

The Cloud Fortress

A demo kit for the roleplaying game *Libreté*, by Vivien Féasson

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A kiss to L'Homme Pumax for « Sally the Bruiser ».

Libreté is a roleplaying game
that owes much to Vincent and Meguey Baker's *Apocalypse World*.

Vivien Féasson

« Follow the yellow brick road
Follow the yellow brick road
Follow follow follow follow follow the yellow brick road. »
Victor Fleming, The Wizard of Oz

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A demo kit for the roleplaying game *Libreté*

Notes

What you're holding in your hands is a demo kit for the roleplaying game *Libreté*, designed to let you test what the game has to offer within a short time (1 to 2 hours) and in a simplified setting. To this end, the adventure the characters will go through has been (more or less) planned and the rules simplified, and the adventure ends at the very moment the final game truly begins: in the fortress of *Libreté* itself.

If you're reading this kit to propose your friends to play, you will have to take on the role of the *Advercity* for the duration of the game. If you

already know roleplaying games, you will know this role as the "Dungeon Master", "Game Master" or "MC" – the player who describes the fictional framework in which player-characters evolve, reacts to their actions, interprets the rules, and gives life and voice to the other beings of the game universe. This is your role, and here you are called the *Advercity*. From now on, I will speak directly to you.

You will need: this booklet, printouts of the character playbooks, at least two six-sided dice, twenty tokens (called "Black Bile Tokens", or "Black Bile" for short), and 2-5 friends.

Preparing the game

■ Start by reading the following paragraph to your players:

"Close your eyes and dream, dream about the child you once were. They are still here, somewhere, resurfacing every time the world crushes you, when you are completely helpless and the only thing you want to do is to curl up in someone else's arms. Reach out to this memory, tear off your adult disguise, and find the door that leads beyond this world, to Limbo and to the Wetlands, where children that go astray inevitably end to wander. Explore the great City, this pale copy of our world that you used to pace before forgetting, this vast hunting ground where, under a torrential rain, the sirains exert a hunger nothing will ever satisfy."

■ Introduce both "sides":

Some of your friends will play children who have recently gone astray; exhausted, they are currently being hunted by hungry sirains. The others will play members of the "Smokies" gang, hardened scouts sent in search of lost kids and food by the Fortress of *Libreté*, the only haven of the Wetlands.

■ Introduce the playable characters:

Max and Orisha for the lost children; Jack, Sally, and Robin for the Smokies (see "The Children" below). If you have fewer than 5 players at your table, try to spread them as evenly as possible between the two groups.

■ Give each player the sheet corresponding to their character.

If you wish, you can separate players at the table according to the group they belong to.

■ Give each player 2 Black Bile tokens.

■ Explain the most basic rules

(See "Simplified Rules" below).

■ Read these two paragraphs:

(To the lost children) They say some of the children that wander in the City will find their way home. You have not. The sirains have spotted you; they have tracked you, caught Michel and nearly got the rest of your group. Up to now, you have been running as fast as you could, but you have begun to experience the first signs of exhaustion.

(To the scouts) You are the Smokies, hardened kids the council of Libreté regularly sends out in search of food or survivors. You were making your way up the high street when you heard them scream, and then you saw them: three lost children, running in your direction, a swarm of hungry sirains on their heels. You've only got a few seconds to prepare...

■ **Sketch a map of the street; describe the situation, the positions of the protagonists and the monsters, and the important elements of the surroundings.**

■ **Ask the players “What do you do?”**

■ **Play**

The Children

Note: Playable children have their archetype indicated in parentheses and get their own character sheet at the end of this booklet; others are labelled “NPC” (for non-player character) and will be played by you, the Advercity.

The Smokies, scouts from Libreté

Jack (the Leader) Jack is the leader of the Smokies, the kind of kid who doesn't speak without a good reason. The others trust him, and he knows that to guide them he will sometimes have to resort to violence.

Sally the Bruiser (the Brute) Sally enjoys her relationship with Jack; compared to him, she almost feels like she's the talkative one, even though she often prefers to react to social interactions through violence.

Robin (the Weirdo) Robin has finally found a family in the Smokies. The other children do not really like seeing him talking to trees, stones, or invisible beings.

Oilive (NPC) Oilive often wonders why Jack took him into his gang. Sally, for example, can't hide her contempt for this boy who can't have a smoke without coughing up.

Rufus (NPC)) Rufus is the joker of the gang. His straw-blond hair and his slightly taller size make him look like a scarecrow.

Messi (NPC) Enthusiastic, a good climber, Messi is the kind of kid that stays positive in most circumstances.

The lost children

Max (the Loner) A leader by accident, he is the tallest and the most strong-willed kid of the group. Having spent most of his childhood on his own has also made him a true survivor, but not someone at ease with responsibilities.

Orisha (the Lil'One) Orisha is the smallest of all. She casts huge astonished looks on the world and needs to be taken care of. Without someone to show her the dangers of the Wetlands, she will not last more than a couple of days; for her this someone is, without any doubt, Max.

Piotr (NPC) Piotr is all complaining, always pessimistic, and his nasal voice does nothing for his image. If necessary, he will not hesitate to sacrifice someone else to survive.

Simplified Rules

■ **Roles** As in most classic RPGs, the participants in the game are divided between the Game Master (that is you, the Advercity) and the players, each of whom plays a Player Character (PC). The players' goal is to play the role of their avatar as best as they can; yours is to help them and make them feel what it is to be a child in the Wetlands, even if it means roughing them up a little.

■ **Black Bile** Each time a player feels that their character has been stressed, humiliated, or horrified by something that has happened, they can take between 1 and 3 Black Bile tokens (their choice). These tokens represent the character's anxiety or stress. For best play, it is crucial for a player to care more about the “truth” of their character than about optimization or calculated moves: this is not a contest, but a story in process.

■ **Childities** “Childities” are uncertain, risky actions that Player Characters (and only them) try to perform within the story, and which require a dice roll to be resolved. There is a limited number of childities which you will find gathered at the end of this booklet.

All childities work on the same basis: **the player whose PC is concerned invests between 0 and 3 Black Bile tokens; they then roll two six-sided dice and add up the dice and the tokens.** The Black Bile that has been put on the test represents the rage and the stress invested in the action by the character – putting 3 tokens into one single action means they’re risking it all and to hell with the consequences.

If the result is in between 0 and 7 the character misses, and you can hit them as hard as you want. They also keep the Bile they bet.

If it is between 8 and 10 they succeed and get exactly what they wanted.

If they get 11 or more they succeed but go too far; you can choose an option from the list provided within the description of the childity.

■ **Exploding** When a PC has **5 Black Bile tokens**, while being in a stressful situation, you can ask their player for an **EXPLODING** test. This test always uses the maximum bet – 3 Black Bile tokens. See the “Ordinary Childities” section at the end for more details.

■ **Special childities** PCs can have unique childities of their own. For example, no one but Jack can **GIVE ORDERS**. Certain circumstances and sirains (see “The Flesh Locusts” below) may also come with specific childities.

■ **Injuries** A PC can suffer from **up to 4 wounds**. A punch usually inflicts 1 wound, a bat or a knife 2 wounds, a gun or a sword 3. A child who ticks their 4th box is dying or dead. NPCs can usually take up to 2 or 3 wounds before dying, but you can always make them stronger if you want to.

■ **Other characters** NPCs (even sirains) never do tests; the PCs are the ones who do, even when they are only reacting to others’ actions. If a PC refuses to react, you are free to do whatever you want with them (capture them, humiliate them, wound them, spare them...). If two NPCs are clashing without any PC trying to intervene, you can decide the outcome.

■ **“You can hit them as hard as you want”** If a player misses a test, refuses to react, or takes ill-considered risks, you can inflict one or two wound checks on them, separate them from the rest of the group, make them lose an important object, humiliate them, kill an NPC they know, etc.

The Adventure

First Encounter

It all starts with an action scene: as the scouts of Libreté enter the scene, what remains of the small group of lost children is attacked by a voracious pack of sirains (see “The Flesh Locusts” below). The potential victims are only a few seconds ahead of the flying monsters, so continuing to run on open ground is not going to get them out of this.

■ **Pick a player and ask them what they want to do** (start with Jack or Max). Depending on their intentions, bounce back on their proposition, answer their questions, ask them to use childities related to their declaration, impose on them the consequences of their actions or ask others how they react. Make your non-player characters talk and act.

■ **Avoid killing a player character but do what you want with the others.** Be careful, not killing them does not mean leaving them intact. I encourage you to make them pay dearly for their misses – a bloody, serious injury, even an arm or a leg getting torn off, will ensure that the scene will leave a mark on everyone’s mind. Sirains are deadly monsters.

■ **If Jack begins to organize his “people”,** ask him for a **GIVE ORDERS** test. Failure may mean that a gang member is attacked by surprise by a part of the swarm and caught in a pincer; an excessive success might signal that Jack gets too much ahead and is hurt, or that he has sacrificed someone to save the others.

■ **Ask the lost children for a RUNNING AWAY test** to allow them to get to the Smokies. A miss means being overtaken by a part of the swarm, ending up cut from the others; an excessive success means taking advantage of another’s failure, hurting oneself, or ending up trapped in a building.

■ **A PC attacked by a part of the swarm** will have to pass a **CONTINUE AT ALL COSTS** test (see “The Flesh Locusts” for a description of this special childity). On a failure, they will suffer one wound check and someone will probably have to come and save them.

■ **If PCs try to lock themselves in a nearby building,** they will have to quickly make every exit airtight (a **PLAY WITH MATCHES** test or just good ideas on how to do that) or kill the monsters that have entered (**ASSAULT SOMEONE**).

■ **It is possible to repel the swarm**, for example by first dismantling a fire hydrant to spray the locusts with water or by inserting a Molotov cocktail into the tank of a car (ASSAULT SOMEONE) or by trying to create some kind of a “counter-fire” (PLAY WITH MATCHES).

Do not ask for dozens of tests. *Libreté* is not an action game and multiplying tests will only cause the scene to get stuck in the mud. Two to five tests should be more than enough.

The Flesh Locusts

These sirains attack as a group and are similar to a swarm of locusts, fairly close to those of the “real world” except for the redness and hardness of their shells. The moment they appear in the sky is usually preceded by a clicking noise getting louder as they approach.

Their strategy is to attach themselves onto a living being and then to start eating its flesh. When fifty or so of these creatures manage to settle on a prey they begin to feast on their skin, the salty taste of which they like more than anything else. It usually takes them only a few minutes to leave a red, bloody corpse behind.

The locusts are rather stupid, incapable of the tiniest strategy or the simplest imitation; their greatest talent is to move as if under the influence of a single predatory will.

■ **Too many:** you cannot destroy a whole swarm of locusts unless you have a flamethrower or a similar weapon.

■ **Continue at All Costs (special childity):** when a Player Character is surrounded by locusts but refuses to give up, he or she must test.

■ **If the result is 7 or less** the character cannot escape. Hit them as hard as you want (you can inflict 1 wound check to them or separate them from the rest of the group, for example).

■ **Between 8 and 10** the character manages to act despite the onslaught of the monsters. This will not prevent them from being devoured if they do not quickly find a way to escape.

■ **11 or more** the character can act but for a price. Advercity, you choose one option from the list below:

■ **They hurt themselves** or get injured by the monsters.

■ **They escape the locusts** by falling into an unknown place.

■ **They distract the locusts** by delivering them another prey.

■ **In their blind fury, they hurt another child** or destroy something important.

A Well-Deserved Rest

Once the locusts have been repelled or destroyed, the children can enjoy a well-deserved rest in an empty building or in some hideout the Smokies use.

■ **Turn this scene into an opportunity to discuss:** the characters have nothing to do but rest and have at last some time to introduce themselves.

■ **Ask the players about their characters**, their mental state after this assault, what they think about the extreme behaviour of one of their new comrades, etc. Ask them what they are doing, how they are using this break between two massacres, how they are dealing with the death of their friend...

This scene is crucial since it is an opportunity to talk about the fortress of *Libreté*, to build new bonds but also to cause small conflicts and “earn” a bit of Black Bile. Or maybe to Confide and lose some tokens?

■ **Use non-player characters** to ask provocative questions or reopen fresh wounds. “Where are you from? How was the world when you left? And your parents? I do not remember mine... It’s been so long since I’ve left them. You should forget them, you’ll never find your way home,” etc.

■ **Remind them they can take Black Bile** every time a voice gets raised or a troublesome memory resurfaces but remember: they decide when and if.

■ **If one player asks you a question**, do not hesitate to turn it back on them. If Jack’s player asks, “Is this the first time we have lost a kid like that?”, answer, “You tell me, have you ever experienced a tragedy like this? More than once? How do you deal with it, what do you do to exorcise the pain? And you, Sally? And you, Robin? What’s different this time?”

Then turn to Max and Orisha’s players and ask them for their opinion. If they do not seem to react, use the other characters to tease them a little, make Piotr explode with rage right in front of them.

■ **Think about details** and ask the players to participate as well. “How do you start a fire? What do your rations look like? How are you sleeping? What are you doing to care for your wounds? What compulsions do you have that surface when you are nervous?”

The Wreck Park

The troop will then likely resume their journey to Libreté; if they want to spend time looking for equipment (gas, food, weapons, etc.), you can skip the search and give them two or three things but nothing out of the ordinary.

After two hours of a sustained walk they make one last stop just before arriving in sight of Libreté: in front of them, a huge shopping mall lost in the middle of a sea of concrete and metal. The car park encircling the fortress gives a clear view of the large building, but what is hidden under the abandoned vehicles remains invisible. The scouts know that this is the most dangerous part of the trip, the place hiding a “necessary evil” of the worst type.

Advercity, you will have to describe the crossing with the most agonizing possible details and encourage the taking of Black Bile tokens. Start with the cars, scattered at first, becoming tighter and tighter as they progress; the scouts who look under the carcasses only to see shadows, yet still hearing creaking, slipping noises; a tire that bursts for some unknown reason; this little childish hand, emaciated, still clinging to the window of a vehicle in a vain attempt to flee; this exposed area, so large, between the two platforms...

■ **If a child gets their fifth token**, ask them for an EXPLODING test in order to avoid running suddenly toward Libreté. A child running or making noise inevitably attracts the Riders (creatures that are barely visible and whose front and rear legs have merged with what looks like organic wheels); they can hear the sirains slipping behind them with a soft, disgusting sound, and a failure on a RUN AWAY test is likely to mean a brutal end (yes, even if it is a PC; this is, after all, at the end of the demo).

■ **You cannot really fight the Riders.** They disappear to attack elsewhere, and a parking lot is the ideal hunting ground for them. The only solution is not to attract their attention, to avoid falling on the ground, or to run as fast as possible.

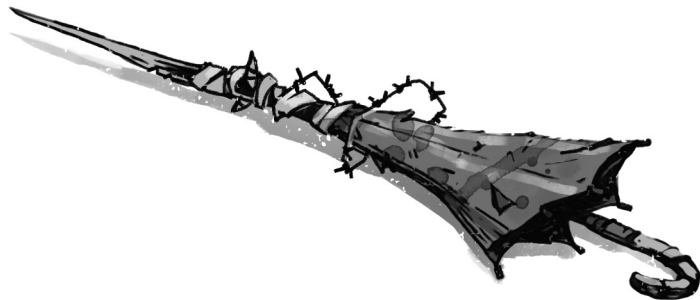
The Glass Doors

■ **Closed!** Those who manage to avoid being noticed or to flee arrive at the glass doors of Libreté. They can hear behind them the sirains slipping ever closer. Children stand guard on the other side of the doors. Everything is closed, and the guards refuse to let them in: the monsters are on their heels, opening the doors would only bring doom to the fortress!

They will have to use persuasion or to physically knock down the doors to get in. Otherwise, chances are that they will die, carried away by the sirains.

As soon as the characters have entered Libreté (or been killed trying), the game stops.

Those who want to continue can do it with the full game or use this demo kit to create their own fortress!



Assault Someone

When I physically attack someone who is willing to put up a fight, I make a test:

On 8-10 I choose one option from the list below:

- I hurt them.
- I put them out of action.
- I repel them.
- I seize something important from them.

On 11+ I choose one option from above and the Advercity chooses one from below:

- I break or lose something important.
- I seriously humiliate them.
- I seriously injure them.
- I hurt someone, an innocent or a friend.
- I do not get out of this unharmed.

Run Away

When I try to run away from a conflict or an unsettling situation, I make a test:

On 8-10 I escape without any serious harm.

On 11+ I succeed but go too far – the Advercity chooses one option from the list below:

- I do not get out of this unharmed.
- One of my friends takes the blow for me.
- Some people will resent me for running away.
- I break or lose something important.
- I am cut off from the rest of the group.

Play with Matches

When I want to try something physically dangerous, I make a test:

On 8-10 I succeed without getting seriously hurt.

On 11+ I succeed but go too far – the Advercity chooses one option from the list below:

- I do not get out of this unharmed.
- Some people will resent me for having done this.
- I break or lose something important.
- I leave a trace or a trail that could easily be followed.
- I am cut off from the rest of the group.

Watch Out

When I really think I'm not in a safe place, I make a test:

On 8-10 the Advercity must tell me where danger really is.

On 11+ I succeed but go too far – the Advercity chooses one option from the list below:

- If there was no danger, I have just made one.
- I find danger, but it also finds me.
- I hurt my allies.
- I sacrifice precious material.
- Aware of the danger in front of me, I become blind to the one behind.

Convince Someone

When I want to persuade someone who has at least one small reason to follow or believe me, I make a test:

On 8-10 they do what I want them to do.

On 11+ I succeed but go too far — the Advercity chooses one option from the list below:

I offend them, deeply.

I pay too high a price.

I hurt them.

I do not leave the situation unharmed.

I attract unwanted attention.

Confide

When I need to be loved, to vent, or just want to spend a nice moment with someone, I can entrust them with something important and make a test:

On 8-10 I temporarily get rid of all those dark thoughts and nasty secrets I had by sharing them. Plus, I choose one option from the following list:

If they are another player character, they can discard 0-3 Black Bile.

If they are a non-player character, they will leave the conversation in a state of relief.

They entrust me with one of their secrets.

They will do something to help me (their choice).

They will give me some food or a small gift.

I'm able to smoothly deliver a difficult message or a threat to them.

On 11+ I succeed but go too far – the Advercity chooses one option from the list below:

I say things that might put me into trouble.

I trouble them or shock them.

I give them the impression that I'm using them.

They will deeply regret what they entrust me with

Someone else overhears our conversation.

Explode (when I have 5+ Black Bile)

Special childity: the Advercity suggests a dangerous course of action.

I make a test with a mandatory investment of 3 Black Bile tokens:

On 7- I keep my tokens but I don't let the bile influence my actions.

On 8-10 I lose my tokens and must choose between:

Taking one Mildew check and keeping control [see the full game for more information on Mildew checks].

Following the suggested course of action.

On 11+ I lose my tokens and must choose between:

Taking three Mildew checks to keep control.

Taking one Mildew check and following the suggested course of action.

[Note: if the suggested actions imply a childity, I will have to make a new test with a new black bile investment.]

I am the Leader

I'm Jack. I'm the leader of the Smokies.

Don't know why, but kids around me seem to count on me to survive. It's not like I ask them to or try to make this happen! But they look at me like I'm some kind of genius or something.

Then there are those who look at me with dark eyes, like these Triumphirats guys in the fortress. I can see they don't wanna share their pretty throne in the sky. The only way I've found to get some peace is to take care of patrols in the Wetlands. At least I'm with my gang there, and no one dares bother me with their chickenshit. And then when we come back home, we're like the kings of old.

I often get Black Bile when

■ I've got too much responsibility for a child.

■ Someone threatens my position or my gang.

■ My gang rejects me or disappoints me.

Who am I?

■ **How they call me:** Jack.

■ **How they see me:** street urchin, athletic, steel-grey eyes, wise, tough kid.

■ **What's mine:** 3 packs of cigarettes, a Zippo lighter, a pocket knife.

What can I do?

■ **GIVE ORDERS:** When I want a group of children to follow my orders (its members must have a reason, even minimal, to do so), I make a test:

On 8-10 the group obeys me for the moment (that of course does not guarantee victory).

On 11+ as above but the Advercity chooses an option from the list below:

I'll have to lead by example.

I must hide the truth, even though they will find it out soon enough.

I must pay a high price or make them pay for it.

They are so motivated they go too far.

■ **TRIUMPH:** I can discard 1-3 Black Bile when I lead other children to victory. PCs who have followed me can do the same.

■ **GANG:** I have an entire a gang with me. We support each other. We are the Smokies.

My so-called friends

■ **Sally the Bruiser, my faithful right arm:** she knows me better than anyone. I can count on her to watch my back, and we sometimes understand each other without even having to talk. You just need to know how to calm her down.

■ **Robin, a strange kid:** I like this dude, although I don't really know why. I should be scared of him, I know, but he's not bad, he's just lost. What he needs is a leader.

■ **The rest of the gang:** Rufus, Messi, and Olive. These are my boys, my friends, my family. Sometimes you have to give them a good telling-off, but on the whole they're OK.

Injuries

- ☐ I need a few hours to catch my breath.
- ☐ I need Mercurochrome and a good night's rest.
- ☐ I need pills and doctors and stuff!
- ☐ I'll never see my parents again...

Ordinary Childities

■ When I want to hurt them or take something by force I have to ASSAULT SOMEONE.

■ When I want to avoid trouble by running from it, I have to RUN AWAY.

■ When I want to climb trees, jump over a hole, or do something dangerous, I have to PLAY WITH MATCHES.

■ When I try to persuade them to believe me or do something for me, I have to CONVINCE SOMEONE.

■ When I try to comfort myself or worm things out of them, I must CONFIDE.

■ When I think there is danger somewhere, I have to WATCH OUT.

■ If I have 5 Black Bile tokens and the Advercity offers me a risky or embarrassing action, I must take a test to not EXPLODE.

Black Bile

I take 1-3 Black Bile tokens when I am in pain, alone, scared, etc.

Each token invested in a childity = +1 for the test (max +3).

Beware: 5 tokens = I have a chance to EXPLODE.

I am the Brute

They call me Sally, Sally the Bruiser. They can, and you should. I've done loads of things before I got to Libreté, bloody bad things. But I've never looked down, and I will not start with you.

I've been part of the Smokies for months. Jack, he regularly provides me with ciggies, and then he gives me things to do. I let him do politics, I prefer adventures, danger, and banging on these fucking sirains until blood spurts on my shoes.

I often get Black Bile when

- I am not strong enough.
- I am humiliated or mocked.
- I feel alone and misunderstood, a monster.

Who am I?

■ **How they call me:** Sally the Bruiser.

■ **How they see me:** barely twelve, tomboy, always sucking on a cigarette, burn marks, aggressive, spitfire.

■ **What's mine:** a torn-up white dress, military-type heavy shoes, a knife, a collection of empty packs of cigarettes, a Molotov cocktail (can inflict 2-3 wounds over a small area).

What can I do?

■ INTIMIDATE SOMEONE: when I want to force someone to do something by using my reputation or my strength, I make a test:

On 8-10 they do what I want.

sur 11+ they do what I've asked but the Advercity chooses an option from the following list:

They are humiliated and will do anything to get revenge.

I do more harm to them than I wanted.

I indirectly hurt someone dear to me.

I draw unwanted attention to myself.

■ **TYRANT:** I can discard 1-3 Black Bile tokens when I humiliate weaker people.

My so-called friends

■ **Jack, a leader I look up to:** he's the boss of the Smokies. We are of the race of the victors, he and I. Not the kind to let people walk all over us.

■ **Oilive, a chubby kid:** maybe it's a cliché, but yeah, I often tease that fat kid. Not that I don't like him, it's just that he is so floppy, and slow... it's f*ing annoying.

■ **The rest of the gang:** Rufus, Messi... they're ok. And there is Robin, who is way too weird. Better let him do what he has to do.

Injuries

- ☐ I need a few hours to catch my breath.
- ☐ I need Mercurochrome and a good night's rest.
- ☐ I need pills and doctors and stuff!
- ☐ I'll never see my parents again...

Ordinary Childities

■ When I want to hurt them or take something by force I have to ASSAULT SOMEONE.

■ When I want to avoid trouble by running from it, I have to RUN AWAY.

■ When I want to climb trees, jump over a hole, or do something dangerous, I have to PLAY WITH MATCHES.

■ When I try to persuade them to believe me or do something for me, I have to CONVINCE Someone.

■ When I try to comfort myself or worm things out of them, I must CONFIDE.

■ When I think there is danger somewhere, I have to WATCH OUT.

■ If I have 5 Black Bile tokens and the Advercity offers me a risky or embarrassing action, I must take a test to not EXPLODE.

Black Bile

I take 1-3 Black Bile tokens when I am in pain, alone, scared, etc.

Each token invested in a childity = +1 for the test (max +3).

Beware: 5 tokens = I have a chance to EXPLODE.

I am the Weirdo

The others call me Robin. I'm part of Jack's gang, the Smokies. First time I've ever been in a gang. Before that I was always alone. Other kids called me wild, since I had trouble making them understand what I meant and I preferred to spend time in the forest, speaking with trees and with other things that at least understood.

Now I can be useful. I go first, I explore, I guide. And even though sometimes they still don't get me, I have friends who take care of me, better than my mum did, in fact better than my dad did, too.

I often get Black Bile when

- I'm rejected because I'm different.
- I can't understand the world around me.
- I'm alone, without even someone to follow.

Who am I?

■ **How they call me:** Robin.

■ **How they see me:** eight years old, gender unclear, ash-covered skin, dirty, tangled hair, strange body paintings, wild, scary, an animal.

■ **What's mine:** primitive "clothes", a shard of glass, charms made of bones and feathers and dried dung.

What can I do?

■ **SEEING:** when I open myself –consciously or not– to an object, a place, a child or something else, I make a test:

On 8-10 I gain intuitive knowledge of it and receive information about it (a glimpse of its past, its secrets, its links, etc.) If it is a PC, its player must answer a question about their character (what they think, why they've done what they did, how they would react in case of a specific event, etc.)

On 11+ as above but the Advercity chooses an option from the list below:

The information I've gained may do more harm than good.

My crisis seems so intense that it shocks those around me.

I hurt myself.

I discover something atrocious but cannot do anything about it.

■ **MARGINAL:** I can discard 1-3 Black Bile when I force other children to react because of my repugnant or strange behaviour.

My so-called friends

■ **Jack, a protector who seems to feel responsible for me:** he is the leader of the Smokies. He loves me, I think, even if he doesn't always understand me.

■ **Oilive, an unhappy kid:** I like him. Sometimes, I bring him critters, but he doesn't want to eat them because the others make fun of his weight, or is it because he finds them disgusting? So it hurts me and he forces himself. He can't smoke, which is a problem for the others, well, except for me; they asked me not to smoke anymore.

■ **The rest of the gang:** Rufus, Messi ... and then Sally, but she doesn't like me. Because she's a girl? Or because she is mean to Oili? I don't know if I should be nice to her or hit her with something.

Injuries

- ☐ I need a few hours to catch my breath.
- ☐ I need Mercurochrome and a good night's rest.
- ☐ I need pills and doctors and stuff!
- ☐ I'll never see my parents again...

Ordinary Childities

■ When I want to hurt them or take something by force I have to ASSAULT SOMEONE.

■ When I want to avoid trouble by running from it, I have to RUN AWAY.

■ When I want to climb trees, jump over a hole, or do something dangerous, I have to PLAY WITH MATCHES.

■ When I try to persuade them to believe me or do something for me, I have to CONVINCE Someone.

■ When I try to comfort myself or worm things out of them, I must CONFIDE.

■ When I think there is danger somewhere, I have to WATCH OUT.

■ If I have 5 Black Bile tokens and the Advercity offers me a risky or embarrassing action, I must take a test to not EXPLODE.

Black Bile

I take 1-3 Black Bile tokens when I am in pain, alone, scared, etc.

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I am the Loner

I'm Max. I'm not going to dwell on my life: one day my fake-father tried to hit me one time too many, so I took one of his f*ing golf clubs and I struck him with it. I fled and I ended up in this horrible place.

There I met the others. I was the biggest so they decided I'd be their leader. I don't want to but it's not like I've got much choice. They will die without me; there are beasts roaming these streets and I can deal with them and take the decisions that must be taken. Michel thought he could get away doing whatever he wanted, but the locusts took him in the end.

Now, what I'd like is a minute or two to breathe, alone. But I can't. The locusts are behind, and the children around.

I often get Black Bile when

- I spend too much time completely alone.
- My lair and my routine are in danger.
- I am in an oppressive social situation.

Who am I?

■ **How they call me:** Max.

■ **How they see me:** fourteen, tall for my age, calm voice, serious, thoughtful to the point of apparent slowness.

■ **What's mine:** a locket with a picture of my dead mother, practical clothes, a swiss army knife.

What can I do?

■ **FEND FOR MYSELF:** when I want to find stuff or food (through a theft, a quick journey to the Wetlands, etc.), or when I just want to survive in a hostile environment, I make a test:

On 8-10 I find what I was looking for, and nobody will miss it.

On 11+ I find what I was looking for but the Advercity chooses an option from the list below:

My brilliant actions will make infamous.

The owner of the goods will hunt me down.

The loss will bring misfortune to someone.

The goods are protected or difficult to access.

What I find is in bad condition, maybe even dangerous.

■ **PAINFUL SOLITUDE:** I can discard 1-3 Black Bile tokens each time I have a good time with other children without them trying to get into my head.

My so-called friends

■ **Orisha, a girl I'm protecting:** I found her wandering in this place where it rains all the time. Lost, like me. She says that she is French, and yet she and I speak the same language. I never had a little sister, but I guess that's how you feel when you have one.

■ **Piotr, a pain in the neck I am responsible for:** the kind to whine without ever proposing anything. God does he annoy me but, hey, I know he wouldn't make it ten yards without me.

Can't wait to find people to take care of these two! I wasn't made to be a leader...

Injuries

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I am the Lil'one

My name is Orisha. My parents, they have come from far away to be happy in France. They haven't found happiness, but we've stayed anyway. One day I was playing in the street and a man came and wanted to take me with him so I ran away. I ran faster than a galloping horse only I got lost on the way and I ended up here.

Max has found me and now we are together; he protects me. He has protected me from the monsters, but we don't know where to find food. And then he left Michel behind with the clickers. The others, they didn't want to wait for him, they said that he would catch up. But it's the clicks that have caught up

I often get Black Bile when

- I feel abandoned.
- I'm hurt by those who should protect me.
- I feel powerless, a baby.

Who am I?

■ **How they call me:** Orisha.

■ **How they see me:** six years old, big open-wide eyes, unusual colour, dirty face, naïve, curious about everything.

■ **What is mine:** clothes too big for me, Nounours (a shabby teddy bear that lacks an ear), a funny colored shell I found on the way.

What can I do?

■ **GO UNNOTICED:** when I try not to be seen, to sneak into a place, or to escape without being noticed, I make a test.

On 8-10 I reach my goal without getting caught.

On 11+ I've managed to go where I wanted to but the Advercity chooses an option from the following list:

- **My companions are caught** because of me.
- **What I find** will bring me trouble.
- **I leave a trace** or trail behind me.
- **My actions** will indirectly harm someone.
- **I am caught** after finding what I was looking for.

■ **A CHILD'S HEART:** I can discard 1-3 Black Bile tokens each time I spend some time playing with other children.

Character Sheet

My so-called friends

■ Max, a big boy who takes care of me: he protects me and has even given me his last piece of sandwich. This is my new big brother.

■ Piotr, another big boy who's always **complaining**: he's never happy and does nothing but criticize what Max does. He even says that I am a "mouth two feed." I think he preferred Michel.

Injuries

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