Fading Suns Storyteller Rules Primer

Game Time

- Smallest (simulational) unit is the **TURN**:
    - 3 seconds, allows **one PC action** without penalty
    - Up to **three multiple actions** are possible per turn:
        - The same **action cannot be repeated** in one turn (exception: firearms can be used rate-of-fire times)
        - The first action **loses dice** equal to the total **number of actions**
        - All further actions lose **one additional die** per action
        - For timing of multiple actions see Initiative below

- **INITIATIVE** is the order of actions in a turn:
    - Step 1 – Determine Initiative:
        - Participants roll Wits+Observe (6)
        - Number of successes is Initiative
        - Ties broken by higher sum Wits+Observe, then higher Wits, then random roll-off with d10
        - No successes is Initiative 0, botch lets character not act this turn
    - Step 2 – Declarations of Intent:
        - Participants declare intentions for the turn in reverse order of Initiative (from lowest to highest)
        - Actions may be declared as delayed to any moment after Initiative or even contingent on other actions
        - Changing actions after declaration necessitates expenditure of 1 Wyrd point and causes +1 to difficulty of new action(s)
    - Step 3 – Execute Actions:
        - Apply Initiative Bonuses for declared manoeuvres or weapons used
        - Participant with highest modified Initiative acts first, others following in order of Initiative (from highest to lowest)
    - Step 4 – Multiple Actions:

- First action at full Initiative, second action at Initiative-2, third action at Initiative -4
- Highest originally rolled Initiative wins resulting ties in Initiative of second and third actions (followed by usual tie-breaks if needed)
  - o Repeat Steps 1 to 4 until conflict/action sequence is resolved

- Bigger (narrative) units are:
  - o **SPAN**: One scene, unity of time/space/action
  - o **ACT**: A major plot point is resolved, which equals mostly one session; experience is gained at the end of an Act
  - o **DRAMA**: One story arc; extra experience is possible through the Leitmotif
  - o **EPIC**: A series of stories, a meta-plot

Traits

- **CHARACTERISTICS** range from 1 to 10, **SKILLS** range from 0 to 10

- A **GOAL ROLL** is used to decide success:
  - o <u>Goal Roll total</u>: Total Characteristic and Skill (if used), apply Goal Roll modifiers to sum
  - o <u>Dice Pool</u>: Divide Goal Roll total by 2 (always round down), take as many d10 as dice pool and roll them
  - o <u>Difficulty</u>: Standard difficulty is (6) but can be adjusted by Goal Bonuses or Penalties (RAW values must be divided by 2 and inverted in value)
  - o <u>No skill</u>: If a character lacks a required skill, the difficulty of the Goal Roll is raised by +1 (Not if no skill is required for the roll!)
  - o <u>Successes</u>: Every die >/= difficulty is one <u>success</u>
  - o <u>Exploding dice</u> (aka "Ten Again"): Every rolled 10 is counted and can be rolled again; if it comes up 10 again, keep rolling

- **EXCESSIVE TARGET NUMBERS:**
    - Target </= 1: <u>Automatic success</u>, number of successes equals pool
    - Target >10: <u>Additional successes required</u>, one per difficulty beyond 10

- **CRITICAL RESULTS:**
    - <u>Critical failure</u> (aka "botch"): No success and at least one rolled 1
    - <u>Critical success</u> (aka "crit"): At least six successes and at least one rolled 10

- **CONTESTED ROLL:**
    - All contestants make their respective Goal Roll
    - The highest number of successes minus second highest is the number of successes for the winner

- **SUSTAINED ACTIONS:**
    - Make a series of Goal Rolls to accumulate a required number of successes (determined by the GM according to RAW screen)
    - Every roll takes a given amount of time depending on the task (determined by the GM), which can be a critical factor under pressure
    - Failed roll: no successes added with this roll
    - Botched roll: sustained action fails completely

- **COMPLEMENTARY ROLL:**
    - Supporters makes their respective Goal Rolls (GM permission required)
    - Every success raises the supported character's Goal Roll total by 1 (before dividing by 2 and rounding down)
    - Supporter and supported can also be one and the same character
    - If supported by multiple rolls, only the best single result counts

- **TRYING AGAIN:**
    - Raise the difficulty for each subsequent try by +1
    - An adequate cool-off phase is required to reset this additional difficulty

- **ACCENTED ROLLS:**
  - Spend one point of <u>Wyrd</u>, then decide:
    - Be <u>cautious</u>, and per two dice dropped from your pool the difficulty drops by -1
    - Be a <u>daredevil</u>, and per two dice added to your pool the difficulty is raised by +1
  - The <u>maximum number of dice</u> dropped or added equals the Skill rating used
- **SPIRIT CHARACTERISTICS:**
  - Inciting **PASSION:**
    - Define the <u>focus</u> for Passion to be triggered (must be epic!)
    - Spend one point of <u>Wyrd</u>
    - <u>Roll Passion</u> modified by the Passion chart (103, screen)
    - Each success is <u>one additional die</u> for impassioned Goal or damage rolls
    - The effect lasts for a <u>maximum of one Span</u>; once it wears off, all (!) actions are at +2 difficulty for just as long due to <u>exhaustion</u>
    - <u>Critical success (crit)</u> on the Passion roll makes the character <u>obsessed</u> with their goal: Nothing else matters and they cannot let go until the situation is resolved
    - <u>Critical failure (botch)</u> on the Passion roll makes the character <u>lethargic</u>: It is impossible to incite their Passion for the rest of the span (or the full next one if it happens at the end of a span)

  - Remaining **CALM:**
    - When character's emotions threaten to go out of control, roll Calm + appropriate skill
    - Modify the roll positively by the Passion chart (103, screen)
    - If successful, the player remains in control; if not, the GM takes over

- o **STEADY HAND:**
  - Define a focus: It must be a task immediately at hand, no long term goals are possible
  - Spend at least 3 turns to focus before you roll
  - Spend one point of Wyrd
  - Roll Calm and modify positively by the Passion chart (103, screen)
  - Each success is one additional die on all Goal Rolls for the immediate task set
  - Effect lasts only for a short time (maximum one span); if anything else but the focus task is done, it ends immediately
  - Critical success (crit) on the Calm roll makes a character totally absorbed by their task: They notice nothing else around them and are exclusively focused on the task
  - Critical failure (botch) on the Calm roll makes the character totally nervous and/or afraid: It is impossible to use Steady Hand again for the rest of the span (or the full next one if it happens at the end of a span)

Karma

- **GOOD KARMA:**
  - o Whenever players do something epic worthy of Passion Play, one die (d10) of Good Karma is added to the Karma pool
  - o Good Karma can be used to save characters from catastrophe (or a botch):
    - One of the players who is not directly affected by the misfortune can take one or more Good Karma dice from the pool and
      - expend them to take over as GM for a moment and describe why things are not quite as bad as they seemed and therefore only failure, not a botch.
      OR

- roll them and challenge Fate: If the roll beats difficulty (8), the botch/catastrophe is turned into a success (!) by the Hand of Fate. If it fails (no success) it is softened into a normal failure, but if it botches the Good Karma dice are wasted and the catastrophe remains the same.

  - It must be logically possible to safe a situation to be able to use Good Karma

- **BAD KARMA:**
  - Whenever players <u>disturb or destroy Passion Play atmosphere</u>, one die (d10) of Bad Karma is added to the Karma pool
  - Bad Karma can be used to <u>plunge characters into catastrophe</u>:
    - Whenever a player succeeds, even critically, the GM can take one or more Bad Karma dice from the pool and
      - <u>expend them</u> to override any previous narration or rolls and make the players concerned fail automatically.
        OR
      - <u>roll them</u> and if the roll beats difficulty (8), the success is turned into a botch (!) by the Hand of Fate. If it fails (no success) it becomes normal failure, but if it botches the Bad Karma dice are wasted and the success remains the same.

Leitmotif

- **Defining the Leitmotif:** At the beginning of each Act (session), the GM draws one High Arcanum openly and it defines the Leitmotif of the current Act
- **Incarnating the Leitmotif:** If players <u>through their play (!) successfully incarnate the concept</u> of the Arcanum in this Act, they can claim <u>one extra XP</u> per adequate scene at the end of the session