TIMELORD
Adventures Through Time & Space

PBEM Rules
Players Edition

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Featuring pictures from www.who3d.com

1. How A PBEM Works

The Timelord PBEM is like reading your favourite Dr. Who adventure with the players as the novelists and the GM as the editor, working together to make that adventure come alive.

The GM's part as editor includes many tasks. He takes your actions, interprets them using the Timelord rules, uses your pregenerated rolls to see whether or not your actions succeed or fail, and then translates all of that information into a readable, novella format. Quite a formidable task, to be sure.

All of the Emails you receive from the GM will be in this novella format, describing the situation so far and the results of your character's actions. Game mechanics will be worked out 'behind the scenes,' as it were, and just like the TV series you will only see the finished product.

As an Example, say your character's name is Jack. You and another PC, Jill had previously decided to climb to the top of a hill and investigate it. The GM sends you this email:

Jack and Jill went up the hill and were surprised to meet a Dalek, who screeched out 'IN-TRU-DERS! HALT OR YOU WILL BE EX-TERM-IN-ATED!' while waving it's disruptor menacingly!

Now it's your turn. What will Jack do? Once you've decided, it's time to send an email describing Jack's actions. You're fellow player Jill will also send in her action. And the GM has to determine, based on those actions, what the Dalek will do and how all of these actions work into the evolving storyline. He has a lot to do.

To aid the GM in his duties, ease his bookeeping and to save on arguments and sanity, it behooves the players to send their responses in a consistent format that is easy to read and understand. These rules are designed to formalize your responses for just that purpose.

2. Player Response Formats

You, will use a combination of three writing styles when sending your responses to the GM: **Continuing Story**, **OOC comments** and **Private Messaging**.

Continuing Story

In Continuing Story Style, you are a novelist of sorts. Your job is to continue the story along from its last point. There are no mechanics involved, no 'my character does a, b and c' type of commands, just third person narrative concerning your (and only your) character's actions.

Continuing on from our previous example, Jack and Jill had ascended the hill and met a Dalek. You decide that Jack, a coward at heart who always looks out for number one, will throw himself off the side of the hill to avoid the Daleks disrupter, and roll to the bottom and safety. To heck with Jill, she can fend for herself!

You type:

Jack, overcome by fear for his own life, yelled to Jill 'You're on your own, kid!' and threw himself back down the hill leaving Jill to fend for herself.

OOC Comments

OOC comments are Out Of Character comments. These are used for any game related info you wish to impart. You can use it to say things like 'I move to area A2 and fire my blaster at the Dalek in A4.'

It can also be used to ask the GM for more info, as in 'What do I see when I look in the closet,' or 'Can my bound character reach the sonic screwdriver in his pocket?'

The format for OOC commentary is: **[OOC: What you want to say]**

Continuing on with the example above, you want to describe Jack's actions to the GM so that Jack doesn't literally do what you wrote in the Continuing Story section of his Email, which might lead to him breaking his crown. You type:

[OOC: I want Jack to move to area A2 at the bottom of the hill, evading fire from the Dalek.]

Private Messaging

If you want to do something that you don't want other players to know about it, such as tripping another PC to ensure that the Dalek catches them first, you should send the email straight directly to the GM, at a private address that he will provide before the game starts.

You may also do this when collaborating with other players as long as you send the results of those emails to the GM in a CC. While the other players may be kept firmly in the dark, the GM must always know what's going on.

NOTE: The GM does not encourage tripping your companions or leaving them in the lurch to save yourself, as it isn't really in the spirit of the Dr. Who TV series. But the option is there should it be needed…

3. The Probability Matrix

As was mentioned before, all action resolution will be taken care of, behind the scenes, by the GM. However, the success or failure of your actions will still be determined by your abilities and a little luck.

For the luck part, the GM will need you to make a series of dice rolls, which he will draw from to determine your success or failure.
In order to make these rolls, go to:

http://www.irony.com/mailroll.html

Once there, you need to create your Character' sProbability Matrix. Input this info:

Number of Dice: 1
Sides: 6
Add or Subtract: -1
Drop High/Low roll: Make sure that both boxes are unchecked.
Number of Repeat Rolls: 20
Subject of Email: [Your Characters name here]: Probability Matrix
Address: [The GM's Email addy.]

Once you've input this, hit the 'Roll them Bones' button and it will send your Matrix to the GM. During the game, the he will use some esoteric mathematical formula, or perhaps just 'Dip, dip, dip, my little ship,' to draw from these numbers whenever your character needs to 'beat the difference.'

Our story continues with Jack racing to the bottom of the hill while evading fire from the Dalek.

The bottom of the hill is 4 areas away, so the GM lets Jack move, but that will be his only action, as moving a number of areas equal to or greater than your MOVE score means you may do no other actions.

The distance of 4 areas vs. Jack's 3 MOVE, means that Jack needs to beat a difference of 1 to make it safely to the bottom. The GM, using the 'One Potato, Two potato' method, draws from Jack's Probability Matrix and gets a 0. Jack fails.

After applying the game rules for failed moves, falling and being overcome by wounds, and then taking into account both the actions of Jill and the Dalek, the GM writes:

As Jack dove down the hill to avoid the Dalek, he tripped and fell.
Rolling violently down the steep embankment, the crown of his head connected with a large rock, knocking him unconscious.
Jill's body, which had been viciously riddled by disrupter rays after Jack had forced the Dalek to open fire, came tumbling down shortly thereafter.
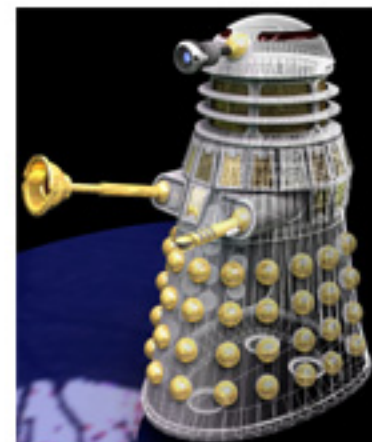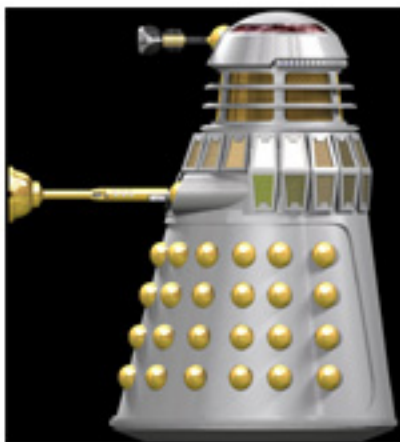
4. A Final Word On Timelord Etiquette

The whole purpose of this game is to recreate the spirit of the Dr. Who television series and the GM will create situations and make rules judgements that reflect that spirit. So while your character may be self-serving (much as Turlough was in his time with the 5th Doctor, or Jack in the examples above), you may not act in an out and out evil way. Actions such as killing, blackmailing or in any way harming innocents or other PC's, may help you to achieve your current goals, but karmic payback is a dog of decidedly female gender.

Heroic actions, on the other hand, are VERY in the spirit of the game, and you might find that the GM bends the rules once in while (say by giving a bonus to skill or by reducing damage) for those characters who act in a suitably heroic way.

While this may not necessarily prevent you from failing or even dying (as Adric found out in Earthshock), it may earn you bonuses for this or your next character. Just remember that just because you could never attempt something in reality, it might well work in the TV universe of Dr. Who!