BAKER
LINGNER PSI✳RUN
MOORE

PSI✳RUN

THEY TOOK YOUR LIFE.
YOU GOT AWAY.
THEY WANT YOU BACK.

RUN!

For VeeaLynn Baker, for all she has given me.

CONTENTS

PSI✳RUN

It starts with the smell of melting plastic. The angles are all wrong, and there are sounds of pain, human and machine. The taste of adrenaline coats your tongue. Get out. Get out! RUN!

You don't know what's going on. You don't know where you are. Maybe you don't know who you are. You've been held captive, who knows how long. Moments ago, you broke free. Now you are struggling to remain free long enough to piece together your own past. You have amazing powers that can help you survive, but those same powers also carry the risk of disaster. And the people chasing you? They'll stop at nothing to get you back.

What am I getting into?

Every game of Psi-Run starts with a crash of some kind. The characters, called Runners, have psychic powers and amnesia. The one thing they know for certain is that they are being pursued by their former captors, called Chasers. Over the course of the game, the players roll dice and assign them to categories, called Risks, in order to achieve their goals, answer the questions about the Runners past, use their psi powers, avoid harm, and avoid recapture by the Chasers. Along the way, the Runners leave a Trail of information as they travel from location to location, and the Chasers follow this trail relentlessly.

Will the Runners learn the truth? Will the Chasers catch them?

Play to find out!

ABOUT THE GAME

Hey, what's Psi Run?

> It's a role-playing game. It's about people with psychic powers and amnesia.

Like a crpg? Is that a strategy guide?

> Like a crpg, yeah, but this isn't a guide, it's the game. You don't play it on a computer, you play it live, in person, with your friends.

Really? How does that work?

We just talk. We each get to say what our characters do and where they go and stuff.

> Exactly! In this game you're a mysterious person with psychic powers, on the run, so maybe I'll say, "you're running down a deserted street in the middle of the night, and suddenly there's a black chopper overhead with dudes in SWAT uniforms rappelling out of it. What do you do?" And maybe you fight, and maybe you run away, or whatever you want to do.

Cool. So there are fights and cut scenes and a plot and stuff?

> Sure! What's most cool is that since it's live, not programmed, you get to say what you want to do even during the cut scenes. Nobody knows how the story will turn out. Not even me!

That sounds fun. Are you going to play? Can I join you?

> Absolutely! Let me show you all how it works.

What will I need?

- · about 30 minutes to read through this book before you play
- · three to five other people
- · a Runner sheet for each player
- · pencils or pens for everyone
- · half a dozen six-sided dice
- · the Risk Sheet
- · the Chaser Sheet
- · a stack of blank index cards or sticky notes
- · coins, paper clips, or some other tokens
- · a table, or some other flat surface, on which to play your cards, dice and tokens

To play the game through to the end, you'll need one marathon 5-hour start-to-finish session, or a few sessions of a couple hours each. For a shorter game, see the note on running the game at a convention, found in the Quick Play section at the back.

The Runner sheet, Risk sheet, and Chaser sheet are at the back of the book. Make copies of them before you sit down to play.

The Risk Sheet

RUNNER:

PSI✱RUN

Apparent age:

When I look in the mirror, I see:

I have questions...

1. Q:
   A:
2. Q:
   A:
3. Q:
   A:
4. Q:
   A:
5. Q:
   A:
6. Q:
   A:

I'm impaired!

I'm doubly impaired!

I'm exceptional.

I want to do something important.

This might trigger a memory.

The chasers might catch up.

Am I using my psi power?

Am I risking harm?

Endgames
Home   Trapped
Lost   Turning the tables
Hidden   On a quest
Making a discovery

The Runner Sheet

CHASERS

PSI✱RUN

LOOK   METHOD   TECHNOLOGY

The Chaser Sheet

Who does what?

One person is the Game Master, who keeps track of the big picture, and the rest play the main characters in the story, who are called Runners.

GM, it's your job to:

- keep track of the bigger story
- be a fan of the Runners
- play the Chasers who are after the Runners
- play everyone else in the story — the cab driver, the innocent bystanders, the suspicious landlady, all the people the Runners meet on their way
- describe locales
- give everyone a chance to speak
- call for die rolls

Make notes during and between play sessions, to keep track of elements of the story, what's happened and what might be coming.

Be on the Runner's side. You're pressing them to make tough decisions, sure, and you're driving the Chasers after them as hard as the dice dictate, but you're not out to punish them. Push them because what they can do is awesome, and you want to see it. Use everything you've got to get to that awesomeness.

When you describe things, give both details and broad strokes. Where are the Runners this time? Inside? Outside? What time of day is it? What season? What does the place smell like? What are the colors, textures, sounds? Create a strong, clear picture of the locale and the people in it, and then see what the Runners do next.

Everybody contributes to the story, so make sure everyone gets a chance to speak. Go around the table, bounce from one spot in the action to another to get different people's angles, point to

someone who hasn't said anything lately and say "What do you do?"

Listen for the moment someone says "I do this..." and have them pick up dice and roll for it. Watch for the moment a player reaches for the dice, and be ready to meet them with descriptions and pressure and cheering. Don't let any one player roll dice twice in a row.

Players, it's your job to:

- · create a Runner you want to play following the rules in the next section
- · describe how your Runner acts, say what your Runner says
- · allow other players to describe things about your Runner's past
- · roll dice according to the rules
- · help make up cool stuff

What special power have you always wanted? Make that character. Play that character fully, with body language and vocal quirks and descriptions of action. Say what you do, and roll the dice.

Listen to the GM and your fellow players. When a cool image for the game or detail of the action leaps to mind, share it. When someone says something cool, be enthusiastic about it.

There will be moments in the game when another person says something about your character's past, and that becomes the truth. Don't get attached to any preconceived notion of your character's personal history. You'll discover the characters past together, during play.

Amy

**When I look in the mirror I see a young woman in a too-big coat and an institutional gown, with a bandaged head
I have questions...**

Where's Molly?

I think I have to get to New Falls, NY. Why?

I can do what now? Fly? Whoa.

I have a key that says "Washburn" on it — what's Washburn??

Whose coat was this, that I feel so attached to it?

Who says what's happening?

The rules determine who has the first say in different circumstances.

First say? What does that mean?

The person that gets to talk first after the dice are placed. It's a way to get everyone's input in an orderly fashion.

When you have first say, speak up. You are responsible for the first description of what happens. Take your turn. Sometimes you get first say on your own action, sometimes on someone else's. Pay attention. Keep your focus on your own responsibilities; remember what your job is, as player or GM, and don't try to take over anyone else's job.

After you've said your idea, your fellow players can offer suggestions, objections, ideas, changes, etc. For every outcome, there's a particular person or people who get the first say.

When you don't have first say, usually your job is easy: go with it. Be right there with the person who spoke first, ready to move ahead. When the action isn't clear to you, weigh in. Add details of the scene, ask for clarification, or offer alternatives. Work together to create a clear picture of the action.

While the GM and Runner roles are very specific, everyone playing the game should listen actively, shout out suggestions, cheer on other players, and react to the surprises and twists of the emerging story. Things like:

"Hey, that's a great idea! That's what happens!"

"Nah...I don't like that so much. Unless..."

"Oh! And then this happens, because of that other thing!"

All of these are good! You'll say them at some point too.

What's on the table?

The Trail, the Character sheets, the Risk sheet, the Chaser sheet, some tokens, and the dice. All of these are public on the table. GM, you also get a Chaser card, but that's not public — more on that later.

What's the Trail?

GM, you're in charge of the Trail.

The Trail is a running list of the places the Runners have been so far, from the initial crash to their current location. Whenever the Runners go to a new place, write the name of the new locale ("at the bar", "under the viaduct", "in the car") on a new card, and place that card next to the last card on the table.

As they go, the Runners leave a trail of sightings, damage, scent markings, psychic impression, etc. that the Chasers follow in their search. On the table, the Trail can act as a map and a gauge of how close the Chasers are to the Runners. Use tokens to keep track of where everyone is located on the Trail. Move the Runners' tokens forward every time they change locations, and move the Chasers' token according to the dice. If the Runners

split up, the Trail forks, the Chasers follow everyone, and you'll need more tokens, one for each Runner and enough Chasers to go around, to mark where everyone is.

What's the Character sheet?

Runners, you are in charge of your own character sheets.

Your character sheet has space for a physical description of your Runner, the questions you are trying to answer to help you recover your past, and a space to track injuries. This is all public knowledge, so after you've filled out your sheet, leave it on the table in plain sight. As you learn the answers to your Runner's questions, write them down.

What's the Risk Sheet?

In each scene, the Runners roll dice, decide what they are risking, and place dice accordingly on the Risk sheet.

The Risk Sheet is everyone's responsibility. It details the various things that a Runner weighs when pursuing her goals — achieving the goal, revealing a memory, staying ahead of the Chasers, staying safe, and using psychic power. It also says who has first say in each outcome. Put it in the center of the table, where everyone can see it.

What's the Chaser Sheet?

GM, the Chaser Sheet is your responsibility.

Your Chaser sheet has space for some broad descriptions of the Chasers. Over the course of play, you or the other players can add more details. When something is revealed about the Chasers, it's your job to write it down on the Chaser sheet. This sheet

goes on the table where everyone can see it and refer to it as needed.

Tokens?

Grab a handful of small things that will stay on a card when you put them there. Use these to mark where the Runners and Chasers are on the Trail. Tokens that are distinct enough that you'll be able to tell them apart at a glance, numerous enough that there are a couple for each player — coins, playing pieces from board games, pebbles, or poker chips, for example.

Dice?

You need half a dozen six-sided dice.

Where are We?

GM, set the game in a modern location.

New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, "a quaint Midwestern town", "my home town", "an urban city center" etc.. There are vehicles, there are guns, and there are different sorts of technology, both the everyday sort like refrigerators and the weird stuff you come up with that is particular to the Chasers and Runners and Psi powers. Choose a place that excites you, and is easy to vividly imagine and describe. Make it populated; isolated islands and untamed wilderness limit the game's potential.

Describe the setting to the other players, so they have some visuals to think about as they create their Runners.

CYBERNETICS, MUTANTS, AND SETTING

Can there be cyborgs in the game?

What about mutants?

We get to decide that! Most of the setting and non-player characters are just regular, but sure, there could be some exceptions. Or maybe it's all cyber-mutants everywhere.

So we get to choose how cyber or how mutant we want the setting to be? Cool, then I think just a little bit cybernetic.

Then can we have lots of mutants?

Sounds good to me! Lots of mutations, with just a touch of cyberware.

RUNNERS

Runners?

Your character is called a Runner. You have special powers. They might be subtle, like super-sharp senses, or blatant, like teleportation. Your power is the reason you've been held and the reason the Chasers want you back. Choose a power you are excited to play!

AN EXTRA SOMETHING

For this game, what's a psi power?

Your Runners use their minds to affect the world in extraordinary ways. Runners may look completely normal in all aspects, yet they have an extra something that makes them a target of interest, adoration, scorn, or exploitation. Runners can control stuff, move stuff, sense stuff far beyond regular people.

Can we make up any sort of power, or is there a list?

There's not a list exactly, but there are some very broad psi categories. Clairvoyance is seeing or hearing things normal people can't. Dowsing is finding water or gold or some particular substance, and Energy sensing would be for things that don't have a physical form. Healing is obvious — you can heal yourself or other people. Levitation means you can fly, Precognition is knowing the future, Telekinesis is moving things with your mind, Telepathy is communicating directly to another mind, and Teleportation is moving from one place to another instantly.

So we use those as starting places? Like, I want my power to have something to do with being super strong, and so it's probably part of telekinesis, but I don't know exactly how it all works. So I'm writing "lift 500x my body weight" on my Runner sheet.

That's great! And we'll find out more in play.

1. Who am I?

Your Runner suffers from amnesia: you don't remember much about your personal past. You have flashes of memories that come to you during stressful moments, as you piece together the events that brought you to this place. If you know your Runner's name, write it down. If you don't, leave that space blank and maybe you'll find out in play. Same goes for apparent age.

2. What is my power?

When you create your Runner, think about what powers you want. Can people tell what your power is by looking at you? What questions do you have about your power? Occasionally in the game, other players determine things about your Runner. Leave space for the cool specific explanations to emerge in play. Think about the power's effect ("My hand just passed through that chair!") rather than explain the details of the power ("[detailed explanation of how I rearrange molecules]").

Write down a few words about your power. Make sure you leave room for variation, interpretation and expansion. Go with "can control water", which has wider applications and is less likely to isolate a character or be out of place in the setting than "can breathe saltwater." Think about how your power looks to other people too — "crushes things, bright light, leaves me hungry" is a fine way to describe your power at the start of the game.

Assume you don't know everything about your psi power, and allow it to develop in play. If you are playing along and you think of new or unexpected applications for your power, that's great!

3. When I look in the mirror, I see...

What would your Runner see in a mirror? Write it down on your Runner sheet. Put as many details as you like: apparent age, gender, coloring, body type, overall style, an impression of health or frailty, any physical clues to psi power. Sometimes it will be very clear you have special powers — "I am floating 2 feet above the ground" — and sometimes it won't — "I look like a regular guy, with stubble and a beat-up cap. There's a box strapped to my wrist."

4. I have questions...

Next, write down on your Runner sheet at least 4 and up to 6 questions, things your Runner is curious about. Don't think up the answers now! During play, you or the other players will answer these questions.

Write at least one question that refers to your Runner's powers.

Psi powers can be really evident in how your Runner reacts or looks, or hinted at by unusual items or special equipment. Powers that involve mental perceptions could be really clear to your Runner right away. What questions does your Runner have about her powers?

When did I learn to fly?
How do I know what's going to happen 10 seconds from now?
Why are my irises white?
How is it that I hear people's thoughts?
What are these metal arm bands?
Where is my fire?

Write questions that refer to your Runner's strengths and weaknesses.

Some fears and skills go deeper than surface memory, into muscle memory. What is in your Runner's muscle memory? What actions have they performed a thousand times? What scares you?

> What happened to make me terrified of doctors?
> How can I tell when things are about to break?
> When did I learn how to kill people?
> I worked with Prof. Ruahn — where?
> Where is my flute?
> That's a military-grade explosive device on my belt – how do I
>   know that?

Write at least one question about your Runner's immediate past or current circumstances.

What does your Runner have on them when they get the chance to run — a scrap of paper with an address, a photo, an odd gadget, a piece of jewelry, a name that keeps running through their head? What questions do these tiny bits of the past bring up? All questions are good; sometimes the ones that seem most mundane – "Where are my shoes?" – have the most interesting answers.

> What is my name?
> When did this dog start following me?
> Who is Sean?
> What's at 136 Forrest Ave?
> What's inside this box attached to my wrist?
> How am I going to find something I can eat?

All of the questions should hint at the Runner's past, distant or immediate. Read your questions to each other, but don't try to come up with answers to these questions now. If you do think of an answer, resist the temptation to say anything. You answer questions during play, as a result of a die roll; there's no guaran

tee as to who will answer them and how, because how you place that die affects who answers.

Once you've got at least four questions written down, you can stop and leave the last two slots open. If you have questions to fill those slots, cool; if not, they can be filled in later during play. Can't think of any? Ask for suggestions from the other players.

Ready?

Do you know what your character looks like? Do you know something about your power? Do you have a handful of Questions written down? Then you're ready to play your Runner!

POCKET FULL OF QUESTIONS

Hey, I need another couple questions about my character.

> What's she got in her pockets? Maybe there's a good question there.

Hmm. A ticket stub and a comb.

> What was the show? Where is the concert hall? I can't think of a good question about a comb.

Oh! Yeah, ok. "Who are the Doubleclicks, and why do I have a ticket stub that says "Call Annie" in green marker?"
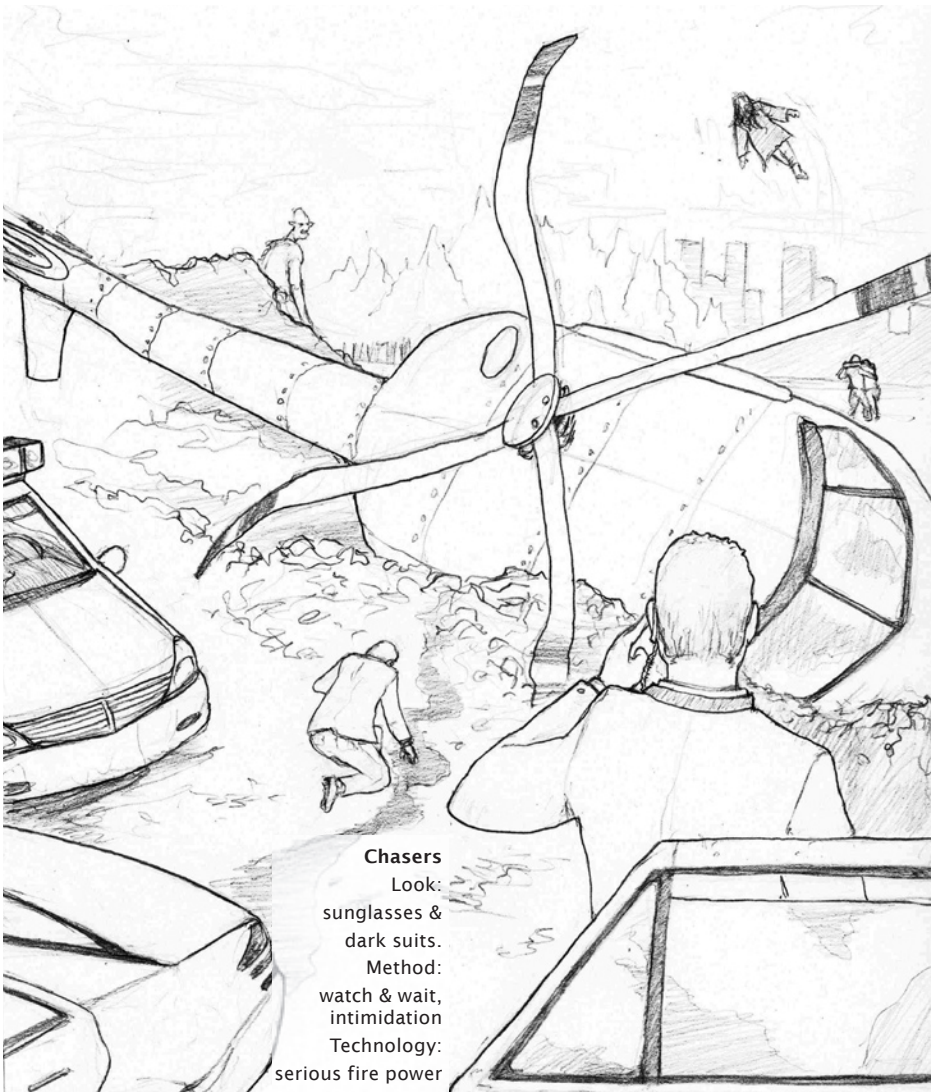
> That could be two questions: "What's the deal with the Doubleclicks" and "Who is Annie"

Cool, that's four. I'll leave the other slots open for later.

> Ok, then we're all set!

Chasers
Look: sunglasses & dark suits.
Method: watch & wait, intimidation
Technology: serious fire power

CHASERS

Who's chasing us?

GM, part of your job is to play the Chasers.

The exact nature of the Chasers is new with every game. Are they a shadowy government organization? Are they a multinational corporation dabbling in genetic manipulation? Are they aliens performing experiments on unsuspecting humans? A group of scientists exploring new modes of communication? All that's certain is that the Chasers want the Runners back under control.

Once the players have created and introduced their Runners, and everyone has heard what they look like and what their questions are, make a few quick decisions about the Chasers. Go for broad imagery, not particulars. What's their Look — corporate, military, alien, underworld? What sort of Methods do they use in their pursuit of the Runners — isolate, network, blackmail, brute force? What's their Technology like — archaic, medical, cybernetic, industrial?

Choose imagery that fits the Chasers to the Runners — If the Runners are in ill-fitting scrubs, maybe give the Chasers a medical Look. If your players give you a sharp-dressed Runner with bizarre and interesting watches, make "time control" a Method of pursuit. If you've got a Runner who is green and hungers for sunlight, write down "industrial landscaping" for Technology.

Write your images down on the Chaser Sheet, using just a word or two in each block, as guideposts for future details.

Chaser sheet?

The Chaser sheet is public information. Keep it where everyone can see, and add to it as needed.

Occasionally, the answer to a Runner's question will show something about the Chasers. That's fine, go with it. Just like it's good for the players to leave room for the specifics of their Runners' psi powers to emerge in play, it's good for you to leave space for the details of the Chaser's facilities, intentions, and methods to get filled in later. It's your job to keep the Chaser Sheet up to date, so whenever anyone comes up with a new detail, write it down.

Chaser card?

GM, you also need a Chaser card you keep private. Put a few more details on it, things you can describe and expand easily. A strong visual, a name, an address — whatever seems most vivid and is in keeping with the broad imagery on the public Chaser Sheet. A Chaser card might include:

    Brunette woman in a good suit
    Mitch, leather, big hands
    Senator Marvin Hempwith (R) Iowa
    High-gloss wooden desks and expensive offices

This lets you focus the look/methods/technology through a consistent lens, without going into too much detail. Of course these are not the only Chasers, and you might have no idea what the Senator's deal is until it comes out in play, but it gives you something on which to hang your "shadowy government plot".

Ready?

Do you know what the Chasers look like? Do you know what they will do? Then you're ready to play them!

RUN!

How do we start the game?

GM, you're up first.

The first scene of the first session always has the same outline: the characters were being transported somehow, the vehicle they were in crashed, and the characters have a chance to escape. What kind of vehicle? What type of terrain? How many guards or drivers? What time of day? What kind of crash? Got a picture in your head? Good!

When you describe the crash, take a card, write "Crash" on the top, and place it on the table. This represents the first locale of the story. Now, describe the environment, the time of day, etc.. You've started the Trail of the story. Go around the table and get everyone's input to the scene, including what each Runner looks like and what they do immediately following the crash.

How do I do stuff?

Players, describe your Runner's actions and speak from your Runner's point of view.

As the GM describes the scene, how does your Runner react? What does she say? How does she feel? What's her plan? Play the role of the runner, like an actor does on stage, or tell what they say, feel and do, like an author of a novel. Do all the little stuff, like describing how your Runner wrinkles her nose at the smell of leaking oil, as well as taking significant action.

As soon as the Runners respond to the crash, everything changes. The story is now in motion.

What's a significant action?

A significant action is something that:

· can go right or can go wrong
· shows off the Runner's exceptionality
· could potentially trigger a memory
· takes time and focus
· might expose the Runner to danger or unwanted attention

When you have a specific goal, something beyond straightforward conversation or movement — something that will change the way things are going — say what it is you want to do, then gather and roll dice accordingly. Play your dice on the Risk Sheet, and follow who has first say. When you want to make a significant action, that means it's time to roll the dice.

Where can I run?

Anywhere that is logical for the story.

Whenever the Runners say "Okay, let's go here," the GM writes a new card and lays it down. Each new locale is a step forward in space. It can be a small step, just "out back of the shop," or a big step, to a locale far away — "Milwaukee."

A locale can also be a step forward in time. Say you've been in the "parking lot at the mall", and now you decide to go to Mikey's place — the GM writes "Mikey's" on a card and lays it down on the table. If you want time to jump forward a bit, say so. "We go hide out at Mikey's for a few days, digging into the computer" is fine; the card still says "Mikey's".

CHASERS IN THE LOBBY

Hey, if I move to another part of the room, is that a new locale?

> No, the chasers can still get to you, so it's the same locale.

What if they can see me but not reach me, would that count?

> As long as they can't reach you.

Like if we were in a glass elevator going up, and the chasers were in the lobby we just left. Or if they are on the shore and we're in the water, swimming away?

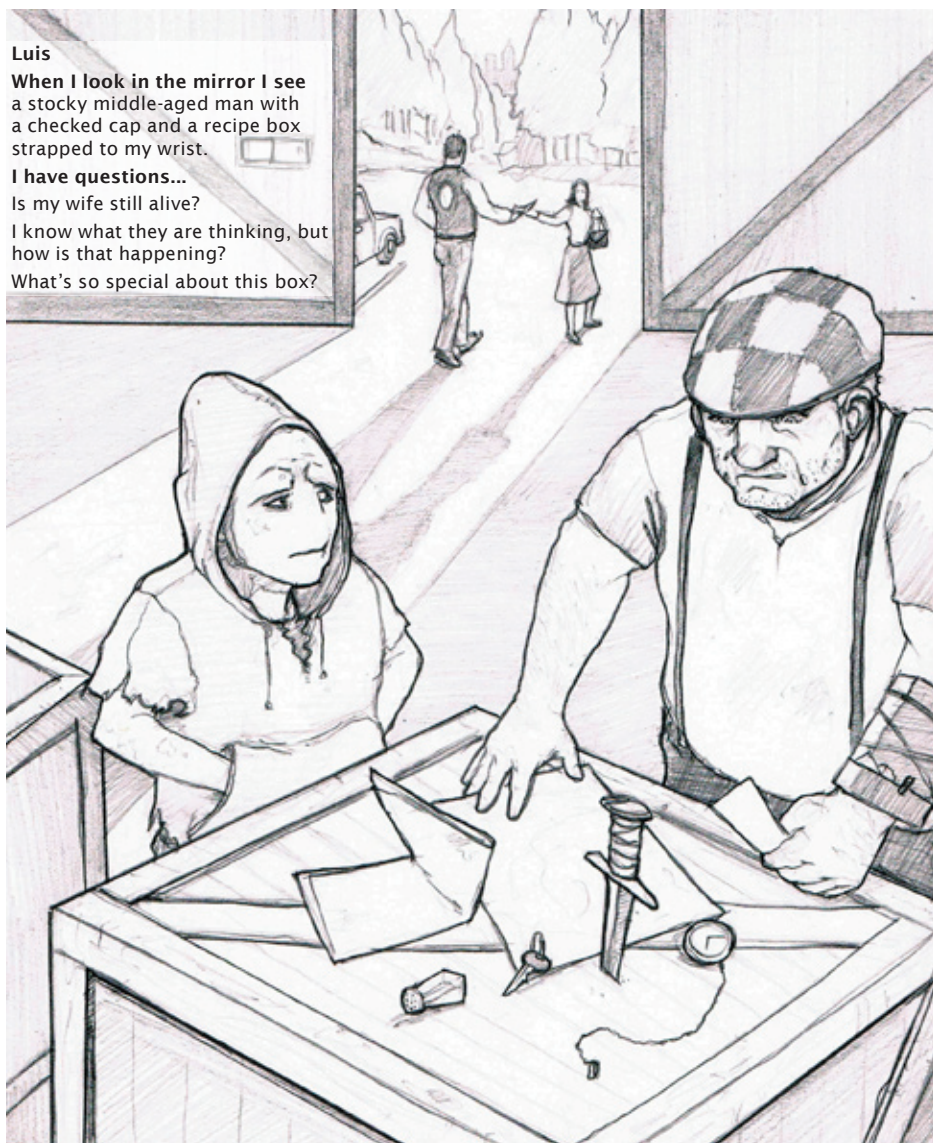> Sure, if they can't get to you, that counts as a new locale.

Luis

When I look in the mirror I see a stocky middle-aged man with a checked cap and a recipe box strapped to my wrist.

I have questions...

Is my wife still alive?

I know what they are thinking, but how is that happening?

What's so special about this box?

THE DICE

When do we roll dice?

Roll dice as soon as any Runner takes significant action. Remember that a significant action is something that:

· can go right or can go wrong
· shows off the Runner's exceptionality
· could potentially trigger a memory
· takes time and focus
· might expose the Runner to danger or unwanted attention

How do the dice work?

Players, it's your turn

1. Say what your Runner wants to do.
2. Determine how many dice to roll — at least 4, at most 6.
3. Roll the dice.
4. Play your dice on the things at risk, one by one.
5. Read the results.
6. Describe what happens!

In general, the higher you roll, the better things can go for you.

1. Say what your Runner wants to do.

Say something like "I want to find some clothing," or "I want to find a place to hide," or "I want to knock him out." Keep your Runner in the active role: "I want to dodge their shots," not "I don't want them to shoot me."

At this point, the GM or another player might say something like "How could you do that?" That just means they can't see

what you see yet, and it's your job to keep talking. Draw on your questions, your psi power, and what has been established so far to explain what you're doing.

Also, if you say, "I want to sneak in the back, take out the guard, and crack open the safe," the GM might say, "Let's just see if you sneak in the back, first."

2. Determine how many dice to roll — at least 4, at most 6.

The number of dice you roll depends on the number of things you are risking.

- Your Runner is by nature exceptional, so pick up a die just for being a Runner.
- Your Runner wants to do something important, so pick up a die for Goal.
- Your Runner could always have a memory triggered, so pick up a die for Reveal.
- Your Runner always runs the risk of being caught by the Chasers, so pick up a die for Chase.
- If your Runner is using a psi power to accomplish the goal, those powers could go out of control, hurting those around her. Pick up a die for Psi.
- If your Runner runs the risk of being injured (physically, emotionally, or socially) in this situation, pick up a die for Harm.

You will now have 4, 5 or 6 dice in your hand.

3. Roll the dice.

Only players roll the dice, the GM never rolls. Roll them, and look at the numbers.

4. Play your dice on the things at risk, one by one.

You might have rolled six dice, but only need five. That's ok, just choose the dice you want to play!

· **Goal**: Your Runner wants to do something important, so play one die of your choice on the Goal box.

· **Reveal**: Your Runner could always have a memory flash, so play a die on the Reveal box.
· **Chase**: Those Chasers are always hunting, so play a die on the Chase box.
· **Psi**: Using a psi power? Play a die on the Psi box.
· **Harm**: Is there a risk of injury? Play a die on the Harm box.

It's your choice where you play your dice on the Risk sheet, so shift them around until you're as happy as you can be with the outcome. Place them, review them, rearrange them — sometimes take advice from the other players, sometimes go with the first thing you set down.

5. Read the results.

How you've played your dice determines whether or not you succeed in your goal. The dice also dictate the twists and turns your Runner and the rest of the group will face next in the story.

6. Describe what happens!

Once you have placed your dice on all the relevant boxes on the Risk sheet, you, the GM, and the other players follow the die results for each category. Pay attention to who gets first say in describing the action, following what it says on the Risk sheet. Continue telling the story.

HARM AND HEALING

Hold on. Putting a die in Harm means I'm risking getting hurt. So if I get hurt, what does that mean?

If you are Harmed, put a token in the Impaired box on your character sheet. Next time you roll, put a die in the Impaired box on the Risk sheet *before* you roll the dice.

What if I get hurt again?

If you get hurt a second time, without healing first, put a second token in the Impaired box on your character sheet. When you roll the dice, you must put the high die in the Impaired box on the Risk sheet *after* you roll the dice and before assigning the remaining dice to the things at Risk.

How does a Runner get healed? Looking at the Risk sheet, I see that there are some timelines.

Any Runner can decide to make "Heal this person" a Goal, and put dice on it to see if it happens. Otherwise the Harm lasts as directed on the Risk sheet.

Does it have to be worded like that? "Heal this person."

Oh, no. It can be any variation on that. Goals like "Get Mason to the nearest ER," or "I tie a rag around Akiko's arm" or "I slap my hand over the bleeding and Make It Stop."

That last sounds like a psi power.

If it's part of your power, sure. Or maybe it's a new application of your power we haven't seen before.

So we should be tracking the Harm we take. With notes or something.

Use tokens. Put one on your sheet when you are Harmed, take it off when you are Healed.

When a Runner is healed, are they all the way healed, or is it a one-for-one, with the healing goals and the tokens in the Impaired box?

I get to decide! If it makes more sense for the story for the Runner to heal all the way, that's fine. If it makes more sense for the story for healing to be a one-for-one process, that's fine too.

THE RISKS

What are the Risks?

When your Runner does something important, roll dice and play them on the things at Risk. The different things at Risk are: achieving your objective — Goal, remembering something — Reveal, getting caught — Chase, losing control of your powers — Psi, and getting hurt — Harm.

GOAL

Do I achieve my goal?

4–6: Runner achieves goal. GM has first say.

1–3: Runner fails goal. Player has first say.

For Goal, you describe the intended action and get first say for results 1–3. The GM has to consider the obstacles to the action and gets first say for results 4–6.

REVEAL

Do I remember something from my past?

6: Runner has a memory that answers one of their questions. Player has first say.

4–5: Runner has a memory that answers one of their questions. Other players have first say.

1–3: Runner has no memory triggered. GM has first say.

For Reveal, if you play a 6 in the Reveal category, choose one of your Runner's questions, and describe how the current action

makes the Runner remember a part of their identity and answer the question. If you play a 4 or 5 in the Reveal category, read your questions out loud, and the other players come up with an answer for one of the questions, based on what might be triggered in the Runner's memory by the current events.

If you started out with fewer than six questions, and you have an open question space, and someone else is responsible for answering a question, they may give you a new question instead of answering an existing question. You can never have more than six questions.

For a 1–3, the GM has first say, and can describe the confusion, frustration, or simple lack of connection that results.

CHASE

Do the chasers gain on the runners?

GM always has first say.

5–6: Chasers make no progress toward the Runners.

3–4: Chasers move one locale closer to the Runners on the trail.

1–2: Chasers move two locales closer to the Runners on the trail.

*If the chasers catch up with the runners, **CHASE** leaves play and **CAPTURE** comes into play.*

For Chase, the GM is always responsible for the movement of the Chasers, and has first say as to what happens in the story, based on the Chase die.

GM, every time the Chasers move, and they are not in the same locale as the Runners, give a quick little sketch of what that's like. Describe a Chaser getting a tip from an informant, examining a footprint or tire-track, scanning through the crowd, making a quick report back to base. Build on the methods, technology, and look, as well as any info that is revealed in play and written on the Chaser Sheet.

PSI

Do my psi powers cause trouble?

5–6: Power causes no trouble. Player has first say.

3–4: Power surge: people may be injured, things broken — it would make local news. GM has first say.

1–2: Power goes wild: people are dead, things destroyed — it would make national news. GM has first say.

For Psi, consider what you know about your Runner's power, including new ways in which it might manifest. You have first say for a 5–6. The GM has first say for the damage on a 1–4, and is responsible for keeping the damage in scale with the die, with events in the story, and for any future scenes that might result from the damage.

HARM

Is anyone hurt?

5–6: Runner is unharmed & unimpaired. Player has first say.

4: Runner is hurt & impaired for the rest of this scene. Player has first say.

3: Runner is hurt & impaired for the rest of this session. GM has first say.

2: Runner is hurt & impaired for the rest of the game. GM has first say.

1: Runner is dying. Player has first say.

For Harm, you describe how you've been injured or impaired if it's minor (on a 4-5-6) or if you're dying (on a 1). Otherwise, the GM has the first say.

If the harm was social or emotional, not physical , a 1 means permanent injury, unless death is somehow appropriate to the story.

What's non-physical harm?

If a Runner is emotionally vulnerable, as in asking for help or shelter, or showing her true feelings about someone or something, she's risking emotional harm. If a Runner is trying to impress or intimidate someone, or trying to fit in with a group, or otherwise socially vulnerable, she's risking social harm.

Does the order of Risk matter?

When describing the results of the dice, start with whatever feels most natural to the scene. If the Runner successfully opens the safe (Goal), but the Chasers come crashing through the door (Chase), those things are going to come before "and you don't remember anything" (Reveal).

ROLLING THE DICE

Ok, you've made it from the bridge to the parking garage. The Chasers are still closing in on the crash site on the far side of the bridge. What do you do?

I'm looking around for an exit, catching my breath. I'm recovering from the Harm I took at the bridge.

I'm listening for the Chaser's minds to come into range, so I can alert the others if needed.

I want to move some of these cars to block the entrance way, maybe buy us a little more time.

Cool, grab some dice. You get one for being a Runner, one for your Goal, one for the Chasers, and one for Reveal. Are you risking Harm and are you using Psi powers?

Yeah, I'm pushing around some cars with my mind — I think things could get dangerous with that!

So grab a die for Harm and a die for Psi, and go ahead and roll them.

I rolled 1,2,3,4, and two 6s!

And where do you want them? You have 5 options and six dice right now.

Ok, I drop the 1. I know I want a 6 in Goal and a 6 in Reveal.

GOAL

4–6: achieves goal

1–3: fails goal

REVEAL

6: remembers

4-5: remembers

1–3: no memory

Maybe the 4 in Psi

and the 2 in Harm?

PSI

5-6: No trouble

3-4: power surge

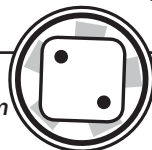1–3: power goes wild

HARM

5–6: no harm

4: impaired, short term

3: impaired, long term

2: permanently impaired

1: dying

That'd mean you're permanently hurt, and you still have to deal with the Chasers.

Right. I'll put the 3 in Chasers; they are still a couple locales away, so that feels fine. And I'll swap the Harm and Psi — 4 in Harm means I'm hurt for this scene, and 2 in Psi means my power goes crazy-wild.

Dude, swap the 6 in Reveal into Psi — don't go wild.

No, I want to see what happens! But I am going to swap Reveal and Harm — I want to see what happens, but not get hurt!

So your final dice look like this, right?

GOAL

4–6: achieves goal

1–3: fails goal

REVEAL

6: remembers!

4-5: remembers

1–3: no memory

CHASE

5-6: No progress

3-4: one locale closer

1–3: two locales closer

HARM

5–6: no harm
4: impaired, short term
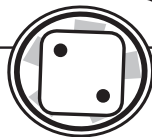*3: impaired, long term*
2: permanently impaired
1: dying

PSI

5-6: No trouble

3-4: power surge

1–3: power goes wild

Yep. Let's see how it goes. I know no-one is Harmed, because of the 6 in Harm.

Your Goal was to move the cars to make a barrier; you're successful, and I have the first say about that. Your Psi power also goes wild. You focus on shifting the cars and all around you, the cars crumple. Glass flies everywhere, car alarms go off like mad. It's like a demolition derby in the parking garage for a bit, and when the dust settles, there's a mound of twisted vehicles blocking the exit.

Cool!

Because of the 4 in Reveal, something about this triggers a memory, but it's up to other players to pick the question and have first say.

Ok, I'm picking glass out of my skin. It kind of shimmers.

Oh, that's got to be it! What are your questions again?

Who's Macy Richards? Where is my bike? When did I learn telekinesis? How old am I really? Why is this sequence repeating in my head? Did I leave the oven on?

The telekinesis one. It's a memory of being in a large glass room of some kind...

Like in a laboratory! There's people in lab coats and stuff! They're doing experiments.

Sure, and you're strapped to a table. There's a huge explosion, glass flying everywhere, people screaming. But you're not on the table anymore.

Oh, that is COOL! And when I look at my arms they are covered in glass shards just like this. I remember being in the lab, now. A look of shock washes over my face.

And the Chasers move one locale forward. Back at the crash site, a van pulls up and two men get out. One of them sniffs the air like a bloodhound. "That way" he says in a sort of broken, inhuman voice. He points across the bridge. The other man makes a call "We've got a lead. Send backup." What do you do?
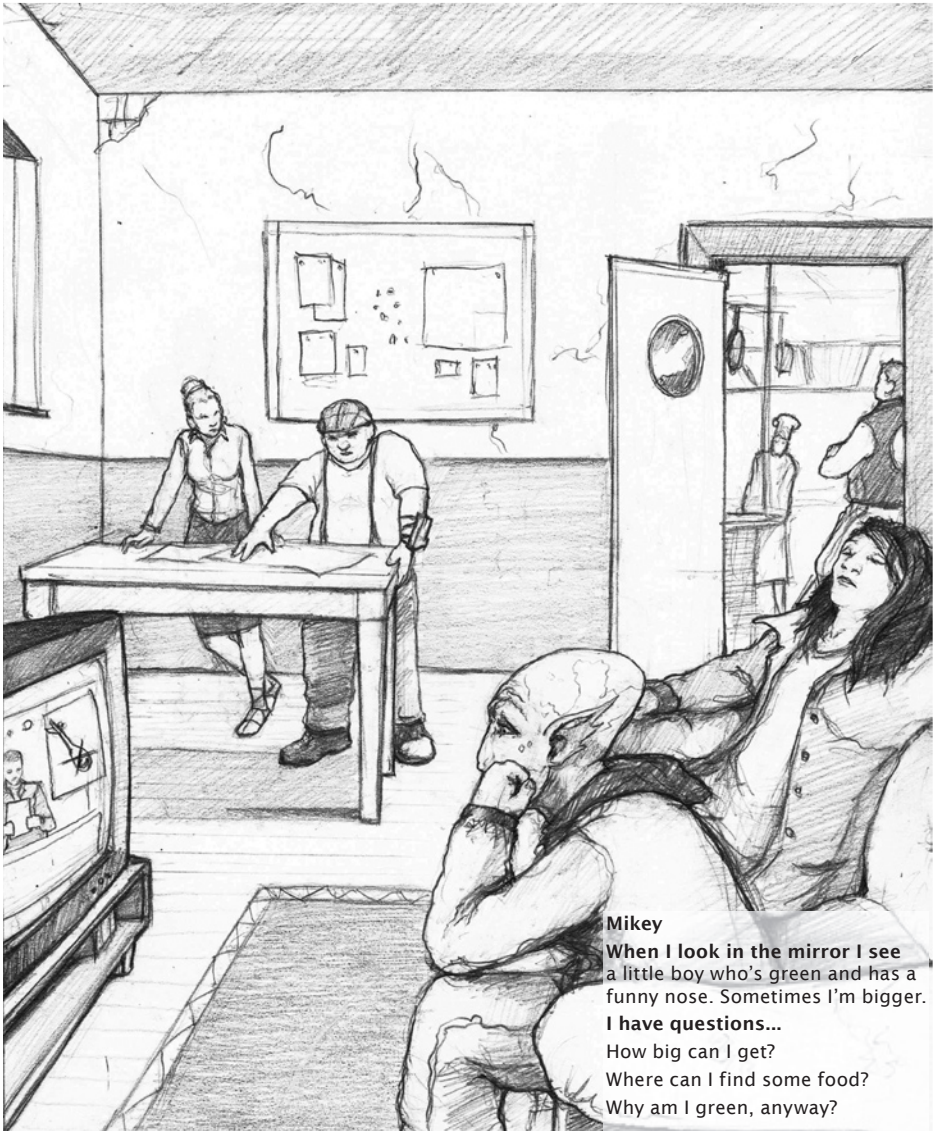
Mikey
When I look in the mirror I see a little boy who's green and has a funny nose. Sometimes I'm bigger.
I have questions...
How big can I get?
Where can I find some food?
Why am I green, anyway?

GOALS & MOVEMENT

A Runner can move by saying she moves: "OK we head out the back." If there's nothing stopping her, she moves. Put down a new locale card. The locale has to be important enough and different enough to mention — "I go get a drink from the kitchen" is not interesting in the same way that "I run to the kitchen, hoping to find a big knife or a heavy pan to use as a weapon" is interesting.

A Runner can also move to a new locale when she makes it a goal: "My goal is to go down to the basement". If she succeeds, cool, she's in basement, new locale card. If she fails, then no, she's still in the first locale (maybe the living room?) — and, since she made it a goal and rolled for it, the Chasers may have moved, even though she hasn't.

A Runner can also set a goal that involves moving in time: "The next evening, I break into the office after hours". If she makes that roll, she's in a new locale called "Office", and it's the next evening. If she blows that roll, and winds up not going where she wanted to go, she just stays in her present locale, and now it's the next evening. Maybe she slept through the alarm — the fictional reasoning for the blown roll — and it's now late at night. And the Chasers may have moved closer. Time moves whether the Runner makes the goal or not.

What if the Runners separate?

Runners can split up. When they do, just create a branching trail. At this point, use tokens for each of the Runners, and one Chaser token for each branch of the Trail.

Some things to remember:

· If someone rolls that the Chasers advance, the Chasers advance on all Runners, regardless of the scene they are in. There are always enough Chasers to go around.

· Different trails can reconnect, and Runners can regroup, as long as it's reasonable at that time in the story.

· You can still answer another Runner's question, even if your Runner is in different scene.

A FORK ON THE TRAIL & CHASERS EVERYWHERE

Ok, this is what the Trail looks like now. The Chasers are at the crash site, and all you Runners are in the garage, behind a couple tons of mangled cars.

Crash! — Bridge — Garage
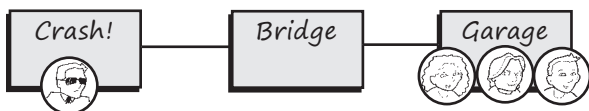
Now, for the sake of showing you the game, where do you head next?

I want to find a way out of this place, so I'm looking for some stairs or a door. I want to get to the roof.
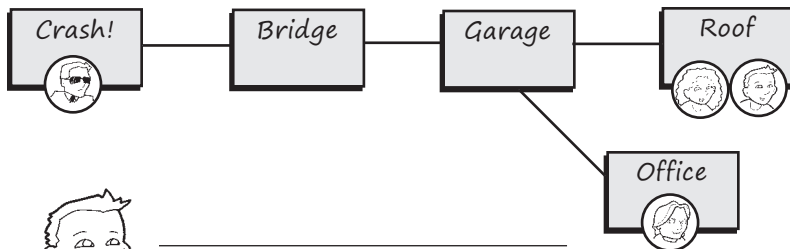
I'm with her.

Ok, the roof for you two.

And I'm going into the building; maybe I can find some information, or overhear someone's thoughts on what's going on.

And an inside office for you. So now our Trail looks like this:

| Crash! | Bridge | Garage | Roof |

Office

It's not a problem that we split up?

Nope. The Trail can branch, just remember that the Chasers are after all of you. And of course, you can meet up again.
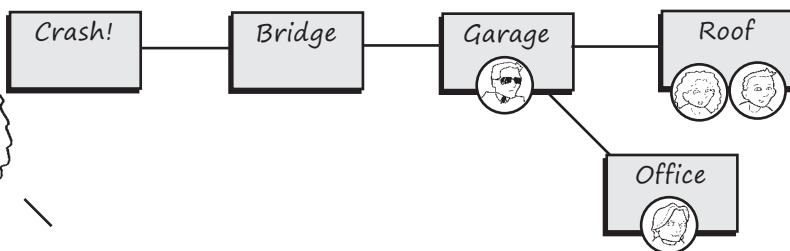
Can we still answer Reveals and stuff if we're on different branches?

Yes! Obviously, your Runners are in different spaces, but you can still contribute.

Now I'm going to skip ahead a bit here, and say that the Chasers are at the garage.

| Crash! | Bridge | Garage | Roof |

Office

YIKES!

I know, right? Now, the next time the Chasers advance, they move equally on all branches of the Trail. So look out.

Wait, so does that mean that if I blow a roll here on the roof, the Chasers barge into the office, too?

Yes, exactly. And if the Chasers are in the same scene as you, when you role dice you have to consider Capture instead of Chase as an option on the Risk sheet.

What happens if they are in the locale right behind us, and I choose to move them two scenes ahead by putting a 1 in Chasers?

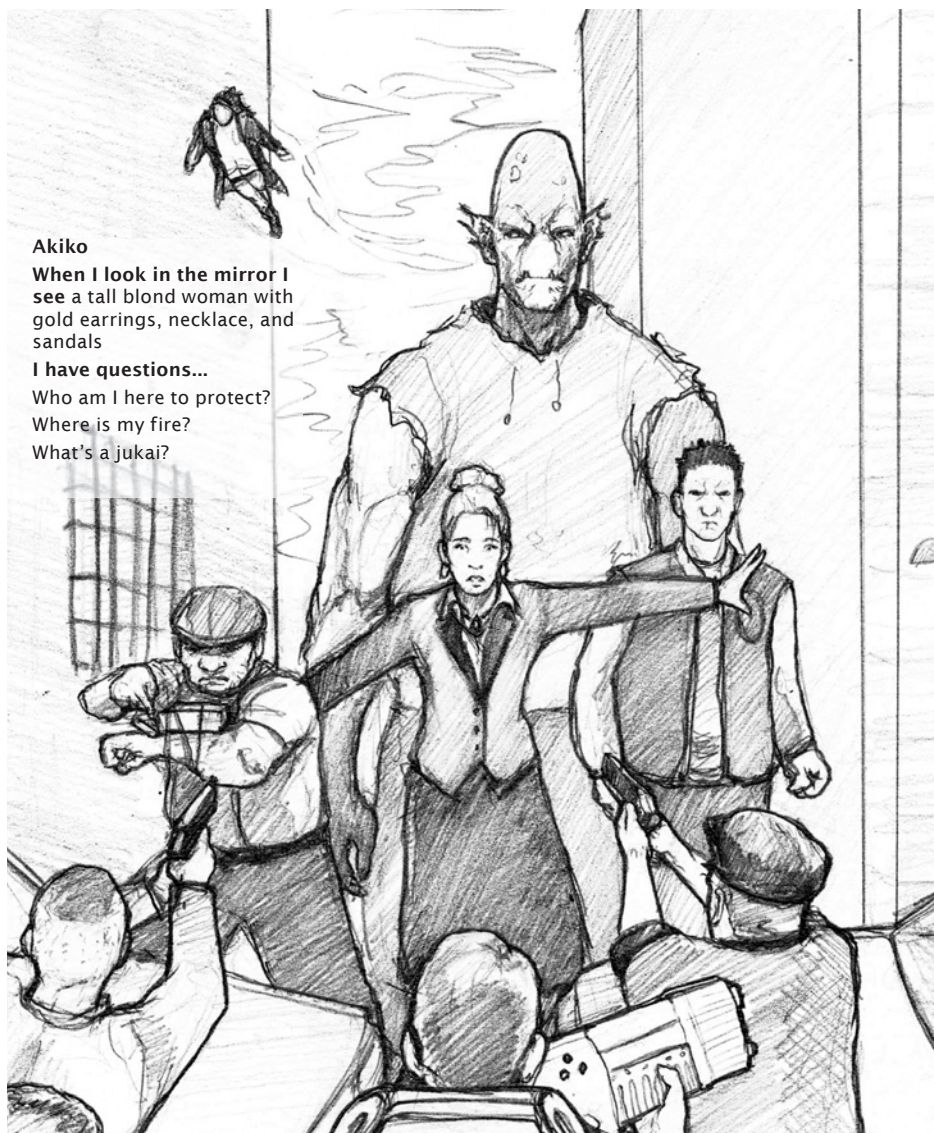Then they catch up. You confront them and risk capture.

Akiko

When I look in the mirror I see a tall blond woman with gold earrings, necklace, and sandals

I have questions...

Who am I here to protect?

Where is my fire?

What's a jukai?

COMPLICATIONS

· You can still contribute input to every scene, regardless of the scene your Runner is in, just not from a 1st person perspective.

What happens if my Runner gets Captured?

CAPTURE

Does anyone get caught?

4–6: Nobody gets caught. Player has first say.

2–3: Somebody gets caught — it may or may not be you. GM has first say.

1: Everyone gets caught. Other players have first say.

If the runner escapes, CAPTURE leaves play and CHASE comes back into play. If the runner gets caught, CAPTURE leaves play and DISAPPEAR comes into play.

If the Chasers are in the scene with you, take Chase out of play by covering that section of the Risk Sheet with a blank card, and play on the Capture chart instead.

On a 2–3, the GM can choose any Runner; it doesn't need to be the Runner whose player rolled.

In order to avoid Capture, that has to be part of your Goal, and you have to accomplish it. If you succeed, place your token 1 locale ahead of the Chasers, and bring Chase back into play.

You can definitely try to rescue a captured Runner. Make it your Goal and if you succeed, they join you at whatever scene you are, however far from the Chasers you are.

If you are caught, Captured comes off the table and Disappear Forever is on the table. Cover up Chase and Capture, and play on the Disappear Forever chart on the Risk Sheet.

DISAPPEAR

Do I disappear forever?

4–6: Runner doesn't disappear forever. Player has first say.

1–3: Runner disappears forever. GM has first say.

If you are captured, and Disappear Forever is at Risk, you can definitely try to escape. Make it part of your Goal, and if you succeed, place your token one locale ahead of the chasers. Disappear Forever comes off the table and Chase comes back on. If a Runner Disappears Forever, that Runner is removed from the game as if they had died.

What if my Runner gets Harmed?

IMPAIRED

If you're impaired, place one of your dice here before you roll.

If you're doubly impaired, place your highest die here after you've rolled.

When your Runner is injured, put a token in the Impaired box on your Character sheet. Next time you roll dice, you still pick up as many of the six dice (Runner, Goal, Reveal, Chase, Psi and Harm) as apply, but before you roll them, put a die in the Impaired box on the Risk sheet. Roll the remaining dice, and play them in the Risk boxes as usual.

 If you are injured again, without healing first, put a second token on your character sheet, in the Doubly Impaired box. Next

time you roll, pick up as many of the six dice (Runner, Goal, Reveal, Chase, Psi and Harm) as apply. Roll all these dice, and **before** you play any dice on the Risk sheet, put the high die in the Impaired box on the Risk sheet.

In order to clear the token off your character sheet, your Runner must be healed. You can wait out the results of the Harm suffered according to the dice. A 4 in Harm means you are recovered by the next location. A 3 in Harm means you are hurt for the rest of the session, but will recover by next session, should there be one. If a fellow Runner chooses to heal you, you are healed as soon as they are successful in that Goal.

If you have two tokens in the Impaired box on your character sheet when another player attempts to heal your Runner, the

Another GM? How does that work?

We share the descriptions, take turns having the 1st GM say after die rolls, that sort of thing. Or, we could divide up the tasks, and one of us could focus on the Chaser and the other one on the setting. Also, you get to see what's on my Chaser card.

Ok, I get it. That's pretty cool.

GM may decide whether your Runner is completely healed, or whether each success in Goal clears one token.

What if my Runner dies?!

Then you become another GM, helping with the description of scenes, playing bad guys, supporting characters, etc.. At the end of the game, you still choose an epilogue scene for your dead Runner. This is also what happens if your Runner gets Disappeared Forever.

What if the Runners don't do anything?

Simple, the Chasers catch them and they disappear forever. GM, it's your job to play the Chasers with everything you have. Advance as strongly and relentlessly as you can.

How does the game end?

The whole game ends when one player has answers for all of her Runner's questions. When this happens, everyone plays out the scene that they are in, and then the last phase of the game, called the Crossroads, begins.

The Crossroads are a set of special scenes. Each Runner gets one Crossroads scene. Do not roll dice during these scenes. These scenes describe the end of this part of the Runner's story; they explain why they are no longer running right now. Decide what happens during the Crossroads scenes following these steps:

1. If you're the one with all your questions answered, you choose first. You're the only one who gets to pick outright whichever ending you want. No one else can pick that ending.

2. "I am no longer running because I am…"

Choose one:
    Home
    Turning the Tables
    On a Quest
    Hidden
    Trapped
    Lost
    Making a Discovery

Now go in order, from the Runner with the most answers to fewest:

3. The person with the next most questions answered picks next.

Of the remaining available endings, pick the one you want. No one else can pick that ending. Repeat, going down in number of questions answered, until everyone has a unique ending. If there's a tie, work it out and agree on who gets what between you.

4. When everyone has chosen from the list, begin the Crossroads.

Players, you're responsible for your Runner's Crossroads. This is a place to wrap up the story of this Runner at this time. No dice can be rolled, so keep your chosen ending clearly in mind and play to that.

GM, you're responsible for the order in which Crossroads are played. Consider what's best for the story — you might be leaving in the middle! Just as with the crash, describe the environment, the non-player characters, and the action.

The group contributes as usual. The Crossroads may be tragic, uplifting, romantic, or suspenseful. The story may come to a natural end, or be left in a dramatic cliffhanger.

CROSSROADS

I just answered my last question. That means the end of the game, right?

Right! So what Crossroad do you choose?

Hmm. I think I'll take Hidden. I am no longer running because I've gone into hiding with the commune, where my mutant powers are seen as just being extra in touch with the earth. Nobody there knows I can control plants, they just think I'm a super gardener.

That's really cool. I have three questions answered.

I have five. I'm going to choose Turning the Tables. The information I have is going to go out on the internet, plus I'm using the telepathy they gave me to implant the suggestion to blow up the lab in the minds of two of the techs.

Now I can't choose Hidden or Turning the Tables. I think I'm Trapped. I'm no longer running because I'm stuck in the carnival, doing stunts with my telekinesis. I know that the show boss will turn me over if I step out of line, so I'm Trapped. I still don't know who Macy Richards is, or where my bike is, or how old I really am.

That's so sad!

Yeah, but it's also really cool, 'cause it kind of sets us up for another game. We can play another game, right?

Sure! Only this time, I want to play a Runner and one of you gets to be the GM!

What if I answer all my questions, but I don't want to end the game?

Too bad, them's the breaks. Schedule a time to play again!

Really?

Well yes, but with the consent of the rest of the group, you can instead join the GM and help run the game for the remaining Runners, ending when everyone has answered all their questions or when everyone agrees to end the game. Crossroads proceed as above, with the first player to answer all questions going first, the next second, and so on.

When all the Crossroads are finished, the game is over! Applaud yourselves!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Who helped you, Chris and Michael?

QUICK START RULES

Before play:
If you have time, read the book. It should take about 30 minutes.

Print out or recreate the Risk Sheet, and make sure you know how it works — check pages 33 to 35 for reference.

At the table:
"There's a lot of room for collaboration in this game. You answer key things about each others' characters, different people get to say what happens, and all of us can keep adding input until we agree what's happened in the story. Usually, that's really easy — we just go with what other people say. If you want to add something, speak up."

Describe the urban setting in broad, vivid strokes.

Hand everyone a Runner sheet.

"Your character is called a Runner. You have psychic powers and amnesia. You have flashes of memories that come to you during stressful moments, as you piece together the events that brought you to this place. One thing you do know: there are people who want you back under their control, they are chasing you, and they will do anything to catch you."

Point to the Chaser Sheet: " This is where I'll write information about the Chasers."

"If you know your Runner's name, write it down. If you don't, leave that space blank and maybe you'll find out in play. Same goes for apparent age. Write down what you'd see in a mirror."

"Write down a few key words about your Runner's power — "crushes stuff, flashy, and makes me hungry" is a good example. Have a general idea, but don't think about too many details — your Runner has amnesia, right?"

"Now think of what questions that might be in your Runner's mind. Write at least one question that refers to your Runner's powers. Write questions that refer to your Runner's strengths and weaknesses. Write at least one question about your Runner's immediate past or current circumstances. Examples are on pages 18-19, and you can help each other if you get stuck. All the Runner sheets are public knowledge, so when you've got your questions written, everybody read them out. "

For a convention game, have everyone stop at 4 questions. This keeps the game to about 3 hours.

"When any one Runner has answers to all her questions, there's a special set of scenes and the game ends."

While the players are making their Runners:
Put six d6 on the Risk Sheet, write "CRASH!" on a 3x5 card, put a handful of tokens of some kind on the table (coins or dice work well), and listen in on Runner creation. Write some details about the Chasers on a 3x5 card — this is called your Chaser card and you keep private; see page 23 for examples.

When the players are finished making their Runners, explain how the dice work:
"When you want to do something, roll dice. You get one for being a Runner and one for each thing at Risk. You always pick up Goal — you're trying to do a thing, Reveal — it might trigger a memory and answer one of your questions, and Chase — the Chasers might gain on you. You can also grab Psi if you are using your powers and Harm if you are risking being injured in some way. Nobody gets to roll dice twice in a row."

Point to the CRASH! card, and explain the Trail:
"Every game starts with the Runners in a crash, and the Chasers are not yet on scene. When you move to a new locale, I'll put down a new card with that locale on it. That makes the Trail for the Chasers to follow, when the dice determine they move. The Trail can fork if you split up — the Chasers just follow all of you."

Write down the Look, Method, and Technology of the Chasers on the Chaser Sheet, based on the Runners, your ideas, and your Chaser card. Players can give input, but keep what you write to a few key words. "Here's what we know so far about the Chasers."

Start the game!

Describe the crash as vividly as you can, and ask the Runners what they do. Follow the action around, make sure everyone gets a turn, and jump back and forth.

When a Runner takes significant action, the player rolls dice and places them on the Risk Sheet. The Risk Sheet will tell you who gets first say about what happens — see pages 33 to 35.

Lay down new locale cards as needed on the Trail.

Every time players roll dice, regardless of whether the Runners move or not, give a little description of the Chasers and what they are doing. Add details to the Chaser Sheet as needed.

Ask "Are you using your Psi power? Are you risking Harm?" whenever it's the tiniest bit unclear. Sometimes people get overexcited and scoop up dice they don't actually want to risk, and sometimes they forget in the moment that they are using Psi or risking Harm.

Complications:

 If a Runner gets Harmed, tell the player to drop a die into Impaired before they roll. If they get Harmed again, they have to

drop the high die into Impaired after the roll. They can be healed if another Runner makes it a Goal.

If a Runner dies, they have the option of becoming a co-GM and helping you with the rest of the game. Show any co-GMs your secret Chaser card.

At some point, the Chasers will probably catch up with the Runners. When that happens, cover up Chase with a piece of paper and use Capture instead. If they get captured, cover up Capture and use Disappear forever instead. Disappearing Forever is the same as dying — that player can become a co-GM instead of just sitting out the rest of the game.

The game ends when the first Runner has answers to all of their questions. Wrap up with the special Crossroads scenes.

"You've answered your last question! Now we get to see the Runners at the Crossroads, where they are no longer running, for whatever reason. Pick from the list on the bottom of your Runner sheet, then whoever has the next most questions answered picks next, and so on."

If the person who triggered the Crossroads really doesn't want the game to end, they have the option of becoming a co-GM and helping you with the rest of the game.

While the Runners are picking their Crossroads:
Review the Chaser sheet and what has happened so far. Be ready to have the big confrontation, spill out the truth, and generally wrap things up.

"No one rolls dice in the Crossroads scenes. Tell us why you are no longer running, and we'll play out the scene to that end."

Thank your players!