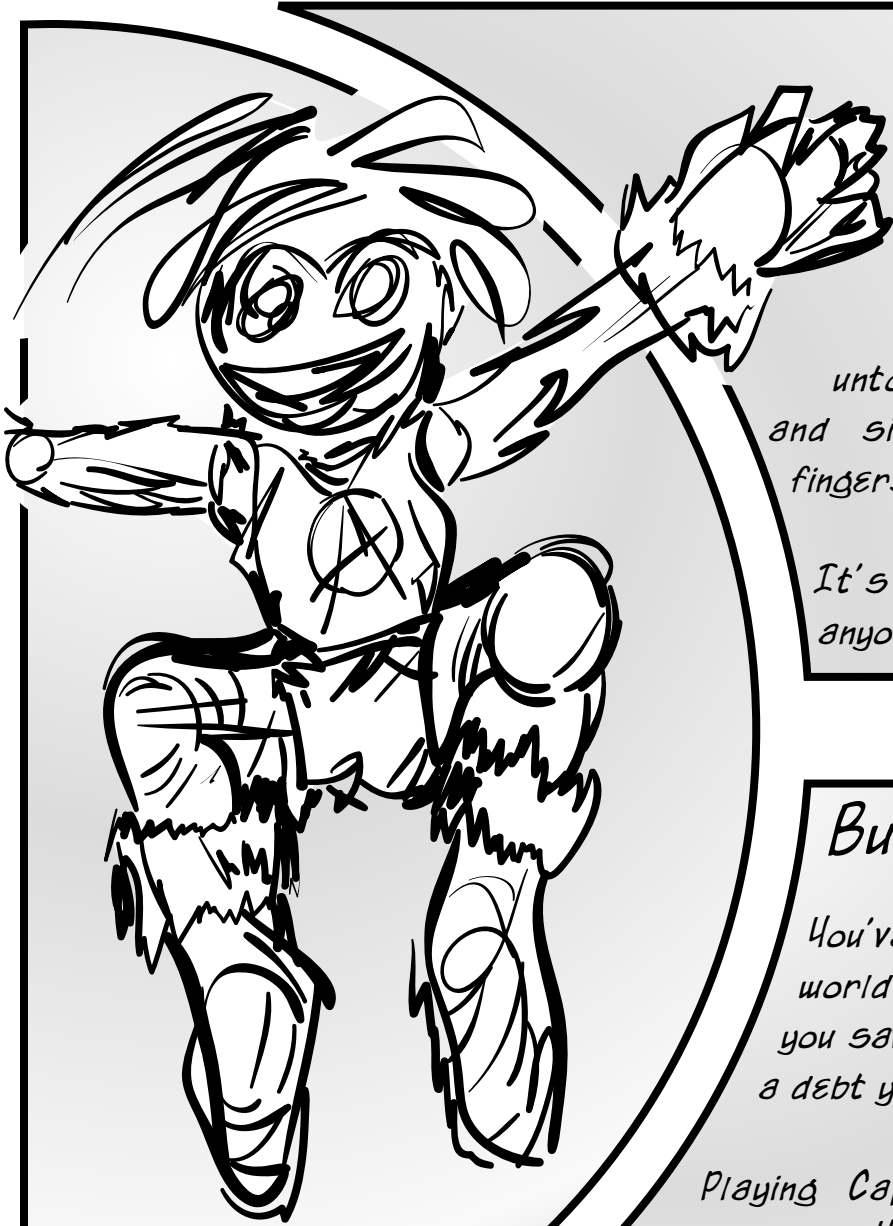


# CAPEES!

## Superhero Storytelling



### *Power is fun...*

*Superheroes soar through the sky and leap across city landscapes. They reshape the course of mighty rivers. They dance untouched when the bullets fall like rain and sift moon-dust through their bare fingers.*

*It's the ultimate thrill ride. Don't let anyone tell you differently.*

### *But do you deserve it?*

*You've been given a gift the rest of the world cannot share. No matter how often you save the city, or the world, you still owe a debt you can never repay.*

*Playing Capes you take on the role of a superhero. You'll tell a story and pursue two goals. First, enjoy your hero's powers.*

*Second, show that your hero deserves them.*

## What you'll need

To play Capes you'll need at least two **Players**. You will all be cooperating to create a comic-book story.

One of the players must be the Editor. They are responsible for everything in the story, especially the many things over which they have no control. Because of this, Editors are notoriously vindictive and short-tempered.

The other players will each take on the role of a superhero. They will each need one copy of the **Hero Worksheet** included at the end of this document, to help them track the various numbers involved in playing a hero.

The group will also need some physical props. You will need a good handful of dice (of the sugar-cube shaped, six-sided backgammon variety), in two distinctive colors. At least twelve per color.

You will need a pad of small slips of paper, or a pack of three-by-five index cards. These will be used to track the various **Complications** that the heroes and villains vie for control over. You'll need room to lay out four or five of them at any one time.

You will need some small tokens to track how indebted your heroes are for their spectacular power. Pennies are good. Small candies are better, if you can resist munching on them at inappropriate times. These will hereafter be called **Debt Tokens**.

You'll need a comfortable place, free of distractions, where you can lay all this gear out, along with your players, and their sodas and other support equipment.

## What you'll do

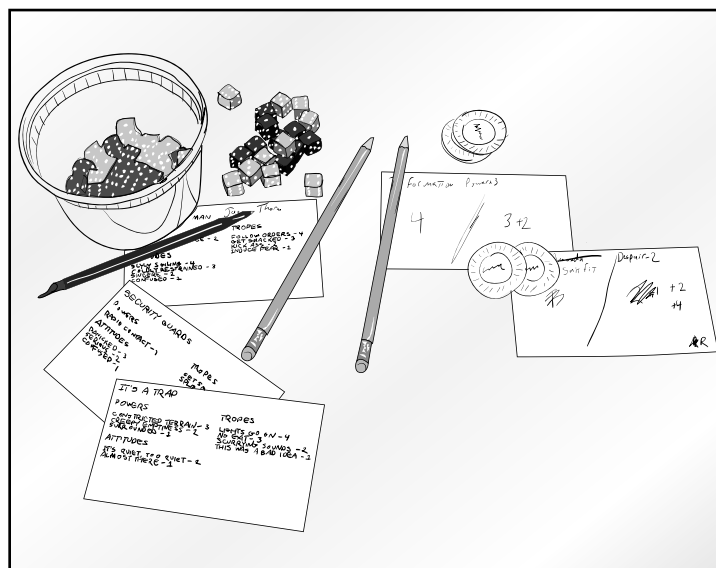
Capes is a storytelling game. You tell a story at the same time you play a game. What you say in the story limits what moves you can make in the game, and the situation in the game limits what you can say in the story.

The goal of the game is to help you tell better stories than you could without any limits. The game-play itself should help you to find ideas that wouldn't normally occur to you... clever ways of combining story and dice to make something better than either.

Because the storytelling and the game-play are so closely intertwined this text will often talk about them as if they were the same thing. Indeed, this pleasant confusion may leech into your own thinking as well.

For instance, you might say "Weather Witch calls down lightning from the dark storm clouds... that lets me roll this die. I get control, so lightning strikes Doctor Thanatos, causing him to drop the jetpack."

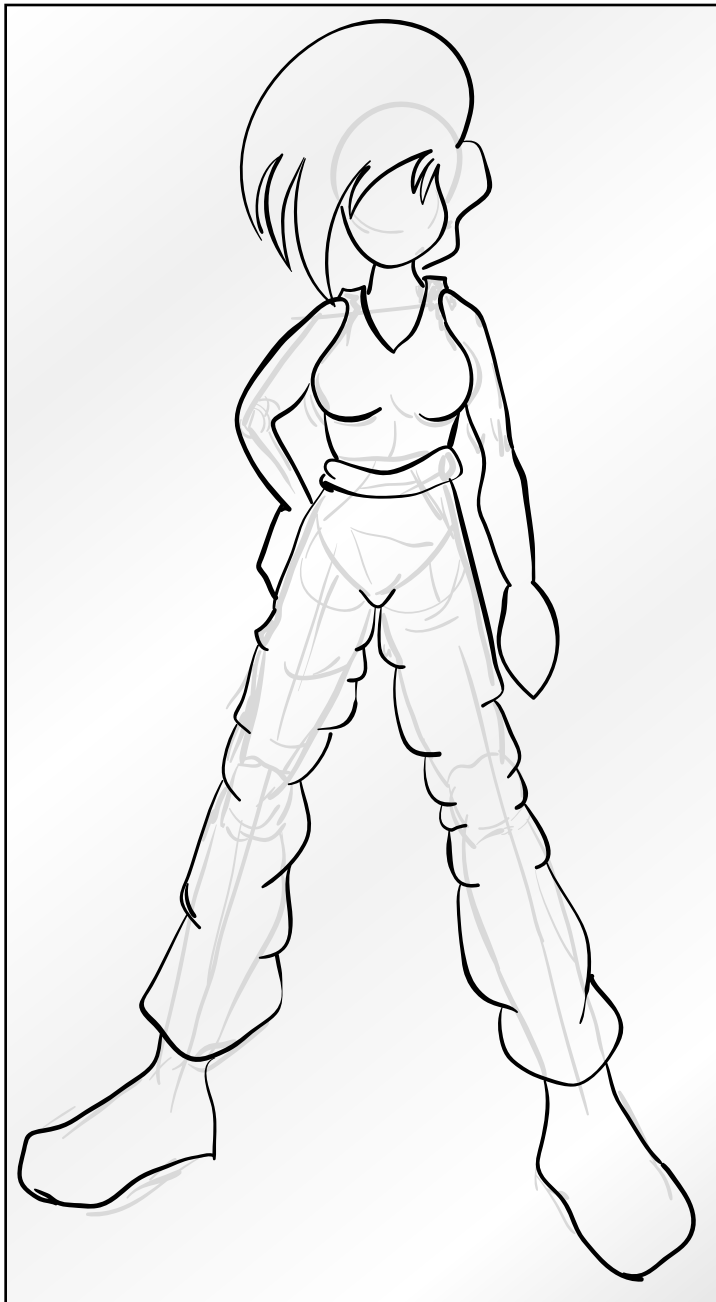
That quick section starts with storytelling ("call down lightning") then switches to game-play to see how the storytelling effects the game ("roll dice", "I get control") then switches back to storytelling ("lightning strikes Doctor Thanatos") to narrate how the game-play in turn effects the storytelling.



The example also switches from narrating the hero created by the player ("Weather Witch") to narrating the world itself ("the lightning strikes") to narrating other characters ("Thanatos drops the jetpack"). This sort of switching is common in the game. In fact, when your hero isn't in the scene you can help out the Editor by figuring out what the villains do.

While you'll narrate for many people as you play, you'll have special provenance over one hero. You create that hero, and you're responsible for deciding at every step of the story what they care about, and what they will sacrifice for. You will put them into the crucible of challenge and confusion time and again, to give them a chance to show what they're made of.

The story you tell is about more than victory and defeat. It is a chance to make your own statement about what it means to be a hero.



## Sketching out your Hero

Okay, it's time to make a superhero. Grab a Hero Worksheet. There are lots of empty spaces there. You'll be filling them in.

First you assign numbers to the arenas in which the hero proves herself. Distribute nine points between the following five Drives, assigning at least one point to each:

### Justice

How much the hero's story revolves around laws, codes of conduct and rebellion

### Truth

How much the hero's story revolves around identity, honesty and secrets

### Love

How much the hero's story revolves around friends, rivals, and romance.

### Hope

How much the hero's story revolves around the safety, needs and doubts of the common man

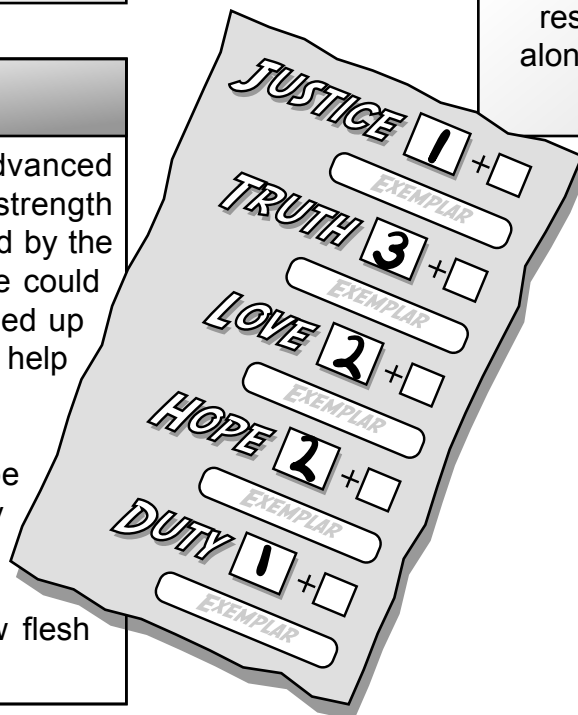
### Duty

How much the hero's story revolves around the responsibilities that they alone can and must fulfill

## Example Character

**Silverstar** (played by Joe) is an advanced android, equipped with superhuman strength and invulnerability. Her creator was killed by the villain who commissioned her, before he could finish teaching her who she is. She ended up in the care of the Freedom Squad, who help her to use her powers for good.

Looking over Silverstars history, Joe concludes that she feels most strongly about exploring her own identity, making connections to salve the pain of her freakish isolation, and learning how flesh and blood people live.



## Filling in the Details

The next thing you do is to put human faces on at least three of your Drives. You do this by assigning them an **Exemplar**. These are people with whom the hero has tangled emotional issues centering around a given Drive.

**Example:** You might have the hero's loving Aunt for Truth (because he constantly hides his superhero identity from her), the girl next door for Love, and the crotchety, hero-bashing newspaper editor for Hope.

Any time an Exemplar is in a scene, it should be an opportunity for the issues they embody to rise to the surface. Conversely, any time your hero wants to prove himself in a given Drive, the Editor could do worse than to frame a scene that includes the Exemplar.

If you are part of a two-hero team then at least one of your Exemplars (bare minimum) must be shared with another hero. If your team has more than two heroes than you must share at least two Exemplars, one each with two different heroes. Your Love Exemplar could be a Duty Exemplar for someone else (or perhaps you both harbor romantic feelings for the same person... complicated, that).

Get together with the other players while they're figuring this stuff out. You can adapt one of the ideas they've already come up with, or work together with them to create a shared Exemplar from scratch. It's easy and fun to do at the beginning and terribly difficult to shoe-horn in later.



**JUSTICE** 1 + ☐

EXEMPLAR

**TRUTH** 3 + ☐

Black Jack

**LOVE** 2 + ☐

Supreme ♥

**HOPE** 2 + ☐

EXEMPLAR

**DUTY** 1 + ☐

Becky Tesla

## Example Character

Joe feels Silverstar needs Exemplars for Truth, Love and Duty. The obvious person to be tangled in her past is the villain who funded her construction.

Joe could invent a villain, but he guesses that other players will have villains as Exemplars. After rejecting several candidates, Joe decides that Silverstar was commissioned by Black Jack, evil brother and rival of Captain Liberty.

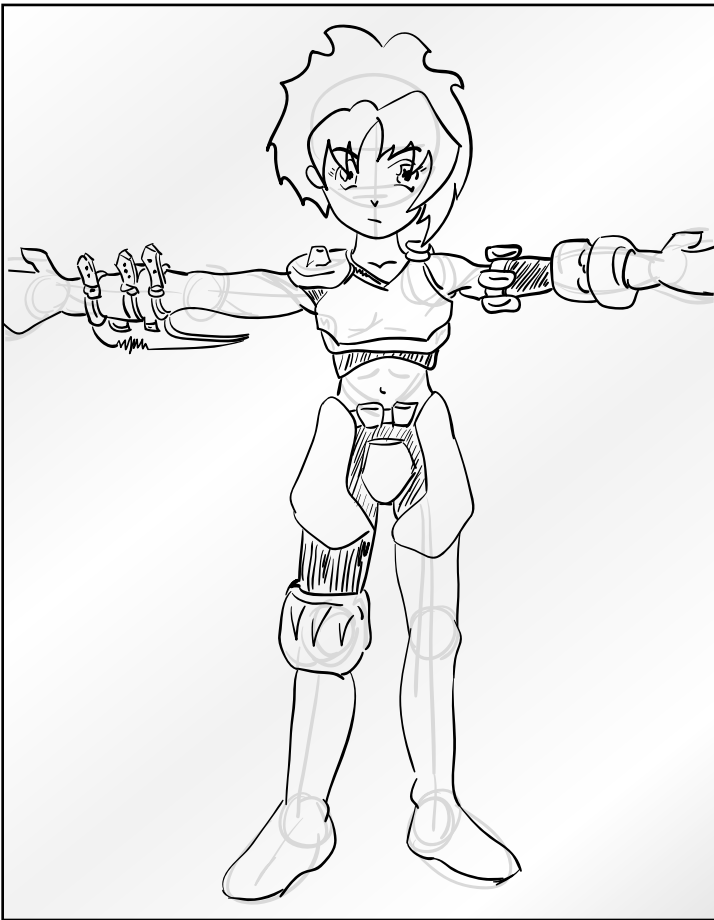
Joe starts writing up Supreme, a stylish, solo hero Silverstar has a crush on. Alice asks around for a shared Exemplar. Joe offers Supreme. They decide that her heroine, Night Maiden, is also fixated on the heroic beefcake.

Finally, Joe sketches in the character of Becky Tesla, the daughter of the inventor who created Silverstar. Becky feels honor-bound to personally avenge her father's death. So much so, that she endangers herself while refusing Silverstar's help.

## Abilities beyond those of mortal men

Now you've figured out why your Hero does things. It's time to start figuring out how they do things. There are three types of **Abilities** that can be used to change dice in the game.

Every type of ability allows you to do the same thing when you use it: You can roll a die of that value or less. So if you use any ability with a level of three then you can roll a die that is a one, two or three. The types of abilities differ in the costs and restrictions on when you can use them.



**Powers** can be used at any time. Each power can be used once a turn. But every time you use one you have to take a Debt Token and place it on one of your Drives.

**Powers** are what they sound like: Leaping tall buildings, flinging lightning from your fingertips, etc.

**Attitudes** are **Blocked** when they are used. That's why they have a little box to pencil in a checkmark on your Worksheet, to remind you that it cannot be used again until unblocked (or next scene). Also, you may only use one Attitude each turn. However they cost nothing to use.

**Attitudes** are what they sound like too: Snotty, Kind, Confused, etc.

**Tropes** are used to react to any roll that has already been made. For each Trope you choose whether it is a fun superpower (and costs Debt when used) or Blocks when used. Draw a filled-in circle over the checkbox of any Trope that costs Debt

**Tropes** are things your hero is so good at that he rarely slips up when doing them. The Gray Ghost is really quite good at slipping out of the shadows quietly. Even when he blows a roll with his Second Sight power, he can slip out of the shadows quietly to get a better look. A Trope can rescue you from a bad die roll, or (in the right circumstances) allow you to quash a good roll of your enemy.

You choose which types you want the most abilities in. Each type starts off with abilities at levels 1, 2 and 3. You then add an ability of level 4 to one of the types, and abilities of levels 4 and 5 to a different type.

### POWERS

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
|                   | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Built-in BIG GUNS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| High-Tech Sensors | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Super Strength    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

### TROPES

|                                                                   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Massive Property Damage       | 5 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nearly Invulnerable           | 4 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Throw huge objects            | 3 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Get hit so hard circuits show | 2 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Feats of computer calculation | 1 |

### ATTITUDES

|                                                            |   |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                        |   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Naive Optimism         | 4 |                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cold "Terminator" Mode | 3 |                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teenage Angst          | 2 |                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confused about humans  | 1 |                          |

## Starting a Story

Once you have a group of superheroes, and your Editor has thought about them and decided how to challenge them, you're ready to tell a story.

Each Player gets a **Story Token** at the start of the session (and each Scene thereafter). They can either place it in the "Prominence" box on their sheet (if their hero will be present in the first scene) or save it for later. One hero, chosen by the Editor, will receive two Story Tokens in the first Scene but must spend them both immediately.

The Editor adds characters until the total Prominence on the hero's side is equal to the total Prominence of their opponents. The total number of Story Tokens spent, all told, is used as the **Victory Target** for the first Scene.



### Game Example

The players of Zip and Night Maiden each spend their one Story Token in Prominence. Captain Liberty receives two tokens and spends them both on Prominence. Joe decides not to include Silverstar.



### Game Example

Against the four total Story Tokens spent by the heroes, the Editor spends one on bank robbers, one on the driver and two on Chief Mannelli. He asks Joe to narrate for the robbers and driver. With eight Story Tokens spent the Victory Target for the scene is eight.

## Things get Complicated

Each story is divided into Scenes, addressing some sort of conflict. In the story, a scene is its situation, and the tensions within it that might be resolved either in favor of the protagonists or against.

The situation of the story is paralleled in game terms by **Complications**. These correspond to the very tensions that could be resolved either in favor of the heroes or against. For the first scene of the first session, the Editor will simply list Complications. Players will later earn the Inspirations and Story Tokens needed take a larger role in defining Complications and Prominence. Index cards with the name written on them are used to represent Complications.



### Story Example

A group of robbers have taken hostages at the First National Bank. Our heroes want to go in, thrash the batd-guys and save the innocents. Police Chief Arturo Mannelli told the spandex-clad freaks to stay away, but they plan to either win him over or sneak past his men.



### Game Example

The bank robbery scene has four complications. Robbery, Clobbering, Hostages and Police.

## Roll Them Bones

Each index card will start with two dice, of different colors. These dice are used to track Control of the Complication. One color is for the heroes, one is for everything that stands in their way (often simply "the villains"). When the number on one die is higher than the number on the other, the side to whom the die belongs is said to have Control of the Complication.

As you tell the story, the rules require that you make your descriptions correspond to the current state (in the game) of the Complications. If your side controls a complication then the situation on the corresponding issue is getting better for you. If the other side controls it then the situation is getting better for them, and worse for you.

To play the game you take turns rolling these dice. Whenever you roll a die you choose whether to keep the result you rolled or to turn the die back to the number it had before you rolled it.

When you roll a die you will also tell what happens. If you just gained Control in the Complication then you describe how the tide of events turned. If your opposition has Control of the Complication then you describe what happened that might have changed events, and they describe why it didn't.



### Game Example

Later in the Scene, Police has a red 5 and a blue 1. Hostages has a red 2 and a blue 4. If blue dice belong to the heroes then they have moderate control over Hostages, and their opposition has dominant control in Police.



### Story Example

Chief Mannelli has given the heroes ten seconds to cease their villain-bashing activities, or he will have his men open fire on them. At the same time, hostages are making their way through a hole that's been broken in the wall, escaping one by one to safety.



### Game Example

A player rolls the blue die on Police, for a six. He chooses to keep the six. With a red five and a blue six, the heroes now control the Police Complication. The Editor rolls the blue die on Hostages. He rolls a five. He chooses to turn the die back to four. With a red two and a blue four, the heroes still control Hostages.



### Story Example

"Five... four... three..." Chief Mannelli yells over a bullhorn. Just then the first of the escaping hostages come into view from an alley. "Hold your fire!" Mannelli says immediately. Then lowering the bullhorn he murmurs "Well I'll be damned... they pulled it off." Meanwhile, inside, a thrown grenade lands dangerously close to the escaping bystanders. They scream, fearing their lives are at an end. Papers and skirts are blown by a sudden gust of wind as Zip (the fastest teenager alive) runs by. The grenade is gone. There is a dull explosion as it detonates harmlessly in the armored bank vault where he dropped it.

## As the Pages Turn

Each Scene is played out in a series of **Pages**. So the Editor might announce "Alright, that's the end of page 2. We're now on page 3 of the bank robbery."

At the beginning of each Page people decide what Complications they are trying to **Resolve** that Page. Starting with the Editor (and proceeding around the table clockwise) each player can **Claim** a Complication for each hero or opponent they are narrating. The Complication must be one Controlled by the side that hero or opponent is playing on. The player then drags the index card for the Complication (carefully!) across the table to sit right in front of the worksheet for that character.

If a player wants to Claim a Complication that has already been Claimed then they can do so, but only if the Prominence of the hero or opponent they are claiming it for is higher than that of the one currently holding it.

When a player Claims a Complication they should narrate how the hero or opponent can see a possible end to the ongoing struggle. This is often the time that villains boast of how they'll conquer the world (sometimes detailing their precise plans) once the hero is dead. It is also the time that heroes make bold statements about how they'll never give up, never give in, and so forth.



### Game Example

Zip claims Hostages (which the heroes control). Captain Liberty claims Hostages from Zip, pointing out that he has a Prominence of 2 to Zip's inferior 1. The Editor claims Robbery for the Robbers. He does not claim any Complications for the Police Chief, because Police (the obvious story-choice) is under hero control.



### Story Example

Zip, dodging bullets, grates out "Just a few more seconds... and the bystanders will be clear." Captain Liberty leaps between the robbers and the civilians, bullets bouncing off his star-spangled chest. "You deal with these miscreants, young speedster!" he bellows. "I always stand ready to shield the innocent!" Meanwhile, the robbers pull a getaway car up, and pile in.

## Your account is Overdrawn

After Complications have been claimed, doubt and weakness must be assessed for any heroes or opponents whose moral foundation is in jeopardy. A Drive is Overdrawn when a hero or opponent has more Debt Tokens on the Drive than the value assigned to it. For each Overdrawn Drive on a hero or opponent the player narrating for them must roll the highest die on their side (or choose one of the highest in case of a tie) and accept the result only if it reduces the value.

If a side loses Control in a Complication because of these rolls the player explains how confusion hinders the hero or opponent. This is often either through doubt (i.e. wondering whether the Drive is actually as important as you thought) or failure (i.e. believing in the Drive and feeling that you've failed to live up to it).



### Game Example

The driver is Overdrawn in the villainous Drive of Need. The opponent side's highest die is a six on Robbery. The roll reduces the red value so much that the opponents lose Control in the Complication.



### Story Example

The wheel man of the getaway car is anxious, panicky. "Wait for the money! Wait for the money!" the man in the passenger seat keeps repeating. But the driver's nerve breaks. "I don't need the money that much!" he cries. "It's not worth going to jail for!" He puts the car in gear and pulls away from the building before his partners can load the loot.



## Action Turns

Most of the time spent on each Page will be spent handling **Turns**. In the first turn of the Page, every hero or opponent (starting with those the Editor narrates, then moving clockwise around the table) gets an opportunity to act. They may choose to **Stake** Debt. They may also (and generally do) choose to roll one of the dice on the table.



### Game Example

The "Getaway" Complication stands at two on the blue (hero) die and four on the red (opponent) die. On his Turn, Zip chooses to Stake a Debt Token from his Hope Drive (Drive of 2) on "Getaway".



### Story Example

The getaway car side-swipes a lamp-post which starts falling on screaming bystanders. Zip grimaces and turns aside. He whisks the bystanders from harms way at the last instant. "These guys are going to kill someone if they aren't stopped!" he mutters, quickening his pace to catch up with the car.

## Staking your Identity

To Stake Debt, a player takes Debt Tokens from his character's Worksheet and places them on a Complication his side does not Control. The player may not Stake two types of Debt (i.e. Hope and Justice) on a single Complication. He may not Stake more tokens of Debt on a Complication than the value of the Drive from which he Stakes.

In the story, players should have their hero or opponent show how they now view the issue of the Complication as personally important to them

## Action! Action! Action!

To roll a die (whether it is on their side or their opponent's) the player must use one of the Powers, Attitudes or (for opponents) Skills of the character. The value of that ability must be at least as great as the current number showing on the die. No Ability may be used more than once in a Page.

There are different costs for using different types of Abilities. If a player uses a Skill or Attitude then that Ability is Blocked and cannot be used again in the same scene. If a player uses a Power then they must take a Debt Token and place it on one of the characters Drives.

In the story, the player must describe their actions in a way that makes clear the importance of the Ability they used to what they were attempting. If they can think of no way that an Ability would apply (Laser Eye Beams at a refined debutante party, for instance) then they may not use the Ability.



### Game Example

Zip chooses to roll the hero die on "Getaway" using Super-speed (a level 3 Power). Because the hero die is a two (equal to or less than the level of the Power) Zip may roll it. He could not have rolled the opponent's die, because it is a four (greater than the level of the Power).



### Game Example

Because he used a Power, Zip takes a Debt Token and places it on a Drive (in this case his Duty Drive).



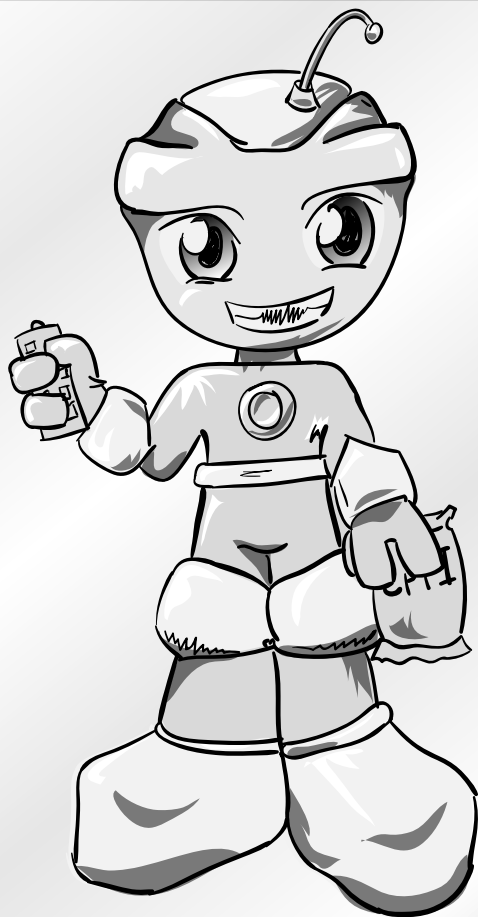
### Story Example

The getaway car tears through the city streets recklessly. But Zip is faster than a speeding automobile, and chases after them on foot.

## Reaction! Reaction!

If the player chooses to accept the outcome of the new roll then any player (including the one who rolled in the first place) may react to that roll with a Trope from one of the characters they narrate. This is the only time when the rules allow one character to interfere in another's turn. The Trope must be of a level equal to or greater than the value of the new die. The interrupting player rolls the same die again and it is his choice whether or not to accept the new outcome. If he accepts it then any player can, in turn, react to this roll with a Trope of his own.

If the Trope used is a super-powered one (as chosen when the hero or opponent was created) then the player takes a Debt Token, as he would if he were using a Power. If the Trope is not super-powered then it is Blocked, as with an Attitude.



### Game Example

Zip's player rolls a one in his attempt to raise his die. He accepts the value and immediately invokes "Mundane Tasks done Super-fast" (a level 2 Trope of the hero) to roll it again. This time he rolls a three. That still wouldn't gain him Control against the opponent's four. He accepts the die, invokes "Desperate Effort" (a level 4 Trope) and rolls it again. This time he rolls a five, which will gain his side Control of the Getaway Complication.



### Game Example

Zip's player decided long ago that "Mundane Tasks done Super-fast" was super-powered, and "Desperate Effort" was not. He Blocks "Desperate Effort" and takes a Debt Token, accepting it for his Hope Drive and staking it on the "Getaway Complication" before rolling.



### Story Example

An old lady is crossing the street, walking her poodle. The getaway car hurtles toward the intersection, heedless of her. "They're going to kill her!" Zip shouts in alarm. He snatches cable from a nearby hardware store and, in an instant, wraps it dozens of times around two lamp-posts, making a net crossing the street. Then he grabs the rear bumper of the car and pulls with a desperate effort, his feet skidding down the street. The car, thus slowed, slams into the net. The net groans, but holds.

## Splitting Dice

Either before or after rolling a die, the player may have an opportunity to Split one die into two or more. To split a die you add more dice, then rearrange their faces so that the sum total on them is the same as the original one and the numbers are as close to each other as possible. In order for a die to be split, you must be able to place every die on your side of the Complication on a Debt Token Staked by your side (including, if it's on your side, the one die that the Complication starts out with).

Splitting dice can also be used to create whole new sides (turning a two-sided Complication into a three-sided, or even more intricate, one). This can cause a shift in Control (as players split their Control between two now-uncooperative sides).



### Game Example

Zip chooses to split the hero die on Getaway. He has two Debt Tokens Staked on the Complication. He puts one of them under the blue die already there. He puts a second die on the second token. He turns the original blue die from five to three, and turns the second die to two. Three plus two gives him an unchanged total of five.



### Story Example

The old lady scurries away from the car that almost ended her life. As robbers leap out, looking around desperately for an escape route, Zip appears in front of them with a sudden whoosing sound. His face is grim and angry. "If you think I'm going to let you get away to hurt people some more," he says with a frown, "You're about to learn how wrong you are."



### Game Example

Night Maiden stakes two tokens of Duty on Police. She splits the blue six into three twos. She places her twos (now a side of their own) on her Debt Tokens. She does not need to assure that the other two is on a Debt Token, because it is no longer on her side. The opponents regain control of the Complication, because their red five is higher than either Captain Liberty's total of two or Night Maiden's total of four.



### Story Example

Captain Liberty congratulates Chief Mannelli on their achievement, and expresses a hope for future cooperation. "Cooperation?" snorts Night Maiden. "He was threatening to SHOOT US! I want to hear him admit that we were the only ones good enough to save those people!" Captain Liberty makes ineffectual shushing motions at Night Maiden. Mannelli's face flushes. His expression shifts from one of grudging admiration to frustrated fury.

## Turn and Turn again

After everyone has had an action in the first turn, you may need to move on to subsequent turns. In the second turn, only those characters with Prominence of two or more get an action. In the third turn only those with Prominence of three or more, and so on. All players may still react with Tropes. Turns continue until nobody's Prominence is high enough for another action.



### Game Example

Only Captain Liberty and the Chief have the Prominence to act in the second turn. The Captain uses his "Team-builder" Attitude and rolls his die on Police, gaining a three, which he accepts. Chief Manning uses his "Angry" Attitude and rolls the Captain's die, getting a two, which he accepts. Night Maiden's player immediately uses "Glare venomously" (a level 2 Trope on her heroine) and rolls the same die again. She gets a five, and chooses not to accept it.



### Story Example

"What she meant was..." Captain Liberty begins. "I **KNOW** what she meant!" Mannelli snaps. Night Maiden glares venomously at Mannelli. "Just stay out of this, Cap," she recommends

## Resolving Complications

After the Action Turns everyone (starting with the Editor, moving clockwise) checks the Complications they Claimed at the beginning of the Page. If a Complication is still Controlled by the side of the hero or opponent who claimed it then it Resolves in their favor. If not then it is moved back to the center of the table until someone claims it on a future Page.

If a Complication has Stakes when it resolves then the Stakes are resolved at that time. Any hero or opponent who placed Stakes and was not on the Controlling side when the Complication Resolved must take back their own Debt Tokens and also take an equal number from the central pile of Tokens. All of these are placed on the Drive from which the tokens were Staked. Any hero or opponent who placed Stakes and was on the Controlling side does not take those Debt Tokens back onto their own Worksheet. Instead they choose the player (including the Editor, but not including themselves) who most helped to make the Complication interesting for them, and give those Tokens to them. That player puts the Tokens on the "Story Tokens" space on their worksheet, and can spend them later for greater control of the narrative.



### Game Example

Captain Liberty had claimed the "Hostages" Complication. At the end of the page the heroes still control it. It resolves in his favor. The robbers had claimed Robbery, but they do not control it at the end of the page. It returns to the center of the table.



### Game Example

Captain Liberty had Staked one Duty token on Hostages. The Editor had Staked one Despair token on the same Complication (from the shadowy arch-villain manipulating events from afar). The Stakes resolve in favor of the heroic side. Therefore the Editor takes two tokens and places them on the arch-villains Despair Drive. Captain Liberty takes his one Debt Token and gives it to Joe as a Story Token in recognition of how his constant aggression as the bad-guys made the Complication entertaining..

## Getting Inspired

The player who claimed the Complication gets to keep the card. He notes whether it was won by Heroes or Opponents ("H" or "O"), the total of the dice of all sides who did not Control the Complication (usually just the opponent's dice) and labels it **Victory Points** (or "VP"). Next to that he notes the difference between the largest die on his side and the largest die on any other side and labels it **Bonus** (or just the number preceded by a "+" sign). He keeps this card, which now represents an **Inspiration**.

In the story, Inspirations represent the consequences of success and failure. They may crop up immediately, or they may appear only much later.

## Replacing Complications

The player who won the Complication now gets to decide what replaces it. He may choose to use an empty index card, write a name on it and set two dice (both ones) on it to represent Control. Or he may choose to put one of the Inspirations he has earned back on the table. He crosses out the old name and writes in a new one. Whichever side won the Inspiration starts with their die equal to the Bonus. The other side starts with a one. If the Bonus is one or less then both sides dice start at one.

## Are we there yet?

The Editor adds the Victory Points for the Complication to the running total of Victory Points earned by that side during the scene. Even if heroes (or villains) have split their efforts and are fighting against their own erstwhile allies, all Victory Points go to either the Hero or Opponent totals. After everyone has checked and, if necessary, Resolved Complications, the Editor checks whether either Victory Point Total has reached or exceeded the Victory Point Target for the scene. If so the scene is over and no more Pages will be played. Otherwise you start at the beginning of the next page the same way you started the previous one.



### Game Example

Hostages was won with a four die and a two die. Captain Liberty's player notes "H 2vp + 2".



### Game Example

Captain Liberty places his Hostages Inspiration back on the board. He crosses out "Hostages" and writes in "Public Opinion". The Complication starts with a red die showing a one, and a blue die showing a two.



### Story Example

A camera crew for the local news arrives on the scene. Captain Liberty expertly leads them away from the ongoing battle of wills between Night Maiden and Captain Mannelli. As the freed hostages eagerly praise the actions of the Freedom Squad, Captain Liberty says he'd be glad to offer an interview.



### Game Example

The heroic side earned two Victory Points for Hostages, which is not enough to reach the Victory Point Target of five for the scene. On Page 4, Night Maiden fails to Resolve Police, but Zip succeeds in Resolving Getaway, with a four and three die against the lone six die of the robbers. He writes down "H 6vp -2" on the card. The hero total rises to eight victory points, which matches the target of eight. The scene is now ended. There is no Page 5.

## Ending the Scene

When the Scene ends any Complications that do not have tokens Staked on them can be immediately claimed and resolved by anyone on the side that controls them. Any Complications that do have tokens Staked on them do not resolve. The Tokens are returned to the people who Staked them. No Victory Points are generated from such unresolved Complications.

In the story, any Complication that does not Resolve is interrupted somehow by outside events.

When all Complications have either been Resolved or discarded, the Editor adds the Victory Totals each side earned during the scene to the Victory Totals for the entire story. If neither side has met the Victory Total for the Story then another Scene is created.

## Beginning the next Scene

Any player who has an Inspiration may use it to create a Complication in the new Scene. This is handled the same way as using an Inspiration when replacing a Complication. After this is done, the Editor may create Complications (neither side starting with a bonus) that he feels will benefit the Scene.

Once Complications are known, players may spend Story Tokens to give a hero, Exemplar or opponent Prominence in the scene. Any character with Prominence will be present in the Scene, and narrated by the player who paid for their presence. Player declare which side (heroic or opponent) the characters they narrate will be on. The Editor then adds characters to whichever side has less total Prominence until the scales are balanced. He then describes (perhaps after a few minutes to arrange all the pieces in his mind) the situation in the story that brings all of those Complications and people together.



### Game Example

The scene ends. Public Opinion has no debt Staked, and resolves in Captain Liberty's favor. Police has debt Staked, and does not resolve. Night Maiden's player takes back the Duty Token Staked on it.



### Story Example

"I could rip you apart, little man!" Night Maiden threatens. "Come on and try it!" Mannelli retorts, "I'm not afraid of...." A lieutenant runs up. "Chief! Chief! The kid... the fast one... he caught the perps on forty-seventh and Lex." Mannelli turns away immediately. "Let's roll," he says as he walks toward the squad car. Night Maiden moves angrily to follow. Captain Liberty takes her by the arm and holds her back. "Another time," he says. "Or not, if you take my advice. It's a fight you'd lose by winning."



### Game Example

Zip's player uses the Inspiration he received for "Getaway" to create a "Villainous HQ" Complication. Captain Liberty declines to use his Public Opinion Inspiration. The Editor adds "Stealth" and "Clobbering" Complications to the mix.



### Game Example

Zip's player plays one Story Token on Zip. Captain Liberty's player plays a token on Polly Trueheart, Exemplar of Love, declaring her to be on the villainous side (probably by way of becoming a hostage). Joe, having sat out last scene and earned Story Tokens as the villains, spends three on Silverstar's Prominence. That means four Story Tokens on heroes and one on opponents. The Editor adds one point on Minions and two points on evil arch-nemesis Black Jack. He asks Night Maiden's player to play Black Jack.



### Story Example

"The driver was supposed to drop the money at this address," Zip says, showing a slip of paper.

"Stars and Stripes!" Captain Liberty exclaims, "that's the old warehouse Silverstar and Polly were searching for signs of Black Jack! They're walking into a trap! You're the only one fast enough to warn them!"