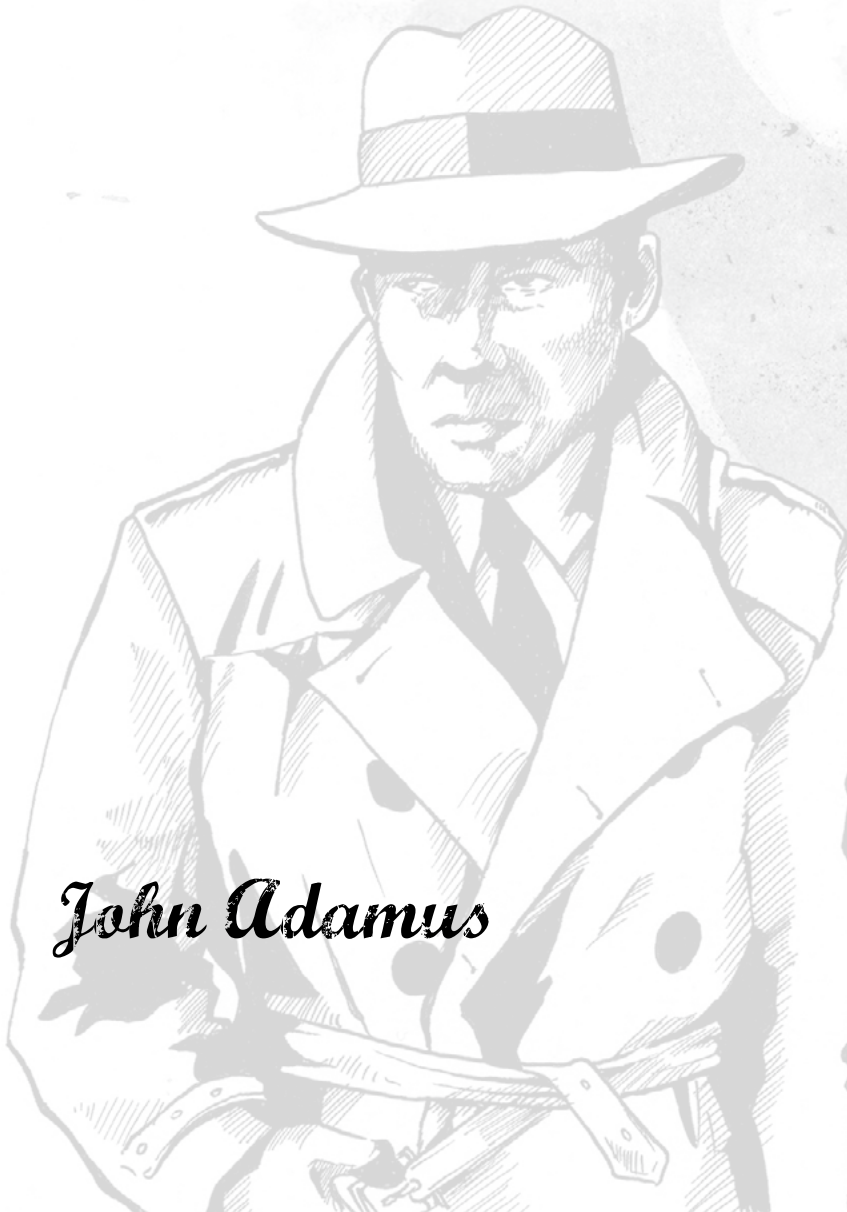


Nair World



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Noir World is built on a modified Apocalypse World engine, as developed by Vincent and Meguey Baker.

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Introduction

Noir World is a world of blacks, whites, and grays; of shadows and light pouring in through venetian blinds; of twists and turns and betrayals and tangled relationships; of crime, danger, drama, cigarette smoke, lonely nights, people you might not trust, people who you think love you, and all the stuff of old movies.

You're about to enter this world. Who you'll be in it is up to you, and it can be anyone from a private eye to a dame in trouble to a cop trying to make the city a better place to someone just trying to line their pockets before the consequences catch up to them. Noir World is stocked with the character types you'd expect from film noir, crime fiction, and old movies, and you'll be able to find just the right blend of tragedy, excitement, and interest for you in the stories of seduction, loss, suffering, and bittersweet victory. Get some dirt under your fingernails. Things are about to get messy.

You don't have to be a good guy. You don't have to be a villain. You might end up being a little of each. But the Movie you tell will be yours, and it will be a roller-coaster. Get ready to walk rainy streets, where danger and complication follow you like a second shadow.

Let's see what kind of trouble you can get into.

A Very Important Note

Noir World has many tropes and draws from source materials that by today's estimation come off as sexist, racist, homophobic, and a variety of other -ists and -phobias.

At no time do I want you to think any of that is encouraged by playing this game, and great lengths have been taken to ensure that players may take any Role and play it as any race, gender, or orientation they prefer, regardless of Era.

Players are encouraged to tailor and modify the game's atmosphere to suit their needs and desires for acceptable play and inclusivity.

Don't purposely go too far and make someone uncomfortable just because "it's part of the trope." Be better than that.

Have a good time. Players should feel free to be themselves and express themselves openly, however they want.

Just because the source material can be a problem for people today does not mean the game has to be.

Treat people, their beliefs, their choices, and their lives with respect.

IF YOU CAN'T DO THAT, THIS GAME ISN'T FOR YOU.

Getting Started

What You Need to Play

In order to play a session of Noir World, you'll need some supplies:

- 4 to 6 players
- 2 six-sided dice per player
- A large pile of notecards or slips of paper (at least two dozen)
- Pens or pencils for everyone
- A list of the Basic Actions (available on page 352 and online)
- A Role (they start on page 113) for each player, and yes, you can have multiples of the same Role in a Movie



Music (for ambiance) would be nice, but it isn't critical. There are many albums, often with Noir in their title, or soundtracks from films that can help create the appropriate experience.

Look at the instrumental soundtracks for the films in the genre. Streaming services like Spotify have a wealth of material like this. Take advantage.

What You Need to Know

Before we go any further, there are a few big points to cover.

Noir World is a collaborative storytelling game. It's a game where the goal, "the win", comes from everyone at the table having a good time working together to tell the best Movie. While over the course of play it may be revealed that a character has a certain motivation or agenda, this isn't a game of "winners" and "losers" so much as it is a chance for a group of people to create an entertaining Movie.

Noir World does not have a designated person in charge. Unlike many games that make a division in labor between players and a Game Master (or some other title that recognizes the breadth of the game's responsibilities), Noir World spreads responsibility across the entire table. Players are called "Roles" and whoever is in charge is called the "Director". The Director changes with the start of every Scene. If a person is uncomfortable being the Director, they can pass the job to someone else.

Noir World requires cooperation and consent. Telling these stories requires playing well with others, taking what they give you and moving forward with it. In order to make the best Movie, it's possible that your character is the murderer, if you think that works best. Or the victim of blackmail. Or it's all the Mook's fault. Noir World works best when everyone's willing to be the heroine or the villain or whatever the Movie needs them to be.

Some Things to Keep in Mind

What happens in Noir World is persistent, meaning if one Scene reveals the Mayor to be corrupt and eventually leads to the Mayor and a Good Cop having a rooftop shootout ending with the Mayor dying, the Mayor isn't suddenly back in the next Scene (unless it's a Flashback, obviously). What goes on in Noir World carries over from Scene to Scene and Movie to Movie and can have large and far-reaching consequences. For more information on Long Play (Sequels, Trilogies, and Series), see page 57.

What happens in Noir World is risky, meaning that the more exciting options are preferable to playing it safe. Big risk leads to big rewards and creates stories that play out like roller coasters on fire at a cliff's edge.

What happens in Noir World is tragic, meaning there aren't many happy endings. More often than not, people end up hurt in some way, shape, or form, stuck with consequences they didn't foresee with few options available to them. It's not that things can't be happy, it just doesn't happen easily, or in ways you can expect.

What happens in Noir World is not detached. You speak and act as your Roles. In many other games, the players talk about what their characters do ("My knight moves to guard the doorway.") which has the effect of separating people from the Movie, as though they're narrating something they're seeing, like telling you about a TV show that's on in the background. When you act as your Role, what you say you do, you do. So it's not the knight who moves to guard the doorway, YOU guard the doorway. The more you can express yourself as your Role, the better the experience for everyone.

What happens in Noir World is not centrally controlled. Everyone shares the storytelling. Players don't respond to just a single person, and it's not through one person's ideas and actions that everyone else reacts and interacts. Noir World is about characters, for characters, and by characters, so the role of Director is a floating position, each player taking a turn at it around the table.

What happens in Noir World is not limited. Treat each game you play like a Movie. Each Scene is part of a whole, and it can be created and expanded as needed in order to have the Movie go in the direction people want. Noir World is about stories large and small, dramatic and tragic, that twist and turn and take the players on a ride. Think visually, like a movie or television camera. Describe what people see. Give some direction to Roles when you direct. See more about being a Director on page 85.

What happens in Noir World is always connected. In a Scene, a Director or Role may establish something as true and when the next Director or Role encounters it, it remains true. Roles and Directors cannot countermand each other. It all works together, and all the Directors and Roles work together to make the best Movie.

The Promises We Make to One Another

Before you start playing, there's something you need to be aware of, and it's really important—Noir World is far more a collaboration and a conversation than a traditionally structured game. And because it's a shared Movie, you have to work with everyone at the table to make sure everyone has some time in the spotlight. When you're Director, it might be tempting to run amok and give your character the most to do, but remember that there are other people at the table who also want to play, and this isn't just YOUR Movie, it's EVERYONE'S Movie. Before play starts, make sure everyone understands that you're all in this together, that you'll listen to one another, and that you'll work with each other to tell a good Movie.

The Tone

There's always a worry when writing a chapter about how to play a game that one point gets repeated over and over until its meaning gets lost or the chapter gets annoying, with the reader saying, "Yeah, we get it."

A lot of space has been spent talking about making sure the tone is serious and that the atmosphere gets built "appropriately". But how you and your players define "appropriate" might be different than I do it or how some other group playing the game somewhere else does. No one is wrong so long as everyone agrees to the theme and has a good time.

If a game gets played for slapstick laughs and screwball comedy (think *Naked Gun*) while some other game takes a turn for the way more serious (think *The Night of the Hunter* or *Chinatown*), so long as everyone's having a good time, it doesn't matter how 'true' something is to film noir. Tell the Movie that everyone wants to tell together, and screw the tone.

The Three Rules of Noir World

Every game has rules that must be followed. These are the three core rules that you need to follow if you want to play the game as intended and tell compelling stories together.

1

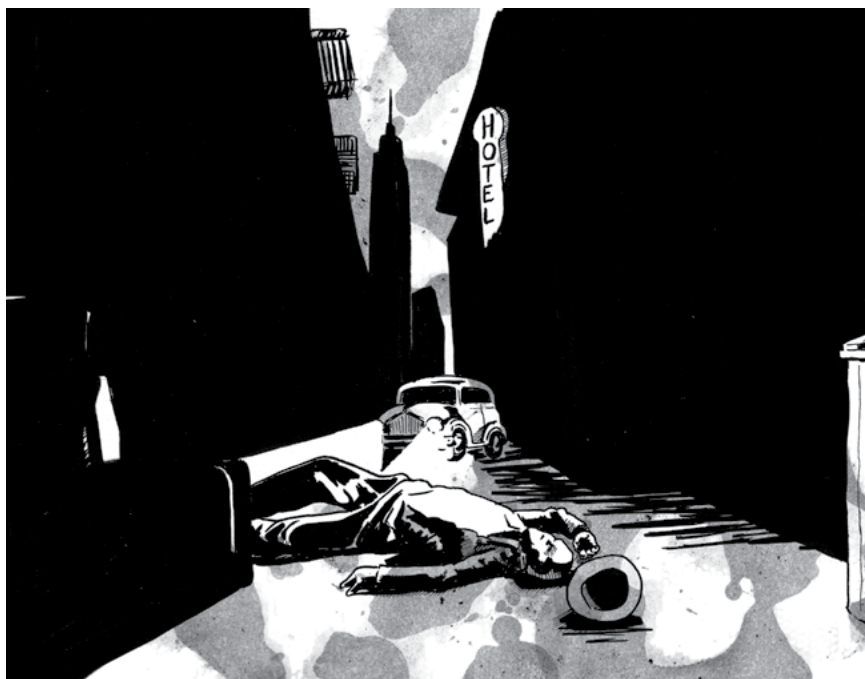
Be ready, willing, and able to tell the best Movie possible, even if it means it's not about your successes.

2

Look for opportunities to share the spotlight or help each other tell their stories.

3

If everyone can agree to it happening, it happens.



Playing Noir World

When you play Noir World, you play a Role that's an archetype (or a composite of several archetypes) found in film noir and crime fiction. You act out Scenes, and each Scene has a different Director, who's in charge of all the people and things that aren't the Roles. Scenes take place at Locations, places that everyone worked together to create before play started. There's also a Crime that's happened (or will happen) when the game (called a Movie) begins. The Crime may or may not get solved, or the whole Movie might take an unexpected twist that everyone enjoys. It's okay and often ideal to do that.

One of the important and fundamental elements of Noir World is the Action, which is an opportunity for a Role to affect the narrative in a specific way. An Action looks like this:

□ Fuego

When you find yourself in a losing situation, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you narrowly escape... this time.

On a 7-9, tell the Director how you escape, but only after you (choose one)

- *Get severely injured (Take 2 Injury and describe your injury. It persists for the rest of the Movie.)*
- *Injure someone else severely (They take 2 Injury, and they describe their injury. It persists for the rest of the Movie.)*
- *Provoke someone who will come for payback later (Pick a Role based on your Hooks or what makes the most narrative sense.)*

On a 6-, the Director can set up something to pay off later OR make you risk something, for free.

Getting Started

That's one of the Private Investigator Actions, which says that during losing situations, situations where they're outmatched, overpowered, and up against a wall, the PI rolls two dice and adds their Risk Motivation.

If the result (the dice and the added Risk) total up to 10 or higher, the PI tells the Director (whoever it is for the particular Scene) how they narrowly escape the predicament.

If the result is between 7 and 9, they tell the Director how they escape, but at a cost: they get hurt, someone else gets hurt, or someone gets provoked and will come back later.

If the result is 6 or less, then the Private Eye does not get their desired outcome (no escape at the moment), and the Director gets a free action to either set up something to pay off later (lighting a fuse to make things worse later) or make the Role risk something or someone they care about.

More information about Risk and the other Motivations can be found on page 41. Information on Director Actions can be found on page 102.

Actions Have Consequences

On a 10+, the character gets what they want, sometimes with a little more.

On a 7-9, they get what they want, but at a cost to them or others.

On a 6-, they don't get what they want, and something dangerous or not good happens.

The Roles We Play

In Noir World, your character is called a Role. There are twenty available Roles in Noir World, ranging from cops to politicians to musicians to goons to socialites. Each player will choose one Role. Each Role has its own advantages and disadvantages, but each Role also has a lot of room to be tailored by a player's decisions.

Each player portrays a Role in the Movie. No Role is inherently all good or all bad, as any Role can be played in any number of ways. And Roles aren't limited by gender, even if the trope is gender-specific. That's really important to keep in mind as you go through the Role and select things like Belongings, Secrets, and Hooks. Just because you (the player) might be a woman does not mean you have to play a woman if you don't want to. Cross, blur, transcend, or skip all the lines you like, and have a good time doing it.

Any Role can be played by any person, regardless of how they identify or what they believe or how they orient. Yes, movies, television, and books describe these tropes as being all one way or another, but Noir World doesn't limit itself to just being a Movie of white guys in hats and dames in dresses slit up the sides. The Fatale doesn't have to be a woman. The War Vet doesn't have to be a man. Put yourself and your own spin into the Role. Make it yours.

There is no limit as to how many of each Role you can have in a Movie. Remember though that having more of one Role can slant the Movie in a particular direction. But this is your Movie, so maybe there really are a half dozen Dirty Cops planning a heist.

There are 20 core Roles in the book, divided into two categories. The Movers are the most proactive roles, prone to causing problems and committing crimes. The Shakers are the more reactive roles, who follow the story and complicate the Movie.

Basic Roles: The Movers

THE GOOD COP

Lots of people talk about the way the world has fallen apart, the way nothing is how it used to be. How there are no people anymore, just selfish and vain louts and ne'er-do-wells, willing to step over their own mothers if it would advance their plans.

Not you, you're motivated by a higher standard. A pure standard. Incorruptible and resolute, you stand strong against all this rot and greed and all this ambiguity. It's not that people haven't tried to tempt you, though. Sure, they offered you a lot before and yeah, they'll offer you more later, but it's never going to be enough. Because you believe in something, because no matter the chaos the world falls into, people are going to need models and examples of how to be better.



THE DIRTY COP

The badge started out shiny, but there's some tarnish to it now. Maybe you got on the force and wanted to do some real good, to walk the beat and help citizens large and small. Follow the rules, and nothing can go wrong, right?

Something changed along the way. You looked the other way here, maybe you took a freebie there, and the system still chugged along. The world didn't come to a screeching halt because you took care of yourself. Isn't that the point? You work hard, shouldn't you get a little something? For Pete's sake, it's not like they're throwing you ticker-tape parades. Everyone else's doing it, so why not get yours? You're not so green anymore; the aw-shucks stuff of youth gave way to a necessary hard exterior, weathered and durable. This City can chew up and spit out most people, but you've learned how to survive.



THE FATALE



You get what you want. Whether that's because of your power, sex, strength, or guile, it doesn't matter. Lure men or women, lure whomever you need nice and close before you get your hooks into them. Get what you want and get out before the heat comes down on you. For too long people thought you were something to be used and discarded, but no more. You'll show them, one snare and well-placed smile and sentence at a time. The City is full of things you want, and you're willing to do anything to have them ... or keep them out of the hands of other people. You deserve to get what you want. Besides, it's not like you're the only one getting what you're owed. Everyone's doing it, and some people are doing it way worse, so what's the harm exactly?

THE MOOK



What you lack in brains is made up for in strength. You never met someone you couldn't intimidate or threaten, and you've never met your equal in a fight. Yeah, it's tough to get the answers you need out of someone with a busted jaw, but they can still give you answers, at least until you bust their hands. You're the attack dog and yes-man, and you're happy that way. Your hard work has so far been rewarded, and it's not too bad a job compared to what you see other people going through.

It's not that thinking is impossible, it's just that subtlety and planning are boring and take too long. Let other people be the brains of the outfit, they're going to need to you to take care of business. Goon. Hitter. Driver. Thug. Toady. Bodyguard. Yours isn't to wonder why, yours is to hit something hard enough it doesn't get back up.

THE PRIVATE EYE

To you, the right and wrong side of the tracks blur together. To you, the blacks and whites and rights and wrongs fused together a long time ago, leaving everything gray and less certain than it used to be. Now it's all for the client, or the truth, or justice, or all of the above, or any combination thereof.

Dogged persistence, sometimes to the point of stubborn obsession and relentless pursuit, marks your career. You're not afraid to get your hands dirty, you're not afraid of getting some mud and blood on your shoes. But you're going to get to the truth, one way or another.



THE WAR VET

You went over there to do your duty and help keep the world a safe place. It was brutal, it was scary. It changed you, but you came back in one piece, unlike so many others. Maybe you even kept your wits about you.

Before you left, the world needed soldiers, and you distinguished yourself as one. But now you're back, and there's no clear enemy to fight, no formations to fall into, and no deployments. The jobs seem mundane. The work is rewarding, but nothing at all like having that rifle in your hands and knowing you were doing the right thing.

Note: Depending on the Era of the game, there's always some war somewhere that the Vet could have participated in, so don't worry about limiting the Vet to only the Second World War.



THE POLITICIAN



This City needs you. Either to raise it up from the corrupt, fetid pit it's become, or to take what you can and be there when it's time to rebuild. Anyone can be a voter; anyone can be an asset... or a liability. Choose your associates carefully, move the pieces on the chess board right, and you might start the week on City Council and end it with a seat in the Senate. Or if you play your cards right, President.

But governance is not the same as selling newspapers on the street corner. Governance takes a level of strategy and courage that most people can only fantasize about having. You've come up the hard way, working the pollsters, getting past the soundbites, shaking babies and holding hands. It hasn't been easy, and it's more than likely you've had to get a little messy to get what you want, but that's politics, right? There are no clean and wholesome campaigns. Politics is the new battlefield, and you're a grizzled veteran.

THE CAREER CRIMINAL



The road is never straight and narrow. It's twists and turns and anyone who says otherwise is a sucker and a sap. This world hasn't given you a square deal since day one, and you're not in the habit of giving one back. Whether it's the long con or the quick hustle or just plain burglary and blackmail, your professional toolbox tends to the seedier side of things, and you're used to being one step ahead of the heat.

That's not to say there's not some good here. It's a matter of interpretation, really. Some say that bad guys make the best good guys, and sometimes that's true. But then again, being bad has gotten you pretty far in life. And it would be a real shame if you didn't see how much farther this road can take you.

THE GAMBLER

You're not risk averse. Flip a coin, roll the dice, see where Lady Luck takes you. It's served you well so far. Even when you lose, you lose with class. There hasn't been action you haven't gotten in on, whether that's the number of times someone spills a beer or how many times it comes up sevens at the table. It's not about winning, though that doesn't hurt. It's about testing the system, being better than the sucker next to you, and cashing out when you're ahead.

You have to risk big to win big, and you've got scars and the lumps to prove it. Those big jackpots are going to be your ticket to somewhere better. Maybe that's uptown. Maybe that's out of town. Doesn't matter. You've got a hot hand and you're going to put it all on the line when the time comes.



THE REPORTER

The people have a right to know the truth. They need to know what's really going on, and they need to be informed to make smart decisions that will lead to better lives. Who's crooked? Who's worth voting for? What's the skinny? Where's the scandal? You've got a nose for digging up the truth. Too bad a lot of the truth is buried under tons of shit, lies, and garbage.

You play a critical part in the City. You're the immune system, or so your editor says. You find infections and drive them out. Corrupt politicians. Scandals with kids. Different ways the City is failing its citizens. These are important stories, and you're doing your best to make sure people know. It's not glamorous. It's made you a few enemies, you're sure. But without you, the shadows seem ten feet thicker and ten times blacker.



Note: The Reporter is entirely due to, and dedicated to, Lilian Cohen-Moore. She exemplifies all that is best about journalism as it is represented in film noir.

Basic Roles: The Shakers

THE STARRY-EYED KID



You came to the big city with your hopes and dreams in one suitcase, and every worldly possession you've got in the other. The City was your chance to get out of your small town and show those people what you're really all about: your destiny, your fame, your infamy. It's all in your hands now, and the City is your oyster.

Gee whillikers, lots of people are just so swell here. Just like your momma taught you, being nice can actually take you pretty far. Good thing it comes pretty natural to you. Hey, is that an old lady to walk across the street?

THE CITIZEN



On Saturdays you mow the lawn. Sunday afternoon, after church, you listen to the ballgame. Tuesday night is bridge night with your neighbors across the street. Your toughest decision is most often what shirt and tie to wear to work, and there's a healthy amount of distance between you and all that nastiness you read about in the morning paper. You try to keep it that way, by golly, but sometimes you just get in over your head. But you're not like these crooks and thugs. You're a good person, an honest citizen. You've never even stolen a gumball. No skeletons in your closet, right?

The riff-raff always seems to be on the other side of the picket fence. You do your best to keep it that way. You want to be respectable. You want to be the kind of person others admire. There are right ways to do that, and there are wrong ways.

THE SOCIALITE

You've never lacked for money. Maybe you earned it. Maybe you inherited it. But you've never known a life without it. Sure, some people are going to called you 'spoiled' or 'clueless', but those people really only know how to struggle and complain about it, don't they? Money opens every door, greases any palm, and seems to be the solution to any problem you've so far encountered. Everyone's got a price, it's just a matter of finding it.



Some people talk about how one day the bubble might burst, how the money might run out. If that's the case, don't you think you should enjoy it while you have it?

THE DISGRACED DOCTOR

They took away your license. Maybe they shouldn't have done that. Your hands are still steady, your mind is still sharp, so who cares about the measly indiscretions some pencil-pusher scribbles in some report? You're helping people, and that's what matters. So long as you've got reasonably clean instruments, a patient, and decent light, you can do anything they ask: yank out a bullet, stitch up a knife wound. Hell, you could even give someone a new face, if they were willing to pay.



What's the world without doctors? Sick. Diseased. Dying. Don't people realize that in your hands are the powers of life and death? Do they think some piece of paper is what empowered you? They weren't there for the years of study and practice. They weren't there when you saved your first life. They don't know what it's like to hold a heart in their hands and make it beat again. They've never seen the look of joy on a mother's face when their baby will be okay thanks entirely to what you can do. Your work defines who you are and gives you purpose. They can't keep you from being the savior so many people need.

THE MUSICIAN



You make your living with sound. That might be an instrument you play, a band you lead, or the songs you sing. Your talent has taken you pretty far in life, and it gives you a measure of celebrity in the City. This, naturally, has afforded you a comfortable living, but it's not without its temptations. Whether or not you succumb to them is up to you. Whether or not your talent keeps you living the way you do ... well, that might not be up to you. Keep making music, see what happens. Fame is a fire that needs regular stoking. Don't let yours burn out.

THE ATTORNEY



You've been making arguments since you learned that whoever cries loudest often gets what they want. You transitioned from playpen to the playground when you learned the subtle art of negotiation, getting bullies to give back lunch money before people got real angry. Not you, of course, but other people. Witnesses. Teachers. You spun this into a lucrative career giving a voice to the bullied, or when the situation arose, making sure the bullies got what they deserve. The road to this success hasn't been all roses and flawless victories, though. It's easy to take a little bribe here and there, let someone slide on the witness stand or maybe change their story. It's up to you whether or not you turn as blind an eye as Justice is supposed to have.

When people run afoul of the law, you're there. For the right price, and with your craftiness, you've saved people from unimaginable horror. You're an unsung hero. You don't wield a gun or work in a back alley, you stand before a judge in a courtroom and do the most noble of tasks: you argue. You lobby. You aid. You demonize. Your words are better than any bullets.

THE GANGSTER

You have an intimate relationship with the City's underbelly. Maybe you run it, maybe you want to run it. Your life isn't always glamorous or easy, since the law can show up and breathe down your neck pretty regularly. On the bright side though, the money and power really do make for some good weekends and thrills.

Crooked is as crooked does, and nothing in this City comes for free. You've learned the real value of power, of strength, of fortitude. If you want anything, you're going to have to take it. That respect you hunger for is there, just reach out for it. And the opposition, those cowards and softies who stand in your way? Wait until they get a load of you.



THE CELEBRITY

You're kind of a big deal. Whether that's for movies or radio or smut or something socially infamous, that's up to you. Maybe you're the child of someone who was famous, and you're just riding coattails and being outrageous enough for the press to keep remembering you. Maybe you're a comedian's punchline. Maybe you should be.

Celebrity is fickle, it's a short fuse. People have memories like goldfish, and you may find yourself hungry for that spotlight again. The good news is that it's only one comment, one action, one decision away. Isn't any publicity good publicity? If they're talking about you, they're paying attention to you, and in no way is that ever going to be a bad thing or a thing you want to give up.



THE EX-CON



Fresh out of the Big House, you've got the clothes on your back and little else. Maybe regrets. Maybe some hopes they weren't able to squash out of you. You're supposed to be rehabilitated, and maybe you are. Maybe you aren't, time will tell. If prison taught you anything, it was a structure and a sense of identity. Out here in the big world, you're on your own, and maybe you don't want to do anything to send yourself back. Or ... maybe you do?

The world outside can be louder, stranger, colder, and worse than inside. Some people can't hack it. Some people are dying to get out and return to whatever life they hope is waiting for them.

GIRL/BOY FRIDAY



Everyone needs a little help, now and then. The right person to talk to, the right phone call to make. Everyone needs a little support too, someone to lend a hand where needed and encouragement when times get tough. Sure, sometimes it's not all cheerleading, sometimes you do have to get your hands dirty, but isn't that the price you pay for helping others? Isn't sacrifice part of cooperation?

Leave the spotlight for other people. You've never been one to seek out the credit. Real satisfaction is found in knowing that you helped someone get things done. You can sleep easy at night knowing you're helping.

The Extras

There are additional roles available in this to change your Movie. Most of these are part of stand-alone featurettes that function as custom settings. Others are available online, such as The Toon or The Replicant, to further alter the tone of any game.

NARWHAL

FEATURETTE
CHAPTER 7

The Captain
The Mate
The Salt
The Rookie
The Drifter
The Loose Cannon

RETRO HEROES & VILLAINS

FEATURETTE
CHAPTER 9

The Amazon
The Hornet
The Ranger
The Chaos
The Phantom
The Shadow
The Vigilante

THE PROM

FEATURETTE
CHAPTER 8

The One Who Won't Move On
The One Who Can't Move On
The One Who Can't
Wait To Move On

The One With
Everything To Lose

The One Who Doesn't Belong
The One Everyone Likes

STAR NOIR

FEATURETTE
CHAPTER 10

The Farmkid
The Scoundrel

The Royal

The Sage

The Menace

The Herald

THE OUTSIDERS

Available Online

The Replicant

The Toon



7564

2 Getting Started

Before your Movie can start, you need to establish some facts about your City, the Crime, and the Roles involved. Follow these five steps as a group to create the foundation for the Movie you'll create.

1: DEFINE THE ERA, any decade from the 1770s all the way up to the near-future of the late 2040s. The default Era is the 1940s.

2: SELECT YOUR ROLES, based on the descriptions found in Chapter 1. Each player needs to establish the following elements of their character, based on information found on their Role Sheet.

- ▶ Choose 1 set of 3 Motivations, then add +1 to Brains, Moxie, or Risk.
- ▶ Choose 1 Secret and 1 Goal. These are narrative elements that can help give momentum or direction to the Role in the Movie.
- ▶ Choose 2 Actions that only your Role will have in the Movie.
- ▶ Choose 2 Hooks between your Role and other Roles at the table to weave your personal stories together.

3: CHOOSE THE CRIME at the heart of the Movie. Choose whether or not the Crime has already happened, or if it will happen over the course of the Movie. In either case, the Roles may or may not be involved.

4: DEFINE THE PLACES AND PEOPLE in the Movie with whom and where the Roles will interact.

5: CHOOSE A ROLE TO ACT AS DIRECTOR FOR THE FIRST SCENE. If a Role is Director, they cannot appear in that Scene. When every Role has been Director at least once, the first Act is over. The second Act starts with the next Director, and the Movie is over when everyone has been Director at least once more.

Before the Movie

With every Role developed, the City built, and the Crime determined, one Role becomes Director and the Movie begins. Noir World begins with the agreement of all players to the Promises We Make Each Other (see page 12).

Step 1 — Define the Era.

This Movie can take place anywhere from 1770s to the near future, with the default Era being the late 1940s. During this step, you determine if the Crime occurs before or during the Movie. Understanding the Era can help frame the Movie before Roles are chosen and distributed and help provide narrative boundaries and momentum.

Step 2 — Select your Roles.

Once you know the Era, you will each pick which Role you wish to play during the Movie. Use the descriptions in chapter 1 to help you select your Roles. Once that's done, each player proceeds down their character sheets choosing Motivations, Belongings, Secrets, Goals, and Actions, and waits for the other Roles to do the same.

Working collaboratively, Roles talk to each other around the table and create relationships using Hooks. When reading a Hook, remember that “you” refers to the person offering the Hook and reading it from the page, and “this Role” refers to the person being spoken to. Every Role offers two Hooks, one each to a different Role, and then receives a Hook in return.

Step 3 — Choose the Crime.

You will then choose the Crime by consulting the Crime chart (see page 52). Each Role rolls 1 six-sided die and the numbers are tallied, not added together. The most common number determines the type of Crime, and then a subsequent roll is made to give the Crime more specifics. In the event of a tie or no number occurring more than once, the group can choose a Crime from the list directly.

Step 4 — Define Places and People.

After Hooks are completed, you build the City by writing down the names of Locations on note cards or slips of paper. Each Location will have a fact (something universally known and always true, such as “Joe’s Diner has the worst apple pie in the City.”) and a Person who has their own fact (again this is universally known and always true, such as “Joe from Joe’s Diner has a gambling problem and can’t resist a bet.”).

Step 5 — Choose a Role to Act as Director.

Choose a Role to act as Director. If a Role is Director, they cannot appear in that Scene. When every Role has been Director at least once, the first Act is over. The second Act starts with the next Director, and the Movie is over when everyone has been Director at least once more.



Step 1 Define the Era

Before you and your friends start playing, you have to choose when you're setting this Movie. Noir World stories can take place anytime from the Roaring Twenties to the Modern Day, with each time period offering its own unique ideas and concepts. Here's a short timeline of the most common Eras of play:

1920s

The Roaring Twenties, a time of Prohibition, flappers, speakeasies, and mobsters.

1930s

The Great Depression, when jobs were scarce and lots of people were down on their luck.

1940s

The Second World War starts and ends; loads of people go off to become War Vets and Cities expand. This is the default Era for Noir World.

1950s

A boom of growth with technology and progress making huge leaps forward.

1960s

A decade flush with social change and attitude shifts, a time of conflicts and strain.

1970s

A decade of malaise and tension as society came to terms with itself.

1980s

A decade of excess and wealth and renewed prosperity, but a growing underbelly of corruption and decadence.

1990s

The end of decadence sees an Era of people living with the consequences of what's happened before.

2000s to today

Modern society is a blend of progress, technology, and challenging assumptions as the wealth and prosperity gap yawns wider.

The Near Future

Maybe it's a cyber-dystopia or an apocalyptic wasteland. But there will always be a struggle between have and have-not, good and evil, right and wrong, action and inaction.

The Eras: Crimes and the Times

One of the advantages to a storytelling game is that time is variable. Just like how the act structure isn't limited to linear progression, the Era in which a Movie can take place is also completely open to change. While the default Era is the early 1940s, noir as a genre spans many decades and (thanks to collaborations in other genres and the neo-noir movement) requires only knowledge of basic Movie needs and some history to be adapted.

What follows is a breakdown of each Era and some key elements for incorporating it into your Movie.

1770s

A volatile time in American and European history, as revolution seizes many industrial nations and colonies alike. It is an Era of fire and fiery passions as people begin to rise up and act out in steps towards overthrowing the old ways of society for new opportunities.

Stories here are about shots not thrown away, of leadership challenged, and victories hard won. This is also one of three Eras that really need changes to Belongings, as things like caliber-specific guns or urban Locations aren't in existence yet. Swap out period-appropriate material as needed. For the curious, a Dueling Pistol is **GUN 2 +INACCURATE +DEADLY** and a Musket is **GUN 2 +LOUD**.

1880s

Dusty trails, boomtowns, and duels at high noon dominate the legends of this Era. The reality is a bit grimmer. As the nation expands to the West, and as the people migrate thanks to rapidly advancing technology, this Era is a clash between old and new, money and poverty, danger and success.

It is possible to tell the classic western tale of gunslingers, but this is also ground for the rise of corporate power, of politicians and early gangsters carving up land under the noses of the earnest citizen farmer.

This is another Era warranting significant adaptation to Belongings, bringing in Revolvers (**GUN 2 +LIMITED SHOTS**) and horses in place of cars. For the record, a horse has 5 Health and is **+STURDY**.

1900s

With the new century being birthed, with mankind taking flight literally as well as figuratively, this Era is the first that truly begins to feel familiar. Cars, planes, large cities, and urban life mirror the present day, and an influx of immigrants rich in dreams but poor in material wealth adds tremendous potential to drama.

Stories set here can play with themes of hope and loss, of traditions clashing, and of greed beginning to throw its weight around as the first signs of profound class disparity take root among robber barons and corporations.

The first three Eras would not be included in the book without the gracious support of the Kickstarter backers.

1920s

Called ‘The Roaring Twenties’, this Era highlights the gangsters, the speakeasies, the flappers, and Prohibition. It’s a time when everyone wore hats, there was plenty of slang (as to what was jake and what wasn’t, for instance), and where Tommy guns were the weapon of choice.

Stories set in the 20s can focus on rises to power and the start of criminal enterprises or prominent (yet dangerous) men. It’s a time of excess and indulgence, with a precipitous notion that the good times will never end. Yes, there are swaths of people separated by a growing wealth gap, but overall, this is an Era of prosperity. Criminal life is glamorized and sensationalized, and the law is viewed as being one or two steps behind, rather than corrupt. Whenever the long arm of the law distinguishes itself (Eliot Ness, the Government, the City Crime Commission), they’re subject to the same sort of glamor spectacle as the criminals they’ve brought to justice. It’s fertile ground for stories about law versus crime or obsessions.

1930s

Marked by the Great Depression, this decade sees a hard collapse of all the excess from the 20s. The good times did end, as did a majority of the prosperity. This Era is dominated by the ideas of struggle, deprivation, and challenge, which make it ripe for the ideas of good people doing bad things to get by.

The chief motivation in this Era is scarcity. Wallets and belts are tightened, finances are dwindling, and the allure of crime has never been more intense. This is also a great Era for developing class tensions: the rich versus the poor; the haves versus the have-nots.

1940s

The default Era for Noir World, where the world is engaged in a War (against whom or where is up to the table), but back home, the effects are felt. Men are often shipping out or returning from the front. Rationing and nationalism work together to foster a sense of community. The home front is a haven for modern society to grow its roots. The healthy and the twisted live side-by-side as rules are made, tested, and often broken for the sake of development, expansion, profit, or notoriety. The focus is less on the specific gangsters as in the 20s, and now on crime as an organization. This is the Era where the “mob” sits in the City’s background, where the City itself reaches a sort of cement and neon adolescence, looking to define and sustain itself while being pulled in so many directions.

Film History

It's worth noting that the majority of film noir occurs in the 40s and 50s, with the development of film techniques thanks to expatriated German cinematographers and the evolution of the Hollywood studio system.

And while we can look at these decades now as the past, it's important to remember that film noir can always be of its own time, even if its trope foundations are universal. Treating whatever Era as though it's the present lends a weight and gravity to the storytelling that is sometimes absent from fantasy or science fiction that ask us to suspend disbelief.

1950s

With one War over (or perhaps a cue is taken from real-life and the conflict has changed theatres or gets called a ‘police action’), suburban life blooms as the City and a new prosperity stretch dollars and dreams further. As families bask and flourish in the splendor of burgeoning technology, the criminal underworld expands, adding to its genealogy through the birth of motorcycle hoods, street gangs, and the birth of car culture – where racing for pink slips up by Deadman’s Curve was a way to show your best gal what sort of person you are. The mob has penetrated beyond corporate interests and can lean in on the family man, for protection “insurance”, just as easily as it can lean on the developing corruption in police departments to keep themselves a comfortable distance from the authorities.

1960s

There’s an interesting shift in social development that begins in the 1960s and into the 70s, as people’s focus tends to move away from occupation and into social equality. Racial divides and social justice move to the forefront of many conversations and considerations, as the “American Dream” utopia is exposed as a fragile, often flawed, and even impractical ideal in the face of realities where crime becomes the refuge and tool to advocate, foment, and enact change. Likewise, the nature of crime changes, branching out past its early years as wealth-generation into a tool for revealing the flaws in a system that grows festering and corrupt, masking itself under the guise of ‘restoring order’ or ‘making sure things are okay’.

1970s

Much like the 30s, this Era is marked by depression, stagnation, and malaise. Whether it’s economic or social, the pervasive sense is that society has found itself to be fractured in voice and intention, as different generations struggle to adapt and co-exist. Long gone are the days of patriotism and can-do spirit, replaced with the beginnings of the me-first selfishness that will come to fruition in later Eras. Crime and corruption are commonplace, using the still-escalating social tensions of the previous Era as both fuel and cover for their continued existence.

1980s

With social equality moved to the back-burner thanks to a new generation coming of age, this Era fully blooms with the me-first attitude hinted at in the 70s. It's a time of excess, with social and technological accelerations driving selfishness and materialism ahead of most other pursuits. This Era can be thought of as an attempt to "get the most stuff and then show it off", leading to a re-glamorization of crime and criminals, since they flagrantly break laws while the authorities seem either deeply corrupt or overworked and inept to stop them.

1990s

As the period of decadence waned, rather than fall into another cycle of decline, society applied the brakes, stalling economic decline while doing its best to get re-focused while tying so many long disparate threads together. Crime was pushed back into the shadows as more time was spent rooting out corruption and glamorizing law and authority ahead of criminality, forcing the underworld to again be something kept hushed, secretive, and more menacing than actualized. Social justice began to emerge and was aided by advancing technology, as a new period of self-development and new versions of a long-lost can-do spirit emerged in the entrepreneurial and burgeoning middle class.

History Can Be Flexible

It's important to point out that just because a Movie is set in a particular Era, elements of that Era don't have to come into play in large and significant ways so that everyone is reminded "Hey this Movie takes place in the 70s!"

Philipp's death via icepick to the skull in an alley could just as easily happen in the 40s as it could the 80s. Or Tyson's corpse being discovered in the 1790s with a bit of poisoned tea fits just as well in the Near Future. The Era gives a framework and some opportunities for Scenes and Roles, it's not something that needs to always make a splashy appearance.

TODAY

In our current Era, society is at a crossroads, where change is broadcast via social media and where expectations are malleable and progressive. The past Eras are seen as “retro” or “hipster”, and the Era as a whole is glamorized, with individual elements seen as parts of a whole, rather than as single pieces themselves. Crime has become synonymous with corporation, and economic and societal disparity grow harder and harder to sweep under the rug. It’s an Era where the word ‘anti-hero’ has become nearly synonymous with ‘criminal’, and where the police have become the enemy to many, thanks to problems and mindsets entrenched and perpetuated by earlier Eras. Instead of this being a golden age of progressive thought, we sit on a high-wire without a net, sometimes even eager to plunge into societal decline.

THE NEAR-FUTURE

No one knows what lies ahead. As such, the near-future is dominated by exploring any elements of previous Eras and then extrapolating them. Maybe corporations have completely given into corruption, and governments are replaced with brand names and logos. Maybe the fossil fuels have finally run out, and the world is a harsh and dangerous wasteland of furious roads and places beyond thunderdome. Maybe law and authority are on a decline, forcing vigilantism to an all-time high, powered by technological advancements and quasi-magic. Cloning, flying cars, post-apocalypse wastelands, alien invasions, anything is possible in the future.

Step 2 Define the Roles

Your Role is the package of information you need as a character in Noir World. Every Role has several sections that you need to fill out now.

- Motivations — Brains, Moxie, and Risk
- Belongings — Tags and Locations
- Motives — Secrets & Goals
- Role Actions
- Hooks

When you have finished this, introduce your character. Pick one of the names listed on your Role, and describe yourself to the group.

How are you dressed?

What do you look like, and what stands out?

For the Math Conscious

Looking over the Roles (starting on page 16), it's very easy to see that the math 'doesn't balance out' the way it does in other games. The numbers don't reach a definitive zero or a plus-one. This is intentional.

This is not a game about mathematic certainty or creating parity among randomizing mechanics.

The purpose of this game is to tell a cinematic experience where uncertainty comes from player choices with the dice mechanics as a supportive measure. It's entirely possible that you'll barely touch the dice over the course of play. It's a function of how play evolves at the table.

The dice are there to be rolled when interesting or necessary. They're as imperfect as the Roles.

Picking Roles

Everyone playing the game needs to select a Role to play. The twenty core Roles are presented below. The best games have a balance between Movers and Shakers.

THE MOVERS

The Good Cop
(page 114)

The Dirty Cop
(page 118)

The Fatale
(page 122)

The Mook
(page 126)

The Private Eye
(page 130)

The War Vet
(page 134)

The Politician
(page 138)

The Career Criminal
(page 142)

The Gambler
(page 146)

The Reporter
(page 150)

THE SHAKERS

The Starry-Eyed Kid
(page 156)

The Citizen
(page 160)

The Socialite
(page 164)

The Disgraced Doctor
(page 168)

The Musician
(page 172)

The Attorney
(page 176)

The Gangster
(page 180)

The Celebrity
(page 184)

The Ex-Con
(page 188)

Girl/Boy Friday
(page 192)

Motivations

Every Role has three Motivations that describe an aspect of your personality. They are Brains, Moxie, and Risk. Every Motivation has a numeric value to it, ranging from -3 to +3, meaning that number is added to or subtracted from the sum of two rolled dice. Every Role has four options for Motivation ranges. Players pick one set and then add +1 to any Motivation they want.

BRAINS

How smart or bright you are. A Role with high Brains knows a lot or thinks a lot and is often well-educated or studied. In other games, this may be expressed as Intelligence. For Noir World, think of Brains as a combination of Intelligence and Wisdom, since Brains also includes common sense or street smarts. It's as much about book knowledge as it is social and societal awareness.

MOXIE

How charismatic or persuasive you are. A Role with high Moxie is spunky or charming and is often seductive or manipulative. In other games, this is expressed as Charisma. For Noir World, think of Moxie as Charisma and Willpower, as Moxie is a measure not just of how you can try and get what you want from others, but also how you can persistently pursue what you want.

RISK

How willing you are to get dangerous. A Role with high Risk is brave or reckless or crazy or determined, regardless of consequences. This Motivation is about the willingness to put yourself in possibly dangerous situations, and how normal you think it might be to end up in jeopardy in order to get what you want.

Example of Choosing Motivations

Brian chooses The Disgraced Doctor as his Role and chooses Brains +2, Moxie 0, Risk +2 as his Motivations. He adds +1 to Risk, meaning his Motivations when play begins will be Brains +2, Moxie 0, Risk +3.

Belongings

This is equipment, things you have access to or things you have on your person. It's also assumed that a Role has small items available or within easy access (so that the Role doesn't have to ask the Director if they have money to pay for a meal, so that the Scene doesn't lose momentum over a question that most players would hand-wave). If it makes sense for the Role to have an item on their person or in their possession and that item doesn't have a significant impact on the story, then the Role has the item. For example, the Fatale probably has lipstick or a handkerchief in their purse, but it may be narratively inconvenient for the player to say they have extra bullets in their coat pocket during a Scene where the tension of the Scene hinges on a lack of ammunition.

The Director's discretion is paramount here. It's important to keep in mind that the goal is to deliver the best Movie experience for all the players, and decisions as to what items a Role has access to is part of providing that experience.

Belongings have tags, which are narrative or mechanical modifiers to help you use the Belongings in a scene. Tags are descriptors. You might have a coat that **BILLOWS** or a gun that's **LOUD**. These tags offer narrative advice you can use when you describe what you're doing in a Scene. Maybe you're the first cop at the crime scene and you use your trusty flashlight to check the oil-splashed asphalt for footprints.

Anything can be tagged. The old rusty rifle over the fireplace might just be for show until one day you have to arm yourself against a Mook trying to break down the door. Maybe it will work and maybe it won't. That decision is up to your collaborating with the Director of the Scene and the outcome of the dice.

ATTENTION-SEEKING – Using this item will draw a crowd and create panic.

BRUTAL – The object injures people so profoundly that their injuries persist for the rest of the Movie. It deals 2 Injury and 1 tag.

CONCEALABLE – This item can be hidden from all searches.

DEAFENING BLAST – This item makes it hard to hear anything else going on in the Scene. Any information heard will be interpreted incorrectly.

DEVASTATING – This object injures people to the point that they're near death. It deals 3 Injury and 2 tags.

Step 2 Define the Roles

DULL – This item is not sharp and doesn't injure people easily.

EXPENSIVE – This item can be exchanged for a new item, a large envelope of cash.

EXPLOSIVE – This item damages everything and everyone around it, often fatally or catastrophically. It deals 2 Injury to everyone in the area, and 1 tag on each Injured person

FASHIONABLE – This item is attractive.

FIRE – This item spreads fire, and anything it touches can burn. That includes people. Burning deals 2 Injury and the tag “on fire” is applied to whatever's burning. Fire persists until extinguished.

HEAVY – This item weighs a lot.

IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES – This item is attractive.

IT BILLOWS – This item looks badass.

KICKBACK – This item generates a lot of recoil.

KO – This item can knock an opponent out if a 5 or 6 is rolled when a Knockout is attempted. See Knocking Someone Out, page 76.

LETHAL – This item can be used to kill, if both the attacker and victim agree to it narratively. See Narratively Killing Someone, page 76.

LONG RANGE – This item can be used over great distances.

LOTS OF AMMO – This item has many bullets.

LOUD – This item makes it hard to hear anything else going on in the scene. Any information heard will be misinterpreted.

LUCKY – This item gives its user a +1 to any action when used.

PORTABLE – This item can be kept in a pocket, holster, or under a coat.

SHARP – This item can cut, and do so deeply.

SHORT RANGE – This item can only be used in close proximity to the target.

SHOCKING – This item stuns a target if a 5 or 6 is rolled when a Knockout is attempted. See Knocking Someone Out, page 76.

TWITCHY – This item randomly discharges, often when least convenient.

UNRELIABLE – This item randomly fails to work, usually at critical moments.

UNTRACEABLE – This item cannot be tied to a specific owner.

WELL-MAINTAINED – This item is clean and in good condition.

WELL-USED – This item is well-worn and familiar.

MAKING YOUR OWN TAGS

In no way is the above list comprehensive. Anyone can add to or amend this list as they need to; just tell everyone which tags you're creating and what they do.

Example of New Tags

*Billy, the Starry-Eyed Kid, has a treasured photograph of someone he believes to be his father. His photograph has a **+CHERISHED** tag, making it important and significant to Billy. He'd hate to lose it.*

FREE LOCATIONS

When picking Belongings, Roles have the option to pick Locations specific to their lifestyle or activities. It might be the apartment you live in, a club you own a stake in, or a favorite place you like to frequent. Any Locations your Role offers do NOT count against the total number of Locations available for the Movie. It's a freebie; just remember that Free Locations count as part of the number of Locations needing to be visited by the end of play. Your freebie Location does NOT get an additional Person in it, since it's yours.

Example of Free Locations

*Mark, the Private Eye, has one of his belongings noted as a **AN OFFICE WHERE YOU'RE BEHIND IN YOUR RENT (LOCATION)**. This office is now a standard location for the game, meaning that it's perfectly reasonable for the Director to establish a friendly visit there by hired goons, or to burn the place to the ground.*

Motives: Secrets and Goals

Each Role chooses one of three Secrets: elements of the Role's backstory that can influence or shape Scenes. These are interesting details that range from "You're secretly terminally ill" to "You're on the run from the police." They exist to give your Role more depth; keep it to yourself until a reveal that would be most interesting, dramatic, or effective for the Movie.

Secrets convey no mechanical advantage. They're a potential story and behavior catalyst. Sharing your Secret before the Movie starts, so that other players and Directors have an idea of what you're looking to accomplish in play is not necessary, but may be helpful. Secrets too may also end up revealed during the course of roleplay, adding interesting torque and tension to situations.

Each Role can choose one of three Goals, something that a Role wants to complete by the end of the Movie. It may be something as direct as "Get out of this alive" or as complex as "Make sure this Role doesn't get out of this in one piece, no matter who they are."

If you complete your Goal, you haven't "won", but it can create an arc for your character over the course of the Movie. Like Secrets, Goals offer no mechanical advantage, but are instead sparkplugs for story decisions. Similar to Secrets, sharing Goals before play begins or letting them emerge organically as a part of role-play are both possible management strategies.

Role Actions

Every Role has four possible Actions specific to it, and you need to choose two of them. The two Actions you choose aren't the only things you can do, but those two things are things only you can do. They're what make you special; they are abilities or opportunities only you have because of who or what you are. The Good Cop can rally people like no other, while the Mook can stand toe-to-toe with anything short of an armored tank better than anyone else.

No matter the Role, everyone has access to a set of universal Actions: things that anyone can do in almost any situation. In fact, most Actions performed will be these basic ones. These basic actions are **CHECK IT OUT**, **FIGHT IT OUT**, **TALK IT OUT**, and **HELP OUT** and are described on page 66.

Hooks

Hooks are the single most critical tool a Director has at their disposal for not only reinforcing a Movie's tone, but also wrangling Roles into taking chances and living with the outcomes. It can be very easy as a Director to lose sight of who's doing what and why. The Hooks are there to provide an incentive (or disincentive) for a Role. Many of the Actions a Role can take refer to whatever relationship has been established by the Hook, and it's often in the Scene's best interest to have that Hook play a part in whatever the Role ends up doing.

If the Private Eye investigating the murder finds the trail takes him to a Politician, that's interesting. But it can be far more interesting if that investigation also takes him to the Socialite who suffered a broken heart at the Politician's hands, the same Socialite who's been seeing the Private Eye intimately. There's nothing wrong in a Director asking a Role to remind them about their Hooks, and then weave them into a Scene's progression.

Yes, it does require flexibility, as some Hooks might not fit easily and immediately into the designs the Director has in mind. It's critical to use the Movie as something evolving and taking shape through play, rather than having play fit the Movie as though it were a fixed template.

Each Hook is only part of a relationship, and when using one Hook, it's important to realize that its corresponding Hook can also make an impact. Directors are encouraged to confer with the Roles to get clarification on how Roles are interpreting their Hooks. There are no wrong answers, so long as everyone can reach a consensus.

Example of Hook Selection

Brianna's Mook has a Hook of "You're tired of taking crap from this person" with Mark's Private Eye. By itself, that suggests an adversarial relationship that can be exploited any time the two Roles interact. It grounds the Mook into always starting from a position of exasperation, no matter the specific situation.

Where things get interesting is by looking at the reciprocal Hook the Private Eye has: "If you made different choices, you could see yourself turning out just like this person."

Interpreting that relationship as a combination of exasperation and guilt creates tension, and that tension can be used as a lens for any situation in the Movie.

Step 3 Define Places and People

Locations

A Location is a place where a Scene happens. Maybe it's the "Over-Easy Diner, downtown", or maybe it's "the 73rd Police Precinct". It doesn't matter who suggests the Location – so long as they also provide one Fact about the Location when they create it. The name of the Location and the Fact about it go on an index card at the center of the table.

There will always be one more Location in the Movie than there are Roles playing in the Movie, so a Movie with 5 Roles would have 6 Locations. This gives variety to the Movie's tone and atmosphere and gives Directors different elements to work with. Group consensus is important here, making sure everyone contributes or is heard in the creative process.

The Fact can be anything. It's a statement that's true about the Location, the people there, or some quality about either. The Over-Easy Diner may also have the best pie in town, or it could be run by Old Pete, a former leg-breaker for the mob. Statements that everyone can agree to, and especially statements that excite people to play, are ideal. The Fact is universally known and true. It's never contradicted by other Facts. It's never countermanded by the fiction in play. A Fact is just what it is, for better or ill. This means everyone knows the Fact about the Location, and it's never questioned as being potentially false.

If a Location's Fact connects to another Location or to another Fact in play, all the better. This will help keep the Movie contained and make sure each Location plays an active part in the Movie.

Example of a Location

The Over-Easy Diner (the Location) is downtown, near the train station, and is a frequent spot for police and their informants to meet and talk. The mob also has it under surveillance from the Sternwood Apartments across the street (the Fact).

The Sternwood Apartments (the Location) are home to several middle-management mob types, who are looking to take over the Over-Easy Diner and chase out the cops and informants alike (the Fact).

People

A Person is a character the Roles can interact with, but isn't a Role themselves. The Person might be there just for a single bit of information to get relayed (a bank manager who witnessed the robbery), or it can be as complex and colorful as the player wants the Person to be. In the earlier example, Old Pete at the Over-Easy Diner counts as a Person.

The maximum number of Persons available is 1 per Location. Locations created as Belongings do not get a Person unless it's specified on the Role's character sheet.

Not all Persons have Locations. The City can support whatever diverse population it needs, so Maude the telephone operator wouldn't need to be assigned to a single space. This way, a Person can be accessible throughout the game, whenever and wherever the narrative requires, without having to up-root or re-arrange a specific Scene.

In every Location, there's a Person to interact with. The Smoky Pearl can have a bouncer named Mookie, the Chatterbox jazz club can have Dizzy Steinway, the Precinct could have Captain Bruno. When you create a Location and its Person, you have the option of providing a Fact about that Person in addition to the Fact about the Location. This way, you can have the Chatterbox just on the edge of the right side of the tracks and its Person be Dizzy Steinway, the slightly bumbling Musician who wishes she were a Private Eye.

Persons have their own agenda. It might be useful to designate their agenda as their Fact – maybe Mookie at the Smoky Pearl really wants to own the joint one day, or maybe Captain Bruno is only three weeks away from retirement. Giving them an agenda of their own, with the assumption they're making attempts to achieve it, will make each Person seem like more than a cardboard cut-out built just so that there can be some roleplay around them while they provide boring facts.

When a Person must do something that would require a roll, assume they can either take the 7-9 result or the 6- result, whichever is more interesting for the Movie, not necessarily for a Role's individual success. Persons have the ability to survive 1 Injury, unless it is more useful to the Movie that they do not.



Persons can also have their own Hooks, either with Roles or with other Persons. Maybe Dizzy Steinway is the War Vet's little sister or Captain Bruno knows the mayor's dirty secret and is getting paid off. Treat Persons essentially like full Roles, just controlled by the Director for that particular scene.

When a Person is used in a Scene, the Director should have a player not currently in the Scene act as the Person, to avoid the Director having to do too much (or if the Director has their own Role in the Scene, to avoid talking to themselves for a whole Scene).

A Person generally can survive as much Injury as the Movie warrants. They might get killed in a shootout or manage to survive the explosion and obligatory fireball just so that they can stick around.

Example of a Person

Tyson the Socialite's Annual Masquerade Ball is the highlight of the charity season. That is, until he is poisoned while giving a toast to the other wealthy people in attendance.

Step 4 Define the Crime

Every Movie has a Crime in it. The Crime is what's wrong. It's what has violated society's rules or led to a change in the status quo. It has the expectation of being solved and of having consequences involving authorities and laws. A Crime can be of any scope, from a simple robbery to a complex series of murders. Likewise, the punishments can vary, from simple fines up to state-sanctioned execution.

In Noir World, the legal process is seldom handled. This isn't a game about depositions, appeals processes, or the filing of torts. Noir World's Crimes can happen during the Movie or prior to it starting. The decision is a critical one because it will be an additional piece of framework for play.

The Crime is part of the Movie's skeleton, though it can be made central by Directors focusing on its progress towards a solution, but as with other elements in Noir World, the Crime is a variable – it may not come up in play, it may not even be resolved, and that's perfectly acceptable.

When Is The Crime?

The Crime is the incident that brings an already entangled group of people together, often with disastrous consequences. There are six types of Crimes in Noir World (Arson, Blackmail, Fraud, Kidnapping, Murder, and Robbery), and before everyone at the table can get specific about what the Crime is, they have to agree on when it happened. There are two options.

If the Crime happened **before** the Movie starts, the Crime is an easier starting point for Good Cops, Dirty Cops, or Private Eyes, since they can serve a natural "I'm here to investigate" function to get the Movie going. Having the Crime happen before play starts also means that the big question in play is "Who did it?", which can provide a lot of opportunities for investigation and discovery.

If the Crime happens **during** the Movie, the Crime is a reason to draw lots of people together. Instead of being a procedural and focusing on investigation, play can focus on "How does it happen?", suggesting the possibilities that maybe it doesn't succeed and can put a great deal of spotlight on non-investigation Roles like the Fatale, Mook, or War Vet.

Step 4 Define the Crime

It's important to point out that the Crime is not the sole thrust of the Movie. It can be, but it's also just as likely that due to the Hooks and whatever relationships those develop into, the Crime becomes a secondary element to the story. That's okay. The Crime is there as a reference point to help bring players together or give them incentive to interact when necessary. The Crime not getting solved does not mean the time spent was wasted. For a discussion of how the Crime intersects with the rest of the Movie, see the Director section, starting on page 85.

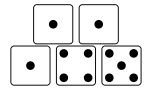
Choosing The Crime

Use the tables below to determine the Movie's Crime. Each player rolls one die to indicate the type of Crime, then rolls a second die to give the Crime more specifics. Once all the dice are rolled, the results are grouped by number. How many sixes are there? How many fives? Fours?

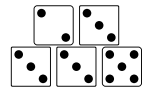
In cases of ties, both actions or specifics are part of the same Crime. (An Arson that involves or covers up a Kidnapping, for example.) It's important that there's a level of agreement among all the Roles as to where the Crime took place or will take place, so that the narrative solidifies into something every Role can participate in.

Example of Crime Selection

Shanna is the Director, and counting herself, there are five players at the table. Everyone rolls a die and gets the following results:



*Taking the most frequently rolled result (3 ones) puts the type of Crime in this Movie as a **murder**. Once the Crime type is picked, all players roll their die again and group together their results. Their second results are:*



*Checking the chart a second time, the Crime is **"A murder is arranged."** Players can figure out who does the arranging and who is the victim during the course of play.*

The arranged murder Shanna wants takes place at the City Zoo, where a very aggressive panda has just come over from China and took out its frustrations all over the zookeeper Jenn, though witnesses report a few strange things going on right before the attack. This leaves the potential for investigation (and therefore giving multiple Roles things they can do) rather than being something that only one Role could do to limited means.

The Crime Chart

MURDER

- 1 A Role's paramour is killed
- 2 A spouse or partner of a Role is killed
- 3 A murder is arranged
- 4 A major political official is killed
- 5 A celebrity is killed
- 6 A Role's family member is killed

ROBBERY/THEFT

- 1 A famous piece of art is stolen
- 2 A jewelry store is robbed
- 3 A bank is robbed
- 4 A wealthy socialite's home is robbed
- 5 A heist is planned
- 6 A government building is robbed

KIDNAPPING

- 1 Someone's spouse or child has been kidnapped
- 2 A minor political figure has been kidnapped
- 3 A CEO or major business figure has been kidnapped
- 4 A socialite's family member has been kidnapped
- 5 A kidnapping is arranged
- 6 A kidnapping is botched

FRAUD

- Someone has been passing fake checks 1
- A counterfeiting ring has run amok lately 2
- Someone commits insurance fraud 3
- Someone has been impersonating someone else 4
- Someone impersonating a member of the clergy 5
- A famous piece of art is a forgery 6

4

ARSON

- A school building has burnt down 1
- A socialite's house has been torched 2
- A church has been firebombed 3
- A minor politician's house has burnt down 4
- A celebrity's house has been blown up 5
- A significant building in the City has burnt down 6

5

BLACKMAIL

- A celebrity is being blackmailed 1
- A minor politician is being blackmailed 2
- A major politician is being blackmailed 3
- A member of the clergy is being blackmailed 4
- A prominent CEO is being blackmailed 5
- Blackmail is arranged 6

6



3 *Playing Noir World*

The key to playing Noir World is to prioritize a cinematic feel and a willingness to tell the best story even when it doesn't specifically give your Role the best advantage or the best outcome.

Play moves not at the decision of your Role but at the speed of the collaboration between your Role and the Scene's Director. It's crucial for the Director to keep the Movie's plot flexible, and it's equally crucial for your Role to work with the other Roles, to make sure everyone's engaged, and the Movie's rich with potential.

Think Like a Movie

Even if you've never seen film noir, chances are good that you've seen a movie or a television show. While *Noir World* focuses predominantly on the tropes of film noir, if you've never seen any of the suggested movies listed in the Appendix (see page 328), any knowledge you have about movies helps.

In every session of *Noir World*, you're creating a Movie. A Movie is a set of Scenes that tell the story of people related in and around a central premise, most often a Crime. Scenes take place at Locations, and involve Roles and often a Person or two. Whenever there's doubt of how a Scene should go, or what a Director should do, think like a movie. What would a character on-screen do? Where would they go? Why? What are they trying to do?

Cooperation is key here. And while it's important to encourage the Roles, *Noir World* is not a game where you push the players of those Roles into uncomfortable spaces. If the table doesn't agree, for whatever reason, then whatever you're talking about – a Location, Person, Fact, whatever – doesn't end up in the Movie. Period.

Let's be clear here: happy endings are few and far between. No one is going to get what they want. The world isn't one of rainbows and puppies. The good guys don't always win in the end, and justice isn't always dealt to the guilty. These are the harsh truths in film noir, and it's important to make people aware of them before play begins. It's not all gloom and doom either – hope isn't eliminated, it's just very far away. There can be happiness out there for some people, but in order to get it they just have to break the rules, get in over their heads, take huge risks against steep odds, and give up a lot of themselves along the way.

Time Is Negotiable

In thinking like a Movie, it is possible to tell a story non-linearly, such as a Near-Future Movie that begins with Paul the Good Cop and Mark the Private Eye being crushed in a giant pneumatic press in the first Scene, then the second Scene setting up that the rest of the film is a flashback, or series of flashbacks to explain how the squishing was inevitable.

The Structure of Play

Overview

Each Director chooses the Location where their Scene will take place, describes it, and uses the Casting Call to determine which Roles are in that Scene (additional Roles may be added in as the Scene progresses, so long as the Director never directs their own Role in a Scene), and then uses up to 3 additional Actions from the Director Actions list (see page 102) to develop the Scene through its beginning, middle and end stages. Once the Director completes the last Action they want to make, the Director Fades to Black, and the Role to the Director's right becomes the next Director.

Play continues and the Movie's Act carries out until every Role has been Director at least once. When that happens, there is an Act break where Persons and Locations are added, modified, or removed to suit the narrative as needed. Play then resumes with a new Director, not necessarily progressing in the same order, but always proceeding to the right at the change of Directors.

Three-Act Structure

Whether we know the terminology or not, we're all familiar with three-act structure. We learned it as beginning, middle, and end, and maybe you got more detail about it with things like escalation, climax, and resolution. In Noir World, it's best to think of the game you're playing as a movie, and then combine what you know about beginnings, middles, ends, climaxes, cliffhangers, and all the stuff you have absorbed from books, television, movies, and Netflix.

BEFORE ACT ONE – INTRODUCTIONS AND SETUP

As discussed before (page 39), make sure everyone has a Role and has picked a Name, Belongings, Actions, and Hooks. Make sure everyone has contributed Locations (don't forget the ones they may have taken as Belongings), and make sure everyone knows what the Crime is. When all that's done, go around the table and introduce the Roles. It may be helpful to make name cards for each player. Reinforce the Director's Code and make sure everyone knows the Director Moves. There's a reference sheet on page 354.

ACT ONE – ESTABLISHING THE MOVIE

The hardest part of the Movie is getting it off the ground. Unlike a lot of games that bring a group of characters together all at once and somehow the loudest or most creative player starts the action, Noir World starts the Movie small, a Role or two at a time, and incorporates more characters over time.

Determining where the Movie starts is related to when the crime is, (page 50) and the type of Crime. It might be best if the investigator Roles (Good Cop, Dirty Cop, Private Eye, Reporter) open the Movie. But that means the Crime has already happened. If the Crime hasn't happened yet or is happening during the Movie, then maybe a non-investigator (Fatale, Mook, War Vet, etc.) starts things off.

No matter how it starts, the first Scene sets the tone. Noir World offers three ways of figuring out who goes first, if people can't reach a decision or no one has a good idea:

- Whoever can tell the most interesting or amusing Movie about a character death in any other role-playing game.
- Whoever has seen the most old, black-and-white movies.
- Whichever Role has the most complicated and potentially messy Hooks.

Each Scene in Act One has a responsibility to establish something, and that doesn't necessarily have to be something mechanical that gets documented on cards. Treating this like a movie, these first Scenes introduce the Roles, their agendas, and their efforts on how to accomplish whatever goals they have. Scenes can migrate and carom across multiple Locations throughout Act One.

Act One concludes when:

- The Crime has been introduced.
- Every Role has been Director at least once.

ACT TWO – AMPLIFYING THE MOVIE

In the second Act, there aren't too many introductions. The Movie should have nearly everything it needs from Act One, so now the focus shifts to making everything more detailed, more emotionally intense, or more dangerous. In this Act, Locations are visited because the Scenes and information to be had there modifies or embellishes existing information. It's not that new information can't come to light in Act Two, it's just that the later new information reaches the players, the more likely they are to assume it's replacing rather than augmenting what they already know.

Picture rolling a snowball down a hill. Initially the ball starts tiny, but as it takes on more snow and gains momentum, the snowball becomes a force to be reckoned with. In your Movie, the information each Director provides in each Scene is helping fatten that snowball and accelerate it towards the bottom of its respective metaphoric hill.

The strength of Act Two is in its ability to let the Movie develop through the combined efforts of all Roles and Directors. It's tempting to have an expectation coming out of Act One, thinking that the plot will play out in a certain way, or that it can be steered in a certain way if a Role or Director does a certain thing or says a line. I urge you to resist temptation and try not to expect Act Two to do anything other than let the plot expand and go where it organically wants. It may not be what someone expects, but provided everyone continues to stay invested in producing the best Movie and staying within the bounds of their Role, then the Act will move in the directions that serve it best.

Act Two is generally the longest of the three Acts, as each Director will naturally want their Scenes to be more substantial than they were in Act One. It may also help to think of Act Two as a length of fuse nearest dynamite. The Act progresses and the fuse burns, getting closer to exploding, and then ultimately exploding to end the Act and Movie.

The Second Act concludes when:

- Every Role has been Director at least once.
- The next step in the movie would be a climactic and exciting Scene (or Scenes) involving action, retribution, consequences, violence, and death.

The majority of Movies will end after Act Two. The final Scene is often where the guns come out and Roles get killed. Or there are dramatic reveals and surprising outcomes. As a Director, encourage this, but keep a firm hand on the tone. Just because the Movie is ending doesn't mean the wheels should come off the train.

Not every character is going to survive Act Two. Some will have to die because the narrative leads in that direction, or because it becomes imperative due to circumstance or criminal nature or Hooks. Some will need to live bearing the weight and scars of the Movie. No one gets out of Act Two unscathed.

(OPTIONAL) ACT THREE – RESOLVING THE MOVIE

If you don't want Act Two to be the end of the Movie, then consider using Act Three to create the ending when boom goes the dynamite. No new information is ever introduced during Act Three. This is due to a rule in screenwriting called "No drive-ups in the third act," meaning new characters with convenient abilities or information don't just appear, because if they were to get introduced into the Movie, any already involved Roles may feel cheated by this last minute *deus ex machina*.

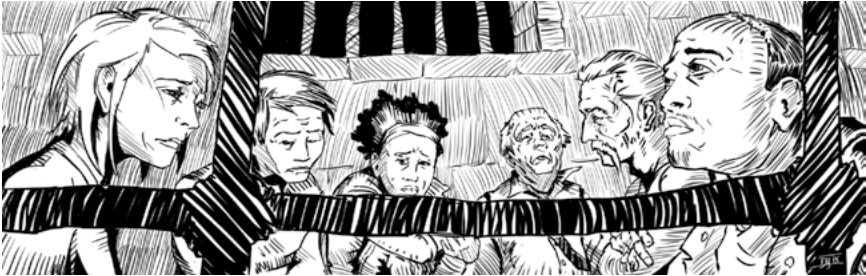
The third Act starts with either the final moments of build-up before the big conclusion (whether that's a gunfight or the reveal of the killer or the car chase on winding mountain roads, etc.) or at the start of that conclusion. Directing a Scene in Act Three means there's no reason to hold anything back. Push all the dials to eleven, make sure to risk everything, and give the best rewards.

The Structure of Play

There can be a temptation to use being in Act Three as a permission slip to let go a little bit in terms of the rules or the structure of the Movie, as you can easily find yourself as a Director very caught up in the snap emotional decisions of the moment. Fight this feeling back, and maintain a hand on the Movie's pace and rules. Just because there's action or consequences or resolution doesn't mean you have to sacrifice tone or pacing. Take your time, make sure you're delivering the best Movie possible, using all the available information you've gained over the course of the Movie. What you do sets the tone for what other Directors will do. Remember that you're all in this together, and enjoy your Movie.

The Third Act concludes when:

- Everyone has been Director at least once.
- All Locations have been visited, and the plot has been resolved to the satisfaction of all Roles.



THE MONTAGE

The Roles may have handled the plot, but there can still be things left unanswered. By using a Montage, everyone is able to provide their Role with an amount of closure. To do a Montage, each player describes how they think the Movie ends for their Role. Did anyone live happily ever after? Did anyone take a moment to stop and mourn the dead? Did people move on to a new life? A new City? A new Crime?

Welcome to the City

There Is Always The City

It doesn't matter if the City in your Movie is modeled after a real-life place or if it's something made up: it's always referred to as "the City". It's as big or small as it needs to be, and it's always going to be a little too crowded and a little too noisy. It isn't entirely based on one real-life place; it's an amalgam of lots of places.

The City can be reminiscent of Chicago, Miami, Tokyo, or even your hometown. Even when the Locations in play suggest there are suburbs or places on the edge of town, there's always the City, forever around the Roles, and always visible. It's an inescapable blanket of asphalt, steel, and glass, all too eager to cover anyone in it.

The City Has Everything

Because the Movie will always take place in the City, the City can have whatever it needs. Abandoned hobo field? Check. Creepy railroad station populated with winos? Check. Posh dance club uptown where you have to know a password to get in? Check. Anything can be found in the City, so long as you can describe it, name it, and everyone else agrees that it's there.

There's no single template for a City. It's not about coasts or skylines. The City has everything and has the potential for everything that isn't mentioned.

All Roads Lead To The City

If you're dealing with a kidnapping, maybe the victim is being held captive out in the country at some farmhouse. Technically, that's outside the City limits, but it's still part of the City. The same is true for quiet suburban places and other cities. No matter what, it's part of the City. And even if the plot resolves itself outside of the City (say that farmhouse gets burnt to the ground after a messy shootout), the Movie's last Scene(s) will always take place back in the City. The Movie will only ever develop and play out at the Locations created at the beginning of play (or the secondary Locations connected to them).

Neighborhoods And Suburbs

Just because there's been a lot of talk about the City, don't think that noir can only occur within a few dozen blocks of brownstones, row houses, and giant buildings. You can easily scale down the City to be a few Locations in a town or anything more specific than that (there have been Noir World Movies that took place in one single apartment building, with the Locations being individual apartments or areas in the building). It's important that you collaborate and decide what kind of story you want to tell, and then tailor the material to suit that idea, rather than the other way around.

It's worth pointing out here that you can easily segregate Locations in a City to different regions (like going from Brooklyn to midtown Manhattan), and in doing so create interesting divisions to help narrative. If you need to create a Little Havana or Little Mozambique to give you the best Movie, by all means do it.

Playing Scenes

Every Movie in Noir World is divided into Scenes, which occur at a Location and involve two or more Roles. A Movie has as many Scenes as it needs, so long as by the end of the Movie, every Location has been used at least once.

The order in which Locations are visited doesn't matter because every Movie is going to be different, and every Director is going to have their own idea as to how they'll take the Movie from Point A to Point B. This is why it's important to keep track of what Locations have already been visited and which ones haven't been. A Location can be visited any number of times in the course of play, and multiple Scenes can take place at the same Location back-to-back.

Every Scene starts with a little setup work.

The Director establishes when this Scene occurs in the Movie's chronology. Is this a flashback? Does this Scene happen right after the last Scene? Is this Scene happening at the same time as another Scene, just at some other Location? Knowing when the Scene happens means that everyone at the table can follow along and use whatever information comes up in the Scene for later Scenes.

The Director establishes who is in the Scene. When you're the Director you cannot direct your own Role. The Casting Call is the list of what Roles are in the Scene, and it comes immediately after establishing the Location and where this Scene takes place in the Movie. As the particular Scene develops, other Roles or Persons can get introduced as it makes sense narratively for them to be there.

There's nothing stopping multiple Directors from regularly involving the same Role or Roles in a number of Scenes (in Movies with fewer Roles, this will be expected), but don't neglect the other Roles available in the Movie. While the narrative thread of the Movie may head in one direction, the potential a Role has to add to and impact that thread is not hindered by who the Role is. Bringing in other Roles that don't have narrative accessibility via their Hooks is an important element to remember. If a Role doesn't have a narrative reason to be there, look at the relationships they have with the Roles that are narratively engaged. What complications, what twists, what surprises can bringing in Hooks yield?

The Director can provide motivations for players who are confused or unsure of what to do. This step is optional. This is especially true for new players, or people with little experience in this sort of game. Whatever information the Director provides has to be in line with the Role's Hooks, Goals, and however they've been played in the Movie up to that point. Large changes in character behavior are jarring and can throw off the Movie's momentum.

The Director establishes the Scene's look. By telling the players what they see and how they see it, describing where the camera moves, what it shows, and what the Location looks like, the Director is keeping the players invested in the Movie. This is a chance to flex those Movie-telling muscles and paint a picture with words. The better the description, the richer and more narcotic it is, the more people will understand the tone and atmosphere of the Movie.

With the prep work done, the Scene begins. It plays out until it reaches a natural conclusion. The Roles have said all they can to each other, and the seeds for the next Scene have been put into place. Every Scene should connect to what's going on in the Movie, and every Scene should lay the groundwork for future Scenes in place. If a Scene falls flat or doesn't set up subsequent Scenes, it's up to the Director to work with the Roles involved to make clear what has happened or is happening.

Czege Who?

The Czege Principle states: when one person is the author of both the character's adversity and its resolution, play isn't as fun. This means that directing your own Role isn't as much fun as you think. Also, it means you act against your best interests. Let's say you're Director and you bring yourself into a Scene. If you roll 6-, you may have to drive a hard bargain with yourself, and how hard would that bargain be, exactly? Avoid the issue entirely and never direct yourself.

Basic Actions

One of the important and fundamental elements of Noir World is the Action, which is an opportunity for a Role to affect the narrative in a specific way. Everyone has access to the four Basic Actions, and chooses two of the four Role Actions described on their sheets. These actions will drive the Movie forward, so it's critical to understand how Actions work.

CHECK IT OUT is triggered when you examine, investigate, or look at things. This is the investigatory and discovery action. It's used when someone wants to find out more information than what they already have. This Action is not without consequences, since not everyone is going to like their business and secrets being uncovered.

FIGHT IT OUT is triggered when you attempt to injure someone or something else. This is what happens when the guns, knives, and fists come out. It's how a fight starts and possibly ends. The minute weapons are drawn and used, Fight It Out is rolled.

TALK IT OUT is triggered when you attempt to converse with someone else and try to persuade them to do something or agree with you. This is all about persuasion, coercion, discussion, or seduction. It's used when someone needs to make someone else see reason, but they don't have to get violent ... yet.

HELP OUT is triggered when you help someone do something. Help Out is used when people aid one another on an action one of them is taking. So long as it narratively makes sense and is possible, Help Out can be applied. Note that help does not stack, so even if multiple people help out, help can only grant a single +1.

Now, let's look at each of these in detail.

■ Check It Out

When you want to examine, investigate, or look at things, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, the Director will tell you something important and useful about what (or who) you're investigating.

On a 7-9, choose one of the following, and the director will tell you what happens:

- *What you discover makes things more complicated for everyone in the Movie. (This may lead to a new Scene, but doesn't have to.)*
- *You're about to get in over your head and have to do something you're going to regret. (This may lead to a new Scene.)*
- *Someone is about to offer you a choice you're not going to like. At all. (A Role or Person can come into the current Scene.)*

On a 6-, you misinterpret what you find, and it leads you into a situation where (choose one):

- *You take 1 Injury trying to get yourself out of it.*
- *You pursue a completely wrong lead that will affect a relationship you have with another Hook.*
- *In the next Scene you're in, whatever you've misinterpreted puts you in danger.*

Examples of Check it Out

Mark the Private Eye knows that something's not right at the Railyard. It's where the body was discovered early this morning, and now that the cops have gone, he can have a closer look around. He's prowling around in the dark, and uses Check It Out to see if there's anything significant that the police missed. The roll+Brains is a 10, so Mark's discovery of footprints is a clue worth remembering.

Brianna the Mook has just finished murdering Ryan the Gambler by leaving his mangled corpse to get somewhat more mangled by a tumble through a cement mixer. When it sets, and the body is half exposed, anyone investigating any part of the Scene rolls Check It Out to find out any kind of a lead.

■ Fight It Out

When you attempt to injure someone or something else, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you succeed, and any weapon you're using does its full Injury.

On a 7-9, you succeed, and any weapons used do half their full Injury (round up), but also either expose yourself to a counterattack you can't avoid OR expose someone else in the Scene (not involved in the fight) to an attack they CANNOT avoid.

On a 6-, tell the Director what happens to make the fight more dangerous while it continues OR the Director will offer you a way out of the fight, but with a serious risk to you more than anyone else in the fight.

Finger Guns Count!

Yes, if people around the table make finger guns, it totally counts as their Roles pulling guns. Just go with it.

Examples of Fight it Out

Jeremy the War Vet has gotten into a shoving match with Brianna the Mook. Narratively, a shoving match wouldn't warrant dice rolls, but when Jeremy pulls out a gun, the shoving stops and the fight starts. Jeremy's roll of 7 means his attack does half the weapon's damage (Gun 2 means it does 2 damage normally, so half that this time), and the Director chooses to expose Marty the Bartender to a shot they can't avoid. Ouch.

When Drew the Career Criminal confronts Attorney John the fight is intense in the confines of the office. And when each Role is done rolling their respective Fight It Out, Drew's corpse is drowned in the fish tank, and John has collapsed onto his desk blotter of a Los Angeles map, his brains leaking everywhere thanks to his skull getting cracked with the bust of Abraham Lincoln that he was trying to keep secret.

■ Talk It Out

When you attempt to converse with someone else and try to persuade them to do something or agree with you, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, the person you're speaking to agrees with you, for now. They may even help you, if they want.

On a 7-9, you can only get what you IF (their choice) you make a promise you're not sure you can keep OR the other person will betray at a critical moment.

On a 6-, your efforts backfire and the Role or Person gains something they may use immediately against you.

Examples of Talk it Out

When Lillian the Reporter heard that Warren the Bad Cop was on the take, she decided to snoop around his flat. She introduced herself to the landlady as Warren's new girlfriend, waiting for him to get off shift. Her roll of 9 is a partial success, and she is let into the flat. Unfortunately, the landlady also gave Warren a call on the other line about his new visitor.

In order to get her plan to become the next Mayor started, Shanna the Fatale has to convince Brian the Good Cop to look the other way when they meet up in the next Scene. Her roll of 5 makes it very clear that Brian will do no such thing, and in fact, he'll use her attempted bribe as evidence to take her downtown for a future Scene.

■ Help Out

When you help someone do something, roll.

On a 10+, your help grants them a +1.

On a 7-9, your help gives them a +1, but you either put yourself in danger OR do something to make the current situation worse for both of you.

On a 6-, you're not helpful at all, and the Director will tell you how your help didn't pan out the way you intended AND now you've done something to jeopardize EVERYONE in the Scene.

Examples of Help Out

During a tussle at the Cemetery, Brianna and Shanna are wrestling for control of the gun in Shanna's purse. Jeremy comes into the Scene just as the struggle is worsening, and decides he's going to throw in with Brianna. With a roll of 4, Jeremy is as helpful as an open window on a submarine, so he tells the Director how he reaches for the gun, and it goes off ... shooting Mark ... again.

Poor Erik. He was only trying to help his friends during a protracted gun fight, rolling Help Out to make sure everyone had ammo. But when the dice come up 6, and he pops his head up to see where the Starry-Eyed kid got to, he catches a round straight to the dome and drops, leaving his Gangster friends in a lurch and one step closer to surrender.

The Violent City

Sometimes in the course of a Movie, fights happen. Combat has lethal potential. Usually combat is part of a Scene as a form of violent communication, or as a narrative development.

Because of the low Health and high Injury of weapons, combat is not often a lengthy experience. The attacker rolls *Fight It Out*. The victim will determine any tags based on any Injury suffered. If there's a counterattack, then the positions reverse and the fight continues.

To support that, after every *Fight It Out* roll, each Role engaged in the fighting has the option to withdraw. Additionally, fights in *Noir World* tend to quickly escalate from fists to guns or even from words to guns, so the Director of the Scene as well as the entire table is encouraged to keep an eye on any situation that escalates too quickly without a narrative reason. It might be really fun to have everyone pull out guns at every opportunity, but is that the sort of Movie you want to create? Keep that in mind whenever combat starts, or when it seems to be going on longer than would make sense if you were watching this play out on a screen.

Example of Combat

The Private Eye decides he needs to get a little rough with Jim the Politician, late one night in an alleyway outside a fundraiser downtown. They've already tried to *Talk It Out*, and now Mark rolls up his sleeves and takes a swing at Jim for making one too many jokes about investigating skills, asses, and elbows.

Mark's attacking, so he rolls *Fight It Out*. He rolls 2d6, adds his Risk, and gets an 8. He's punching, so the Politician will take 1 Injury, and Mark chooses to expose himself to an unavoidable counterattack from the Politician, so Mark takes 1 Injury from punches to the face.

Now it's Jim's opportunity to either continue the fight or not, and Jim, being a proud man, attempts to stab the Private Eye in the gut with a small knife (*Knife 1*). He rolls 2d6 and adds Risk, getting an 11. With a swift motion, he drives the blade into Mark's midsection, netting the Private Eye his second Injury.

Now *Badly Wounded*, Mark declines to continue the fight, hoping that they can get back to talking and maybe doing something about his wounds.

Life Hurts

Being dead is probably the easiest thing someone can do in noir or crime fiction. They just lie there, they're not in pain, and they're pretty much an object to be used by other people. Whatever happened to them is what often drives the Movie either by plot or by emotional arc, and the other people involved use the body or the death as something to react to. Like I said, it's the easy part.

The suffering and trauma that doesn't kill you? That's the hard part. And that's what noir focuses on. Killing someone is too easy. Making them hurt for the rest of the Movie, that's something to relish.

In Noir World, dying is straightforward. If a Role agrees to it, you can kill them. Period. Dead. Worm chow.

The hard part is when you don't outright die. In many stories (books, TV, and movies alike) there are characters who endure a great deal of physical injury – they get fingers broken, they lose teeth, they get shot or stabbed. It's gruesome, it's a lingering pain, and it's an active reminder of their frailty.

These people aren't superheroes who can shrug off the effects of a fight by catching their breath for a few minutes. These aren't stories with magical healing or health potions. These are stories of people just like you or me, getting the stuffing beaten out of them while they're involved (or thought to be involved) with a situation.

Example of Violence

Brianna is Directing a Scene where Mark must break into Jeremy's apartment to look for clues. What Mark doesn't know is that Jeremy is waiting just on the other side of the door with a bat, thinking that the burglar isn't going to be the Private Eye. Mark gets into the apartment easily (there's no roll because it's more interesting to have him succeed), but Jeremy rolls a Fight It Out the minute Mark steps inside.

The two Roles talk a moment, and decide that rather than take potentially serious Injury from a bat, Mark can be KO'd for the rest of Brianna's Scene, unless she wants him awake in the same Scene by using a Later On... Director Action to accelerate time.

Getting Injured

Usually in noir, suffering happens far more than dying. Injury is marked in Tiers, and Injury is cumulative. All Noir World Roles can take up to 3 Injury.

Guns do 2 or 3 Injury, and Fists will always do 1 (because it hurts to get punched). Improvised weapons do Injury based on their size or toughness. A cut with a scalpel may be 1 Injury, while a brick to the face is 2.

The first Injury Tier is Hurt, where a Role is beaten up in a noticeable way, but they're not badly impaired. Hurt may be something like black eyes, a broken nose, or getting the wind knocked out of you. Taking 1 Injury is painful, but you'll deal.

The second Tier is Badly Wounded, where a Role is so wounded that they're impaired, or their condition is progressively worsening. Badly Wounded may be something like being shot or stabbed or breaking a limb. It's very painful, it makes it really hard to do anything, and if you're not careful, it can lead to your death. Taking 2 Injury is much more of a big deal, but you'll find a way to go on.

The third Tier of Injury is Near Death, where a Role is somehow clinging to life, but only barely. Near Death may be the outcome of an almost fatal car crash, or taking multiple bullets to the body, or being tossed off a building into a dumpster. It's a wonder how someone Near Death isn't already pushing up daisies. Taking 3 Injury is as close to dead and out of the Movie as you can get. See Curtains on page 77 for more information.

Getting Injured

Injuries are the results of Actions. They're often the physical consequences to your decisions or your emotional/mental state. When you get stabbed, shot, beaten, or otherwise have something grievous happen to you, you take Injury. Every weapon in Noir World has a number associated with it, telling you how much Injury it inflicts. For example - Knife 1 - means that this particular knife inflicts 1 Injury. A Gun 2 then means it inflicts 2 Injury, and so on.



WOUNDS

In addition to having an Injury rating, items also place tags on their targets. These tags confer a narrative description, adding some visual cues or imagination to the otherwise mechanical sound of “2 Injury”. For every Injury, regardless of its associated number, a tag may be placed on the target. A list of tags is available on page 42.

Injury is persistent, so any effects carry over from Scene to Scene. Tags can be removed or healed through medical treatment (whatever makes the most narrative sense), but without treatment, tags persist as well.

Example of Injuries and Wounds

*Mark, the Private Eye, decided it would be a great idea to investigate the back room of the seedy bar after hours. He burgles his way inside, only to find that Brianna’s Mook is waiting on the other side of the door. And she decides to let her crowbar do the talking. The crowbar is **(Club 2 KO lethal)**, so any hit deals 2 Injury. The fight doesn’t last too long after Brianna tees off on Mark, dealing 2 Injury. Mark chooses to tag himself with “**+BUSTED RIBS AND FACE**” as a result.*

HEALING

Healing is a rarity in Noir World. The Disgraced Doctor is the only Role with an Action that can heal another Role during play, meaning the majority of play will provide Roles with plenty of Scenes in which Injury persists.

Healing can happen without the Doctor being a Role in the Movie. At the end of every Act, each Role can choose to heal 1 Injury. More important than the accounting of Injury is the narrative reason provided. The injured Private Eye has a viable reason to go into the second Act with that wound still fresh and bleeding, especially if she's going to confront the Role who dealt the damage. Directors are encouraged to prioritize the narrative above individual Role health.

Is there a Doctor in the house?

Even when there are no Disgraced Doctors in the Movie, it is possible to narrate or explain within the game fiction that a Role has tried to tend their own wounds (first aid, crude bandages, duct tape). There are no specific rules about healing outside of the Disgraced Doctor's action (see page 168) because that's not something that happens often in film noir and crime fiction – if a Role is bandaging themselves up, let the narrative explain how and why.

Although the Disgraced Doctor is the only Role with an ability to heal another Role, it's important to realize that there's more to the Doctor than just being a walking first-aid station. Remember that Roles and Injury are part of noir, and that no single Role is a noir requirement. As was said in the Injury section, you can use the narrative to justify some healing without including mechanics. Let them rip up a bedsheet to make bandages, or fashion a splint out of a tire iron. If it helps tell the best Movie possible, and doesn't interfere with play in a substantial way, go for it.

Likewise, for a lot of players there's a nervousness about being injured and then needing healing. This is often the case in other games, but isn't something focused on in Noir World. It's important to stress to the players that by virtue of noir, injuries happen, wounds don't get immediately patched up, and that a Role can still be very functional or important to a Movie even after getting shot.

Going Dark

KNOCKING SOMEONE OUT

The KO is something that needs consent – you just can't knock a Role out without the player knowing it, since being unconscious means they're unable to respond. Reviving a person requires a narrative reason, like you slapping them awake, rousing them with smelling salts, or throwing water on them ... or whatever you think would bring someone back around.

The KO tag does not deliver additional Injury, but when a KO item is used to knock someone out, one die is rolled after any Fight It Out roll happens. If the result is a 5 or 6, it's possible to knock the target out should the player agree. Any other die result deals 1 Injury with no tags.

At the start of the next Scene, a Role that's been knocked out may come around either when the Director pulls them into the action or when it's narratively interesting.

Bringing in Another Role

When one Role dies, a player may want to bring in a new Role to keep participating in the Movie. Introducing a new Role, making new Hooks, all while keeping the Movie moving forward seamlessly is tough to do. Is it possible?

Yes, but it's not always the best thing to do. Talk it out amongst the group; be democratic about it. Do what works for you, but in a lot of Movies, Roles tend to die near the end of play, where it wouldn't make sense to bring in a new Role. Do what makes the best sense ... just don't make the new Role the long-lost twin of the old Role, please.

DEATH & DYING

Everyone dies eventually. It's entirely possible to skip the Fight It Out Action and kill a person automatically. This often happens at the end of the Movie, or when the narrative being built at the table suggests that the Role's death adds additional weight to the story. As with any decision in this game, a Role can be automatically killed, if they agree to it. If a Role dies, the player can still be a Director.

There's a mechanical way to determine when a character will die as well. When a Role exceeds 3 Injury, they're dead. But there's one last Action to take:

■ **Curtains**

When you take more than 3 Injury, roll the dice.

On a 10+, you aren't dead yet, but things aren't looking good. You're fighting to stay alive, so do one last thing in this Scene. Say something, do something, make it count. And then you're dead.

On a 9-, you're dead, right then and there.

Examples of Curtains

When Frederi's Socialite suffers what would be a fourth Injury due to a rapier being thrust through his throat, ruining not just his fancy leather chair, but his fancy smoking jacket and his fancy ascot, sending his fancy decanter of fancy brandy spilling all over the fancy rug he got as a gift from a guy impersonating royalty, he rolls Curtains, and with the result of a 7, is dead where he sits.

Sometimes it makes sense to skip the earlier tiers of Injury and go right to Dead, such as in the case of John's Career Criminal who crashed through the glass ceiling of City Hall while trying to break in by bypassing the alarm system. His elaborate system of pulleys and cables gave way and he fell three stories through glass and steel. Naturally, he's no longer alive.

The Changing City

Changing Locations

Before the first Scene, everyone is going to create a list of Locations. Put each one on a notecard and supply a Fact or a Person for the Location. Locations can be revisited repeatedly, as often as you need to, for whatever Scenes you need.

Over time, as Scenes develop, additional Facts may be brought up. The Smoky Pearl might start as the struggling jazz club on the edge of the waterfront, but as the Fatale and Musician get to talking, one of them might bring up that The Smoky Pearl also has a back room where low-level Mooks smoke jazz cigarettes and bet on the ponies. This statement, once everyone agrees to it, is true and gets written down on the notecard for The Smoky Pearl. The Fact doesn't offer a mechanical bonus, just a narrative one – it is part of the Movie and can be leveraged to advance or retard the plot as needed.

Locations help define the perimeter of the Movie's scope. Assuming there are 6 players around the table, there are a maximum of 12 Locations for the Movie to happen in (one per player, plus an additional one each if they all choose Locations as part of their Belongings). The Movie can ONLY take place here, or at a secondary Location that is a part of those Locations. You can subdivide a Location no more than twice (the 51st Precinct can have an Interrogation Room and a Lock-up, but not a Shooting Range, let's say). The clearest way to distinguish between making a secondary Location and a new Location is by asking two questions:

1. Is this Location a part of an existing one? If yes, when make it a secondary Location.
2. Is this Location's purpose to the Movie going to be of use to more than just two people for a Scene or two at most? If yes, make it a new Location.

Secondary Locations won't usually be made at the beginning of play. You can try to be predicative and think ahead, but it's often easier to create what you need at the time you need it. This is especially true if the secondary Location isn't going to be used by more than a few people for a Scene or two – there's not often a reasonable or logical way to justify everyone having access to the Precinct's Interrogation Room without a Cop or two being present. Secondary Locations do not get Facts or Persons. They're just extensions of an existing Location.

Locations are mutable though. You can always burn down The Warehouse or crash a sedan into the front window of Sharpstein's Department Store. A Location that gets severely affected in the Movie, even to the point of it no longer being a viable Location, can either be removed from play entirely (making the Movie even more claustrophobic) or changed to reflect the effects. The car sticking out of the department's store front window is going to change it from "Sharpstein's Department Store" to "Scene of a Terrible Car Accident with Part of the Car Smashed into Housewares".

Note: Remember that during play, every Location has to be visited at least once. If you eliminate a Location before using it in play, justify narratively why the old one had to be removed. You can replace it if the Movie needs or benefits from it. You may also find it helpful to put a number on each Location as you use it, so that people can chart the Movie's progression.

In the course of play, it might be necessary to add or expand a starting Location. For example, the 73rd Police Precinct may be the starting Location, but it may be necessary to add more specific parts to it: The Interrogation Room or The Chief's Office.

These secondary Locations are created just the same as Locations – with a name and a fact about them being written on an index card – however, the secondary Location cards are laid on the table next to or near the Location they're split from.

Over-Easy Diner

The Diner is downtown, near the train station, and is a frequent spot for police and their informants to meet and talk.

Fact: The mob also has it under surveillance from the Sternwood Apartments across the street.

Location

Adding Facts

Playing very organically means that as each player acts as Director, new Facts about a Location or Person are going to come up. It will start with whatever is generated at the start of play, but each new Scene can provide more information. Whenever a new Fact is established, the Director is responsible for writing down the Fact on the Location card. No Location can have more than 2 Facts related to it.

Facts Are True. No matter what the Fact is, it will be true and valid. This may be a cause for discussion among players. That's okay. You can always adapt the Fact so that it fits the narrative or tone better (like people are happier naming the nun at the church Sister Eustace instead of Sister Connie) before play begins.

Facts Cannot Cancel Out Previous Facts, Only Complicate Them. It's possible through play that the Movie will shape itself with conflicting information. This may be the case for Roles, given players the chance to weave double-crosses (or triple-crosses even), but between Locations and People, any Facts provided cannot conflict with any other Facts in play, even Facts about a different Location. Instead of conflict, Facts lead to complications. As stories move forward, things only get worse: more tangled, more tragic, and more dangerous.

So if the Over-Easy Diner is where cops meet informants, there won't be some other Location where that also happens in the same way. Any meeting between a cop and an informant that happens elsewhere is not going to be a run-of-the-mill meeting, there's going to be something significant (and ideally negative) about it.

Creating Secrets

Here's an optional rule that may add some additional tension, mystery, or intrigue to a Movie – Secrets. A Secret is like a Fact, in that it's a statement about a Location or a Place, but unlike a Fact is it not universally known. Similar to how a Role has a Secret that can affect a Movie, Secrets can also be given to Persons and Locations.

Logistically, this is managed the same way as writing the Facts – on the note card where you identified the Person or Location, add a Secret (label it so you distinguish it from any Fact). In play, whenever that Person or Location is involved, the Director can use that Secret's reveal to add momentum or interest to a Scene.

Like this: The Private Eye is investigating the Socialite's penthouse, and the Penthouse has a Secret **“+HAS A HIDDEN PANIC ROOM BEHIND THE ANTIQUE GRANDFATHER CLOCK.”** When the Private Eye rolls Check It Out successfully, the Director can choose to bring up this discovery as part of the Scene, and introduce it as a Secondary Location once it's discovered.

Or, for a Person: Wanda the Dock Worker has a Secret **“+KNOWS WHERE A BODY IS BURIED.”** When Wanda comes up in play, the Director can point out that this Secret needs to remain hidden, and can prompt the Role acting as Wanda to do her best to keep it close to the vest, at least until there's a convincing reason not to.

Troubleshooting Noir World

What do I do when no one wants to go first?

Start with a recap of all the Locations you've made and how they might connect to the Crime. If that still doesn't create an idea, move on to who you think has an interesting Hook and how it might relate to a Location or the Crime. If that doesn't create any sort of idea, look at how two Roles are connected and ask what would make for an interesting Scene.

Help! I'm in a Scene (not as Director) and don't know what to do!

Are you in a Scene with someone you've got a Hook with? How can you bring your Hook into a conversation about what's been happening in the Movie so far? Do you have an Action you can take, even if it means you need to do a little leading or creating in the Scene? The best thing you can do is work with the Role(s) in the Scene, rely on your Hooks, keep your Goal in mind and always try to add something that helps the Movie more than it helps your Role. Remember, this isn't a game where you need to or must be the winner, you're all working together to tell the best Movie, so make sure you're saying "Yes, and" and you're willing to do whatever that takes, even if you're not going to come out ahead or unscathed in this Scene.

Help! I'm a Director and have never done this before.

No matter if you're the first Director in this Movie or not, think about all the movies and television you've watched and start visually. Tell the Roles what the Scene looks like. Describe the big stuff and the little stuff. You don't have to race through this, and you can choose what you want to talk about. When you bring in a Role, think about why they're in that Location. Do they have a goal while they're there, what could they risk, or lose, or gain while they're there? What sort of challenge can you create for them by using Director Actions?

Remember too that there are other Roles in this Scene, and it's by working together, rather than by telling them what they're doing or what they can react to that's going to make this Scene an interesting part of the Movie. Don't worry that your Scene isn't 'doing enough' or that it's 'too long' – it'll all work out in the end.

What do I do if the Movie has nothing to do with the Crime we set up at the beginning?

Check and see if everyone is having a good time. They are? Then don't sweat it. If they're not, see what you can do as both Role and Director to steer things back on course.

How long should a Scene be?

The short answer is "as long as it needs to be." Depending on Director Actions and the decisions the Roles make, there's no set time limit. It is entirely contextual based on the roleplay happening.

How do I know a Scene is over?

Scenes are done when the Roles have done all they can think of doing given the information they have at the time. Whether there was a lengthy discussion, or a quick set of vignettes, the Scene's purpose is to contribute to and then advance the story. If it's done that, even if you're not sure how perfectly it did that, the Scene is over.

Sequels, Trilogies, and Series

Most times, a Movie in Noir World is played in a single session over the course of one night. In some cases, a Movie stops at a cliffhanger or a natural break in the action so that you can finish it a subsequent night. But the shorthand is one Movie, one night.

If you want to use these same Roles again, but in a different Crime, then that second Movie is a Sequel. If you add a third Crime to these Roles, the Movie is a Trilogy. If these characters are part of on-going multi-Crime play, then you're developing a Series.

While there's no specific experience or leveling system in Noir World, it is possible to improve characters over time, using a simple guideline – For every two Crimes, the Role gains one Action and one Hook. So, in a sequel, choose three of the Basic Actions per Role and take three Hooks. If the Role persists past a trilogy, they'd gain their fourth Action and one more Hook.



4 *Directing Nair World*

The Director is more than just the traditional “Game Master” who acts on behalf of all the people and things that aren’t managed by other players; they’re also facilitators responsible for creating an atmosphere where any Role or combination of Roles can succeed or fail or endure the consequences of either.

A Director doesn’t control the flow of story so much as steer it, breaking up logjams with decisions that prompt creative reactions. A Director works in conjunction with the Roles, not so they “win” but so everyone involved tells a story they’ll end up talking about after the Movie is long over.

Making the Movie

In many games, the Game Master or GM, is the only proactive position at the table. No matter the number or how engaged the players are, they're still reacting to whatever the GM says is going on in the fiction. There's nothing wrong with that, but *Noir World* uses a more collaborative and dynamic model.

By giving each player a chance to direct the other players, a Director creates a component of a great experience, rather than being relied upon for the lion's share of the gaming experience. This idea is critical to what *Noir World* is about – people working together to make sure they all have a good time, and everyone having a relatively equal stake in that experience.

It's important to remember that a player cannot star in a Scene and be their own Director. If you want to be in a Scene, pass the Director's position to someone else. Don't worry; you'll get it back.

To be an effective Director, you need to know the tools you're working with. You have complete autonomy, and whenever you're the Director, the other players take their cues and get their answers from you. Don't panic. Even if you've only ever been a player in a game and never in charge, you can be a Director in *Noir World*. Here's how.

To establish a framework and give some boundaries to the Movie, there are a few immutable constants that give shape and structure to whatever Movie gets told.

Keep It Claustrophobic

Noir isn't like other types of film where there are big outdoor shots or stories about people walking across fantasy landscapes. *Noir* stories are tightly framed and uncomfortably close. There aren't a lot of places to go; there isn't much breathing room. This helps keep the plot and its implications bearing down on the people involved and continually drives home the idea that this Movie is tense and twisted and only going to get more of both by the time the Movie reaches a climax.

This is why Noir World has a fixed set of Locations. There's no escaping the Movie. Locations and Persons can be revisited at any time and any number of times, but by the end of the Movie, all Locations must be visited at least once. It does not matter if a Location ends up being saved to the end for some third-act showdown, or if it's where the epilogue happens, every Location serves a purpose to move the Movie forward.

At the end of the First Act, a Location and its Fact that doesn't appear like it will come into play given the developing narrative can be replaced or modified to better fit what's going on. However, it cannot be removed entirely. Always make sure to have one more Location than you have players, and make sure that by the end of the Movie, every Location has been visited once.

Always Bring the Pain

When we think of noir movies, it's hard not to think about iconic shots. People looking through venetian blinds; the woman in the sexy dress half-hidden in shadows; the private investigator with his bottle of booze and rumpled suit. Those descriptions speak to us because they bring us back to a moment in the movie. A moment, where generally, people are in some kind of pain. Maybe the Private Investigator just got punched out in the alley behind the supper club. Maybe the Dirty Cop just got double-crossed.

Emotional or physical pain is how a Role is connected to the progress of the Movie. It's the unofficial currency of noir, and should be spent freely in copious amounts to make sure every Role ends up with a little dirt or blood on them.

Noir World is a game where you can encourage bad circumstances and outcomes. It's not about intentionally failing the roll or always choosing the 6- result, it's about understanding that this game aims to strike a balance between tough choices and bad consequences. In that space, in that very grey area of thinking, there's a great engine for storytelling. Use it, and encourage the Roles to look past their own injuries to tell the best Movie possible.

Go Past the Wince

Think about any conversation you've had with a friend where you recount something particularly bad that happened to you. Maybe you just ended a relationship spectacularly. Maybe you witnessed a fight at the office. Maybe your grandmother said something incredibly awkward at dinner the other night. Think about how, when you got to the really uncomfortable part, the other person winced. That idea is the seed for the kind of emotions you want to bring into play. Start at the wince, and ask what would make this more uncomfortable. The purpose isn't for shock value, but more misfortune and terrible outcomes.

The Dirty Cop didn't just get double-crossed (there's the wince), he ended up taking the entire fall for the Crime, and his hated nemesis, the Good Cop, will get promoted for bringing him in.

The "wince" is a tipping point that can't be overlooked. A lot of the noir that birthed *Noir World* exists as a tool for one wincing moment or one wincing question. Whatever that might be around your table, find it and lean on it. You've got a responsibility and an opportunity as a Director to draw the best emotional responses from the Roles for the sake of making good story, so that means you've got to put them in emotional situations and empower them to think more than just mechanically.

It's Okay to Lose

In many traditional games and roleplaying experiences, losing is the same as failure, and losing is to be avoided. That's true for games with heavy doses of competition. And it's somewhat ingrained in game players since the advent of two-player contests. But in *Noir World*, there isn't a concept of losing, not in the traditional sense.

This is because there's no winning either. Sure, someone can win a fight, or solve a crime, but that's not all a noir movie has to offer. It's about understanding that winning comes with tarnish and consequences – win the fight, but break your hand and nose doing it; solve the crime but breach your moral code to make the arrest. Even in winning, there's losing. No one gets out of noir the same way they came in.

Directors can set a tone where the interesting thing isn't when everything goes perfectly or even well. Interesting events, moments that make a Movie more engaging and enjoyable, are preferable over the moments where there's too little description and an over-reliance on rolls of dice.

“Lose” is one of those loaded words when it comes to playing games. Too often it gets measured only in a binary, and it's important to remember that Noir World works best when you view every situation as part of a spectrum: the Role finds herself in one situation where she can act a certain way at the time for her advantage, but later, because of that, there are consequences to face. Keeping the waters muddy between winning and losing, shifting it more towards ‘who gets out with the most advantage’ will go a long way with letting the Roles know what to expect both in terms of play but also when the Director's position shifts and the Movie can twist and turn.

Draw out the Suffering

It can be very tempting in a tragic Movie to hurry things along and reach the conclusion, because the uncomfortable parts are ... uncomfortable. But in a race from point A to point B, speeding through Scenes makes it difficult to let people sit and be uncomfortable. Those wincing moments, those tragic outcomes? They're more satisfying if they're not over quickly. The complications in Noir World should be like the sore in your mouth – it would be gone if you'd just stop tonguing it, but you can't help yourself.

This isn't to say one character should be dogpiled for the whole Movie. Every Role in a Movie is going to end up with at least a little dirt under their nails and on their shoes. Every Role is designed to contribute something to a Movie (no matter what type of Movie), but along a scuffed and effected trajectory.

The Directors Code

No matter what type of Movie is told, it's important to make sure every Director knows what their responsibilities are.

Breathe The Noir

“Yes, And”

“Yeah, You Are...”

“Tell Me More...”

Address The Characters And Their Situation

Mask Your Actions

Encourage Tough Choices Over Easy Ones

Give Them Enough Rope To Hang Themselves

Reward Tragedy With More Of The Same

Pain And Suffering Are On The Menu

Tie Loose Ends Into Knots

Everything Goes To The Plot

Take Suggestions

Share The Movie

Breathe The Noir

Noir is not just making things black and white or adding rain, trench coats, and fedoras. It's not only gangster slang, tommy guns, and boozy voiceovers. It's atmosphere. It's the idea that there isn't a clear-cut good and a clear-cut evil, that everything – and everyone – is a little of both for their own reasons.

Conveying the suspense and tension, even its companion senses of frustration and claustrophobia, are going to go a long way in making the game feel noir. Anything else you do to sell the idea and have players buy in is gravy once people understand and help support the atmosphere.

This means you make it clear to the players that this isn't just a game around the table, you and your friends are all parts of a movie production: the actors, the director, the writers, the camera, all of it. And “make it clear” means not just telling them to get the message across, but also doing it. Every time you're Director, assume that responsibility and set the bar high, so that your players will rise to your challenge.

You don't need to be a deeply entrenched movie buff with an encyclopedic knowledge of obscure foreign films. What you need is a passion to tell a good story and a willingness to describe things visually. Paint the picture vividly. Give the Roles clear instruction, and don't let them take shortcuts.

Example of Breathing the Noir

It's possible for something that doesn't sound noir to feel noir based on how the Director describes it. For example when Jenn the Attorney falls from the rooftop Halloween Party at the Panda Hotel, the Director describes the sight like this: “The chatter of traffic and horns blotted out her scream as she fell. Everyone who saw the plummet would later call it an angel's graceless tumble. And now that she's hit the ground, she's a piñata, burst with candy and stuffing spilling onto unforgiving concrete.”

“Yes, And”

You are your players’ biggest fan. You want them to do everything, anything, all the things. You want this, because games are fun. You’re super excited about anything that happens. Don’t say “No” to what the players want to do, don’t discourage them from connecting threads or taking the Movie in a particular direction (even or especially if it’s a direction different than what you expected). Add to the Movie, add reactions on top their actions, and build a huge stack of amazing and memorable lines and events. It’s not a house of cards; it’s a pyramid of good times.

Granted, if the players are completely off-base or straying far away from tone and the plot, you don’t have to agree to everything. Use your discretion and keep things in perspective. But when they’re on point, when they’re moving forward in that direction you’re looking for, reward them with forward progress.

One of the red flags to look out for is that when you create an atmosphere of positive contribution, Roles not in a Scene will want to insert themselves into it, because they want to be part of the Movie during those fun moments. As a Director, it’s up to you to keep clear boundaries about who is and who isn’t present for certain Scenes, as that’s critical for tension and working out the plot. It’s possible to maintain boundaries and be improvisational at the same time.

“Yeah you are...”

Part of being the players’ biggest fan is encouraging them to keep doing things that keep you excited to be their fan. Celebrate their actions, their words, and their thinking, by being that person we hate at the movies – the one who talks to the screen. Let your cheers, gasps, shock, and awe be heard. Let them know you support what they’re doing and what they plan to do, because you can’t wait to see how this turns out.

“Tell Me More”

When you ask for information, when the world gets a little more filled in, don't settle for the first little bit. You don't want a nibble; you want a sizeable piece to dig into. Prompt players for material, and don't settle. That bartender isn't just “tattooed”, he's “marked with prison tats and scars from a dozen fights.” The more details they can offer, the more the world becomes theirs. And you want them to own this world, so that when things take a turn for the tragic, everyone feels it.

Count on the fact that people naturally want to contribute in positive ways that earn themselves recognition. A lot of people have a negative reaction to their own suggestions, having received too little praise for their ideas. This is your chance, in some small way, for a few hours, to make sure that a good idea gets praised, no matter the contributor.

Not every player is going to be able to produce a wealth of information with minimal prompting. You may have to draw out and bait some information from a player. A bit of patience goes a long way in making sure someone feels comfortable and encouraged to contribute.

Giving Permission

Actually say “Yeah you are” and “Tell me more”, it's important “Yeah you are” should be your response to any statement where a player says what they're going to do, or where a player seeks permission for what they want to do.

“I'm going to pull my gun on him.”

“Yeah you are. Let's see what happens next.”

What you're trying to create as a Director is an atmosphere where everyone at the table, regardless of their experience with noir or gaming in general, feels welcomed and encouraged, no matter who they are or how they identify. To do this, Noir World not only supports playing any Role in any fashion or identity, but the Director is the biggest fan of the Role when they're taking actions.

Be supportive, be encouraging. It will make a difference with the tone of the Movie. It may also be the permission slip some people need to take the dramatic or interesting risks a Director may be looking for.

Address the Roles and Their Situation

Though you as the Director are speaking to the player, you're asking what "they" (the Role) is up to.

Tented notecards in front of each player with their character name and Role makes this a lot easier.

If Clark is a Mook named Tiny, then you're asking Tiny what he's doing about the approaching sirens he's hearing. Make sure everyone knows each player's Role and the name of that Role. It's one more way to make the player invest in the world and feel like they and what they do matter. This is where notecards with a Role's name come in handy.

If you think this sounds like it requires and challenges people to think on their feet (as their character) – you'd be right. You want players to respond in the first-person. You want them thinking about their Goals and their Secrets and their Hooks (not necessarily always in that order) so that they realize how integral they are to the Movie's momentum and how responsible they are for the Movie's conflict and inevitable consequences.



Mask Your Actions

In many roleplaying games, it can be very jarring to be in-character, sharing a moment of emotion or action, and then all of a sudden say a word or phrase that isn't in-character.

Example of the Awkward

Good Cop: "Yeah, we just need to know where you were last night."

Fatale: "Like I said, I was out. Do you go out, Detective?"

Good Cop: "Don't give me that, sister."

Fatale: *winks* "(then, to the Director) Can I try and talk it out?" (This is the awkward part)

Turn the awkward into something awesome by having Roles not say the name of the thing they're doing. Instead, just do it. It won't distract or slow down Scenes. On those Actions where the Director must offer choices, that's where the action pauses. But wait until the Scene develops a bit before thinking it's a game and not a movie.

Pause the action only to describe the different decisions the Role has to make. You don't have to discuss each one, and you don't want to bog the game down with clarification or pedantry, since that will water down the choice and its aftermath. While there's no count-down clock to keep things moving, any time choices are offered, you run the risk of stalling out the Movie, so be aware of how things are moving. And keep them moving.

The Choices You Offer

It's worth pointing out here that when you as Director must offer choices, it's important to remember that the outcome of those choices reverberate not just through the Scene where you're the Director, but also any subsequent Scenes that other Directors run. This can create a little bit of panic, but that's not the intention.

Choices are meant to steer the Movie towards or away from something, and to give the Role(s) involved a chance to add drama, tension, or consequences.

Choices should be a risk; they should give the player some pause because they need to have a weight to them. This isn't like offering chocolate chip ice cream or mint chocolate chip ice cream, where either way you're getting ice cream, this is about having to choose between the immediate situation and the potential future. Decisions are supposed to matter. A lot of film noir has a "if only they had taken the other option" feel, and that's to be encouraged in play.

Also, it's worth pointing out that the Movie comes first, ahead of individual player interests. It may be exciting or fun for the Girl Friday to rat out her best friend to the Mook, but does it narratively make sense? Whenever choices can be made, keep the story in mind.

Encourage Tough Choices

When all the Roles cooperate, when the Director is lenient, it can be easy for the Movie to snowball and reach a comedic or almost slapstick tone when what everyone wanted was something harder, darker, or more emotional. To lock in that flavor, whenever there's a choice to make, don't even bring up the easy way out. Sure, the Private Eye could ignore the ringing phone, but reminding them the rent is due and the bank account is dryer than a desert in July means that phone is getting answered. In that shootout between cops and the bank robbers, it could absolutely get solved by waiting for reinforcements. But what if one cop hears a woman screaming for help, and now there's a gun to her head? Great moments come from making tough choices and living with the consequences.

Give Them Enough Rope

Because noir isn't about saving princesses from castles or finding the lost treasure of a forgotten kingdom, it can be easy to have players lose track of the reasons behind what they're doing. As a Director, you'll sometimes have to explain why a Role is in a Scene, and what they're trying to accomplish, relative to the Movie's story as well as their own Hooks. It's worth mentioning here that as Director, you can provide possible reasons for a Role to do (or not do) something. But be careful – this isn't a permission slip for forcing the Movie in one direction, this is offering choices to a Role so that the Movie can advance.

Too often, players play a game with expectations that they're supposed to “win”, which often boils down to some expectation that there aren't consequences for their actions. They might be used to a game where their knights can march through town and cause a ruckus at the tavern, and it won't matter because they're the Movie's heroes, and the tavern is just some piece of set dressing for them.

Noir World is different. It's all about the consequences of actions. Make everything have consequences, and make them matter. Someone double crosses the local crime boss? You better believe there will be a “private meeting” taking place down some back alley late at night. Think the Private Eye can just get away with pissing off the Dirty Cop one too many times? That could be a great way to get a knuckle sandwich ... or worse.



Reward Tragedy With More of the Same

Some games end when something awful happens. For noir, something awful happening is usually just the start of a plunge into the really bad stuff. It's not enough to have your spouse betray you and run off with the insurance money, they're skipping town with your best friend and framing you for the fraud. The Good Cop may be trying hard to keep their moral code intact, but trying to do the right thing in a city full of wrongs means that good people end up with blood on their hands from time to time, even if it's just splatter. When Scenes create tragedy, revenge, desperation, or emotional turmoil, make sure everyone involved has a seat on the rollercoaster as it falls off the tracks.

This can be done through leaning on Director Actions, as well as making sure Hooks are prodded and brought up. Using a relationship map is encouraged.

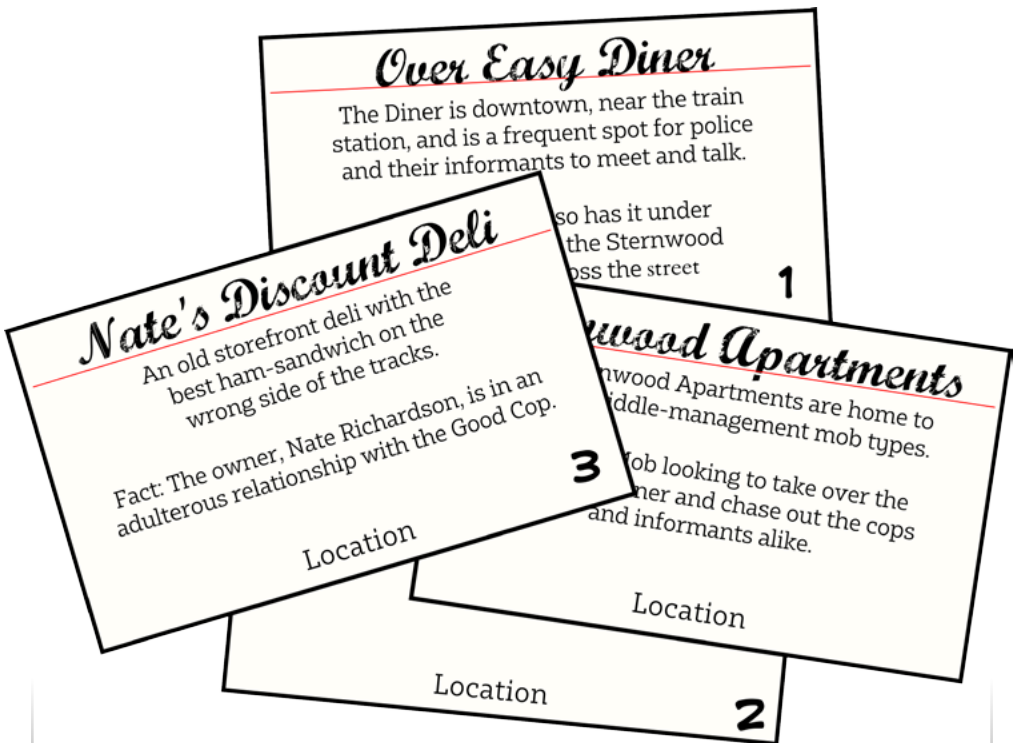
Pain and Suffering Are on the Menu

Noir encourages high stakes and high drama, and you should too. Don't let there be any low-cost, easy ways out, and don't let people off scott free. Instead, jam the knife in deeper, and make things complicated, sad, and messy. It's your job as Director to weave and tangle all the strands of this Movie's web together, and the easiest currencies to spend to do this are emotional pain and loss. You have an endless supply of both, so when you give people choices, make them choose between terrible things. Things that have no other option but to lead them further down a spiral of bad decisions and messy consequences.

Tie Loose Ends into Knots

It's easy to lose track of things when there's a lot going on, and it's all moving pretty quickly. People say things, things worth remembering, and it's easy to let something go by, even if you promise to "come back to it later". If you need to (if it will help you), encourage players to write down notes, and take some yourself. If you see a Location that hasn't been used yet, or a Person who hasn't been in any Scenes, but the Movie's looking like it will wrap up soon, bring those unused things into play as quickly as possible. Don't worry about having one more plate to keep spinning – the players will handle that for you – just focus on making sure that everything in play connects somehow to each other. The mob-run deli is next-door to the bank that got robbed, and it's across the street from the Fatale's secret love nest, where the Private Eye has cornered the Socialite. Leave nothing untouched with your greasy, dirty Director mitts.

One of the ways to track the ends is to mark each Location index card with a number, so that players can see where they've been and where they need to go before the end of the Movie. Remember that you can also revisit a Location too. Just make a note about what Scene you're in.



Everything Goes to the Plot

If a Director isn't careful, the plot can easily become a distant and hazy idea that makes people laugh when they think about how far they've moved away from it. To keep everyone and everything focused, when a new Person comes into play, make sure they have something to contribute to the plot – maybe they've heard something, maybe they know someone else who knows something. Each new Person is a chance to bring the plot to the forefront of play. Just be careful not to keep harping on it, since if you start playing and start introducing two or three Persons at a time, it can be obvious that they're all concerned about the plot.

Also, the Crime DOES NOT have to be the plot of the Movie. The Crime is there as a potential throughline to tie things together or to act as a catalyst for the interactions between Roles, but the Crime doesn't have to be the reason for the Movie. Sometimes the Crime slips into the background, and that's okay.

Take Suggestions

Noir World isn't a game played by one person. It's not played in a vacuum, and none of it is scripted. People collaborate to tell a Movie marinated in danger, suspense, and emotion, and often they're more creative than we give them credit. Sometimes they just need permission or a comfortable atmosphere, so give it to them. If someone says something funny or more interesting or something that can lead to better play, take it and use it. Thank the person who contributed it, and keep the Movie going forward.

As a Director, one of the responsibilities you have is to measure and encourage player involvement, regardless of whether or not their Role is in the Scene.

Share the Movie

Here's the unspoken short form of this rule: You're in charge of not being in charge. This means that when you're Director, your job is to make sure the other people are doing the bulk of the play. Yeah, you're the one who steers things occasionally, and it's you asking questions or describing things and making decisions, but this is not a traditional GM-it's-your-Movie-and-they're-all-just-players-in-it experience. You're in charge of moving the spotlight to showcase the other players' awesomeness. Don't hog it. Don't play favorites. You're all in this together.

Usually, this game is played in two Acts, meaning everyone at the table will direct twice (page 57) and often that takes time. Narratively, that time allows for Scenes to fully develop. Once started, Scenes will often take on a life of their own, as they'll progress and new information will come up. It's important to remember to keep the Scene focused.

Because the job of Director isn't fixed on one player the entire time, Director Actions are intentionally left broad and adaptable.



Director Actions

THE FREE ACTIONS

- Establishing Shot and Call Sheet
- Fade to Black

THE LIMITED ACTIONS

- Harm something or someone
- Introduce someone new into the Scene
- Later on....
- Make them risk something
- Meanwhile & Flashback
- Offer them a terrible choice
- Pay off something previously set up
- Set up something to pay off later



The Establishing Shot and Call Sheet

Free Action

In thinking like a movie, you should describe what the Roles are seeing, both as participants in the Scene and as an audience. Describe what people see, describe the Location, describe the traffic or the movement or the weather or the lighting. Paint a picture so people know they're not acting in some undefined space.

The Establishing Shot is a free Action because every Scene needs to start with description, and players need to know who's in the Scene. This is particularly true in the first Scene of Act One, because that Scene can establish a tone to be carried through the rest of the Act or Movie.

A good Establishing Shot does not have to include tons of description. It can be as simple as "We're back in the police station, only now the coffee is colder, and the phones have finally stopped ringing."

Also, you need to list which Role is in the Scene, and why they're there. It's sometimes less important to talk about how they got there, just that they're there now, and that's where the Scene opens.

Fade to Black

Free Action

There are parts of Scenes that can be less exciting than other parts. No one wants to watch someone sleep for six hours. No one pays attention to the boring parts of a stakeout. When you need to end a Scene and pass Director responsibilities to another person, Fade to Black.

Harm Something or Someone

Limited Action

Few things motivate like a response to something bad happening. The sidekick or lesser character getting injured (or killed) spurs the protagonist into all-out war in so many movies. While not every harmful situation ends up with a corpse and a blood oath for vengeance, response to Injury or damage can energize a flagging Movie or a languishing Role into bigger and more dramatic Scenes. What or who you damage or harm as a Director is up to you, but it helps if you pick a Location or Person or Role that's relevant to what's happened recently in the Movie.

The Injury doesn't need to be catastrophic; it can be as straightforward as a bar fight that a Role could win but didn't want to get into in the first place. You as the Director can use this Action to emphasize an atmosphere where the Movie is not a safe place, where the consequences of what a Role says or does can land them into trouble to be sorted out with fists, knives, or guns.

Example of Harm Something or Someone

Shanna is directing the second Scene, where Mark's Private Eye and Brianna's Mook come to a misunderstanding at the Over-Easy Diner about cream in coffee. The Private Eye of course got mouthy, and the Mook didn't appreciate someone drinking her coffee in front of her. Shanna, Mark, and Brianna work together and say the argument was solved by a Mook fist meeting a Private Eye stomach, netting the Private Eye 1 Injury and sending him back to his office at the end of the Scene.

Introduce Someone New Into the mix

Limited Action

It's possible that some Scenes won't involve everyone. A police interrogation room with a Dirty Cop and a Politician sweating it out under the lights isn't the best place to find a Starry-Eyed Kid milling about. But there are going to be times where you need to bring someone into a Scene, and you can either do that by placing them in the Scene (the cub reporter is snooping around the precinct while an interrogation happens), or they get tied to the Scene during a discussion (the Politician mentions the Starry-Eyed Kid's name). If you're going to bring someone into a Scene, make sure that Role knows about it, and make sure they consent to being a part of the Scene. No one likes getting surprised by needing to participate.

Making sure it's narratively interesting is at times a tough task. Always look for a reason for a Role to get involved, and remind players that they can suggest who would fit in the Scene if you're having trouble.

Example of Introduce Someone New

Brianna's Mook is drowning Disgraced Doctor Tyson in the fish tank he keeps in his clinic waiting room when the phone rings. Tyson doesn't live long enough to answer it, and Brianna waits for the phone to stop ringing before she hears Matt's Musician knocking at the clinic's door.

Later On...

Limited Action

There are parts of Scenes that can be less exciting than other parts. No one wants to watch someone sleep for six hours. No one pays attention to the boring parts of a stakeout. When you need to skip ahead, use Later On. This is also a great way to gloss over a situation that might be uncomfortable to play out, but is narratively necessary (like when the Fatale seduces someone, and people don't want or need to act out the seduction, they use Later On to move forward in time without ending your turn as a Director) or expedient to keep the Movie's momentum and keep the Roles invested in what's going on.

What's the Difference Between Fade to Black and Later On?

Use Fade to Black to end a Scene and give someone else a chance to be Director. Use Later On to fast-forward through downtime or moments in the Movie that don't need to be explicitly played out. As a Director, check in with other players to see if they agree the Action is warranted – this can be useful when some subject material in-game makes someone uncomfortable as well.

Make Them Risk Something

Limited Action

Everything has a price tag. Everything has a cost and strings attached. Possession can breed comfort. Losing relied-upon possessions can be like losing part of your identity. Can you imagine a cop without her badge, or a gambler without her lucky dice? It's the possibility of this loss that will move Roles to act in dramatic and unexpected ways. Prey on their identities. Remind them that valued possessions are fragile.

Likewise, the risks Roles take don't only affect their Belongings. Relationships can be risked. Would the Dirty Cop appreciate his arrangement with the Politician being publicized by the Reporter? Would the Good Cop want his Secret told by the Musician?

When risk extends past the material, you can add layers of emotional tension to a Scene that otherwise might be simplified by moving or hiding something to protect it from danger. Even the suggestion of needing to alter an arrangement can be enough of a risk to spur action from a Role, and that action can be used in future Scenes as part of that Role's arc in the Movie.

Example of Making Them Risk Something

Jeremy is directing, and he knows Matt's Musician values his relationship with Shanna. So during his Scene, he puts the two of them on the phone together and has them discuss how the Crime, the planned murder of a City comptroller impacts their relationship. Matt and Shanna choose to take opposite sides in this debate, so throughout the Scene, the Fatale emphasizes a need to make the Crime happen, while the Musician has doubts. Jeremy decides to have the Fatale risk their relationship by suggesting that if the Fatale is serious about making it happen, she's going to have to do it herself, but keep the Musician in the dark about it. It will probably wreck their relationship if she's found out, but that's the risk she's willing to take.

Meanwhile & Flashback

Limited Action

Noir is cinematic, so handle things cinematically. As Director, you're in charge of the 'camera' – the mental picture everyone has of the Scene. Describe the Scene, set up some action, and let it play out. When you need to show things happening simultaneously but not in the same location, say "Meanwhile", then describe a separate scene. If you need to change chronology and show things that happened earlier, usually for plot setup, declare a scene a "Flashback". Treat what you're talking about like a film. Talk about the camera, where it is, how it moves (feel free to use your hands to frame a shot). The players are both audience and actor. Just don't do any reshoots or second takes.

Example of Meanwhile & Flashback

Jason is directing, and in order to set up the Scene he wants, he needs to put together some exposition for his idea to work. So he starts by creating a Flashback where two Persons in the Movie, the crime boss and the bank manager, both meet secretly and exchange envelopes, speaking in hushed coded language, before nodding to each other and driving off. He uses that information to lead into his intended Scene, where he can have the bank manager involve Mark's Private Eye in the Crime. Once Mark is introduced, Jason concludes his Director's turn by saying that while Mark was learning about the Crime, Brianna's Mook was across town getting orders from the crime boss.

Offer a Choice, but There's Always a Catch

Limited Action

It's possible that you're not happy with the choices the Roles are making. They might not be tragic enough, they might not be horrific enough. Maybe they're playing it safe, and you're sick of it. Offering a tough choice is a great way of putting someone in the throes of terrible options, sticking their life between a ton of rocks and two tons of hard places, then making them choose which way they want to suffer. How the choices arise, whether organically or suggested by a Role, doesn't matter. Choices with catches are a great way of putting a new twist on a situation. Be on the lookout for opportunities to suggest or prompt decisions that need to be made.

The choice you offer should not be impossible or necessarily obvious: this isn't about creating options that exist on the extreme ends of the good-or-bad spectrum, nuance is emphasized here. While it might appear like a choice has an easy solution and apparent reward, it's what sits unseen in the consequences that makes a choice have an impact with the Role who made it.

Example of Offering a Choice & Catch

Mark's Private Eye meets Jeremy's War Vet in the Alley behind the Over-Easy Diner for a quick rendezvous. They argue about what Jeremy has hired Mark to do and when Jeremy pulls a gun, it becomes very clear to Mark that this is a losing situation, so he rolls his dice (for his Fuego Action). He gets a 5, and because it's a 6-, something bad is going to happen. Per the text for the Fuego Action, Jason the Director can set up something to pay later or make Mark risk something. The heat is already pretty high with the gun in Jeremy's hand, so the Director has Mark risk something: break off the partnership with Jeremy or say something to get Jeremy off his back ... for now. Mark takes a second and chooses to break off the partnership, and Jeremy shoots him in the stomach before walking away.

Set up Something to Pay off Later

Limited Action

With all the Directors working together to craft the best Movie, it's important that each Director feed their ideas into the mix of existing ideas. No one person controls or owns the entire story, allowing for different contributions from anyone at the table when they're Directing.

To set something up, it simply needs to be established as existing or possible (cutting the brake line in a car a few Scenes before a Role drives down winding canyon roads in the dark), and other Directors can then use it as a point of interest or development. Not everything set up will be paid off. With so many players and so much potential, it's important to remember that not every hook in the pond will catch a fish, but having multiple hooks makes catching that fish easier.

A Director can take up to three Actions before passing the Scene to the next person on their right. Any Action can be repeated, but not back-to-back. In the previous example, if Brian takes over from Jason, he can use a *Meanwhile Action* and describe something that happened on the other side of town that involved the Mook and the Fatale, then an opposing mob boss's goons kick in the door (*Threaten Something or Someone*), and take the pair of Roles to meet the mob boss (*Introduce Someone New Into the Mix*) to continue the Scene. With that complete, he *Fades to Black* and passes the Director's chair to someone else.

Example of Setting Something Up

Early in Act 1, Shanna described the squeaky floorboards in an office. She pans the camera out to show that this is the office of Mark: the Private Eye. She established this key detail about the Location which will clearly be useful later on in the Movie.

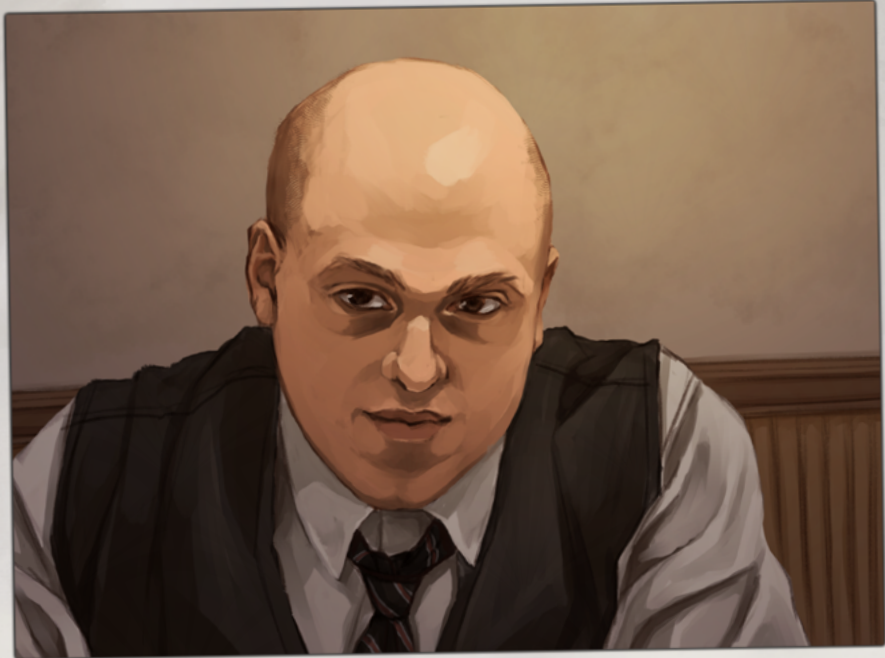
Pay Off Something Previously Set Up

Limited Action

Once something has been set up (see the previous Action!), it's important to give it some closure, otherwise it will nag at the Movie and leave a sizeable gap in the narrative. The time between when a thing was set up and when it's paid off is an important measure to understand – wait too long and people will forget about it (though that may or may not be to the Movie's advantage); do it too quickly and the event won't have any resonance. What the payoff looks like is situational, as it won't always be an object ("Here, have the money you wanted.") nor a promise. You can pay something off in any number of ways, but your own familiarity with television and movies will easily tell you that some combinations of payoffs and setups don't work together (like the promise of an envelope of money and then getting a box full of gerbils). Just like how setups deal with an expectation, so too do pay-offs. Pay-offs play with the expectations of reward and finality. It's with these expectations that you can lead Roles to "take just one more job" or "do one more thing, and then..."

Example of Paying Something Off

Now into Act Two, Matt is Director. He remembers that key detail about the Private Investigator's office. When Brianna's Mook attempts to be stealthy and kill Mark while he sleeps on the office couch, the floorboards squeak and give her presence away.





Basic Roles: The Movers

The Movers are the proactive Roles who can take charge and be central features in a Movie. They have the potential to get things done, make things better or worse, or otherwise take steps to give the Movie some added momentum. The Movers are:

The Good Cop

The Dirty Cop

The Fatale

The Mook

The Private Eye

The War Vet

The Politician

The Career Criminal

The Gambler

The Reporter

The Good Cop

The City is a mess. Far too many of your fellow officers are on the take. Far too few even care about the people who have to live in this slowly rotting urban carcass. You've watched your co-workers, your superiors, and even the politicians take bribes, turn a blind eye, or worse. It's like their oaths and vows don't matter. It's like they don't know they have a duty, a higher calling, an obligation to truth, justice, and doing what's right.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Brant, Randy, Marcus, Kim, Sarah,
Denise, Lauren, Harrison, Gordon, or Elliot.

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You support your ailing mother back on the farm.
- You're going to solve one more case, hopefully make a big paycheck, and retire to the Caribbean.
- You've started visiting the wrong side of the tracks after hours.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To change someone's life for the better
- To make your mark on the City
- To serve justice and uphold the law

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- Standard cop wear
- Standard police sidearm (Gun 2 +loud)
- Spotless dress uniform
- A raggedy outfit for undercover work
- A good dark suit or dress
- A tuxedo or evening dress
- Casual clothesBlackjack (Club 1 +KO +portable)
- A regular spot at a Location
- A trusty flashlight (+KO +portable)
- A growing stack of bills you can't pay.
- A baseball bat (Club 1 +KO +portable)
- A sawed-off shotgun (Gun 2 +loud +brutal)
- A run-down apartment on the north side of The City OR A nice house in the quiet part of the City (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You're secretly pining for this Role.
- This Role threatens to expose your Secret to get you to do what they want, and you keep letting them do it.
- The Role to your left is someone you'd like to arrest for something.
- You and this Role ended your relationship years ago, and one of you isn't ready to move on yet.
- This Role is the one who got away, either in love or in a Crime.
- One day, you and this Role are going to have a reckoning.
- The Role to your right is someone who you feel would betray you at a moment's notice.
- Your obsession to prove this Role guilty will be the death of at least one of you.
- You let this Role down when they needed you most.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role is always looking to corrupt you, and this other Role is always trying to save you.
- (3-Role Hook) You and this Role grew up together. You both kept this other Role out of trouble on a regular basis.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Do the Right Thing

When you're in a Scene and someone takes an Action that breaks a law, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, chastise them and then tell the Director how you're going to do what's right or necessary to fix what they've done.

On a 7-9, you chastise them, but (choose 1):

- *Your virtue will get you into trouble in your next Scene.*
- *You will find find out something you won't like in your next Scene.*
- *Someone decides to get rough with you.*

On a 6-, your goody two-shoes act immediately provokes a violent reaction or marks you as someone that needs to be dealt with for the rest of the Movie.

□ You Know These Streets

After you Check It Out at the scene of the Crime but before the Scene ends, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, choose 2 from the list below.

On a 7-9, choose 1:

- *You discover information that leads you somewhere else, but it also leads you into a fight you may lose.*
- *You discover information that implicates someone you'd never suspect.*
- *A Person at the Location implicates someone not actually involved in the Crime.*
- *You think you're onto something, but end up involving a Role you have a Hook with.*

On a 6-, you end up getting in over your head, because what you discover conflicts with one or more of your Hooks.

□ A Light in the Dark

When you're in a Scene with another Role and they follow your example, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you both take +1 to your next rolls in the Scene.

On a 7-9, your actions attract unwanted attention in both this Scene AND the next one either of you are in OR the Director can introduce someone new into the Scene for free.

On a 6-, someone in the Scene makes a decision that will get more than one person hurt.

□ Shiny Badge

When you use your authority to persuade someone, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, take a +1 to your next roll OR tell the Director how you and this Person or Role are going to be working together.

On a 7-9, a Person or Role in the Scene makes a promise they don't intend to keep AND plans to double-cross you in a later Scene.

On a 6-, the Director can make you risk something for free.



The Dirty Cop

You may have started off clean and eager, but the bloom came off that rose pretty quickly. The only way to survive in the City is to look out for number one along the way, because no one else is going to. And so what if you skim a little off the top, shake an informant down for a few bucks, or have a price in mind to look the other way? Who's gonna stop you? You're pretty sure everyone else does it too, only way bigger. So long as you stay a small fish, taking little bites out of this rotten pie, you'll be just fine. Sock it all away for your retirement fund. Somewhere warm and sunny, where you can sit in the sun for hours and get this lifetime of filth off your skin.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Bullock, Carson, Brock, Oakley, Martinez,
Jackson, Palmer, or Saturday

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +2
- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- Internal Affairs has suspected for months that you're dirty, and they're THIS close to catching you.
- Your spouse has ZERO idea that you're dirty, and thinks you're the City's best cop.
- You're an informant for either the local muscle or Internal Affairs.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To score a huge payday
- To have someone else take the fall for what you're doing
- To get in good with some bad people

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- Rumpled suit or dress
- Standard police sidearm (Gun 2 +loud)
- A trench coat (+it billows)
- A marker for an illegal poker game at Location
- A dress uniform
- A leather jacket and casual clothes
- A spare set of cuffs
- A pair of brass knuckles (Fist 1 +KO +concealable)
- A blackjack (Club 1 +KO +portable)
- A shotgun (Gun 3 +noisy +kickback)
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 2 +short range)
- A heavy flashlight (Club 1 +KO)
- A secret stash of notes on people you need leverage on
- A box concealing something that could end you
- An apartment uptown paid for with dirty money OR a quiet house with a white picket fence outside of town (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role caught you doing something you shouldn't have been. Today's the day they go public. With everything.
- You have dirt on this Role. Today's the last day you stay quiet about it.
- You frequently think about punching this Role in the face.
- By the end of this Movie, you and this Role are either going to end up dead or enemies for life.
- This Role left you at the altar, and you will never forgive them.
- This Role is someone who you think would be an excellent patsy ... if you ever needed one.
- You think this Role saw you do something you shouldn't have. They didn't, but you act like they did.
- Why doesn't this Role love you as much as you love them?
- You're romantically involved with this Role, and it needs to end today. Messily, if necessary.
- (3-Role Hook) You and this Role worked together, then this other Role came along and everything went to hell, and now you're going to make sure everyone gets what they're owed.
- (3-Role Hook) You're in a relationship with this Role, but you've promised this other Role that you're going to end it so the two of you can have a happier future.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Shake Down

When you want information or a bribe out of someone, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you get what you want AND someone in the Scene mentions a Role worth talking to.

On a 7-9, you get some of what you want, but in order to get more, you're going to have to deal with one of the Roles you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, in either this Scene OR the next one you're in, things get violent. Either you or another Role in this Scene or the next will suffer at least 1 Injury. Work out with the Role and Director how that happens.

□ Bully with a Badge

When you abuse your authority, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, no one questions you. Someone in the Scene is impressed by you and is willing to help you accomplish what you want.

On a 7-9, you get challenged on the spot, and it's going to get messy. The Director can choose 1:

- *Introduce one of your Hooks into the Scene for free.*
- *Involve your Secret in the Scene.*
- *Involve one other Person or Role in the fight.*

On a 6-, before the Movie is over, you'll have to deal with one of your Hooks based on what happened in this Scene.

❑ Takes One to Know One

When you enter a social function or large gathering, ask the Director who else at the Location might also be dirty, corrupt, sleazy, or have something to hide. If you have a Hook with them already, take +1 to your next roll.

❑ Friends in Sleazy Places

When you deflect blame or suspicion off of you and onto a Person or other Role, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, what you're saying seems reasonable ... at least for this Scene.

On a 7-9, what you're saying will be believed only if you prove it by doing something you don't want to do by the end of the Movie.

On a 6-, before the end of this Act, someone's going to make you pay for what you did in this Scene.



The Fatale

Life is cruel, you can be crueler. Life is cold, you can be colder. It's not all about sex and looks; it's about getting what you want and getting it now, with a capital N. Other people are toys and tools for you. You can play anyone like a harp. Eventually everyone comes around.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Veronica, Ben, Jen, Terry, Carl, Jack, Amita, Sarah, or Mollie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -2
- Brains -2, Moxie -1, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've got a trust fund no one knows about.
- You're dying, slowly, and no one knows.
- You've got sizeable financial debts all over the City.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To gain more influence in the City
- To corrupt someone else
- To set something awful into motion and get away with it

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A killer outfit
- Professional business attire
- Your choice of kink gear
- Clothing, perfect for a funeral
- The most garish “Fuck you I make this look good” outfit possible
- A small pistol (Gun 2 +concealable +up close and personal)
- A sharp stiletto (Knife 1 +lethal +sharp)
- A little black book full of favors people owe you, and those you owe them
- A shovel in the trunk of your car (Club 2 +messy)
- A selection of wigs and makeup to disguise yourself
- A piece of very expensive heirloom jewelry
- A sterling silver cigarette case and ebony holder
- A swanky apartment uptown OR a cocktail lounge you own a stake in (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role believes you are worth saving and goes out of their way to “help” redeem you.
- You would give up everything if this Role would just admit they have feelings for you. They don’t, but you don’t know that.
- This Role broke your heart routinely in the past.
- This Role is someone who has always come across as better than you, and you really want to prove they’re not.
- You left this Role at the altar. You’ve been avoiding them until today.
- You’d spend your last dime trying to see this Role ruined. Or dead.
- You regret how you hurt this Role, and you’re trying to make it right.
- This Role is going to get you exactly what you’ve always wanted; all you need to do is make sure they take the fall.
- You’re related to this Role, and no one knows but you.
- This Role keeps trying to win you back. You think it’s cute, and you’re stringing them along.
- (3-Role Hook) You are blackmailing these two Roles, and neither knows about the other Role.
- (3-Role Hook) You left this Role to start a relationship with this other Role, and at least one of them is going to “take care” of the situation.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Why Don't We Sleep on It?

When you use your attractiveness, sexuality, or physical attributes to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, choose 2 from the list below.

On a 7-9, choose 1:

- *The other Role or Person will help you accomplish 1 thing in a future Scene so you can get what you want later.*
- *In order to get what you want, you'll have to set up this other Role or Person to take the fall.*
- *The other Role or Person lies to you, but you believe them.*
- *The other Role or Person swears they'll help you, but first you have to help them deal with either a Hook they have or a problem they're involved in. It will get messy for at least one of you.*

On a 6-, your advances get spurned, and the other Role or Person gets one of your Hooks involved to straighten things out.

❑ Do What You Have To

When you double-cross someone for your own advantage, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, no one suspects you when it succeeds.

On a 7-9, you're clear for now but (choose 1):

- *One of the Roles you have a Hook with gets involved, and it might cost you both dearly.*
- *One of the people you double-cross tells a Role you have a Hook with all about the plan at the worst possible time.*
- *Your bullshit gets taken too far, and you end up making a terrible promise to someone in order to keep things going.*

On a 6-, you realize that in order to make your plan work, you have to implicate yourself. The Director will make you risk something you care about for free.

❑ Never a Damsel in Distress

When you want someone else to fight for you, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, that person or Role believes you to be in serious trouble, and by the end of the Movie, they risk everything for you. (It might kill them, and you're okay with that.)

On a 7-9, you and the Person or Role hatch a plan that you don't realize will hurt everyone involved.

On a 6-, the fight happens, and in order to avoid getting into too much more trouble, you tell a lie that spells trouble for you by the end of the Movie. (It might kill you.)

❑ Come Up and See Me

When you need to get someone to do what you ask, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, they'll do it, and another Role in the Scene takes notice.

On a 7-9, they'll do it, but one of the Roles you have a Hook with finds out.

On a 6-, you don't get what you want AND one of the Roles you have a Hook with finds out AND you end up having to make a terrible decision in order to keep things from getting worse.



The Mook

It's good to know your place in the world. You're not the bottom of the food chain; you're at least two good steps above it. You're the one people call when they need protection, when someone needs persuading, when you need to dangle someone else out a window ... that sort of thing.

Is it legal? Not always. But you learned a long time ago that you weren't cut out for brain surgery.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Tracy, Lefty, Curly, Darren, Sweetums, Brigid,
PeeWee, Kathy, Terry, Sue, or Luanne

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie -1, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're loaded, and no one knows.
- You're about to get a significant promotion in the underworld.
- You're about to get a significant demotion in the underworld, and this is your last chance.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To increase your notoriety
- To avoid getting found out or arrested
- To set yourself up for the future

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A standard goon outfit
- A tuxedo or evening dress
- An apron and thick gloves, along with other body-disposing clothes
- Casual leg-breaking clothes
- A reserved seat at a Location
- A few large oil drums and bags of cement for hiding bodies
- Clothes you wear when you don't want to appear like a Mook
- Brass knuckles (Fist 1 +KO +concealable)
- A crowbar (Club 2 +KO +lethal)
- A handgun (Gun 2 +noisy)
- A knife (Knife 1 +sharp)
- A sawed-off shotgun with an easy trigger (Gun 3 +devastating +twitchy)
- A rented storage space where you can stash bodies and money OR a cramped little apartment in an ethnic neighborhood (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You and this Role have done some work together in the past, and it went really well.
- You and this Role did some work together, and it didn't go well, and you each keep a secret because of it.
- This Role knows way too much about what you do. When you get a chance, you need to shut them up. For good.
- This Role left owes your employer a lot of money, and you've been assigned to keep an eye on them.
- You would do anything for this Role, but you won't do ... that, the thing they keep asking you to do.
- The last time you saw this Role, you swore revenge for what happened.
- You're going to kill this Role by the end of this Movie, and it's been a long time coming.
- You're tired of taking orders from this Role.
- Everything in your life lately has brought you to today, the day where you finally tell this Role that you've had enough of their shit.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role has asked you to "take care of" this other Role.
- (3-Role Hook) You were the one who saved this Role when their life was in danger. They don't know it, because they think this other Role saved them. You should go straighten this out today.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Tough Guy/Gal

When you Fight It Out and roll an 11 or 12, deal 1 extra Injury.

❑ The Strong, Silent Type

Shake off the first 2 points of Injury you suffer in a Movie.

❑ Go Down Swinging

If you're already injured, add +1 to any Fight It Out attempt you make.

□ Get Your Point Across

When you intimidate a target, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, the message comes across loud and clear, and the other Person or Role will take a huge risk to help you.

On a 7-9, they get the message, but there's retribution. Choose one:

- *One of the Roles you have a Hook with finds out what you've been doing.*
- *Any Good Cop, Dirty Cop, or Private Eye come talk to you in a future Scene. (If there aren't any in this Movie, then two Roles you have a Hook with end up involved in what you're doing.)*
- *A Role you have a Hook with offers to help, and you know it's going to cost them dearly but you let them do it anyway.*
- *What you do leads another Role into danger.*

On a 6-, in order to get their cooperation, you confess your Secret to the other Person or Role, and you'll end up risking your life by the end of the Movie.



The Private Eye

You're a shamus, a sleuth, a gumshoe. It's your job to do the jobs that no one else wants, or solve the things that other people can't or don't want solved. It's not a glamorous life, but it's your life, and sometimes, that means bullets and dames, and other times you take seedy photographs outside seedier motels in areas of the City you don't want to be caught in, alive or dead. Maybe you're struggling from paycheck to paycheck, and your frequent detours to examine the bottoms of bottles and shot glasses isn't helping. Maybe you're just one damsel in distress away from getting out of the business entirely. The City's dirty, and you always seem to find garbage on your shoes.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Harry, Sam, Nick, Philip, Toby, Alice, Endeavor, Karen, or Mary

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've got a gambling problem.
- You're currently an addict OR you've got a newly minted sobriety/recovery.
- You grieve the loss of your partner but never let it show.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To do the right thing, even if you weren't hired to do it
- To rescue someone in trouble
- To retire somewhere nice with enough money to live on

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A comfortable outfit
- An office where you're behind in your rent (Location)
- A trench coat or duster (+roomy +it billows)
- A tuxedo or evening dress
- Workout clothes
- A decent set of casual clothes for blending in
- A fancy outfit with shiny shoes
- A reliable pistol (Gun 2 +noisy +concealable)
- A little black book full of favors people owe you, and those you owe them
- A hand cannon of a gun (Gun 2 +deafening blast +heavy)
- A pair of cuffs you may not have the key for
- An old billy club (Club 1 +KO)
- A growing stack of unpaid bills
- A photo from happier times that you always keep with you
- A treasured family heirloom you always keep on your person
- The bedroom of the Role you went home with last night (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- Every time you see this Role, things always get way worse before they get better.
- In another world, if you made different choices, you could see yourself turning out just like this other Role.
- This Role is a frequent client.
- You broke this Role's heart, and you don't think twice about it. You had to.
- This Role has a running tab and owes you quite a bit of money.
- This Role swore they'd leave their last relationship for you. They didn't, and you're devastated about it.
- Exposing the truth on a case ruined the relationship you had with this Role. You may or may not regret doing that.
- You're related to this Role, and only they know about it.
- You don't know how to redeem yourself in the eyes of this Role.
- (3-Role Hook) You're going to do your best to see that these two Roles end up together, even if it kills you.
- (3-Role Hook) You're about to involve these two Roles in something very stupid that could make all three of you very rich or very dead.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ One Thing Led to Another

After you *Check It Out*, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, the Director will point you to the next Person or Role you should talk to.

On a 7-9, what you discover leads to one of the following:

- *You have to deal with a Role you have a Hook with to get more information.*
- *You have to make a terrible bargain with steep consequences in order to get what you want.*
- *A Role in this Scene is going to get you involved in a completely different problem.*
- *You have to promise a Role in this Scene something you can't possibly keep.*

On a 6-, you completely misinterpret evidence, and it leads you to involve a Role you have a Hook with in the situation that will get at least one of you hurt or killed.

□ Fuego

When you *find yourself in a losing situation*, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you narrowly escape ... this time.

On a 7-9, tell the Director how you escape but only after you (choose one):

- *Get severely injured. (2 Injury and describe your injury. It persists for the rest of the Movie.)*
- *Injure a Role or Person severely. (They take 2 Injury, and they describe their injury. It persists for the rest of the Movie.)*
- *A Role you have a Hook with comes for payback later, and one or both of you will end up hurt or dead.*

On a 6-, the Director can set up something to pay off later OR make you risk something, for free.

❑ Always a Complication

When you enter a Location for the first time, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director one Fact about the Location.

On a 7-9, you'll encounter one of the Roles you have a Hook with, and things get messy very quickly.

On a 6-, something happens in this Scene to make your life get much harder for the rest of the Movie.

❑ Your Girl (or Guy) Friday

You have someone in your office who makes the coffee and runs errands. This Person can do each of these things once per Movie:

- *Involve the police in a Scene (roll a die. On a 1-3, it's a Good Cop, on a 4-6, it's a Dirty Cop). If both police Roles aren't in the Movie, the Director can send in a Role you have a Hook with.*
- *Lie to get you out of a tough situation, but their lie gets you into a worse situation by the end of the Movie.*
- *Set up a meeting with another Role in a future Scene.*



The War Vet

You went over there and did what you had to do. It wasn't easy, and maybe you don't like talking about all of it, and maybe it's good to talk about some of it. The nice thing, if there is such a thing, is that war gave you a particular set of skills and the confidence to use those skills. You can handle yourself in a fight, you know a thing or two about getting out of a jam, and they even taught you how to jump out of an airplane. Or how to hurl a grenade. Or kill a man in the jungle with a sharp stick and your bootlaces.

But now you're back. And the lines between ally and enemy blur often. The rifle's out of your hand now, but that structure, that routine, that order, you miss it, and you can get it back. You'd do anything to feel like you know what you're doing.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Mark, John, Jack, Brick Rockwell, Sarah, Cordelia, Marcia, or Sandy

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +2
- Brains +2, Moxie -2, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're a fake, impersonating someone who died in the War.
- You're running from the military police because of what you did in the War.
- One night you got drunk and killed a close friend or family member of another Role.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get the respect you haven't had since the War
- To settle down and start a family
- To start a new career

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- Standard civilian clothes
- A dress uniform
- A tuxedo or evening gown
- A dark suit or dress
- Workout clothes
- Jeans and a t-shirt
- A dependable rifle (Gun 2 +long range +well-maintained)
- A good military stipend
- A roomy rucksack
- A military sidearm (Gun 2 +loud +well-used)
- A pair of binoculars
- A sharp knife (Knife 1 +sharp +concealable)
- Your photo on the wall at a Location
- A small stake in a Location
- Your apartment, just as you left it before the War OR your parents' brownstone uptown (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role admires you for what you did during the War.
- This Role promised to wait for you while you were away, and they didn't.
- This Role hates you for what you did during the War.
- You met this Role when you were on furlough. They don't remember what happened that night. You can't forget it.
- Everything between you and this Role changed because of what happened that one night. They regret it, you don't.
- This Role harbors doubts about your heroism and has voiced them to you in the past.
- This Role owes you for what you did to keep them from getting drafted.
- This Role is madly in love with you, and you don't know. You also can't stand to be around them.
- This Role knows you didn't earn your War medals honestly and is threatening to go public.
- (3-Role Hook) You're pretending to be someone you're not so that this Role keeps loving you. This other Role knows what's going on, and today's the day they confront you about it.
- (3-Role Hook) You and these two Roles have been planning a crime for a long time. Today's the day you put that plan into motion.

Role Actions

Choose 2

☐ Sock It to 'Em

When you KO someone, you KO on a 4, 5, or 6.

☐ Crack Shot

When you engage someone in ranged combat, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, take an additional shot before your opponent can.

On a 7-9, deal Injury, but expose yourself to return fire you can't avoid.

On a 6-, your opponent takes a successful shot (and deals Injury) before you get yours off.

❑ Army Training, Sir

Don't count your first Injury in the Movie.

❑ Storm the Beaches

When you charge recklessly forward in a Scene without thinking, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, your bravado inspires a Person or a Role in the Scene to make a tough decision.

On a 7-9, a Person or Role in the Scene thinks it's a great idea to involve you in a problem they're having because you're so brave.

On a 6-, your bravado just pisses people off, and someone ends up hurt before this Scene is over.



The Politician

You're someone with a vision. You're someone who looks at the rundown buildings and the old roads and see not ruins, but opportunities. Sometimes this manifests as a ruthless set of power plays, sometimes it's truly magnanimous gestures. While nothing yet has stayed in your way for long, there is that possibility that you may face an impediment en route to your ultimate goal, be that Mayor, kingpin, Senator, or something more.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Wilson, Orson, Claire, Tiffany, Rudolf, Christina, or Sondra

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +2
- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains -10, Moxie +1, Risk -1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're not who you really say you are; you've been impersonating someone else for decades.
- You owe unbelievable amounts of money, both legally and illegally, and you live in constant fear of being found out.
- You're dying, and no one knows it.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To make at least one new powerful alliance
- To secure fame or money for yourself
- To become a household name

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An incredibly well-tailored outfit
- More money than you know what do with
- A luxurious private penthouse (Location)
- A great outfit you can wear to black-tie events
- An estate on the edge of the City (Location)
- A treasured, expensive piece of jewelry you always have with you
- A collection of firearms (any single one is a Gun 2 +loud +lethal)
- A set of clothing no one would expect you to own
- Your “lucky” outfit you wear when schmoozing
- A safe deposit box at a large bank downtown
- A little black book full of favors people owe you, and those you owe them
- A little something extra you set aside for bribes or “donations”
- A photo of someone who long ago left your life
- A treasured item from your childhood

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role is entirely responsible for your political success, and you’re desperate to keep that a secret.
- You’re bankrupting this Role, emotionally or financially. Or both.
- This Role once passed a comment that they didn’t think would get back to you. It did, and you’ve sworn to make them pay.
- All your work in politics has been done so that this Role will see that you love them.
- You keep making a lot of promises to this Role, and today it will get you into trouble.
- You have arranged for this Role to meet an untimely end.
- Today’s the day this Role finds out the truth about something you’ve been hiding from them.
- Using your power to keep this Role from succeeding seems like a perfectly reasonable way to spend your time.
- This Role will do anything for you, regardless of legality or risk, and you take advantage of this regularly.
- (3-Role Hook) These two Roles betrayed you, and you have always suspected them of working together to do it (maybe they did, maybe they didn’t), but you’re on a collision course for a showdown.
- (3-Role Hook) To get where you are today, you told this Role that this other Role is responsible for all the things wrong in your life. They believed you. Today the truth is coming out.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Of the People

When you're trying to deflect suspicion, blame, or trouble, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director which Role in the Movie you've shifted the blame to.

On a 7-9, you'll shift the blame onto a Role you have a Hook with, and they'll want to talk to you before the end of the Act.

On a 6-, not only are you acting MORE suspicious, you'll have to do something terrible in order to make things right.

□ Backroom Deal

When you need to bribe someone, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, both of the following are true.

- *You gain leverage on someone you don't have a Hook with.*
- *You gain leverage on someone you have a Hook with.*

On a 7-9, one of the above is true.

On a 6-, neither is true, and someone you have a Hook with is upset with your failed bribe attempts.

□ Lobbying Interests

Whenever you need to persuade someone, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, they consider your offer and will get back to you with a positive answer in this Scene or the next.

On a 7-9, they make a counteroffer. In order to agree, you'll have to involve someone you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, news of your offer reaches the worst ears possible.

□ The Puppetmaster

When you set up at least one Role to take a fall or be a victim in your plans, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, your plans leave no trails back to you.

On a 7-9, there's one link back to you that involves a Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, not only is there a trail back to you, but someone's after you in a future Scene.



The Career Criminal

Knowing what you know, there are only two options for you: a life of hustle or a life unsatisfied. You've been working marks for their trust and money since you were cheating people with a lemonade stand. Now you're working any and every angle, hungry for the big score so you can get away clean, so that you can retire and live comfortably without those damned cops on your trail and without having to look over your shoulder for the great number of enemies you've accrued through swindles and lies.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Chase, Tom, Nate, Cherlene, Carol, Wanda, or Patrick

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +0
- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk +1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're impersonating someone who died, maybe at your own hand.
- You're developing a serious addiction to something.
- No matter what you say, you're always one more score away from going legit.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get the "big score"
- To retire comfortably ... and have a long life
- To avoid getting caught

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A well-tailored outfit
- A shap knife (Knife 2 +sharp +lethal)
- An outfit so you can pose as another Role
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- Boring casual clothes
- An outfit you wear as a “disguise” to blend in when you need to
- A really great looking fedora
- A stack of fake business cards for all sorts of businesses
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- A half-full flask of hooch
- A set of light-anywhere matches
- Several bank accounts full of money you’ve “earned” over the years
- A photo of this Person (or Role, your choice) – they’re your next mark
- An illegal casino you’re running down by the tracks OR an apartment you’re not paying rent on (Location)
- A stack of fake IDs

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role used to love you, before you broke their heart for the last time.
- This Role broke your heart, and you’re not over it yet.
- You and this Role are on a collision course by the end of this Movie. One of you will not walk away.
- You’ve been in love with this Role for years, and they have no idea.
- You conned this Role’s parents out of a large sum of money. The parents are now dead and today the Role wants payback.
- This Role is out to get you, either for personal or professional reasons.
- You regret ever conning this Role years ago, because all they do now is bring it up and want an apology. And their stuff back.
- You are related to this Role, and only you know about it.
- This Role is related to you, and you don’t know. Unfortunately, today’s the day you find this out, and they find out you conned them out of money a long time ago.
- (3-Role Hook) Way back, these two Roles were unknowing allies in one of your first cons. They never got their cut of the profits and never knew what happened, and you’re feeling guilty about that.
- (3-Role Hook) You and these two Roles are planning the perfect Crime. Perfect, I tell ya, nothing could go wrong.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ It's Very Distinctive

When you enter a Location for the first time, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you and a Role you have a Hook with both know this Location intimately.

On a 7-9, in this Scene, a Role in this Location will ask you to do something before the end of the Movie.

On a 6-, a Role in this Scene recognizes you. They want (the Director chooses 1):

- *Compensation (you're going to need to get them money from another Role).*
- *Revenge (a fight breaks out before the end of this Scene).*
- *Assistance (they will make you an offer you can't refuse – help them, or they'll go to the cops).*
- *An alibi (they're planning to do something, and you're going to keep them from getting caught).*

□ You Know People

Choose a Person. One of the following is true for every interaction you have with this Person throughout the entire Movie:

- *You and this Person have a great relationship, and you can add +1 to any Risk roll you make.*
- *You and this Person had a secret affair, and you can take advantage of that with a +1 to any Moxie roll you make.*
- *This Person taught you everything you know. You take a +1 to any Brains roll you make.*

❑ Age of the What, Now?

When you get your hands on a weapon you've never used before, your first action with it gets a +1.

❑ White Knight, Black King

When you're faced with a chance to do the right thing, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you do the right thing and who in the Scene gets put in a terrible position because of it.

On a 7-9, you can do the right thing, but choose 1:

- *Another Role in this Scene gets hurt or blamed for it.*
- *As a "reward" for doing the right thing, you get asked to do something worse by a Role or Person in this Scene.*
- *You have to give up something or someone important to you and that may affect your relationship.*
- *A Role you have a Hook with changes the way they feel about you by the end of the Movie.*

On a 6-, by the end of this Act, a Role will swear to make you pay for what you've just done.



The Gambler

You live your life owing a lot to lady luck. Whether shuffling cards, pulling slots, spinning wheels, or rolling dice, sometimes things go your way, and sometimes they don't. But while you might be down now, you'll be back up around soon, better than ever. You can't gain anything without risking everything.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Frank, Nancy, Rick, Terry, Kenny, Joan, Amber, or Scott

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2
- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +1, Risk -2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've been trying to go legit and failing to stay that way for the last 6 months.
- You've been gambling trying to get enough money together to marry your best guy or gal.
- You've been saving a lot of money for a very rainy day, and today it looks very cloudy out.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To win big and rub it in the face of another Role in this Movie
- To beat the house, even if you have to cheat
- To win big without having to cheat

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit you'd wear for a night out on the town
- The uniform you never returned from your last day job
- The outfit you expect to be buried in
- An ill-fitting set of clothes that are all you have left from that night
- A marker for a seat at an illegal poker game at a Location
- A slush fund you put half your winnings into for your retirement
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- Your father's lighter
- The deed to your parents' old farm, crumpled in your pocket
- An apartment in a five-floor walkup uptown (Location)
- A photo of your best gal or guy who's long since moved on
- A basement apartment under a Location (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- If no one could catch you, you'd punch this Role square in the nose at least once a day.
- You've been stealing from this Role to finance your latest run. Today's the day they find out.
- You mean well, but you always seem to blow it with this Role, especially when it matters the most.
- You're bankrupting this Role, emotionally or financially. Or both.
- This Role will double-cross you when it's least convenient for you.
- This Role knows your Secret, and you often involve them in whatever stupid or dangerous stuff you're doing.
- You have loved this Role for a long time. Today's the day you tell them.
- You're married to this Role, and chose not to tell them you just lost your wedding ring and your nest egg, which is eating you up inside.
- You're related to this Role, and only they know about it.
- You and this Role were switched at birth.
- (3-Role Hook) You went to school with these two Roles. You've remained friendly outside of work, but now your job threatens your relationship with both of them, for various reasons.
- (3-Role Hook) You and these two Roles have been friends since childhood, and today's the day you all do something dangerous or stupid to make yourselves wealthy or famous.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Know When to Hold 'Em

When you try to bluff your way out of trouble, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, hold 2.

On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend hold to:

- Offer a +1 to another Role's roll before this Scene ends.
- Convincingly implicate a Role not present in this Scene.
- Convincingly implicate a Person not present in this Scene.
- Implicate a Role you have a Hook with.
- Gain information from a Role in this Scene you can use to your advantage later.

On a 6-, your bluff fails. Live with the consequences.

□ Know When to Run

Once per Act you can run out of a Scene to avoid trouble, but it will catch up to you by the end of the Movie. When you run, roll+Brains.

On a 7, 11, or doubles, you can get out of the Scene, but this will all come back to haunt you in the final Scene of the Movie.

On snake eyes, there's no getting out of this alive unless you give up everything AND implicate another Role.

On any other number, you can get out of a Scene if you (choose one):

- Implicate a Role you have a Hook with.
- Do or say something to complicate the lives of everyone in the Scene before you leave.
- Leave behind something that matters to you that can get you into trouble later.

□ Know When to Fold ‘Em

Instead of Talking It Out, you can Gamble. To Gamble, roll 2d6.

If even, you’re convincing and get what you want.

If it’s odd, instead of getting what you want, ask to do a favor for the person, and it’ll involve someone you have a Hook with.

If it’s snake eyes, you’re in deep shit, and either have to lose something that matters to you OR make sure someone you have a Hook with loses something that matters to them.

If it’s doubles, take the result and roll again. All results stack.

□ Know When to Walk Away

When the heat is on, and you’re in danger, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, make a clean getaway.

On a 7-9, the only way you’re getting away is to meet someone you have a Hook with in your next Scene, and it won’t go well for you.

On a 6-, there’s no getting out of this without you Fighting It Out or taking an automatic 6- result to Talk It Out.



The Reporter

(For Lilian Cohen-Moore)

The first rule of journalism is to report the news, objectively, whatever it takes. The truth is out there, and people have a right to know. In a City as corrupt as this, there's a lot to tell them. Crooked cops, politicians in bed with mistresses, all kinds of criminals and their syndicates.

Your editor sends you out to fill column inches and damned if you don't do it every time. Sometimes, you even make a deadline.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Lillian, Lois, Anne, Vicki, Tess, Jimmy, Sam, Skip, Josh, or Paul

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie +1, Risk -2
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +2
- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk -1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're determined to get that editor's position.
- You'll do anything for a story ... ANYTHING.
- You hate your job and totally want to do something more adventurous.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To score a story big enough to get you promoted
- To gain some fame
- To expose something really huge

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A trusty notepad and pen
- ❑ An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- ❑ Boring casual clothes
- ❑ An outfit you wear as a “disguise” to blend in when you need to
- ❑ A well-maintained typewriter
- ❑ A regularly full flask of hooch
- ❑ A little black book of names and numbers that you shouldn’t have
- ❑ A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 2 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- ❑ Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- ❑ A set of light-anywhere matches
- ❑ A small home just outside of the City (Location)
- ❑ An apartment in a six-floor walkup uptown (Location)
- ❑ A card labelled “PRESS” for the brim of a hat
- ❑ A second-hand pocketknife (Knife 1 +sharp)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- ❑ You hope breaking the big story will finally get this Role to notice you.
- ❑ This Role encourages you to bend and break the law at any opportunity to advance your career.
- ❑ Is it time for this Role to step in front of a bus yet? Can you maybe push them into traffic?
- ❑ That Role? Pond scum. Lower than pond scum. Even thinking about them makes you sick.
- ❑ This Role is in awe of you, thinking you’re spooky, or practically a wizard with what you’re able to do.
- ❑ You wrote unflattering things about this Role, and they want payback.
- ❑ This Role is trying to sway you to write something flattering about them, even if it’s all bullshit.
- ❑ This Role has a story for you that seems just too good to be true.
- ❑ This Role risks everything for you, and you never know what to say, but today you’ll try and say something. It will go badly – you’re not good at these sorts of things.
- ❑ (3-Role Hook) In a perfect world, you’d be married to this Role and employed by this other Role.
- ❑ (3-Role Hook) This Role is paying you to regularly write terrible things about this other Role. Today that relationship is exposed and ended, possibly in a messy way.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ On the Record?

When you think someone is lying to you, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, the Role will tell you something true that persists for the rest of the Movie.

On a 7-9, you're partially right, but ... choose 1:

- *Your editor has to straighten out the mess, and you'll have to have a difficult conversation with a Role you have a Hook with before the end of the Act.*
- *You've just put someone else in danger and you don't realize it. By the end of this Movie, a Role you have a Hook with will be in life-threatening danger.*
- *You've just put yourself in danger and you totally know it, but it's cool, you can handle it ... mostly. You'll have a dangerous encounter in your next Scene.*

On a 6-, of course they're being honest with you. In fact, why don't you offer to help them?

□ The Fourth Estate

Whenever you use your job to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you get what you want, and it has a positive impact on the Scene.

On a 7-9, you can get what you want if you first agree to do something that will harm or end a relationship with a Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, a Role in the Scene is sick of you throwing your weight around and (they choose 1):

- *Get rough with you to shut you up (take 1 Injury in a brief scuffle).*
- *Make your life worse for the rest of the Movie (the Director will offer you a terrible choice as a free Director Action).*
- *Threaten a Role you have a Hook with in an effort to shut you up (they can work with the Director to make that happen either in this Scene or the next).*

❑ The Truth Is Out There

When you follow a theory everyone else dismisses, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, your lead works out, providing you with new information to use in either this Scene or your next Scene.

On a 7-9, your lead takes you right to a Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, you'll need more proof, and to get it, you'll have to convince a Role you have a Hook with to work with you. You will both regret this before the Movie is over.

❑ On a Deadline

Whenever you make a quick decision, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, take a +1 forward to your next attempt at something.

On a 7-9, your rushing around tests a relationship you have with someone (a Person or Role), and the Director can either offer a terrible choice or bring someone new into the Scene for free.

On a 6-, your haste means you overlook something significant, and a Role you have a Hook with has to bail you out.





6

Basic Roles: The Shakers

The Shakers are the reactive Roles who give meaning to the story. They may defend the status quo, or complicate the dramatic situation. The Shakers are:

The Starry-Eyed Kid

The Citizen

The Socialite

The Disgraced Doctor

The Musician

The Attorney

The Gangster

The Celebrity

The Ex-Con

The Girl/Boy Friday

The Starry-Eyed Kid

Gosh, the City is really big! These buildings and streets sure do seem to go on forever in so many directions. And look at those lights. One day, that'll be your name up there. The star of stage and/or screen, that's you alright. This is swell! You saved up your money, packed one suitcase and hightailed outta that tiny town with their tiny dreams all the way here, to the big City, where you're gonna show 'em all. It doesn't matter if they tried to tell you how hard it can be. It doesn't matter that they warned you about how dangerous this can all get. You've got talent, and by gum, you'll show 'em what talent can do.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Andy, Billy, Pat, Tracy, Mickey, Morty, Clara, or Sue

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk +0
- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk -1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're completely trusting of anyone who says they can help.
- You have no idea who your mother or father is, and maybe it's a Role in this Movie.
- You're desperate to be successful and will stop at nothing to get famous.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get famous
- To see your name in the papers
- To be someone other people won't forget

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A packed suitcase of clothes your parents gave you before you left
- Your hopes and dreams of success in the big city
- A wrinkled dress or ill-fitting suit for day-to-day wearing
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- Your high school varsity jacket
- One really nice pair of shoes
- A diary where you detail all your best ideas
- A picture of your beloved pet
- A dull switchblade your best friend from home gave you (Knife 1 +dull)
- A wallet or purse bulging with your life savings
- A camera and scrapbook to document your first year in the big City.
- A stack of headshots and glamour photos
- A cramped rat-trap of an apartment in the worst part of town (Location)
- The private studio where you audition regularly (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You envy this Role's success, and today's the day you make a move to get yours, by any means necessary.
- You see this Role as an older sibling who can do no wrong in your eyes.
- This Role is legitimately impressed by you and just hasn't told you yet.
- You regularly imagine what life would be like if you were this Role.
- Golly, you're pretty sure that if you just spend more time with this Role, they'll stop doing all that bad stuff.
- You've decided that today's the day you confess your Secret to this Role, because they keep telling you that you can trust them. They wouldn't lie to you, would they?
- This Role said you could ask them for a favor anytime.
- This Role embarrassed you once, and even though they haven't thought twice about it, you spend hours plotting revenge.
- This Role is about to ask you to do something you've never done before, but they've promised you a HUGE reward. Of course you said yes!
- You're pretty sure you're related to this Role, but they keep denying it.
- (3-Role Hook) You witnessed these two Roles doing something dangerous and (gasp!) illegal. They don't know you know, but the guilt is chewing you up inside and you need to tell someone what happened.
- (3-Role Hook) Before you left home, your mother tucked the phone number of this Role and the name of this other Role into your suitcase, saying they were both "really good friends of hers who can help you."

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Just Lucky I Guess

Once a session, re-roll any roll. Live with the consequences.

❑ Trusting Face

When you blindly follow someone because they sound like they're friendly, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you will end up in a terrible set of circumstances, but you'll narrowly avoid danger or Injury.

On a 7-9, you get in over your head and face a hard choice: either you or someone you have a Hook with will have to do something your momma wouldn't approve of, or else you're both going to get hurt bad.

On a 6-, you walk right into a dangerous situation that persists into your next Scene.

❑ Built Farm Tough

Ignore the first Injury you suffer.

❑ Folksy Wisdom

Instead of Talk It Out, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, whatever someone is telling you sounds like a terrible idea, but you offer an alternative that risks someone you have a Hook with.

On a 7-9, what they're saying doesn't sound so bad, but you should make sure someone else knows about this and can help you out, like a Dirty Cop or Private Eye or someone important.

On a 6-, gee whilikers, that sounds like a swell idea, and you can't wait to get started ... and tell everyone what you're doing.



The Citizen

You are John or Jane Q Public. You're an average citizen. You have an average job, an average home, and an average yard. Your spouse may or may not be average. On the whole, you prefer nice orderly things and don't go looking for trouble. So why does trouble keep finding you?

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Tad, Muffy, Chad, Taylor, Dana, or Gloria

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk +0
- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk -2

Body
[]

Moxie
[]

Risk
[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You know your spouse is sleeping with a Role.
- You're one step ahead of the creditors and repo man ... for now.
- You hate your job, and want to do something more adventurous.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To be taken seriously for once
- To get into a new and dangerous lifestyle
- To earn some respect

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A trusty flashlight (Club 1 +KO)
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- Boring casual clothes
- An outfit you can be buried in
- A well-stocked toolbox
- A shotgun (Gun 3 +kickback)
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 2 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- A small camera you barely know how to use
- A small home just outside of the City (Location)
- An apartment in a six-floor walkup uptown (Location)
- Money you've squirreled away from your job for a rainy day
- A good relationship with a Person in the City
- A bridge game every week with a Person in the City

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You've seen this Role around, and you're intrigued to know more about who they are and what they do.
- This Role will tell you their Secret today in exchange for your help doing something incredibly dangerous.
- You would hate to meet this Role in a dark place alone.
- You spend a lot of time trying to get this Role to pay attention to you.
- This Role mistook you for someone else and tells everyone that you're not who you actually are.
- You've been trying to find just the right words to ask this Role to marry you. You're going to have to do something big and risky today to get them to say yes.
- You love this Role, and they toy with you because of it.
- You're married to this Role, and you have no clue that today it's all coming to a possibly tragic end.
- You used to see this Role socially back in your "wild and crazy" days.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role has asked for your help in committing a Crime, and you both agree to frame this other Role for it. It doesn't matter that you've never done anything like this before.
- (3-Role Hook) In order to support your family, you've asked these two Roles to help you make a lot of money quickly, even though it's dangerous and will probably kill somebody.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Another Fine Mess

Whenever someone influences or persuades you do anything, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, take their deal and tell the Director how you're going to throw yourself into completing the task.

On a 7-9, accept the deal but there's a complication, pick one:

- *You lose 1 of your Belongings in an unfair deal.*
- *A Role you have a Hook with is about to ask you do something potentially even worse either by the end of this Scene or at the start of your next Scene.*
- *Something you say gets misinterpreted, and you wind up in worse trouble for the rest of the Movie.*

On a 6-, the Director will put you in a terrible situation and you'll have to choose between taking a fall or needing to make a deal with someone.

□ Patsy

When you find yourself caught up in someone else's plans and you don't know what to do, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director which Role you have a Hook with that you're going to ask for help before the end of this Scene, then go do it.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you which Role you have a Hook with that's going to help you before the end of this Scene, even though you don't want their help.

On a 6-, the Director can EITHER offer you a terrible choice OR set up something to pay off later as a free Director Action.

❑ Beginner's Luck

The first time you try something you've never done before, add +1 to the attempt.

❑ Who's the Stiff?

Whenever you meet a Person or Role for the first time, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, they believe you're just a regular person who couldn't possibly be a threat, and they go on about their business while you're standing right there.

On a 7-9, they mistake you for someone dangerous they know. They will immediately involve you in whatever they're doing.

On a 6-, they mistake you for someone they're afraid of. They'll change their plans because of you showing up. Or they'll fight you. Their choice.

Note: If they mistake you for someone else, those mistakes persist for the rest of the Movie.



The Socialite

You're not oblivious to what's going on around you, you know perfectly well that next weekend you're going yachting with Lance and his fiancé, and probably will spend your whole summer on the Cape. Your air is rarefied; your life is often a blur of cocktails and soirées. The coffers seem bottomless, and your hardest decisions stem from which course you want while you're at whatever restaurant. Some might call you spoiled, some might call you out of touch, but you're pretty sure that given the chance, everyone would jump at a chance to walk a mile in your designer shoes.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Trent, Lance, Wanda, Lane, Darren,
Madison, Louise, Virginia, or Agatha

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk -2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie +1, Risk +0 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You didn't inherit your vast wealth; you committed a Crime, and you're worried about getting found out.
- You're terrified of losing your wealth and having to work a "common job".
- You're not really a Socialite, only a scared impersonation of one.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To secure yourself as the richest, most influential person in the City
- To leave a legacy for the less fortunate
- To put your name on something this City will never forget

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A fancy outfit you look great in
- A very stuffed wallet or purse
- An outfit you can exercise in
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- Clothes you'd rather not let anyone see
- An outfit you assume "regular" people wear.
- The formalest of formalwear
- A little bell you can ring for service, even if no one pays attention to it
- A treasured, expensive piece of jewelry you always have with you
- Enough makeup to make sure you always look good
- A very expensive cigarette holder and lighter combo
- A cushy penthouse apartment in the best building in town (Location) (comes with a butler as a free Person)
- A swanky estate outside of town (Location) (comes with a butler as a free Person)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role is going to take all your money by the end of the Movie.
- You're related to this Role, and only you know.
- This Role used to travel in the same social circles you do, and you pity them for how they live now.
- Because of the way you throw money around, this Role is always looking for a handout. How disgusting.
- Sometime in the past, you broke this Role's heart and moved on. They haven't.
- You've been desperate to get this Role to agree to marry you.
- This Role knows your Secret and is threatening to go public with you. You're not sure you could survive that, and you're willing to take drastic action to keep your Secret safe.
- This Role has said you have the ability to get away with murder. You're eager to see if they're correct.
- You're convinced that if you lose all your wealth, you'll end up as pathetic as this Role.
- (3-Role Hook) You were switched at birth with this Role, and only this other Role knows about it. Today's the day you find out.
- (3-Role Hook) In order to protect yourself from a threat that you believe is true (it may or may not be) you've lied to this Role about what this other Role is going to do. By the end of the Movie, this blows up in your face.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Privilege, Unchecked

When you throw money at a problem, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, the problem seems to slip into the background ... for now.

On a 7-9, your largesse earns you a new friend who will (you choose one):

- *Get you into trouble that you can't spend your way out of.*
- *Implicate you into something they're tangled up in.*
- *Beg you to help them out ... just this once.*

On a 6-, your profligate spending has attracted unwanted and immediate attention. The Director can bring someone into the Scene for free.

❑ The Butler Could Do That

You have a butler. The butler ... (choose one):

- *Is a distinguished War Vet who retains their service weapon (Gun 2 +well-maintained).*
- *Is the tireless victim of all your abuse. Should they die, you take a -1 to all rolls for the rest of the Movie.*
- *Is well connected in the City. A Person at a Location is their family member or lover.*

You can order your butler to handle any task you don't want to, and you treat any information they gather as though you heard it personally.

❑ Swine Before Pearls

When you feel your wealth and status aren't being appreciated, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, a Role in this Scene appreciates you so much that you get something you didn't know you wanted.

On a 7-9, a Role in this Scene appreciates you enough to bring you into a problem they're having so you can solve it.

On a 6-, your wealth IS appreciated ... but only because a Role and/or a Person now plans to rob you before this Movie is over.

❑ Life of the Party

Whenever you're at a big gathering of people, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you're making sure people pay attention to you.

On a 7-9, something you say or do puts you on a collision course with the Crime AND one Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, you get yourself into hot water and have to have an uncomfortable conversation with someone you have a Hook with.



The Disgraced Doctor

Losing your license was not the stoppage of your career that the Medical Board thought it would be. Taking your shingle down off the big blue box you called a clinic did nothing to halt you taking care of others. Whether that's a god complex or something noble, you continue to work with patients as needed, only a phone call or suture away.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Frank, Nancy, Rick, Terry, Who, Amber, or Scott.

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +2, Risk +2
- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk +1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- Your hands shake when you work; you end up getting very drunk to do anything surgical.
- You feel intense guilt over a medical mishap that wasn't your fault.
- It's a rush to play god, and you're looking for bigger and bigger rushes.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get your license back by any means necessary
- To continue your work so that others may know your genius
- To be someone other people won't forget

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit you fail to keep clean
- A folder of plans and conspiracies about how you lost your license
- The outfit you expect to be buried in
- A clean set of scrubs
- A slush fund you hid from the Medical Board
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- A business card from a Role in this Movie
- A sharp scalpel (Knife 1 +lethal)
- A stack of overdue bills you're looking to get out from under
- An apartment in a six-floor walkup uptown (Location)
- A pile of dull and banged up medical tools (Knife 2 +sharp or Club 2 +KO)
- A photo of your best gal or guy who's long since moved on
- A small dingy clinic where you treat people who stumble in off the street (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You spend a lot of time trying to make up for a mistake you caused in this Role's life.
- Your carelessness cost a family member of this Role their life. They don't know you were responsible, but the guilt is eating you up.
- This Role is willing to bankroll your future, but first they're going to ask you to do something absolutely terrible.
- You love this Role, and they won't even give you the time of day.
- You have no doubt that this Role would absolutely benefit from some surgery. You keep trying to persuade them.
- Years ago you botched a procedure on this Role. Everyone except this Role notices.
- This Role left you when your practice failed.
- You'd give anything to end up alone in a room with this Role.
- This Role owes you a lot of money. You need it. Today.
- (3-Role Hook) You went to school with these two Roles. You've remained friendly outside of work, but now your job threatens your relationship with both of them, for various reasons.
- (3-Role Hook) One drunken night, this Role came to you and said they'd love to look like this other Role. They were joking. You thought they were serious, and today's the day you show them how you'll make it happen.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Lay on Hands

When you attempt to heal other peoples' wounds, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, the wounded Role can recover from Injury with no problems when the Director takes the Fade to Black Action.

On a 7-9, they recover but (choose one):

- *Their wound will reopen by the end of the next Scene they're in.*
- *They will pass out at the worst possible time later in this Movie.*

On a 6-, they don't recover, you've made a mess of things, and the Role is now bleeding regularly all over the place for the rest of the Movie.

□ Take Two and Call No One in The Morning

When you assist someone using your medical knowledge, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, the Role takes a +1 to their next roll.

On a 7-9, you provide information but (choose one):

- *It gets you both into trouble before the end of the Movie.*
- *Someone has overheard what you said, and it bites you in the ass later in this Act.*
- *Someone has found out about what you can do, and your life gets very complicated in your next Scene.*

On a 6-, someone comes to see you right away, and the situation is dire for at least one of you.

□ Basically, Run

In any Scene where you're pretending to know less than you do, take a +1 to any one roll in the Scene.

□ Am I Good Person?

When you use your medical knowledge for personal gain, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director how your knowledge is going to help you.

On a 7-9, you realize that in order to get what you want, you have to talk to another Role, and they'll either make you a risky offer OR put a high price tag on what you want.

On a 6- your attempts at personal gain attract the attention of a Role you have a Hook with, and they end up getting involved more than they'd like.



The Musician

You've got the voice of an angel. Or you play with talent you got in a deal with the devil. Either way, your melodies hold the keys to heaven and forbidden treasures. And you know it. Whether on stage in some smoky room or on someone's arm, you're well aware and quite comfortable with everyone getting a little whiplash and eye strain from checking you out.

Maybe you've still got dreams of making it big someday, maybe those dreams faded out like the trumpet's last solo. It doesn't matter, you're going to play until you can't go another beat, and dammit, people are going to listen until the very last note.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Dorothy, Johnny, Claire, Rosemary, Carlos, Ike, Herman, or Ruth.

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie -1, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're a fraud; you're just re-recording someone else's music.
- You're losing your voice and your looks; you'll be done professionally in six months.
- Your manager has been stealing from you, so you need money NOW.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To become even more famous, regardless of the cost
- To eliminate whomever you see as competition
- To get enough money or fame to go record music "that really matters"

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A fancy outfit you perform in
- A blackjack (KO, portable)
- An outfit you can exercise in
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- Clothes you'd rather not let anyone see
- Boring casual clothes
- The formalest of formalwear
- A switchblade (Knife 1 +sharp +concealable)
- A shotgun (Gun 3 +noisy +kickback)
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- A set of light-anywhere matches
- An apartment uptown paid by a Role who's a big fan OR a mansion in the rich part of town (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You and this Role are related, and only you know about it.
- This Role wishes they had your life, so they've been impersonating you, and today you find out.
- You traded your relationship with this Role for career success. One of you regrets that decision.
- One drunken night, you told this Role your Secret, and you've been begging them to stay silent about it.
- This Role is your best friend, and today they arrange to have you killed. You don't know that, and you'd never believe it if someone told you.
- You've been secretly ripping off this Role for the last year, and today they notice.
- This Role has been trying to get you out of the music business for years. Today they make an offer too good to be true.
- You resent this Role for pushing you so hard into bad situations.
- You're married to this Role. The marriage will likely end badly. Today.
- (3-Role Hook) You once used your celebrity to help screw both these Roles over. Now they're both looking for you, but they each think they're acting alone.
- (3-Role Hook) These two Roles got you involved in a stupid and dangerous plan once. It helped your career, but you've been planning revenge for a while now. Today is the day you put things in motion.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Three-Ring Circus

When you use your fame to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, it works, and you'll get what you want with minimal fuss.

On a 7-9, you can get what you want but first (choose 1):

- *A Role in this Scene recognizes you, and asks a favor that will get you into trouble.*
- *The Director can involve someone you have a Hook with into this Scene (for free), and things between the two of you are about to get complicated.*
- *You end up making a promise you can't possibly keep to a Role in this Scene.*

On a 6-, your celebrity backfires on you, and you're stuck doing something you don't want to do instead.

□ Your Biggest Fan

Create a new Person for any Location in play. They can do each of these things once per Movie:

- *Give you +1 on a roll in one Scene at that Location.*
- *Take the blame for something you did. It will cost them everything, maybe their life.*
- *Provide you either a gun (that's somehow involved with the Crime) (Gun 2 +noisy) or money (their life savings).*

❑ Down to the Crossroads

Start this Movie either (choose 1) incredibly wealthy or incredibly popular, but take -1 to every roll you make in the Final Act of the Movie.

❑ Curtain Call

Once per Movie, tell the Director how you're using your fame to get you or another Role out of trouble, at the cost of your reputation.



The Attorney

Justice may or may not be blind. The scales may or may not be balanced. You do the hard work in this City, making sure the guilty are punished and the innocent go free. But the definitions on 'guilty' and 'innocent' seem to change day by day and minute by minute. Graft and rule-bending are as common in your job as legal briefs and precedents.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Ben, Perry, Jen, Joyce, Gordon, Matt, Susan,
Sabrina, Peter, Cliff, or Kerry

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk +1 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You have no need for money; you're related to any Socialite or Celebrity if they're in this Movie. You do this for kicks.
- You love to make it sound like you spend all this money frivolously, but really you give it all to an orphanage.
- You've convinced yourself the cops are after you. Maybe they are, maybe they aren't.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get a ton of publicity and become famous (or infamous)
- To make up for a past mistake
- To get yourself elected Mayor

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- An outfit you wear when you want to win in court
- Clothes someone bought you on the best day of your life
- The outfit you expect to be buried in
- Clothes you think someone else would like you wearing
- An expensive briefcase/attaché that you can sell for money in a pinch
- A standing reservation at one Location
- A slush fund of “legal fees” you’ve skimmed off the top from cases
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- A safe deposit box at a large bank downtown
- Your father’s lighter
- The deed to your parents’ old farm, crumpled in your pocket
- An apartment in a six-floor walkup uptown (Location)
- The key to a Location you picked up by accident last night
- A photo of your best gal or guy who’s long since moved on
- A basement apartment under a Location (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role broke your heart and now insists on telling you how much better their life is without you.
- This Role will ask you to risk your career to help them out of a jam.
- This Role wishes they had your life, so they’ve been impersonating you, and it’s gotten them into serious trouble.
- You traded your relationship with this Role for career success. One of you regrets that decision.
- This Role regrets ever meeting you, and you’re not proving them wrong.
- You’ve been secretly ripping off this Role for the last year, and today they notice.
- All you can think about is how you need more of this Role in your life, and it’s been affecting your career.
- Why won’t this Role just admit that they love you already?
- You have an on-again off-again relationship with this Role. Everyone knows you’re hot for each other.
- You’re married to this Role. The marriage will likely end badly. Today.
- (3-Role Hook) You only went to law school to prove to these two Roles that you weren’t the little kid they picked on when you were growing up.
- (3-Role Hook) You’re exactly the person these two Roles need to talk to in order to pull off “the perfect crime.”

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Objection!

At the start of play, roll 1 die. If you roll an even number, you may re-roll any 2 rolls you make in this Movie. If you roll an odd number, you only get 1 re-roll. You must use whatever the new roll's value is.

❑ You Can't Handle the Truth

When you need to intimidate someone, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you threaten them to go along with you but only until the end of this Act.

On a 7-9, they will agree to help you during this Scene but either (their choice) betray you at the end of the Act OR betray you at the end of the Movie.

On a 6-, they say no, and things will either escalate into a fight OR they'll talk to someone you have a Hook with, and a fight will happen because of that conversation.

❑ I'd Like to Present This into Evidence

Add one Fact to any Person or Location in the Movie, so long as that Fact benefits you and complicates things for someone else in this Movie.

❑ Treat Them as Hostile

When you talk to, interrogate, or threaten someone for the first time, add a +1 to any Talk It Out rolls.



The Gangster

While the City goes to hell, you're the one holding the handbasket. More than just a Mook, you're rungs higher on the food chain. Are you the Boss? Not yet. Are you living your dream? Absolutely.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Lucky, Smiling Jack, Diane, Doris, Henrietta, Killer, Rocco, or Iceman

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You have a fondness for kittens.
- You really want to fall in love, just like in the pictures.
- You've been giving a lot of thought to going legit lately.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To become as (in)famous as you think you deserve to be
- To take the big score before you die
- To run this City

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- Flashy clothes you wear for going out on the town
- A wallet thick with cash
- A really conspicuous hat you're known to wear
- A tuxedo or evening dress
- A jug of gasoline and some matches you keep in the trunk of your car
- Blackjack (Club 1 +KO +portable)
- A swanky apartment uptown (Location)
- A machine gun (Gun 2 +deadly)
- A small notepad where you scribble ideas of heists, capers, murders, and other crimes
- A baseball bat (Club 2 +KO +portable)
- A sawed-off shotgun (Gun 2 +loud +brutal)
- The backroom at any existing Location (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- One day, if you have your way, you're going to kill this Role.
- This Role risked everything for you when you were first starting out, and you've never thanked them. Until today.
- You're related to this Role, and only they know about it.
- This Role has on several occasions avoided or survived all your attempts to "handle them" and you've had about enough of it.
- This Role lost their reputation in order to protect you. Today they want payback.
- You and this Role spend a lot of time talking about the past. They moved on, you haven't.
- You've been trying to avoid your old way of living, but this Role keeps pulling you back in.
- You want to bring this Role into your criminal empire by any means necessary.
- All you want is a quiet life with this Role, and you'll do anything to get it.
- (3-Role Hook) These two Roles are in a relationship, and you're very eager to break them up.
- (3-Role Hook) You double-crossed both these Roles, and told this Role the other Role was actually at fault.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Shoot the Place Up

When you threaten a Role with violence, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you can arrange for violence to happen before the end of this Scene OR the end of the Act.

On a 7-9, before the violence can happen, you need to convince someone you have a Hook with to be a part of it. It'll be a tough sale, and it'll cost you something.

On a 6-, someone's going to rat you out.

□ This Is Your City

Pick one Person at a Location. Once during this Movie, you can (choose 1):

- *Bully them to risk their life for you.*
- *Bully them into giving you their life savings.*
- *Convince them to entangle a Role in something they're not involved with.*

❑ Street Tough

Shrug off the first point of Injury you suffer.

❑ Run These Streets

Anytime you're able to entangle a Role in something against their will, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, make them an offer they can't refuse.

On a 7-9, a Role you have a Hook with will need to be convinced first, but they'll lend a hand.

On a 6-, the only thing you're getting is betrayed before the end of the Movie.



The Celebrity

It's not hard to become famous. You do one thing, sleazy or otherwise, and people want to put cameras in your face while asking you for your opinion. The hard part is keeping that spotlight on you, because you do better in direct light.

Keeping yourself relevant is practically a full-time job in itself. It's a good thing the City offers so many opportunities for you to pop up here and there, for good or ill, because you don't want to imagine going back to a world where no one knows you, or worse, where no one cares about you.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Lauren, Brad, Ava, Chris, George, Debbie,
Jane, Veronica, Myrna, or Tom

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +0

- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk +1

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're into some really kinky shit.
- You did some things you're not proud of in order to get where you are.
- Your looks are fading; you'll be a has-been within 6 months.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To leave a legacy after you're gone
- To have someone take the fall for something terrible you've done
- To get out ahead and alive

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A very stuffed wallet or purse
- An outfit no one would expect you to wear so well
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- The formalest of formal wear
- An outfit you wear as a “disguise” to blend in when you need to
- An assistant (they only do menial tasks for you)
- A snub-nosed .22 (Gun 1 +short range +concealable) that fits in a purse or coat pocket
- A tailored trench coat (+it billows)
- A stack of outstanding debts at several Locations in the City
- The best cigarettes or cigars you can import, legally or otherwise
- A palatial estate where maybe the Crime happened (Location)
- An apartment you keep as a love nest (Location)
- An invite to an after-hours party at this Location
- A Person at a Location owes you a favor

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You love this Role, and they toy with you because of it.
- This Role despises you for your fame.
- You will kill this Role for the gossip you mistakenly think they're spreading about you.
- This Role has information (photos, film, news, etc.) about you and could go public at any minute. It will ruin you if they do that, so today you're going to have to stop them by any means necessary.
- This Role is related to you, and only you know about it.
- This Role once pulled you out of a jam, and you owe them BIG.
- Today you ask a favor from this Role, and you can't believe you have to stoop so low, but you're desperate.
- This Role did something that started your career, and they never publicly take credit. They just hold it over your head every chance they get.
- This one time, something terrible happened, and this Role blames you, even though you had nothing to do with it.
- (3-Role Hook) These two Roles are in a relationship, and you're very eager to break them up because you love one of them.
- (3-Role Hook) You're absolutely certain that this Role will be “the next you”, and all you need to do is convince this other Role to help you make that happen.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ PR Meltdown

If you use your fame to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, it works but only for this Scene.

On a 7-9, you can get what you want but first (choose 1):

- *A Role in this Scene recognizes you and asks a favor that will get you into trouble.*
- *A Person or Role in this Scene mistakenly believes you're in the Scene for a reason you aren't and acts accordingly.*
- *Have a conversation with one of the Roles you have a Hook with, and they're going to offer to "help" you for a price.*

On a 6-, your celebrity backfires on you, and you're stuck doing something you don't want to do instead.

❑ I'm in It for the Fans

When you use your attractiveness, sexuality, or physical attributes to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, choose 2 from the list below.

On a 7-9, choose 1:

- *The other Role or Person will help you accomplish 1 thing in a future Scene so you can get what you want later.*
- *In order to get what you want, you'll have to set up this other Role or Person to take the fall.*
- *The other Role or Person lies to you, but you believe them.*
- *The other Role or Person swears they'll help you, but first you have to help them with a Role they have a Hook with.*

On a 6-, your advances are spurned, and the other Role or Person has to go talk to a Role you have a hook with to straighten things out. Things will NOT go well for you.

❑ I'm in It for the Art

When you take an opportunity to be dramatic, even when the situation isn't helped by it, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, your acting changes how one Role in this Scene feels about you, in a positive way.

On a 7-9, your acting changes how one Role in this Scene feels about you (in a negative way) AND they can ask for your help in a problem they're having.

On a 6-, not only does your drama go unappreciated, but every Role in this Scene starts actively hating and discrediting you for the rest of the Movie.

❑ Ready for My Close-up

While you are injured, take a +1 to all rolls.



The Ex-Con

Life in the big house made you hard. You're not carved out of cookie dough, you're steel now – strong and cold. You went in, and maybe you did it (or didn't) do it, but you're out now, and you have no intentions of ever going back in. Prison wasn't a picnic; it wasn't a walk in the park. You saw things and did things that people wouldn't believe, but you did what you had to do to survive. Now the City welcomes you with open arms of asphalt, but you can't help noticing that this could just be one more prison for you.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Bruno, Pam, Gia, Francis, Olive, Griff, Tammy, or Crystal

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk -1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie +1, Risk +1 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've been plotting revenge against all the Roles who wronged you.
- You've committed far more crimes than what you went to jail for.
- You were framed, and the memories of prison haunt you.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get even with whatever Role wronged you before you went inside
- To go legit, no matter who tries to pull you down
- To make a new life for yourself in a new place

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A grubby set of coveralls
- A shiv you keep in your back pocket (Knife 1 +sharp +lethal)
- An outfit no one would expect you to wear so well
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- A spare set of coveralls
- The outfit you wore in court for sentencing
- The keys to a Location you swiped off a counter one night
- A regularly full flask of hooch
- An outfit you stole from a nice store and stashed if you ever got out
- A marker for an illegal poker game held at a Location
- Barely enough money to feed yourself
- A pair of brass knuckles (Fist 1 +KO +concealable)
- A booth at a local automat (Location)
- A dingy apartment in a nine-floor walkup uptown (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You love this Role, and they have no idea.
- You're related to this Role, and only they know about it.
- This Role lied about what you've done, and that's why you went away. It's payback time.
- This is the only Role who came to visit you while you were inside. You're eager to show your gratitude.
- You and this Role are related, and only you know about it.
- You took the fall for this Role, going to jail so they didn't have to. You're guilty and angry about it.
- Every time you see this Role, you're reminded of that one night before you went away. It both excites you and haunts you.
- Today's the day you find out that this Role ruined your life while you were inside.
- All you want is a quiet life with this Role, and you'll do anything to get it.
- (3-Role Hook) You double-crossed both these Roles, and told one that the other was actually at fault. One or both of them are getting suspicious, and today you will have to straighten all of this out.
- (3-Role Hook) You need to repair your relationship with this Role now that you're out of prison, but this other Role is in the way, and this morning you woke up to realize that at least one of you isn't getting out of this Movie alive.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Yard Time

Ignore the first 2 Injury you suffer in the Movie.

□ Prison Economy

Before play begins, choose one Person at a Location. This Person was inside with you and is maybe even your old cellmate. You can see them any time during the Movie and ask for one of the following (choose one):

- *An untraceable gun (Gun 2 +short range +concealable).*
- *A meeting with another Role that happens parallel to the next Scene (a free Meanwhile Director Action).*
- *Enough money to bribe a Role to do something dangerous on your behalf.*

❑ Dead Man Walking

When you're injured, take +1 ongoing for the duration of the fight.

❑ Thug Life

When you use your prison experience to get what you want, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, someone in the Scene agrees to help you, but you need to pay them back before the end of the Act.

On a 7-9, they'll ask you to do something first to prove yourself EITHER in this Scene OR the next Scene you're in, and it's going to suck for you.

On a 6-, you get in WAY over your head, and at least one Role in this Scene ends up injured.



The Girl / Boy Friday

You are always there to help. You're always there to be involved. You love to help. You love to be right in the thick of things. Sure, it's not always cheerful and sunny. Yes, it can be dangerous. But the point is that you're there to help, to lend a hand, to be a shoulder to cry on. One day you might be pouring coffee, the next you're hiding a body. But, the important thing is that you're helping ... right?

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Sue Ann, Mark, Dash, Tad, Chip, Carla, Meghan, or Christine

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +2
- Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1
- Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk +0

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You are THIS close to giving up on your dreams and going back to the small town you came from.
- You always try to insert yourself into situations just so you can get rescued.
- You have been saving money for a rainy day, and you're ready to do something amazing ... or risky.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To start a new relationship with a Role
- To strike out on your own and be a huge success
- To get recognition for all you've done

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A sensible business outfit
- A blackjack (Club 1 +KO +portable)
- An outfit you could wear for a night out on the town
- A set of plainclothes for blending in
- The formalest of formalwear
- A switchblade (Knife 1 +sharp +concealable)
- A pencil and paper, always at the ready
- Always enough pocket change for a phone call or a meal at the automat
- A little black book of phone numbers of Roles who owe you favors (tell the Director when you use it)
- A little brownstone you share with a roommate (Location)
- An apartment on the wrong side of the tracks (Location)
- A working camera, with a flash that you don't know how to shut off (it goes off at the worst possible times)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role thinks you can do no wrong, and you're not eager to prove otherwise.
- You wait patiently for this Role to ask you to marry them. You'll never lose hope it'll happen.
- This Role has always hated you, and only they know why.
- Today's the day you put an end to how this Role abuses you.
- You keep trying to help this Role, and it keeps making things worse for both of you.
- You're related to this Role, and they still think of you as a kid.
- You're in love with this Role, and they're clueless about it.
- This Role doesn't realize that this one time you took the blame for something they did. It helped them out, but it still haunts you.
- That one night with this Role was a drunken mistake, wasn't it? You're not so sure now.
- (3-Role Hook) You're trying to end things with this Role, and set them up instead with this other Role.
- (3-Role Hook) By the end of this Movie, you'll have to choose between these two Roles: one you'll be with, and the other you'll lose forever.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Attention to Detail

When you help another Role Check It Out, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, treat any information you get as though both you and the other Role heard it simultaneously.

On a 7-9, any information you get will put you in danger in your next Scene OR a Role you have a Hook with is put into danger because you of course tell them what you've found out.

On a 6-, the information you get is bogus, but you think you're helping when you take a big risk.

□ What's the Worst That Could Happen?

When you take a risk in order to help someone else out, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, everything's fine ... for now.

On a 7-9, in order to have things work out, you'll have to (choose 1):

- *Risk something important to you (The Director will ask you to risk something important to you as a free Director Action)*
- *Involve someone else into the Scene (The Director will ask you to involve a Role you have a Hook with as a free Director Action)*
- *Endanger a Role you have a Hook with (The Director will harm someone or set something up for later as a free Director Action).*

On a 6-, tell the Director the worst thing you could say or do in whatever situation you're in, then say it or do it.

❑ Danger-prone Daphne

Anytime you Check It Out, immediately roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you overhear something important about another Role.

On a 7-9, you mishear something, and you get a Role you have a Hook with into deep trouble because of it.

On a 6-, a Role or Person in the Scene gets tough with you to ensure your cooperation. Take 1 Injury and listen to what they have to say.

❑ You Know Just Who Can Help

Anytime you have a chance to tell the police what's going on, roll+Brains. On an even number, tell a Dirty Cop. On an odd number, tell a Good Cop. If there are no police in the Movie, substitute 2 Roles you have Hooks with.





7

Featurette: Narwhal

It's been a long stretch at sea. Weeks. Months. It's hard to tell anymore. The days and nights have tumbled into one another like the waves rocking the boat. All you know is that three days ago, you spotted a pod of narwhals, and you knew something felt wrong. You know those horned bastards couldn't be a good sign.

And you were right.

A few days ago, they followed you. You sped up, they kept pace. You thought, what? Maybe four of them? Five? No, someone said, six. Six narwhal. One's bad enough, but now there's six and you're running out of ideas.

Guns did nothing. Putting barrels in them did less. All you've done is pissed them off. You know you've pissed them off because yesterday they struck. A coordinated attack. You didn't know they could do that. You didn't think anything could do that. But yeah, they did. Six horns pierced the hull and dinged up the engine pretty good.

So now you limp home. The crew is tired. Scared. Bitter. For better, for worse, you gotta get home and away from these damned narwhal.

Welcome to the Sea

What You Need to Know

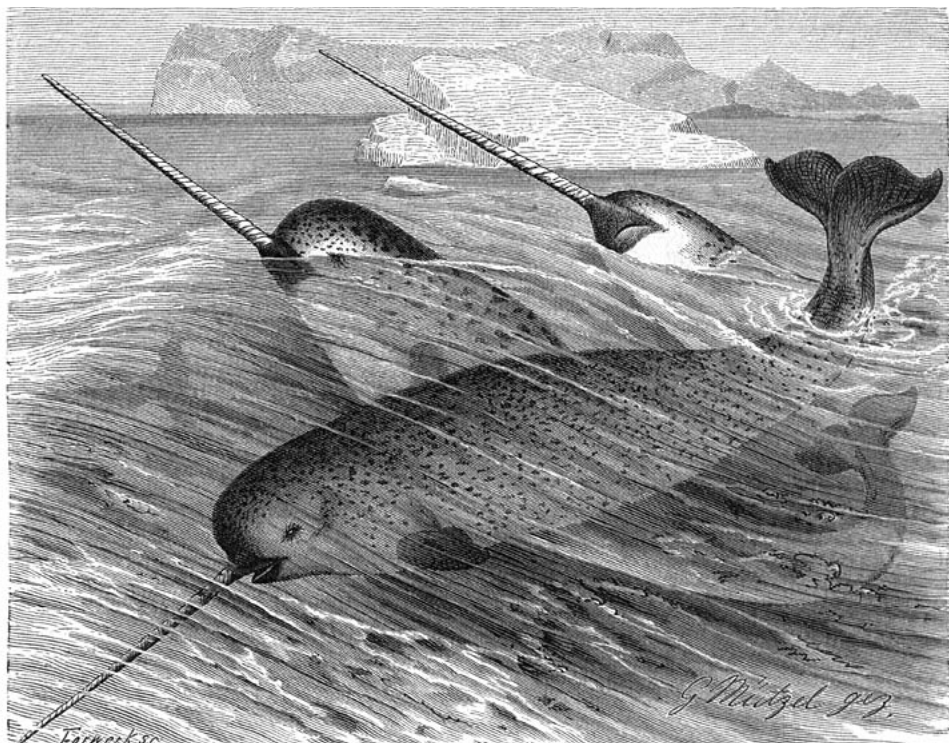
Six fishermen. Six narwhal. One leaky boat and three days and nights to get home before the ship sinks. It takes place in any Era between the 1940s and the 1990s.

WAIT, THE SHIP IS FLOODING?

Yes. Blame the holes in the hull and the engine that's currently smoking and making chugga-chugga sounds.

Also, if you take more than three days and nights to reach Port, you won't get paid. And you **need** to get paid.

In this Featurette, the Roles are those of six long-haul fishermen who have angered a pod of narwhal. The narwhal don't have a great sense of humor, but they do have a thirst for vengeance. Each Role is a different crew member on the ship, and each Location is a different room or place on board. The Movie takes place over a period of up to 3 days and 3 nights.



THINGS TO CHANGE FROM TRADITIONAL NOIR WORLD

Use only the six fishermen Roles.

Locations are rooms or areas of the ship; they have no Persons assigned to them. The Locations receive Facts as in City Creation.

Each Scene takes place at a specific time (Day 1, Night 1, Day 2, etc.) unless it is a Flashback.

After every Day or Night (at the end of Day 1, at the end of Night 1, etc.), roll Sinking.

The Movie ends when:

- The Movie has run for 3 Days and 3 Nights.
- All Locations have Flooded.
- All Roles are dead.

After 3 Nights or 2 Acts, any surviving crew will make it to Port. Give each crew member a resolution Montage to wrap up the Featurette.

■ **Sinking**

At the end of every Day or Night, roll.

On a 10+, only a slight bit of water is in the Location. The Location is Barely Flooded, with the water up to somewhere between ankle and knee deep. There's no change to Location viability.

On a 7-9, the water level is increasing. It's Partially Flooded and up to between waist- and mid-chest deep. Should this result happen again to the same Location, the Location is Flooded. If a Role uses the Use the Pump Action, they can reduce the water (from Flooded to Partially Flooded to Barely Flooded) at the cost of 2 Injury once per Scene.

On a 6-, the water level is so high that the Location is Flooded. Any Scenes in this Location suffer a -1 on all rolls.

Boat Locations

Every Location on this ship is treated as though it were standard City Creation when it comes to providing Facts. However, unlike City Creation, no Persons are created. Additionally, each Location has Actions specific to it, that Roles can use while at that Location. Each Location's Actions can only be performed at the Location (unless otherwise specified).

The Deck

This Location includes the exterior of the hull and topside of the ship. When you are on the deck, you have the option to either fire the ship's deck-mounted harpoon gun (Gun 2 +loud) or observe the narwhals circling the ship, getting closer.

■ Attack the Narwhals

To fire the gun, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you hit a narwhal. If this is the seventh hit on it, it's dead, and you can collect its corpse for the Cargo Hold. Otherwise, the jerk is still out there, taunting you.

On a 7-9, you hit something. Roll a die. If even, you can maybe salvage it, and take it to the Cargo Hold. If odd, all you managed to do is pull a narwhal closer. The Director will tell you if they attack.

On a 6-, you either miss or the gun jams, whichever is least convenient for you. It will take the rest of the Scene to unjam it.

■ Watch the Narwhals

To watch the narwhals, don't roll anything, just tell the Director what you think those horned bastards are doing out there, just on the edge of your vision.

■ Ride the Narwhal

Against all better judgment, it is possible to swim alongside them. You are not Aquaman, so you cannot saddle one. To swim with the narwhal, dive into the water, and roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you very quickly realize this is a terrible idea, and will barely make it back to the boat in one piece. Tell the Director how you narrowly avoid certain death.

On a 7-9, this isn't the worst idea you've ever had, and you've only got a few scratches to show for it. Take 1 Injury and the Director will tell you how you earned it when you make it back to the boat.

On a 6-, this is awesome, and there's no problem at all. Tell the Director what you risked and lost to do this, then take 1 Injury. The Director will tell you how you earned it as well as TWO tags that will hamper you the rest of the Movie.

Do the Narwhals Attack?

The level of narwhal nastiness is entirely dependent on the Director. The narwhals can never do enough damage to sink the boat outright, but they can do enough damage narratively to make the Movie more interesting. Directors are encouraged to make sure that any narwhal damage leads to room flooding. If any Role wants to fight back, narwhal-to-Role damage is always 1 Injury, and it's the Director's choice as to whether it's a bite or a puncture wound.

The Engine Room

The engine is old, and frequently breaks down. Any Role can attempt to work on the engine either by Brute Force or by an Action they have. You can push the engine to go a little faster, or use the bilge pump to reduce flooding.

■ Brute Force

When you brute force the engine to work harder or better, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, whatever the hell you just did is working. The engine isn't making any strange noises or producing unexpected smoke. It looks like you'll make it back to Port if this keeps up.

On a 7-9, okay, it's only making slightly fewer of those noises, and the smoke seems to be a little less thick. However, the Director will tell you if you've hurt yourself to make this happen (take 1 Injury) OR what's going to happen at the end of the Scene to make things worse for everyone.

On a 6-, you really had no business going near that engine, you know that, right? Tell the Director the worst thing that could happen, then it's going to happen.

■ Give Her More

To tinker with the engine, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director what you did and how it's going to speed the ship up.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you how speeding the ship up just now has caused a problem elsewhere on board.

On a 6-, the engine has stopped. Totally stopped. It can be restarted at the beginning of the next Day or Night.

■ Use the Pump

When you want to pump water out of the ship, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, reduce the water level in up to 2 Locations by 1 (from Flooded to Partially Flooded to Barely Flooded).

On a 7-9, swap the water level in 1 Location with the water level in another Location. Live with the consequences.

On a 6-, choose 1: Take 1 Injury as the pump backfires and hurts you OR raise the water level in this Location by 1.

The Galley

This is the second largest space on the boat and contains a kitchen, eating area, chairs, and a few small tables. This space is **+CLUTTERED**.

■ Cramped Quarters

In any fight that occurs here, take a +1 to each Fight It Out roll if you're willing to raise the water level in the Location by 1 when the fight's over.

■ Feast or Famine

When you search the Galley for an item you need, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, find what you're looking for, and tell the Director how you're going to use it.

On a 7-9, find what you're looking for, but only after you cause a racket and make a mess that attracts attention.

On a 6-, you don't find what you're after, but you do find something that's going to make life harder for you.

Crew Quarters

The crew sleeps here. It used to be the cargo hold, but the Captain made the decision before this voyage started to make **+CRAMPED** quarters so that this voyage could make “the big score.” The Roles can decide if the narwhals were the score, or if they interrupted the hunt for the score.

■ Don't Let the Bedbugs Bite

When you attempt to get some sleep, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you can sleep through a Day or Night, and reduce your Injury by 1.

On a 7-9, your sleep is plagued by your worst nightmares, and you either oversleep or are woken by the worst thing possible happening.

On a 6-, there is literally no way you can sleep without dealing with either another Role or something in another Location. Better choose 1, then go take care of business.

■ Secret Stash

When you search the Location for something, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, you not only find what you're looking for, you find something unexpected as well.

On a 7-9, you don't find what you're after, but you find something that will get a Role you have a Hook with into trouble.

On a 6-, instead of finding what you want, you find things that neither you nor another Role in the Scene want discovered.

Cargo Hold

This is the largest area on the ship. A lot of other rooms sacrificed space in order to make sure there was plenty of room to hold the catch. It's also where the largest leaks have been temporarily patched.

■ Dump the Cargo

When you want to empty the cargo hold, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you not only jettison everything in the Cargo Hold (thus giving up your future paycheck), you also reduce the water level by 1 in every Location except The Helm and The Deck.

On a 7-9, you can jettison half of the cargo, but you attract unwanted narwhal attention in doing so.

On a 6-, the Cargo Hold doors stick. Increase the water level in this Location by 1, and take 1 Injury when the boat's temporary repairs start to breach.

■ Hiding Spot

When you need to conceal yourself or something from other Roles, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, no one's going to find it.

On a 7-9, someone's going to find it when least convenient for you.

On a 6-, not only are they going to find it when least convenient for you, but they'll use it to make things worse for everyone.

Captain's Quarters

The Captain has very clearly made this their space. It's got the nicest bed, the best linens, and plenty of supplies for one person to live as comfortably as possible sharing a single bathroom with five fishermen.

■ Lap of Luxury

When you take the one object you need from here, roll+Risk.

On a 10, congratulations, you're the proud owner of the object. Use it wisely.

On a 7-9, the only way you're getting the object out of the Location is by first dealing with this Role, and it's not going to go well for at least one of you.

On a 6-, you have two options: make a commotion that gets you and another Role into trouble OR make a commotion that only gets you into trouble.

■ Crow's Nest

Any Talk It Out rolls made here add a +1 if the Role doing the asking is willing to make a terrible choice the Director offers.

The Helm

From here, the ship's course can be plotted and laid in. It's the highest point on the ship. This is also where the Radio is.

■ Plot a Course

Whenever you lay in a course you think will get you back to Port faster, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, it seems like a good way to go.

On a 7-9, your plan is just crazy enough to work, but first you'll need to ask a Role you have a Hook with to see about getting the engine to cooperate.

On a 6-, everything looks fine! You're not at all worried that this new course puts a whole lot of danger between you and Port.

■ Hail a Vessel

Whenever you use the Radio to talk to someone, roll+Moxie.

On a 10, they completely hear everything you're saying and will do their best to help, but not until the next Day starts.

On a 7-9, the Radio cut out a little bit, but you're pretty sure your message came across. Help will arrive a Scene too late.

On a 6-, you're a thousand percent certain the radio was working just fine and that help is on the way. Tell the Director how you're going to prepare for help that isn't coming.

The Captain

This is your vessel. This is your crew. You've got the sea in your blood, and thanks to these narwhal, some of your blood in the sea.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

James, Kat, Jim, Paulomi, Pike, Sarah, Ron, or Meg

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0

- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're hoping the boat sinks and that everyone on board is lost so that your family can collect the insurance.
- You turned down a full-ride scholarship and dreams of medical school to take over the family business.
- Narwhals killed your family and you're out for vengeance.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To make the big score and give up this life that's wearing you down
- To be the only one who gets out alive
- To be remembered and loved by the crew

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A notepad and pencil
- ❑ A badly mangled photo of your family, the corners singed
- ❑ A cap your dad gave you the day you learned to sail
- ❑ A broken compass
- ❑ A stack of long overdue bills
- ❑ A flask of hooch you're always quick to drink from
- ❑ A sharp knife you won in a bar bet (Knife 1 +sharp)
- ❑ A bright yellow raincoat you can't stand wearing
- ❑ A love letter from back home that you can't bring yourself to answer
- ❑ A navigational chart you think is correct. Maybe it is, maybe it isn't.
- ❑ Your dad's lucky poker chip
- ❑ A flare gun you keep in the Captain's Quarters (Gun 2 +explosive +burning)
- ❑ A journal where you log all your personal failures and shame
- ❑ A picture of a family member who was lost at sea

HOOKS

Choose 2

- ❑ You had to convince this Role to take this job. You both agreed this would be your last voyage. One of you took that more seriously than the other.
- ❑ This Role lied to you about their motives to take this job, and you'll find that out before the end of the Movie.
- ❑ You've never suspected this Role of trying to kill you, but today's attempt might succeed.
- ❑ This Role once tried to lead the crew in a mutiny, and you've resented them ever since.
- ❑ This Role has been sleeping with your spouse or partner, and the guilt's been eating them up.
- ❑ This Role promised to marry you, but they broke your heart. Now you're both on this damned boat, and it's time to talk about the past.
- ❑ This Role has fished you out of too many dive bars and brothels to count, and you're pretty sure they're sick of saving you.
- ❑ You would give anything to keep this Role from turning into you one day.
- ❑ You became Captain to impress this Role, but they're not impressed. Ever.
- ❑ Before this voyage even started, you dreamt about this Role having "an accident" so that you could "comfort" their family back home.
- ❑ This Role is going to confess their Secret to you at the worst possible time before the Movie ends.
- ❑ You need to tell this Role how you feel about them. You can't keep a secret any longer.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Keep Her Going

Whenever you act to keep the crew and/or ship heading home, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, holy shit, you actually inspired a Role in this Scene to do something brave and heroic. Everyone in this Scene takes a +1 to all rolls until the Scene ends.

On a 7-9, what you do succeeds, and it's inspiring, but tell the Director what you lose, say, or give up, in order to make it work.

On a 6-, no, this isn't working, but you don't realize it yet. Either the Director will set up something to pay off later OR they'll tell you that everything's fine, and then another Role in this Scene will have to make a terrible choice the Captain doesn't know about.

□ Make It So

Whenever you give an order and expect it followed, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, your order is followed to the letter.

On a 7-9, your order is only going to get followed if you compromise on something or let the Director threaten someone or something for free.

On a 6-, Sure, your order is totally getting followed right up until the point where someone can defy you or double-cross you when least convenient for you.

□ Farewell and Adieu

Whenever you take a risk that could affect the crew and/or the ship, roll+Brains.

On a 10, somehow, some way, this works out. Tell the Director how you narrowly avoid danger.

On a 7-9, this is so crazy that it's only going to work if you put yourself in greater danger than everyone else. Go ahead and tell the Director what dangerous thing you're going to do, then do it just before the Scene ends.

On a 6-, your actions keep yourself safe at the expense of your crew or your ship.

□ Down with the Ship

Shrug off the first point of Injury suffered when using Use the Pump.

The Mate

Always a bridesmaid, never a bride. You're the Executive Officer. This means that you have to deal with all the complaints from the crew, and the outrageous commands of your captain.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Kat, James, Jim, Kara, Luanne, Gwen, Paulomi, or Korra

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk +0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +1, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You believe that the best kinds of heroes are the ones who die trying.
- The minute you return to Port, someone's going to break your thumbs if you don't have their money.
- You admire the narwhal for its grace and tenacity.

GOALS

Choose 1

- Take control of this ship by any means necessary
- Just make it home to see that one person
- Get more money than any fisherman has ever earned

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A small pistol you hide in your bunk (Gun 2 +loud)
- A brochure for the ship you're gonna buy when this is all over
- A love letter from the Captain's younger sister
- A small photo of you as a high school athlete
- A boy scout handbook
- A map your mom gave you before she died
- The engagement ring you'll use to propose the minute you get back to Port
- A small box of trashy romance novels
- A picture of your childhood pet
- A letter from your father apologizing for how he raised you that you read every night
- Half the trophy you received for winning a regatta (either Club 1 or Knife 1, your choice)
- A fly-fishing kit
- Your grandfather's bad weather gear that you inherited and treasure
- The religious text of your choice
- A broken harmonica

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You and this Role have a long history of falling in and out of love.
- You'd love to spend your days avoiding work and getting drunk, but this Role always seems to be in the way.
- This Role loves you, but you keep rejecting them. It's a game to you now, even though it breaks their heart every time.
- No matter what this Role says, promises, or offers, you'll never put them ahead of the chance of becoming Captain one day.
- This Role ratted you out when you tried to arrange a mutiny. They deserve payback.
- This Role keeps dropping hints about your Secret, and you're desperate to shut them up.
- You keep daydreaming about what life would be like if you admitted your feelings for this Role.
- A long time ago, you almost killed this Role. They don't know it was you, but you have to tell them before the end of this Movie.
- Nothing is more important than exposing this Role, the asshole.
- You married this Role in international waters one drunken night, and you don't know how to tell them you weren't serious.
- Life would be so much easier if this Role would just shut up and let you do what you wanted.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Ahead Full

When you give an order that usurps the Captain's plans, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, a Role in the Scene follows it to the letter, even if you don't want them to.

On a 7-9, a Role will follow your order, but first you're going to have to do something you don't want to with a Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, if you want anything done, you're going to have to do it yourself.

□ Jolly Roger

Instead of using Hail a Vessel, use this Action instead and roll+Brains.

On a 10, they swear they'll come out to help you, and you believe them. Tell the crew immediately.

On a 7-9, they've heard about your situation, and the only way you'll get their help is if you say yes to whatever terrible deal they offer. The help might arrive in time.

On a 6-, there's no one coming, and you're going to have to tell the crew immediately.

□ I Got a Bucket

You only suffer 1 Injury when using Use the Pump.

□ Land Ho

Whenever you Plot a Course and can brag to another Role about it, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, if you then ask them to do something for you, they'll take a +1 to their next roll when they do it.

On a 7-9, you are one-hundred-percent certain that your course is optimal, except it isn't, but you won't find that out until the worst possible time. Also, the other Role is going to tell the rest of the crew about it.

On a 6-, there is no way this course is going to work without you convincing a Role you have a Hook with to either go down to the Engine Room or do something they are absolutely opposed to doing.

The Salt

You've lost track of the number of times you've been out to sea. Those rolling waves and stormy nights are far more your home than any apartment you can barely afford. You like it out here. Things make sense out here. And in all your years, never have you seen narwhal do this.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Jim, Paulomi, Ludmilla, Alex, Kareem, Kat, James, or Ace

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +0, Moxie +0, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie +2, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +0

Body
[]

Moxie
[]

Risk
[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You are most looking forward to getting back to Port and watching your favorite soap opera.
- You don't want to survive, so you'll destroy the Radio at your first possible convenience.
- You killed a War Vet in a bar fight and assumed their identity years ago.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To kill these narwhals at all costs
- To keep others from making the same mistakes you have
- To go down with the ship

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A gaff hook you always carry (Knife 1 +sharp)
- A photo of the daughter you've been searching for
- An unpaid bill from the lawyer who botched your divorce
- A broken mirror (Knife 1)
- At least one eye patch
- The note your parents left you at the orphanage
- Bullets for a gun you pawned the last time you were in Port
- A concertina
- A little black book of phone numbers of former flings, long out of date
- A wallet you took from a guy you killed in a bar fight
- A folding army shovel (Club 2 +messy)
- Your grandfather's peg leg (Club 2 +heavy)
- A stack of money you hide in your bunk and count every night
- A patch from your brother's motorcycle gang
- A sketchbook, you're into landscapes right now

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You promised someone back home that you'd kill this Role before the end of the Movie.
- This Role has promised to cut you in on a big score if you make sure nothing happens to them.
- You just want this Role to know how you feel about them. That's all you've ever wanted.
- This Role deserves a punch in the mouth, a kick in the ass, or worse. And that's just for starters.
- This Role routinely cheats you out of money, and you're sick of it.
- This Role wastes far too much time trying to be your conscience. Today you make them shut up.
- You need to redeem yourself in the eyes of this Role, no matter what.
- Back in Port, you regularly impersonate this Role so that you can get laid or get free drinks. They don't know, but you're starting to feel bad about it.
- This Role is the only person on board who knows that you nearly died thanks to a tragic narwhal encounter as a child.
- You promised to love this Role forever, but it looks like you're going to have to break that promise before the end of this Movie.
- You keep raiding this Role's bunk and found something shocking.
- This Role has been trying to pick a fight for days now. Today's a good day to oblige them.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Got Me Sea Legs

Shrug off the first two points of Injury you suffer in the Movie.

❑ Rough and Ready

Once per Act, you can re-roll any roll you make so long as you can tell the Director how life at sea taught you a valuable lesson.

❑ **Little Brown Eel**

Treat any Flooded location as Partially Flooded so long as you're not Injured.

❑ **Smile, You Son of a Bitch**

Add +1 to any Attack the Narwhals or Fight It Out Actions.

The Rookie

You picked a hell of a time to come on board, kid. This is your first voyage. You've got your reasons to be out here, sure, but you're as green as they come.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Paulomi, James, Pratt, Kat, Stewart, Nails,
Jim, New Guy, or Hot Stuff

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie +1, Risk -2
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +0

- Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie -1, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You regret every second of this voyage.
- You can't swim.
- You've made a deal to sell the cargo for double the price to someone else, if you get home alive.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To overcome your worst fear, whatever that might be
- To be the lone survivor from this voyage
- To have your own boat one day, where everyone is nice and works together without complaint

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A switchblade your sister gave you (Knife 1 +sharp)
- A clean pair of pants
- A scrap of clothing the last person you loved gave you that one night
- Your father's medal from the war
- Sketches of the tattoo you're going to get back in Port
- A love letter you've started writing to the Salt's daughter
- Your kid sister's diary, it's all you have left of her since the accident
- A hat you stole before you came aboard
- The novel you've been writing late at night
- A letter from another Captain to jump ship and make "serious money"
- A risqué picture of the girl you've had a crush on for years that you keep in your bunk
- Waterproof matches
- One outfit you wear to pass yourself off as another gender
- A few photos you took from the early days of your voyage
- An empty wine bottle that you keep as the last memento from the one who got away

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You joined this crew because this Role made a promise they have zero intentions of keeping.
- This Role forced you to join this crew under threat of you disappointing your family back home.
- You could see yourself kicking this Role overboard for all the shit they put you through.
- This Role is related to you, and only they know about it.
- This Role has always refused to rekindle your relationship, until today.
- You are going to have to do something pretty big to make this Role aware of how you feel about them.
- You cannot let this Role draw another breath on this goddamned boat.
- You owe this Role because they stood up for you when no one else would.
- This Role holds an event in your past over your head, and you wish they'd let it go.
- You haven't told this Role that you want to marry their sibling back home yet, and you hope they don't find out.
- This Role taught you everything you know, and you're eager to learn more, no matter how irritating that may be.
- You agreed to help this Role take over the ship in exchange for your share of the haul and a favor you'll be asked for by the end of this Movie.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ New Guy

Whenever you are the butt of someone's jokes, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you can laugh along with it. Good joke, guys.

On a 7-9, it stopped being funny about five jokes ago, and you're going to have to confront a Role about it. It's going to get messy, but you don't care.

On a 6-, they just made your list. Your murderin' list.

□ Shovel Chum

When you follow an order without question, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, this is absolutely the best thing you could be doing right now. It's important, and you gotta follow orders.

On a 7-9, you have a better idea. Tell the Director what you do instead, and then confide in one Role about what you've done.

On a 6-, screw the order, you know exactly what to do. The problem is that you'll not only put yourself in harm's way (the Director can threaten or harm someone/something for free) but risk someone else in the Scene as well.

□ Little Buddy

Take a -1 to any Help Out rolls you make with the Captain or Salt.

□ Cage in the Water

Whenever someone risks your life instead of their own, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, if you suffer any Injury as a result of what happens, reduce it by 1.

On a 7-9, if you suffer any Injury as a result of what happens, reduce it by 1, and the Director will tell you how what you've done leads to someone else in the Scene getting injured as well (they'll take 1 Injury).

On a 6-, any Injury you suffer also includes at least 1 tag that affects you for the remainder of the Movie.

The Drifter

You never stay in one place too long. You've got your reasons. You haven't held a steady job in years, and you're as surprised as anyone about how well this is going. Maybe the sea is where you're supposed to have been this entire time. Have you thought about being Captain? They do get the biggest shares...

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

James, Lexi, Noah, Dean, Kat, Jim, Paulomi, or Tommy

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie +2, Risk -2
- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

SECRETS

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

Choose 1

- You used to be a Dirty Cop. You went clean, and then got out of the City before the mob found you.
- You're an escaped convict posing as the twin sibling of a beloved guard you murdered.
- The only way your family is taking you back is if you get these narwhal before they get you.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To get back in touch with your family
- To help someone improve their life
- To make so much money you can go back to the farm

BELONGINGS

Choose 3

- A flask of hooch you're always quick to drink from
- A picture of your childhood best friend
- A picture of your son, taken that one fateful day
- A letter from a family member asking where you've gone
- A stack of job applications for different jobs when you get back to Port
- One good silk necktie
- A sharp knife you won in a poker game (Knife 1 +sharp +fancy)
- A large revolver you hide in the Galley (Gun 2 +loud +heavy)
- A small prybar you used to pop open the door to the Helm when the Captain or Mate locks it
- A footlocker filled with photos of kittens
- The wedding ring your spouse threw in your face the day you walked out
- A single bar napkin with the address a Private Eye gave you for your spouse and their new family
- A winning lottery ticket you can't bring yourself to cash in
- A length of rope you keep around 'for emergencies'

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role knows why you left your family, and you'll do anything to keep them from exposing the truth.
- You confide in this Role, even though you know you shouldn't.
- This Role wants you to forget your past and think about the future they're offering you. It'll just start with you doing them a "small" favor.
- This Role is forever denying all your offers of help, so it looks like you'll have to get more forceful about it.
- You can't believe this Role manages to not die on a daily basis, and you're starting to wonder what it would take for them to have an accident.
- Given the right circumstances, this Role is who you want to spend your life with, should you get off this boat alive.
- You've been worried this Role has nefarious plans for this voyage, and you're going to put a stop to them, somehow.
- You're related to this Role, and that's why you're on this voyage.
- You'll keep this Role safe even at the cost of your own life, it's what their mother made you promise to do.
- This Role deserves more respect than you've been giving them, and today you go about changing that.
- This Role never passes up a chance to tell you what you're doing wrong.
- You are willing to do anything to get this Role to sign over their share of the cargo to you.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Repair

When you attempt to fix the Engine or Radio should it break, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, it's working, and way better than before. It will stay in this condition for 2 Scenes.

On a 7-9, it's working and will stay in this condition for 1 more Scene after this.

On a 6-, you just made everything worse. The Director will tell you how you have to deal with a Role you have a Hook with in order to even begin straightening this out.

□ Been All Around the World

Add +1 to any Talk It Out roll you make, provided you talk about some place and some event that occurred in your past.

□ Amity Means Friendship

When someone rolls Talk It Out in a Scene you're in, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you keep your mouth shut and don't make anything worse.

On a 7-9, you open your mouth and suggest something that either leads to another Role having to do something they won't like, or it leads to something another Role may barely survive.

On a 6-, you can't help yourself and say the worst thing possible, exposing not only a Role but also yourself to danger. Tell the Director what happens.

□ Crack Shot

Add +1 to any Attack the Narwhals roll.

The Loose Cannon

Predictable isn't a word a lot of people use to describe you. You're pretty sure that's synonymous with "ordinary" or "boring" or "passive", so ever since you've come aboard, you've been living life to the fullest, taking whatever risks you can, and generally pushing everything to its absolute limit. Because what's the point of life if you're not going to do it full throttle?

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Kat, Paulomi, Elvira, Riggs, Betsy, Don, James, or Jim

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk -2
- Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You don't plan to make it off the boat alive. You never plan to make it out alive.
- You used to be a very popular musician a few years ago. Now you're hiding from that life.
- You don't need money at all, you're the child of wealthy Socialite parents.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To take someone else out before they take you out
- To kill these narwhal and claim the horns
- To become Mate under a different Captain

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A broken knife (Knife 1 +dull) you stole from a bar
- An army jacket you found at a bus stop
- A case of cheap wine you hide in your footlocker
- A bullet you're saving "just in case"
- A newspaper clipping about a bus crash in your hometown
- A flask of hooch you're always quick to drink from
- A shiv you hone in your spare time (Knife 1 +sharp +improvised)
- A trenchcoat (+it billows)
- A manicure set
- A three-month supply of hair pomade
- A bar tab waiting for you back in Port
- The only known picture of you smiling
- A stack of napkins with different phone numbers written on them
- The wristwatch you took from a guy passed out at a bar

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You could have been this Role, if only one moment in time had gone a different way.
- Is there anything or anyone more frustrating than this Role?
- Before this Movie is over, this Role is going to regret ever breaking their promise to you.
- This Role has no idea that back home, you've been sending their spouse money for the baby that's yours.
- This Role has been running up a bar tab in Port under your name, and you'll find out about it before the end of the Movie.
- No, you wouldn't mind at all if this Role drowned. In fact, you'd help.
- You and this Role are going to set the record straight today, even if it has to get messy.
- You promised this Role that the haul would be ten times bigger than it is, and now they want an explanation.
- You blame more than half of your problems on this Role.
- This Role treats you like family, which is why it hurts so bad when you disappoint them regularly.
- You and this Role have big dreams of a future together, if you both get out of here alive.
- This Role has loved you for a long time, and you've had no idea until today.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Sacrifice

When someone enters a Flooded location, you can rescue them, provided you tell the Director what you're risking and ultimately giving up to save them.

❑ One in Every Port

When you need to improvise a solution, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, your flash of genius pays off. Tell the Director how you solve the problem.

On a 7-9, okay smart guy, it looks like it'll work, for now. The Director will tell you how the solution momentarily works out for the rest of this Scene.

On a 6-, good plan hot shot, the Director will tell you how things just got worse for everyone in this Scene.

□ Finish the Fight

Once per Act, re-roll any Attack the Narwhals roll.

□ Blowhole

Instead of Talk It Out, use this Action instead and roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you've got a way with words. Someone's gonna do you a favor because of it, even if you don't want them to.

On a 7-9, someone in this Scene will talk to a Role you have a Hook with for you, especially if you don't want them to.

On a 6-, what could possibly go wrong? Tell the Director how the only way to resolve this problem is to have at least 1 Scene with a Role you have a Hook with.

How to Play Narwhal

This Featurette proceeds through a fixed set of Days and Nights, broken up by Flashbacks and Meanwhiles. The intention is to keep the Movie on edge, and therefore keep the Roles on edge.

DAY ONE

This is not the first day of the voyage, but rather the first day after the narwhal attacks. The relationships between Roles, however frayed, however tenuous, are already in progress, and are building towards whatever their conclusions might be.

NIGHT ONE

The tension should increase here, with the threat of more narwhal attacks or boat problems starting to present themselves over the course of the night.

DAY TWO

This is a great time to introduce or reinforce the notion that the only way to get through this is to get back to Port. This is the halfway point of the Movie, and most often, the halfway point to whatever machinations the Roles may be developing.

NIGHT TWO

This is often where plans start to happen, as well as start to unravel. This is the most common moment for a Director to introduce another narwhal attack, or push a Role to make a terrible or selfish decision.

DAY THREE

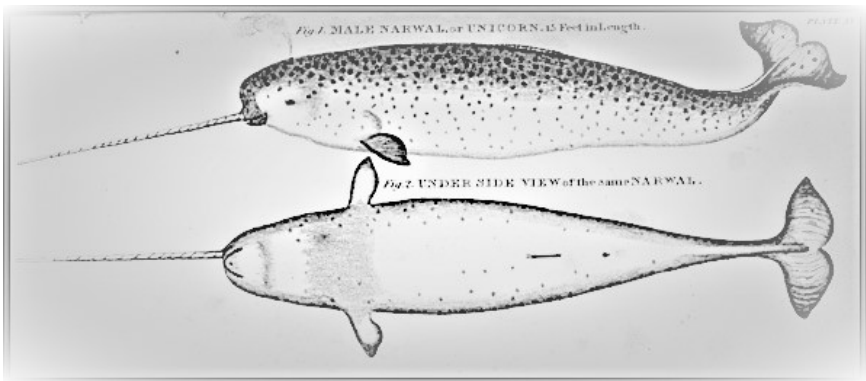
If there was ever a time for a climax, this is it. This would also be one of the least convenient moments for one more round of engine trouble, flooding, or narwhal attacks.

NIGHT THREE

The last night before the ship and any survivors will reach Port on what would be the start of Day Four, unless other plans or disasters have taken precedence.

THE PORT MONTAGE

Give any survivors an opportunity to narrate what happens when they make it back to Port, for good or ill.







Featurette: The Prom

It's the Prom. And Prom Weekend. For so many young adults, this weekend is the pinnacle of social and emotional plans and dreams. It's a combination of rented outfits and expectations and emotional expression that culminate in consequences and lasting memories that mark or scar people for the rest of their lives.

In the Prom, the Movie is much more intimate, much more emotional and volatile, since instead of the traditional Roles, this is the Movie of teens on the cusp of calamity and chaos, maturity and moving on, and decisions that feel monumental and irrevocable.

It is strongly encouraged that all players make clear the subject material they are and aren't comfortable with to avoid this Featurette becoming a source of problems or upset. No player should be forced into something uncomfortable for the sake of "appropriate drama", and everyone should have the ability to speak up and out for themselves.

Welcome to Prom Night

What You Need to Know

Six teenagers. Loads of emotion. A little alcohol. A few reduced boundaries and inhibitions.

In this Featurette, the Roles are those of six teenagers who have gotten together for Prom Weekend. The Movie has 4 fixed Locations – the Prom, the Limo, the Hotel, the Beach – and 2 Locations the Roles will provide. Facts and Persons for all 6 are created as per usual. Additional Locations can be added as needed for the sake of the narrative.

THE SHORT VERSION

The Prom. It's a rite of passage for so many teenagers. It's a chance for a great party with friends on the eve of new horizons. It's often a clash of emotions and sexuality. It's a chance to wear fancy clothes then ditch school the next day. It's a monumental tipping point for a lot of lives. Which is why this weekend is going to be one you won't ever forget.

Adulthood looms, whether in college or not, whether on a path that will carry them for the next fifty years or not, and prom weekend is one of the last times a young adult has a foot in both worlds – the years of school and friends and the years ahead of more school, jobs, marriages, kids, and getting older.

The Prom Featurette tells the story of six kids and their fateful decisions during the three-day weekend rich with expectations, hopes, and promises. It's a weekend that will irrevocably change and define their lives. It's where six kids shape their futures.

This Featurette is noir at its most raw, with the blurring of so many lines and expectations while also being potentially one of the more brutal and affecting Featurettes. Roles in The Prom are tailored to the best and worst of the youthful tropes players may expect in a Featurette like this while making sure each has the potential for a dramatic and enjoyable arc.

THINGS TO CHANGE FROM TRADITIONAL NOIR WORLD

Use only the 6 Prom Roles.

Four of the 6 Locations are pre-determined and include Persons. The remaining 2 Locations (and their Persons) will be created by the Roles. All Locations receive Facts as per usual City Creation.

Each Scene takes place at a specific time (Day 1, Night 1, Day 2, etc.) unless it is a Flashback.

The Movie ends when:

- The Movie has run for 3 Days and 3 Nights, or 3 Acts, whichever comes first.
- All Roles are dead.
- After Night 3 or 3 Acts, Prom Weekend is over.

The Locations

Every Location in this Featurette is treated as though it were standard City Creation when it comes to providing Facts. The Locations are as follows, and are always visited in this order:

The Limo (Part 1)

The Limo picks all Roles up at the home of one Role in the early evening. Every Role is dressed and ready for the Prom by the end of the Scene. It's up to each Role to describe how they arrive to the home, and whether they're already ready or not or just waiting for the Limo. Possible Persons who might be involved include the Driver, a Parent, or other friends.

Going to Dinner

One Role has arranged for the whole group to have dinner at a fancy restaurant. Naming the restaurant, deciding on what kind of restaurant it is, and what people eat and drink is decided as per usual City Creation rules. Possible Persons include the Waiter, the Maitre'd, the Hostess, or anyone associated with working in the restaurant.

The Limo (Part 2)

Once Dinner is complete, everyone gets back in the Limo for the ride to the Prom itself.

The Driver

The Limo Driver is a recurring Person in this Movie, so yes, they have a Secret. However, unlike most Persons, the Driver only has 2 Health instead of the standard 3.

At the Prom

The Limo arrives at the Prom, but it waits out front for the duration of the event. The event itself is in a large space and is themed. Possible Persons include other attendees, teachers, the Chaperone, the Prom Planner, or someone associated with the venue.

The Limo (Part 3)

Once the Prom is over, everyone's back in the Limo for the ride to the "after party", held at the Hotel, which is near or at The Beach.

The Hotel

The Hotel, where the booze, sex, and drugs can collide with expectations and pressures. For some this will be the most anticipated part of the night, and for others the most dreaded. What happens here will be carried forever by the Roles, in both pleasant and haunting memories. Possible Persons include hotel desk staff, Housekeeping, and various people living in and around the hotel.

The quality of the hotel is entirely up to the Roles. It can be five-star luxury, a half-star flophouse, or anywhere in between.

The Beach

The waves and sand add a weight to the weekend. Is it a vacation? A reminder of younger, better days?

The Next Day

The Featurette ends with a montage of the Monday morning after everything is said and done, and people have resumed their "lives". Memories may still be raw, life may never feel the same.

The One Who Wont Move On

These are your glory days, why let them go?

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Brad, Jennifer, Billie, Ashton, Kory, or Jessie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0

- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You abuse steroids.
- You cheated on all the tests and papers necessary for the “perfect” future everyone praises you for.
- You’re going to sell the family business the first chance you get.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To make sure no one forgets you, no matter what
- To have “an epic time”
- To stand up to authority

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- Barely enough pocket change and a pack of gum
- A backpack full of condoms, lube, and porn
- A backpack full of half-full liquor you stole from your parents
- A clutch purse with the tags still on, and a single condom inside
- Some torn-out pages of a yearbook
- A small gun someone bought you (Gun 2 +concealable +3 bullets)
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were kids
- A small knife (Knife 1 +tiny)
- A scrap of paper with the number of an escort service on it
- A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- An intimate picture of your ex
- A pair of underwear that aren't yours that you sort of forgot you had
- A bag full of drugs

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You and this Role have been best friends for as long as you can remember. You are terrified of having to say goodbye to them this weekend without admitting how you feel about them.
- This Role is your date this weekend. You want to make sure at least one of you has a good time.
- You broke up with this Role a few months ago, but they're still your date for the weekend. You realize this is going to get awkward in a hurry .
- This Role is going to break your heart before the weekend is over.
- You're going to break this Role's heart before the weekend is over.
- This Role is related to you, and only they know about it.
- You keep this Role around so that you can take advantage of their stuff regularly.
- You're only friends with this Role because you believe they make you look better to other people.
- Before the weekend is over, you're going to tell this Role how you feel, and the response may not be what you're expecting.
- This Role is the last holdout for signing your yearbook with something meaningful, and you should ask them why.
- Despite this Role's constant urging, you're just not ready to make plans for the future, and you're sick of them pushing you.
- No one knows you've changed your entire future plans just to spend more time with this Role.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Broken Heroes

Whenever you reference the past in a way you think is fond or positive, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, it's a fond moment. Tell the Director how you're using that memory to give you or another Role in the Scene a +1 to a roll in this Scene or their next.

On a 7-9, it's a bittersweet moment. Tell the Director what the memory is, and they'll tell you how another Person or Role remembers it differently, and not for the better.

On a 6-, it's a terrible memory. Tell the Director how thinking about it affects you, then take a -1 to your next roll.

❑ Rewind

Whenever you reference the past in a negative way, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, yeah, that sucked. But tell the Director how you're better for getting through that.

On a 7-9, not only was it awful for you, it was awful for a Role you have a Hook with. Tell the Director how you both live with the memory, and how it's going to make things more difficult for you in this Scene.

On a 6-, the past is coming back to haunt you. The Director will tell you how harm from your past is continuing to hurt you.

❑ One Last Time

When you and a Role you have a Hook with have a serious talk, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director how it makes the current Scene better.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you how things are only going to get better by you putting another Role in harm's way.

On a 6-, tell the Director how the only way anyone gets out of this is by hurting and being hurt. Choose either yourself or the other Role, and the Director will tell you what you both need to do before the end of the Movie in order to not make things worse.

❑ Great at One Thing

Add a +1 to any Motivation (Brains, Moxie, or Risk).

The One Who Can't Wait to Move On

Really, these are the glory days? God, you've been over them for what feels like a lifetime already.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Jessica, Alicia, Tommy, Ash, Wen, or Carl

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0

- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- Your car is packed and you're ready to leave this town the minute this weekend is over.
- You've discovered you're about to be a parent for the first time.
- You're leaving town without actually having enough credits to graduate.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To leave no trace of yourself behind
- To not be the only one leaving
- To prove how stupid everyone else is

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A notepad and pencil
- ❑ A wallet full of false IDs, your mom's credit card, and plenty of large bills
- ❑ A gym bag full of clothes you'd prefer to party in
- ❑ A backpack full of condoms, lube, and porn
- ❑ A clutch purse full of expensive makeup you either borrowed or stole
- ❑ A clutch purse full of wrinkled cash
- ❑ A clutch purse with the tags still on, and a single condom inside
- ❑ An unfinished job application you're trying to keep hidden
- ❑ An unopened piece of mail from your dream university
- ❑ A memento from a first date
- ❑ Your father's credit card that may be fraudulent
- ❑ An unpaid speeding ticket you keep in a purse or wallet
- ❑ A small knife (Knife 1 +tiny)
- ❑ A scrap of paper with the number of an escort service on it
- ❑ Pepper spray (Gun 2 +burning eyes +ouch)
- ❑ A library book you stole
- ❑ An engagement ring
- ❑ Promises you never worry about having to keep

HOOKS

Choose 2

- ❑ This Role is desperate to make you stay.
- ❑ You will do everything in your power to not leave this Role behind.
- ❑ You've had a crush on this Role for a long time, and you wouldn't feel right about leaving without talking to them about it.
- ❑ You want to make sure this Roles knows exactly how much you hate them before the weekend is over.
- ❑ You're desperate to try and keep this Role from revealing your Secret. You don't know that they're going to do it anyway.
- ❑ This Role owes you big for something you're tired of taking credit for.
- ❑ This Role is going to do something stupid to convince you to stay.
- ❑ This Role is your roommate for the weekend, and you don't plan on letting them know any of what you're up to.
- ❑ You feel guilty that your attitude is robbing this Role of the joy and fun of the weekend.
- ❑ This Role is going to get you into serious trouble this weekend.
- ❑ Only this Role knows that you've had a serious relationship with a teacher for the last 2 years.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Waiting for This Day

Whenever you tell the Director how you prepared for something to happen, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, yeah, what you thought would happen did happen. Tell the Director how you rub it in another Role's face.

On a 7-9, it happened like you thought it would, but the Director will tell you how something you're unaware of will make the rest of this Scene very difficult for you.

On a 6-, you were right, except you didn't account for having to deal with something. The Director can offer a terrible choice or harm someone in this Scene for free.

□ Blow This Pop Stand

Whenever you can talk about how you can't wait to move on, take a +1 to one roll you make in this Scene.

□ They're beneath You

When a Role you have a Hook with rolls Talk It Out with you, choose 1:

- *Before the end of the conversation, negatively involve another Role you have a Hook with.*
- *Before the end of the conversation, positively involve another Role you have a Hook with.*
- *Before the end of the conversation, make the Role feel as guilty and as awkward as possible.*

□ Dine and Dash

Whenever you get a chance to make an exit, roll.

On evens, it makes a good impression.

On odds, tell the Director how something you said or did (or forgot to say or do) is going to blow up in your face before the end of the Movie.

The One with Everything to Lose

You can't step a toe out of line, or can you? Just trying to get through the day without being too embarrassed.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Terry, Jackie, Joey, Brie, Curtis, Marina, or Sophia

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0

- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've been lying about who your parents are for years.
- You've got a worsening shoplifting habit.
- You're an abuse survivor.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To make it so big, you can rub it in everyone's face
- To do something so no one forgets you
- To have at least one moment you'll never forget

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A disorganized wallet or purse
- ❑ A wallet full of false IDs, your mom's credit card, and plenty of large bills
- ❑ A backpack full of half-full liquor you stole from your parents
- ❑ A clutch purse full of expensive makeup you either borrowed or stole
- ❑ A clutch purse full of wrinkled cash earned at the night job no one knows you have
- ❑ A clutch purse with the tags still on, and a single condom inside
- ❑ A small gun someone bought you (Gun 2 +concealable +only 3 bullets)
- ❑ Your father's credit card that may be fraudulent
- ❑ An unpaid speeding ticket you keep in a purse or wallet
- ❑ A scrap of paper with the number of an escort service on it
- ❑ A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- ❑ An intimate picture of your ex
- ❑ A bag full of drugs
- ❑ An engagement ring
- ❑ Promises you never worry about having to keep

HOOKS

Choose 2

- ❑ You've had major feelings for this Role for years, and dammit, you're going to spend the weekend letting them know it.
- ❑ You and this Role are going to be roommates this weekend, and only you see it as the best thing ever. Best. Thing. Ever.
- ❑ This Role is secretly sick of how you keep talking about what you're going to do in the future and hopes you fail.
- ❑ You're in an on-going relationship with this Role, and this weekend is going to test it.
- ❑ This Role is tired of seeing you succeed at everything and is actively trying to sabotage your weekend.
- ❑ This Role is going to ask you to do something stupid.
- ❑ This Role is related to you, and clearly they're the favorite sibling.
- ❑ This Role is your competition and you can't let them win ANYTHING.
- ❑ This Role knows something that will jeopardize your future, and you'll do anything to stop them from spreading it around.
- ❑ This Role has stolen something from you, and you're going to realize it when it's needed the most.
- ❑ This Role is a charity case, so you've gone out of your way to set up a perfect weekend for them... too bad it's all going to backfire for you both.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ The Smart Play

Whenever you try to convince another Role to do something they don't want to do, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, not only will they do it, they'll get another Role involved and do something even more big, stupid, or dangerous.

On a 7-9, they'll do it, but only if you tell a Role you have a Hook with something you don't want to.

On a 6-, sure they'll do it, but you have to go first.

□ Like a Fox

Whenever a Role pressures you to do something you don't want to do, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, stand firm and tell the Director how you make a counteroffer.

On a 7-9, tell the Director how you fail to negotiate your way out, and then ask a Role you have a Hook with to help you.

On a 6-, cave and live with the consequences.

□ Save the Day

Whenever you do something that someone isn't expecting, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you've made an unexpected good impression with another Role.

On a 7-9, you don't inspire others, but tell the Director how you feel about what you've done, then take a +1 to your next roll in this Scene.

On a 6-, your action provokes either an argument or an actual fight in this or the next Scene.

□ No Risk, No Reward

Whenever you roll+Risk, take -1. Anytime another Roll rolls+Risk and you're involved, take +1.

The One with Nothing to Lose

Who cares? What really matters anyway? This is all bullshit. It's a lame excuse for these idiots to drink beer and rub up against each other in hopes of distracting themselves from the pathetic emptiness of their meaningless consumer-driven lives.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Garth, Tim, Angie, Laura, Cyrus, Alfie, or Debbie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body
[]

Moxie
[]

Risk
[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're addicted to something that is getting harder and harder to hide.
- You write a lot of very bad poetry under a very popular pen name.
- You've been saving money to adopt a child.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To burn this whole motherfucker down
- To make someone admit their true feelings
- To screw someone over while you get what you want

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A pocket knife (Knife 1 +useful)
- A gym bag full of clothes you'd prefer to party in
- A clutch purse with the tags still on, and a single condom inside
- An unfinished job application you're trying to keep hidden
- An unopened piece of mail from your dream university
- Your father's credit card that may be fraudulent
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were kids
- A flask of homemade wine
- A scrap of paper with the number of an escort service on it
- A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- An intimate picture of your ex
- A pair of underwear that aren't yours that you sort of forgot you had
- Pepper spray (Gun 2 +burning eyes +ouch)
- A bag full of drugs

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role wants to save you, but you keep hurting them in the worst way possible in order to try and push them away.
- You are secretly in love with this Role and will take the fall for something they'll do in order to protect them.
- You see this Role as the sibling you always wanted.
- This Role let you take the fall for something they did, and this weekend you'll have your revenge.
- This Role is in love with you, and you have no idea.
- This Role thinks they're better than you, and you're going to knock them down a few pegs.
- You have a deep need to confess terrible things to this Role.
- This Role is going to get you in so much trouble this weekend, and you're looking forward to it.
- You spend a lot of time making sure this Role doesn't get into trouble, and no one else knows it.
- This Role is your roommate this weekend, and it seems like a perfect time to ruin their life.
- You will spend your last dollar making sure this Role doesn't turn out anything like you.
- You and this Role are meant to be together except they don't know it yet, but you'll show 'em.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Get the Horns

Whenever you disrespect authority, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you change someone's mind.

On a 7-9, the Director can set up something to pay off later after you partially change someone's mind.

On a 6-, not only did you not change anyone's mind, you're about to get into a fight.

□ Protected Pedestal

When you take advantage of your status or position for personal advantage, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, you get what you want but first, you (choose 1):

- *Gain information that will help you later*
- *Hear about an opportunity that will benefit you later.*

On a 7-9, you will get what you want AFTER you put a Role you have a Hook with into harm's way.

On a 6-, you get nothing except trouble, and the Director will tell you what it is.

❑ Wasn't Always Like This

When you try and weasel your way out of something you don't want to do, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you get out of it immediately. Let it be someone else's problem.

On a 7-9, you're only getting out of it when you make it someone else's problem. Dump it in their lap.

On a 6-, it's not just your problem to handle. Involve a Role you have a Hook with, and good luck.

❑ Lucky Cockroach

Shrug off the first point of Injury you receive.

The One Who Doesn't Belong

How the hell did you end up here? You have no place being here, not with these people.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

John, Meg, Jason, Penn, Lyndsay, or Bill

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You have a warrant out for your arrest.
- You aren't sure if you want to go to college.
- You really love dinosaurs, like, REALLY love them.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To fall in love the way you see in the movies
- To earn someone's respect
- To get over something you're afraid of

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A notepad and pencil
- ❑ A backpack full of condoms, lube, and porn
- ❑ A gym bag full of cheap beers you bought with a fake ID
- ❑ A clutch purse full of expensive makeup you either borrowed or stole
- ❑ A clutch purse full of wrinkled cash
- ❑ An unfinished job application you're trying to keep hidden
- ❑ A travel-sized tube of toothpaste, along with a folding toothbrush
- ❑ Your father's credit card that may be fraudulent
- ❑ A small knife (Knife 1 +tiny)
- ❑ A scrap of paper with the number of an escort service on it
- ❑ An intimate picture of your ex
- ❑ Pepper spray (Gun 2 +burning eyes +ouch)
- ❑ A lighter
- ❑ Promises you never worry about having to keep

HOOKS

Choose 2

- ❑ The only reason you're here tonight is because this Role has you confused with someone else, and you've never corrected them.
- ❑ You promised this Role's parents that you'd keep them out of trouble, but they're not making it easy.
- ❑ This might be your only chance to tell this Role how you feel about them.
- ❑ You and this Role share a secret about something that happened last year, and you're not handling it well.
- ❑ This Role never forgave you for something that's really your fault.
- ❑ You blame this Role for ruining something important to you that they've long since forgotten about.
- ❑ You've spent too long living in this Role's shadow, and by the end of the Movie you'll make them pay for keeping you down.
- ❑ By the end of this Movie, this Role is going to know exactly how you feel, even if it gets messy.
- ❑ This Role has been planning to ruin you for a long time now, and tonight you suspect they're putting that plan into motion.
- ❑ You just want to make this Role happy, and you'll do everything you can to see that happen.
- ❑ This Role is always ready to fight you, and you never back down.
- ❑ Tonight, you and this Role confess your feelings to each other. Except they're going to break your heart.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Never Gonna Give You Up

Whenever you act to prevent someone from getting into trouble, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you change the situation for the better.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you what you have to do to put the blame on you and off the other person. Then do it.

On a 6-, not only do you not keep the other person out of trouble, you get lumped in with them. The Director will explain and then let you deal with the consequences.

❑ I Don't Know What to Do

When you need to get a Role's attention in a Scene, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director what you do to get their attention in a positive way.

On a 7-9, the Director will offer you a hard choice OR make you risk something in order to get more than one Role's attention in a negative way.

On a 6-, everyone in a Scene is totally paying attention to you, and it's totally not in a good way.

□ Um...

Whenever you try to stop someone from doing something you think is stupid, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, you've stopped something terrible from happening.

On a 7-9, the only way you're stopping anything is to get more involved in it, to an uncomfortable degree.

On a 6-, there's no stopping this train to terribletown. Tell the Director how the Scene (choose 1):

- *Gets worse for you and another Role in this Scene.*
- *Get dangerous for you and another Role in this Scene.*
- *Gets dangerous for you and another Role in a later Scene.*

□ Like You're Invisible

Retroactively place yourself in any Scene and treat any information from it as though you heard it firsthand.

The One Everyone Likes

These are your glory days, why let them go?

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Katie, Madison, Tanner, Bryce, Dylan, Harper, or Dakota

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk -1
- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains +1, Moxie +1, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You killed someone in an accident and your parents paid to keep it quiet.
- You sing showtunes when you think no one is around.
- You enjoy watching boys kiss.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To break someone's heart
- To get what you deserve
- To take credit for something that you didn't do

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A small bag you always fill with party stuff
- A wallet full of false IDs, your mom's credit card, and plenty of large bills
- A backpack full of condoms, lube, and porn
- A backpack full of half-full liquor you stole from your parents
- A clutch purse full of expensive makeup you either borrowed or stole
- A clutch purse full of wrinkled cash from a side job nobody knows about
- Some torn-out pages of a yearbook
- An unfinished job application you're trying to keep hidden
- An unopened piece of mail from your dream university
- A small gun someone bought you (Gun 2 +concealable +only 3 bullets)
- A picture of a recently deceased family member
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were kids
- A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- An intimate picture of your ex
- An engagement ring

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role has been trying to ruin you, and before the end of the Movie, you'll turn the tables on them.
- If you're going down, you're taking this Role with you.
- You're going to get with this Role if it's the last thing you do.
- Exposing this Role for who they really are is top of your priority list, even ahead of having a good time this weekend.
- This Role is your roommate this weekend and is completely oblivious to how you feel about them.
- You're related to this Role, but only you know about it.
- This Role wants to be you so badly that it's sort of creepy.
- A long time ago, you confessed how you felt to this Role and they've forgotten. You'd like a do-over before the end of this Movie.
- A one-night stand with this Role was one of the worst experiences you ever had, and now it looks like they want to do it all over again.
- You're going to put an end to this Role ruining everything for you.
- Without this Role in your life, your future is hopeless, so how are you going to convince them to go with you?
- This Role has been promising this weekend will be special since you were little kids. And so far, nothing has gone right.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Always a Bridesmaid

When you feel like someone's intentionally ignored you, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director what you plan to do to put the spotlight back on you. The Director can set something up to pay off later for free.

On a 7-9, tell the Director who you pick a fight with about it, then go pick that fight and live with the consequences.

On a 6-, build a bridge and get over it, but not before something awful happens to you first to make this Scene more dramatic for you.

□ Spike the Punch

Whenever you have a chance to make someone else's life harder for your own amusement, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, do it, you won't get caught, and it'll be something you'll laugh at.

On a 7-9, do it, but tell the Director who catches you and what you do to keep them quiet.

On a 6-, the Director will tell you how you're caught in the act. Go live with the consequences.

□ Wonderwall

When you attempt something romantic with someone, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, tell the Director how things end up in your favor.

On a 7-9, the Director can either make you risk something OR offer you a terrible choice so you can get what you want.

On a 6-, the Director will tell you how you get your heart broken. Then tell the Director what you do to make things worse before they get better.

□ Get What You Need

When a Role in a Scene you're in rolls Talk It Out, you can add +1 to their roll if they agree to let you do the talking. Then take complete selfish advantage of the situation.





Featurette: *Retro Heroes & Villains*

Sometimes the Movie you want is a little less about detectives and fatales, and a little more about the classic and fantastic. Just before noir really took off as a movement, there was a span of time where pulp and noir overlapped, and you saw a lot of traditional heroes of adventure serials suddenly and somewhat incongruously take on different sorts of stories.

You might tune in and hear your favorite Bat-Hero stopping counterfeiter one week, only to have them uncovering a plot by an angry wife to do in a prominent city official the next. It was a little jarring, but it was all part of the cinematic and narrative growing pains that both pulp and noir went through en route to becoming the now more accepted superhero fare we can get in theaters and media today.

Welcome to Justice City

The Retro Heroes and Villains presented here are noir adaptations of classic comic and radio serial heroes given a tint through a Noir World filter. The colors maybe are a little muted, the backstories are a little less glamorous, but these are the heroic and villainous tropes we recognize today.

Yes, you can combine several of these Roles in one Movie for a sort of Retro-Watchmen, but that's up for player discussion, since it can be hard to maintain a consistent tone when you have these Roles and their agendas all in play with each other.

Any of these Roles can be brought into any other Noir World Movie, but not the Featurettes. This is by design, so that you don't suddenly have for example, The Amazon running roughshod all over a High School or The Chaos dealing with narwhals (no matter how interesting that might sound).

If you're wondering if this or that Role is this or that classic Hero or Villain, assume you're right.

Welcome to Justice City



DUB

The Amazon

You're a woman in a man's world. It's a wonder you've made it this far, but you continue to impress in all the right ways when asked. Brains, brawn, sex appeal, it doesn't matter, you do what needs to be done, you say what needs to be said, and no man can tie you down and hold you back.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Diana, Hera, Mei, Alex, Anna, Jenn, Ya Ling, or Apollonia

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie +1, Risk -2
- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +0
- Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- All you want is to fall in love and be a stay-at-home spouse.
- You're not you; you're impersonating your sister who lives a more glamorous life.
- You're trying (and maybe failing) to stay one step ahead of the law.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To run this City the way **you** think it should be run
- To prove your worth
- To defend those that can't defend themselves

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A very spangled outfit you always wear
- A tiara from your win in a beauty pageant
- A pair of bracelets your mother gave you the day you left home
- A length of rope
- A sharp hunting knife (Knife 1 +sharp +large)
- Red, white, and blue intimate apparel
- A purse stuffed to bursting with all kinds of assorted junk
- A trenchcoat (+it billows)
- A pair of very sensible yet flattering boots
- The deed to a small piece of farmland in the country, worth a lot of money
- Your father's Lightning Bolt, his lucky token
- A faded picture of a one you used to love
- An outfit that really downplays your appearance
- The most elegant formal attire anyone could afford
- A luxury apartment with a lush garden OR a swanky home you inherited from your dead father (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You're willing to give everything up for this Role, but they have no idea you even care about them.
- This Role is intimidated, because of something they saw you do.
- You need this Role to give you the approval they've long denied, but have you taken things too far to get it?
- You and this Role grew up together, but now you can't be bothered to care about their life.
- This Role is going to do something absolutely dangerous in order to show you how serious they are.
- You and this Role used to be together, but something you don't talk about drove you apart, and it still hurts.
- This Role broke your heart when they said or did this one thing. You're eager to break more than just their heart now.
- This Role has offered you a great deal of money to do something stupid today.
- This Role is the best sidekick no matter the adventure.
- It's as if some invisible force is keeping you and this Role apart despite everything you both do.
- (3-Role Hook) You were left at the altar by this Role, who you later found canoodling with this other Role. Today you set them both straight.
- (3-Role Hook) You heard from this Role that this other Role is going to make you take the fall for whatever they're doing.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Invisible Jet

Once per Act, you can arrive into a Scene (where someone else is Director), without being brought in by Director Action.

❑ Child of Themyscira

Whenever someone asserts you're not up to a task, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, you'll prove them wrong, and impress another Role while you do it.

On a 7-9, you vow to accomplish the task, but you quickly realize that you'll need to ask a Role you have a Hook with for help.

On a 6-, instead of the task, you vow to spend the remainder of the Movie doing everything you can to ruin the life of the Role who thought you couldn't do the task in the first place.

❑ Tell the Truth

When you suspect someone of lying, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, you find the lie and trip the speaker up in it.

On a 7-9, you find the lie but misinterpret it, and this exposes a Role you have a Hook with to a bad situation in a later Scene.

On a 6-, nope, no lies here. Time to follow a different train of thought.

❑ I Thought They Were with You

Whenever you're brought into a Scene with a Role you have a Hook with, choose 1:

- *They take +1 to any one roll in the Scene, but any roll you make, you must take the 6- result.*
- *You impulsively take action before anyone else does. This is often a terrible idea, but you do it anyway.*
- *You make a bold suggestion that affects the Role's plans going forward.*

The Hornet

You didn't think you'd like the mask. You grew into it though, juxtaposing it with your cavalier lifestyle. The City offers you a lot of things you love: drinks, parties, a chance to celebrate wealth, a chance to teach criminals a thing or two. You revel in the double-life: a contradiction with a slick smile. Whether the police call you a criminal doesn't matter, no one's going to make any of this less fun for you.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Britt, Reed, James, Daphne, Horoku, Judy, Anne, Lenore, or Keye

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk -2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You hate everything about your non-crime-fighting lifestyle, and can't get away from it fast enough.
- You're impersonating the Hornet, who you killed one night. The guilt tears you apart.
- You are allergic to hornets, bees, and wasps.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To save the City from all crime everywhere, forever
- To become the City's greatest villain
- To inspire others to rise up and take action

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A domino mask you always wear when fighting crime
- A practical yet slightly unflattering outfit you fight crime in
- A machine gun (Gun 2 +loud +dangerous)
- A dart gun (Gun 1 +KO +mostly silent)
- A sharp hunting knife (Knife 1 +sharp +large)
- A list of low-level criminals you constantly obsess over
- The grubby outfit you started out fighting crime in
- A trenchcoat (+it billows)
- A pair of very sensible yet flattering boots
- A growing sense of unease whenever you're not fighting crime
- A photo of an old flame, but you've got no idea who they are or what their name was
- A faded picture of your mother
- A hornet-themed flask of very expensive brandy
- The most elegant formal attire anyone could afford
- An apartment with a lot of hornet-themed décor no one questions OR a swanky home you purchased downtown (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You inherited the mantle of the Hornet from a family member, and this Role reminds you that you are a poor imitation of your predecessor.
- You regularly blame this Role for all your shortcomings and failures.
- This Role told the cops that you're a villain, not a hero.
- You rescued this Role once, and you wish you hadn't.
- This Role regularly puts themselves into grave peril, confident that you'll always save them.
- This Role wants you to betray everything you believe in because they promise you a better and different life.
- This Role broke your heart and led you to put on the mask.
- You fear that this Role will abandon you when you need them the most.
- You refuse to believe that you're anything less than superhuman, despite this Role constantly reminding you of your mortality.
- You love this Role, while they hate your guts. You've got to do something incredible to change their mind.
- (3-Role Hook) These two Roles both think you should give up fighting crime because they're both certain you'll end up dead.
- (3-Role Hook) A long time ago, you and these two Roles planned to do something this City would never forget. Now that you're a crimefighter, those two Roles are going to ask you to stick to the plan.

Role Actions

Choose 1 Kato Action, and one other Action.

□ Kato I

You have a trusty manservant. He is... (choose 1)

- *A vastly more competent fighter than you. You take every opportunity to have him fight your enemies. Add +1 to every Fight It Out roll.*
- *Your only friend. It's unclear if he feels the same way about you.*
- *Willing to put you in ever-increasing amounts of danger to see you either become a better hero or die trying.*

OR

□ Kato II

Whether they want to be or not, designate another Role in the Movie as your Kato.

Any time you have a Scene with them, treat them like your sidekick. They take a +1 to any Talk It Out rolls in those Scenes, even if they're not talking to you.

□ The Black Beauty

The first time you enter a Location, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, both of the choices below occur.

On a 7-9, choose 1.

- *You make the most dramatic and attention-seeking entrance possible, no matter how dangerous or stupid it might be to do so.*
- *You immediately assess the danger of the Scene and insert yourself into it.*

On a 6-, your presence escalates the tension to a tipping point. The Director will tell you how you've made things worse and what you're going to have to do to at least get out of the Scene either unhurt or without agreeing to do something risky first.

□ Under the Mask

Whenever you're torn between fighting crime and being a civilian, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, this second, right now, is the perfect time to be the hero. Tell the Director what you immediately want to do, then go do it.

On a 7-9, your hesitation puts someone in the Scene in danger, and the Director will offer you a terrible choice or threaten someone or something as a result.

On a 6-, tell the Director what you want to do, then do the opposite and live with the consequences.

The Ranger

You've always held yourself to a higher standard. You used to be a Good Cop in this City. You used to be the shining example of everything right. Now, thanks to what happened, you aren't. Maybe they know you're not dead, maybe they don't. But after tonight, you'll leave no doubt.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

John, Dan, Clayton, Fran, Jordan, Allen, Anne, or Dottie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +2, Risk -1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk +0 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- There are parts about faking your death that you really enjoyed.
- You once stole something tiny from a store. You never forget that rush.
- You are very confused by how things in the City work, but you keep it to yourself.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To be a role model
- To do something noble, but not claim any credit
- To fight back against a bully and win

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A domino mask you always wear
- A ten-gallon hat you seldom take off
- A revolver (Gun 2 +loud +only six shots)
- A thirst for revenge
- A sharp hunting knife (Knife 1 +sharp +large)
- A list of principles you live by that you never stop talking about
- Your dead brother's badge
- A large framed citation from a past Mayor
- A pair of very sensible yet flattering boots
- An outfit no one would ever expect to see you in
- A tattered and singed photo of your ex
- A faded picture of your mother
- A single silver bullet you keep "for luck"
- A small backpack with one change of clothes in it
- An abandoned garage you've taken up as your "lair" OR a fifth-floor walkup in a quiet building of kind neighbors (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role regularly looks up to you and you won't let them down.
- This Role believes you're a villain, and you won't rest until you change their mind.
- You rescued this Role once, and now they keep getting into trouble just so you'll do it again. It's kinda creepy.
- This Role regularly tries to get your attention by doing really stupid things, but you've gone out of your way to avoid them.
- This Role wants you to betray everything you believe in because they promise you a better and different life.
- You can't let this Role expose the truth about you.
- You fear that this Role will abandon you when you need them the most.
- This Role grieves your death every day. Today you're going to have to reveal to them that you're not dead. It might go poorly.
- This Role was instrumental in setting up the events that caused you to fake your death, and you burn with vengeance over all of it.
- (3-Role Hook) You used to love this Role, but they've moved on to be in a relationship with this other Role. Now you've got to get your old love back, and this new Role is in the way.
- (3-Role Hook) You grew up with these two Roles, and you never knew how instrumental you were in their young lives. Now you're older, and your two dear friends need you one more time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Kemosabe

Designate a Role as your sidekick. In any Scene with that Role, whenever they get into trouble, you can choose to do or say something that gets them out of trouble, but makes everything worse for you.

□ For Great Justice

When you're able to stand up for justice, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, someone in the Scene is inspired to do something they didn't think they could do.

On a 7-9, someone in the Scene will be inspired to do something, but first you have to either do something you didn't think you could do OR you have to convince a Role you have a Hook with to do something they don't want to do.

On a 6-, either someone picks a fight with you over something you've said or done OR you have to show how you're just not as brave as everyone thinks.

□ Hi Ho Silver

Once in the Movie's Act One, you can leave any Scene without consequence, provided you do so in the most dramatic way.

□ Track It Down

Instead of Check It Out, you use Track It Down.

On a 10+, you find a critical piece of information that affects not only you immediately, but a Role you have a Hook with in either this Scene or the next.

On a 7-9, you find a critical piece of information, but someone in this Scene begs you to keep it secret.

On a 6-, you misinterpret the information, but no one's going to convince you you're wrong, so why not go right ahead and get yourself into hot water? Tell the Director how you boldly go somewhere to see someone you shouldn't.

The Chaos

You believe there is a City somewhere under the husk of buildings and traffic. You believe that the City is more than the sum of its parts, and that its parts have grown vestigial. Or worse, sickly. You can restore the luster, the wonder, the good of it. You can end all this nonsense. You can have a few laughs doing it. You can inspire and rally and challenge through fear, through action. You'll do what the others can't. Or won't.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Heath, Jack, Cesar, Jeri, Eartha, Dutch, Princess, or Lori

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains +1, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1
- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You have an irrational fear of cameras.
- You give most of your ill-gotten gains to pay for your mother's care.
- You have plans to run for President one day.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To prove that someone good is really evil inside
- To make the City evolve
- To control something or someone that no one suspects

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit you wear while being a criminal
- A fresh corsage or pocket square for every outfit you own
- A stack of business cards for fake businesses
- A little black cocktail dress or tuxedo
- Plenty of walking-around money
- A cigarette case full of chewing gum
- A small pistol (Gun 2 +concealable +up close and personal)
- A sharp stiletto (Knife 1 +lethal +sharp)
- A deck of cards where you've drawn moustaches and googly eyes on all the face cards
- Your old prison outfit
- An insistence on drinking only Italian-roast coffee
- An unfinished love letter to someone in your old hometown
- A selection of wigs and makeup you can use to disguise yourself
- Your father's lucky cufflinks
- A set of brass knuckles (Club 1 +KO)
- An abandoned shop downtown OR a house you're "borrowing" because the real owners are overseas (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role made you what you are today by rejecting you in your youth.
- This Role has always stood up for you, and today you thank them.
- You regularly steal ever increasing amounts of money or items from this Role, and you're worried they're growing suspicious.
- Nothing good comes from this Role being alive at the end of this Movie.
- You and this Role are destined to be enemies forever.
- Why won't anyone believe that you and this Role are meant to be together forever? Is it because nobody wants anything to do with you?
- This Role owes you a great deal of money, and today you've asked them to do something to work off their debt.
- You know this Role can do no wrong and won't believe anything or anyone that says otherwise.
- You are related to this Role, and they try to keep it secret.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role was your roommate and best friend until you walked in on them with this other Role, who you were going to ask to marry you.
- (3-Role Hook) You have paid a large sum of money (and still owe more) to this Role so they'll "take care of" this other Role.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Do You Know Where I Got These Scars?

Every time you're asked a personal question, tie it back to a completely fabricated and ever-changing backstory.

❑ Wait Till They Get a Load of Me

Choose 1 and live with the consequences:

- *Take a +1 to all Talk It Out rolls in this Movie, but lose every fight you're in.*
- *Take a +1 to all Help Out rolls in this Movie, but a Role you have a Hook with takes a -1 to all Check It Out rolls.*
- *Take a +1 to all Check It Out rolls in this Movie, but treat all Talk It Out rolls as though you got the 7-9 result.*

□ Watch the World Burn

Whenever you roll Fight It Out, and the result is 7+, increase the Scene's danger recklessly.

□ Surprise!

At the beginning of the Move, roll.

If even, add a +1 to Risk for the duration of the Movie.

If odd, add +1 to Moxie for the duration of the Movie.

The Phantom

You're not like the rest. You don't have wealth or gadgets. You don't rely on some sidekick to do all the hard work for you. Sure, you wear a mask, but there are times when it's just for the look, right? You make your name in this City with two clenched fists, a whole lot of luck, and the knowledge that someone fighting for the right causes is someone who cannot be stopped.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Lee, Ray, Georgia, Bailey, Tina, Paula, Helen, or Doris

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +2, Moxie -1, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +0, Moxie +1, Risk +1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brains +1, Moxie +0, Risk -1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +2 |

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You want to fall in love.
- You're desperate to find a successor to your legacy.
- You believe very strongly in the free market and capitalism.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To reveal yourself to the City and bask in glory
- To become ridiculously famous
- To meet someone, fall in love with them, and retire

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit you wear while fighting crime
- A crushed velvet tuxedo or dress the color of your crime-fighting outfit
- A decent pair of shoes you can either wear casually or to fight crime
- A tattered motorcycle jacket you found in a dumpster
- The keys to a house long demolished
- A newspaper clipping of your first great heroic act
- A small pistol (Gun 2 +concealable +up close and personal)
- A sharp stiletto (Knife 1 +lethal +sharp)
- A newspaper clipping calling you a menace to the City
- A set of clothes you wear to look vaguely “poor”
- A treasured childhood memento
- A list of people you’ll one day “deal with”
- A whole set of barbells and exercise equipment you keep at home
- A selection of wigs and makeup you can use to disguise yourself
- A set of brass knuckles (Club 1 +KO)
- A small apartment you’re very content with OR a house on the edge of the City (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- Every time you see this Role, you introduce yourself like it’s the first.
- This Role idolizes you and you do next to nothing to stop it.
- This Role has sworn to see you exposed.
- You are convinced this Role is one citizen the City no longer needs alive.
- You used to be married to this Role, but one of you skipped town and today’s your first day back.
- This Role supports your crime-fighting lifestyle, and you take advantage of that at every chance.
- You’re haunted by something this Role said the last time you saw them.
- This Role took a substantial risk for you and paid a terrible price. You’re desperate to make things right today.
- This Role will betray you when least convenient, and you won’t see it coming.
- This Role has a slightly creepy interest in you that you’re about to discover.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role thinks you’re taking things too far. The other Role thinks you’re not going far enough.
- (3-Role Hook) You keep saying that splitting these two Roles up from their relationship is what’s best for everyone. It’s actually because you want one of them for yourself.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ The Skull

Shrug off the first point of Injury you suffer in the Movie.

❑ For Noble Reasons

Whenever you're unsure if a Role or Person is being good, virtuous, and/or honest, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, sure they are, and you'll stand up for them if necessary.

On a 7-9, they probably are, ask the Role and Director what you'll need to do to verify this.

On a 6-, of course they are, in fact, let's go help them right now. In this Scene. No matter what.

□ The Devil and the Hero

When you have to ask a Role you have a Hook with for advice, take a +1 to any roll you make that's in line with their advice.

□ The Long Line of Phantoms Past

You can only die in the final Scene of the Movie. Anytime you accumulate 3 or more Injury, you collapse dramatically and have a very faint pulse. Let another Role in the Scene deal with you. Two Scenes from now, you'll be back on your feet as though you've only suffered 2 Injury.

The Shadow

You're thought to be nothing more than one more rich socialite out of touch with the regular folk of the City. But late at night, when everyone's absorbed in their own world, you're out in the City. You defend it from villains large and small. You are the immune system fighting against the disease that could ravage the City you call home. You find evil, and you dispose of it. Period. Accept no substitutes.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Lamont, Alec, Mary, Karen, Clive, Lana, Connie, or Tom

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains -1, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains +1, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You don't want anyone to find out about what you do at night.
- You're keeping a promise you made on your father's deathbed.
- You really want to open a shelter for pets.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To restore the City's hope
- To not rest until every criminal is brought to justice
- To get a statue commemorated to you

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit you wear while fighting crime
- A fedora you're always seen in
- A decent suit or dress that you try to keep clean
- A little black cocktail dress or tuxedo
- The keys to a house long demolished
- A newspaper clipping of your first great heroic act
- A small pistol (Gun 2 +concealable +up close and personal)
- A sharp stiletto (Knife 1 +lethal +sharp)
- A newspaper clipping calling you a menace to the City
- A set of clothes you wear to look vaguely "poor"
- A treasured childhood memento
- A list of people you'll one day "deal with"
- A whole set of barbells and exercise equipment you keep at home
- A selection of wigs and makeup you can use to disguise yourself
- A set of brass knuckles (Club 1 +KO)
- A small apartment you're very content with OR a house on the edge of the City (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You've loved this Role from the moment you laid eyes on them, and today you'll profess that love. Dramatically.
- This Role wants you absolutely run out of town.
- This Role actively discredits you but has never admitted to it.
- You and this Role are engaged to be married, but at least one of you has a secret that's keeping that from happening.
- You've never trusted this Role, and you see no reason to start.
- This Role would make an excellent successor if you train them first.
- This Role is a fount of stupidity, and you're not sure how they manage to get through the day in one piece.
- This Role has betrayed you more times than you can count, but here you are asking them for another favor.
- You are this Role's only friend, but you're keeping your crime-fighting a secret from them.
- (3-Role Hook) This Role would give you the shirt off their back if you asked. This other Role keeps trying to tell you not to take advantage of them.
- (3-Role Hook) Today, this Role has presented you with a plan that will either pay off huge or completely ruin you all. You've gone to this other Role for advice.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ What Evil Lurks

The first time you enter a Location as your crime-fighting persona, tell the Director how you assess the Location's potential dangers, then roll Check It Out before anything else happens.

□ In the Hearts of People

Whenever you roll Talk It Out while fighting crime, add +1 to your roll when

- *You have the support of another Role in the Scene OR*
- *You can point to evidence in the Scene that there's a problem.*

When you use that +1, the Director can bring someone into the Scene for free.

□ The Shadow Knows

Whenever someone asks if you know something, make up the most complicated piece of bullshit about it.

□ Ominous Laughter

You can escape any Scene by saying, “Smoke Bomb” and then giving an ominous laugh. But first you have to roll+Risk.

If odd, the Director will tell you how you escape only after things get messy for everyone in the Scene.

If even, the Director will tell you how you didn’t make a clean getaway and will have to live with the consequences.



10

Featurette: Star Noir

There's no reason why you can't have a noir movie in some other place not nearby and not recently. Maybe your story ends up being told a long time ago and in places way over there far away from where you might be right now, but noir knows no bounds when it comes to time and space.

At least it shouldn't.

In Star Noir, fire up your imaginations, laser swords, and starships, because noir is coming to far away worlds with twin suns or stars with death rays. The Movies of Star Noir feature heroic and dramatic tropes with an entire galaxy of potential for scruffy rogues, noble princesses, and young heroes.

Welcome to a Galaxy Far, Far Away

In galaxies some distance away, and in the distant past, there was noir. Just because space operas and heroic journeys aren't limited to a single City doesn't mean the emotional core of the story – the tragedy and consequences – are absent.

Star Noir opens up some familiar archetypes and changes a few rules.

There are no Eras – Star Noir always takes place long, long ago.

Locations are also broader; instead of being limited to a single City, Locations can be entire planets, battle stations, or capital ships. Locations still receive Persons and Facts as in Noir World.

Most significantly, the Crimes have changed to Themes and follow a simpler chart and single roll of a die, as follows:

- 1** A family relationship is discovered but ends terribly.
- 2** Someone plots vengeance.
- 3** A whole lot of murdering happens, and consequences follow.
- 4** Good people go through hard times.
- 5** Bad people learn the error of their ways.
- 6** Someone loses a thing and gains something else.



Additionally, the “City” becomes the “Galaxy”, and rather than being limited to specific places within a City, the Locations are limited to specific places within a City, the Locations are planets, systems, and cities unto themselves. By expanding the scope of the Movie, and in exchange for some of the claustrophobia present in *Noir World* proper, *Star Noir* allows a Movie to be told in more epic, operatic scales.

Roles in *Star Noir* are more archetypal, reflecting heroic themes and personal relationships with an emphasis on the potential of what could happen, rather than on the past. This is one more way *Star Noir* is a more positive adaptation of *Noir World*.

This is not to say the fundamentals of noir are wholly absent, they aren't. They're instead better amalgamated into the future rather than the past or present. If *Noir World* focuses on what happened before to inform the present, *Star Noir* focuses on how the present shapes the future.

The Farmkid

You're from a galactic backwater, a place where sand is coarse and gets everywhere. A place where the work is hard, but your hair is feathered, and you do occasionally get a chance to go pick up some power converters with the few friends you have.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Luke, Mark, Billie, Jenny, Lita, or Jessie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +0

- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You really do an incredible number of impressions.
- For all the complaining you do, you love working on a farm.
- You HATE womp rats.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To do what's right
- To be just like your father, who you don't know anything about
- To help someone redeem themselves

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- An outfit that's a little dated
- Power converters
- Blaster (Gun 2 +pew pew)
- Laser sword (Knife 2 +vraam)
- A sensible cloak (+it billows)
- An outfit that's very slimming
- An outfit that makes you look a little short
- A rugged backpack
- A locket with the burnt photo of a deceased loved one
- A really impressive scar you got in that one fight
- A slightly unhealthy crush on your best friend Biggs
- Always enough powdered blue milk for a drink
- A robotic limb that needs to be updated
- A flight suit from your time in the military
- A book you've been trying to finish for years
- A little hut out of the way (Location)
- A farm that's heavily in debt (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You are related to this Role, and you'll find this out when it's least convenient for you.
- This Role has been regularly showing you that what you thought was true is, in fact, all wrong. You keep coming back to learn more.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- You tell everyone you can't stand this Role, but really, you can't stop thinking about them.
- This Role always seems to show up when you need them around the least.
- You hate this Role more than almost anyone else in the entire Galaxy.
- This Role has some sort of sorcerous hold over you, yet you keep trying to get away from them.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it's not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- This Role is hiding something from you, you can feel it.
- This Role has been promising you more and more things that seem too good to be true.
- You will exact your revenge on this Role now that you know they're alive.
- This Role regularly tells you that you're destined for greater things.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Twin Suns

Whenever you reference life on the farm, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, add a +1 to the next roll someone else in this Scene makes after you explain how farm life prepared you for this.

On a 7-9, add a +1 to the next roll someone else makes in this Scene and take a -1 to your next roll, even if it's not in this Scene.

On a 6-, tell the Director how you're convinced that the only way to handle what's going on is to do it how you'd do it back home. The problem is that you're about to make things worse for everyone in the Scene.

□ Whiny Is a Force Power

Whenever you whine about something, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, good news, you've just convinced someone in this Scene to do something that will make things better.

On a 7-9, in order to change the situation, the Director will offer you a terrible choice where the options are all going to lead you to do something risky.

On a 6-, not only has the whining not helped at all, it's annoyed someone so much that you're about to get into a fight or argument before the end of this Scene.

❑ Picking up Power Converters

Add a +1 to any Motivation (Brains, Moxie, Risk).

❑ That's Impossible

When you find out something's true, and you refuse to believe it, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director how it makes the current Scene better.

On a 7-9, you'll believe it only after you say or do something reckless that may harm yourself or a Role you have a Hook with.

On a 6-, not only do you not believe it, you'll try to convince anyone you talk to that it's wrong before the end of the Movie, even when that makes any situation worse.

The Scoundrel

From one side of the Galaxy to another, you've seen plenty of things you can and can't explain. But, on the bright side, the credits are good, assuming you can avoid Imperial entanglements when necessary. It's a hard life, but a good one, moving from job to job, staying one step ahead of all the promises and debts you have no intention of keeping.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Harry, Han, Tryst, Jean, Dafne, or Sammie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +1
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +1, Risk +1
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You feel really guilty about being such a rogue and are trying to change.
- You're setting money aside to retire and be a nerf herder.
- Whenever you get in over your head, you'll always go back to what you're good at.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To fall madly in love
- To keep scheming as long as you can to get as much as you can
- To make lifelong friends

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A blaster (Gun 2 +pew pew)
- A fedora you'll wear one day
- A little black book of all the debts and tabs you're running up
- A small religious statue you got from your mother
- A stolen uniform that you swear you'll return one day
- A large box of tools for emergencies
- A nice vest and pants for dressy occasions
- A growing stack of fines and tickets
- A datapad that only occasionally works
- Enough credits to get a one-way ticket to the edge of the Galaxy
- A memento from a failed relationship who swore they'd kill you if you crossed paths again
- A decent outfit that makes you look like a politician or professor
- A tattoo that reads "No Time For Love"
- A small knife (Knife 1 +tiny)
- A cheap disguise that hasn't failed you yet
- A ramshackle place you call home that others find shoddy (Location)
- A usual table at a local cantina (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role keeps involving you in situations you barely make it out of in one piece, and you're starting to worry that your luck is running out.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- You tell everyone you can't stand this Role, but really, you can't stop thinking about them.
- You look up to this Role, but you'd never admit that to them.
- You've been avoiding this Role for a long time over something that happened in the past.
- You cheated this Role out of something important, and today they'll try and get it back.
- What people say about this Role is true, from a certain point of view.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it's not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- This Role is going to reveal something to you that will change both your lives forever.
- The last time this Role saw you, you made a promise that they think you've been keeping this whole time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ Never Tell Me the Odds

Whenever you attempt what someone else would call reckless or stupid, add a +1 to the roll.

□ I Know

When a Role you have a Hook with confesses something to you, choose 1:

- *Tell the Director what you do to make the Role love you just a little bit more, then say “I know” and go do it.*
- *Tell the Director what you do to involve another Role into this situation, then say “I know” and go do it.*
- *Tell the Director what you accidentally do to make this situation worse for both of you, then say “I know” and live with the consequences.*

❑ Evasive Maneuvers

Shrug off the first point of Injury you suffer in the Movie.

❑ Life Debt

You have a trusted friend and confidante. They (choose 1)

- *Can intimidate someone one time in the Movie into giving you what you want.*
- *Can assist you (and you alone) in a single fight in the Movie (they add a +1 to all Fight It Out rolls you make in one fight).*
- *Are your best friend who you routinely put into harm's way, and it is almost always because of their actions that you get out of most scrapes alive.*

The Royal

It's up to you whether or not you shrug off the mantle of royalty or wear it proudly, but you measure your life in dinner parties, receptions, and protocol. It has its perks – you've never had to worry about money, the servants can be really helpful or useful, and getting chauffeured is a pretty nice way to see the Galaxy. It's only lately that you've started asking yourself if there's more to life than this or what you're going to do when the money runs out.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Carrie, Natalie, Dirk, Taylor, Mickey, or Fran

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains +1, Moxie -1, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You've been lying about your planet being destroyed and being an orphan.
- You've are mortified of commitment and turning out like your parents.
- You're adopted. You're only just now starting to suspect something.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To resist any oppression you can find
- To find out what a nerf actually is and why they need herding
- To have at least one moment you'll never forget

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A surprisingly dainty blaster (Gun 2 +pew pew)
- The paperwork for a fake identity
- An outfit that you wear often, even when it's incredibly inappropriate
- Half a picture of an ex from your one and only one-night stand
- A proper set of boots for kicking ass
- A journal where you've been trying to write a novel for years
- A small knife you got someone to buy you (Blade 1 +concealable +sharp)
- An article of clothing from your last relationship
- Enough money wadded up to do something reckless
- A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- An intimate picture of your ex
- A piece of rock that you falsely believe to be from a destroyed planet
- An unfinished poem about something traumatic when you were young
- Your dead parent's little black book of old debts and IOUs
- The keys to a disused vacation home by the lake (Location)
- A luxury vehicle you can hide in (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You're sick of this Role always telling you that you're their only hope every time they have a problem.
- You are related to this Role, and you'll find out when least convenient.
- You love this Role. They know.
- This Role has been regularly showing you that what you thought was true is, in fact, all wrong. You keep coming back to learn more.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- You say you can't stand this Role, but you can't stop thinking about them.
- This Role always seems to show up when you need them around the least.
- What people say about this Role is true, from a certain point of view.
- This Role has some sort of sorcerous hold over you, yet you keep trying to get away from them.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it's not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- This Role promises more and more things that seem too good to be true.
- The last time you saw this Role, you stole something from them. Today you hope they don't remember.
- The last time this Role saw you, you made a promise that they think you've been keeping this whole time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ You're My Only Hope

Whenever you Talk It Out and need to convince someone to help you, take a +1 when they say yes, but you also end up making their life much, much harder first.

If they reject your offer, tell the Director what you do to make trouble for them right here and right now.

❑ Aren't You a Little Short?

Whenever you judge another Role, take a +1 to your next roll in the Scene.

❑ Lone Survivor

Add +1 to any Motivation. If ...

- *You add +1 to Brains, once per Movie you can re-roll 1 Check It Out.*
- *You add +1 to Moxie, once per Movie you can re-roll 1 Talk It Out.*
- *You add +1 to Risk, once per Movie you can re-roll 1 Fight It Out.*

❑ Chainmail Bikini

If you're able to get into a fight after trying to Talk It Out First, take a +1 to all Fight It Out rolls.

The Sage

You'd think being a smart person in what's so often a not-so-smart Galaxy wouldn't be so bad, but more and more you're finding out that no matter what your point of view, every star system seems to have more than a fair share of nimrods. Thankfully, you're smarter than just about everyone in any room, no matter where you go, and you're not shy about telling people.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Ben, Alec, Ahsoka, Laura, Brit, Denis, or Krissy

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +1, Moxie -2, Risk +1
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +0, Risk +2

Body

[]

Moxie

[]

Risk

[]

SECRETS

Choose 1

- You regret the fight you had with your mother before she died.
- You write a lot of very bad poetry under a very popular pen name.
- You once killed a man in a bar fight, and you'd do it again in a heartbeat.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To start a music career
- To make someone admit their true feelings
- To have the high ground morally

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A laser sword (Knife 2 +vraam)
- A surprising inventory of cloaks (+they billow)
- A picture of an ex you still pine for
- A box of junk you've scrounged up from all the people you've inadvertently hurt
- A very distinguished outfit for public appearances
- A series of well-rehearsed lies
- The keys to a vehicle you long since got rid of
- Something you stole from a friend of yours when you were younger
- A growing assortment of trashy books you've been collecting
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were kids
- A flask of homemade wine
- A blaster (Gun 2 +uncivilized)
- A piece of jewelry you kept from a one-night stand
- A dingy home that's too far away for anyone to get to (Location)
- A decent home that you barely visit and keep just as a place to either hide or store your stuff (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role regularly tells you that you're destined for greater things.
- This Role has been regularly showing you that what you thought was true is, in fact, all wrong. You keep coming back to learn more.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- You once offered this Role a great sum of money to get lost. They didn't, and you didn't get your money back, either.
- There's maybe one or two people you hate more than this Role.
- What people say about this Role is true, from a certain point of view.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it's not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- This Role is hiding something from you, you can feel it.
- You will exact your revenge on this Role now that you know they're alive.
- You've been lying low hoping this Role doesn't notice you, but today the past catches up with you.
- The last time you saw this Role, you stole something from them. Today you hope they don't remember.
- The last time this Role saw you, you made a promise that they think you've been keeping this whole time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ More Powerful Than You Can Possibly Imagine

When you suffer your first Injury, take +1 to any Fight It Out rolls you make for the rest of this Movie.

When you suffer your second Injury, re-roll any Fight It Out roll. Deal with the consequences.

Note: These DO NOT stack.

❑ Old Hermit

When you attempt to go unnoticed, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, no one's going to notice you unless you get into a fight.

On a 7-9, you'll go unnoticed only after 1 Role or Person interacts with you, and it won't be good for you.

On a 6-, everyone notices you, but you'll swear you're invisible.

□ From a Certain Point of View

Add +1 to any Talk It Out roll if you're able to completely confuse and bullshit the other person.

□ Valiant Sacrifice

Whenever you can risk yourself to save someone else, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, what was going to happen to them now happens to you.

On a 7-9, tell the Director how your heroism comes a split second too late, and now, what was going to happen to them happens to both of you.

On a 6-, the Director will tell you how you messed up so badly that what was going to happen to them gets worse.

The Menace

Just like how you hate sand for being coarse and rough, you're not a big fan of people either. Good thing you're never paid for your people skills. It's a tough world out there, and you're determined to be the toughest. Though you never understand why some people think you're just a whiny kid in a nice suit. You'll show them ... one day.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Hayden, David, James, Sienna, Lyndsay, or Margie

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains +2, Moxie +0, Risk +0
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk +0
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2



SECRETS

Choose 1

- You keep a dream journal.
- You're really into pod racing.
- You spend a lot of time helping senior citizens in your off hours.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To make someone fall in love with you
- To make someone obey
- To be in charge

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A laser sword (Knife 2 +vraam)
- A black cape (+it billows +majestic)
- Several vices and habits you refer to as “your life support system”
- A choker your ex left behind
- An only slightly creepy memento you kept from a one-night stand
- Really expensive black leather gloves
- A picture of you in a mask from when you were a kid
- A prized piece of sports memorabilia
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were kids
- A small knife (Knife 1 +tiny)
- A whole lot of intense guilt and teenage feelings about your life
- An intimate picture of your ex
- Promises you never worry about having to keep
- A stronghold you inherited, devoid of servants and furniture (Location)

HOOKS

Choose 2

- This Role regularly tells you that you’re destined for greater things.
- You are related to this Role, and you’ll find this out when it’s least convenient.
- This Role has been regularly showing you that what you thought was true is, in fact, all wrong. You keep coming back to learn more.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- This Role always seems to show up when you need them around the least.
- There’s maybe one or two people in the entire Galaxy that you hate more than this Role.
- What people say about this Role is true, from a certain point of view.
- This Role has some sort of sorcerous hold over you, yet you keep trying to get away from them.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it’s not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- This Role has been promising you more and more things that seem too good to be true.
- You will exact your revenge on this Role now that you know they’re alive.
- The last time you saw this Role, you stole something from them. Today you hope they don’t remember.
- The last time this Role saw you, you made a promise that they think you’ve been keeping this whole time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

□ More Impressive

Whenever you Help Out another Role, make sure you tell everyone that it was really all you, and not the other Role.

□ Apology Accepted

Whenever you can make someone apologize, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, tell the Director how you change the situation selfishly for the better.

On a 7-9, the Director will tell you how getting the apology now will get you into trouble later in the Movie.

On a 6-, in order to get the apology you want, you're going to be asked to do something you can't say no to.

❑ Not a Space Samurai Yet

Any time you suffer an Injury, add +1 to whatever your next roll is.

❑ Best Badass in Space

When you roll Fight It Out:

If there's another Role witnessing the fight, take a +1 to your next roll in the fight.

If you get through the fight unhurt, take a +1 to your next roll, whatever it may be.

If the other person gives up and leaves the fight, take a +1 to your next roll AND tell the Director the version of the events that you want spread around as gossip.

The Herald

You're never sure what your lot in life is. Is it to suffer? To be someone's servant? To work tirelessly in the background and get such little recognition? Whatever it may be, you're getting sick of it. Today sounds like a great day to do something about it. Maybe that'll make you the hero, maybe that'll mean you become a person you never thought you could.

NAMES

Choose a name from the list below, or create your own.

Kenny, Anthony, Tara, Millie, Alexa, Wong, or Boris

MOTIVATIONS

Choose 1 set, and then add 1 to any Motivation:

- Brains +0, Moxie -1, Risk +1
- Brains -1, Moxie +2, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk -1
- Brains -2, Moxie +0, Risk +2



SECRETS

Choose 1

- You're planning on blackmailing a lot of people.
- You enjoy causing accidents so other people get hurt.
- You love to knit.

GOALS

Choose 1

- To avoid getting hurt
- To make sure someone gets what's coming to them
- To take credit for something that you didn't do

BELONGINGS

Choose 2

- A small multitool you always carry
- A set of lockpicks
- A key to a storage locker
- A stack of intimate photos you found in the trash
- A small flask of bad homemade wine
- The marriage license from when you got left at the altar
- A pair of broken handcuffs from when you were arrested
- A small gun (Gun 2 +concealable +only 3 bullets)
- A picture of a recently deceased family member
- A picture of you and another Role from when you were younger
- A promise to get a sibling out of jail
- An intimate picture of someone else's ex
- A small shack out by where people dump garbage (Location)
- The childhood home of your ex, which you maintain, hoping they'll come back one day (Location)
- A lifetime of neuroses

HOOKS

Choose 2

- You love this Role. They know.
- This Role has been regularly showing you that what you thought was true is, in fact, all wrong. You keep coming back to learn more.
- This Role will risk everything for you by the end of this Movie.
- You tell everyone you can't stand this Role, but really, you can't stop thinking about them.
- You once offered this Role a great sum of money to get lost. They didn't, and you didn't get your money back either.
- There's maybe one or two people in the entire Galaxy that you hate more than this Role.
- What people say about this Role is true, from a certain point of view.
- This Role has some sort of sorcerous hold over you, yet you keep trying to get away from them.
- You will risk everything for this Role, and it looks like it's not going to go well for either of you before the end of this Movie.
- You've been lying low hoping this Role doesn't notice you, but today the past catches up with you.
- The last time you saw this Role, you stole something from them. Today you hope they don't remember.
- The last time this Role saw you, you made a promise that they think you've been keeping this whole time.

Role Actions

Choose 2

❑ Used to Fly, Can't Anymore

Whenever you remember the past, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, both of the below occur.

On a 7-9, choose one of the following:

- *Another Role in this Scene takes a +1 to their next roll, AND you take a -1 to your next roll.*
- *You can re-roll any ONE roll before the end of the Movie, but another Role in this Scene must use a 6- on a roll before the end of the Movie.*

On a 6-, your recollection is completely wrong, and the Director will tell you how it immediately gets you into trouble.

❑ Faulty Circuits

When you suffer an Injury to help or defend another Role, they take a +1 to their next roll.

□ **Alright, Shut Up**

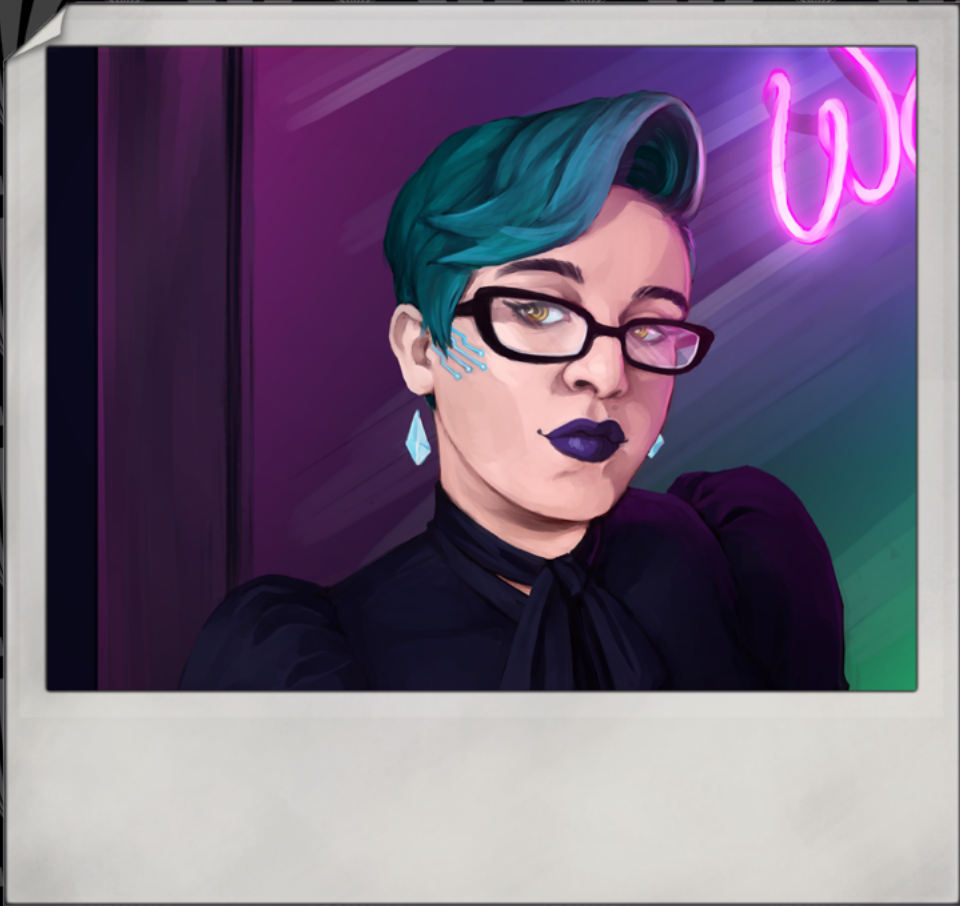
When a Role in a Scene you're in rolls Talk It Out, you can add +1 to their roll if they agree to let you do the talking.

□ **Swiss Army Tool**

When someone else needs something, roll 2d6.

On evens, tell the Director how you happen to have exactly the thing they need.

On odds, tell the Director how you have something almost as good, and then the Director will tell you how it'll work out now, but be a huge problem when least convenient later.



Appendices

The following pages are laid out as reference tools for Roles and Directors to help them create their own Movies in whatever way they wish. This section includes how to add Cthulhu (because we know how often that comes up) as well as lists of resources for different media to help add more noir flavor or ideas to Movies. It concludes with some closing thoughts about what this game is, where it came from, and what it means to the author.

- 1: Cthulhu Noir**
- 2: Source Material**
- 3: The Third Man**
- 4: The Maltese Falcon**
- 5: Final Words**
- 6: Kickstarter Backers**
- 7: Sheets & Handouts**
- 8: Common Role Sets**
- Index**

1: *Cthulhu Noir*

Cthulhu has, since its popularization many decades ago, been an institution in horror and horror roleplaying games. The Great Old Ones and their Great Old ilk could be a Mount Rushmore or perverse Hall of Sanity-Reducing Presidents if enough cultists got together, and in no way is the following appendix looking to unseat anyone or anything sleeping in R'lyeh on the basis of their horror credentials.

No, I'm looking to put a new lens on the camera and show that Cthulhu and the rest of the Lovecraftian or Derlethian suite are actually an underappreciated noir goldmine.

The Levels of Story

Looking at it practically, we need to divide Noir World into two stories at two different scales. On one level, there's what we'll call the "micro-level", where the majority of play happens, where Roles and Persons collide and interact for the sake of telling a good story. This level unto itself is only micro because the adjoining level is so much larger. It's micro in name only.

Directors need to manage the micro as though it's all about setup, it's all about the actions taken to lay the groundwork for payoffs to happen at the larger, practically unfathomable level where Great Old Ones and eldritch horrors hold sway. We'll call this level the "macro-level."

The macro of this level comes because the Roles are now so tiny, so beneath recognition, as though the story is zoomed out to some level where only the emotions and desires hold sway, because it is these elements that are the only practical currency in this level we can understand.

BACKGROUND: THOSE DAMNED CULTISTS

Much of the micro-level will depend on cultists, but instead of descending into a definition of what a cultist is, let's look at what the cultist represents. The best reference for a cultist has to be the Doozer from *Fraggle Rock*, and that probably warrants a lot of explanation, especially since you're reading an appendix that's supposed to look at noir gameplay.

The Doozers, for those who have never seen *Fraggle Rock*, are industrial little creatures who live to build grand cities and incredible architecture amid the caves of *Fraggle Rock*. They're these tiny creatures, always eager to build and develop. Contrast them against the much larger *Fraggles*, creatures who treat the Doozers with a certain futility and utility, because Doozer-buildings are a delicious snack for *Fraggles*. *Fraggles* don't really consider anything on a Doozer level, the Doozers just produce whatever they do, the *Fraggles* don't care about it, and then tear it apart with their bare hands and consume it.

Or to put it another way: small beings put considerable effort into constructing monoliths and cities only to have larger and indifferent beings come along and dash them to consumable pieces, leaving only insanity and destruction in their wake.

The cultist-as-Doozer analogy falls short, since it doesn't account for any of the emotional weight behind why a cultist looks to sacrifice herself or others to some titan of the outer beyond, nor does it speak to the promises of forever-not-coming power, but we can consider the cultist motivation here to fill in the blank, and bring us out of the Muppet discussion and into a noir one.

A cultist's actions are predicated on choice, with expected rewards for labors, only to have them likely denied or coming at an unforeseen cost. By that standard, it's hard to get more noir.

HOW MICRO AND MACRO INTERACT

Remember that there are two types of stories happening in any game of *Noir World*, one on a narrative level, where the Roles and Persons collide and interact, a sort of smaller world-and-story-in-a-bottle, and a larger level, the level where players are collaborating and co-creating interdependent elements.

Doozers are building a micro world, until the larger Fraggles come along to consume it. This has the effect of making Fraggles the destructive greater forces outside Doozer control. The macro-level is the Fraggle level, where Doozers aren't appreciated for their labor, and their architecture isn't appreciated for its geometry. At best, their structures are a food source, and at worst, an obstacle.

The micro world of a *Noir World Movie* is consumed by the larger world of the players. Roles are part of the story, although to themselves, they don't recognize that they're in a story; that's the separation that defines the only firm boundary between the micro- and macro- level. This distinction is breached when two things happen:

- A) The narrative demands emotion and decision-making with expected goals in mind.
- B) The consequences of any decision making aren't paid off in the expected fashion or the full breadth of consequences isn't understood at the time the action happens.

The cultist, and indeed any Role in *Noir World*, deals with (b) because the player, or the Elder Gods, engage with (a) while having a great deal of power over (b) through collaboration and imagination.

PUTTING TENTACLES TO IT

Unsupported horror, whether that's horror for horror's sake or horror that's stapled onto story like bad set-dressing, is going to stick out against the baked-in noir of any Role. And that's because noir isn't horror, and noir isn't even horrible, noir's a tragedy, and it's hard to see horror as a tragedy because the nature of horror has fear as its primary emotional hallmark.

This is why you can't just call Hook 'Tentacles' and slap on a new coat of sanity erosion onto a Movie. It will look like a child playing dress-up unless both the noir and the horror elements blend better to an altogether different and new palette – tragedy.

To do this, we have to think that the consequences and payoff of story is held off until the ending Montage, that everything in the first Act(s) are all setup, and that the responsibility of the ending Montage is to show the eventual downfall of everyone whose story wasn't already concluding en route to the ending Montage. It's all ready, it's all leading and gaining momentum, the same way all the horror ultimately leads to a confrontation with something so outside sanity that sanity is lost and the rewarded life is as much torture as it is beyond conception.

Likewise, an emotional weight, and not a narrative one, is placed on choices made during early Movie development. You don't have to ham-hand the City building, you don't have to force in some newly discovered temple or create Persons one step away from moustache-twirling obvious villains. It's just that the play-at-the-table choices need to step deeper into what will be more inevitably tragic.

As one playtest discussion went:

“The Movie is less about the great thing from outer space coming and wiping out the City as much as it is about the story leading us to darker and worse places, almost like the coming of something supernatural would be a welcome relief.” (credit: Aaron Sheffield)

So it’s not about flexing your Lovecraft muscles and showing off who can name the more obscure horror, it’s about the menace those horrors represent far more than their actual appearance. In fact, actually putting something like Cthulhu into the Movie will likely derail the entire story – no Noir World Role should ever come face-to-face with anything so beyond reality that the Movie becomes oppositional in nature. It’s not Roles versus Old Ones (there are plenty of great games for that), Noir World is about Roles grappling with the inevitable doom on top of the more immediate tragedy of choice and consequence as well.

Because of this, Cthulhu Noir doesn’t require any mechanical changes. There is no Sanity to track, no mechanic to account for it, because as with people, you cannot assess them so specifically. Yes, it’s possible to observe someone detached from reality to a great degree, but that’s the extreme of the scale, and the subtler gradations tracked mechanically as ‘Sanity Loss’ aren’t immediately visible any more than you can visually identify someone schizotypal or maniacal. Actions may betray and portray the measure of lost Sanity, but Directors and Roles alike are encouraged to not get bogged down in what is ultimately minutiae compared to the emotional and narrative outcomes driven and demanded by story. If desired, here are some suggestions, a modified Role and additional Hooks.

THE LIBRARIAN

The Citizen becomes the Librarian with a few simple changes.

- In Motivations, add +1 to Brains, and add -1 to Risk.
- Replace the Beginner's Luck Action with I Read That in a Book Once.

❑ I Read That in a Book Once

When you recall important information, roll ...
+ Brains, if you're trying to help make the Scene better.
+ Risk, if you're trying to look out for yourself.
+ Moxie, if you're trying to get recognized as being smart.

On a 10+, tell the Director what book you read, what the information is, and how it's helping right now.

On a 7-9, tell the Director what book your read and what the information is, and the Director will tell you how you're making a crucial error that will make things worse later.

On a 6-, the Director will offer you a terrible choice between saving yourself or someone you have a Hook with because of the information you're getting drastically wrong.

ADDITIONAL HOOKS FOR EVERY ROLE

Every Role adds the following 2 Hooks to their list of possible Hooks:

- ❑ You've craved power for so long, and you're so close to getting what you want, there's just this Role standing in the way. You'll need to take care of them before the end of this Movie.
- ❑ You're 99% certain this Role will help you in accomplishing your goals; all you have to do first is tell them about your dreams and hope they see the genius in them.

IN CLOSING

No other prohibitions exist to limit the Cthulhu or Lovecraftian elements of Movies. And I'm sure intrepid Directors will find ways to adapt classics like Masks of Nyarlathotep to a Noir World Trilogy, and I look forward to hearing all about it.

2: Source Material

Noir World comes out of a rich tradition of film noir and detective stories. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but this list will give you quite a few resources for getting your noir on.

BOOKS

The Jack Taylor series
by Ken Bruen

The Dresden Files
by Jim Butcher

The Postman Rings
Twice by James M Cain

The Felix Castor series
by Michael Carey

Anything written by
Raymond Chandler

Anything written by
Dashiell Hammett

Anything written
by Chester Himes

The Kenzie/Gennaro
series by Dennis Lehane

The October Daye series
by Seanan McGuire

Dark City: The Lost World of
Film Noir by Eddie Muller

The Tally McGinnis
series by Nancy Sanra

The Film Noir
Encyclopedia, by Silver,
Ward, Ursino, and Porfirio

The Loretta Lawson
series by Joan Smith

The Mike Hammer series
by Mickey Spillane

The Nero Wolfe series
by Rex Stout

The Jack Irish series
by Peter Temple

TELEVISION

Endeavour

Inspector Morse

Justified

Mr. Robot

Murder She Wrote

The Fall

The Killing

The Nero Wolfe Mysteries

The Rockford Files

The Wire

The X-Files

Twin Peaks

Veronica Mars
(just the first season though)

Wallander
(the one with Kenneth Branagh)

MOVIES

Arsenic and Old Lace

Rope

Brick

Devil in a Blue Dress

Cape Fear (either version)

The Grifters

Chinatown

Sin City

Clue

Sin City: A Dame to Kill For

D.O.A.

Strangers on a Train

Blood Simple

The Big Sleep

Double Indemnity

The Maltese Falcon

Heist

The Naked City

Fargo

The Postman Always
Rings Twice

Key Largo

The Sting (skip the sequel)

Kiss Kiss Bang Bang

The Thin Man

LA Confidential

The Third Man

Lady on a Train

Touch of Evil

Miller's Crossing

Vertigo

Mildred Pierce

Zodiac

Night of the Hunter

3: *The Third Man*

The *Third Man* is a 1949 film noir written by Graham Greene and directed by Carol Reed. It is considered by many to be the greatest British movie of all time, and it's been a subject of debate as to how true this is. But in terms of film noir, it's not hard to put **The Third Man** in the majority of top-5 or even top-3 lists when you look at its story construction, the performances, and probably most importantly, the way it was filmed. This is a beautiful movie, and I'd strongly encourage anyone who appreciates both film noir and beautiful use of light and shadow to check it out.

The Roles for this Noir World Movie are as follows:

ACTOR	CHARACTER NAME	ROLE
Joseph Cotten	Holly Martins	The Citizen
Alida Valli	Anna Schmidt	The Celebrity
Orson Wells	Harry Lime	The Career Criminal
Trevor Howard	Major Calloway	The Good Cop
Bernard Lee	Sergeant Paine	The War Vet

The Era for this film is the default 1940s, and the City is modeled after 1949 Vienna, where it is divided into quadrants based on Allied control: the British, the Russians, the French, and the Americans. However, and this is important as the Movie advances, at the center of the City, it's international territory, where the Allies split control.

Because the City is divided, the Locations created are given an additional Fact based on their location (as in "The Party Hall" +In the British quadrant +A place where people get together to hear speeches). This division within the City creates some tension as each quadrant is run by a distinct set of rules and bears different violations.

How This Breakdown Works

Every Scene in the Movie is numbered and the timestamp is based on the actual film's runtime, so that if you're watching the film, you can somewhat sync up what's happening on-screen (so you can see the Scene in action).

Act 1

Either the War Vet or the Good Cop is Directing first, and they provide a narrative voiceover that explains the City being divided and describes a few of the landmarks that dot the Cityscape.

SCENE 1

(3:13) We're introduced to Holly Martins, the Citizen, coming off a train to meet his friend Harry, the Career Criminal who has offered him a job based on a set of Hooks they established prior to the Movie. We find out that Holly is broke, and very much out of place here. We start at The Train Station with its Fact +The best way into or out of the city.

Leaving the train station, Holly ends up walking to Harry's Apartment, a second Location in the film, and its Fact is +Incredibly opulent and practically a palace.

(4:02) Though Harry's Apartment has no Person (because it's Harry's), the Director quickly introduces a neighbor to let Holly know that Harry is dead, hit by a car, and that only ten minutes prior to this Scene, some people took the coffin away.

SCENE 2

(4:50) Our new Director is the Career Criminal, and now Holly walks (still carrying his suitcase) to the cemetery to track down Harry's funeral services. Holly has a run-in with the Good Cop as well as the Celebrity here, as everyone watches the service. The Scene wraps up with Holly meeting Calloway and getting a ride back into the City, but first they make a detour to a new Location "The Bar" +A great place to drink away your problems.

SCENE 3

(7:29) New Scene, the new Director is the Celebrity. She's got Holly and Calloway a few drinks in, and Calloway rolls Talk It Out to get some information out of Holly about his past connection to Harry. He rolled pretty well, because Holly is laying out a hefty amount of backstory. Here, too, we see that the Citizen is a novelist of middling import, some Roles having heard about his work, others haven't. This Scene will later introduce the War Vet, because a drunken Holly will nearly roll Fight It Out against the Good Cop but gets intercepted by Scene's end. This is also the Scene where the Citizen practically becomes the Private Eye, or at least will try and act like one for the rest of the Movie.

SCENE 4

(9:42) New Scene, new Director. The Good Cop is directing again, because the Citizen and War Vet are in the Scene, even though one of them should be in charge. The new Location is the Sacher Hotel +A military-run hotel trying desperately to stay booked and popular. Here, the War Vet introduces a Person without a specific Location, a Mr. Crabbins, who will meet the Citizen and want to talk writing.

SCENE 5

(12:54) New Scene, new Director. The Celebrity directs the Citizen and a few Persons in this Scene. At a meeting at Café Mozart +A place for meeting all kinds of people, so that he can get some information about Harry's death. Holly meets "the Baron", a Person without a Location, +A frequent associate of the Career Criminal. With a pretty decent Talk It Out roll, and counting on the idea that Persons always take the most story-interesting results, Holly learns about Harry's accident, or at least a version of it. When the neighbor NPC seems rather dismissive of the story, Holly gets some conflicting information and sets out to get the truth.

SCENE 6

(17:31) Our next Scene talks place at the Josefstadt Theatre (+Culture happens here). The Good Cop is directing the Citizen and the Celebrity. In the dressing room, the Celebrity gives the Citizen a few more details about Harry, and there's just a hint of romance in the air over tea and talking. Holly learns that the Celebrity's hook with the Career Criminal has something to do with their past relationship, though it's over now, and not just because Harry is dead. A lot of what the Celebrity says corroborates the Baron's story from the earlier Scene, though the Celebrity adds in a new Person, the doctor, Winkel, who might have something to say later.

Note: Winkel is one of the primary sources for the Disgraced Doctor Role.

SCENE 7

(22:01) The next Scene takes us back to Harry's Apartment, as the Citizen and Celebrity are now partners (more or less) in this impromptu investigation. The neighbor gives a few more details about the accident, specifically about the number of people present at the time of the accident and how the inquest of the death turned out.

SCENE 8

(26:04) The Career Criminal is the Director, and the Citizen/Celebrity couple have walked back to the Celebrity's apartment now (+There's a strange old lady always around) only to discover the police are searching it. Or more specifically, the Good Cop is rolling Check It Out a few times to see what he can unearth. At some point, the Good Cop rolls well because the Celebrity's been hiding +some forged papers, which adds some complications to her life. This sends the Citizen off to find Winkel.

SCENE 9

(32:35) Winkel is somewhere between a doctor and a mortician living in an +Overly decorated and still somehow dark home. Holly bumbles his way through a Talk It Out roll and finds out some disconcerting things about Harry's accident that don't quite jibe with what he knows so far.

SCENE 10

(34:47) The Citizen is now the Director, as the Celebrity and the Good Cop are hashing out the discovery of her +forged papers. After they exchange some Talk It Out rolls, and the Good Cop gets the better of the situation, he lets her know that the Career Criminal was running a smuggling racket that withheld medicine from a local hospital, and that Harry Lime isn't the nice guy she believed him to be.

SCENE 11

(36:44) The War Vet directs our Citizen and Celebrity to a quick Scene at a new Location, the Casanova (+Alleged music meets alleged food) where a number of Persons interrupt their drinks to talk to them about the investigation. Enter one more Person, Popescu, another Career Criminal who specialized in paperwork. Popescu adds another dimension to the accident, but inadvertently puts Holly even more onto the scent of what really happened, rather than dissuading him.

SCENE 12

(42:51) The Celebrity and Citizen head back to her apartment under the Good Cop's direction and have a personal moment together. This not-quite romance builds over shared reminiscences of Harry. After a conversation, on the walk back to Harry's apartment where they had planned to talk to the neighbor, they discover the neighbor has been killed, one Scene after telling Popescu that the neighbor had some details about Harry's accident. The growing crowd suspects Holly of the murder, sending our reluctant investigative couple on the run. After avoiding the crowd, Holly makes his way to a car that speeds him to the International area of the City, so that Holly can deliver his lecture on behalf of Cribbins.

SCENE 13

(55:55) The Celebrity directs this Scene, where the Good Cop and the Citizen finally meet back up, and the Citizen is told about the Career Criminal's racket and the hospital medications. It's a pretty information-heavy Scene, but the Movie needs it for backbone this late into the first of its two Acts (especially because the second Act is so short).

SCENE 14

(1:00:07) Back at Harry's Apartment and under the War Vet's direction, the Celebrity receives flowers from the Citizen, a sign that after all this, he's heading out of Vienna. The Celebrity reveals the details of her previous meeting with the Good Cop, putting everyone on the same page in terms of knowing about Harry's criminality.

We take a quick Act break here at 1:05:15, with the reveal that the Career Criminal isn't dead after all!

Act 2

SCENE 15

(1:06:00) Fresh off the reveal of the Career Criminal, the second Act starts with the Celebrity directing the meeting between the Citizen and the Career Criminal, which ends in very little said and a footchase through the Viennese streets. It introduces us to a critical location in the Second Act, the Sewers +It connects everywhere to everywhere else. The Citizen brings in the War Vet and Good Cop to explain what happened, and after a terse back-and-forth, the Sewer entrance is discovered when the Good Cop rolls really well on Check It Out.

SCENE 16

(1:09:01) Back at the Cemetery, the Career Criminal directs this Scene where the Citizen, the Good Cop, and the War Vet exhume what they think to be the Career Criminal's body, only to discover it isn't. The Career Criminal also uses a Meanwhile Director Action to cut back to the Celebrity's apartment, showing the police coming for her and later interrogating her.

SCENE 17

(1:15:52) The War Vet directs this Scene where the Career Criminal and the Citizen meet at another new location, The Amusement Park (+An unlikely place to conduct business). The meeting is tense, with the Citizen telling the Criminal to turn himself in, and the Criminal giving a million and one reasons about why he can't and won't. This also involves the Celebrity to some degree, and at the end of the Scene, there's just a hint of menace that the Citizen will pay for his involving the police in the first place.

SCENE 18

(1:21:18) The Citizen and the Good Cop meet up again under the Celebrity's direction, and hash out a plan to deal with the Career Criminal once and for all. This also leads to arrangements of the Citizen and the Celebrity getting out of Vienna, which immediately propels us into ...

SCENE 19

(1:23:24) A War-Vet-directed Scene at the Train Station where the Citizen and the Celebrity meet. Of course, this is all part of the ruse to get the Career Criminal caught, but initially this starts as a Scene where the Celebrity and Citizen can fare thee well. It ends after a few cutaways to everyone (including the Career Criminal, Good Cop, and War Vet) narrating the end of this Scene as well as the final 15 minutes of the film as a Montage.

The Montage:

Snared, the Career Criminal makes for the Sewers with the War Vet and Good Cop giving chase. The Citizen takes another route beneath Vienna's surface, though they all meet up for the final pursuit that gets the Career Criminal shot by the Citizen as he nearly makes good his escape.

In the final moments, the Celebrity rebuffs the Citizen, as he is a changed man.

4: *The Maltese Falcon*

The Maltese Falcon is a 1941 film directed by John Huston, best known for starring Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Peter Lorre, and Sidney Greenstreet. It is considered by many to be one of the greatest film noir ever produced (though personally I think it's second-best only to **The Big Sleep**, another Bogart film), and along with **The Big Sleep** and **Double Indemnity**, forms the foundational triumvirate of films that helped create Noir World in the first place.

ACTOR	CHARACTER NAME	ROLE
Humphrey Bogart	Sam Spade	The Private Eye
Mary Astor	Ruth Wonderly aka Brigid O'Shaughnessy	The Fatale
Peter Lorre	Joel Cairo	The Mook
Sidney Greenstreet	Kasper Gutman	The Gangster

There are two points of interest here – first, Lorre's Mook is not the typical heavy lug bruiser. He's in a lot of ways the obverse – small, conniving, and shrewd. Second, for much of Noir World's early development The Gangster was going to be the last of the "Base 6" Roles available, taking the place of The War Vet. It was only due to my grabbing the War Vet for a playtest off the pile of papers that the Gangster was relegated to later testing and eventual inclusion.

The Era for this Movie is the default 1940s., in 1941 San Francisco.

Act 1

SCENE 1

(1:04) The opening scroll text is Director narration, the set up for the Movie's use of a MacGuffin, an object at the heart of the story. The Gangster is our first Director as we open on a Location, the Spade and Archer Detective Agency, where we meet the Private Eye, Sam Spade. The Location's Person is Effie, the office secretary, who will also introduce the Fatale by the name Wonderly. They talk for a bit, and the Private Eye is presented a case: to find a man named Thursby (another Person created within the City). As the conversation progresses, another Person enters the Scene, the Private Eye's partner, Miles Archer, who promises to go later that night and track down Thursby.

Note: The office is not the Private Eye's Location from their Belongings because we'll later see the Private Eye's Apartment.

Note 2: Effie the secretary is one-half of the template for the Girl Friday. The other half is Kat Kuhl, who you can hear on the One Shot Podcast's playthrough of *Noir World*.

SCENE 2

(6:04) The Mook, our new Director, treats us first to a quick *Meanwhile* of Archer getting shot on the corner of Bush and Stockton Street before our next Scene takes place at the Private Eye's Apartment. He's woken by a phone call from another Person, Detective Tom Polhaus, who bears the bad news of Archer's murder. Our Private Eye quickly phones the office secretary to make her handle the now-widowed Mrs. Archer, I guess because our Private Eye doesn't feel too confident in his ability to *Talk It Out* very well.

SCENE 3

(8:05) At the corner of Bush and Stockton (the murder scene), the Private Eye does have to roll Talk It Out and does okay for himself, revealing a little information in exchange for a lot of information from Polhaus about the crime scene. When the Private Eye heads back to his apartment, he's disturbed a second time by the cops, Polhaus and Dundy, who think he killed Archer. He didn't, and after another Talk It Out roll, he's able to put some breathing room between him and the law.

SCENE 4

(13:28) With our new Director, the Fatale, opening this Scene with a quick recap that the Thursby and Archer murders were linked, we come back to the detective's office where he orders the name changed and then has to talk to the mourning widow Archer. It goes about as well as expected when you roll a 6-. Compound this with a stern talk from Effie, and our Private Eye is really rolling the dice poorly. Wonderly calls him and sends him over to the next Scene, at the Coronet Apartments, Apartment 1001.

SCENE 5

(17:04) In apartment 1001, the Private Eye and Fatale talk, with the Fatale revealing that her name is O'Shaughnessy not Wonderly, and after a sharp back-and-forth, the Private Eye still helps the Fatale (which is really what she's after).

SCENE 6

(22:45) Back to the office we go, with the old partner out and the office renamed. He quickly confers with his attorney (a Person really only created for this conversation, so that the Private Eye can keep the law off his back), before our Director the Fatale brings the Mook into the Movie. The Mook comes in with the promise of paying a substantial sum of money for the discovery of the Movie's MacGuffin, although things get a little testy, and during the course of their conversation, the Mook's player made finger guns, so the conversation shifted to something more aggressive. This led to a Fight It Out Roll that the Mook (for the sake of a good narrative) conceded, and the Private Eye lays him out flat. With the Mook handled, a good Check It Out roll gets Spade more information on the Mook. We end the Scene the reveal that the Mook is staying at the Hotel Belvedere, another Location for later, just before the Mook tries one fruitless search for the MacGuffin.

SCENE 7

(30:20) After shaking a quick police tail (a Meanwhile provided by our new Director, the Gangster), we're back at the Coronet Apartments and another conversation between the Fatale and the Private Eye. The conversation takes a turn for the romantic just after Spade tells O'Shaughnessy about Cairo (the Mook), and the Scene ends with Spade arranging to take the Fatale to his place ... for her safety.

SCENE 8

(33:33) The Gangster is our Director again, because this Scene puts the Fatale, the Private Eye, and later the Mook into the Private Eye's Apartment. Again, the Mook draws a gun and gets knocked down for his trouble (taking 1 Injury, unlike last time). Then the Gangster brings Dundy and Polhaus back in, so the Private Eye gets extra lucky with a Talk It Out roll and spins a pretty decent lie that pacifies everyone. After the Mook and the police depart (not together), the Fatale fills the Private Eye in on the MacGuffin.

SCENE 9

(47:48) Back to Spade's office, where Effie lets Spade know that Gutman (our final Role in the Movie, and the only one we've not seen yet) called before, and that he'll call again. This segues into one more meeting with the Fatale, and then a quick meeting with the widow Archer. Spade's luck completely runs out, and he consistently rolls poorly through all these Talk It Out efforts.

SCENE 10

(51:06) We're finally introduced to the Gangster when our Mook Director puts the Private Eye into Gutman's Penthouse Location. The two meet, chat, and the Private Eye doesn't like the Gangster's threats, making some of his own before leaving the Penthouse. We take our Act break here, because the Movie picks up speed from here on out.

Act 2

SCENE 11

(55:20) Fresh from our break, Spade talks to the cops, who have brought in a District Attorney, and it's in this Scene we start to see just how much the Private Eye is trying to play as many sides against the others as possible. Once he leaves the interrogation downtown, two of the Gangster's unnamed goons pick him up and take him back to the Penthouse.

Scene 12

(57:31) Back at the Penthouse, and the Fatale is our Director for another meeting between Spade and Gutman. After a good bit of info-dump about the MacGuffin, the important thing to note here is that the Gangster slips the Private Eye a Mickey (also known as a Mickey Finn, a drug usually put in drinks to incapacitate someone), and following the KO rules (see page 76), he collapses giving the Mook and Gangster time to depart the Scene. Time passes, and when Spade wakes up, he's alone in the Penthouse. A Check It Out reveals some information about the MacGuffin's possible whereabouts before the Scene ends.

SCENE 13

(1:06:08) The Private Eye is our Director for a quick narration about where the MacGuffin was (a ship), and how that ship is now on fire. We cut back to the detective's office where the ship's captain dies holding a badly wrapped MacGuffin.

Note: The Private Eye goes to stash the MacGuffin, and on the card with the location he writes "City" (1:10:11), which is one of the reasons why all Cities in Noir World are just referred to as such.

Act 3

MONTAGE

(1:12:26) In these final Scenes, there is no single Director, as all the Roles converge on the Private Eye's Apartment. The Gangster and Mook want the MacGuffin, and the Private Eye's plan starts to spring into motion. After some crackling Talk It Out rolls, the Private Eye calls secretary Effie to deliver the MacGuffin to the apartment, and the Gangster assesses it to be a fake (1:28:43) before taking his Mook and exiting the film (1:31:27).

(1:31:28) We're left now with the final bit of wrap-up in the film, where the Private Eye confronts the Fatale about the murders of Thursby and Archer and her attempts to get her hands on the MacGuffin. The police arrive as they so often do, but the Private Eye no longer covers for the Fatale, and she's taken in, along with the MacGuffin, the Gangster, and the Mook. This leaves the Private Eye standing alone, not much richer, and without a partner ... but at least he has his moral code beneath his slick veneer.

5: Final Words

When I was a little boy, I wished I had a life as cool as in the movies or on television. I wanted to have a life of adventure like Indiana Jones. I wanted to be as cool as MacGyver, and help people the way Archie Goodwin did. I escaped into and lost myself in those movies, shows, and books, because it seemed like they were always having a much better virtual existence than my real one.

It was at some point around middle school I started reading almost as many detective stories as comic books, because being a detective seemed to be cooler than any other job I saw. They dressed cool, they talked cool, and they had a swagger an insecure, sickly, and geeky kid desperately wanted, mainly because maybe the cute girl in gym class or Spanish class would pay attention to him and want to go to the school dance. But also, there was an appeal to the voiceover in old movies. It was like being in their head, and it seemed like their head was way more rough and confident and capable than mine. The fact that everything looked cooler in black and white helped too.

When I moved away from Mickey Spillane and Rex Stout, I went to *Sherlock Holmes*. It was on TV, on that channel my grandparents watched, and it was unlike anything I had seen before. Here was a guy, slicked black hair, incredibly dressed, absolutely being the smartest guy in the room and getting respected for it. And the mysteries were, for a young kid, hard to figure out initially. It wasn't like some of the shows on TV where the first guest star you spot is either the victim or the criminal. It was provocative. It made me think. It made me transition from television Sherlock to book Sherlock. Now Conan Doyle's hero was the new center of my thinking, and I thought he was the quintessential detective.

Fast forward many, many years. I'm now working in the gaming industry. I've worked with my friends to turn their ideas from things in conversations into books for sale. I feel envious, not because they're making scads more money than I am, but because they've made their own games. I wanted that feeling. I wanted that accomplishment. So I started writing what I called *The Great Game*, based on a Sherlock Holmes quote. The game was going to be a chance for players to be like Holmes, smartly deducing and piecing together clues to solve crimes. I loved the idea. I remember a favorite childhood board game with the same themes, and I wanted to translate part of that atmosphere to something more like my other gaming experiences. What I was unprepared for, what I was clueless about, was how hard it is to take an idea out of your head, an idea you think is fully formed, and put it down on paper, thinking you're just transcribing it and any reader can come along and understand it perfectly.

The Great Game used about forty to sixty dice per player and a wagering system a lot like Liar's Dice. At least there was supposed to be. It exists on paper in a few paragraphs with very few notes and a lot of bullet points. It's not quite embarrassing to think about or talk about, but it's very much a 'first idea' that I just wanted to have on paper so I could say "Hey friends, I too am making a thing!" rather than making a game I'm actually proud of. It's taken over 40 different drafts to go from a Sherlock Holmes clone to what you have in front of you now.

It's not that Sherlock Holmes wouldn't have worked: it just has a really finite scope. Playing a detective is great, but everyone wants to be the best detective, and everyone wants to have an epic case – playing a game about catching a purse snatcher is often less exciting than the adventure where you trek across Europe and ultimately fake your death at the end. And how many times can you do that? Maybe once or twice before the glow wears off. The other issue was the fact that there are multiple players – how many Sherlock Holmeses could there be solving a case? I was playing too small and was too scared creatively, because I was afraid of appearing stupid or foolish. Also, in talking to people, they wanted to play other parts of the Sherlock Holmes world – they wanted to be the criminals and the cops in addition to the detective.

I spent about three months NOT writing a thing, because I was afraid to go back to the page and didn't want to feel like a failure. I realized that I wanted to make a game that anyone could pick up, and that I wanted to use a pre-existing mechanical system, so that I'd be spared making up brand new mechanics from scratch. In those months, I went back to my old movies and books, back to the *Thin Man* and *The Big Sleep* and *LA Confidential* and *The Black Dahlia*. I wanted to give people a chance to tell stories with awful people in terrible circumstances of their own design, and I wanted people to have fun double-crossing each other before the guns came out and everyone went down in a hail of bullets.

My first thought was to use Fate Core, but I struggled to find a way to have players double-cross each other. Fate Core is a great system, and I love working with it, but it wasn't doing what I wanted to do. I looked at GUMSHOE and found it to be a little too crunchy and numbers-driven for what I wanted. Initially I was intimidated by *Apocalypse World*. I didn't get it, it seemed like very little game and way more open-ended conversation than what I expected a game to be, so I tried *Dungeon World*. I will admit to stupidly thinking if I cloned its layout and tweaked a few things, *Noir World* (as I started calling it) would be just as successful.

The problem was that even though I had picked a mechanical engine to drive my game, I was serving two masters – I thought I needed to be faithful to the game’s parentage while still having so much of my own signature to it. It didn’t occur to me until many, many drafts into the writing and re-writing that a game is less about the author and their spotlight and way more about a shared experience given to the players. I wasn’t thinking about the players, I wasn’t making a thing for players, I was still making a game so that people thought I was smart enough and good enough to be their friend.

So I got my head out of my ass and started thinking about two questions – “What do I want people to feel while playing my game?” and “Are there things I’m really enthusiastic about that can rub off on people playing the game?” I didn’t come to those questions quickly, but the more I thought about the process of development, the questions came up. I dissected as much of every *World game as I could immediately find, trying to see if there were specific mechanics that expressed the prime parts of play, that I could model things after. If I was going to build something, it was going to have good genetics.

I went to Gen Con 2014 with a gut full of nerves and a messenger bag full of blank note cards and poorly formatted pages I printed the day before my flight. I was nervous, and had no idea how my “game” (I didn’t even want to call it that yet; it didn’t seem good enough or complete enough) would play out. I expected it to work for about thirty minutes, and then my enthusiasm would slip, my panic would show, and things would come to a screeching halt.

The first time it ever got played was in a hotel bar. I was nervous and nauseated, and from what I remember, I made a lot of apologies and told people after about 45 minutes that I didn’t know what else to do. They, however, didn’t seem to want to stop. There had been a scene at a funeral, where a dead mobster’s mistress and wife got into a soap opera catfight in the grave. I still can’t believe it worked. It might not have been a full game, but there was enough on paper, and I could pull enough out of my ass to give a few people a really good time. I am forever indebted to the five people at the table. Thank you.

By the time the first actual “proper” game at Gen Con 2014 came around on that Sunday, I had jettisoned any idea that the game didn’t work at all, and now I just wanted to get the ball rolling and get out of the way. I was lucky to get some very engaged and enthusiastic players, all of whom took time afterward to give me good feedback and patiently listen to me thank them for taking a few hours of their Sunday afternoon when they could have been doing countless other things. Thank you everyone.

5: Final Words

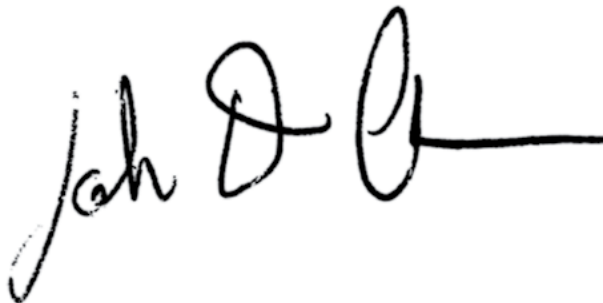
Between Gen Con 2014 and Metatopia 2014, as my personal life accelerated, I stayed motivated to work on Noir World, aware that it now had potential to be a game, eventually. I took all the Gen Con notes and kept working and re-working. I talked to friends; I watched more movies with a legal pad in hand. I committed to making Noir World into something I could show off at Metatopia.

And show it off I did. Some of the people who played it were the people from whose games I built Noir World's ideas. Some of the people who played it were award-winning friends of mine who I consider a surrogate family. Once I was done puking my guts out into garbage cans in hotel parking lots, I showed them what I had worked on. The game they played is roughly the grandfather of this one. I realized that I had found good footing and had a game people enjoyed – even to the point where I could get up from the table, run to the bathroom to nervously yak up my guts again, and come back to a room of people still playing without decaying into a riot or an argument.

I am proud to say that after more than forty drafts, I have made a game I am proud of. I have made a game that hopefully delivers a good time to you and your friends. I have made a game based on a thing I am crazy passionate about. And I want you to have fun with it.

Share your fun experiences with people on twitter: @noirworldrpg is the game's Twitter account, and #noirworld is its hashtag. You can email me anytime at noirworldrpg@gmail.com.

Thank you for picking up this book. I hope you have a good time possibly getting double-crossed and possibly gut-shot on the floor of a dingy motel room, and the last thing you see is the person you thought you loved breaking your heart and leaving you to take the fall for what you thought was the perfect crime. Or not. I don't judge. Just go have a good time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. A." with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

6: *Kickstarter Backers*

Noir World has been made possible thanks to our Kickstarter backers. We would like to thank the following people.

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Thank you all.

7: Sheets & Handouts

Basic Actions

■ Check It Out

When you want to examine, investigate, or look at things, roll+Brains.

On a 10+, the Director will tell you something important and useful about what (or who) you're investigating.

On a 7-9, choose one of the following, and the Director will tell you what happens:

- *What you discover makes things more complicated for everyone in the Movie. (This may lead to a new Scene, but doesn't have to.)*
- *You're about to get in over your head and have to do something you're going to regret. (This may lead to a new Scene)*
- *Someone is about to offer you a choice you're not going to like. At all. (A Role or Person can come into the current Scene.)*

On a 6-, you misinterpret what you find, and it leads you into a situation where (choose one):

- *You take 1 Injury trying to get yourself out of it.*
- *You pursue a completely wrong lead that will affect a relationship you have with another Hook.*
- *In the next Scene you're in, whatever you've misinterpreted puts you in danger.*

■ Help Out

When you help someone do something, roll.

On a 10+, your help grants them a +1.

On a 7-9, your help gives them a +1, but you either put yourself in danger OR do something to make the current situation worse for both of you.

On a 6-, you're not helpful at all, and the Director will tell you how your help didn't pan out the way you intended AND now you've done something to jeopardize EVERYONE in the Scene.

■ Fight It Out

When you attempt to injure someone or something else, roll+Risk.

On a 10+, you succeed, and any weapon you're using does its full Injury.

On a 7-9, you succeed, and any weapons used do half their full Injury (round up), but also either expose yourself to a counterattack you can't avoid OR expose someone else in the Scene (not involved in the fight) to an attack they CANNOT avoid.

On a 6-, tell the Director what happens to make the fight more dangerous while it continues OR the Director will offer you a way out of the fight, but with a serious risk to you more than anyone else in the fight.

■ Talk It Out

When you attempt to converse with someone else and try persuade them to do something or agree with you, roll+Moxie.

On a 10+, the person you're speaking to agrees with you, for now. They may even help you, if they want.

On a 7-9, you can only get what you IF (their choice) you make a promise you're not sure you can keep OR the other person will betray at a critical moment.

On a 6-, your efforts backfire and the Role or Person gains something they may use immediately against you.

Director Actions

DIRECTOR'S CODE

Breathe the noir

“Yes, And”

“Yeah, You Are...”

“Tell Me More...”

Address the characters and their situation

Mask your Actions

Encourage tough choices over easy ones

Give them enough rope to hang themselves

Reward tragedy with more of the same

Pain and suffering are on the menu

Tie loose ends into knots

Everything goes to the plot

Take suggestions

Share the Movie

THE ESTABLISHING SHOT AND CALL SHEET

Free Action

In thinking like a movie, you should describe what the Roles are seeing, both as participants in the Scene and as an audience. Describe what people see, describe the Location, describe the traffic or the movement or the weather or the lighting. Paint a picture so people know they're not acting in some undefined space.

The Establishing Shot is a free Action because every Scene needs to start with description, and players need to know who's in the Scene. This is particularly true in the first Scene of Act 1, because that Scene can establish a tone to be carried through the rest of the Act or Movie.

FADE TO BLACK

Free Action

There are parts of Scenes that can be less exciting than other parts. No one wants to watch someone sleep for six hours. No one pays attention to the boring parts of a stakeout. When you need to end a Scene and pass Director responsibilities to another person, Fade to Black.

OTHER DIRECTOR ACTIONS

Limited Action

- Harm something or someone
- Introduce someone new into the Scene
- Later on....
- Make them risk something
- Meanwhile & Flashback
- Offer them a terrible choice
- Pay off something previously set up
- Set up something to pay off later

8: Common Role Sets

There are a lot of interesting combinations of roles that you can play. Here are a particularly good set of combinations for you to consider for your movie.

For a Law & Order experience...

- The Good Cop
- The Dirty Cop
- The Attorney
- The Disgraced Doctor
- The Citizen
- The Reporter

For a Murder Mystery experience...

- The Reporter
- The Citizen
- The Girl/Boy Friday
- The Socialite
- The Private Eye
- The Good Cop

For a Classic Movie experience...

- The Good Cop
- The Dirty Cop
- The Private Eye
- The Fatale
- The Mook
- The War Vet

For a Gotham, Hell's Kitchen, or particularly Heroic experience ...

- The Vigilante
- The Good Cop
- The Dirty Cop
- The Chaos
- The Politician
- The Disgraced Doctor

For a Sin City experience...

- The Good Cop
- The Mook
- The Career Criminal
- The Gangster
- The Gambler
- The Fatale

For a Hamilton experience...

- The War Vet
- The Politician
- The Fatale
- The Citizen
- The Socialite
- The Politician

8: Common Role Sets

For 3 players who want an action experience ...

- The Dirty Cop
- The Career Criminal or The Fatale
- The Good Cop

For 3 players who want to fix the City

- The Politician
- The Gangster
- The Socialite

For 3 players who want a heist story ...

- The Ex-Con
- The Career Criminal
- The Mook

For 4 players who want a 1-Act Drama

- The Celebrity
- The Musician
- The Attorney
- The Ex-Con

For 4 players who want a family drama ...

- The Fatale
- The Citizen
- The Gambler
- The Socialite

For 5 players who want deep backstory connection...

- The Career Criminal
- The Starry-Eyed Kid
- The Musician
- The Ex-Con
- The War Vet

From playtesting: The Bank Robbery Double Date

- The Dirty Cop
- The Dirty Cop
- The Fatale
- The Mook

From playtesting: The Curious Cabinet of Dr Wu

- The Disgraced Doctor
- The Socialite
- The Career Criminal
- The Mook
- The Dirty Cop
- The Gambler

From the One Shot Podcast

- The Reporter
- The Reporter
- The Mook
- The Socialite

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