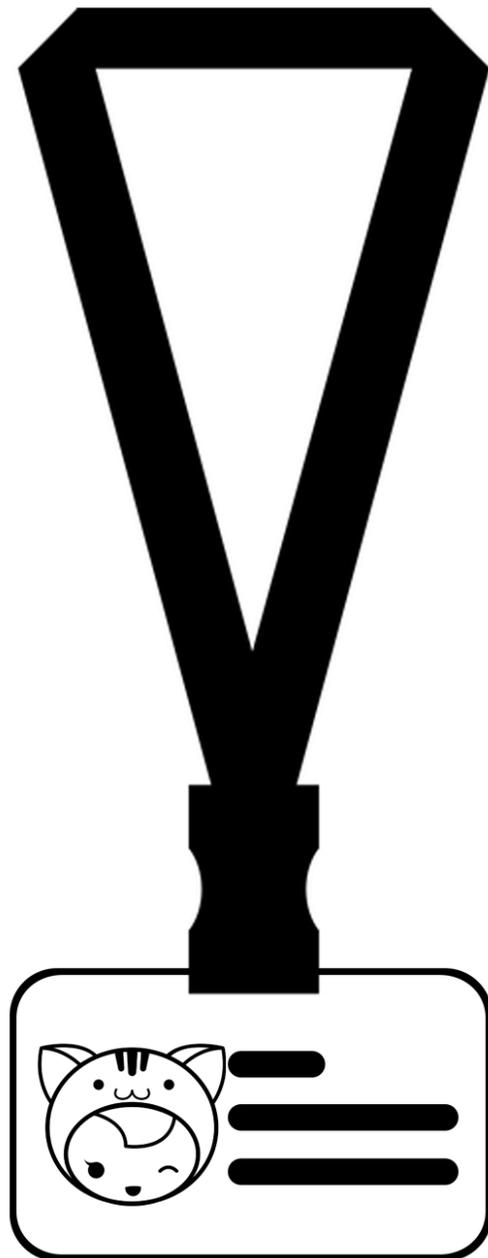


AnimeCon

By Ewen Cluney

A Freeform RPG For 3-6 Players



Introduction

It's Memorial Day weekend. You're going to AnimeCon, one of the biggest anime conventions in the country. You've been planning for this day for months, and you come to the con with a bucket load of hopes that are about to collide with reality.

This is a freeform-style RPG, where you improvise a story about ordinary people going to an anime convention. (You can make it be about another kind of convention by tweaking the roles and the convention sheet.) The characters in it are flawed, but realistic, and sympathetic. They're not idealized, but they're not portrayed as human garbage either. They're just people.

Things You'll Need

In order to play you will need printouts of the role cards and convention sheet, something to write with, a total of 3-6 players, and a few hours to play. You can play seated around a table, over the internet, or even live-action. You will need some knowledge of anime conventions in order to play.

Inspirations

Amidst Endless Quiet, Dramacon, The Four-Day Weekend, Fuck Youth, Genshiken, Remodel, Until We Sink, and about 20 years of involvement in anime fandom.

Credits

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Setup

Once you have the necessary materials and you've all gathered together, take a little time to talk and generally warm up. If you don't know each other, introduce yourself. Maybe play a little word association or another word game. If there's anything you especially do or don't want to see in the game, this is the time to bring it up. Although it has the potential to get very emotional, this is still ultimately something you do for fun.

Each player contributes one item to "the buzz," a list of things that are particularly popular and prevalent at the convention. These can be series that are especially big in the fandom, guests that people really want to see, or trends that are sweeping the convention. Ideally, these should be things that all the players are familiar with, or at least feel confident they can bullshit about.

Each player picks a role card and fills it out. There'll be some choices and a fill-in-the-blank. Think about what's in the buzz as you come up with answers. You can add some more details not mentioned on the card if you wish, but try not to spend too much time on it. Particularly for the name, you are not limited to the choices on the card.

Once everyone's done, each player briefly introduces their character to the group. Each player then says how their character knows one of the other player's characters. Your character may know the other characters in ways that haven't been established yet, or they could just be strangers that you repeatedly bump into over the course of the convention.

Scenes

The game plays out in a series of scenes. Go around the table, letting the players take turns setting up scenes. Keep going until you have checked all of the boxes on the scene sheet. (You can skip some if you want the game to be shorter.)

When it's your turn to set the scene, pick one of the entries on the scene sheet and check the box for it. Scenes that say "Play First" must be played before any other scenes are picked, and scenes that say "Play Last" must be played after all of the others are checked off. Use it as inspiration to frame a scene. Decide which characters appear in it, where and when it takes place, and the general situation.

When you are setting up a scene, you don't actually have to have your character be a part of it. Regardless, try to give every player a chance to participate in the game a reasonable amount. If someone hasn't been in the scene in a while, try to think of a way to include them. When other characters besides those of the players show up, anyone can jump in and play them, though you should avoid having too many other characters take part of the story.

Role-play the scene as it comes to you naturally. Try to keep individual scenes short, say 5 minutes or so, but don't worry too much if it runs longer.

Role Cards

Beleaguered Staffer

- **Name (Choose One):** Nicole, Kentaro, Carly, Lucas, Aya, Josh
- You're on staff at this convention, and mostly just want everything to go smoothly.
- **Staff Position (Choose One):**
 - Gopher/Volunteer
 - Guest Relations
 - Tabletop Gaming
 - Video Rooms
 - _____
- Something is already going wrong with _____.
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Confused, Frustrated, Serene

Starting Relationship

Troublemaker

- **Name (Choose One):** Emily, Kyle, Sylvia, Ben, Ginger, Dennis
- You have something of a grudge with _____.
- Let's face it, you really just want attention.
- You came to the con with... (Choose One):
 - Some firecrackers.
 - A costume that conceals your face.
 - A "Free Hugs" sign.
 - A backpack full of super balls.
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Curious, Mischievous, Sullen

Starting Relationship

Professional Artist

- **Name (Choose One):** Alexis, Simon, Naomi, Jake, Dawn, Cedric
- You're a professional creator, known for your work on _____.
- You're a bit older and wiser than the average attendee at this con.
- You're here the con... (Choose One):
 - As a guest of honor.
 - Just for fun.
 - To help out at your publisher's booth.
 - To spend time with a friend you haven't seen in a while.
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Annoyed, Melancholy, Relaxed

Starting Relationship

Sexy Cosplayer

- **Name (Choose One):** Kelly, Adam, Tina, Tim, Mai, Tomoaki
- You're sexy and don't mind showing it off.
- You are cosplaying as _____.
- You're hoping to... (choose one or more):
 - Show off your hot body.
 - Show off your amazing costume.
 - Have a good time.
 - Find a boyfriend/girlfriend.
 - Not get harassed.
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Confident, Embarrassed, Envious

Starting Relationship

Young Artist

- **Name (Choose One):** Jenny, Chris, Samantha, Jonathan, Sue, Nick
- This is your first time going to a convention.
- You brought a lot of fanart of _____.
- You have an artist alley booth along with... (choose one):
 - Your boyfriend/girlfriend.
 - A more experienced artist.
 - Your best friend.
 - Someone who bailed at the last minute.
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Exhausted, Nervous, Optimistic

Starting Relationship

Zany Friend

- **Name (Choose One):** Megan, Dave, Rebecca, Mike, Angela, Jon
- You're a veteran of many conventions, and you're happy to have talked a friend in coming.
- Before the convention is over you must get _____.
- You are totally addicted to... (choose one or more):
 - Yaoi
 - Caffeine
 - Buying Plushies
 - Glomping
- **Opening Mood (Choose One):** Caffeinated, Dorky, Excited

Starting Relationship

Convention Sheet

Convention Name

AnimeCon

The Buzz

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Scenes

- The registration line (Play First)
- Setting up (Play First)
- Professional advice
- Power outage
- An argument with security
- Recounting what happened last year
- The dance
- After hours, in a hotel room
- A rare opportunity
- A prank gone wrong
- Uncomfortable elevator ride
- The masquerade
- The hottest new series
- A medical issue
- Monday afternoon lunch (Play Last)
- Back home (Play Last)

Convention Locations

- Artists Alley
- Autograph Session
- Backstage
- Bathroom
- Bento Booth
- Café
- Con Ops
- Concert
- Dance
- Dealers Room
- Electronic Gaming
- Elevator
- Garage
- Hallway
- Hotel Back Room
- Hotel Bar
- Hotel Lobby
- Hotel Pool/Hot Tub
- Hotel Restaurant
- Hotel Room
- Maid Café
- Masquerade
- Nearby Restaurant
- Panel Room
- Party Room
- Registration
- Stairwell
- Tabletop Gaming
- The Green Room
- Video Room
- Volunteers Room