

DRAMASYSTEM

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SYSTEM CHEAT SHEET

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GENERAL PROCEDURES

Order of Precedence: Randomly sort players (using notecards, etc.)

Votes: Each player gets 1 vote. GM is tiebreaker.

Face Cards: Jack, Queen, King, Ace.

DRAMA TOKENS

Start of Episode: 0 Tokens

End of Episode: Do not carry over to next session.

Paying Tokens: If a player does not have a token, the token they pay is taken from the kitty.

GM Tokens: GM has single pool for all recurring characters.

Using Tokens:

- *Force* (2 tokens): Petitioner forces granter to grant concession. Scenes cannot be called to reverse result for rest of session.
- *Block Force* (3 tokens): Cancel attempted Force. Petitioner does not pay Force cost. Scenes cannot be called to reverse result for rest of session.
- *Support Force*: Pay some or all of the Force/Block cost. Character must be part of scene / describe what they say or do.

PROCEDURAL TOKENS

Red, Yellow, Green

- Start session with 1 of each.
- Refresh all 3 tokens when last token is spent.
- Procedural tokens do NOT refresh at end of session.

BENNIES

Gaining Bennies: End of episode.

- *Statement*: In new order of precedence, make statement highlighting how their character's poles were used to highlight the episode's theme.
- *Ranking*: Each player and GM ranks other players with #1 as best, etc.
- *Tally*: GM tallies votes.
- *Gain Bennies*: 2 players with lowest score. (In ties, all players get bennies.)

Spending Bennies: Maximum 1 spend per scene.

- *Drama Token* (1 bennie): Gain 1 drama token.
- *Procedural Token* (1 bennie): Gain 1 procedural token.
- *Draw Card* (1 bennie): Draw +1 card.
- *Call Scene* (1 bennie): Immediately call scene out of order.
- *Crash a Scene* (1 bennie)
- *Prevent a Crash* (1 bennie, Caller Only): Prevent someone from spending bennie/drama token to crash your scene.
- *Burn Token* (1 bennie): Burn 1 drama or procedural token held by another player.

EPISODES

Theme: GM chooses theme of first episode.

- Determine order of precedence to pick one theme per episode.
- Order repeats once finished.

SAMPLE THEMES

Ancestral Sins	Masks
Betrayal	The Morning After
Blood Ties	New Beginnings
Buzzards Circle	Night Games
Cages	Old Memories
Change Is Hard	Outsiders
Charity	Predator and Prey
Choosing Sides	Progress
Condemned to Freedom	Rebirth
Dying Well	Reckonings
False Smiles	Redemption
Fear	Ritual
Fear of the Unknown	Secrets
Forgiveness	Small Details
Gold	The Spear of Truth
Guilt	Thresholds
Heartache	Ties that Bind
Heating Up	Trust
Home	Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right
Justice	Unity
Knowing Too Much	Vengeance
Lion's Den	What Price Victory?
Losing	What's in a Name?
Losing Control	
Loyalty	

COMMON INTENTIONS

acceptance	excite
admiration	favor
affection	forgiveness
anger	gain trust
annoy	mollify
apology	obedience
assure	punish
attention	seek truth
be assured	test granter's worthiness
calm	

SCENES

Calling Order: 1st Scene = Player Choosing Theme

- Determine order of precedence, replacing player who called first with GM.
- Order repeats once finished.

Calling Scenes:

- Cast (1 drama token / green token to not include caller)
- Location
- Time Break (if any)
- Mode (Dramatic/Procedural)
- Situation (Meeting vs. Complication)

Situation: Meeting vs. Complication

Challenges: Caller may acquiesce or revise.

Otherwise, resolved as noted.

- *Ducking a Scene:* Pay 1 drama token.
- *Crashing a Scene:* Pay 1 drama token. (Can be done during a scene.)
- *Time Jump:* Prevent time jump that would bypass actions they want to take. **Vote.**
- *Plot Jump:* Prevent advancement of plot element that should be played out in full. **Vote.**
- *Location:* Consistency, continuity, tone, or believability.
- *Novelty:* Prevent replaying earlier scene without the situation having changed. **Vote.**
- *Procedural* (during a scene): Action must be resolved with procedural resolution. **Automatic.**

Right to Describe: Characters present in the scene.

- physical circumstances
- behavior of walk-on characters
- their characters' actions and the results

DRAMATIC SCENES

Calling Dramatic Scene: Include petitioner (usually caller) and what they want from character in scene.

- *Concession:* Any major shift in emotional power in the desired direction counts as granting the petition. (Ask for big goal, even if it would require several scenes / multiple concessions for a character to believably change their mind.)
- *Practical Favors:* Favor is still about the emotional need. Whether the favor is actually performed later does not retroactively change emotional outcome of scene.

End of Scene: Ask petitioner if they got what they wanted.

- *Yes:* Petitioner pays 1 drama token to granter. (Cannot be gainsaid by other players.)
- *No:* Granter pays 1 drama token to petitioner. (Can be challenged. **Vote**, caller as tiebreaker.)

SPECIAL CASES

No Contest Scenes: If granter has no reason to oppose petitioner's request, they may declare it. Bring scene to quick conclusion and caller can call new scene or pass to next caller.

Two-Way Exchanges: Both characters want something from the other. Each petition is resolved separately at the end of the scene.

Multiple Petitions: Cannot be called; may emerge during play. Resolve each petitioner in new order of precedence.

Soft Open: Scene started without intent. Should generally be avoided. Resolve as multiple petitions.

- *Conference Scene:* All/many characters discuss an issue in front of them.

Speech-Making: Single character petitioning other characters as a collective. Resolve with **Vote** of which characters were convinced.

PROCEDURAL SCENES

Calling Procedural Scene: Include practical goal they're trying to achieve. (Challenge, resolve with **Vote**.)

- Maximum of 1 procedural resolution per scene.

Step 1: GM Opposition Spend. GM picks and conceals one procedural token.

GM's Token	Opposing Force	Match Needed
Green	Strong	Same value
Yellow	Middling	Same value, suit
Red	Weak	Same value, suit, color

Step 2: Target Card. Draw a card and reveal it.

Step 3: Players Spend and Draw. Determine order of precedence. Players pick a procedural token.

- *Knock Out:* GM removes one matching card from any player (or next matching card if none currently matches).
- *Other Players:* Players without characters present can spend yellow or green token.

Player's Token	Cards Drawn
Green	2
Yellow	1
Red	1 + knock out

Narrate. With each card drawn, player narrates their character taking action. On knock out, GM describes a reversal.

Card Match	Describe action as...
Value	Seemingly decisive
Suit	Impressive
Color	Solid
None	Ineffectual

Step 4: Final Result. On match, characters prevail.

Step 5: Personal Consequences. Affects future scene. Approved by GM.

- *Green Token + Face Card:* Advantage.
- *Red Token + Face Card:* Obstacle.

PLAYER V. PLAYER

Step 1: Announce Abilities & Goals

- Strong v. Weak = Strong Wins
- Strong v. Middling = Strong gets +1 card

Step 2: Draw Cards & Narrate

- GM decides which character initiated contest.
- That player draws first card; then alternate.
- Narrate step to victory (if higher than opponent's current highest card) or setback (if lower).

Player's Token	Cards Drawn
Green	3
Yellow	2
Red	1

Step 3: Outcome: Character with highest card wins and describes outcome.

- Ties resolved in suit order (spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs).

Assisting: Play token and play cards as per above, narrating and contributing cards to chosen side.

- Original contest narrates final outcome regardless of whose token paid for winning card.

GAME MASTER

- Can call scene between any characters without paying drama tokens.
- Introduce exposition to player-called scenes; or be called upon by players to provide exposition.
- Ask leading questions.
- Declare scene conclusion (when necessary).
- Declare Cliffhanger, cutting off the current scene and ending the session.
- *Save Recurring Character* (1 green token / call for Vote): Prevent declaration of recurring character's death. Character cannot be killed at any time during current episode.

GM CHARACTERS

Minor Characters: Introduced by caller.

- Name.
- Brief description (1-3 clauses).

Recurring Characters: Any character who becomes granter/petitioner.

FINAL EPISODE

- Main characters lose immunity.
- GM cannot save recurring characters.