RED, WHITE, BLUE

While driving home to and from work (about an hour each way), I like to listed to heavy metal CD's...especially the super-cool but kinda-cheesy epic metal albums from bands like Iron Savior and Hammerfall. Naturally, I sing (yell, scream) along. What I love most about a band like Iron Savior is the emotion of their songs and how it touches the lyrics (usually involving epic space battles featuring bold heroes fighting against superior numbers) and the music. Each song is a little story about these heroes, alone and lost in space, fighting the enemy for the future of Mankind. Yeah.

So I had to write a game system that gets me in that same place.

It's really more of a story game than a RPG (and it is definitely not a traditional RPG). One of the "rules" I set was to create a game where game jargon was never spoken...and to coin a phrase, the system was "transparent" (ahem).

The result is this:
Every player has three piles of red, white and blue tokens.
Every player has a total of nine tokens.*
In the center of the table is a communal pile of red, white and blue tokens.

The color of the token indicates how it may be used.
Blue tokens are "general action" tokens -- they are used for anything.
Red tokens are "passion" tokens -- they are used when the character is experiencing strong emotions.
White tokens are "misfortune" tokens -- they are used when the character has suffered a setback or a tragedy.

When a player wishes to have their character take action in the story, the player places one token of the appropriate color into the center pile. he then takes a token from the pile and adds it to one of his own piles.

If a Blue token is used, the player takes a Red token.
If a Red token is used, the player takes a White token.
If a White token is used, the player takes a Blue token.

The dramatic rationale for this system is as follows:
Actions lead to Emotions.
Emotions cause Complications.
Actions arise from Complications

Players remain In Character throughout the game, though shifts in Stance are allowed. It is preferrable to speak "in character" to explain actions, rather than to narrate the actions...but this isn't required. Nothing external to the story should be introduced...this includes game-related terms (ie: referring to the tokens).

There is no GM and play is character-centric. However, players are not limited to one role, different roles or anything like that.

* This number can be anything, really. Nine is just convenient because it's less than ten and it equals three piles of three. Also, the colors' specific meanings can be anything.