

# Masks in the Madhouse, the RPG

V1.20

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**\*Note:** this document was created to help me organize my thoughts for the Madhouse game. It is not required reading for the players. Any player that does read this, however, will better understand how the game is made and why it was made that way.

**If anyone would like clarification on anything contained within this document please just ask me to do so.**

After viewing the first session I intend to re-write the rules to be more adjustable to different numbers of players, different player personalities, and a different setting, if desired.



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## **1.) Game Overview**

This is a live-action role-playing game where every player role-plays (dresses, thinks, acts, and speaks like) a specific costumed character. Every character is a hero, villain, or something in-between.

The objective of the game is to acquire points by achieving goals and acquiring resources. The player with the most points at the end “wins” the game.

The fun of the game is using one’s resources, negotiation charm, and cleverness to achieve their goals.

Every character has unique goals and a unique set of resources.

All players must stay in-character for the duration of the game, 3 hours.

The game is designed to support 9 or 12-18 players. This edition is uniquely tailored for 15 players.

At its most basic level this game is “Use X to achieve Y without letting Z happen”.

## **2.) Setting**

The game occurs in a specific section of Gotham City’s Arkham Asylum which is referred to as “The Madhouse”. There are three Factions and a few Independents (characters that do not belong to a specific Faction) that have been trapped in a prison riot in the Madhouse on game night.

The three Factions are:

- 1.) League of Evil Masterminds which are “bad guys” that have been recently locked up by Batman.
- 2.) The Alliance of Justice which are “good guys” that entered the Madhouse to interrogate Leaguers to learn more about the death of the Alliance’s previous leader.
- 3.) The Enigmatics which haven’t chosen “bad” or “good” and are in Gotham for an unknown reason. No one knows why they’re in Gotham, let alone the Madhouse.

All players will have 3 hours to learn more about other characters, make allies, achieve their goals, and gather resources before Batman shows up and restores order to the Madhouse.

### **3.) Fundamental Mechanics**

#### **i.) End-game Questionnaire**

Every player must answer some simple questions at the end of the game. The following questions will be handed out on small cards:

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Your Faction:</b>
<b>Your Faction's Leader:</b>
<b>Did you achieve your Win Condition?</b>
<b>Did your Lose Condition happen?</b>
<b>Were you Unmasked?</b>
<b>Resources</b>
Money-
Rep-
<b>Your committed Allies (be honest: which other character(s) were working with you?):</b>
-
-
<b>Best Costume (3 points for first name, 2 for second, and 1 for last)</b>
-
-
-
<b>Best Roleplay (3 points for first name, 2 for second, and 1 for last)</b>
-
-
-

The Host will tabulate these results and determine who received the most Game Points (i.e.: the “winner”).

## ii.) Game Points

Game Points are used to determine the game's "winner". These are the only criteria used.

Number	Source of Game Points	Number of Game Points
1.)	Achieve Win Condition	10
2.)	Fail Lose Condition	- 6
3.)	Be Unmasked	- 5
4.)	Acquire Money	1 for 1
5.)	Acquire RepP	1 for 1
6.)	Acquire Committed Allies	3 each

### **1) Win Condition**

Every character has a single Win Condition. If that win condition is reached then the character earns 10 GP.

Some characters (6) have a win condition where they get 2 or 3 times as many GP for every Money **or** Reputation Point that they have. (See example "iv".)

Real Examples with names removed:

- i.) Have character X Unmasked.
- ii.) Become leader of a new Faction
- iii.) Belong to a Faction that doesn't have character Y or Z.
- iv.) Earn 3 times as many GP for Money.

### **2) Lose Condition**

Every character has a single Lose Condition. If the lose condition comes to pass then the character loses 6 GP.

Real Examples with names removed:

- i.) Character X and Y are both Masked.
- ii.) Character Z isn't in your Faction
- iii.) Have less than 4 committed allies.
- iv.) Have less than 3 Reputation Points.

### **3) Unmasking**

Any character can be Unmasked. To be Unmasked a character must use a weapon against you. There are 5 weapons in the game and they all come in sealed envelope. Weapons are one-time use only and to be used the wielder must open the envelope. One of the weapons will be (randomly) handed out as a "dud", and will say that it falters when the envelope is opened.

Once Unmasked a character must forfeit all of their Resources (Money, Reputation Points, and Information Cards), but they are able to continue playing.

Every player must honestly state whether they were Masked or Unmasked at the end of the game when asked on the End-Game Questionnaire.

### **4) Money**

Some characters will begin with Money. All characters receive GP for having Money at the end of the game. Some characters will receive twice or three-times as many GP for money (if it's their Win Condition).

Every 1 Resource Point of money will be distributed as 5 Monopoly “20s”. Each Monopoly 20 will represent \$20, 000. Every Monopoly 20 represents 0.2 Game Points.

Ex

- i.) Character X has 3 Monopoly 20s. That’s \$60, 000 or .3 GP.
- ii.) Character Y has 17 Monopoly 20s. That’s \$170, 000 or 1.7 GP.
- iii.) Character Z has 7 Monopoly 20s and the win condition “Receive 3x GP for Money”. That’s 0.7 GP multiplied by 3= 2.1 GP.

\*For the mathematically disinclined just think this: more money is better, especially if it’s your win condition.

### 5) Reputation Points

Some characters begin with Reputation Points “Rep”. All characters receive GP for having Rep at the end of the game. Some characters will receive twice or three-times as many GP for Rep (if it’s their Win Condition).

Every 1 Resource Point is worth 10 Reputation Points. 10 Reputation Points will be distributed as 5 reputation cards worth 2 Reputation Points each.

Reputation Points symbolically represent respect/fear/love/owed favours in the community.

Ex

- i.) Character X has 4 Rep cards. That’s 8 Reputation Points or .8 GP.
- ii.) Character Y has 15 Rep cards. That’s 30 Reputation Points or 3.0 GP.
- iii.) Character Z has 11 Rep cards and the win condition “Receive 3x GP for

Reputation Points”. That’s 22 Reputation Points or 2.2 GP.

\*For the mathematically disinclined just think this: more reputation points is better, especially if it’s your win condition.

### 6) Committed Allies

At the end of the game every player will write down the names of any characters that their character considers an ally. **Every player must be honest and fair.**

If two players write each others’ names down then they both receive 3 GP.

Ex

- i.) Aurla writes down Berrus, Cassia, and Damen
- Berrus writes down Aurla and Damen
- Cassia writes down Aurla and Damen
- Damen writes down Cassia

	Aurla	Berrus	Cassia	Damen
Aurla		xy	xy	x
Berrus	xy			x
Cassia	xy			xy
Damen	y	y	xy	

This means that the committed allies are:  
 Aurla and Berrus  
 Aurla and Cassia  
 Cassia and Damen

Each player in each pair receives 3 GP.

Aurla= 6 GP  
 Berrus= 3GP  
 Cassia=6 GP  
 Damen=3 GP

### iii.) Resource Points

Every Character begins with exactly 5 Resource Points.

These resources will be printed on small pieces of paper and given to the players (to see for the first time) at the beginning of the game night.

There are 4 different types of Resources.

Resource Number	Resource	Resource Points	Game Points	If Unmasked...
1)	Weapon	3	0	Use it in retaliation, both lose weapons.
2)	Money	1	1	Forfeit
3)	Reputation Points "Rep"	1	1	Forfeit
4)	Information Cards	1	0	Keep

#### 1) Weapons

Weapons are worth 3 Resource Points each but worth 0 Game Points, so don't bother holding on to one until the end of the game.

Also, no character can begin with 2 weapons

There are 5 weapons in the game and they will be handed out in sealed envelopes. If you have a sealed weapon then you can use it to threaten anyone, but to actually use it you must open the sealed envelope (one-time use) to Unmask someone.

1 of the 5 weapons will be a dud (randomly distributed) and fail to work when opened.

#### **If someone uses a weapon against you...**

And you don't have a weapon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forfeit all your Money and Rep to the weapon wielder.</li> <li>- Become Unmasked</li> <li>- Keep your Information Cards</li> </ul>
And you use your own weapon in defense—but it's a dud.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You've used up your weapon.</li> <li>- Forfeit Money and Rep to the weapon wielder.</li> <li>- Become Unmasked.</li> <li>- Keep your Information Cards</li> </ul>
And you use your own weapon in defense—and it works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both weapons are used up.</li> <li>- No one loses Money or Rep</li> <li>- Neither wielder is Unmasked.</li> <li>- Keep your Information Cards</li> </ul>

## 2) Money

Every 1 Resource Point of Money will be represented by 5 Monopoly “20”s (money bills).

Each money bill represents \$20, 000.  
Each money bill is worth .2 GP

Thus, every 1 Resource Point of Money represents \$100, 000 but is handed out as 5 separate Money bills.

Every Money bill will give you more Game Points so collect as many as you can.

You can trade Money however you like. You can trade for other Resources (Weapon, Reputation Points, or Information Cards) or for services (say “this” to someone, Unmask “that” person, name me as an ally...).

If you are Unmasked then you must give your Unmasker all of your Money. **Be honest.**

## 3) Reputation Cards

Every 1 Resource Point of Reputation Points is represented by 5 Reputation Cards “RC” that each say “2 Reputation Points”. Each RC represents 2 Reputation Points. Each RC is worth 0.2 GP.

Thus, every 1 Resource Point of Reputation Points represents 10 Reputation Points but is handed out as 5 separate Reputation Cards.

Every Reputation Card will give you more Game Points so collect as many as you can.

You can trade RC however you like. You can trade for other Resources (Weapon, Money bills, or Information Cards) or for services.

If you are Unmasked then you must give your Unmasker all of your Reputation Cards. **Be honest.**

## 4) Information Cards

Many characters will begin with at least 1 Information Card. The statements on an Info Card are always factually true. They will give you information about another’s win or lose condition.

*Ex:*

*i.) Character X wants to become leader of Faction A.*

*ii.) Character Y wants to Unmask character B.*

*iii.) Character Z begins with Money, but wants Rep.*

Every Information Card is worth 1 Resource Point but is worth 0 GP, so there’s no point holding on to them until the end of the game.

Information Cards “IC” can be sold or traded for any other resource or service you can think of. **However, you cannot lie or mislead others about the information on an IC. You can refuse to talk about the details on a card, but you can’t lie about anything on the card.**

If you are Unmasked you may retain your Information Cards if you choose to.

#### **iv.) Leadership and Recruitment**

The 3 beginning Factions (League, Alliance, Enigmatic) will have assigned leaders (Jeff, Garret, Craig). These original leaders have the authority to accept or refuse new recruits to their Faction.

These original leaders will remain the undisputed leader of their Faction unless they 1.) are Unmasked (publicly or privately) or 2.) publicly renounce their leadership.

If the original leader is no longer the Faction's leader then any player can become a member of that Faction simply by stating that they belong to that Faction on the End-game Questionnaire.

If the original leader is no longer a Faction's leader then the leadership of that Faction will be determined by the number of votes "Faction's leader" that leadership candidates receive.

**A character cannot be the Leader of a Faction if they are Unmasked.**



#### **4.) Character Creation**

6 weeks before play every player was given a code name and a character archetype for their character. Code names were used to organize the characters and begin forming the foundation for character relationships and motivations.

With this introductory information the players had the opportunity to name their character, design their costume, and contribute to their character's back-story (what they've done in the past, who they like, who they don't like, what they want...). Most players capitalized on this opportunity, others didn't. What was most important is that every player had the time (2-3 weeks) to be creative with their character and suggest a **name** (moniker) and **costume** (motif) idea.

**Every player is responsible for buying/creating their own costume for game night.**

Every character is given a single win condition, a single lose condition, and exactly 5 points of resources. Every character has a unique combination of conditions and a unique combination of resources.

The conditions and resources for each character are based off of the character's back-story. Assigning conditions and resources was difficult [more so than expected] because all characters had to be interwoven without giving any one player a clear advantage.

To do this I:

- 1.) Determined 5 "Pillar" characters that would have difficult long-term goals but resources that allowed them to conscript others. Experienced role-players that pay attention to details, remain in character, and are focused were given these roles.
- 2.) Determined how many Factions the game would end with. This helped determine where characters were likely to end up and create conditions accordingly.
- 3.) Ensured a proper spread (economy) of Money and Reputation Points (as resources and win/lose conditions) to encourage an exchange of both resources.
- 4.) Made sure that every character had at least 1 written condition (such as "become a member of this Faction", "have this person Unmasked", or "create your own Faction") to create an interesting gameplay dynamic that transcends resource accumulation.

The conditions and resources for each character were used to write up the final character list (with descriptions).

The exact wording for the win condition, lose condition, and resources will be given at the beginning of the game. This is done to discourage meta-gaming.

### **5.) Cash Prize Pool**

Every player donates \$10 to create a large cash prize pool.

[I, the Host, have volunteered to submit \$10 as well.]

The prize pool will be collected before game day to ensure that it is ready for use.

There are 3 different prize categories: “Most Points”, “Best Costume”, “Best Role-play”.

The Prize Pool will be divided up as follows...

<b>Award</b>	<b>Percent of Prize Pool</b>	<b>Jan 7, 2012 Split of \$160 in \$</b>
Most Points	25	40
Best Costume	25	40
Second Best Costume	12.5	20
Best Role-play	25	40
Second Best Role-play	12.5	20

If a player achieves the most points, is voted to have the best costume and the best role-play then they will win \$120 on game night!

## 6.) Examples

This section is divided into 2 parts:

Part 1: Characters, Conditions, Resources

Part 2: Determining Game Points

The 4 fictional players Aurla, Berrus, Cassia, and Damen will serve as examples.

Aurla is the leader of Faction X.

Berrus is a member of Faction X.

Cassia is the leader of Faction Y.

Damen is an Independent

Assume that there are only these 4 players playing the game.

### i.) Part 1: Characters, Conditions, Resources

I used the same format as the table below for the characters in the Jan 7, 2012 session.

The Jan 7 session will have 15 characters. This example only has 4.

Try to think up ways that each character can use their resources to achieve their win or prevent their lose condition. Of course the game will become very unpredictable very quickly... but every character has at least 1 viable plan right from the start.

The Character “bios” were created once the character conditions and resources were assigned.

<u>Faction</u>	<u>Player Name</u>	<u>Character Name</u>	<u>Win Condition</u>	<u>Lose Condition</u>	<u>Resources (5 points)</u>
X	<b>Aurla</b>		Ensure that there are at least 3 members in Faction X.	Have less Rep than Damen.	Information-Cassia begins with a weapon, wants Money  Information-Damen begins with Money.  Information-Cassia wants to be a member of

					the Faction that Berrus belongs to.  1 Rep  1 Money
<p>You are a dedicated old woman that wants your Faction to thrive.</p> <p>You realize that Damen is hot-tempered new blood that could cause problems for you if you don't earn more respect than him.</p> <p>Aurla begins with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 separate Info Cards</li> <li>- 5 Monopoly "20s" worth \$20, 000 each (\$100, 000 total)</li> <li>- 5 Reputation Cards worth 2 Reputation Points each (10 Rep total)</li> </ul>					
X	<b>Berrus</b>		3 times the Game Points for Money.	Aurla isn't Unmasked.	Information-Cassia begins with a Weapon, wants Money  Information-Aurla wants Rep, begins with Money  2 Rep  1 Money
<p>You have a grudge against Aurla and would like to see her taken out of the Mask game.</p> <p>You're somewhat of a sleaze-ball that wants nothing more than money.</p> <p>Berrus begins with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 separate Info Cards</li> <li>- 5 Monopoly "20"s worth \$20, 000 each (\$100, 000 total)</li> <li>- 10 Reputation Cards worth 2 Reputation Points each (20 Rep total)</li> </ul>					
Y	<b>Cassia</b>		Be a member in the Faction that Berrus	Have less than 3 Money.	Weapon  Information-Damen wants RP, begins with

			belongs to.		Money. 1 Rep
<p>You've fallen madly in love with Berrus and can't bear to be apart from him.</p> <p>You don't feel comfortable without a considerable amount of wealth and would like to take this Madhouse opportunity to accumulate more money.</p> <p>Cassia begins with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 Weapon</li> <li>- 1 Information Card</li> <li>- 5 Reputation Cards worth 2 Reputation Points each (10 Rep total)</li> </ul>					
Independent	<b>Damen</b>		Become the leader of a Faction.	Have less than 3 Rep.	2 Money 1 Rep Information-Berrus wants Money, begins with RP. Information-Aurla wants more members in Faction X.
<p>You're a new up-and-coming Mask that wants to make a name for himself. You know you can lead a Faction... so why not do so?</p> <p>To truly cement your position of authority you'll need to have the respect (reputation points) of other Masks.</p> <p>Damen begins with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 separate Information Cards</li> <li>- 10 Monopoly "20"s worth \$20, 000 each (\$200, 000 total)</li> <li>- 5 Reputation Cards worth 2 Reputation Points each (10 Rep total)</li> </ul>					

What I expect the characters to initially try...

#### Aurla

- Will try to bring Berrus into Faction X so that Cassia wants in.
- Will show Cassia the Info Card that says "Damen begins with Money" and tell her that she can take all of Damen's Money if she (Aurla) gets to keep his Rep.

#### Berrus

- Trade Rep to Aurla for Aurla's Money
- Show Cassia the Info Card that says "Aurla begins with Money" and hire Cassia to Unmask Aurla so that Cassia can take Aurla's money.

#### Cassia

- Will try to trade her own Rep for Damen's Money.
- Will be have to choose whether to use her Weapon for Aurla or for Berrus.

#### Damen

- Trade his own Money for Berrus' Rep
- Will pressure Aurla to let him join Faction X
- Will try to use Money and Rep to get other Faction X members to vote for him as leader.

Some characters will require more patience, forethought, wit, or argumentation than others. In order of weakest to strongest player: Aurla, Berrus, Damen, Cassia.

Aurla will be very difficult to play because her lose condition is dependent on Damen's success, so Aurla will have to pay close attention to him or properly time his Unmasking.

Berrus is difficult because he has to convince Cassia to use her weapon against Aurla.

Damen is moderately difficult because he has enough resources and information to get what he needs, he'll just have to be persistent in his efforts.

Cassia will be easy to play because she will be reacting to other players' offers for her weapon.

**ii.) Part 2: Determining Game Points**

Total Money in play: 4 Resource Points' worth: 40 Money bills (Monopoly 20s) or \$800,000.

Total Rep in play: 5 Resource Points' worth : 25 Reputation cards or 50 Rep.

Pretend this is Berrus' End-game Questionnaire:

<b>Name:</b> Berrus
<b>Your Faction:</b> Y
<b>Your Faction's Leader:</b> Cassia
<b>Did you achieve your Win Condition?</b> N/A
<b>Did your Lose Condition happen?</b> No
<b>Were you Unmasked?</b> No.
<b>Resources</b>
Money- \$240,000= 2.4 Resource Points. 2.4 x 3 (Win condition)=7.2 GP
Rep- 4 Rep Cards= .4 Resource Points. =.4 GP
<b>Your committed Allies (be honest: which other character(s) were working with you?):</b>
- Cassia (she also wrote his name down—making them committed)
-
<b>Best Costume (3 points for first name, 2 for second, and 1 for last)</b>
-
-
-
<b>Best Roleplay (3 points for first name, 2 for second, and 1 for last)</b>
-
-
-

Berrus would receive 7.2 (win/money) + .4 (Rep) + 3 (Cassia ally)= **10.6 GP.**

Special thanks to the 15 players who (knowingly or not) are playtesting my first version of this game!