



Bringing a Character to Life: When the Acting Happens

by Jeffrey Szappan

When asked what makes a favorite character stand out in a person's mind, rarely do you get "the words they speak." Words alone can never flesh out a character. A character is not just the dialogue, but the delivery -- and more importantly -- what happens between the lines. Nathan Fillion's portrayal of Malcolm Reynolds in the series *Firefly* did not live and die by the words he spoke, but the way went about his business.

How does this relate to LARP? Often time's people get caught up with a facet of a character. "This character will speak with a cockney accent," or "this character will have a wonderful mask they never take off." Focusing on any single part of the whole does not make for an engaging character. In the example above, Mal wore a brown coat, one that was a holdover from the war, which marked him as someone hung up on the past. That did not make the character engaging. He spoke simply, but that also didn't make for the character. Both of these again or single facets, and neither makes the character truly engaging.

One of the things we encourage as STs to make someone get a feel for their characters is the Character Creation Document, or CCD. This document has a litany of questions an individual's asks themselves to get

under their character's skin. Does the character have quirks? What does the character do when annoyed? Though how they relate to others and how they speak to others is important, the acting happens between the lines. Does the character fidget? Does the character stroke their beard, play with their purse, fold their hands quietly. Do they tilt their head when listening? Do their eyes glaze over when technology is discussed? A trap many beginning actors fall into is hitting a mark

The result: individuals have a tendency to focus on the new and the shiny, the "unique," or single facets that make an individual stand out. In LARP, the biggest thing that makes a character stand out isn't the costume, it's the presentation. It's sliding into the skin as another entity entirely, and making others forget the person behind the character, but truly becoming the character. This is done through words, actions, and mannerisms. All facets make for the whole, not a single impressive facet.



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Coordinator Spotlight

Polly Rhodes

DC GA-013-D Columbus Georgia

Polly Rhodes is the current Domain Coordinator for GA-013-D Columbus Georgia. Polly became the DC there in March 2013 and has been doing a fantastic job. Believe it or not, she didn't get into gaming until she joined Mind's Eye Society in May of 2010. The only type of gaming that she had done before this was on consoles and not live action. In May 2010, a co-worker approached her asking if she had ever played any role-playing games. While she had heard about them and knew what they were, she had to admit that she had never worked up the courage to give them a try. She gave in and decided to go with him to that month's Requiem game and was in awe. She stated that, "Everyone was gracious enough to answer all of my many questions and I was instantly hooked. I joined that month and have been playing ever since."



Polly decided to become a coordinator to help other players. She wanted a chance to do her part and help others reach their goals in this organization.

Polly has become friends with everyone in her local game and many of the surrounding domains. While she admits that the position was a little overwhelming at first and that there were many things that went on behind the scenes that she had never realized. This did not stop Polly, she jumped right in and has never looked back. She only hopes to help others have the amazing experiences that she has had. When Polly is not working, gaming, reading, or playing catch-up on life; she enjoys painting and making crafty gifts for friends and family. A little known random fact about Polly is that she was named after a Walt Disney Movie. Yes, her middle name is Anna.

Recipe of the Month

Easy Pumpkin Soup

2 cans (14 1/2 ounces each) canned chicken or vegetable broth	
2 cans (15 ounces each) pumpkin	1 bay leaf
1 cup whipping cream	2 garlic cloves, smashed
1/4 cup pure maple syrup	1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

Whisk pumpkin, broth, cream, garlic and bay leaf in a heavy large saucepan over medium- high heat.

Bring to a simmer, whisking often. Add syrup and ginger. Simmer 10 minutes
Remove garlic and bay leaf. Season to taste with salt and pepper



MES Photography:

Appreciating Costume Detail

By T. Allen

It is that time of year again for conventions, featured games and events happening all around us during our exciting and new campaign! Oh but what does this mean? NEW COSTUMES! I do not know if you are as excited as I am about this, but I hope you are!

As a photographer in the club I have come to enjoy the exquisite details that our dedicated members will put into the costumes that decorate the world of darkness within our clubs convention halls and game sites. Players never cease to amaze me with the beadwork, intricately placed blood and amazing detail to scars and props.

The costuming in our club helps to define the creativity and the careful thought we put into our worlds of darkness and characters. Taking the time to make those costumes so photographers can have something to admire, preserve and show off to the world outside of the club is also a positive source of attention to attract new players.

Next time you are trolling the halls of your local games, featured games and conventions take a moment to look around you. I believe we should take the time to admire our props, photograph our hand-made feathered fans and gaze upon our beautifully constructed costumes!

How often do you take a pause to notice, compliment and photograph the wonderful work dancing around you in your venues? My steampunk hat alone took me 8 hours to sew and then took months to match it to a dress, just imagine how long it took 'Tree Man' last year to glue all of that moss and foliage to stilts and football gear.

What I wish to see is more artists and photographers taking more time out to compliment the players who have worked so hard to bring us these nice things to admire. Pull out your camera, write a

thank you letter after a game or convention, encourage the creativity so we have more to enjoy at our games. Tree man, you were Epic, Sharon you are gorgeous... Tony Lone fight you make one heck of a one eyed masked acolyte... all of you who bring wonder into this club with your fantastic dedication to your characters and atmosphere, THANK YOU, the ST's thank you and my Camera thanks you too!

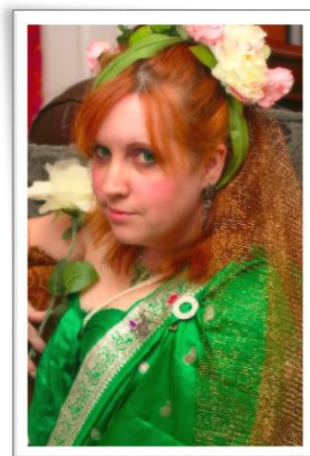


Pictures by

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&

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Why I Costume

by Amber Stephenson US2011017337

A person may enjoy gaming for a variety of reasons. It might be the appeal of escapism, the satisfaction of socializing with people of similar interests, or perhaps the satisfaction of shooting someone's character without real life repercussions such as blood or felonies. I personally enjoy all of these things, but my favorite aspect of LARPing is costuming.

Nothing solidifies my gaming experience more than costuming. As I begin forming a character concept, I start asking myself "How would this person dress?" I'll go to my closet and begin trying things on until I look in the mirror and begin to see the person I'm creating. Come game time, putting on my character's costume really gets me in the right mindset. It is almost like I'm putting the character on. And when I am at a game where others are costumed, it really makes the whole experience come alive.

I am by no means a great costumer. I can't sew and have almost no artistic

ability. But I do give a good hard look at the contents of my closet and try to see the costuming potential in pieces. Sometimes it's about putting the right outfit together. Or, maybe, there is one signature item that really transforms you from a player to your character. For instance, I had a character that was recognizable by her Bump-It. Everyone HATED that character's hairstyle, but it made the character who she was.

I encourage anyone who doesn't costume to give it a try. It doesn't have to be an expensive or difficult endeavor. Try some makeup or a different hair style, or even just a hat or necklace. Get as creative as you want. Other players will identify your character easily, and you may feel more like the character you are portraying. And really, how many chances do we get as adults to play dress-up? I spent half of my childhood dressed like a ballerina alien on Pride Day, and I have no intentions on stopping now. Thank you, LARPing.



Fighting Ennui - The Game of Couplets By Jacob Hastings

Greetings all! There are moments in the long years of unlife that Kindred must face their most dreaded enemy: boredom. Have you stifled your enemies' every move? Have you seen the latest play by Solomon Drake multiple times and discussed all its brilliance in every media? Have you found yourself repeating the same conversations with the same people for what seems the millionth time? Is random violence and mayhem simply a drain and not a relief? Are you contemplating walking out in the sunshine simply to see if you really do sparkle? Do not fear! I will present a means of distraction, something to do in the many large and small salons throughout the land. I will help you to fight Ennui!

In this, the first of what may be successive articles in aid of staving off boredom through the demonstration of your superior wits and humor, I will divulge a game to you which I call "Couplets". It involves the creation of rhyming couplets around given themes, to show off your wit and demonstrate the complete lack of wit in others. The most prevalent theme is that of Kindred life- after all, what else could be more interesting to us than that?

In order to triumph, there must be someone to dole out praise upon the worthy, and heap scorn upon the paltry offerings of those who fight far outside their own weight class. This requires a judge of discernment and refinement- a Harpy would, of course, be a perfect fit for such a position. It would be... gauche... for such an individual to actually play, but they could certainly offer their critiques, and perhaps a superior example, after the players have completed their efforts. In these modern days, there may be those who would prefer a consensus from the group as to whose efforts were triumphant, but this may lead to discord- or simply the most prestigious participant always winning. At that point, boredom ensues once more and the point of the game, entertainment and challenge, are lost. The game itself has many variations and levels of difficulty. At its most basic, the game would function as follows. The judge would determine how many rounds the game would last- if there is time, a number of rounds equal to the number of participants would be ideal. In each round, the players would receive their own subject for their couplet, and be given time to compose their lines, perhaps five minutes- extra points for style to those with no need to write notes

to compose and recite their poems. Each player would deliver their offering in turn, and the judge would critique their work, determining the winner for that round. In the next round, the judge would change who was the first to deliver their words, either having the previous rounds winner beginning and rotating from there, or simply shifting where at the table they would begin. In the end, the one who won the most rounds would be the winner for the game, receiving all glory. Those whose offering were truly unworthy would receive naught but scorn. And if the judge decrees that none were truly worthy to win, then shame upon them all! There are different ways for each participant to receive their Subject. I favor a set of cards, each with a topic involving Kindred existence, being dealt to the players. This introduces a feeling of randomness, and removes any trace of favoritism, which can ruin the joy of the game. Such a deck might include cards with the following forty subjects on them, or subjects modified by the desire of the deck's creator: Camarilla, Anarch, Brujah, Gangrel, Malkavian, Nosferatu, Toreador, Tremere, Ventrue, Children of Set, Assamite, Ravnos, Giovanni, Lasombra, Tzimisce, Caitiff, Gargoyle, Ghoul, Kine, Childe, Neonate, Ancilla, Elder, Justicar, Archon, Prince, Seneschal, Sheriff, Keeper of Elysium, Scourge, Harpy, Masquerade, Domain, Progeny, Accounting, Hospitality, Destruction, Elysium, Vitae, Prestation, Wraith. For a little spice, one can add Sabbat and Caine cards, but not for the newcomers!

Alternatively, the judge can deliver their topic to each player, or the player before or after can do the same. This may be a necessity if no one had the foresight to bring a deck of Subjects. I would recommend that if the players are giving topics then who gives the topic to whom be reversed each round, to add an element of payback to the competition. One might also give the same subject to the entire table. They can be given time to compose and recite as normal, or one can force them to create extemporaneously, each being forced to reference the line made by the previous competitor. This is, of course, more difficult, but balances the disadvantage of presenting first.

The rules as described above are the least difficult iteration of the game. Once players have mastered that, more complexity may be added! The next variation is to add a new rule for the couplet, an Attitude. This can, as with the Subject, be given by the judge or randomly determined from a deck of built cards. The Attitude is the emotion or opinion being expressed within the couplet- as we are

all aware, it is not just WHAT one says, but HOW one says it that expresses meaning. A deck of such Attitudes might contain: Praising, Scornful, Mourning, Amazed, Loathing, Awestruck, Reverent, Bored, Hopeful, Dismissive, Fawning, Shocked, Delighted, Saddened and Helpful. Others may be added, of course, as desired.

There are two other variations that may be added, to further complexity and difficulty. First would be to add Allusions. Each couplet, in addition to its other requirements, must allude to a well-known, to the educated and refined, source. One could either make a deck of possible Allusion categories, or construct a deck of Allusions relating to a single category. Some possible categories might be the Bible, Mythology, Literature, Drama, Philosophers, Historical Events, Kindred History, or Popular Entertainments. I, naturally enough, favor Allusions to the great works of the theater such as Shakespeare or Shaw, but others have their tastes. A last variation plays with the form of the game itself- instead of Couplets alone, the Form of the poem is determined by random chance. Players might be asked to create a haiku, an epitaph, a quatrain, an ABC poem, or a limerick instead of a simple couplet. Even greater challenge! Even greater praise for success! Still, these are variations that should only be attempted with the most witty and educated of Kindred, as they are extremely demanding in skill and wit. Even I, in all humility, do not claim mastery of these forms. And so the game, with praise and shame tied to mother wit. And yet, I hear the gamblers whispering in the back- Raise the Stakes! Of course, this is possible. After all, would Prestation not be a suitable instrument of reward and punishment? There are endless possibilities for this, including side bets against each other among the participants, but I think there are two main forms. First, the Trophy- the judge awards the winner a largish Boon, and collects a smallish one from each other participant. Second, the Ante- the winner collects a boon from each of his or her defeated rivals. The winner may then grant one to the judge from him or herself, as a sign of respect and thanks for the effort- one hopes this would not influence the determination of the winner, however.

And so, I conclude this article, built solely out of interest in preserving my fellow Kindred from destruction sought out of boredom. I hope that it is helpful, and that someday we may play Couplets together. *Jacob Hastings is a character in the Atlanta Domain's Cam/Anarch venue, and can be reached at princeminos@gmail.com*



Restless

She stands upon the cliffs, watching out to sea.
Her cloak swirls about, restless as her heart.

The box she holds is opened, the ash is swept into the
wind and the other half of her soul is gone.



As the sun sets they rise and begin their nightly walk.

"You seem quiet this evening." She asks.

He shifts under his coat and states, "I was going to let you begin tonight."

She smiles, "I begin every night. So why do I feel as if I am going to
confessional?"

"Do you have something that you need to confess to me?" He asks

"You already know all of my secrets dear, and yet you still stay around, when
it is clear that I drive you insane sometimes." She chuckles

"I stay because I have sworn to protect you, even from yourself. I stay because
you are my friend." He replies.

Personal Ads Employment Lost & Found



Personal Ads/Employment:

Young Strapping Lad looking for Young Hot Chick to read poetry to and take out for a bite. Call 689-1596 (evenings only)ask for Raine

Do you want to date my avatar, She's a star. Contact Jenny Jenny 867-5310

Do the voices talk to you? Well they talk to me also. Let's hook up! Call Selena 777-6669

Rocket Scientist Seeking test subjects to experiment on. Good Pay. Serious inquires only. Call 892-9732 (evening only) ask for Michaelus

Local Gravedigger seeking apprentice. Life Insurance Supplied. Call 846-8763

Flame Retardant Material for sale. Only used once. Call 268-9462 for a special deal. Ask for Freddy

Local Gravedigger seeking apprentice. Life Insurance Supplied. Call 846-8763

(Pictures by Emma Finley US2013040105)

Lost & Found

Lost: Brown dog, answers to the name of Rusty. Reward offered, he has special talents. Call 589-8796

Lost Wheelchair, Last seen at top of Reynolds Cliffs.

Lost beloved pet alligator. Answers to Tobie. Friendly.

Lost wedding ring Hooters Parking lot on 07/24
Reward cal 867-5309

Please remember that these ads and such are made for fun. Please do not call the fake phone numbers.

A great idea to kick back and relax with your domain members and have a social movie night! This also helps getting the creative juices flowing all around!

Remember to bring the Popcorn!

Below are some suggestions for Movie Night Socials!

Accord Night Movies (Mixed Genre)

Underworld (2003) (any of them)
The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (2003)
Hellboy (2004)
The Evil Dead (1981)
The Fifth Element (1997)

Vampire Movies

Blade (1998)
Lost Boys (1987)
Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992)
From Dusk Til Dawn (1996)
Queen of the Damned (2002)

Changeling Movies

Legend (1985)
Labryrinth (1986)
Alice in Wonderland (2010)
The Dark Crystal (1982)
The Spiderwick Chronicles (2008)



Hunters

John Carpenter's Vampires (1998)
From Dusk Till Dawn (1996)
30 Days of Night (2007)
Van Helsing (2004)
Species (1995)
Season of the Witch (2011)

Mage

Constantine (2005)
The Sorcerer's Apprentice (2010)
Jumper (2008)
Next (2007)
Big Trouble in Little China (1986)

Werewolf Movies

The Wolf Man (1941)
American Werewolf in London (1981)
Dog Soldiers (2002)
The Howling (1981)
Ginger Snaps (2000)



September 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 No regional drive this month.	2	3	4 SE Region Office Hours 7pm cst #se-region	5 VST Reports Due CC Reports Due	6	7
8	9	10 DST Reports Due	11	12	13	14
15 RST Report Due DC Reports Due	16	17	18	19	20 RC Report Due	21
22	23	24	25 US NST Report Due	26	27	28 Chattanooga GOTM
29	30 US NC Report Due	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Regional Drives for the remainder of the 2013 year:

October 2013 – Canned food drive

November 2013 – Toys for Tots

ARTISTS CORNER

Artwork By Sarah Wade US2013010018



Artwork By Tony Lone Fight US2007029471

