

SOLO ROLE PLAYING?

This sample scenario showcases parts of the Libre Solo Role Playing game. This is not the full game, it's a mash-up with simpler rules and a taste for some of the game's key tools: yes-no questions, skill checks and plot stress.

The full game spins stories completely on the fly. This training wheels edition wraps the tools around a short branching path adventure. This sample also draws from a sample setting and optional rules-lite RPG that's included in the full game. This adventure also uses some elements (dialog, unexpected events and foes) that were pre-generated. Usually the player creates these elements while building the story. It leaves out many rules, details and options from the full game to keep it simple.

For this solo adventure you'll need pencil, eraser and scrap paper; two 10-sided dice; and you'll probably want to print out pages 13 to 15 (rules, mission sheet and character sheet) for reference and record keeping. Happy adventuring! *⊙*

SPECIAL DELIVERY AN INTRODUCTORY MISSION

Your player's character - the protagonist of the story - is Arthur Falcone. Arthur is a struggling private investigator who lives in Mill City, a post-industrial metropolis in the mid-Atlantic United States. Arthur has a patron who's hired him for odd jobs over the years, a wealthy businessman named Peter Havik-Stand. The adventure kicks off when Peter calls Arthur and asks the investigator to meet him in a cafe near his office right away.

Take a moment to look through Arthur Falcone's character sheet on p.15, which you'll use for this mission. In the upper left are Arthur's vital statistics, called attributes: +1 is good, 0 is average, -1 is poor. Arthur is an especially good talker and listener (high

savvy) but he is clumsy (low *nimble*). Further down the sheet are Arthur's listed skills. To the right of the skills on the player character's sheet are Arthur's details for untrained skill use. You'll use these whenever the investigator tries a skill that is outside his expertise.

To figure out what these skill levels mean, look at the yes-no questions & skill checks (d100) chart on p.14. The left-hand column on the chart shows Arthur's base likelihood to succeed at any given attribute: from nigh impossible to nearly certain, ranging from -3 to +3. You'll shift the likelihood of skill check success up or down one or more categories mainly based on two types of factors - window dressing and scene qualities - that help or hinder Arthur's chance of success. Θ

SCENE 1: THE ASSIGNMENT

This starting segment is called a *cutscene*, which is all about dialog and information gathering. In this adventure, the cutscene sets up Arthur's goal for the story (called a *mission*) with his patron. The full Libre Solo Role Playing game uses tables and guidelines combined with the player's free narration to generate scenes. Check out the "Behind the Scenes" sidebar on p.4 for a little more about how some of the scene elements were generated using the full game's rules. The adventure starts with private investigator Arthur Falcone meeting his patron, wealthy businessman Peter Havik-Stand, at a neighborhood cafe. Pause and make a mental picture of the place where Arthur and Peter meet. Now look up the scene qualities table on p.15, roll three random results (d100) and write them down. You might roll one or more *places* (a result of 20 or lower) or *rationales* (a result of 81 or higher). A rationale is the prevailing social atmosphere among generic people in the area. Scene qualities may seem whimsical, but they can be important in helping Arthur succeed. Work the scene qualities into your mental picture of the scene. If a scene quality contradicts your original idea for the scene, let the scene quality take precedent if you can make sense of it. Now jot down some notes of your modified mental picture of the scene, maybe things like: - what time of day / day of week / season of year is it? What's the weather like outside?

- Is the cafe airy or cramped, crowded or nearly empty? Filthy and run-down or clean but well-worn?

- Is the wait staff attentive or surly?

- Are there plate glass windows? Are they small and barred?

There's no need to answer all these questions, but write down things you think are key to your mental picture. These notes are called *window dressing*. They're not as important as scene qualities, but they come in handy.

If you are stuck on any major scene details that seem important, you can ask a question about it (e.g., "is there an umbrella stand?") and roll on the yes-no question (d100) table on p.14 for an answer. Just have in mind why you're asking, and what yes and no mean before you pick up the dice. For now, any yes-no question rolls should be at the "50/50 moderate" level. A result of 1-50 means yes; a result of 51-100 means no. For each yesno question you ask, put a tick mark next to the mission sheet's plot stress counter on p.13. As a rule, go with your mental picture and intuition of what the place looks like; don't get hung up asking yes-no questions.

When you are done, you are ready to open the scene. Add 5 to the plot stress counter. Add up all your plot stress tick marks, then roll d100. If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, you get an unexpected event. Go to unexpected events on p.14 and follow the instructions. You'll need to incorporate whatever happens as soon as it's logically possible: right away if you can, later in the same scene if you can't.

Moments after Arthur arrives, Peter enters and collapses into a seat opposite Arthur. He lets a large, fancy canvas bag drop heavily on the table as he struggles to catch his breath. "I need you to get this bag to a certain Miss Marjani immediately." Peter hastily scribbles a telephone number on a napkin that he hands to Arthur. "Miss Marjani is at the Eritrean Embassy. It's across town, off the 500 block of Walnut Street. Call her once you are at the embassy. She will come out to greet you. Do *not* go in." Peter glances at his jewelled watch. "You have about two hours before the embassy closes. Miss Marjani is leaving town and she won't have a forwarding address. The delivery should take you only about an hour in this traffic, but I'll still pay your usual retainer, \$600. I assume you're game?"

You may now want Arthur to ask questions or make requests of Peter. For each of the questions below you'll first have to make a successful *negotiate* skill check: Arthur does not have *negotiate* skill; it falls under *influence*, and defaults to his untrained skill of *social* 0. Look through the sample questions, and apply the bonus or penalty shifts listed for the question or request. If there is something about the window dressing you wrote down, or about the scene qualities you rolled that you believe should influence Arthur's interaction with Peter, you may add or subtract 1 shift for each positive or negative thing. Count up the pluses and minuses, and roll the skill check on p.14. If you succeed, look up Peter's response on p.12.

When Arthur fails his first social skill check (rolling a no result), Peter rises indignantly and says "Dammit Arthur, I don't have time for this. It's a quick job, I'm paying you well, just get it done!" He heads for the door. Add one plot stress, and wrap up the scene below.

Possible questions (see p.12 for answers):
1: "So - what's in the bag?" (0 shifts)
2: "I'm afraid I'm going to need more money..." (0 shifts)
3: "Uh - can I borrow your car?" (-2 shifts) / "I'll need you to get me a rental?" (-1 shift)

4: "Can I call up my assistant Toni Graham to come and help out?" (+1 shift)

5: "Okay Peter, what are you *not* telling me?" (0 shifts)

When you're done having Arthur make requests, end the scene: roll d100. If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, you'll need to go to the unexpected events section and follow the instructions. You must resolve any unexpected events before you can close the scene. If you roll above your current plot stress, the scene closes without futher incident. Θ

BEHIND THE SCENE

In Libre Solo Role Playing, stories often start by assigning a goal, called a *mission*, to the player's character. The mission drives the player character's story forward. The player can choose some elements in the scene or roll them randomly. In this scene, the player chose the key *person of interest* (wealthy patron Patron Peter Havik-Stand), and rolled a random *place* ("Tavern/Inn/Hotel", which the player interpreted as a cafe). This story's scenes all happen in civilized places; wilderness places get separate treatment. The mission was rolled randomly, as: "Deliver" "Odd/Exotic Weapons" (to) "Diplomatic Expert" (at) "Palace/Fortress/HQ".

The player used deductive logic, made some yes-no question rolls to confirm guesses, and used some free narration to turn the item into a bag, and to change the target person and place into Miss Marjani at the Eritrean Embassy (something from the Mill City background setting in Libre Solo Role Playing). The dialog was interpreted from random rolls on a template called *Structured Questions for Persons*. Elements like unexpected events were pre-rolled randomly to make it easier to jump right in with this sample adventure.

SCENE 2: CROSSING THE CITY

This segment is an example of an *obstacle scene*. As the player and story teller, your goal is to navigate Arthur through this scene by relying on his skills, wits and luck. The scene starts with detailed branching options. Based on what Arthur does and what happens to him, the story could go in many different directions. Possible elements include a car crash, a race or chase across the city, and efforts to get hold of alternate transportation when things go wrong. The scene is divided into numbered sections to make it easier to follow what might happen next, based on what Arthur does. As you make your way through the story, we'll show some tools and rules that you can use to improvise, to give a taste of how Libre Solo Role Playing works when there *isn't* a set track for what happens next.

Track Arthur's skill check successes and each time you ask for trouble on the mission sheet, p.13. You need three of each to achieve meaningful success in the scene. At that point you can close the scene with a success, and move on to the next scene.

To count a skill check roll toward meaningful success, there's a cap on the odds. It cannot be higher than 50/50 moderate (0 shifts) before figuring scene qualities. That means Arthur will needs to take penalties on some skill check rolls if you want them to count toward meaningful success for the scene: more about that later. If you reach the end of the scene's options and did not snag three successful skill checks and ask for trouble three times, you might try to continue by improvising, or else *throw in the towel* on the scene. There are other dead ends where Arthur could fail to reach the Eritrean embassy in time. If you hit one of those dead ends, you can try to improvise your way out, or else throw in the towel. Throwing in the towel means Arthur Falcone fails in his assignment; go to entry #13 to close the scene, then go directly to scene 4.

This obstacle scene is a *follow-up scene*. That means it begins right where the last one left off. If Arthur was hurt, that carries over. Plot stress *always* carries over. Like before, draw a mental picture, but this time about the streets of Mill City as Arthur gets ready to cross town. Carry over details still relevant from the starting cutscene into this new scene. Turn scene qualities that carry over (e.g., if it was raining last scene it should still be raining) into window dressing. Roll three fresh scene qualities, incorporate them into your mental picture and write them down. If you roll a static scene quality like a place, or sounds or smells, you can 'play' these at any one location in the scene where it could help in making a skill check or asking for trouble.

Like for the first scene, jot down the major points of your mental picture as window dressing for the scene. Once you're done with window dressing, add 5 to the plot stress you carried over from the last scene. Open the scene by rolling d100: If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, you'll need to roll for an unexpected event on p.14, and incorporate the result into the start of the scene.

Obstacle scenes need an advance game plan for skill check challenges. In this case, they're chosen for you. Arthur is going to be tailed, so first he'll need to succeed in a *notice* roll to realize he is being followed. If that happens, he'll next make a *drive car* skill check to shake the tail or to drive aggressively across the city to make it to the embassy in time. If that succeeds, Arthur might make a *navigation* skill check (this defaults to *wayfinding*, under Arthur's untrained *animal/vehicle* 0), to evade city gridlock. Arthur needs to succeed at three skill checks. There is a strong chance he'll fail at one or more of those attempts, which will throw the story in a different direction. To make sure there are plenty of opportunities for the private investigator's skill checks and asking for trouble, there is a foe (generated randomly in advance) in this scene: an elderly driver. The person is a non-combatant, but potentially dangerous behind the wheel.

To open the scene, Arthur sticks Peter Havik-Stand with the cafe bill and takes the bag to his car. Arthur's clunker has a -1 shift penalty to *drive car* skill checks. If Arthur successfully asked for a rental car, that is delivered to him within minutes; it has no drive skill modifiers. If Arthur snagged Peter's luxury sedan, that is premium equipment for a +1 shift bonus to *drive car* skill checks. Arthur puts the key in the ignition, pulls into the road and turns toward the far side of the city.

As this scene progresses, we'll take off the training wheels a little at a time. Using the included tools, you *can* experiment with taking the story off the rails. The point is to make this story your own, a taste of how Libre Solo Role Playing's story flow works.

I. MINIVAN

#1

We'll start with Arthur's *notice* skill check, to find out if he realizes he is being tailed. Arthur has *notice* 0; add +1 shift for any window dressing that would help Arthur's skill check, and subtract -1 shift for any factors that would hinder Arthur's skill check. The type of car Arthur is driving doesn't affect this roll.

If you want this skill check to count toward meaningful success in the obstacle scene (and you do), then the net skill check with all window dressing applied *cannot* be higher than 0 shifts (meaning a 50/50 moderate chance of success). The foe driving the minivan has a universal *conflict* 0 skill: That means the foe's skill doesn't modify Arthur's chances of success.

USELESS QUALITIES?

Often scene qualities won't have any obvious use in a scene. For example, as the player's character races around the city, cooking smells aren't much help. The full game describes how to interpret scene qualities and use them effectively. But even then, scene qualities are often window dressing cues instead of playing a direct role, and that's intentional.

Before picking up the dice, you must decide what failure means. Failure always has a consequence. Here the consequence is straightforward. It's reasonable that whoever this foe works for, wants the delivery stopped. What easier way than to cause an accident?

Now consider if scene qualities help or hinder the roll. Add or subtract 1 shift for each scene quality that would affect the notice (e.g., good/bad lighting or weather). Scene quality modifiers *can* take you above the cap of 50/50 moderate chance of success, and still let a successful skill check roll count for meaningful success.

Pick up the dice, roll the *notice* skill check on the chart on p.14, and add a tick to plot stress. If the check succeeds (rolling a yes result), Arthur sees the minivan driving erratically behind him, and can deal with the threat; mark down your first successful skill check on the mission sheet on p.13. You can proceed to entry #9 in section III on vehicles and chases. If the check fails, Arthur only finds out about the other driver when there is a deafening crash and the minivan crumples the back of Arthur's car. Go to entry #2.

#2

The collision is a good chance to *ask for trouble*. Asking for trouble is a yes-no question that has a bad outcome for Arthur if the answer is yes. We'll ask: "Will the other driver try to run Arthur over next?" That would definitely be bad! Roll it as a 50/50 moderate yes-no question on p.14. If you ask this question (and you should) add a tick to plot stress. Regardless of the outcome, tick one 'asking for trouble' box on the mission sheet. Asking for trouble is a yes-no question, so if the roll result is lower than current plot stress, roll an unexpected event on p.14. If after the crash the other driver has a murderous bent, go to #3. If not, go to #4.

#3

Arthur gets out of his car as the minivan driver backs up, its hood bashed in. The other driver then throws the

WHAT IS A CONSEQUENCE?

Whenever a skill check fails, it's never *just* a failure. Instead, the failure means a setback for the player's character and/or dials up the threat level. The action moves forward, but not in the way the player wanted. Some consequences are obvious: failure to climb probably means a fall; failure to drive aggressively implies a crash. Sometimes it's less obvious. Here are ideas if you want to try your own hand at consequences:

- Require a follow-up skill check to avoid an immediate threat.

- Complications make a repeat attempt impossible, or at least more difficult and dangerous.

- The skill check's intended result happens, but at a steep price (e.g. injury, damaged gear or spent money).

- The skill check's intended result happens, but it creates a new (and bigger) problem.

ailing vehicle back into gear and hurtles forward directly at the investigator! Arthur must make a *nimble* roll to get out of its way. As before, figure out the consequence before rolling. In this case, we'll decide failure means Arthur takes a level of damage. Again, the driver's general conflict 0 skill doesn't affect the roll. But we can also now assess that there is -1 shift to the driver's roll: The minivan is defective equipment after the crash. Check if any window dressing can add or subtract shifts. For example, heavy traffic could hinder the minivan. But keep the skill check at 0 shifts (50/50 moderate) or below if you want it to count toward meaningful success. Save any scene qualities that apply to the roll for last, because those shifts *can* take you above or below the 50/50 moderate chance of success and still have the roll count toward meaningful success.

Once you roll the dice, regardless of the outcome, add a tick to plot stress. If Arthur succeeds, he dodges out of the way and gets to safety on the sidewalk. Mark the successful skill check on the mission sheet. If Arthur fails, the car hits him and he takes a level of damage.

After the murder attempt, the driver tries to escape. If you want Arthur to continue the altercation, you can improvise using the DIY Tools on p.7. Arthur might try to leap onto the vehicle and hang on (using his *nimble* and/or *strong* attributes) while the driver aims to flee through city streets. Keep in mind Arthur's goal is to get to the embassy and he doesn't have much time, or else his mission fails. If there was a collision and the minivan driver *didn't* try to run Arthur over, the investigator and the driver pull over and start to swap paperwork. You can make an *empathy* skill check for Arthur (it defaults to Arthur's untrained *social* 0). Once again, window dressing and/or scene qualities might influence the roll, and the other driver's *conflict* 0 doesn't affect the roll. Add a tick to plot stress. Success means Arthur realizes the elderly driver is stalling for time and the accident report will take hours. If the empathy skill check was at 50/50 moderate odds or lower before figuring in any scene qualities, then the player can also record a successful skill check on the mission sheet. If Arthur succeeds, go to #5; if he fails the skill check, go to #6.

#5

Arthur realizes he needs to bail on the accident to get to the embassy in time. You'll need to work out how get out of the situation. A deceive or intimidate skill check? Abandon the car and run off? You may ask for trouble (at 50/50 moderate odds) on whether the minivan driver calls the police on Arthur. Assaulting the elderly driver does nothing for Arthur, but should guarantee a police response. If the police get involved, go section II (On Foot? Getting Mobile) entry #7 and #8 and then section III (Vehicles and Chases) entry #9 to try and figure out a way to get mobile and then deal with the police in pursuit. In section III, the pursuer is not the minivan but a police car with sirens blaring. The officer behind the wheel is a foe with *drive car* 1, *pistol* 1, and general conflict 0 skill. If the officer stops Arthur's vehicle and draws her/his service weapon (by your call or through a

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Consequences for social skill checks can be tricky. So here are some ideas of what can happen to Arthur if he fails these types of checks:

- Arthur gets lied to, or gets bad information on which he then acts.

- Arthur is publicly berated or humiliated, preventing further social skill use in that location.

- Arthur is unnerved by the interation. Any further social skill use is at -1 shift for the rest of the scene.

- The person threatens to, or calls, the authorities on Arthur. The investigator may try to de-escalate.

- The person gathers buddies to try and intimidate Arthur.
- The person assaults, or tries to rob or swindle Arthur.
- The person wastes Arthur's time (which he can't afford).
- The person is panhandling/wants a bribe before helping.

yes-no question result), close the scene. Arthur is taken down to the station. Go to scene 4.

#6

Failure always carries a consequence. In this case, a failure could mean Arthur doesn't realize that time is slipping away until it's (nearly?) too late. You may decide either that Arthur still has a chance to get across town in a last-minute wild race against time (in which case, go to section II, entries #7 and #8, then section III, entry #9). Otherwise Arthur realizes too late that he won't reach the embassy in time, and his assignment has failed. Close the scene and go to scene 4.

II. ON FOOT? GETTING MOBILE

#7

If Arthur's car was damaged, all is not lost! You may ask the yes-no question if the car is still drivable (this is not a case of asking for trouble). Arthur's own car was already a clunker so if it still runs, its -1 shift for defective equipment is unchanged. But for a rental or Peter's luxury car, *drive car* drops by 1 shift. A quick on-the-spot repair to make a car drivable would require *a mechanic* skill check, which defaults to untrained *knowledge* -1 with at least an extra -1 shift because Arthur doesn't have tools. If the car doesn't run, go to #8 for other transport options.

If Arthur is driving a crashed car, a possible asking for trouble is: "Does the police see Arthur driving the damaged vehicle and pursue?" If the roll result is yes, the officer behind the wheel is a NPC with *drive car* 1, *pistol* 1 and general *conflict* 0 skill. Arthur might try to shake the tail (go to section III, entry #9) or else pull over, in which case the officer would insist on towing the car. If you want to pursue Arthur's trying to use skill checks to talk his way out of it, fight or run away, can improvise using the DIY Tools. With a successful skill check, Arthur might even convince the officer to give him a ride in the cruiser... If the officer draws her/his service weapon on the investigator (by your call or through a yes-no question result), he is taken down to the station. close the scene and go directly to scene 4.

#8

Arthur might hail a taxi or ride service. He might need to make a successful *negotiate* skill check, which falls under *influence*, to convince the driver to shake a tail or drive aggressively. That would default to Arthur's

DYI TOOLS

Ready for some improvisation? Here are tools you can use to make your own decisions on what to do in this obstacle scene:

Skill checks: Figure out the skill check you want to make. You know why you want Arthur to succeed, but also consider what failure means before picking up the dice. Failure always has a consequence. The p.6 sidebars suggest what kinds of bad things can happen to Arthur.

- Check window dressing. Clearly helpful things add 1 shift; clearly hindering things subtract 1 shift.

- If the skill check is opposed by a foe, subtract the foe's specific skill or general *conflict* skill.

- If you want the skill check to count toward meaningful success, it must be at 0 shifts (50/50 moderate) or below.

Add in any relevant scene qualities last. Any that directly help or hinder, add or subtract 1 shift.
Pick up the dice and roll, and add a tick to plot stress. If the skill check succeeded and it qualified for meaningful success, mark it on the mission sheet.
Narrate the outcome.

Ask for trouble: Ask a yes-no question that, if the answer is yes, introduces a new setback or headache for Arthur, often forcing a skill check.

- Start at 50/50 moderate odds, and shift up or down in either direction based on relevant window dressing. The final must be 50/50 moderate odds or higher to qualify for meaningful success.

- Scene qualities that directly affect the likelihood of the roll, add or subtract 1 shift apiece.

- Pick up the dice and roll, add a tick to plot stress, and mark that you asked for trouble on the mission sheet, whether trouble happened or not. If the roll result was below the current level of plot stress, roll on unexpected events p.15.

- Narrate the outcome.

Yes-no questions: Ask the question for which you need an answer.

- Start at 50/50 moderate odds, and shift up or down based on the likelihood that the answer should be yes, modified by shifts in either direction from window dressing and/or scene qualities.

- Only ask if there is a reasonable chance for the answer to be yes or no. Otherwise just decide.

- Pick up the dice and roll, and add a tick to plot stress. If the roll result was below the current level of plot stress, roll on unexpected events p.15. untrained *social* 0. Or if you have a good fast-talking story in mind, narrate it and apply it to Arthur's *deceit* 2 skill. Arthur's *intimidate* 2 should have at least -2 shifts: Drivers do not take kindly to being threatened. Any social skill check failure gets Arthur ejected from the ride, with no other ride options close by.

Arthur can call and ask for an immediate rental car delivery. There is a -2 shift to this attempt by default. The skill check defaults to Arthur's untrained *negotiate* 0. As with a taxi or ride service, Arthur's *deceit* 2 might be possible, but you'll need to narrate a great fasttalking story to justify rolling a *deceit* skill check. Arthur's *intimidate* 2 is useless: threatening a rental car employee over the phone is a non-starter. Failure in this social skill check means the rep hangs up on Arthur.

Arthur might take a gamble with public transportation. Getting the bus schedule right defaults to Arthur's *smart* 0; asking people for directions would default to Arthur's *savvy* 1. A possible consequence for failing the roll might mean Arthur gets on the wrong bus and is lost: close the scene and go to scene 4. Or make up your own consequence. Arthur can't use social skills successfully on the driver, but he can get dropped (or booted) off. You can also get inventive asking for trouble.

Arthur can try to steal a vehicle. That is ill-advised, but carjacking would be *intimidate*. Hotwiring might be *disable* (defaulting to Arthur's untrained *device/ranged* -2, with at least another -1 shift for no tools), followed by *mechanic* (untrained *knowledge* -1, again with at least another -1 shift without proper tools).

Arthur just might be able to hoof it. If you believe the investigator has made it far along to the Eritrean embassy already, the player can ask the yes-no question if the private investigator is within running distance. A skill check against his *hardy* 0 attribute could get Arthur there in time with an extended sprint. A failure, or asking for trouble, could either mean Arthur runs out of steam and reaches the embassy too late; or if you're more forgiving, that Arthur takes a level of damage (representing fatigue from being out of breath, not actual wounds) that carries over into the next scene.

Something else. There are many other possibilities to try and get Arthur back on track. Think about what you want the investigator to try and accomplish; you can use the DIY Tools on p.7 to go your own way. Try and get a

bicycle; commandeer an idling delivery truck; happen to see and flag down an acquaintance. Just assess the probability, ask a yes-no question whether it's possible, and use a skill check to make the attempt; remember each skill check failure consequence digs a deeper hole.

III. VEHICLES AND CHASES

#9

For this section, refer to the DIY Tools on p.7 to make skill checks, ask for trouble, and to check the probability of any yes-no questions you might ask. If Arthur is not being tailed but you still need to reach three successful skill checks, go directly to entry #12.

If Arthur is behind the wheel and is being tailed, he is going to try and lose the tail. This is an opposed *drive car* skill check: Subtract the foe's *drive car* or general *conflict* skill from Arthur's *drive car* 2 (plus or minus any shifts for the quality of the car, which is part of window dressing modifiers).

If Arthur is a passenger and someone else is driving, he can try to talk the driver into driving dangerously. If he fails, go back to II, entry #8 (On Foot? Getting Mobile) as Arthur gets curbed. If he succeeds, the driver has a general *conflict* 0 skill. If you are generous, Arthur might contribute a +1 modifier to the driver's roll.

Because losing a tail is a contested skill check, only apply bonuses or penalties from window dressing and scene qualities if they somehow give one driver an edge over the other. In a contested roll like a car chase, road and weather conditions usually affect everyone equally: don't apply these penalties to a contested roll. If Arthur's contested drive car skill check fails, go to #10. If it succeeds, he loses the tail. Go to #11.

#10

What is the consequence from the failed *drive car* skill check? Now it's your choice! Make up your own, or ask

STOP AND SMELL THE ...

The mechanics make the game work. But the more interesting part of Libre Solo Role Playing is in the details. Don't miss out! If you find yourself going through the motions of rolls, stop every now and then. Take a moment to visualize, or at least think about the details of what's happening that moment in the scene. It adds creativity and a dimension of depth to the game. a yes-no question if you have more than one idea in mind. Some possible consequences: Arthur hits an object that disables his car or makes the airbag explode for a level of damage; the pursuing vehicle collides with Arthur's vehicle, causing damage or injury; Arthur clips a pedestrian or hits another car, and if he takes off it's hit and run (see the suggestion of police pursuit in entry #7); Arthur runs into gridlock, and the pursuers catch up and block in his car. What skill check might Arthur use next to try and deal with the situation? Use the DIY Tools on p.7; remember that each skill check failure is a consequence, and that matters get worse as they pile up. When you are done here, go to #13.

#11

Arthur shakes the tail. You may still want to ask for trouble (to get the scene to qualify for meaningful success). In that case, you can roll to see whether something might go wrong during the rest of the trip. For example a big pothole might blow a tire, the radiator fails, or some other issue disables the car. These troubles might take you back to section II, entry #8.

#12

If Arthur is not being tailed but is behind the wheel of a drivable car, you can still use a *drive car* skill check for meaningful success, representing aggressive driving to get across town quickly. This could be another chance to get a successful skill check, and/or ask for trouble. If a check fails, you may return to entry #7 and #8 in secion II. Apply penalties based on how aggressively Arthur is driving and window dressing/scene qualities (such as rough ground/pavement, wet or night-time conditions).

#13

Have you managed three successful skill checks and asked for trouble three times yet? Once you have done both, you can try to close the scene. Do that by rolling (d100) against plot stress. If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, go to unexpected events p.14 and resolve the roll before closing the scene. Otherwise the scene closes smoothly.

If you still need another successful skill check or asking for trouble, Arthur Falcone could hit road construction delays in downtown Mill City, and try to navigate his way around the jam to get to the embassy in time. *Navigate* is part of *wayfinding*, which falls under Arthur's untrained *animal/vehicle* 0. The consequence for failure puts Arthur in congested traffic, running out of time. Maybe the investigator can jump out of the car and make a run for it: go to entry #8, under *Arthur just might be able to hoof it*. Or you may have other ideas that Arthur might use to get through heavy traffic and reach the embassy in time, in which case use the p.7 DIY Tools to work it out.

If you *still* haven't reached three qualified successful skill checks and asks for trouble, you can try to improvise ideas using the DIY Tools for as long as you can come up with increasingly harsh consequences for failure. If you run out of ideas, or the consequences get too severe for Arthur, you may throw in the towel: Arthur fails to reach the embassy in time and his assignment has failed. In that case, close the scene and go straight to scene 4 wrap-up. @

SCENE 3: RUMBLE AT THE EMBASSY

This segment, which is a simple taste of direct conflict, is called an *encounter scene*. Your goal this scene is simple. Arthur arrives outside the Eritrean embassy where he faces off against group of foes. To achieve meaningul success, he has to win the conflict. In Libre Solo Role Playing, losing a conflict can have very serious fallout. The stakes are high. Obviously, you could come up with lots of clever ways that would let Arthur bypass the conflict brewing here. In the full game it's easy to flip an encounter scene into an obstacle scene and skirt a dangerous conflict. For this training wheels edition, you don't have that option. Arthur has just one way to get meaningful success for this scene: engage and defeat the foe group. This encounter scene is also a *follow-up scene*, which means it starts immediately where the last one left off. If Arthur has been grazed or wounded in past scenes, that carries over. As before, make a mental picture about what the area around the embassy looks like, and what kind of neighborhood it is in. Carry over anything that's relevant from the last scene's window dressing and qualities, as window dressing for this scene. Roll three fresh scene qualities, incorporate them into your mental picture and write them down.

This time you'll have a foe group in the scene: A tall, tough-looking man in a leather jacket and four lackeys. The tough is classified as a *leader*, which just means he can't be attacked until all his lackeys (called a *team*, and

treated as one entity) are taken out first. The leader has general *conflict* 0 skill. The lackeys are a weak team, but as long as any team member is still standing, add +1 to all skill checks made by the leader. That means the foe group defaults to a general *conflict* 1 for skill checks. The foe group isn't armed with weapons: They want the bag. Barring that, they want to stop its delivery. They're not murderers.

Once you're done jotting down scene qualities and window dressing, inherit the last scene's ending plot stress and add 5. Roll d100: If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, roll in the unexpected events section, and incorporate the result into the start of the scene.

As you open the scene, consider how Arthur is going to enter it. Will he screech to a halt in front of the embassy in a beaten-up car? Is he huffing and puffing up the sidewalk to get there in time? Does he park a few blocks away and try a sneaky or nonchalant approach?

The rules for this conflict are as simple as it gets. For the base chance of success, Arthur has *brawling* 1; the foe group collectively has *conflict* 1. Conflicts are contested skill checks, so subtract the foe group skill from the player character's skill: That makes the two sides evenly matched before applying any window dressing or scene qualities. In contested skill checks, only count window dressing and scene qualities if they give one side a clear edge over the other. Don't count qualities like rain, rough or slippery ground, or poor lighting that affect both sides equally.

For a straight-up fight, each round of conflict is an opposed skill check. For each success (rolling a yes result), Arthur takes out two team members. That means if Arthur succeeds twice, all four lackeys (weak team members) are taken out. At that point only the leader will be left, who has *conflict* 0; a final success will take

SCENE RECOVERY

In the full game, throwing in the towel or suffering other setbacks in any one scene doesn't mean the mission fails. There is always the option to set up the next scene to try and get the story back on track. Stories can end up winding in unexpected directions while working to recover from the fallout of the player character's past mishaps. out the leader, at which point Arthur wins the conflict. For each failure (rolling a no result), Arthur takes a level of damage. Every round of conflict is a skill check, so it adds a tick to plot stress.

Arthur needs to fight to succeed in this scene. But he doesn't need to play fair. Consider that the foe group wants the bag, and given a choice would rather not get into a punch-up. If Arthur approaches to parlay, the foe group engages him first to *intimidate* (at *conflict* 1), which Arthur resists with his *willful* 0. If Arthur fails, the likely consequence is that he gives them the bag. If he succeeds in the skill check, Arthur has the chance to try his *deceit* 2 against their *conflict* 1, for example. Draw on the DIY Tools on p.7 and get creative.

Arthur could get an advantage if he can stage a successful ambush, taking the foe group by surprise. If that happens, for the first round the foe group can only defend at *conflict* 0 (that is, Arthur deals damage if he succeeds the first round conflict skill check, but if he fails he takes no damage). Treat the fight as a regular conflict after the ambush round.

If Arthur wins the conflict, he can call Miss Marjani to meet him outside the embassy. A regal lady will exit the building, likely with a look of shock at whatever carnage Arthur wrought. She will coolly accept the bag and thank the investigator. Test scene plot stress one final time (d100) before closing the scene, for the possibility of a final unexpected event.

If Arthur wins the conflict and rolls the foe group for cash, he can net about \$50 apiece from each of the four team members, and about \$250 from the leader. Taking peoples' wallets after beating them up is right up there with intentionally ramming cars into people -- the sort of thing that comes back to haunt an investigator.

If Arthur is incapacitated, he loses the conflict. Move directly to the scene 4 wrap. If Arthur flees from the conflict, the foe group lets him go. They'd prefer to snatch the bag, but they just need to prevent delivery to succeed. Again, Arthur loses the conflict. In either event, it's time to move to close the scene, rolling d100 against plot stress to check for an unexpected event, then move on to scene 4 wrap. Θ

CONFLICT OFF THE RAILS

You might have Arthur try something clever in the encounter scene. Refer to the DIY Tools on p.7 for rules. **Sneaking:** Arthur needs two sneak checks of his untrained *sneak* -2 against the foe group's *notice* 1. Two successes permit an ambush; failure means the foe group detects Arthur and the conflict starts immediately. **Using the antique gun:** Start with two yes-no questions: Is it locked in a case (very likely)? Are bullets and gunpowder included (unlikely)? If Arthur can get at it, maybe he can use the antique pistol with his *intimidate*. **Vehicular mayhem:** Use *drive car* to jump the curb and ram the foe group for a level of damage. That's good for an ambush, but after the first round Arthur needs to exit the vehicle to continue a regular conflict. Running people over could make for big future problems!

Swap gun/gun case for decoy: A shrewd move, but it has no direct effect on this scene's conflict. **Call for backup:** Another shrewd idea, but Arthur has no time to delay; he needs to face this conflict now. **Phone Miss Marjani:** If Miss Marjani steps out, the foe group will intercept and detain her. That's good for a temporary distraction (giving Arthur a bonus to a skill check). She will not fight. If the Eritrean embassy is notified they, they call metro police. Miss Marjani, concerned for her safety, slips away and the mission fails.

SCENE 4: IT'S A WRAP!

This final segment is also a *cutscene*, focused on closing dialog and resolution of the *mission*. For this adventure the resolution is abbreviated into a positive outcome and the consequences of failure. In the full game, the player isn't constrained to a straight win-lose scenario. The player can keep trying for meaningful successes to get a positive outcome. By the end of a story, that positive outcome might not look much like the original mission. The full game also lets the player delve into loose ends that might have come up during the adventure (possibly for future stories), and collect rewards and assign player character experience for future stories.

Whether Arthur managed to get the two meaningful successes he needed for the adventure or not, it's time to wrap up the assignment. This is *not* a follow-up scene; it takes place days later with Arthur's patron, Peter Havik-Stand. You may choose or roll the place (If you decide to choose rather than roll, places that make sense would be the cafe where the assignment started; or else a hospital bed if Arthur became incapacitated). Visualize, roll three scene qualities, write down window dressing, carry over plot stress from the last scene and add 5, then test plot stress by rolling d100 to check for an unexpected event to incorporate at the start of the scene.

If scenes 2 and 3 both had meaningful successes, narrate a positive outcome for Arthur. Peter has lawyers on retainer who will settle or otherwise deal with anything illegal the private investigator might've done during the assignment. Anyone Arthur might have injured along the way should recover without too much trauma. Most important (to Peter at least), the bag was delivered and the deal closed. Arthur's hospital bills are covered, as are vehicle and property damage.

If Arthur had one scene with meaningful success, Peter is upset but downplays his disappointment. If the bag was lost or stolen, Peter's insurance covered some of the loss, but Peter also makes it clear that Arthur embarrassed him in the eyes of the buyer. If Arthur still had the bag but didn't deliver it in time, Peter informs him that the buyer got cold feet and the deal fell through. Arthur doesn't get any money for botching the delivery, but insurance is going to cover at least some expenses for any injury and damages. The police looks the other way if there was a punch-up, but the investigator might be in legal trouble for blatantly criminal violations like stealing vehicles, or attempts to run people over.

If Arthur had no meaningful successes, Peter is livid. He heaps abuse on the investigator, even if Arthur is recuperating in a hospital bed. There may be lawsuits

POSITIVE OUTCOME

Even when a player gets the meaningful successes needed to finish the story, that only means the player can narrate a positive outcome. It doesn't always mean that the original mission succeeded, just that the final result ends up being positive for the player's character. The form that success takes can be much more ambiguous than the sample endings here. and police charges looming against Arthur. Peter rubs in that the investigator botched the transaction and ruined an important partner relationship. Peter swears that he's going to stick Arthur with the bill for mishandling what should have been a routine delivery.

Who was behind the toughs? Why was the bag and its contents so important, and who was the buyer? Who is Miss Marjani, and what ties does she have to the Eritrean embassy? What is her involvement above and beyond the deal?

We won't address these questions at the end of this particular assignment. In the full game, it's normal to use a closing cutscene to wrap up at least some of these loose ends, or record them for future investigation. Whether Arthur succeeded or failed in this particular assignment, the player can pick up these elements in future Libre Solo Role Playing sessions, over time building a rich tapestry of people, places, items and motivations as part of a continuing series of stories. Besides any monetary rewards and information insights, at the end of a story Arthur would also pick up experience that can be spent on building up the investigator's skills, skill groups and even attributes.

Wrap the story with a final roll against plot stress. If the roll triggers an unexpected event, resolve it before closing this final scene. \odot

Thanks for guiding Arthur through the mean streets of Mill City! Hopefully you enjoyed this introductory challenge, and had the chance to take the adventure off the rails even just a little. May all your future successes be meaningful.

PETER'S ANSWERS

From p.3. Each time you come to this table, add plot stress as directed and roll d100. If you roll at or below the current level of plot stress, go to the unexpected events section on p.14 and follow the instructions.

Peter says reluctantly, "It's a firearm, a valuable 18th century antique pistol. That's why you don't go into the embassy with the bag -- you don't want that kind of trouble." Add two plot stress, go back to questions.
 Peter says, "I'll add \$300 to your pay and you stop asking questions. Deal?" If Arthur accepts, add one plot stress and wrap up the scene. If Arthur does not accept, add one plot stress and go back to questions, but apply an extra -1 shift to any further questions.

3: Peter very reluctantly (hands you his keys / takes out his smartphone and begins fidgeting with it), muttering

something under his breath. If Arthur got keys to Peter's expensive luxury sedan, it is "premium equipment", which adds a +1 shift to any drive car checks. If Arthur gets a rental, it will be delivered at the cafe in a few minutes. In either case, add two plot stress and apply an extra -1 shift to any further questions.

4: Peter gives Arthur a sour look. "If you think we have time to call up your friends, you didn't hear me the first time." Add three plot stress and go back to questions.
5: Peter hesitates. "Well, there is this European gent named Marik. Marik Gaard. We have a disagreement over this," he waves his hand over the bag. "That's why I'm handing this job to you at great expense instead of paying some courier twenty bucks. " Add three plot stress and go back to questions.

FINAL WORDS

During play, you may have picked up some of the game's tactics. Draw on your bonuses to raise the odds when the consequences for failure are risky; make skill checks for meaningful success when the consequences are manageable, ideally after lining up a scene quality for tailwind. Ask for trouble in ways that might prompt skill checks, which can be turned back to meaningful success. Manage the economy of actions and yes-no questions to minimize plot stress' unexpected events. In the full game, you leverage environment, equipment and people (allies, patrons, rivals, foes and others) to help position each scene for meaningful success. If in this story you considered (or even better, ended up trying out via the DIY Tools) something totally off the charts, like having Arthur carjack the minivan driver's vehicle, or offering \$100 to his taxi driver to join the punch-up in scene 3, then congratulations! That's exactly the sort of thinking that Libre Solo Role Playing is all about. Θ

ABOUT LIBRE SOLO ROLE PLAYING

This adventure shows off some pieces of the Libre Solo Role Playing game. The full game's storytelling engine should work with most settings and RPG rules; or use the book's included RPG rules, which are tuned for the storytelling engine. Libre Solo Role Playing covers how to build scenes, how to ask and use yes-no questions and skill checks effectively, shows when and how to ask for trouble, and provides ways to handle other persons (patrons, allies, rivals, foes) in the game. The RPG part of the game covers generating a player's character, allies, rivals and foes. It includes simple and complex rules for building powers for settings using magic, psionics, advanced technologies or super mutations (or all of the above). There rules-lite RPG mechanics handle skill checks and conflicts elegantly, even with many allies and foes using a range of gear and abilities in a scene. It includes progression of the player's character, allies and rivals through gaining experience.

Optional rules cover more complex use of powers; there are guidelines for setting up challenges across longer journeys and quests; rules for generating random deadly monsters; and an optional way to generate random rewards. The Libre Solo Role Playing game also includes two sample settings sketches -- modern-day Mill City shown here and Artanes Bronze Age low fantasy. It includes an extended annotated play-through sample transcribed from actual game play. \odot

MISSION SHEET

Use the tracking sheet here to write down scene qualities and window dressing for setup. Track plot stress and any other important details as the scene progresses.

Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3	Scene 4
Scene Qualities, Person, Item			
Plot Stress	Plot Stress	Plot Stress	Plot Stress
Window Dressing, Notes	Window Dressing, Notes	Window Dressing, Notes	Window Dressing, Notes
Skill Successes: ◊ ◊ ◊ Ask for Trouble: ◊ ◊ ◊ Meaningful Success?	Skill Successes: ◇ ◇ ◇ Ask for Trouble: ◇ ◇ ◇ Meaningful Success?	Skill Successes: ◊ ◊ ◊ Ask for Trouble: ◊ ◊ ◊ Meaningful Success?	Skill Successes: $\diamond \diamond \diamond$ Ask for Trouble: $\diamond \diamond \diamond$ Meaningful Success?

YES-NO QUESTIONS			
& SKILL CHECKS			
SHIFTS	6	YES	NO
+3	Nearly Certain	1-95	96-00
+2	Very Likely	1-80	81-00
+1	Likely	1-65	66-00
0	50/50 Moderate	1-50	51-00
-1	Unlikely	1-35	36-00
-2	Very Unlikely	1-20	21-00
-3	Nigh Impossible	1-05	06-00

SCENE QUALITIES

Each scene has three randomly rolled scene qualities. results 81-00 are rationales (reflecting attitude or behavior of generic people present in a scene)

1 2 3 4 5 6	Square/Meeting hall Warehouse/storage Marketplace Farm/villa/estate Smithy/factory	51 52 53 54 55	Wide open spaces High Observation point Sight-blocking Hot Humid
0 7 8 9	Crafting-place Shop/store Tavern/inn/hotel Arena/sport-place	56 57 58 59	Cold Dry Breezy Windy
9 10	Streets/alleys	59 60	Gale
11	Luxury digs	61	Cloudy
12 13	Library or lab	62	Overcast
13 14	Palace/fortress/HQ Keep/tower	63 64	Stormy Clear
<u>14</u> <u>15</u>	Field/meadow	65 65	Still
16	Garden/lawn/park	66	Sprinkling
17	Temple/church	67	Rain (sleet/snow)
18	Home/hovel	68	Downpour (blizzard)
19	Cellar/underground	69	Work sounds
20	Port/station/transit	70	Running water
21 22	Memorial Crowded	71 72	Blowing winds Traffic/Passers-by
22	Plants	73	Birdsong
24	Garbage/rubble	74	Animal sounds
25	Offal smell	75	Quiet/serene
26	Cooking smells	76	Floral/sweet smells
27	Pollution/smog	77	Solid/hard ground
28	Chemical smells	78	Soft/plush ground
29	Incense/perfumed	79	Smooth/slip ground
<u>30</u> 31	Stuffy/stale smell	80	Rough ground
32	Cramped Furniture-strewn	81 82	R: Conversation R: Argue/debate
32 33	Curtained	o∠ 83	R: Study/learn
34	Machinery/magic	84	R: Guard/vigilance
35	Background noise	85	R: Guard/vigilance
36	Music	86	R: Anxiety/fear
37	Stairs/ramps	87	R: Anxiety/fear
38	Terraced	88	R: Hate/anger
39	Vehicle(s)	89	R: Hate/anger
<u>40</u> 41	Fence/hédge	90	R: Hunt/scavenge
41 42	Ditch Dank/damp	91 92	R: Welcome/friendly R: Worship/reverent
42	Bright/well-lit	92 93	R: Sick/diseased
44	Gloomy/dimly-lit	94	R: Drunk/drugged
45	Twilight/dusk	95	R: Hurt/suffering
46	Shadowy	96	R: Respect/grateful
47	Hazy	97	R: Celebrate/fest
48	Foggy	98	R: Tired/rest/sleep
49	Dusty	99	R: Cook/eat/drink
50	Smoky	00	R: Lack/hungry/poor

PLAYER CHARACTER HEALTH

The protagonist (player's character) has three levels of wounds before being taken out. All other persons go down with one hit except for teams, where one level of damage takes out two members.

Grazed: a close call but nothing serious. Normally, the player's character could shake it off after a night's rest. **Wounded:** a serious injury that gives the player's character -1 shift to *all* skill checks (including rolls against attributes). The condition lasts the duration of the mission.

Incapacitated: unconscious or otherwise totally helpless: Don't close the current scene formally, it ends immediately. Go directly to scene 4 for the aftermath.

EVENTS TABLE

For this quickstart, when you get an unexpected event, roll d10 and look up the result below. Apply the result as soon as possible. If it just can't be worked into the scene, you can ignore the result. After you've rolled here, regardless of what (if anything) happens, cut your current level of plot stress in half, rounding down.

1: Arthur does something noisy or clumsy, like knocking over or dropping an object. If it's something really critical, Arthur can try a *nimble* skill check to recover.

2: Nothing happens

3: Any foe in the scene is momentarily distracted. Describe why. Arthur may seize the moment to take an action (i.e., make a skill check).

4: Nothing happens.

5: Look out! Something big and heavy comes flying/swinging/careening at Arthur, who must make a *nimble* skill check to dodge out of the way. If Arthur fails, he takes a level of damage.

6: Some random people (window dressing) in the scene are friendly to Arthur. This may give a +1 or -1 shift to one yes-no question or skill check.

7: Nothing happens.

8: Some random people (window dressing) in the scene are mistrustful of Arthur. This may give +1 or -1 shift to one yes-no question or skill check.
9: Nothing happens.

10: Any foes in the scene detect Arthur and try to engage in physical conflict. *But* if Arthur is already fighting foes, instead they hold momentarily: This is an opportunity for Arthur to parlay and de-escalate.

If there are *no* foes in the scene, a nasty troublemaker from Arthur's past named Rabin Trebon has seen the investigator and moves in to settle an old score. Rabin has *brawling* 1, *intimidate* 1, and *conflict* 0. See scene 3's conflict rules for guidance how to handle a punch-up with Rabin.

\cap	A D		ΓER:
СП	MK	ΛU	IEK.

Arthur Falcone PLAYER: _____ XP: ____

ATTRIBUTES	DESCRIPTION & GOALS		
ĥ	to be around. Falcone wash after uncovering and whist company. which cost him his Falcone started his struggli ago and is desperate for to pal up with Peter Havil experienced than the real	NDED (ends scene; proceed to next scene)	job) s hths gad &
BASE		UNTE	RAINED
	LLS: brawling), groups: perform, martial arts, ath	letics weapon)	(-1)
		icus, weapony	
	LLS: groups: bows, throwing, guns, g	unner, disable, *dodge)	9
	LLS: drive car 2, groups: ride, handle animal, way	find, crew, drive, pilot)	
	LLS: <u>sather</u> information groups: hunt, survive, streetwise		-2
	LLS: groups: crafts, medic, professior	n, mechanic, *research)	
	LLS: deceive 2; inti groups: influence, interact)	midate 2.	
(special ability=hardy -1; (type magic=smart -1;	LLS: es: melee, ranged, attribute, skill,		
psionics=willful -1. No untrained) *Not	ice, research and dodge are stan	dalone skills, not skill groups	
SIGNATURE GEAR, EQUIPMENT, VA	LUABLES:	PATRONS, ALLIES, RELATIONSHIPS	
weathered trenchcoat. Pedora,		Pater Havik-Stand impulsive wealthy	
beaten up four-door compact	cðr	businassman (patron). Toni Graham * unflappabla part-tima ass	istant
(-1 to drive car chec	.Ks),	(ally),	(2)(2)(1)
cheap cell phone		Emily Chan * police detective (rival).	
wallet with $2\emptyset\emptyset$ dollars. Mathematical matrix	axed-out credit cards,		
cramped 2 nd -story office in	n dingy city building.		
about 2.5% dollars in bar	nk account		

Special Delivery!

Private investigator Arthur gets a cakewalk assignment dropped in his lap: Just get a bag across town by 5pm. Courier jobs are usually beneath Arthur, but at \$600 for two hours' work, that's quick and easy money he can't afford to turn down. And that's how his troubles began...

This introduction to Libre Solo Role Playing wraps a sample of the game's tools and RPG rules around a branching path adventure. The rules have been stripped down and combined with a partly pre-scripted plot, to mix a taste for the rules with an underlying structure. As the story progresses, go off the rails and make it your own. The full Libre Solo Role Playing game lets you tell stories in your own way. It creates obstacles to overcome, plot twists, setbacks and surprises. Recruit allies to help your player character's cause; square off against dangerous foes and recurring rivals. Take your character on perilous journeys; conduct thorough investigations; seek to overcome the threats of an unpredictable world.



Libre Solo Role Playing http://www.librerpg.com