



The ghost of Emily Brontë presents :

# *Wuthering Heights* *roleplay*

A romantic roleplay game

by

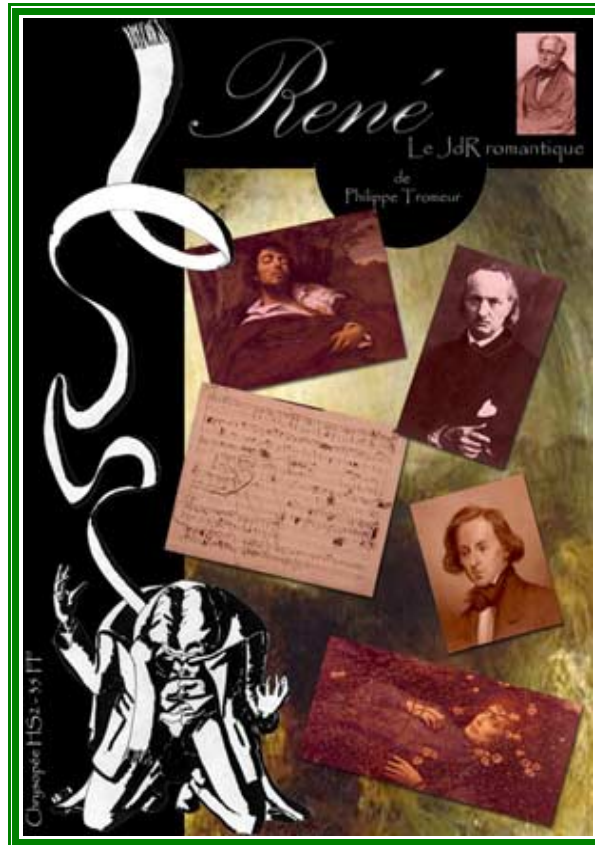
Philippe Tromeur

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## Introduction

This work is an adaptation of René le jeu de Rôle Romantique for British gentlemen. Here the work of reference shall be Wuthering Heights, of course. This text is an revised version of the French rules (the printed French version is different).



yes, it does exist ...

## Disclaimer

In all the rules, the male gender (he, his, etc.) will be used for our examples. This of course implies the game is not suited for the feeble minds of our ladies.

This work deals with such themes as **Suicide**, **Despair**, homosexuality & socialism for the sole purpose of entertainment.

No animals, nor children were knowingly hurt during the playtests of the game.

All models are at least 18 year old\*.

\* except the guy with the candle \*\*

\*\* it's a small candle anyway

## Persona Creation

The Actor shall throw two ten-sided dice & add thirty-nine to obtain the Persona's amount of **Rage**.

He shall throw two ten-sided dice & add thirty-nine to obtain the Persona's amount of **Despair**.

He shall throw one ten-sided die & add fifteen to obtain the Persona's **Oldness**. Unless some special **Problem**, this is exactly the Persona's **Age**.

Then the Actor shall throw one ten-sided die & divide by two (round up\*). This is how many **Problems** his Persona has.

The actor then determines each Problem for his Persona by throwing 1d100 & referencing to the **Problem** Table. If the Actor rolls twice the same **Problem**, he should either double its effect, or roll another **Problem**. The Actor may refuse a **Problem** for his Persona ; every time he does that, he must roll 2 **Problems** in its stead. If an Actor only rolled one (or two) **Problem**(s), it is advisable he should choose one other **Problem** to make his Persona more interesting.

He now chooses a **Name**, such as Heathcliff, Gwynplaine, Jean Valjean...

He then chooses a feature **floating in the wind** (hair / coat / scarf / kilt / whatever).

The Actor should check the box corresponding to "**Worried**" & "**Tired**", the default mental & physical states.

Choosing an **Occupation** is optional (this occupation only brings status, not skill).

\* : always round to the number which is the most annoying for the Persona. Round up when in doubt.



*& now the infamous ...*

## **Problem Table**

01-04	You are without a family
05-08	You are a republican
09-12	You are a socialist
13-15	You are a Baptist / Methodist
16-18	You are a monk or pastor
19-22	You are an homosexual
23-25	You are an alcoholic (5 pints a day)
26-28	You are a drug addict (1 hour a day)
29-31	You are honest
32-35	You are in love with someone from your family (Mother, Brother ...)
36-36	You are a sex addict (once a day)
37-38	You smoke (12 hours a day)
39-40	You gamble (2 hours a day)
41-41	You play the bagpipes (1 hour a day)
42-44	You sing (1 hour a day)
45-48	You play the piano (1 hour a day)
49-52	You are a poet (4 hours a day)
53-56	You read too much (8 hours a day)
57-59	You dress improperly
60-60	You are poor
61-64	You have ill health (double your <b>Oldness</b> but not your <b>Age</b> )
65-66	You are old (double your <b>Oldness</b> , with your <b>Age</b> )
67-70	You are naive
71-73	You are a bad guy
74-74	You are a Muslim (or Buddhist)
75-77	You are a catholic
78-78	You are a foreigner (French, German...)
79-79	You are a Jew or Gypsy (no nationality)
80-81	You are obsessed with the occult
82-83	You are ugly
84-85	You have a bad sight
86-88	You are small
89-90	You are bald
91-92	You are thin
93-94	You are fat
95-96	You are Irish
97-97	You are mute
98-98	You are haemophiliac (triple your <b>Oldness</b> only when <b>Wounded</b> )
99-99	You are deaf
00-00	You are an albino (without a big sword)

### Basic Rule

When not specified, a roll is a **d100** roll (roll **1d10** twice, first die is the tens, second die the units, « 00 » means 100).

A d10 is a ten-sided die : you can find it in every occult library or sex-shop, or you can use a Bible (carefully).

You have two ways to check **Rage, Despair** or **Oldness** : **roll above** or **roll below**.

*If the roll equals the score, it's a fumble.* A romantic **fumble** should make one's life a real pain ...

### Rage Checks

A violent action requires the Persona should roll **below** his **Rage**.

To refrain from reacting too violently, a Persona should roll **above** his **Rage**.

### Despair Checks

To make an important decision the Persona should roll **above** his **Despair**, same if he need to notice something else than his own feelings (i.e. "Perception Roll").

To be sincere, a Persona should roll **below** his **Despair**.

### Oldness Checks

To test his wisdom, one should roll **below** his **Oldness**.

To test his physical well-being, one should roll **above** his **Oldness**.

Note that you must sometimes make a difference between physical & mental **Oldness** ; a Persona suffering from an illness (generally a romantic disease such as Tuberculosis, Polio or Syphilis) has a doubled **Oldness**, but only for the purpose of physical tests. Being ill does not make you smarter.

### Duel

Both would **roll below** their **Rage**.

Should one **succeed** & the other fail, the latter gets **Wounded** (see below).

Should both **succeed**, both lose 1 **Rage** & the duel keeps on, if both would agree.

Should both **fail**, they stop the duel & become friends, or something like that. They would not fight again for 1d10 days.

Whatever the other's result, the victim of a **fumble** shall be **Wounded**.

If both **fumble**, both are **Wounded**.

### Murder / Suicide

The murderer should roll below his **Rage** twice.

Two successes mean a perfect Murder.

One success & a failure mean the victim is only **Wounded**.

Two **failures** mean the would-be murderer couldn't do such an horrible act. He loses 1 **Rage** & gains 1 **Despair**

One **fumble** means someone else was killed, not the Persona's intended victim. The murderer loses 1d10/2 **Rage** & gains 1d10/2 **Despair**.

Two **fumbles** mean the wrongest person was killed (the murderer's true love if possible). The murderer loses 1d10 **Rage** & gains 1d10 **Despair**.

### To be Wounded

A **Wounded** Persona should immediately roll **above** his **Oldness**.

If he is only **Tired** :

A success means the Persona is **Suffering** from light wounds.

A **failure** means the Persona is **Dying**.

A **fumble** means the Persona is **Dead**, after the death speech, of course.

If he is already **Suffering** :

A success means the Persona is now **Dying**.

A **failure** means the Persona is **Dead**, after the death speech, of course.

A **fumble** means the Persona is now **Dead**, without the death speech !!!

### To be Suffering

A **Suffering** Persona can act normally (well ... as usual) without penalty.

A **Suffering** Persona must try to roll above his **Oldness** every night.

One **success** brings the Persona back to health, **Tired**.

One **failure** means the Persona is now **Dying**.

### To be Dying

A **Dying** Persona can't do anything except moaning, coughing, bleeding, etc.

A **Dying** Persona must try to roll above his **Oldness** every night.

Two successive **successful** nights bring the Persona back to life, becoming **Suffering**.

Two successive **failures** kill the Persona after a lot of death speeches.





## Art

Making Art (generally speaking : painting, poetry, dance, music ...) consists into trying to transmit one's own feeling to someone else.

Hence the rules for Art :

First, the Actor choses if he wants to roll **below** his Artist's **Despair** (if he wants to communicate his sadness) or **above** it (shall he want to communicate his joy)

Then he shall throw the dice and see if he makes the roll

- If he **succeeds**, the Artist achieves what he wants
- If he **fails**, the result is rubbish
- If he **fumbles**, the result is shocking

Then every person who watches / listens / reads / tastes the results reacts.

- If the result of the artist is **rubbish**, everyone knows but few will tell.
- If the Art is shocking, some people might **Rage** against the Artist.
- If the Artist expressed what he wanted, there shall be a roll to see if the spectator is moved by this Art. The person makes the same kind of roll than the artist did (above / below **Despair**).
  - If he **succeeds**, he is completely moved by the Art, and Shall gain / lose 1d5 **Despair** (depending on what the Artist wanted)
  - If he **fails**, he is only politely interested in it
  - If he **fumbles**, he is moved by the Art, in a negative way, and shall gain / lose 1d5 **Rage / Despair** (what is the most dramatic)

## Love

Trying to seduce someone is trying to make someone share one's feelings.

So : the rules for seduction exactly follow the rules for Art (see above).

I won't repeat myself, so I give an example :

*Lord Vincent Smallpees (R51 D58 O21) wants to seduce Lady Margaret Whateley (R45 D55 O23), the wife of his best friend Alfred Thompson. He choses to tell her he's been loving her for such a long time, that his heart will shatter if she ever refuses to be kind, or something like that. His Actor choses to roll below Vincent's Despair ; he rolls : it's a 11, which is a Success. Cowabunga !*

*Now let's see how Lady Margaret will react to this sincere expression of personal suffering. As Vincent's Actor did, Margaret's Actor shall roll below her Despair ; he rolls : it's a 55, which is a fumble !*

*Margaret suddenly remembers her loved father, dying from a heart attack during a dinner. Could she kill her best friend, this dear Vincent ? Could she betray her husband ? Margaret feels panicked ; she gains 1d10/2 Despair :  $9 / 2 = 5$  !*

*She is completely seized with angst and flees Vincent, crying.*

*Vincent gains 1 Despair. His rolls under this new value of Despair, which means he can't react. Margaret runs towards the cliffs ...*

### Emotional Shocks

During a Tragedy (an 'adventure'), the Persona will go up & down **Rage** & **Despair** scales.

A strong shock (death of a friend ...) will make the Persona gain / lose d10 points in **Rage** or **Despair**.

An important event (love **success** / **failure**, death of a relative ...) make the Persona gain / lose d10/2 points.

Some events / situations may make the Persona gain / lose 1 point (good / bad weather, small success / failure ...).

### Effects of important gains & losses of Rage & Despair

If a Persona **gains** 5 **Rage** or more at once, he suffers from a sudden fit of violence, aimed at the object / person which caused the last important gain of **Rage**. Depending on the situation, this might mean screaming at someone, breaking something, a **Duel**, a **Murder** ... After his wrath calms down (1d10 minutes), the Persona loses 1d10/2 **Rage**.

If a Persona **gains** 5 **Despair** or more at once, he suffers from a sudden fit of angst. Depending on the situation, this might mean catatonia, **Suicide** ... If he survives this 1d10-minute-long crisis, the Persona loses 1d10/2 **Despair**.

If a Persona **loses** 5 **Rage** or more at once, he suffers from a sudden fit of apathy. After 1d10 minutes of meditation, the Persona gains back 1d10/2 **Rage**.

If a Persona **loses** 5 **Despair** or more at once, he suffers from a sudden fit of joy. After this 1d10-minute-long happiness, the Persona gains back 1d10/2 **Despair**.

### Effects of extraordinary values of Rage / Despair

If a Persona's **Rage** ever reaches (or rises above) **75**, he suffers from a sudden fit of violence (see above).

If a Persona's **Despair** ever reaches (or rises above) **75**, he suffers from a sudden fit of angst (see above).

If a Persona's **Rage** ever reaches (or falls below) **25**, he suffers from a sudden fit of apathy (see above).

If a Persona's **Despair** ever reaches (or falls below) **25**, he suffers from a sudden fit of joy (see above).

### Effects of cumulative gains & losses of Rage & Despair

Once the character has gained more than 10 points in **Rage** or **Despair** in less than a week, he goes up one level into madness. All Persona start at "**Worried**", then become "**Troubled**", then "**Deranged**", then "**Absent**".



### To be Worried

A **Worried** Persona is a fully functional (yet fictional) character in a Tragedy, only more sensitive than the banal person.

### To be Troubled

A **Troubled** Persona seems to react normally to the outside world, but is in fact obsessed with his own **Problems**.

This state is normally **1d10 days** long, after which the Persona is only **Worried**.

### To be Deranged

A **Deranged** Persona does not seem to react normally to the outside world, being so obsessed with his own **Problems**.

This state is normally **1d10 weeks** long, after which the Persona becomes **Troubled**.

### To be Absent

An **Absent** Persona does not react to the outside world at all except for basic needs (breathing, eating, sleeping, writing poetry ...).

This state is normally **1d10 months** long, after which the Persona becomes **Deranged**.



## Ghost

If a Persona dies before the end of a Tragedy, he might become a **Ghost**, 2d10 minutes of play later.

A **Ghost** may act (subtly) on the physical world when his Actor rolls below his **Rage**. He shall lose d10 points of **Rage** after that.

He may suggest something to a living character when his Actor rolls below his **Despair**. He shall gain d10 points of **Despair** after that.

**Ghosts** can fly slowly, but can't go through solid objects. They disappear when their **Rage** or **Despair** reaches 10 or below, or at the end of the Tragedy.

**Ghosts** can't sense or affect each others.

A **Ghost** never gains **Rage** or **Despair** (or loses them for other reasons than ghostly actions).

## Ageing

Every Christmas, the Persona rolls d10xd10 : this is a number of days after which the Persona becomes ill (**Suffering**).

Every April, 11, the Persona has 10% to gain a new **Problem**.

## Rewards / Evolution

Should some Personae survive a tragedy (a gaming session), give one of them the possibility to lose a **Problem**.

If a Persona's **Rage** or **Despair** is greater than 55, they lose d10/2 points.

If a Persona's **Rage** or **Despair** is less than 45, they gain d10/2 points.

Add 1d10/2 to the Persona's **Oldness** (1d10/2 years pass).

## End word

Such is Wuthering Heights Roleplay, English adaptation of French Masterpiece René le jeu de rôle romantique.

If you have any comment about the game (or the grammar or anything), write to me at this address : pht@i.am

Philippe TROMEUR



# Wuthering Heights Roleplay Game



**Name :**

**Sex :**

**Occupation :**

**Origin :**

**Things floating in the wind :**

**Rage : \_\_\_\_**

**Despair : \_\_\_\_**

**Oldness : \_\_\_\_**

**Age : \_\_\_\_**

**Problems**

**Details**

**Tired**

**Suffering**

**Dying**

**Dead**

**Worried**

**Troubled**

**Deranged**

**Absent**

**Notes :**

## Appendix 1 : a tragedy

# Sailing to Nowhere

**A Young Man in Distress**

**Leaving Home**

**Love Boat**

**The Arrival**

**The Manor of Dread**

**The Picnic of Devastation**

**No Future**

## Appendix 2 : variant of character creation

### The Archetypes

Instead of completely rolling up a persona, the actors can chose an archetype, which considerably speeds up things.

Roll the Attributes as indicated, then for each problem proposed, roll a d100 to see if you are affected by the listed problem.

#### The Priest

Rage : 39+1d10  
Despair : 50+1d10  
Oldness : 20+1d10/2  
100% Priest  
80% Naïve  
60% Alcoholic  
40% Reads too much  
20% Sings  
Roll one last problem

#### The Fiend

Rage : 50+1d10  
Despair : 50+1d10  
Oldness : 20+1d10/2  
100% Bad Guy  
80% Foreigner / Jew / Irish ...  
60% Without a family  
40% Ugly  
20% Smokes  
Roll one last problem

#### The Shame

Rage : 39+1d10  
Despair : 39+2d10  
Oldness : 15+1d10  
50% Alcoholic / Drug-Addict  
50% Homosexual  
50% Gambles  
50% Socialist  
50% Dresses improperly  
Roll one last problem

#### The Thin-Blooded

Rage : 39+1d10  
Despair : 50+1d10  
Oldness : 15+1d10/2  
100% Ill Health / Haemophiliac  
80% Reads too much  
60% Love in the family  
40% Haemophiliac / Ill Health  
20% Albino  
Roll one last problem

#### The Bourgeois

Rage : 39+1d10  
Despair : 39+1d10  
Oldness : 15+1d10  
50% Plays the piano  
50% Love in the family  
50% Honest  
50% Fat  
50% Reads too much  
Roll one last problem

#### The Artist

Rage : 39+2d10  
Despair : 50+1d10  
Oldness : 15+1d10/2  
100% Writes poetry (or another art)  
80% Read too much  
60% Drug-Addict  
40% Poor  
20% Obsessed with the occult  
Roll one last problem



## Appendix 3 : d20 Compatibility

### Character Creation

Roll up a d20 character as usual.

Roll the Wuthering Heights special attributes (Rage, Despair, Oldness, Problems ...).  
Voilà !

### Optional Racial Modifiers

Wuthering Heights characters are generally human. If you wish to create non-human PCs, here are some suggestions :

Elves : -d10/5 Rage ; +d10/5 Despair

Half-Elves : +d10/5 Despair

Dwarves : +d10/2 Rage

Halflings : -d10/2 Rage ; -d10/2 Despair

Gnomes : -d10/2 Rage ; +d10/2 despair

Half-Orcs : +d10 Rage

### Action Resolution

You can use either the D20 resolution system, or the Wuthering Heights Engine, as you wish, depending on the situation.

The WHE is recommended for Tragedies, though ; use the D20 system when you have to crawl some dungeon or kick some evil Necromancer's ass (which does not happen very often in the 19<sup>th</sup> century).



## Appendix 4 : F.A.Q.

- So you don't have rules for different damage depending on the weapon, the skill of the attacker, the penetration, armor, hydrostatic pressure, wound location ... ?

- No

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This text is dedicated to the participants at Baroquon '99  
(sorry for missing Rococon 2001)

especially

Sheila Thomas  
and my “Wuthering Heights” playtesters  
(M. Baker, M. Lush, A. Rilstone & R.A. Worth)



sure I'm on coke ...