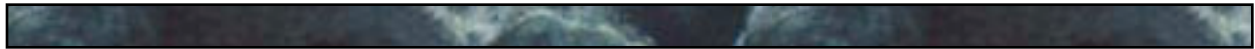


STORM KNIGHTS

ACTION CANT

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ACTION CANT

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These are original rules, intended for use with *TORG: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. The most recent version of these rules (and other TORG resources) can be found on the STORM KNIGHTS website:

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INTRODUCTION

TORG is a cinematic game, the mechanics of which encourage fast-paced action. Some realities, however, are more fast-and-furious than others.

The Nile Empire is a pulp realm, it draws inspiration from Golden Age comics and movie serials. Orrorsh is the reality of fear, it reflects various horror movies and novels.

The essence of TORG is the clash between different realities such as these. To depict this, the game mechanics use Axi-

oms and World Laws.

Axioms limit the ability of the living to create and use tools. World Laws define the “genre” of a reality. Though they measure many ways in which realities differ, neither fully capture the differing levels of action common to all realities.

This article expands the basic reality rules of TORG. In addition to Axioms and World Laws, it adds a new aspect to the reality of a cosm: the Action Cant.

ACTION CANT

The Action Cant measures how action-oriented a reality is on a 5-point scale, from "Gritty" to "Superheroic." Cosms with a high Action Cant are fast-paced and furious, cosms with a low Action Cant are more "realistic."

In general, most realities are assumed to have an Action value of 3, unless the genre of the reality indicates otherwise. Core Earth, for example, is a 3. The Nile is more action oriented, and so rates a 4. Nippon Tech is more realistic, so it would probably be a 2.

The chart includes the author's interpretations of TORG realities and their probable Action Cant.

The Rules

The Action Cant governs how many damage packets a character can buy off with a possibility, roll-again opportunities, the roll required to achieve a Glory, how many Drama Deck cards each player can have in their hand, and (at a high Cant) a

ORRORSH AND THE ACTION CANT

Orrorsh has a suggested Action Cant of 1, making it a Gritty reality. Nearly all horror movies or stories tend toward the "gritty" end of the scale and Orrorsh's Cant represents this.

The "Marked for Death" Fear result (see the *Orrorsh Sourcebook*, pg. 63) overlaps somewhat with the Action Cant mechanics for buying off Damage. In a Gritty reality (like Orrorsh), characters can only buy off 1 damage packet with a Possibility, whereas with Marked For Death, characters can't spend Possibilities to buy off damage at all.

Orrorsh's Action Cant applies all of the time and so marking a character for death is somewhat gratuitous. If using the Action Cant rules with Orrorsh, it would probably be better to eliminate the "Marked for Death" Fear result, in the interest of balance.

REALITY	ACTION	DESCRIPTION
Aysle	3	Cinematic
Core Earth	3	Cinematic
Cyberpapacy	2	Adventurous
Land Below	4	Heroic
Living Land	2*	Adventurous
Nile Empire	4	Heroic
Nippon Tech	2	Adventurous
Tharkold	1	Gritty
Orrorsh	1	Gritty
Space Gods	3	Cinematic

*Or 1, depending on how tough you want the Living Land to be.

character's first multi-action is free.

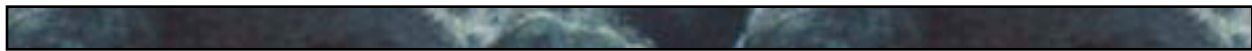
Damage Packets

Possibilities can be used to "buy off" damage. In default TORG, each possibility can buy off 3 "packets" of damage. One damage packet is 3 Shock, 1 Wound, "K," "O," or "KO".

With these rules, the Action Cant determines how many damage packets a character can buy off with each possibility. In a realm with Action 1, only 1 damage packet can be bought off with each possibility. In a realm with Action 5, 5 damage packets can be bought off.

Roll-Agains

TORG has a mechanic commonly referred to as an "exploding" dice. Whenever the d20 is rolled, the player can roll-again on a 10 or 20. This is modified depending on whether the character is an ord or a stormer and if the character has adds in the appropriate skill.



CANT	ACTION	GAME EFFECTS
1	Gritty	1 damage packet per possibility. Roll-agains on a 10. 3 cards per hand. Glory 50.
2	Adventurous	2 damage packets per possibility. Roll-agains on a 10. 4 cards per hand. Glory 50.
3	Cinematic	3 damage packets per possibility. Roll-agains on a 10 and 20. 4 cards per hand. Glory 60.
4	Heroic	4 damage packets per possibility. Roll-agains on a 10 and 20. 5 cards per hand. First action is free. Glory 60.
5	Superheroic	5 damage packets per possibility. Roll-agains on a 10 and 20. 5 cards per hand. First action is free. Glory 60.

When using the Action Cant rules, ords and stormers are treated the same for roll-again opportunities- they both have the roll-again opportunities the Action Cant gives them. In a realm with Action 1 or 2, characters can roll-again on a 10, but not a 20. In a realm with Action 3 (or higher) characters can roll-again on a natural 10 or 20.

This restriction doesn't apply to possibilities. When a character rolls the d20, then spends a possibility to roll another dice and add it to the first, the possibility

WORLD LAWS

World Laws can modify the Action Cant. In the Space Gods reality, for example, the rules on damage packets are modified by the alignment of the character (Aka, Coar, or Zinatt.) World Laws override the Action Cant for natives of that reality (always) and for visitors to that reality (only while they are there). Other World Laws can be adjudicated in a similar manner.

Gamemasters should also feel free to adjust certain World Laws, in regards to the Action Cant. This can customize these rules for a particular cosm. For instance, this author has modified the Nile's Law of Action to allow Nilish characters to have access to their Action 4, even when they are in other cosms. In that case, using the benefits of their Action Cant causes a 1-case contradiction (as it is the effect of a World Law.)

die roll (but not the original) has roll-agains on 10 and 20.

Characters who do not have adds in a skill, yet attempt to use it, are considered

unskilled. When using these rules, being *unskilled* has two effects. The Difficulty Number for *unskilled* skill use is usually higher (see *The Storm Knight's Guide to the Possibility Wars*, pg. 63-65) and the character is *stymied*. This condition "cancels" the first roll-again opportunity, as normal.

Card Hands

When using the TORG Drama Deck, the normal size of a player's hand is 4 cards. Whenever the player gets to refill their hand, they refill up to 4 (not counting subplots and other special cards).

The hand size of players is now dependent on the Action Cant of the realm they are adventuring in. In a realm with Action 1 or 2, their hand size is 3 cards- they can only ever have 3 cards in their hands (subplots and other special cards excepted). In Action 3, the hand size is 4 cards. In Action 5, it is 5 cards.

One-on-Many

The One-on Many multi-action rules (pg. 107 of the *Revised and Expanded TORG Rulebook*) enable characters to engage in the kind of cinematic heroics essential to a good TORG game. Instead of 1 action per each round, TORG characters can try multiple actions, though at a penalty of increasing each action's Difficulty

Number.

In realms with an Action rating of 4 or 5, multi-actions become easier: the first action taken in a round doesn't count when calculating the multi-action penalty penalty.

ACTION CANT AND REALITY

Cants are a third part of a cosm's reality. The first two are World Laws and Axioms. Axioms and World Laws both have different rules for contradictions and other reality-crossing mechanics. Cants function differently from both World Laws and Axioms.

A reality's Action Cant affects all those who enter the reality, without contradiction. Anyone who enters takes full advantage of the Cant's benefits (or hindrances.) This causes no contradictions, so never threatens characters with disconnection. Characters do not possess Cants, and thus are not affected by their "home" Cant when outside their reality.

These rules, despite being somewhat different from those usual in TORG, are necessary, both to maintain the integrity of a cosm's genre and for game balance.

HIGH LORDS AND ORDS

High Lords and chief lieutenants of High Lords should always be treated as if they were Action 5, even if their reality would normally have a different rating. This adds a little extra danger to these prime villains.

"Ords" are individuals who are ordinary. They are the dependents and minor characters in a *Torg* "movie." They are intended to be real people, whereas Storm Knights are the larger-than-life heroes. Ords should always be realistic, while Storm Knights are more cinematic.

Under these rules, ords should always be treated as if their Action Cant were 1. This highlights the contrast between Storm Knights and ords.

Glory

The limited roll-again opportunities available at Action 1 and 2 make achieving a Glory result harder. Accordingly, the required roll for achieving a Glory in those realities is lower, a 50 instead of a 60.

Cosms with "gritty" action would be far too easy for a heroic or superheroic character to adventure in- they would simply be far tougher than locals. Conversely, characters from a "gritty" realm would be far too hampered in a "superheroic" realm.

The genre of a cosm is enhanced by an appropriate Action Cant rating. Characters can be far more heroic in a "pulp" realm than in a horror realm. By having the Cant be a universal convention, alien characters play by the same rules as locals.

Mixed Zones

Mixed zones are rare occurrences.

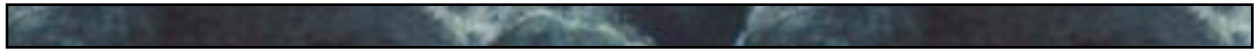
They are usually violently storm ridden areas where two realities battle for dominance.

Reality fluxes and shifts,

with one realm or the other predominating. This instability means the effective Action Cant can change from moment to moment, although it can also remain stable over long periods of time.

Gamemasters may choose what the Action Cant is at any given moment, selecting the Cant of one reality or the other or any value in between. Of course, if both reali-

MIXED ZONE CHART					
	Realm 1				
Realm 2	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	2	2	3	3
2	2	2	3	3	3
3	2	3	3	3	4
4	3	3	3	4	4
5	3	3	4	4	5



ties have the same Cant, this is the Cant for the whole mixed zone.

Alternately, gamemasters may consult the mixed zone chart (which averages out the different Cants). To use, read the Ac-

tion Cant of the first reality across, then the second reality's Cant down. The intersection of the two is the effective Cant of the mixed zone.

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