Eldritch Express
Rule Draft

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Introduction

This is an attempt to implement Eldritch Horror has an express dice game similar to the Arkham Express dice game. It borrows ideas from Eldritch Horror, Arkham Horror, Arkham Express and Elder Sign. This has been lightly tested and it is somewhat working, but there is a lot of balance issues for far regarding the odds.

Nb of players: Maybe a max of 4 players, since the goal is to keep the game short. Also with only 6 regions to travel on, you cannot cover all spaces of the world.
Play time: The aimed playtime is 30-60 minutes, but will probably last 120 minute.

Components

Here is the current list of components of the game. The goal is to keep the game relatively compact, so mostly tokens, cards and dices has been used.

1 World Map: A board split in 6 sections, numbered 1 to 6, represented as a 2x3 square grid. Each section contains a city location.
1 Omen Clock: The same omen clock like in Eldritch Horror but used like in Elder Sign. Maybe on board.
6 Character Sheet: Each charater has a max Health/Sanity, and a knowledge and skill special power which allow dice manipulation. They also have starting gear and location, encounter dice task after defeat.
6 Investigator Marker: Used as a pawn to keep track of player location
3 Ancient one Sheet: Contain doom track size, special ability, maybe an awakening rule text
6 Action Dice: Special dice that hold 6 different face icons.
2 Mythos dice: Regular D6 in 2 colors.
20 Clue tokens: Contains a dice task (like in Elder sign) on the back, Front has a clue symbol
6 Gate token: Contains a dice task Front has a elder sign symbol.
2 Rumor token: Simple mmarker
1 Mystery token: The face is blank the the back add 2 roll (investigation + research)
1 Expedition token: Marker token
1 Doom Track marker: Keep progress of doom track.
1 Elder sign marker: Keep progress of player's progress.
4 Red Health Die: Keep track of character health.
4 Blue Sanity Die: Keep track of character sanity.
20 Item cards: The front is an icon, the back is the name and the bonus effect.
20 Spell cards: The front is an icon, the back is the name and the bonus effect.
14 Artifact cards: The front is an icon, the back is the same and the bonus effect.
20 Condition cards: Front is an icon, back is the effect.
22 Monster tokens: Only the face hold monster information

Setup

1-Omen Clock: Set the omen clock marker on the green comet.
2-Spawn a gate: Roll 1 d 6 and place a gate on the matching location. Add a random monster to the same location.
3-Spawn a clue: Roll 1 D6, place a clue in the area of the world matching that number. A clue and a gate cannot be spawned at the same location on hte first turn.
4-Spawn expedition: Roll 1D6, place the expedition token in the target location of the board.
5-Spawn a mystery: Roll 1 D6 to place the mystery token on the matching location of the board.
6-Investigation: Players choose investigator, place health and sanity die on their maximum value and collect initial assets: Items and spells. Place investigator on starting area.
7-Ancient one: Choose an ancient randomly, set the doom track marker on the matching value. Place the elder sign marker on the same value.
8-Starting Player: Select a starting player randomly.

Game Play

Each player plays one at a time until they win or lose the game in clockwise order. The player wins if the number of elder sign reaches 0. And the player fails if the doom track reach 0.

Turn order Summary

1- Upkeep and Assignment
2- Fight Monsters
3- Roll the action dice
4- Resolve Threath
5- Resolve Encounter
6- Rest
7- Move Investigator
8- Advance omen clock and resolve the effect

1. Upkeep and Assignment

If you are delayed, flip the investigator token face up, lose your turn and skip to the next player.

If you are lost in time and space undelayed, roll 1D6 and move to the location indicated by the roll.

You can decide to hide if there is no monster that prevent hiding. In that case, you will lose your turn, but you will not encounter any monsters. If you hide, skip to the next player.

Assignment: The player can assign his character to any of the encounter located in his new area, or assign his character to the city of his region. This will determine what the the action dice will be used for.

If you assign your character to a city, you may refresh any item cards that were previously exhausted.

2. Fight Monsters

If there are any monsters in the area you are located, you need to face each of them before proceeding. You will face all monsters at the same time.

You can use all your weapons for the battle. If you have no weapon, your attack strength is 0 and you will not kill any monster. Some weapons are discarded after use, some are exhausted while others can be used indefinitely. You are never forced to use all your weapon.

You may spend 1 sanity to cast a spell. Some spell act as a weapon but making magikal damage instead. Some spells have special effects instead and are not used in battles. Spells last for the whole turn.

Then battle is resolved this way:

1- Lose sanity: Sum up the horror of all monsters and lose that many sanity. If you get 3 or more sanity loss you may want to exchange it for a madness (see other rules).

2- Apply damage: Distribute all your physical damage or magical damage on the monsters. You need to inflict as much damage as it's thoughness to destroy it. In that case, put the monster back into the pool.

Certain monster has physical and magical resitance. It means that the first points of damages of the matching type (physical/magical) inflicted on the target are ignored, and then it takes regular damage. Monsters with the value "A" (All) are simply immuned to all that type of damage.

3- Lose Health: Then sum up the strength of all monsters and apply that much damage on the character. Again, it is possible to exchange 3 health loss for an injury.

3. Rolling Dice

In that phase, you roll the 5 special dices. You add a die if you are blessed, and remove a die if you are cursed. There are 6 different faces on the dice:

- Travel: Used for movement or shipping items, clues, spells, etc.
- Rest: Used to recover health, sanity and remove conditions
- Investigation: Used to resolve encounter
- Research: Used to resolve encounters
- Threath – Health: Bad hazards that makes you lose health
- Threath – Sanity: Bad hazards that makes you lose sanity

The dice rolling follow those rules:

- After rolling, you must set aside at least 1 die and then reroll the rest.
- You must set aside at least 1 Threath roll if some are available unless you are assigned to a city. A thread die count as a die to set aside.

When all rolls are done
- Players can use their characters Knowledge and Skill ability to modify their roll. (maybe they can use the abilities of other characters if assigned to the same encounter, not sure)
- If you are blessed, you may remove 1 die from the dice rolled .
- Some artifact and allies can give you an extra die of a specific face or cancel a threath die. You may only use 1 of those abilities per turn. So more rolls only gives you more options. (Probably only allies will give extra dice and you can only have 1 ally at a time)

Rumor: You may spend your action to drop clue tokens on the rumor instead of rolling dice. In that case your turn is over and you place as many clue tokens as you like on the rumor token.
If there are 4 clue tokens in the rumor stack, regress the doom track by 1 and remove the rumor. You do not need any investigation or research roll to succeed.

4. Resolve Threath

For each health threat you roll, you lose 1 health. For each 1 sanity threat you roll, you lose 1 sanity. You lose nothing if you are located in a city. If you roll 3 of a kind, you may take an Injury or Madness instead of losing health or sanity. See other rules.

5. Resolve encounter

You must have a number of research and investigation dice equal or higher to what is requested by the task. You may spend a clue token to add a research or investigation result on your roll. Some task are to hard to be completed without clues. The results of passing or failing is different according to the type of encounter. See table below:

Gates: (requires a specific combination of 3 rolls) If you pass, you close the gate. Flip the gate on it back side to indicate it is now sealed and increase the progress the elder sign by 1. If you fail you gain a condition, and move to the lost in time and space location delayed.

Expedition: (requires a specific combination of 3 rolls) If you pass you gain an artifact, if you fail you get a condition. Roll the new location of the expedition which cannot be the current location.

Front of Mystery: (require a specific combination of 3 rolls) If you succeed, flip the token and place in a random diagonal location (2 space away). Roll odd = left, roll even = right.

Back of Mystery: (requires a specific combination of 3 rolls + 1 investigation and 1 research roll) If you pass, you progress the elder sign track by 2, if you fail you gain a condition.

Cities: For each 2 Investigation you may gain an item, for each 2 Research roll, you may gain an Spell. On a 3 of a kind (Investigation or Research), you get the city's special ability.

Defeated Investigator: (Requires a specific combination of 3 rolls) Character can recover items and spells. If it is a success, elder sign progress increases by 1. In both situations, character is removed from the board.

List of Rewards and Penalty type for each kind of encounter.

Type	Pass	Fail	Other
Gate	Close Gate Elder Sign Progress by 1	Lost in Time & Space, Condition	Gate is fliped to indicate it is sealed
Expedition	Artifact	Condition	Change expedition
Back Mystery	Elder Sign Progress by 2	Condition	Add a new mystery
Front Mystery	Flip, Relocate Mystery	Condition	
Cities	Gain items,spells,special		
Defeated Investigator	Elder Sign progress by 1.		Remove investigator Gain possessions

Note: The challenge requirements of expedition and mystery is placed on the board instead of the token. The back of the mystery token adds 1 investigation and 1 research result to the regular 3 requested roll.

6. Rest

Each roll can make you recover 1 health OR 1 sanity. When in a city, each roll makes you recover a 1 health AND 1 sanity. 3 rolls can make you remove a condition if you are located in a city.

7. Collect Clues

For each unused pair of investigation or research roll, you may collect a clue in the area even if you failed the encounter.

8. Move investigator

You may move a number of region in the world octogonally equal to the number of travel rolls. You may send an item, spell or clue to another character by spending travel rolls. To move an asset on the same region, it requires 1 roll, then 1 extra roll for each region to cross octogonally.

9. Advance omen clock and resovle effects

You advance the omen clock by 1 step and resolve the effect of the new omen:

Green Comet: Advance doom track by 1. If the doom token moves over the rumor token, discard both rumor tokens and regress the eldersign track by 1.

Blue Zig Zag: Roll the mythos dice. The first die will indicate the location where a gate is spawned with 2 random monster. If there is already a gate in that location, 2 new monster are spawned instead. If there is a sealed gate at that location, the gate token is removed. The second die will indicate the location where the clue appears. Place a clue token on that location.

If both dice roll has the same value, a rumor is spawned into that target location. Place the first rumor token on the target are, place the 2nd rumor token 4 space away from the current doom track location. If a rumor spawn while there is already a rumor in play, regress the rumor token location on the track by 1.

Flying monsters: If a gate is guarded by more than 1 monster and there are flying monster in the stack, they will move octogonally to a space containing an investigator. Chose randomly if there is more than 1 investigator. If there is no investigator, it moves randomly.

Red Sun: Resolve the ancient one effect located on his sheet.

Other Rules

Those are additional rules which are common to most lovecraft games.

Delayed investigator: An investigator that get delayed, is flipped face down on the board. He will lose this next turn.

Defeated investigator: If a player lose all their health or sanity, they are placed on the board face

down on the board and they flip their investigator sheet. Place all posession on the sheet and set the investigator aside. The elder sign track regress by 1. The player choses a new investigator and place it on the board with his starting assets.

Conditions: Condition tokens will most likely disable the Knowledge or Skill of the character or have other nasty effects. They remain on the character until death or cure. A Blessed condition is a positive condition that will be discarded when an investigator catch it's next negative condition. They will cancel each other, discard them both. If you draw a condition you already have, discard it and draw another one.

Wound and condition substitution: When a character receives 3 or more health or sanity loss, he may trade 3 health loss for 1 injury condition or 3 sanity loss for 1 madness condition. This is likely to occur in battles. If a player has all 3 madness or 3 injuries injuries, he cannot use this ability.

Items: They are mostly weapons that will increase comabt strength in combat. Some items are one time use some are rechargable while other are permanent bonus. Rechargable items can be replenished The next time you the investigator is assigned to a city.

Spells: A spell is cast by spending 1 sanity point. It can be cast on yourself or any other investigator in the same area at any time. The same spell cannot stack their effect. If you draw a spell you already have, draw another spell. You may never hold 2 copies of the same spell, it's pointless. You may also not cast the same spell multiple times in a turn

Artifact: These are powerful items with special unique abilities.

Allies: Most allies gives an extra roll. You may not have more than 1 ally with you.

Reference (Official)

--- Areas of the world ---

North America
- Expedition (Grand Canyon): RII
- Mystery: RRR
- City (Arkham): Gain an Ally

South America
- Expedition (Amazon): RII
- Mystery: RRI
- City (Bueno Aires): Draw 3 spells and chose 1

Europe
- Expedition (Olympus): RRI
- Mystery: RRR
- City (London): Gain a clue and spawn a random clue

Africa
- Expedition (Pyramids): RRI
- Mystery: RII
- City (Alexandria): Bless or remove curse

Asia
- Expedition (Himalaya): III
- Mystery: RRI
- City (Tokyo): Destroy a monster on the board

Australia
- Expedition (Antartica): III
- Mystery: RII
- City (Sydney): Draw 3 items and chose 1

Note:
- Maybe remove 3 of the kind letter challenge if odds are different

--- Conditions ---

2xBack Injury: (Injury) Cannot carry items, or only 1 [No Items]
2xInternal Injury: (Injury) Disable Skill
2xLeg Injury: (Injury) spend 1 travel roll, else delayed [Move or Delayed]
2xAmnesia: (Madness) Disable Knowledge
2xParanoia: (Madness) Lose allies and cannot gain new allies [No Allies]
2xHallucination: (Madness) Lose all spells and cannot learn new ones [No Spell]
4xBlessed: (Bane) Roll and extra die and you may discard one [+1 die]
4xCursed: (Boon) Roll 1 less die. [-1 die]

--- Gates to another world ---

Yuggoth	RRI
The Dreamlands	RII
Lost Carcosa	RII
Plateau of Leng	III
City of the Great Race	RRI
Abyss	III

Note:
- Maybe remove 3 of the kind challenge if odds are different

--- **Items** ---

.32 Revolver: 1 damage and exhaust
.45 Automatic: 1 damage and exhaust
Knife: 1 damage, reusable
Shot Gun: 2 damage and exhaust
Riffle: 2 damage and exhaust
Cavalry Saber: 2 damage, reusable
Flame Thrower: 3 damage and exhaust
Tommy Gun: 3 damage and exhaust
Dynamite: 4 damage, expandable
Kerosene: 4 damage, expandable
Molotov Cocktail: 3 damage, expandable
Holy Water: 2 Magickal Damage, expandable
Whiskey: Prevent up to 2 sanity loss in a round (horror -2)
Bandage: Prevent up to 2 health loss in a round (strength -2)
Ancient Tome: 1 clue token
Old Journal: 1 clue token
Puzzle Box: Use to Gain 1 Artifact
Cross: Give bless condition (seem strong, because hard to get a condition)
Protective Amulet: Reroll threath die once
Lucky rabbit's foot: Reroll non-threath die once

Note:
- Maybe remove special items, not sure.

--- **Artifact** ---

Spirit Dagger: 1 damage, 2 Mgk damage
Enchanted Blade: 2 damage, 3 Mgk Damage
Sword of Glory: 2 damage, 3 Mgk damage
Lightning Gun: 3 damage, 4 Mgk damage
Necronomicon: Use to gain 2 spells
Nameless Cult: Use to gain 2 clues
Culte des goules: Convert non-threath roll to Research Face
Book of Dzyan: Convert non-threath roll to Investigation face
Healing Stone: Convert non-threath roll to Rest face
Ruby of R'lyeh: Convert non-threath roll to Movement face
Pallid Mask: Avoid all monsters
Gate Box: Get 1 free investigation or research roll to close gate.
Alien Statue: Prevent 1 sanity loss from monster and threath.
Enchanted Jewelry: Prevent 1 health loss from monster and threath

--- **Spell list** ---

2xHeal: +3 Health, or discard Injury
2xCloud Memory: +3 Sanity, or discard Madness
2xShriveling: (Combat) 2 physical or magical damage
2xRed Sign of Shudde M'ell: (Combat) 3 Magical damage

2xDread Curse of Azatoth: (Combat) 4 Magical Damage
2xMist of releh: Ignore all monsters this turn
2xGreater Banishment: Destroy a monster (maybe 2 monster , else replace by something else)
2xFlesh Ward: Monsters reduce their strength by 1.
2xInstill Bravery: Monsters reduce their horror by 1.
2xAstral Travel: Move to any area

Note:
- Add type incantation or evocation (5/5), see eldritch horror

--- **Ancient One** ---
Cthulhu (Dreams of Madness)[11]: Each investigator lose 1 sanity. (maybe also 1 health)
Shub-Niggurath (Black goat of the woods)[10]: Each investigator the mythos dice. If a 4-6 is rolled on the yellow die, a monster appears where indicated by the green die.
Azatoth (Absolute Destruction)[12]: If there are no rumors in play, place a random rumor. Else regress the rumor on the track by 1.

Note:
- reduce awaken time by 1/3 or 1/4 to shorten the game

--- **Allies** ---
Asenath Waite: Gives a Move roll
: Gives a Rest roll
John Legrasse: Gives a Investigation roll
Professor Armitage: Gives a Research roll
Tom "Mountain" Murphy: Prevent 1 health loss from monster and threath
Eric Colt: Prevent 1 sanity loss from monster and threath.
Professor Morgan: +1 Physical Damage
Charles Dexter Ward: +1 Magical Damage

--- **Character** ---

Lily Chen: Martial Artist
Health: 5   Sanity: 5
Skill: +1 Physical Damage
Knowledge: Beginning of turn, you may exchange health and sanity.
Starting: Asia, Item, Item
Defeated Encounter: RRI

Diana Stanley: Redeemed Cultist
Health: 6   Sanity: 4
Skill: Gain a clue if kill a monster of thoughness 2+
Knowledge: Reduce horror of monster by 1
Starting: South America, Spell, Item
Defeated Encounter: III

Akachi Onyele: Shaman
Health:4   Sanity:6
Skill: Can switch Investigation and Research rolls when closing gates
Knowledge: Do not get delayed when lost in time and space
Starting: Africa, Spell, Clue
Defeated Encounter: III

Joe Diamond: The Private Eye
Health:6   Sanity:4
Skill: When get a clue, draw a 2nd one.
Knowledge: Investigation face
Starting: North America, Item, Clue
Defeated Encounter: RII

Wilson Richards: The Handyman
Health:5   Sanity:5
Skill: Change a non-threath die to any face of your choice
Knowledge: Cancel a health threat roll
Starting: Australia, Item, Item
Defeated Encounter: RII

Dexter Drake: The Magician
Health:5   Sanity:5
Skill: Magical Damage +1
Knowledge: Draw a 2nd spells when gain a spell
Starting: Europe, Spell, Spell
Defeated Encounter: RRI

Note:
- Specity stating items type (ex: weapon)
- Maybe special abilities does not effect rolling, avoid calculating odds.
- Defeated encounter might not have 3 of a kind (depends of the odds)

--- **Monster List** ---

Name	Horror	Strength	Though.	P. Resist	M. Resist.	Special	Qty
Cultist	0	1	1	-	-		3
Witch	0	1	1	-	1		2
Warlock	0	1	2	-	All		1
Zombie	1	1	1	-	-		2
Migo	1	1	1	-	-	Flying	2
Ghost	1	1	1	All	-		1
Nightgaunt	1	Delay	2	-	-	Flying	1
Vampire	1	2	2	1	-		2
Elder Thing	1	1	2	-	-		2
Werewolf	1	1	2	All	-	No Hiding	1
Hound of Tindalos	2	2	2	-	-	No Hiding	1
Shoggoth	1	2	3	1	-		1
Starspawn	1	2	3	-	-		1
Flying Polyp	2	2	3	1	-	Flying	1
Dhole	2	2	3	1	1		1

<u>No Hiding:</u> If there is a monster with that ability in a stack, characters cannot hide and must face the whole encounter stack.

<u>Flying</u>: Those monsters will move during the gate step of the omen track if there is no investigator in their current location.

<u>Delay (D)</u>: The investigator lose it's turn and becomes delayed instead of receiving damage

<u>Lost in Time & Space (L)</u>: The investigator lose it's turn and becomes delayed and is moved to the lost in time and space location.