An Adventure in White Wolf’s World of Darkness

The World of Darkness is a gothic and noir inspired setting for several tabletop roleplaying games produced by White Wolf Publishing including Vampire: The Requiem and Werewolf: The Apocalypse. White Wolf games are similar in concept to Dungeons and Dragons but with a more explicit focus on storytelling.

Tabletop Roleplaying

You are a denizen of the World of Darkness, where some nightmares are real and danger lurks around every corner. You will role play one of four people drawn into a mysterious plot. Your Game Master will serve as narrator and play the part of the other characters you meet.

Character Sheet and Dice Rolling

Your character sheet describes your personality and lists the various abilities that your character has. Most things are measured in the number of dots after the name. When your character wishes to take an action in the game, do this:

- Ask your Game Master what roll to make. Usually he will tell you an Attribute and a Skill.
- Add the number of dots next to the Attribute to the number of dots next to the Skill.
- Roll that many 10-sided dice.
- Every die that shows an 8, 9, or 10 is one success. Keep track of your successes.
- Re-roll any dice that show a 10, adding more successes if you get more. Repeat.
- Report the total number of successes to the Game Master.

If you want to take an action for which you would not roll any dice, roll one 10-sided die. If you get a 10, it is worth one success (and you get to roll again), otherwise you fail dramatically.

For example, say you want to search a room for a clue that will explain how a local millionaire was murdered. Your Game Master tells you to make a “Wits + Investigation” roll. Say you have 2 dots in Wits and 1 dot in Investigation, so you roll three 10-sided dice. They show 3, 8, and 10. Two of those are successes. Then you re-roll the 10 and get a 9. You tell your Game Master that you rolled 3 successes, so he narrates that you find a fingerprint.

Willpower

If you really want an action to succeed, you can spend a willpower point to roll 3 extra dice. The number of dots in Willpower tell you how many points you have to spend. When you spend a point, place an “X” in one of the Willpower boxes to indicate that you have used it.

Notice that your character also has a Virtue and a Vice at the top of your character sheet. If you take an action which is consistent with your Virtue or Vice, but which is bad for you in the game, your Game Master may choose to reward you by giving you a point of willpower back.
Morality
One of the primary themes in the *World of Darkness* is sin and the descent into madness. If you do something immoral, your Game Master will tell you to make a morality roll with some number of dice. If you fail that roll, you lose 1 dot of Morality. Then make a roll equal to the number of remaining dots in Morality. If you fail that roll too, your character becomes mentally deranged. Your Game Master will tell you what kind of derangement you gain.

Merits
Merits represent resources that are at your character’s disposal, such as money, fame, or connections in the underworld. Each merit is different, so consult your character description.

Combat
Many tabletop roleplaying games focus on combat, but in *The World of Darkness* you may go many sessions without ever getting into a fight. However, should you find yourself in combat, here are some common rolls. Note that each weapon has a bonus that gets added to the number of dice you roll.

- Weaponless hand-to-hand fighting: Strength + Brawl
- Melee weapon fighting, such as with a sword: Strength + Weaponry + the sword’s bonus
- Ranged weapon fighting, such as with a gun: Dexterity + Firearms + the gun’s bonus

If your attack roll exceeds the Defense of your target by some number, you do that many points of damage. Damage can be either Bashing (indicated by a “/” in a Health box) or Lethal (indicated by an “X” in a health box). If you have no empty health boxes and take Bashing damage, change “/”s to “X”s. If you have no empty boxes and take Lethal damage, you die.

Discussion Questions
1. During your adventure, the Game Master probably had to adapt the story in response to the unexpected actions of the players. Ask you Game Master for an example of when this happened and how he responded. When should a Game Master rearrange the story to fit the players, and when should a Game Master prompt the players to follow his story?
2. How did rewarding you for roleplaying your virtue or vice effect meta-gaming?
3. A roleplaying game overseen by a human storyteller is, for many, the gold standard of interactive narrative. Imagine writing a bot to control the narrative of a digital RPG such as *Dragon Age*. Is this an AI complete task? What single ability of a human Game Master would be hardest to replicate?
4. Due to time constraints, you played with pre-constructed characters. How does the process of creating your own character effect the game? Does it facilitate role playing, or is adopting a pre-constructed persona appeal to you in some cases?