Tears in Rain

A Blade Runner hack for Trollbabe
By Per Fischer

Introduction

"This is a bad one, the worst yet.
I need the old Blade Runner. I need your
magic."

This is a Blade Runner hack for Trollbabe. You need the original Trollbabe rules where you can read about the basic game mechanics. The rules are incredible value for money at $10. Get them here: http://www.adept-press.com/trollbabe/buy.html - this will be the best $10 you've ever spent on anything.

The terminology used will be straight from Trollbabe, and if it has been given a more genre-appropriate term, the original term will be listed such when first introduced: Tech(Magic). I have tried to keep as much Trollbabe lingo as possible.

Blade Runner is 25 years old and out in its "final edition", so this is the perfect time for Tears in Rain, I feel. Sadly I didn't see the movie in 1982 - that was a time in my life where I would avoid anything smelling of mainstream and mostly watch Norwegian, Russian or French films. When I watched it some time later, it blew my mind. The first time I saw it on a big screen was when the director's cut was released, and my mind was blown once more. I will talk to you in this document as if you have seen Blade Runner, and I assume you know f.ex. what a Voight-Kampff machine is, or a replicant. If not, there's always Wikipedia.

Trollbabe is about being in the middle but torn from both sides, and being a bit of those two sides yourself. In Tears in Rain you play a Blade Runner, a special unit policeman whose main task is to track down and retire illegal replicants.

As in the movie, one of the issues to address in the game is existential: Are you human or a replicant? Are the memories from your childhood, the images of your parents, real or only implants in your brain? Did you actually learn to speak Japanese and French, or were you only programmed? Who knows. You are an outsider, forced to negotiate between these two sides. They need "your magic". This is modern noir, but noir nonetheless, and the typical noir detective is an outsider, a voyeur to the action until he/she intervenes and tilts the balance.

A word of advice: Tears in Rain is not a game about re-enacting Blade Runner or repeating all the cool stuff from the movie. That's been done. It's about dealing with a situation, and exploring that situation through your own Blade Runner character. Feel free to invent new awesome technology like the Voight-Kampff machine or the Spinners, and give them new cool names and functions. Help the humans. Or help the Replicants. Or try to negotiate between them. Fall in love. Have sex. Solve crimes.

Tears in Rain works for one GM and one player as well as up to three players. Running for more than three players is possible, but not recommended.

The System

"Quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it?
That's what it is to be a slave."

The Tears in Rain system is exactly the same as in Trollbabe, with some alternative flavouring. Your character has a number between 2 and 9. Blade Runners can do stuff within three things: Tech(Magic), Combat and Social. Roll over your number to do Tech, under to fight, and the smaller of those two intervals, including your number, to interact socially. If your number is 7: 8-10 to do Tech. 1-6 to combat. 7-10 to do social stuff.

Blade Runner Characters

"You could learn from this guy, Gaff. He's a
god damn one-man slaughterhouse."

Pick a number for your character, and a speciality for each action type. The specialities are for colour purposes only, and have no game mechanical effect. Use a speciality in the game to add extra colour when resolving a conflict in a scene. Specialities:

Tech: Information retrieval, biogenetics, data analysis, origami.

Combat: Firearms, acrobatics, guerilla, soldier, furious.

Social: Charismatic, enthusiastic, seductive, insightful, intimidating, richer than you.

The visuals are important, so describe your character according to the following in as much detail as you like. Be sure to come up with cool brand names and model names for equipment. It's not just "a gun". It's a Steyr Mannlicher Police Special .44+. It's not just "a coat". It's a Nebermann synth-leather Climate-tex. You get the picture, I hope.

Name: A Blade Runner is known by his/her last name only. Deckard. Holden. Gaff. Sparks. Jensen. Giggs. Anderson. Moeller.

Clothing: describe what your character is wearing, and remember brand names.

Style: Describe your character's make-up (if any) and hairstyle.

Stuff: Two personal belongings, like a photo album, a diary, a calf-skin(gasp) wallet or similar.

Gear: Pick two pieces of equipment, preferably that say something about your character. Every Blade Runner has access to a Voight-Kampff and an Esper machine already, so don't pick those.

Weapon: your character's preferred duty weapon. Doesn't have to be a gun, but it probably is. What kind and what model?

Decide where in The City you character lives. Maybe your Blade Runner has got an apartment, maybe he is sleeping at the police tower, or maybe he is sleeping rough.

Stakes & Consequences
"Have you ever retired a human by mistake?"

Stakes are the GM-prepared conflict(s) of interest for a game. Someone somewhere wants something and cannot get it. The Consequences are the outcomes of the Stakes.

A Blade Runner's presence and possible intervention will illuminate, enhance, complicate or move the Stakes towards their Consequences. A conflict has at least two sides. Which one will the Blade Runner choose?

Possible Tears in Rain Stakes that tweak the original ones:

Run-in (Feud)
Copyright (Land theft)
Framed (Framed-up culprit)
Uprising (Plain old oppression)
War (Complex war)
Administration (Leadership)

The Consequences can be taken and used straight from Trollbabe.

The Scale of Stakes and Consequences
Person
Group
Neighbourhood
Community
Area
City

Playing the game
"If only you could see what I've seen with your eyes."

Scene setting and conflicts, rerolls etc. works like normal Trollbabe. The list of rerolls to invent and bring new stuff into play in Tears in Rain looks like this:

Something in your pocket (A carried object)

A newfound friend (A sudden ally)

A sudden reveal (A found or reached item)

A flashback

Utilising Technology (Spell or magical effect)

A feature of the City (handy geographical effect)

Thanks to Ron Edwards for Trollbabe, and to Joe Murphy for helpful suggestions.

Name: _____

Player: _____

Story: _____

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Number	Type	From	To	Speciality
	Combat		–	
	Tech		–	
	Social		–	

Rerolls

❏ Something in your pocket

❏ A newfound friend

❏ A sudden reveal

❏ A flashback

❏ Utilising technology

❏ A feature of the city

Portrait

Gear

Relationships

❏ _____

❏ _____

❏ _____

❏ _____

❏ _____

❏ _____

Clothing/Style/Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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