

TRAITS of a RASCAL

A Rascal has greater or lesser degrees of the great, universal social ills that have plagued civilization always.

MENDACITY

- 1 *Honest*
- 2 *Conscientious*
- 3 *Calculating*
- 4 *Equivocating*
- 5 *Deceitful*
- 6 *Perfidious*

TURPITUDE

- 1 *Virtuous*
- 2 *Upright*
- 3 *Reckless*
- 4 *Selfish*
- 5 *Corrupt*
- 6 *Degenerate*

MEANNESS

- 1 *Compassionate*
- 2 *Kind*
- 3 *Opportunistic*
- 4 *Heartless*
- 5 *Cruel*
- 6 *Devilish*

CUNNING

- 1 *Innocent*
- 2 *Trusting*
- 3 *Clever*
- 4 *Cynical*
- 5 *Devious*
- 6 *Treacherous*

COWARDICE

- 1 *Courageous*
- 2 *Brave*
- 3 *Hesitant*
- 4 *Yellow*
- 5 *Craven*
- 6 *Pusillanimous*



THE RASCALS

Traits are rated from one to six. Each number has a descriptive adjective attached.

Mendacity reflects your innate honesty, or lack thereof. Roll *under* your Mendacity to tell a terrible lie or convince someone of your innocence. Roll *over* your mendacity to discern the truth of a thing or remember your mother's birthday.

Turpitude is an indication of your morality and virtue. Roll *under* your Turpitude to be wicked to joyful effect or to corrupt an innocent. Roll *over* your Turpitude to resist temptation or donate money to a good cause.

Meanness informs your dealings with others, be you kind or cruel. Roll *under* your Meanness to take a widow's last dollar or kick a man while he's down. Roll *over* your Meanness to comfort an orphan or help a stranger.

Cunning speaks to your trust in others, and theirs in you. Roll *under* your Cunning to learn a secret well-kept or convince a sucker to part with his money. Roll *over* your Cunning to keep your business to yourself or give the cops the slip.

Cowardice references personal courage or its pigeon-hearted opposite. Roll *under* your Cowardice to escape a deserved beating or finger somebody else for a crime. Roll *over* your Cowardice to knock a man down and thrash him or to take your lumps.

Every character begins with a number in each Trait. The most angelic specimen will have a 1 in each attribute, but these creatures are vanishingly rare. A Rascal begins by crossing off ten adjectives from the high end down toward the low.

When a Trait is used, roll a die. Regardless of the outcome, cross it off.

Traits always move in a constant direction, either up or down and then back again in the opposite direction. A used Trait becomes something slightly more or less severe. When you reach the top or the bottom, simply erase all the marks and start fresh in the opposite direction.

If you have a Mendacity of 4 with the 5 and 6 crossed off, the next time you use it your Mendacity becomes 3. If you have a Turpitude of 5 with 1 through 4 crossed off, your next stop is 6 and degeneracy.

This means that the most terrible, hardened yegg will eventually go soft - and, in exposing his human feelings, feel the sting of approbium from his criminal brotherhood and begin to toughen back up quickly. Similarly, the naive rustic who loses everything to three-card Monty rapidly becomes less trusting. Eventually his Cunning will reach evil heights, at which point he will see his error and slowly, slowly return to decency.

EXAMPLE

Bainbridge Mills begins play with a Cowardice of 6 - positively pusillanimous. The first time he uses it, the 6 is crossed off and Mills' new score is 5.

After a few misadventures Bainbridge Mills uses his Cowardice four more times, bringing it down to one. The former shirking milk-blood has acquired a spine somewhere, and he's full of courage. But nothing good can last; he uses it again and Cowardice rises to 2.

Now Mills is on the path of the chicken-heart again, having seen the error in his ways. The brave becomes hesitant, hesitant becomes yellow, and yellow eventually becomes craven.

LEARNING

At the end of every session, you will permanently cross off a number, either from the low or high end of one of your character's attributes. This represents the acquired wisdom of a lifetime of hard knocks. Maybe you trust a little less and maybe you have learned not to be so damn mean. It pushes you in one direction or the other. Your fellow players will decide which attribute, and which end gets clipped, based on your character's experiences during the session.

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