



“TRAVAILS AND MISFORTUNES”



“The second son of the king ... repeatedly asked me to teach him how to shoot [the harquebus] and I always excused myself for not doing it by saying that he would have plenty of time to learn it in the future... [One day] he came to the house where I was hosted at the time of the siesta ... where he found me asleep on a mat ... After ordering one of his servants to quietly put fire to the match, he picked up the harquebus, intending to load it as he had seen me doing in several occasions. Not knowing how much gunpowder was required, he filled the barrel with more than two hands before inserting the bullet. Next he put the gun to his shoulder and aimed at an orange tree to his front. When he fired his mischievous fate willed that the gun burst at three different places wounding him twice – including his right hand thumb that barely escaped being chopped away – so much so that the young prince fell to the ground looking more dead than alive.” TToMP, Ch. 136

From role to play

In a TToMP game you and your fellow players “become” the characters created according to the guidelines of the last section. While playing you are to act and behave in-character within the game context. This behaviour is purely imaginary and results from the interaction among the players.

The present section provides a system of guidelines and rules devised to facilitate the smoothest interaction between you and the other players while ensuring that the unfolding of game events and actions is consistent with the setting. We hope that it will also fuel your imagination by providing ideas and options for your in-character decisions.

Actions and other events

In the course of a game you will define what your character does, his actions. The GM decides what the NPCs do and also handles non-human events. The difference between an action and an event is that the former is the result of a human will while the latter happen independently of the purposeful behaviour of a person.

Breaking up actions into action phases

Actions are complex by nature. Because of this in TToMP any action is broken up into the four phases:

- **Context** – Actions don’t happen in a vacuum. They take place within concrete temporal, geographical and social circumstances that limit what characters can do and how they can do it. This corresponds to its *context*.
- **Goal** – Action are performed purposefully with a certain objective or aim in mind. What the character actually does is instrumental in achieving that objective. So the player has to define the *goal* of his character.
- **Tasks and performance** – To set up a goal and do nothing to fulfil it is simple wishful thinking. The character has to translate his goals into a concrete behaviour.

This is the character's *task*. A task may or may not be done, thus we need to define the actual *performance* of the character.

- **Outcome** – Usually what really happens from the completion of a task is not at the discretion of a single party. It is the result of the interaction of the independent performances by the different characters and other events. All of this has to be conciliated into an *outcome*.

Types of actions

Usually a person attempts to do a task at a time. For instance, a character may be singing *or* playing the lute. In combat he may attack an enemy *or* defend against an attack. When the action incorporates only one task it is called a **simple action**.

In other occasions the character may attempt to do several tasks in the course of a single action. These are called **complex actions** and can correspond to one of two cases:

- **Simultaneous tasks**. It happens when the character attempts to do two or more tasks at the same time. For instance, the character may both sing *and* play the lute, or a fighter may attempt to attack with a sword while parrying an incoming blow with a shield. Usually characters don't attempt more than two simultaneous tasks. Only on exceptional occasions will they try to pursue three or more courses of action at the same time.
- **Chained tasks**. Another possibility is for the character to attempt several objectives in sequence in the same flow of action. Say, a fighter attempts to use his rapier to parry an incoming attack and follow it with a counter-attack; a run-away thief with a persecutor on his heels tries to dive through the door, get up and jump into a horse.

Finally, it is possible to have several people acting together, each performing a single action but at the same time doing it in connection with the actions of the other persons. For instance, one person is singing, another playing the lute while a third plays the flute, all to the same tune. This is a **collective action**.

Factors affecting the action or event: Using modifiers in action resolution

More often than not the outcome of the game situation cannot be predicted or foreseen with certainty by the characters since it is subject to the intervention of conflicting forces – of which the behaviour of the characters is only one. If those factors favour the fulfilling of the desired outcome, we call them **bonus**. Conversely, we call them **penalties** if they may jeopardise the fruition of the intended outcome. Bonus and penalties are respectively notated with nb and np where n stands for the value of the modifier.

In any situation the players must calculate the balance of bonus and penalties to determine the **total modifier** at hand. If there are more bonus than penalties, the total modifier is called a bonus modifier. Conversely, if there are more penalties than bonus it is called a penalty modifier. Of course, it is possible to have no modifiers to apply if there are no bonus or penalties or if they cancel each other.

Alternative methods to handle action resolution

Each of the phases of an action requires the players to decide on what happens and how it happens at that particular phase. There are several ways to settle on this:

- **Automatic resolution** – What the players say that happens, happens.
- **Deliberate resolution** – Players state the intentions and behaviour of the characters and arbitrate how these translate into an outcome based on the likelihood of the possible results.
- **Random resolution** – Players state the intention and behaviour of their characters and arbitrate the corresponding results based on a random factor generated with dice.

Automatic resolution is adequate to simple situations where the outcome can hardly fail to materialize or the character can easily repeat the action to succeed, there's no stress, and failure to achieve the intended result does not entail long lasting consequences. Usually that means that players don't even bother identifying modifiers to the action. This is what happens in most daily life situations like walking around your home town.

Both deliberate and random resolution are used in situations characterized by high uncertainty and major long lasting consequences.

When using deliberate action resolution all you have to do is to sort out the balance between bonus and penalties and interpret it to define the course of events. The rules contained in the present section will explain how this is done.

When recurring to random action resolution one also has to calculate the modifier to the action but in this case it is translated into a random factor represented with dice. The result generated through the corresponding dice roll provides the clue that allows the players to decide on the course of events in the game situation.

Using dice in random action resolution

Random action resolution requires the usage of a variable number of 6-sided dice (d6). This is called a **dice-pool**. Dice-pools include two components: A Basic Die (BD) and modifier dice. The players always roll the BD, even if no modifiers apply. The number of modifier dice is the same as the value of the modifier that applies to the situation.

The dice-pool is notated as:

- Bn if there is a bonus modifier, where n is the BD plus the value of the bonus modifier. This is a bonus dice-pool.
- Pn if there is a penalty modifier, where n is the sum of the BD with the value of the penalty modifier. This is a penalty dice-pool.
- The BD if no penalties apply to the situation.

Once you have sorted out the number of dice in your dice-pool all you have to do is roll it and:

- In the case of a bonus dice-pool, roll the dice and retain the highest value rolled.
- In the case of a penalty dice-pool, roll the dice and retain the lowest value rolled.

Marcia's PC attempts an action where he has 3p and 1b making for a bonus modifier of 2p that, summed to the BD, makes for a dice-pool of P3. She rolls 3d6 and gets 2, 4 and 5. She picks the 2 – the lowest value rolled – and discards the other two dice.

John's PC action is subject to a bonus of 2b. This is his bonus modifier that added to the BD results in a B3 dice-pool. John rolls three dice and amazingly gets 4, 5, and 2. He discards the 2 and the 4, and retains the 5.

Example of an action

Let's clarify the concepts from start up by using the excerpt above this page as an example. We need to break it up into the four steps in action resolution keeping in mind that we are trying to analyse the behaviour of the young prince and that what follows respects the conventions presented in Section 1.

First step, context: *“he came at the time of the siesta to the house where I was hosted... where he found me asleep on a mat”*.

As you can see, this passage provides us with the spatial (*“the house where I was hosted”*) and time (*“at the time of the siesta”*) context. It also informs us on what Fernão Mendes Pinto was doing (*“where he found me asleep on a mat”*).

Notice that the context allows us to decide on who can act in the given situation.

Second step, goals: *“repeatedly asked me to teach him how to shoot [the arquebus]”*.

The intense desire to learn how to use the arquebus is so extreme that the young prince decides to take the issue on his hands. This desire is the determinant in the formation of his intentions. We can define the young prince's goal in the next terms: *“If the foreigner (Mendes Pinto) does not teach me how to use the gun, I'll do it on my own”*.

Third step, tasks and performance: *“After ordering one of his servants to quietly put fire to the match, he picked up the arquebus, intending to load it as he had seen me doing in several occasions. Not knowing how much gunpowder was required, he filled the barrel with more than two hands before inserting the bullet. Next he put the gun to his shoulder and aimed at an orange tree to his front” and fired it.*

This description gives us the tasks the prince set up to do. Since there were no obstacles to his action, he performed his tasks according to his intentions. Notice how it is influenced by his skill (or lack of).

Final step, outcome: *“When he fired his mischievous fate willed that the gun burst at three different places wounding him twice – including his right hand thumb that barely escaped being chopped away – so much so that the young prince fell to the ground looking more dead than alive”*.

The final part of the passage corresponds to the description of the outcome of the performance.

The present section allows you to handle situations like this by providing guidelines on how you can describe the action of your character and rules to arbitrate what happens at each stage of action resolution. Throughout the rest of the section we will exemplify the presentation of the rules with the follow up to the events just described.

The where and when of your action: The context

In order to act you need to define a course of action. Your ability to do this is defined within boundaries that can either limit your freedom or serve your purposes. These boundaries are circumstantial since they correspond to factors external to the character. We will specifically consider three types of contextual factors: The antecedents of the situation, and the spatial and temporal boundaries of the action.

Antecedents

Before a player can decide on his character's course of action he needs to understand the *antecedents* that lead to the current situation. Usually it's up for the GM to provide the antecedents if these don't come up from the previous developments in the course of the game session. Usually he will outline who, why and how is involved in the situation, and where and when it is to happen.

“...the youngster fell to the ground more dead than alive. His two friends run away to the palace shouting as they crossed the streets «The foreigner's gun killed the son of the King!», thus raising such an outcry among the residents as if the whole town was falling apart. The people, weapons in hand and shouts in their mouths, rushed to the house where my poor self then was in such a state as only God can tell. Waking up with this outcry and spotting the young prince close by, covered in blood, I mindlessly embraced him forgotten of where I was. In the mean time the King came (...) [with the Queen and their two daughters] and when they entered the house and noticed the youngster laying on the ground like a dead man, I embraced to him and both of us covered in blood, they all got convinced that I had murdered him. Two soldiers rushed, sword in hands, ready to kill me but the king shouted: «Ta, ta, ta, question him first (...)»

“(...) Then they called without delay three scribes and five executioners with unsheathed two-handed swords while I was put on my knees in front of them, my arms in chains. And the bonze Asquerão Teixe, the chief justice, his sleeves rolled up his arms and a dagger stained with the blood of the prince in his hands, told me: «I summon you as if you were the son of the devil – what you surely are – and as guilt of this grievous crime as the dwellers of the House of Smoke in the deep concave of the centre of the Earth! Come, raise your voice so that everyone can hear it, tell me, why did you wish your gun to kill through its sorceries this innocent child, hair of our own heads?»”

As you can see, Mendes Pinto is suspected of killing the prince for some mischievous reason. He is questioned to get an explanation to the why of such an act.

The time dimension

Action takes time. How long it takes is dependent on the nature of the action. In most occasions we don't need to care too much about this, though. The GM just needs to settle on a reasonable duration for the action. Yet, sometimes it asks for definite units of time. This is especially true in cases of repetitive performances (see below for this concept). The most common time units in TToMP are the *round* based on the Creed, and the *turn* based on the hour (both of these time units are based on Fernão Mendes Pinto's book). Of course, this is not to say that the GM will not resort to other units of time. The night or the day, the week, the month, the year, etc., all have a place in a game of TToMP. Each time unit allows for the completion of an action. Intense physical or inter-personal action is handled in rounds while more relaxed action takes place in turns.

The round

Intense physical activity like combat or some cases of social interaction is handled in 20 seconds rounds. This is based on Mendes Pinto's descriptions where he references time in terms of the *Creed*, the Christian prayer where the faithful enunciates his belief in God. A creed corresponds more or less to one minute and is often qualified with “less than” or “something more than”. (For examples of a situation involving rounds, check pages XX and XX.)

“In less than a creed twelve of the sixteen Portuguese in our party were slain with another thirty-six boys and sailors”
Ch. 36

The turn

Other than the creed, Mendes Pinto often uses two other time units: The half-hour and the hour. These are mainly used for important collective action – battles more often than not – and for leisurely social interaction. Because of that, when handle such situations with half-hour turns:

“After an exchange of gunnery that lasted for close to one hour and a half...” Ch. 57

Mendes Pinto is being questioned by the chief justice of the King. This is done through an interpreter and in the middle of interventions by other people present in the room. It is not a fast affair. We may assume that the dialogue is taking place in _ hour exchanges.

“... in the course of which [Mendes Pinto’s interrogation by the chief justice] were spent more than three hours...”

Other time units

Besides the round and the turn, there are other larger time units that regulate daily life including the break up of the day according to religious rhythms, days, weeks and months, seasons, monsoon cycles, etc. In any case, the half-creed and the half-hour are those that usually will regulate the characters’ actions.

The space dimension: Where action happens

The players need to have an understanding of the place where action takes place. This is basically an issue of describing the surroundings and what’s in there. The level of detail is left to the descriptive skills of the GM. In any case, he should provide visual clues that may be accessible to the characters and that may be relevant to the sequence of events.

Mendes Pinto is held in chains in the middle of the house, surrounded by the executioners and the scribes, the chief justice in front of him. Close by is the King, the Queen and the princesses. All around there are noblemen and servants. Somewhere half-forgotten lays the prince.

Integrating space and time: movement and placement

Space may also play a major role in action. In many occasions it may be treated as a circumstantial constrain, like when a character has to perform in a very narrow place that affects his freedom of action. Yet, space takes a dimension of its own when it becomes a determinant of action. This falls down either to movement or positioning.

Movement

Movement is measured in all possible scales used in measuring space. Fernão Mendes Pinto mentions measures that were more or less standard at his time like the league, the mille, the pace or the foot. Furthermore he often uses missiles as a reference. We find mentions of different shots (gun, harquebus, crossbow, arrow) and thrown weapons (the stone more often than not). Finally, he obviously uses the nautical knot.

Given this, it is useful to identify the most relevant scales to be used according to the different time units.

In the course of a half-creed a character is able to do the next moves:

- Step around while performing an action that doesn’t require movement: 10 paces.
- Walk ready to act and keeping an eye to placement and possible surprises: 30 paces.

- Charge into the enemy from harquebus volley distance: one harquebus shot that's roughly equivalent to 100 paces.
- Run as fast as possible in even terrain while being unencumbered by equipment or heavy gear: maximum of 200 paces.

As you can see, the basic unit we adopted is the pace. It corresponds roughly to something between 75cms and 1 meter or to the now outdated yard.

If Mendes Pinto was not bounded and forced to rest in his knees he could move himself at this pace. Not that it would be of much help given that he is surrounded by a little crowd while in a closed space. As things are he may attempt to crawl on his knees or raise up to his feet, just before his head falls down to the ground severed from his body by a slash of a sword.

For larger time units the most relevant measures are the mille and the league, the former corresponding to approximately 1,500 paces and the latter to 6,000 paces. For simplicity sake we will use these units both for inland and nautical movement, thus dropping the knot despite the fact that it was the most common unit for naval purposes.

Positioning

Positioning refers to the relative placement of the character towards other characters, entities or things in situations where there can be a physical or social interaction. It helps define what the characters can do in the course of a half-creed.

Unknown constrains

Within the general context we may isolate several aspects that condition the nature and terms of the actions the character may undertake. These are the *external constrains* affecting the characters. Constrains may be unknown to the participants in the action. Furthermore, constrains are not necessarily true facts. The character may work on wrong or false assumptions. Finally, constrains can be positive or negative.

Unknown to Mendes Pinto, to the King and to everybody else, the prince is not dead but only fainted.

Notice that constrains are independent of the action of the characters involved in the situation. This is a critical point: if the current behaviour of character A limits the behaviour of character B, in a certain sense it constrains B. But this is not what we refer to here. We are only looking at constrains that are not the result of the willing action of one of the parties currently involved in the situation.

What you want to achieve: Your goals

There's a purpose to action. Whenever a character does something he will be attempting to reach a certain expected outcome, his goal, and he will be willing to apply himself to it. Yet, for any goal there may be several alternative courses of action the character could pursue. Furthermore, even if the character chooses to achieve a certain goal, he may not be willing to fully commit himself to it.

Setting goals

This is to a certain extent self-explanatory: Your character wants to achieve something with his behaviour. Yet, what your character aims at may change widely from action to action. Sometimes he may concentrate on the behaviour in itself (and probably the pleasure one can extract from it), like when one is dancing or listening to music. In other situations he may target a change in the environment, like when he wants to produce something new like a poem or a change in the mindset of another character. It may even happen that your character is only concerned with the maintenance of the status quo. Furthermore, a character's goal doesn't need to be his own alone. He may be sharing the goal of another character or characters (either if he wishes it or not).

Mendes Pinto's goal is, of course, to save his life and dismiss the impending accusation of murdering the prince.

Defining commitment

A goal is nothing else than wishful thinking, the expression of a desire, if not backed by a will to act on it, by the definition of a precise course of action and by the correspondent performance. On what concerns the will to act, it is dependent on the personal traits of the character. These define his commitment: How much involved he will be with the action, how much he will invest into fulfilling his aim. This involvement is measured in a grading that goes from a refusal to get going with the action to total commitment to its completion. The exact commitment will depend on the interplay of three types of factors: Contextual factors; personal factors; and the effect of surprise. These factors are handled as bonus or penalties to the Basic Die.

Contextual factors affecting commitment

Whether a person wants or not to perform an action depends to a certain extent on how the person perceives how the context favours or works against his performance and how serious the situation is in terms of its potential outcome (as described latter in this section). The nature of that vision determines either a bonus or a penalty to the commitment roll:

| <u>Predicted outcome</u> | <u>Positive</u> | <u>Negative</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Neutral | - | - |
| Minor | 1b | 1p |
| Major | 2b | 2p |
| Critical | 3b | 3p |

Notice that positive factors may work either as positive or negative modifiers. They are negative if the character is surprised but when the surprise is gone they affect commitment as a bonus.

Being held chained and down in his knees while facing a menacing crowd howling for his head is not the best environment on where to exercise free will. Mendes Pinto is facing a critically negative situation. This implies a 3p modifier to his commitment.

Personal factors affecting commitment

Further to contextual factors, the determination of commitment also requires the player to identify the combination of the most relevant value and goal (if any) that may influence his behaviour in the situation for the purpose of fulfilling his goal. Of course,

these personal factors may work for or against the formation of commitment, depending on the situation at hand.

Mendes Pinto has a great esteem for his safety. This only makes him more aware of the danger he is in, resulting in a 1p mod to his commitment. The fact that he wants to get rich plays no role in this situation.

When the unexpected happens: readiness and the impact of surprise

Often in Mendes Pinto’s book we find persons being surprised by events they did not anticipate. Usually, it takes time before the person is able to get up to his senses and frame a course of action. Sometimes the dynamics of the events don’t allow for this and the person is left at the mercy of what is happening. The end result is that surprise is a critical determinant of action since a surprised character needs time to realize what is happening, get hold of his senses and define a course of action. The reverse of surprise is the situation where the character is aware of the situation, defined his course of action and mentally prepared himself to act:

| SURPRISE PENALTY | | |
|------------------|---------------|---|
| Readiness | Penalty | Meaning |
| Motivated | 1b | The character is fully aware of the event and prepared to act. |
| Ready | Acts normally | The character is fully aware of the event. |
| Alert | 1p | The character anticipates something, just does not know the what, when and how of it. |
| Surprised | 2p | The character does not anticipate the event but he is awoken and in hold of his senses. |
| Clueless | Can’t act | The character is sleeping or is so surprised he isn’t even able to understand what’s happening or envision the probable outcome of the situation. |

When, awoken by the shot, Mendes Pinto discovered the prince seemingly dead in his room, he was completely *clueless* about what was going on. Some time latter, still bewildered by the pace of events, he remains under the effect of *surprise* and can’t completely get hold of his senses. His commitment suffers a 2p modifier.

Summing up

The combination of these different factors is expressed as a modifier to the BD that allows us to determine the exact nature of the character’s commitment either through a dice roll or through deliberate determination:

| COMMITMENT DETERMINATION | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Commitment | Random roll | Deliberate arbitration* |
| Passionate | 6 | $\geq 5b$ |
| Committed | 5 | $2b - 4b$ |
| Ambivalent | 3 – 4 | $1p - 1b$ |
| Reactive | 2 | $2p - 4p$ |
| Inactive | 1 | $\geq 5p$ |

* Notice that this is the balance of the situational modifiers. It does not include the dice in the BD.

What do the different types of commitment mean? Simply put:

- A **passionate** person will devote himself fully and use all his resources in the action.
- A **committed** person will dedicate most of his resources to the action but may pursue other secondary goals at the same time.

- The **ambivalent** person weights the action against other possibilities and will commit a limited level of resources to it.
- A **reactive** person will not start the action unless forced to or in support of another person. He will try to use as few resources as possible.
- An **inactive** person will not do it, not even if forced to.

(This general classification will be adapted to the different types of actions in subsequent sections.)

Fernão Mendes is subject to a contextual 2p modifier to which is added is personal 1p and the 2p effect of surprise. That gives us a total modifier of 5p plus the BD for a P6 dice-pool. If we were to opt for deliberate arbitration we would get a direct *inactive* Mendes Pinto. We decide to roll instead and get 5, 4, 1, 3, 2, 5. We retain the lowest result, a 1, still an *inactive* commitment to the goal.

“«...tell me, why did you wished your gun to kill through its sorceries this innocent child, hair of our own heads?» To which I answered no word since I was so mindless that even if I was shopped to death, I am sure I would be unable to feel it.”

Changing commitment and goals

In the course of time a character may change either his goals or his commitment.

Changing commitment

When a situation requires several rounds there can be changes in commitment on the part of the characters so it needs to be re-evaluated at the start of each round. When doing this don't forget to reflect the impact of changing contextual and personal factors. On what concerns surprise, decrease it by one level each successive round until the character becomes completely alert (unless, of course, no new surprising events happen in the mean time).

“With fire and ire on his face [the chief justice] insisted: «If you don't reply to my queries I will have you sentenced to death in blood and fire and water and wind blows so that in the air you shall be broken into pieces just as the feather of a dead bird gets divided into countless parts!». Upon which he gave me a mighty lash out to get me into my senses, and continued: *«Speak, confess who paid you and for how much and their names and where they live».*

Eventually Mendes Pinto is able to dispel the initial surprise. The magnitude of the menace is still there, just as the sense of insecurity: He still suffers a 3p modifier to his commitment. That means that he may *react* to the questioning that is being conducted. (We may also attempt a roll and get... 6, 6, 2, 3. By now Mendes Pinto became *reactive*.)

“To which I, by now somewhat more awoken, answered that God only knew it and took Him as the judge for the matter. The chief judge, not satisfied with what he had gotten, continued to menace me with all sorts of baffling and terrible prospects in the course of which were spent more than three hours”.

Changing goals

Changing goals usually are the result of a major change in the environment that implies that the previous goals are no longer relevant or, of course, of the fulfilment of the stated goals. In any case, the new situation may be start for a new line of action that calls for a different set of goals.

“The chief judge, not satisfied with what he had gotten, continued to menace me with all sorts of baffling and terrible prospects in the course of which were spent more than three hours until, Our Lord be praised, the young prince awoke. Seeing his parents covered with tears, he told them not to cry or accuse anyone of his death since he alone had been the cause of everything that happened, and that I was innocent of any guilt so he requested

them on the blood that covered him to have me freed right away, otherwise he would die again. Hearing this, the King ordered the executioners to take off the chains that were holding me.”

The unexpected twist of events determines that the impending menace is dispelled. Fernão Mendes is lucky to achieve his goal even if not as a result of his action.

The King orders his bonzes to cure the wounds of his son but they are unwilling to do it. They suggest that an old, famous and very holy bonze from a nearby pagoda be called to heal the prince. The latter replies that he is not going to wait for a blind man and die from blood loss before he arrives. He asks his father to order Mendes Pinto to heal him instead. The father accepts his son’s suggestion and promises to enrich Fernão Mendes if he cures his son.

Even before accepting to address the request, our adventurer attempts to get a more peaceful environment for the new course of action: *“I replied to his highness by asking him to send away those people since I was disturbed with fear generated by their outcries”*. This done, Fernão Mendes is still not very secure on what to do so he *“checked the wounds, and if I dare heal them, I’ll do it willingly”*. He realizes that the wounds are not very deep or dangerous so he accepts to cure the prince, thus starting on a new course of action with a new goal, *“and putting myself in the hands of God, and plucking up courage since there was no alternative to it or I would be put to death, I readied everything needed for the treatment”*.

(In terms of commitment, we may assume that: First, the context is slightly negative since on one hand if Fernão does not do as he is ordered he risks his life, but on the other hand the wounds are not very serious and are within the reach of his ability (1p). Second, in personal terms, the fact that he has no choice is a boost to his need for security and he relies on his faith in God (2b). Third, a successful treatment means that he will be handsomely rewarded, thus contributing to his long-term goals in life (1b). So, we have 1p for context, 2b for values, 1b for goals for a total modifier of 2b for commitment: Fernão Mendes Pinto is *committed* to heal the prince.)

What you attempt: Handling tasks

Your character may be more or less committed to a goal. But how does he attempt to do it? In other words, what are the *tasks* he wants to achieve in order to fulfil his objectives? Of course, he may not be able to achieve his tasks as intended. We need to account to his actual *performance*.

“...I readied everything needed for the treatment and moved right away to cure the wounded hand (since it looked in a more precarious condition) where I used seven stitches ... the wound in the forehead was smaller so it only required five. I covered the wounds with an egg mix and a tissue that I carefully laced”

Defining tasks

You define the intentions of your character by describing the task or tasks he sets out to do.

In the case of Mendes Pinto, we have: 1st task *“...I readied everything needed for the treatment”*; 2nd task *“moved right away to cure the wounded hand (since it looked in a more precarious condition) where I used seven stitches”*; 3rd task *“the wound in the forehead was smaller so it only required five”*; 4th and final task *“I covered the wounds with an egg mix and a tissue that I carefully laced”*.

While framing this description you need to account for the means used and the circumstantial constraints that may affect his performance.

When considering the means you must acknowledge if there are things the character may use in the course of his performance. Of course, his first instrument is himself but in many situations he may use external instruments that can further his ability to fulfil his goals, be it tangible means (like weapons, tools, cash, goods, etc.) or intangible instruments (such as knowledge – all the more effective the more secret it is). You can select as many means as you wish provided you can employ them in a useful and meaningful way. The means can be used either to further the purposes of your character or to hinder someone else’s performance.

“...I readied everything needed for the treatment”. Mendes Pinto takes care of preparing the means he needs to cure the prince before he starts to attempt the treatment.

You also must take into account circumstantial constraints that may hinder the ability of the character to optimise his performance. Usually this is done within the context of the description of the situation as presented by the GM¹.

Any task incorporates several discreet aspects. These are handled through *Task Points* (TP). No task may have more than 6 TPs.

Qualifying tasks

Each task may be qualified in terms of its complexity, quality and timing to describe more precisely what the character wants to achieve (the exact meaning of these generic qualifiers varies with the nature of the task and will be explained latter). Each qualification has a cost in TPs. These costs are cumulative:

| LEVEL | COMPLEXITY | QUALITY | TIMING |
|-------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 0 | Simple | Poor but functional | Slow |
| 1 | Standard | Standard | Standard |
| 2 | Complex | Good | Fast |
| 3 | Highly complex | Excellent | Can’t be faster than this |

Notice that the basic qualifiers have no cost since the character is always expected to be able to perform at least one action at the lowest level of quality, complexity and timing in the course of a round.

First task: “...I readied everything needed for the treatment”. Most likely the GM just allows the player to declare what Fernão Mendes uses in the treatment without further complications, leaving these to the other tasks when our adventurer performs the treatment.

Second task: “moved right away to cure the wounded hand (since it looked in a more precarious condition) where I used seven stitches”. Remember that “his right hand thumb ... barely escaped being chopped away”. We may consider that this is a standard complexity operation. The Portuguese wants to do a good job – after all, he is taking care of a prince – but, aware of his limitations, does not aim at excellent quality. Time, on the other hand, is not a problem, he can do it leisurely. We have 1 TP for complexity + 2 TP for Quality for a total of 3 TP in this task.

Third task: “the wound in the forehead was smaller so it only required five”. This is identical to the previous task.

¹ For an example of a situation where this happens check XXX.

Last task: *“I covered the wounds with an egg mix and a tissue that I carefully laced”*. Mendes Pinto feels comfortable with a serviceable quality and this is a simple task. We have 1 TP for quality.

Once you identified and qualified the tasks that your character intends to perform in the course of the round, you need to order the TPs according to their priority from highest (1) to lowest (6). This is done according to the sequence in the description of the task but in any case complexity always comes first. Whether quality or timing comes next is left to the player.

Going back to the second task, *“moved right away to cure the wounded hand (since it looked in a more precarious condition) where I used seven stitches”*, the first TP is for complexity while the second and the third are for Quality. Timing is basic so we don't need to account for it.

Keep in mind that a player cannot use more than 6 TP in a task. If the total TPs exceeds 6, either you have to lower the qualifications or break up the task into smaller components to be performed in different actions.

Multiple tasks in complex actions

Often it is possible to perform more than one task in the course of a round. In fact, there are occasions where the character is almost forced to due to time constrains or to the pace of events.

Multiple tasks in a round or several rounds of single tasks?

It's intuitive that nobody can do whatever he wants in the course of a round. There are always limits to how much someone may attempt. It's up to the player to decide if his character will bundle several tasks into a single complex action or separate the different tasks into successive simple actions. Usually the main factors affecting that decision will be the time constrains and the potential of changes in the context that affect the situation². It's usually a wise decision to separate the preparation from the execution meaning that you can have a first round where the character prepares the means he will use in the next rounds.

Fernão Mendes is wise enough not to rush himself, so he decides to fulfil his intentions in steps, each task taking a separate round:
First round, first task: *“...I readied everything needed for the treatment”*.
Second round, second task: *“moved right away to cure the wounded hand (since it looked in a more precarious condition) where I used seven stitches”*.
Third round, third task: *“the wound in the forehead was smaller so it only required five”*.
Last round, last task: *“I covered the wounds with an egg mix and a tissue that I carefully laced”*.

Task points in complex actions

Both chained and simultaneous tasks incorporate two or more tasks into a complex action. Each of the tasks can be qualified in the terms above but the maximum of 6 TP still applies to all of them. The player has to sum the TP is all of the actions and if that value exceeds 6 he either downgrades the qualifications or sacrifices a task. Furthermore, the player has to adjust the timing in the case of chained tasks and the complexity in the case of simultaneous tasks according to the next rules.

² If there is no time for previous preparation you may have to bundle it with the main task in a single (chained) action. For an example of a situation where this happens check XX.

Chained tasks. The character has to adjust the timing of the sequence of tasks so that he spends one TP in timing in each subsequent action. That means he has to spend at least these TP in each action:

| MINIMUM # OF TP SPENT IN TIMING | NUMBER OF CHAINED TASKS | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | TWO TASKS | THREE TASKS | FOUR TASKS |
| 0 | 2 nd task | 3 rd task | 4 th task |
| 1 | 1 st task | 2 nd task | 3 rd task |
| 2 | | 1 st task | 2 nd task |
| 3 | | | 1 st task |

Suppose that Mendes Pinto wants to treat the prince in a single action by chaining the last two tasks. The two tasks are of standard complexity (each requires 1 TP for Complexity). The first task has to be of standard Timing while the second task can be performed in a slow timing. Mendes Pinto wants to perform both tasks at a good level of Quality but this requires 7 TP:

- First task – Complexity 1 TP + Quality 2 TP + Timing 1 TP = 4 TP.
- Second task – Complexity 1 TP + Quality 2 TP = 3 TP.

This means that Fernão Mendes cannot perform the two tasks at a good level of quality in a single round.

Simultaneous tasks. The character has to adjust the complexity of the overall action to take into account the multiplication of simultaneous tasks. This is achieved by increasing the complexity of the tasks according to their decreasing priority:

| MINIMUM # OF TP SPENT IN COMPLEXITY | NUMBER OF SIMULTANEOUS TASKS | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | TWO | THREE | FOUR |
| 0 | 1 st priority | 1 st priority | 1 st priority |
| 1 | 2 nd priority | 2 nd priority | 2 nd priority |
| 2 | | 3 rd priority | 3 rd priority |
| 3 | | | 4 th priority |

Notice that there are chained and simultaneous tasks that are trained to be done together. When this happens the character may not be required to spend TP according to the rules above. For instance, anybody that learned how to fight with a one-handed weapon and shield can use both simultaneously without needing to spend 1 TP for complexity in the secondary of these two actions.

Handling performance

To perform a task it is not enough to know what the character wants to do since there are many factors that may contribute or hinder his action. Therefore we need to account to those factors before settling on what really happens.

Performance modifiers

The character may or may not perform his tasks as he intends. Whether he does it or not is dependent on a wide range of personal and external factors that may interfere with his performance. To determine what he actually does you need to take into account the character's personality traits, abilities and physical status, as well as the means employed and any external constrains.

Personality traits and performance. The first aspect to consider is whether the character has any personality trait that may either leverage or hinder his performance. You see, intentions are simply ideas that cross the mind of the character. The ability to turn those ideas into fact depends to a certain extent on the personality of character. Notice that personality traits may work both ways: If they contribute to the performance, they provide a bonus; if they work against it, they impose a penalty.

We know that Fernão Mendes Pinto is joyful, friendly and modest. None of these traits contribute or interfere with his intention to heal the young prince's hand.

Abilities and performance. To do something one has to know how to do it. We have seen that abilities are broken up into common and occupational where the former are more or less known by most people at a standard (Basic Die) level while the latter are standard level only to whomever has specialized in their execution but usually may also be performed at a lower level of skill (2p) by other people. In both cases abilities are culture specific (each culture has its own set of common and occupational skills and these may not overlap among cultures) and experts can have an ability higher than standard (1b or more).

Our adventurer wants to perform a surgery, an occupational ability that he lacks but that most people can perform at 2p. Since Fernão Mendes has been subject or exposed to plenty of surgeries in his past life as a soldier, we can upgrade his ability to 1p.

Physical status and performance. A character that is not in good shape either because he is wounded, sick or tired is more likely to under-perform, suffering a corresponding penalty to his performance. On the other hand, a character that rested and prepared himself physically to the task may get a bonus for being in top condition. Apply the next modifiers (all factors are cumulative):

- Prepared for the task 1b
 - Minor sickness / minor poisoning / minor related damage* 1p
 - Major unrelated damage* / minor fatigue 1p
 - Major sickness / major poisoning / major related damage* 2p
 - Critical unrelated damage* / major fatigue 2p
 - Critical sickness / critical poisoning / critical related damage* 3p
- (* Related damage affects the body locations used in the performance; unrelated damage affects body locations that are not directly used in the performance.)

Mendes Pinto has been through a good courtly life, so he is rested and in top physical condition. On the other hand, the hours of stress that followed the accident have been tiresome. One thing cancels the other so we may consider that there are no physical modifiers to his performance.

Means and performance. If a performance requires some instrumental means, their absence or quality may affect the performance. Required means have to be there. Dispensable means may not be there but their absence may mean that success becomes more difficult. Poor quality means may penalize the performance while top quality means may make it easier.

We know that Mendes Pinto got his means prepared in the first round but what were these? Even if he does not have a surgeon's kit with specialized tools, he can certainly improvise

whatever he needs. After all the small surgery he is about to perform only requires a sharp needle and a strong thread plus good water to clear the wound. We may assume that whatever he got is adequate to his objectives, so no penalty applies.

External constrains and performance. There are external constrains that may affect the capability to perform as intended. If the ambient is particularly conducive to the performance, this may imply a bonus. If it hinders the character, it results in a penalty.

With the help of the king Fernão Mendes made sure that the environment is not distracting or prejudicial to the treatment by removing the psychological pressure exerted by the courtesans, a pressure that otherwise would penalize his performance.

Commitment and performance. Commitment plays a major role in performance. This is represented by a modifier to performance based on the level of commitment:

| Commitment | Performance mod |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Passionate | 1b |
| Committed | - |
| Ambivalent | 1p |
| Reactive | 2p |
| Inactive | Does not perform |

Mendes Pinto knows that his life is at stake if he is not able to cure the prince. He would rather avoid being involved in such a situation but he will do the needed. He is *committed* to the treatment.

Determining actual performance

Once the factors affecting performance have been identified we can proceed to a final decision on what happens in the course of the action. The starting point is to compute all the factors that affect the performance as presented in the previous paragraphs.

The Portuguese is subject to 1p for his limited ability in surgery. This results in a penalty modifier of 1p and a final dice-pool of 2P.

Once you have defined all the factors that affect performance you get a modifier to arbitrate the performance of the character in the task at hand. How you sort it out depends on the resolution method of your choice: If you opt for random determination, just pick your dice and roll. If you favour the deliberate method, check the next table:

| ACTUAL PERFORMANCE IN DELIBERATE RESOLUTION | |
|--|---------------------|
| Total modifiers* | TP performed |
| $\geq 5b$ | 6 |
| $2b - 4b$ | 5 |
| $0 - 1b$ | 4 |
| 1p | 3 |
| $2p - 4p$ | 2 |
| $\geq 5p$ | 1 |

* Notice that this is the balance of the situational modifiers. It does not include the BD.

The value you rolled or picked up from the table is the maximum TP your character was able to perform according to his intentions. All TP in the description above that value are discarded: Your character was not able to perform them.

Remember, in his second round Mendes Pinto's intentions are the next: *"moved right away to cure the wounded hand ... where I used seven stitches"*: Complexity 1; quality 2-3.

If we choose the deliberate method he cannot fulfil his objectives since he can only perform up to 2 TP. He has to downgrade the quality of the treatment to standard quality: *"...I used seven stitches but if the treatment had been done by a surgeon's hand, maybe a lot less would be needed"*.

Of course, one could roll at 2P instead of picking the performance value from the table but the risk of getting an even worst performance may be too great.

How things unfold: the outcome

If nothing interferes with the performance it happens as described. That means the outcome of the situation is the one that comes naturally from the way the character performed.

That's how we handled the first round in the treatment of the Prince.

In some cases the performance just cannot bear fruit, no matter what the character may attempt. For instance, if the action requires something to be there and it doesn't, the performance fails.

This would happen if Mendes Pinto didn't have the materials he needs to perform the surgery.

Most often than not the performance is neither automatic nor impossible, either because some unexpected event takes place, unaccounted external constraints interfere, expected factors don't materialize or the action undertaken by another party interacts with the action of your character. If this happens the characters may not be able to control either the nature or the extent of the outcome of their actions. Usually this will be critical in stressful situations, situations where the outcome implies long range effects to the characters or their environment, or where may it start major causal chains that will lead to sizable changes in the future. When this happens and we need to arbitrate the nature of the outcome, how do we go about it?

The first step in the arbitration of an uncertain outcome is to identify what are the alternatives. In fact, uncertainty means that there are several possible outcomes to the action, one of which will materialize. This means that to handle alternative outcomes the players need to: a) identify the alternatives; b) adjudicate which of the alternatives materializes.

Potential alternative outcomes

Most often than not, the difference between the alternative outcomes is a matter of degree within a continuum that starts with no change to the existing situation and ends with radical, irrevocable change. For game purposes, we may break it up into a limited set of alternative outcomes:

- **Critical** – the action achieves a radical change.
- **Major** – the action brings an important change.
- **Minor** – the action only results in a sizable change.
- **No change** (other than the passage of time) – the action changes nothing.
- **Fumble** – the outcome is worse than the previous situation.

The alternatives have to be defined according to the situation at hand. The departing point is the situation before the action. It corresponds to the “no change” outcome. Based on that the players should define the Critical outcome meaning the best desirable result of the performance. The Major and Minor outcomes can be worked out as incremental improvements to the present situation. The Fumble is just the opposite.

In the case of our adventurer we have to check what may happen as a result of his operation to the Prince’s finger. Let’s try to define the possibilities:

- Critical – the finger is completely healed to the point that there’s nothing to remind it had been hurt.
- Major – the finger is completely healed but there’s a scratch to mark the accident.
- Minor – the finger is healed but there are some permanent functional sequels that cannot be cured.
- No change – the wound is still there.
- Fumble – not only the wound is still there but it has been augmented. Maybe the finger has been severed.

Adjudicating the effective outcome among the alternatives

As always, adjudicating outcomes depends on the resolution method the players resort to: Automatic, deliberate or random. As was mentioned above, most common actions can be considered automatic since it is unnecessary in most game situations to configure alternative outcomes. This is specially true about simple tasks in non stressful situations. We may safely assume that the character is able to do what he wants and the outcome follows straightforward from the performance as intended by the character (or even if he fails at a first attempt, he will do it at the second or third time).

Whenever there’s the need to decide on one among several alternative potential outcomes, the players need to resort to either the deliberate or the random method. In both cases, a minor outcome is considered to be the most likely consequence of the action. The probability of an outcome different from minor depends on the factors in the performance that may lead to it. For this purpose, the players need to identify those factors. They may include:

- The quality of the **task performance** (poor = 1p; standard = 0; good = 1b; excellent = 2b);
- If there is a **counteraction** by an adversary, the quality of his performance (poor = 1p; standard = 2p; good = 3p; excellent = 4p);
- Characteristics of the **means** that specifically apply to the outcome (from 2p to 2b).
- **Circumstantial factors** that specifically apply to the outcome (from 2p to 2b).

Mendes Pinto is performing a *standard* surgery. There’s no counter-action to it. The means are adequate and the circumstances neutral. All in all, no modifiers apply.

The sum of the factors that influence the outcome corresponds either to the dice-pool the player has to roll if using the random determination method; or the ascribed outcome if using the deliberate method:

| OUTCOME DETERMINATION | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Type of result | Random roll | Deliberate arbitration |
| Critical | 6 | $\geq 5b$ |
| Major | 5 | $2b - 4b$ |
| Minor | 3 – 4 | $1p - 1b$ |
| No result | 2 | $4p - 2p$ |
| Fumble | 1 | $\leq 5p$ |

Sensing the risk of leaving things to a dice roll we opt for the deliberate method and settle for a minor result rather than risking a potential fumble: “...I used seven stitches but if the treatment had been done by a surgeon's hand, maybe a lot less would be needed... within twenty days he was completely cured, if it wasn't for a small loss of control in the thumb”.

Mendes Pinto was able to save the thumb of the wounded boy, yet he used more stitches than needed and couldn't avoid a minor disability.

Putting it all together

In the course of this section we went through a step-by-step analysis of action resolution in TToMP. To consolidate the concepts it's useful to see them in action in a couple of other situations. What follows is a set of examples that will allow you to get a better grasp of the rules. Notice that a broader

Action resolution in social interchanges

When the listeners said in certain passages «Taximida» one of us by the name of Vicente Morosa also said «tal seja tua vida», such be your life, and that with such a grace in the gestures and a look so grave, with no hint of cheerfulness, that no one present could hold his laughs. Only he didn't change his looks and kept feigning the outlooks of true devotion, his eyes set in the Talapicor. The latter, on noticing Vicente Morosa, was not able to keep his composure and did as the others so that when the sermon came to an end everybody was laughing with joy, both the preacher and the preached... believing that the Portuguese was displaying true devotion and belief; but if they realised that he was doing it out of mockery and contempt, he would be heavily punished.

Peregrinação, c. 127

ADVANCED RULES

< THIS WILL NEED MAJOR CHANGES TO BE PUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW VERSION OF THE STANDARD RULES ABOVE >

Complex intentions

There are situations where you want to achieve several objectives with a single performance. In this case you have more than one intention and a single course of action to do it. When this happens you may not or want not to separate the intentions into different separate performances. When this happens you treat the whole as a single unit, including for the purposes of applying qualifiers, but the cost of the unit increases with the growing number of intentions:

| # of intentions | PP per intention | Total cost in PP |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | +2 | 3 |
| 3 | +3 | 6 |
| 4 | +4 | 10 |

Example

Repetitive performance in successive rounds

In the simplest situations one action requires one performance. This is not always so, though. Sometimes the character needs to repeat the performance several times before reaching his aims while external constraints, means available and commitment remain constant. In this case the players go through performance iteration after performance iteration until either the character achieves his aims, changes these, or needs to re-evaluate the external constraints or his commitment.

Notice that in repetitive performance you only need to pay for any given mean the first time you use it. You don't need to pay in the subsequent performance iterations.

Routine behaviour

There are situations that repeat themselves so often that they generate a standard response on the part of the character: they become routine. When this happens the character is led to stereotyped behaviour. Here you should not use the random method of action determination. Instead, the whole action should be described, including the definition of aims, commitment, performance and outcome.

As long as the situation unfolds according to the expectations of the character, he responds as defined in his routine. If the situation evolves in a different direction from what was expected, the character will be surprised.

Combined actions

Combined actions are situations where there is an interaction among the behaviour of two or more parties, either through joint action, assistance, collaboration or confrontation. In the first three cases the parties are trying to reach a common end; in the last case they attempt to outdo each other in an action / counteraction dynamic.

If there is a combined action situation, all parties involved state their aims and determine their commitment according to the previous rules, under the constraints of a common context. Combined actions only require specific rules for performance description and outcome determination.

Performing combined actions

When performing combined actions each player describes independently the performance of his character, including qualifications and the assignment of commitment grades, like if they were acting in isolation. Next, these independent performance descriptions are combined into an overall description of the situation.

Joint action

What is specific of a joint action is that several parties come together to achieve a common outcome that would be impossible or harder to achieve in isolation by joining their strengths in a similar behaviour.

Assistance

In the case of assistance a party (the author) is trying to do something and gets support from other parties.

Collaboration

In the case of collaboration the parties also come together to achieve an outcome that would be impossible or harder to achieve in isolation but each party performs a part of a common project.

Confrontation

Confrontations are combined actions where one party (active party) is trying to achieve an outcome (principal action) and the other party (passive party) is trying to avoid that outcome through a counter-action.

Outcome of combined actions

The outcome of combined actions is handled just like for independent performance. The specificity is that you need to identify the contribution for the outcome from the different parties involved. In the case of alternative outcomes, you identify the alternatives just like for independent action.

Outcome of assistance

The performance of the author defines the basic arbitration of outcomes. The performance of the assistants contributes to the performance of the author as a modifier. That means that first, each assistant has to define the outcome of his performance. This outcome is incorporated into the action of the author as a modifier.

| Outcome of the assistant(s) | Modifier to the author's outcome |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Critical | 3b |
| Major | 2b |
| Minor | 1b |
| No result | – |
| Fumble | 1p |

Outcome of joint actions

In this case the players should combine the contributions of the different parties into a single outcome by taking into account what each party has is contributing, both positively and negatively. If there is a result to adjudicate, the factors pertaining for each party are combined into a single adjudication process where you take into account:

- The quality of the performance for each party involved in the action;
- The means used by each party;
- The circumstantial factors that apply to all parties plus those that apply specifically for each party.

Outcome of collaboration

In this case each party is handled as if it was acting in isolation. If their contributions are required and they fail, the overall outcome does not materialize.

Outcome of confrontations

In the case of clashing performances, the players need to account for and balance the factors implied in both performances to determinate the result. First, the passive party arbitrates the result of his counter-action. This result is incorporated into the principal action as a modifier to the result factors:

| Counter-action result | Principal action results modifier |
|------------------------------|--|
| Critical | 3p |
| Major | 2p |
| Minor | 1p |
| No result | – |
| Fumble | 1b |

Framing lively performance descriptions

TO BE CONTINUED

< THE PRESENT EXAMPLE WAS DESIGNED IN THE COURSE OF AN EXCHANGE WITH ??? ON RPGNET TO EXPLAIN BETTER THE RULES. IT WAS THE STARTING POINT FOR THE REVISION OF THE PRESENT SECTION. BECAUSE OF THAT THE LANGUAGE USED IS NOT THE SAME THAT IS USED ABOVE >

1. Going after a mango.

Remember what I said about automatic resolution? This is one of those situations where it makes no sense to handle it in any other way. Yes, Mendes Pinto may fall or he may fail to climb the tree. But why bother looking after alternatives in such an unimportant matter?

2. Hidding from the enemy.

Here it is different. This a stressful situation where what happens is critical. Let's structure it:

a) Definition of circumstances:

How hard is it to climb the tree? The GM has to define a modifier to action. This is the equivalent in TToMP to the target number in d20. The GM decides that there are big mango trees and medium sized mango trees.

Big mango trees provide better coverage (+2b) but are harder (+2p) and take longer to climb.

Medium mango trees provide less coverage (+1b) but easier (+1p) and take less time to climb.

Now, at this stage it is for the GM to provide a description of the circumstances. The dialog could be something like:

GM - "You are running away from the enemy. You can listen to them not far away. The road goes into the fields. There are some mango trees around."

MP - "Hum, how big are the trees?" (he knows that mango trees have a good foilage)

GM - "You have some big and old ones but also some medium sized."

b) Definition of aim.

Now it's for the player to decide on what his character wants to do:

MP - "I'll try to get up a tree and hide there."

c) Definition of commitment.

Now, does MP really want to achieve his aim? Or will he look after another alternative? In other words, how committed is he to it?

To decide on this we need to look at MP in more detail:

His personality is marked by joyfulness, friendliness and modesty. None of this contributes for the action.

He values security so he will do whatever he needs to escape the enemy. +1b for commitment.

We don't know what happened before, but we may admit that it had an impact on his attitudes and award a further +1b to his action.

At this moment MP has two alternatives to define his commitment:

i. He may go randomless. If he does, he picks the commitment that corresponds to 2b (1b from values +1b from imediate past) which is "committed". So, MP is committed to climb the tree and hide there.

ii. He may go random. In this case he rolls $BD+2b=3d10$ and pick the highest result. MP rolls and gets a 3, a 6 and a 8. The highest value rolled is 8 that also corresponds to committed.

d) Performance.

It's time for MP to describe what intends to do:

MP - "I'll climb up a medium sized mango tree as fast as I can and hide in the foilage."

GM - "How do you do it? The first branches are at 2,5 meters from the ground. The best branches to hide are a further meter above those."

MP - "I'm not loaded so I'll just run to the tree, and jump to the branch, putting a foot to the trunk for leverage."

Now it's time to assign performance points to the action up to the limit of 10:

i. We start with commintment. Since MP is only "committed", he spends 1PP up front.

ii. Next we have the first sub-action: 'climb up a medium sized mango tree by jumping to the branche,

putting a foot to the trunk for leverage, and as fast as MP can'.

The first sub-action does not have costs for multiple sub-actions.

MP - "What does quality means in this context?"

GM - "It means whether you do it in a clean and neat way or not. If not you will do a lot of noise, leave marks on the tree, bruise yourself and possibly tear your cloths."

MP - "I see. In terms of quality, it's serviceable, so it costs 1PP."

GM - "Ok. In terms of complexity, the way you want to do it is complex. That's 3PP. And you want to do it as fast as you can, so it takes +3PP. If you decide to go to the tree and climb from a static departing point, it will be less complex but will require added time."

GM - "So far we have:

- 1PP for Commitment; it's PP #1.

- Climbing the tree costs PP by the next order:

MP describes / GM suggests

quality inter. #2PP #2PP

complexity inter. #3PP #3PP

complexity adv. #4-5PP

timing extra #4PP

timing inter. #6PP #5PP

timing adv. #7-8PP #6-7PP"

MP - "I think I'll give up the idea of running up the tree and follow your advice."

iii. Finally we have the second sub-action, to "hide in the foliage". The second sub-action costs 1PP for being a second sub-action.

GM - "Basic performance means that you stay at the lower branches, trying to hide behind the trunk. Increased quality allows you to climb to the upper branches, while increased complexity allows you to look to the places with more foliage, shadows, etc."

MP - "In that case I go for intermediate complexity and intermediate quality by this order."

GM - "In terms of PP you need:

- 1PP (#8PP) for the extra sub-action,

- 1PP (#9PP) for complexity,

- 1PP (#10PP) for quality.

That's it, you have no more PP to assign. But do you really do it? Let's see."

After distributing PP according to the intended performance the player needs to see if the character actually achieves what he intends to do. For this purpose he needs to do a Performance roll (or do it randomless if he so decides).

The only factor that affects MP's performance is the difficulty of climbing and hiding in a mango tree = +1p.

He does not have any skill that could help him in his action neither is he using any equipment of other means that can facilitate the performance; he is not hindered by heavy gear nor by a poor physical condition.

Based on that we can see that MP either rolls for performance at BD+1p or goes randomless and is only able to do what he wants up to PP #4. He decides to take his chances and rolls getting a 5 and a 8. He keeps the worst value rolled, a 5, still better than if he had opted for randomless. From the described performance, MP only retains the components that correspond to the PP #1 to #5: He climbs the tree to the lowest branches. This is serviceable in terms of quality, standard in terms of complexity and normal in terms of timing.

On what concerns his second action, to hide from the enemy while on the tree, he does it but at a basic level of performance.

GM - "MP goes to a tree and climbs it up to the lower branches. It takes a little longer than what he wanted and is not as quiet as he would desire. His hands are bruised and now there's a little hole in the left knee of his pants. He can see the lost tissue stuck in the trunk, one meter below. In any case, it has been a close call since the enemy has just arrived. Had it taken a little longer and they would have seen you climbing the tree. You hear someone saying <<He is somewhere around, I heard him trying to get cover somewhere>>. Someone replies <<Let's search and we will find him>>."

e) Outcome.

In this context outcome measures how well MP is able to cover his presence. We know that he was not

able to make it up to the highest branches.

GM - "As I said, a medium mango tree offers some level of coverage (+1b) but you are at the lowest branches so you get +1p and your performance in hiding is poor (+1p). Your basis to define the outcome is BD+1p."

MP - "If I go randomless it means I only get minor coverage, right?"

GM - "Yes. Minor hiding means the enemy will have +1p to his search, medium is +2p and critical is +3p. Of course, if you roll and fumble the enemy will have +1b instead."

MP - "I'll roll... a 3 and 10, gosh."

GM - "You are basically standing in the tree. Your only hope is that the enemy will not look in your direction."