



GOING STUNTLESS

Stunts are a lot of fun, but they are a little more detail than many people are comfortable with. Sometimes, such as when playing a pickup game, they can slow things down, especially if players need to stop and look up what exactly their stunts can do.

To handle this, one option is to set stunts aside, and slightly expand the scope of what an aspect invocation can do. This requires very few changes – while it means that invokes may be a little more common, it just means the GM is going to have to be a little more diligent on compels, but that’s a good thing.

The general idea is that an invocation is comparable to a stunt. Now, if everyone knows the stunts well enough that you can do this off the top of their head, then great, but if you know stunts that well, then you probably don’t need this option in the first place.

DRAMATIC INVOCATIONS

A dramatic invocation is just like a regular invocation, except it can do a few more things than a normal invocation. Only a character’s personal aspects (the one on his sheet) may be dramatically invoked, and the process is the same as for a regular invocation (requiring the expenditure of a fate point).

A dramatic invocation can grant a bonus or reroll as normal, or it may do one of the following.

Skill Substitution – The character may roll one skill in lieu of another. This must be described in a way that makes sense, but so long as it is dramatically appropriate, then this is a simple swap.

Example: Jet Black launches a flying tackle at one of Der Blitzmann’s thunder drones. He could substitute athletics for

fists in this situation. Sally Slick, on the other hand, might try to hit a weak spot and substitute engineering for fists.

Introduce a Gadget or Artifact – This is basically the same as the universal gadget stunt. As such, I’ll just quote the appropriate passage:

A universal gadget is, essentially, a personal gadget that you may design on the fly, in the middle of a situation, as if your character happened to have “just the thing” in his satchel at the precise moment when it was needed. This gadget follows the same design rules as a personal gadget (above), but is only allowed two improvements, not three. Once defined, the gadget is locked in for the remainder of the session. As with personal gadgets, see page 213 for detailed gadget design rules.

Rather than a gadget, the character can have just the right tool or a supply of cash.

Introduce an NPC – Similar to introducing a gadget, the player may introduce an NPC who is favorably inclined towards (though not slavishly so) the PC and declare one fact about them (“He’s the chief of police”).

Display of Knowledge - Make a declaration attempt as described under “Declaring Minor Details” (see page 87 of the text) . If you get at least one shift, you successfully declare one aspect; for every two shifts you gain beyond the first, you may declare one additional aspect about the subject in question (so two aspects total at 3 shifts, three aspects total at 5 shifts, etc). If you opt to declare only one aspect in total, you may instead convert these additional shifts into non-aspect facts .

Make a Move – The character can move three zones rather than the usual one without making a roll. This extra movement can be

used to overcome zone thresholds, so it may be a burst of speed, a heroic leap, a spiderlike climb, or anything else of the sort.

Act Fast – The character may automatically win initiative, or may perform a defense or block action outside of their normal turn.

LIMITS ON DRAMATIC INVOCATION

While dramatic invocations are potent, this makes it all the more important that GM's keep the specific aspect in mind when they're used. If a player uses a "girl in every port" aspect to introduce an NPC, that NPC should have a romantic entanglement with the PC. Similarly "Girl in every port" might justify a movement bonus when jumping out a bedroom window, it's not going to be usable that way in a back alley brawl (unless it's a very strange brawl indeed).

LOCKED ASPECTS

Sometimes characters have certain abilities or tricks that they want to have in effect at all times. When this comes up, the player and GM should discuss the circumstances of the bonus and when that is settled on, the player may spend a fate point to "lock" an aspect, and get the permanent benefit. These benefits are basically the same as the dramatic invocations, but focused to reflect gimmicks. Generally speaking the locked ability will be less flexible than the dramatic invocation, but it's "always on" status should compensate.

This is a situation where the stunt list can be a handy guideline for what a locked aspect can do, and in most situations, a stunt is a perfectly acceptable example of what a locked aspect can buy.

For example: Jet Black makes regular use of the skill substitution of athletics for piloting, so he wants to lock that in rather than have to pay for it every time. He also has an Amazing Jet Pack he'd like to not have to buy in every time. He locks down his "Motorhead" and "Amazing Jet Pack" stunts so that he permanently has the skill substitution. He also opts to take a stunt (personal

gadget) so the jetpack has a few more intrinsic abilities.

A locked aspect may no longer be invoked, though it can be compelled and tagged as normal. The player must spend a fate point for each locked aspect at the start of each session, effectively reducing the number of fate points they begin play with.

CINEMATIC THRESHOLD

Because this is pretty fast and loose, it may make characters more capable than some GMs are comfortable with. On the other hand, some GMs may want even **more** action. Both options are easily addressed.

LESS CINEMATIC PLAY

The player should pick some number of his aspects and mark them in some way. Only those aspects may be dramatically invoked. The exact number is a matter of taste – 5 is probably a good starting point, adjusted up or down to taste.

MORE CINEMATIC PLAY

The GM may allow dramatic invocations of **all** aspects, including those on scenes, temporary aspects from tags and so on. The GM may wish to limit it so that it excludes free tags (so a dramatic invocation always costs a fate point) but even that limit can be discarded.