Civil War: Act I

Build Up Scene: Battle of Stamford

(By James Nostack)

This scene takes place in Stamford, CT as the X-Men confront the Rampaging Hulk. **Players should be advised that the X-Men will probably be defeated and possibly killed.** This scene is included solely to demonstrate just how much carnage can result from super heroes battling it out in a public place, and how dangerous the Hulk can be.

Doom Pool

The Doom Pool for Act I normally begins at 2d8; you may have played some of the earlier build-up scenes, in which case it might be higher or lower. For this scene, in the process of activating the Rampaging Hulk, the Hulk has already suffered 1d12 Emotional stress and 1d6 Emotional trauma, which gets cleared out and moved to the Doom Pool. The Hulk is also suffering from a **Complication: Easily Angered d8** (this is a plot item for later in the Event), which also adds 1d8 to the Doom Pool for this scene. Add all of that to whatever your current Doom Pool is.

If this is your first scene in the game, however, the total Doom Pool begins at 1d6 + 3d8 + 1d12.

Who is Present?

Player Characters:

The Uncanny X-Men. The roster I handed out included <u>Beast</u>, <u>Colossus</u>, <u>Cyclops</u>, <u>Shadowcat</u>, and <u>Storm</u>. Feel free to use others, I strongly suggest using Storm to lead to conflict with the Black Panther and Wakanda in later Acts. I let the players know that any character not selected by the PC's was either busy doing crisis control, traumatized, or dead. I deliberately left Wolverine out because I have plans for him later, but you can do your own thing.

Watcher Characters:

- The Rampaging Hulk

- Mob of 5d4 Civilians (distinction: panicked; specialties: none)

Frame the Scene

We're opening in medias res, with the X-Men locked in a losing battle against the Rampaging Hulk. Ask the players how this happened. Specifically:

- Why did they come to Stamford, Connecticut in the first place? (If you have a town you'd rather destroy, feel free to use it.) Were they on a mission, or just passing through?

- How did they end up fighting the Hulk? The big green guy is super angry, far more so than you've ever seen him before—did you find him this way, or did you somehow set him off, and if so, how?

- What's their plan? There are numerous civilians at risk, possibly several of their teammates have been injured, and the Hulk is just getting started.

Just to be Sadistic

Make sure every player begins with 1 plot point token. Explain that they can gain an additional plot point by activating one of their limits.

- *Colossus*: for one extra plot point, explain what mistake you made that allowed the Hulk to throw you into the middle of the Long Island Sound, so that your Superhuman Durability d12 is now changed into **Complication: Sinking Fast d12**. (Please note: in one of my playtests, Colossus never managed to get out of this complication and spent the whole scene stuck in the mud. This is probably a good chance to break out the "Work Uninterrupted to Remove a Complication" rule [OM55], and say that after 3 rounds of trying, he's managed to work himself free and remove the complication by spending a plot point.)

- *Cyclops*: for one extra plot point, explain how the Hulk disabled your ruby visor. This either shuts down your optic blast, or turns it into a **Complication: Zapping Everything in Sight d10**.

- *Shadowcat*: for one extra plot point, explain where the heck Lockheed wandered off to, and why he won't be available this scene.

- *Storm:* for one extra plot point, explain how your emotions got the better of you, and turn one of your Goddess of the Storm powers into a complication. (One player suggested that she was annoyed that the Black Panther was having cold feet about the wedding and didn't have the courage to tell her this himself.)

During playtest, taking these plot points proved hard to resist, but they really complicate the X-Men's position. No need to tell the players that, though...

Scene Distinctions

- Half the Town is on Fire
- Downed Power Lines
- Streets Choked with Rubble

Scene Events

- Spend 1d8 Doom = 4d6 Mob of Cops (confused, out-classed—note that using these distinctions at d4 grows the Doom Pool) arrive, firing on super humans with their d6 pistols. About half the time they will target the Hulk (who they cannot possibly damage), but aren't above shooting at enormously destructive mutants such as Cyclops or an out-of-control storm goddess. If the heroes try to reason with them and calm them down, the cops might be able to loan a d6 support die to the heroes.

- Spend 1d10 Doom = add Toxic Acid Cloud is released as part of the random destruction from a nearby chemical plant, as a 4d6 large scale threat (distinction: poisonous; Power Trait: corrosive d8, with the area attack SFX).

Running the Scene

As the Watcher, your job here is to build up at least 2d12 Doom Dice, and then end the scene once several of the X-Men have been taken massive stress or trauma. By ending the scene with things going massively against the heroes, you can declare that the Hulk has killed, driven insane, or emotionally crippled several super heroes, as well as half the town of Stamford, Connecticut.

Explain to the players that the Rampaging Hulk is defeated by knocking the Doom Pool down to 2 dice, just like you'd defeat a large-scale threat. The Hulk's **Complication: Easily Angered d8** may help anyone trying to inflict Emotional stress on the brute.

As players who wants to go first. If they can't decide after a while, it would probably be Beast or Storm, with their superior reflexes.

When it gets around to the Hulk's turn, you've got three good options: fight with any X-Men in your vicinity, use an area attack against the 5d4 mob of civilians (remove one mob-die for each effect die of d6 or higher), or grandstand in a spectacularly destructive or menacing fashion to add a die directly to the Doom Pool (as usual, a hero may try to oppose if it makes narrative sense to do so).

As a Watcher, keep an eye on the Beast if he's in play. His *Oh My Stars and Garters!* SFX can erode the Doom Pool pretty quickly. Try to take him out early if possible.

Another thing to keep in mind: the X-Men work really well as a team, but pretty poorly as individuals. It might be worth spending a 1d10 Doom Die to split off a particularly pesky X-Man into a solo situation, where his or her Affiliation will be knocked down to a 1d6.

When I run this scene, I keep forgetting to spend 1d8 Doom to introduce the Mob of Cops. I think it's useful to bring them in, to demonstrate the impotence of conventional law enforcement in the context of superhuman carnage—which helps to explain why the Registration Act is so necessary.

Be sure to keep an eye on the Doom Pool, because as soon as it drops to two dice, the Hulk reverts to Bruce Banner. When you feel you've got a comfortable margin, though, spend 1d10 Doom to introduce the Toxic Cloud. The Toxic Cloud can be used to take out remaining civilians, the cops, or (best choice) any X-Men congregated together.

The Scene Ends When...

- Watcher spends 2d12 Doom to end the scene (and hand out 2 XP to all players). Generally it's best to do this once you've really got the X-Men on the ropes.

- The X-Men reduce the Doom Pool to two dice, and the Hulk changes back to Bruce Banner.

- The X-Men are all stressed out or otherwise preoccupied.

- The X-Men flee the scene, either on foot or by bringing in their Blackbird (requires a character with a Vehicles specialty to activate a Watcher's opportunity to bring in this resource). The Hulk is probably too busy smashing apart the town to care that these puny mutants are fleeing.