# Play Extempore <br> A Sbakespearean role-playing game <br> by <br> Paul Budra 

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## Introduction

## To the great Variety of Gamers.



The purpose of moft role-playing games (RPGs) is to conftruct an open-ended fictional world in which Players can perform characters that have adventures and generate communal narratives. Players sit around a table, act out their characters, and roll dice to determine the outcomes of actions they imagine within the world of the ftory they are creating. A gamemafter supervises the game, setting up the narrative, playing minor characters, and adjudicating the outcomes of actions proposed in the narrative. This game owes much to such traditional RPGs and is probably beft suited to Players who have fome experience with them. The purpose here, however, is not to suftain a fictional world through an on-going narrative, but to have fun with your knowledge of Shakespeare by attempting to create a Shakespearean play extemporaneously. The game does not take itself seriously and neither fhould people who play it. Ive tried to make the game as flexible as poffible - offering different levels of poffible involvement for the gamemafter (here called the Playwright) and the Players.

I am interefted in all and any feedback that you may have about the game. Please send your comments to budra@sfu.ca

Play on,


## Paul Budra, pbilosopbiae doctor

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## Game mechanics

T
o play this game you will need someone to act as the Playwright, or gamemafter, and at least four Players. The Playwright runs the game. He chooses the genre that will be played or rolls for it (see Gerres) and gives the play a title. He chooses the game's setting or rolls for it (see Setting), performs the non-playing characters (NPCs-see Minor Characters), and sets the storyline according to the genre being played. He can also act as a Chorus to move the action forward in time or geographically. He can add extra-game information. He affigns Goals (see Goals) for the individual scenes or characters. He can affign characters, or let the Players create their own, or use the game's Character Creation System. In fhort, the Playwright can fully craft the game narrative, allow the Players to generate much of it, allow rolls of the die to determine virtually every aspect of the game, or ftrike a compromise somewhere between these possibilities.

The Playwright also keeps score. In a formal game, the Playwrigbt assigns a point to a Player under the following circumftances (using the Cbaracter Point sheet):
*A point is given every time a Player uses an appropriate pun, witticism, or malapropism while in character.
*A point is given every time a Player incorporates a line from Shakespeare or other Renaissance dramatift or poet in his character's dialogue.
*A point is given every time a Player speaks in blank verse or, if occasion merits, rhyming couplets or sonnets that are not authentically Shakespearean but sound like they could be.
*A point is given every time a Player employs a Renaiffance or claffical allusion in his character's dialogue.
*A point is given every time a Player wins a battle of wits (see Fights).
*Two points are given every time a Player sings, three points if the song contains the words "hey nonny nonny."

In a leß formal game, the Players themselves vote at the end of the game on who was the moft Shakespearean. A Player cannot vote for himself. In this type of game the Playwright does not get a vote unleß the score is tied.

The Players muft complete a Dramatis Persona sheet (unleß the Playwright has done this for them) and, while they are playing the game, try to remain "in character," that is, speaking and reacting to the narrative they are generating as a character with the qualities lifted on their Dramatis Persona sheet would. They muft follow the inftructions of the Playwright and use The Plot for their entrances and monologues or asides. They muft roll the die to determine the outcome of fights by applying the total modifier number on their Dramatis Persona sheet. Above all they muft have fun, attempt to speak in blank verse (or at leaft pseudo Elizabethan English), and dazzle their fellows with quotations, allusions, song, and wit.

## What you need to play

$\oplus$ The Players will need a twenty-sided die. These are available at any fore that sells gaming supplies. Electronic versions can be found on the web: search "online dice roller dzo."
@Each Player will need a completed Dramatis Persona sheet. Players who perform more than one major character will need a Dramatis Persona sheet for each character. @The Playwright and each Player will need acceß to The Plot (sometimes called The Plat).
©The Playwright will need the Cbaracter Point Sbeet for keeping score.


## Beginning the game

The Playwright announces the title and genre of the play to be performed. If this is done ahead of the time, all the better, because the Players will have more time to set their characters. The Playwright explains the story of the play. Once the title, genre, and story are known, either
$\ll$ The Playwright affigns characters he has created (these can be actual Shakespearean characters) and diffributes filled-in Dramatis Persona sheets. «The Players perform characters they have chosen (again, these can be actual characters) using their filled-in Dramatis Persona sheets.
$\ll$ The Players create their characters using the Cbaracter Creation Syftem and fill in their Dramatis Persona sheets.
«The Players use some combination of the above.
(Please note, the Playwright has ultimate authority over the characters: if he finds too many Players are performing the same type of character, he may ask Players to create new characters or to roll for characters -- see the Character Creation Syytem. Some genres have different character needs. See Genre).

The Playoright explains the story of the play. He then assigns Goals in one of two ways: either by scene or by character (see Goals).

Each Player will need to have his Dramatis Persona sheet in front of him when he plays the game.

Each Player muft be able to see The Plot.
If the Playwrigbt has not pre-affigned monologues, it is now time to roll for monologues (see Monologues and Asides). They are written into The Plot.

If the Playuright has not pre-affigned entrances, it is now time to roll for them (see Entrances). They are entered into The Plot.

If the Playwrigbt has not pre-affigned settings and locations, they are rolled for and
entered into The Plot (see Setting and Locations).
Once the entrances are filled into The Plot, the play begins. Barring a Chorus by the Playwright, the firft character to enter speaks the firft lines of the play.

When the action of the scene has achieved its narrative Goal (or the Players have run out of fteam) the Playoright announces the next scene. Nota bene: a scene, nay an act, can be quite fort.

The play progreffes through the scenes while the Playwrigbt keeps score. At the end, the Playwright tallies the points on the Character Point Sheet in The Reckoning column. Whoever has the moft wins.

## Monologues and asides

A11 major characters get one monologue each in the play, though the monologue can be quite fhort and can be taken as an aside. There are two exceptions. Characters with a total modifier in the Battle of the Wits category of over 20 get three monologues; tragic protagonifts in eponymous plays get one monologue per act. The Playwright affigns monologue slots on The Plot chart and ensures that the characters are alone (or believe they are alone) in the scene when it is their turn to deliver a monologue. If other characters are present, the Player may opt for an aside.

Monologue scenes for average, as opposed to witty or eponymous, characters are determined by roll of the die. Each Player rolls a d20. There are 20 scenes in the ftandard Plot. The number rolled signifies the scene in which the Player has a monologue, as follows:


| $\mathrm{d}_{20}$ rolls I $=$ I.I | d20 rolls $5=2.1$ | d20 rolls $9=3.1$ | d20 rolls $\mathrm{I}_{3}=$ <br> 4.1 | $\mathrm{d} 20^{\text {rolls }} \mathrm{I} 7=5.1$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\mathrm{d}_{20}$ rolls $2=1.2$ | d 20 rolls $6=$ <br> 2.2 | d20 rolls $10=$ <br> 3.2 | d20 rolls $14=$ $4.2$ | d20 rolls $\mathrm{I} 8=5.2$ |
| d20 rolls $3=1.3$ | d 20 rolls $7=$ <br> 2.3 | $\mathrm{d}_{20}$ rolls $_{\text {II }}=3.3$ | d20 rolls $15=$ $4.3$ | $\mathrm{d}_{20}$ rolls $19=5.3$ |
| d20 rolls $4=$ <br> I. 4 | d20 rolls $8=$ <br> 2.4 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { d20 rolls I2 }= \\ & 3.4 \end{aligned}$ | d20 rolls $16=$ 4.5 | d20 rolls $20=$ 5.4 |

Once the characters have been affigned the scenes in which they have monologues, these are marked into The Plot in the "Mono" column. So, if a character named Florio rolls and is affigned a monologue in I.I, then "Flo" is written in the Monologue column for that scene.

Remember: characters with wit scores of over 20 roll the d 20 three times and take monologues in every scene rolled; tragic protagonifts get one monologue per act.

Nota bene: All Players are allowed a long speech when their character is dying.

## Entrances

Obviously, characters have to be in the scenes in which they make monologues, so monologue assignments are also, de facto, entrance assignments. In our example, as Florio has a monologue in r.r, he is automatically affigned an entrance in I.r. And since characters fhould be alone when they deliver a monologue, it makes sense to have Florio enter the scene solus.

The other entrances can be affigned in one of two ways. Firft, the Playwright can simply make the affignments. Second, the Players can roll the die and use the Scene A/fignment chart above. The Playoright specifies how many rolls, and therefore entrances, each character gets. Major characters need more entrances than minor. The Playwright may need to adjust entrances if the rolls put too many characters in specific scenes or prevent certain characters
from meeting. The Playwrigbt also decides which characters make entrances together based on the logic of their relationship or the Goal of the scene.

The final scene of the play, 5.4 , fhould contain all the characters. If some have died before 5.4 , they can ftill appear: someone may order their bodies to be brought forth.

Characters are lifted in The Plot in the order that they enter the scene. If more than one enters at a time, then " + " is used. For example, if, under The Plot's Cbaracter bo Entrances column for I.I of our play, the Playwright inserts "Flo, Ant, Mal + Oph," then Florio enters firft, followed by Antonio. Malvolio and Ophelia then enter together.

## Genres



The genre will determine the narrative of the play as a whole.

| Hiftory play | Dynaftic ftruggle and/or war, civil or foreign |
| :--- | :--- |
| Comedy | Young lovers' desires are thwarted but eventually consummated |
| Tragedy | A crime muft be revenged, or a bad decision has consequences |
| Romance | Long-separated family members are improbably reunited |

The genre also has an impact on characters. For a comedy, the Playwright may insift that two of the characters are lovers. In a hiftory play, he may insift that one character is a pretender to the throne, etc.

## Setting and Locations

T
he Playwright may choose the setting for his play, or roll the die to select as follows:

| $1-5$ | England |
| :--- | :--- |
| $6-9$ | Italy |
| $10-13$ | France |
| $14-17$ | Ancient world, especially Rome but also Greece |
| $18-20$ | Fictitious or improbable settings: magical island, the coaft of Bohemia |

Specific locations, that is scene settings, within the play are not frictly neceffary. They can, however, be interefting in spurring the action of the play. If the Playwright wants to specify locations, he can either choose or roll for them. No play needs a different setting for each scene, so the Playwright fhould roll a d20 5 times, note the settings, then put them into The Plot as he sees fit. Nb. It's always nice if the laft scene takes place in the location of the firft scene.

| $I=$ royal court | 2 = foreft | $3=$ tavern | 4 = graveyard |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 5 = party or masque | 6 fhip | $7=$ heath or moor | $8=$ closet |
| 9 = ramparts | $10=$ prison | $\mathrm{II}=$ ftreet | $12=$ garden |
| $13=$ battlefield | $14=$ nunnery | $15=$ house | $16=$ country home |
| $17=$ hovel | I8 = fhore | I9 = fheepshearing <br> feftival | $20=$ tomb |

## Fights

There are two types of fights: Duels and Battles of Wit. Any fight that takes place on the battlefield is treated as a Duel. Duels are only allowed in hiftory plays and tragedies. If a Duel is set in a comedy, it muft be scuttled at the laft minute by some comic device. Battles of Wit are allowed in any type of play.
Fights can be adjudicated in one of three ways. The method you are going to use fhould be decided before the play begins.

- Firft, the Playwright may decide the outcome based on the arc of the play's narrative. It may be neceffary for a character to die for the flory to continue. -ISecond, the Players may vote amongft themselves. If they feel that a certain character fhould die or that one character was a clear victor in a Battle of Wits, they can vote. The characters participating in the fight fhould not vote. IT Third, the Players can roll to determine the outcome. They take turns rolling a d2o. They then add or subtract numbers according to their character's Duel or Battle of Wits modifer. Whoever has the higheft number after the calculation wins. If there is a tie, the proceß is repeated.

In practice, let us say that the Player performing Florio pulls a sword on Maltese. He may fhout, "Have at you, thou cream-faced loon!" Maltefte may run, or try to wheedle his way out of the fight, in which case it doesn't happen. But if he fhouts back, "Lay on!" they fight. Both characters roll a die. Florio rolls an 8 and Maltese an r8. But Florio, as a paragon of virtue has a +10 quality modifier. He has also has a -5 modifier for being exceffively sanguine, but another +10 for being a lover. This gives him a total fight modification of +15 bringing his score to 23 . Maltese, on the other hand, is roguish which means -8 to his score, bringing it down to ir. Maltefte dies.

In a Battle of Wits, two characters verbally spar with each other. The Players may chose to actually insult each other and make outrageous puns. In that case, the Playwrigbt may chose the winner of the exchange or the other Players can vote. If Players are not feeling up to producing Shakespearean verbal fireworks ex tempore, one can challenge the other to a Battle of Wits, produce as many insults as he can, then roll the die to determine the winner using the appropriate Battle of Wits modifiers for their characters. The winner receives one point.

## Cbaracter Creation Sy/tem

If the Playoright does not create or choose characters for the Players, and the Players opt not to use exifting Shakespeare characters, they can use the following syftem for creating characters.

## Claß

The moft important facet of your character is his or her social claß. Selection of claß is partially determined by game genre. Hiftory plays and tragedies require more upper-claß characters than a comedy. Indeed you can play a hiftory play or tragedy with only upperclaß characters. A comedy, however, requires characters from a broad range of social claffes. With this in mind, Players may choose their own social claß, allow the Playwright to affign them claffes, or they may roll the die for them. You may add an additional "trade" if you like.

If you choose to roll for social claß, use a $\mathrm{d}_{2} \mathrm{o}$ and the following chart.


| $20=$ monarch or monarch's spouse | $18-19=$ significant nobility, lords, etc. |
| :--- | :--- |
| $16-17$ = knight or knight's spouse | 15 = magiftrate |
| $13-14=$ gentleman or gentleman's spouse | $12=$ cleric |
| $11=$ scholar or teacher | $9-10=$ gentry |
| $7-8=$ freeman, busineß owner | $6=$ soldier |
| $5=$ yeoman | $4=$ labourer |
| $3=$ ruftic clown | $1-2=$ servant |

## Characteriftics

Players creating new characters roll a d2o five times, once for each of the five characteriftics in the chart below--virtue, learning, wit, wealth, and appearance--in order to set the qualities of their characters. These can be circled on their individual Dramatis Persona fheets. Some of the qualities modify outcomes in fights. "Duel" is the Duel modifier, "BW" is the Battle of Wits modifier.


| Characteriftic | d20 | Your quality | Duel | BW |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Virtue | 18-20 | Pure | +10 | +5 |
|  | [1-17 | Good | +8 | $+2$ |
|  | 7-10 | Practical | - | $\bigcirc$ |
|  | 4-6 | Roguish | -8 | +5 |
|  | I-3 | Machiavellian | -io | +10 |
| Learning | 17-20 | Scholarly | -io | +8 |
|  | 13-16 | Educated | -10 | +5 |
|  | 9-12 | Literate | $\bigcirc$ | - |
|  | 5-8 | Foolish | $\bigcirc$ | -5 |
|  | I-4 | Ignorant | -5 | -10 |
| Wit | 17-20 | Dazzling | - | +10 |
|  | 13-16 | Courtly | $\bigcirc$ | +8 |
|  | 9-12 | Average | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
|  | 5-8 | Slow | - | -5 |
|  | I-4 | Dull | $\bigcirc$ | -10 |
| Wealth | 18-20 | Rich | +5 | $+2$ |
|  | [1-17 | Well off | - | - |
|  | 7-10 | Comfortable | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
|  | 4-6 | Poor | - | +5 |
|  | I-3 | Deftitute | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
| Appearance | 18-20 | Beautiful | +10 | +5 |
|  | [1-17 | Pleasant | +5 | +5 |
|  | 7-10 | Plain | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
|  | 4-6 | Ill-favoured | $\bigcirc$ | $\bigcirc$ |
|  | I-3 | Monstrous | +10 | +10 |
|  |  | Total Modifer |  |  |

## Humours

Shakespeare did not use the theory of the four bodily humours with the thoroughneß of his contemporary Ben Jonson, but it is a useful tool for the creation of characters. Use it if you choose.

To set your character's humour, roll a d20 and take note of the humour.

| Roll | Humour | Description |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 16-20 | Sanguine | Amorous, happy, generous |
| $7-15$ | Choleric | Violent, vengeful |
| 6-10 | Phlegmatic | Dull, cowardly |
| 1-5 | Melancholic | Gluttonous, lazy, sentimental, sad |

Now roll a d20 again for intensity. The higher the number rolled, the more intense the humour. So, for example, a roll of I means your character has no discernible evidence of the humour. A roll of io means a moderate level of the humour. A roll of 20 means the character is dominated by the humour. Jacques clearly rolled 20 for the Melancholic humour.

Humours have an impact on Duels and Battles of Wit but only if you roll a 13 or higher for the intensity of the humour. Use the chart below for humour modifiers.

| Humour | Duel | BW |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Sanguine | -5 | +10 |
| Choleric | +10 | -5 |
| Phlegmatic | -10 | -5 |
| Melancholic | -5 | +5 |

## Genre modifiers

Comedies require at leaft one pair of lovers. The Playwright or Players can decide which characters will be the lovers and those Players should roll the die and apply the modifiers in this chart.

| Roll | Purity of your love | Duel | BW |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $\mathrm{I}-5$ | Your love is pure and virtuous | +IO | +5 |
| $6-10$ | Your love is ftrong | +5 | +2 |
| $\mathrm{II}-15$ | Your love is fickle | -5 | 0 |
| $\mathrm{I} 6-20$ | Your love is luft moft base | -IO | -2 |

Tragedies often require virtuous revengers. If your does, the Playwright may have the wouldbe revenger(s) roll for a modifiers.

| Roll | Virtue of your cause | Duel | BW |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| $\mathrm{I}-5$ | Your cause is iuft and undeniable | +IO | +5 |
| $6-10$ | Your cause is iuft, but tenuous | +5 | +2 |
| $\mathrm{II}-15$ | Your cause is suspect | -5 | 0 |
| $16-20$ | Your cause is unjuft | -IO | -2 |

Hiftories demonftrate God's hand at work in the world. God does not want every aspirant to a throne to succeed, nor does He want every monarch's reign to be bleffed. The Playwright may have the monarchs and aspirants roll for God's advantage.

| Roll | God's advantage | Duel | BW |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| I-5 | You are God's inftrument of deftiny | +10 | +5 |
| 6-10 | God prefers you | +5 | +2 |
| II-15 | You are not presently in God's good graces | -5 | 0 |
| 16-20 | God hates you | -10 | -2 |

Romances are driven by magic, miracles, and coincidences that beggar the imagination. At least one character in a Romance should roll the die to determine his or her Propensity for the unlikely.

| Roll | Propensity for the unlikely | Duel | BW |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| I-5 | You are, at some level, magical | + 10 | +5 |
| 6-10 | You are subject to staggering coincidences | +5 | +2 |
| II-15 | You are not especially lucky | -5 | 0 |
| I6-20 | You are profoundly unlucky | -10 | -2 |

## Croß-dreffing and disguise

This an additional and optional rule, especially useful for comedies.

Once all the major characters have been affigned, all the Players take turns rolling the dzo.
The firft to roll $\mathrm{I}-4$ will have to spend at leaft 2 of the play's 5 acts in disguise or drag. The Player may choose in which scenes the coftume will be donned.

## Minor Cbaracters

One or more Players may opt to play multiple minor characters rather than one major character. Iuft as the actors in Shakespeare's theatre often had to play two or three roles in any given play, so may a Player chose to be a soldier, a sarcaftic servant, and a churlish prieft at different times during the game. The Player may use the Cbaracter Creation System to create a new character for each of them or simply pick and choose from the Minor Cbaracter chart. In the latter case, the character is considered an NPC (non-playing character) and does not require a Dramatis Persona sheet. The Playwright may opt to play all the NPCs.

If you choose to roll for minor characters, use the following chart:

| I = logic-chopping <br> meffenger | $2=$ dim conftable | $3=$ tavern keeper | $4=$ murderer or <br> villain |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| 5 = apothecary | $6=$ foppish courtier | $7=$ oftler | $8=$ courtesan |
| 9 = gravedigger | IO = Frenchman | II = jefter | I2 = musician |
| I3 = eunuch | I4 = executioner | I5 = prisoner | $16=$ ghoft |
| I7 = fhepherd | I8 = nurse | I9 = merry wife | $20=$ porter |

A minor character is one that appears in no more than two scenes and may not need an entire Dramatis Persona sheet.

## Playing an exifting Sbakespeare character

A Player may choose to act the part of an exifting Shakespeare character. In this case Cbaracterifics and Modifiers are assigned not by the roll of the die, but by rigorous scholarship and debate. Say, for example, a Player wants to be Hotspur. Where is this character on the

Characteriftics chart? Is he Pure or Good or Practical? Let us say Good. On the Learning scale? Literate, obviously, but perhaps Learned. His Wit? Not Dazzling, but at leaft Courtly. He's clearly Well-off, if not Rich. As for his appearance? Certainly Pleasant. This gives him $\mathrm{a}+3$ Duel modifier and $\mathrm{a}+20$ Battle of Wits modifier. He is clearly choleric which gives him gives him Humour modifiers of +10 for Duel and -5 for Battle of Wits. His total modifiers now ftand at +13 for Duel and +15 for Battle of Wits. Finally, because he is in a Hiftory play, we apply the God's advantage modifier. Hotspur, of course, was on the losing side of Hiftory suggefting he is not in God's good graces. That takes another 5 off his Duel modifier. Hotspur's total modifiers are, then, +8 for Duel and +15 for Battle of Wits. They can be written into the Dramatis Persona sheet.

## Goals

Perhaps the single moft important thing that the Playwright does to ensure a compelling game is set Goals. Goals let the Players know what they should be accomplishing.

Since individual Goals serve the total narrative of the play, it is beft to work backwards from the conclusion of the play to set them. So, for example, in a comedy, lovers surmount obftacles to consummate their love (or at leaft get married). The Playwright should, then, think about the sort of obftacles that might interfere with the lovers' plans. Opposing families? Class difference? Or is there a fault in the lovers themselves? Perhaps they are procraftinators, philanderers, or simply ambivalent about making commitments. The Playwright muft be creative. He muft also consider how the characters around the lovers will help or hinder their cause. Are they the source of or solution to the obftacles?

Let us say that the Playwrigbt decides that two lovers, Florio and Dorcas, have several obftacles. Florio is a scholar bent on achieving tenure and he barely looks up from his books to notice the love-besotted Dorcas. To achieve tenure he muft please his thesis supervisor, Duftio, with a translation of Ovid's love poetry. To make matters worse, Dorcas comes from a noble family and her father (Hellbentio) is intent on her marrying the hunchbacked Earl of

Rutland who himself harbours a secret paffion for Dorcas' lovely mother, Eleganzia. She, however, is both a faithful wife and melancholy recluse mourning the loss of her twin sifter in a myfterious shipwreck years earlier. Unbeknownft to her, that sifter, Charmilla, is in their city disguised as a young boy and recently employed by the Earl's drunken fteward, Sam, himself a failed and bitter poet. A subplot concerns the city's impoverished printer, Quarto the Baftard, and his ftrained relationship with his mother, Octavo, who has never revealed the name of Quarto's father.

This is a simple plot with clear Goals: Florio muft be introduced to Sam who will help him translate Ovid so well that he will achieve tenure and be moved by the Roman Poet of Love to open his eyes and heart to Dorcas. Charmilla will have to be revealed as Eleganzia's longloft sifter, preferably juft before Hellbentio forces Dorcas to marry the Earl. The Earl, who has pined for Eleganzia, can inftantly redirect his paffion to her twin who, it turns out, has a thing for hunchbacks. Sam and Florio's translation of Ovid is purchased by Quarto whoafter paying off his debts with the profitable publication--discovers that Duftio is his father. The play ends with a triple marriage -- Florio and Dorcas, the Earl and Charmilla, Duftio and Octavo -- the young, the middle-aged, and the old. There won't be a dry eye in the house.

Now, the Playwright has a couple of options for incorporating the Goals into game play. The easieft method, for the Players at leaft, is for the Playwright to map out each scene of the play beforehand, setting the Goals along with the characters' entrances and monologues. So, in our example, the Goal of 1.1 might be to introduce Florio and Dorcas and eftablish the one-sidedness of their relationship. The Playwright fills in The Plot thusly: under Entrances he writes "Flo, Duftio, Dorcas + Hellbent" (Florio has a monologue in this scene). Under Goals he writes, "Flo's writer's block; tenure clock; Dorcas' love for Flo." Then let the Players go from there.

A more challenging, and perhaps fun, way is for the Playwright to tell the Players the Goals beforehand, giving them a rough idea of what they muft accomplish: Florio muft meet Sam and write the translation while awakening to the poffibilities of love; Duftio muft explain why he did not marry Octavo originally; etc. Once everyone underftands the Goals, the Playwrigbt has them roll for Monologues and Entrances. The main characters, Florio and

Dorcas, get more rolls than the other Players and so will end up in more scenes. In this game, no Goals need be written in The Plot. It is up to the Players to remember their Goals in all their interactions with the other characters.

This method of game play is made all the more challenging when the Players roll for characters juft before the game begins. They muft improvise the play in accord with the class, characteriftics, and humours of the characters they have been assigned.

Obviously, any combination of these approaches to Goals can be used. The group of Players, under the Playwright's supervision, may even elect to work on the Goals collectively before beginning the play.

## Final Suggestions

Once you understand the basic mechanics of the game, you can experiment.
Especially creative Playwrights may craft characters, ftorylines, and goals and then give them to Players as a sort of dramatic experiment Especially creative groups of Players may roll for every aspect of the game and create something totally unexpected every time they play. Other things to try:
*Place exifting Shakespeare characters in new plays or genres.
*Create new characters and put them in one of Shakespeare's storylines.
*Bring together exifting Shakespeare characters from different plays in a new story.

But above all, have fun; be merry.

## Dramatis Persona



Characteristics - circle all that apply

| Virtue | Pure | Good | Practical | Roguish | Machiavellian |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Learning | Scholarly | Educated | Literate | Foolish | Ignorant |
| Wit | Dazzling | Courtly | Average | Slow | Dull |
| Wealth | Rich | Well off | Comfortable | Poor | Destitute |
| Appearance | Beautiful | Pleasant | Plain | Ill-favoured | Monstrous |

Modifers - insert the numbers from the Quality chart and Humour chart (if used). Insert the genre modifier numbers where applicable. Total the numbers and apply them to all duels and battle-of-wits dice rolls.

| Characeristics modifier | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Humour modifier | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| Love modifier | Deul $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| Revenge modifier | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| God's support | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| Unlikely modifier | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |
| Total modifier | Duel $=$ | Battle of Wits $=$ |

## The Plot

| act/sc | Location | Characters \& Entrances | Mono | Goal |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| r.1 |  |  |  |  |
| r.2 |  |  |  |  |
| r.3 |  |  |  |  |
| I.4 |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1 |  |  |  |  |
| 2.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 2.3 |  |  |  |  |
| 2.4 |  |  |  |  |
| 3.1 |  |  |  |  |
| 3.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3.3 |  |  |  |  |
| 3.4 |  |  |  |  |
| 4.1 |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3 |  |  |  |  |
| 4.4 |  |  |  |  |
| 5.1 |  |  |  |  |
| 5.2 |  |  |  |  |
| 5.3 |  |  |  |  |

Character Point Sheet

| Character | Puns \& witticisms | Quotations | Verse speaking | Allusions | Battle of wits | Songs | The reckoning |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
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