

The Narrative

The Narrative is what's happening within the game as it exists in the spoken exchanges of the players. The Narrative is constructed in two ways, through The Dialogue and through Challenges.

The Dialogue

The Dialogue is the conversation that happens between the Actors and Directors in which the Actors either ask questions or make statements about what their Persona do that the Director then responds to. Anything that the Director says during the Dialogue becomes part of The Narrative.

Keeping Score

During The Dialogue the players will have to keep track of various things that inform what happens in later play and what the conversation should be focused on from moment to moment.

Stance

The Director has a Stance towards each of the Actor's Personae. This score, rated from 1 to 6, determines how the Director responds to questions and statements from that Actor. A Stance of 1 means that the Director responds as favorably as possible while a Stance of 6 means he's responds as cruelly as possible. The "as possible" caveat covers two things: what has already been established in the fiction and what seems within the boundaries of the game's established tone.

The Director's Stance towards each Persona begins at 1 and increases in response to certain actions from the Persona, as outlined below.

Expressions and Traits

One of an Actor's goals is to work in all of his Persona's Expressions and Traits by making them clear in play. This is done by acting them out or including them in questions and action statements. Each other player (all the other Actors and the Director) are responsible for keeping track of this. Each player should have a list of each other player's Expressions and Traits and whenever they feel that they've been sufficiently conveyed by the Actor as part of the Dialogue, they should check it off.

At the end of each Episode, the Actor gains an Advance for his Persona if and only if every player has checked off every Expression and Trait he possesses. To make this easier, after play is finished, Actors can recount what their Persona did during that session. Note that an Actor cannot, either during play or in his post session recaps, mention any Expressions or Traits he possesses directly.

Investments

Another way for an Actor to gain an Advance for his Persona is by making and fulfilling an Investment. To do this the Actor needs to select an Element from The Narrative that their Persona takes a personal stake in. An Element is anything in The Narrative that can be expressed as a noun that is not a Persona. The personal stake taken by the Persona (the Investment) is represented by the Actor reducing one of his Persona's Characteristics (and adjusting his Expressions accordingly) and recording that value as the value of the Investment which is written as (Element) > (Relationship/State). Element is just the name of the Element where Relationship/State is a statement of what the Persona would like to see happen to the Element, either in ultimate terms or in relationship to himself.

When the Element involved in the Investment is brought to the listed Relationship/State, the Investment is said to be resolved and the Persona achieves an Advance.

Strategies

A Strategy is any course of action a Persona takes to either resolve an Investment or to bring an Episode to an end. What course of actions would bring an Episode to an end will vary based on how Episodes were defined in Step 1.

Strategies need to be recorded whenever they are begun because Persona can be forced to abandon them during the Challenge system.

It's worth noting that Strategies are not necessary things that the Persona is cogent of, but they are concrete things mechanically, meaning that even if a Persona's actions move him towards his goals only through dumb luck or stabs in the dark, if the Actor expects them to resolve something (either the Episode or an Investment) they must be recorded, if they are not recorded,

then the Director needs to make sure, through framing of The Narrative, that the actions cannot resolve anything.

Anytime a Persona takes an action that initiates or develops a Strategy, the Director increases his Stance towards that Persona by 1.

Shadow Play

Ideally, none of these things will be said. Instead, changes in Stance, Expressions, Investments and Strategies should be written down and recorded on index cards while the normal flow of The Dialogue continues as fluidly as possible.

Challenges

A Challenge occurs when an Actor doesn't like a statement made by the Director and thus decides to challenge that statement. At which point the flow of the game changes from a series of spoken exchanges (The Dialogue) to a series of spoken exchanges and dice rolls that allows (mostly) the Actors to add content to The Narrative.

An Actor can only challenge a Director's statement if its in response to an action his Persona's made in pursuit of a Strategy.

A Challenge is resolved by following the below procedures:

Phase 0

Before the Challenge begins in earnest, each Actor will need to determine his Persona's Challenge Scores. These Scores are Threat, Opportunity and Danger.

A Persona's Threat is equal to the Director's current Stance towards him +/- his Threat Score. His Opportunity and Danger both begin equal to his Threat.

Phases

The following phases can be followed in a continuous cycle until the Challenge comes to an end.

Phase 1: Issue Threats

If any Persona's Opportunity is greater than his current Guard, the Director must present them with a potential Negative Trait. These are Traits that will work against the Persona for the

remainder of the Challenge. The Trait has a Strength equal to the Persona's current Danger plus the difference between the Persona's Guard and his Opportunity.

Whenever the Director issues a Negative Trait, the Persona reduces his Opportunity and Danger to 0.

Phase 2: Resolve a Move

Once the Director has issued out his Negative Traits, the Actors can have their Persona make Moves.

First the type of Move must be determined.

If the Actor wants to reduce the value of a Negative Trait that he's just received, he makes a Defensive Move.

If the Actor wants to modify the values of existing traits, he makes a Recovery Move.

If the Actor wants to create new Traits (either Positive Traits affecting himself or another Persona, or Negative Traits affecting Elements from the The Narrative) or to create or modify Elements, he makes a Leading Move.

The first step for making a Move is for the Actor to describe what it is his Persona does or is doing in The Narrative.

Then, if the description is evocative enough, or if the underlying action is daring or risky enough, any other at the table can offer the Actor to make his Persona's action a Stunt. The Actor can either accept or deny the offer.

After the action is described, the Director sets the action's Scope, from 1 to 6. The Scope is an expression of how sweeping and complete the Action is. Up to 3 points can be awarded for time taken and up to 3 can be awarded for significance.

Then, the Actor gathers his die pool. This is equal to Base + (Defense, Recover or Lead (depending on the action type)) + Stunt if the action was a Stunt.

If the Action is a Stunt, the Actor must now declare a Target Number. This is any number between 1 and 6.

Now, any other Actor may have his Persona aid the acting Persona. Doing so gives the acting Persona a number of bonus dice equal to the helping Persona's Aid.

The Actor then must pay for the Action's Scope. He may do this by taking dice from his die pool or by spending Fortune points.

Once this is done, if the Actor has dice remaining, he rolls his dice to determine the Result. If he has no dice, he must accept a Miss Result.

If the Move is not a Stunt, then the Result is equal to any one die selected out from the rolled die pool. If the Move is a Stunt, then the Result is either an Achieve Result, if the Actor was able to select out a die showing the Target Number he choose earlier, or it is a Miss.

On a numbered Result (from selecting out a die on a non Stunt Move), the Result sets the Move's base Danger or Opportunity (depending on the type of Move, Defensive and Recovery Moves generate Danger, Leading Moves generate Opportunity) and its Power. You want your Move to have the lowest Danger/Opportunity possible while having the highest Power possible.

If the Result is a Miss, then its Danger/Opportunity base is 6 and its Power is base is 1. If the Result is an Achieve, then the Move's Danger/Opportunity base is 1 and its Power base is 6.

Next, the Actor spends the Move's Power.

The Power of a Defensive Move reduces the Strength of any threatened Traits on a 1 for 1 basis.

The Power of a Recovery Move reduces or increases the Strength of any existing Trait on a 1 for 1 basis.

The Power of a Leading Move either creates a new Trait, which costs (Threat) per Strength point of the Trait or it can either create or destroy an Element, the cost of which is the Threat + the Scope of the Element.

If any Traits are in play that apply or affect the current Move, those Traits become affecting at the resolution of the Move, and stay in effect until the end of the next Move the Actor makes.

Affecting Traits are applied to Scores just like Knacks, Powers and Signature Items were during Persona Creation. Choose a Score and either negatively adjust its value (so that its worse for you) if its a Negative Trait or positively adjust its value, if its a Trait.

Phase 3: Check for a Conclusion

Whenever a player creates or increases the Strength of a Trait that has a Strength equal to or greater than their Threat, that Trait is called a Telling Trait. Telling Traits reduce the Persona's current Threat by 1. When a Persona's Threat is

reduced to 0, unless the Director choose to Push (see below), he is effectively out of danger and no longer generates Opportunity or Danger.

Once a Persona reduces his own Threat to 0, he can designate any future Traits that he creates or modifies as affecting any other Persona's Threat, which then is reduced whenever a Trait he increases is Telling.

Any time a Persona is affected by a Negative Trait that has Strength equal to or greater than his Surrender Threshold, its a Telling Negative. Each Telling Negative reduces his Surrender Threshold by 1. When his Surrender Threshold reached 0, he is defeated and must Surrender his current strategy (keep the card designating the strategy on the table but note that (Persona X) can no longer forward it).

The Director, may, at any time, reduce his Stance towards a Persona by 1 to increase that Persona's Threat to (Stance +1 – Threat Score). This is called a Push.

Whenever a Persona would be forced to Surrender, his Actor may choose to instead make a Sacrifice. He can either Corrupt one of his Persona's Characteristics or he can put his Persona's life in on the line.

If he Corrupts a Characteristic, then he takes his lowest Characteristic (choosing between Characteristics tied for lowest) and changes it to the Corrupt version with a new value equal to (6 – the value of the other Characteristic).

If he puts his Persona's life on the line, then, if he is forced to Surrender again, his Persona dies in Narrative.

Doing either of these (Corrupting a Characteristic or putting the Persona's life on the line) resets the Persona's Surrender Threshold to its [(original value) -1].

Each of these things can only be done once.