

ACTION MOVIE WORLD



FIRST
BLOOD

directed by produced by powered by
ian williams flatland games the apocalypse



“Much better than my
wildest expectations”
- The Director

This is a badass roleplaying game. Build a team of action stars and make the best cheesy movies a child of the VHS era can imagine!

Save the day! Stop the bad guy! Avenge your buddies! Blow Stuff Up!

ACTION MOVIE WORLD: First Blood contains almost everything you need to make sure the hero wins, the villain loses, and the good movies get sequels. Just add 2d6 and some friends. Remember to rewind your cassette for the next player.



**POWERED BY THE
APOCALYPSE** 

ACTION MOVIE WORLD

FIRST
BLOOD

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ERUDITE INTRODUCTION

The year 2015 was a momentous one for America.¹ The Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality and essentially upheld the Affordable Care Act. The Obama administration re-opened diplomatic relations with Cuba and negotiated a nuclear deal with Iran. All of these things are important, regardless of your political affiliations. But if you're like me, the reason you'll remember 2015 is that *Showdown in Little Tokyo* got released on Blu-ray in a glorious 1.85:1 transfer.² It's a moment I've waited for since the introduction of the high definition format.

Action movies—especially those released between 1973³ and 1995⁴—define a world of exaggerated honor, camaraderie, and musculature. It's a world in which many of us lose ourselves, blissfully. Action movies combine the graceful movements of the musical with the bone-crunching violence of slapstick, and the simple frontier justice of the Western. Gene Kelly and The Three Stooges merge to form Jackie Chan in a faceoff against Arnold Schwarzenegger.

I remember, somewhere around 1992, aged 14 or so, watching *Bloodsport* on late-night cable. The story is raw, sinewy, and basic. Former Army Captain Frank Dux (Jean-Claude Van Damme), trained in the arts of ninjitsu by a Japanese surrogate father figure, enters an illegal underground martial arts tournament called the “Kumite.” There he fights for blood and honor.⁵ Few movies in the sound era are as formally perfect as *Bloodsport*. Characters define themselves through their martial arts

1 And sad, as action fans lost Roddy “I have come here to chew bubble gum and kick ass...and I'm all out of bubble gum” Piper.

2 You might not recognize that title, but if you're between the ages of 31-49, and grew up with premium cable—HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, The Movie Channel—you've seen it. Dolph Lundgren and Brandon Lee, Tia Carrere in tow, versus hordes of yakuza. You laughed at the naked yakuza underwater battle in a sauna. You guffawed at the idea of 6'4” Swede Lundgren living in a traditional Japanese villa that he built with his own hands, not to mention his devotion to wabi-sabi. You chuckled at the ridiculous homoerotic banter between Lundgren and Lee. At one point, Lee actually says to Lundgren, “You have the biggest dick I've ever seen on a man.” I say that to all my friends now, regardless of their biological sex or gender identification, knowing it's the nicest thing they're ever likely to hear.

3 *Enter the Dragon*, where Bruce Lee fights an army of assassins.

4 *Sudden Death*, where Jean-Claude Van Damme fights an assassin in a penguin suit.

5 Adding to the mystique of *Bloodsport* is its origin in fact. The film is based on the purported exploits of the real Frank Dux, who claimed to be the only Westerner to win the Kumite. It was great publicity for Dux's Hollywood marital arts schools, but reporters later found that his story was macho fantasy—the stuff that makes a great action movie.

techniques,⁶ visually communicating their Weltanschauungs with each blow and parry. The minimalist dialogue recalls the grim existentialism of Beckett, as when the villainous Chong Li (Bolo Yeung) tells our hero Frank Dux (JCVD), “You break my record, now I break you, like I break your friend.” The tale is of Greek tragedy, or perhaps Biblical parable. Van Damme in the Lion’s Den.

Speaking of big cats, I might also mention *The Beastmaster*, another late-night cable mainstay.⁷ Marc Singer and his abs electrified the screen in his star turn as Dar, an orphan prophesied to save the world from evil. Dar could speak with animals, and accompanied by his ferrets, an eagle, and a big freaking panther,⁸ he laid waste to cultists and berserker warriors, saving the day and teaching us all about animal rights and exercises for your core. It was a movie that appealed to beefcakes and dungeonmasters alike, and really bridges action film ideology with role-playing possibilities. If D&D is the granddaddy of role-playing games, *The Beastmaster* is the granddaddy of action fantasy movies clearly aimed at role-players.⁹ It follows the classic action movie plot, in which a reluctant hero must learn and gain experience before taking on a dangerous quest and fearsome opponent. Sounds familiar, I’d say, to those of us who know our way around polyhedral dice.

Which brings me to **ACTION MOVIE WORLD**. The classic action plots give you the opportunity to play in your favorite action worlds and combine them. For example, you might like tying the world of monosyllabic barbarians played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Red Sonja* to the world of monosyllabic special forces operatives played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Predator*. Yes, you can do that! The gameplay of **ACTION MOVIE WORLD** lets you both inhabit and transcend the narrative structures of action movies in ways that celebrate the dumb (and smart) fun of action movies and deconstruct the, shall we say, socio-political blind spots of action movies.

For example, like ancient epics, much of Western philosophy, and frankly, most role-playing games, action movies have chiefly been the province of men, narrative extensions of patriarchal myth. They are stories of communities in disarray, threatened

6 Granted, the techniques are somehow all racist – the African fighter mimics a monkey, for a notable example – and unfortunately such clumsy racial caricatures are to be expected in the genre, though not excused.

7 For people without premium cable, TBS and later TNT were action movie gold. Ted Turner’s sister networks, for the first decade or so of their existence, played nothing but Atlanta Braves games, westerns during the day, and *Bloodsport* and *Beastmaster* at night. That was it, and it was glorious.

8 Not to mention sidekick John “Good Times” Amos in a thong and Bond girl Tanya Roberts, also in a thong.

9 It’s also gorgeous to watch, since its cinematographer was John Alcott, who’s otherwise best known for shooting Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Barry Lyndon*, and *The Shining*. As he did in *Barry Lyndon*, Alcott lit every scene in *The Beastmaster* exclusively with candlelight.



by evil or corruption, and lone men who restore order.¹⁰ From a more modern perspective, it can be argued, convincingly, that action movies are vehicles for straight men to objectify other men. It's gay porn for straight guys.¹¹ These men fulfill actual men's fantasies of themselves as heroes unconstrained by societal decorum, family responsibilities, and physical incompetence. Certainly these movies are overwhelmingly masculine. There just aren't many women, at least in American action movies.¹² I suppose you can argue Sigourney Weaver is an action star because of *Aliens*,¹³ but really, outside of Blaxploitation stars like Pam Grier, Tamara Dobson, and Gloria Hendry; Red Sonja herself, Brigitte Nielsen; and the indomitably diminutive Cynthia Rothrock, action movies remain a man's world. MMA champion Ronda Rousey may find an action movie career soon,¹⁴ but for the moment it remains mostly a man's world. Even Red Sonja can't resist having Arnold Schwarzenegger in there to tame the untamable flame-haired warrior queen.¹⁵

So what kind of man's world are we talking about here? The hyper-masculine '80s heroes often are, as academics often note, cultural revenge fantasies. Certainly this is true in the most famous films of Chuck Norris and Sylvester Stallone. Their work revises history, suggesting we could have won Vietnam or the Iran hostage crisis if we'd just been more tough and manly. It's mostly a white, American or European, world as well. There are dozens of Asian crossover stars,¹⁶ and of course the brief Blaxploitation cycle of the 1970s. There are exceptions, like Wesley "Always bet on black" Snipes.¹⁷ But in general, action films have to at least partly be defined by what they exclude. That said, there's another kind of man's world, too, and it's one worth thinking about. Many of the best action movies feature American stars or émigrés—Van Damme, Schwarzenegger, Lundgren—who bring a rootlessness to their cipher characters. They are machines for kicking ass. Sometimes their families have been killed and they're out for revenge; sometimes they're robots; sometimes,

10 Think Patrick Swayze in *Road House*, or better yet, Nicolas Cage in *Con Air*. In fact, stop reading this and go watch *Con Air*. Then watch it again. Then play a *Con Air*-themed session of ACTION MOVIE WORLD. Then watch *Con Air* a third time. Do this every weekend for the rest of your life.

11 I think that should be a new show on Bravo. Can we work up a pitch?

12 Asian martial arts cinema, primarily Hong Kong, Japan, and Thailand, features more women protagonists, like Michelle Yeoh, Reiko Ike, and JeeJa Yanin. Still, they are overshadowed by their male counterparts.

13 Linda Hamilton didn't get tough until 1992, and then was never tough again, which is why I leave her off the list. Ditto for Jamie Lee Curtis's 1989 cop movie, *Blue Steel*, which is now, unfortunately, remembered only for inspiring Zoolander's signature move.

14 She is, as of this writing, slated to re-imagine Patrick Swayze's role in a remake of *Road House*.

15 Even Xena had to put up with men until she got her own show and became the first real lesbian action icon.

16 A list is probably unnecessary, but if you're new to the genre, start with Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Sonny Chiba, Sammo Hung, Chow-Yun Fat, Jet Li, Tony Jaa, and all the Hong Kong wuxia stars who cameoed in John Carpenter's *Big Trouble in Little China*.

17 Welcome back!

they're cops fighting alien drug dealers.¹⁸ It's more than that, though. In fighting alien drug dealers, he's also finding something. He's finding himself.

With **ACTION MOVIE WORLD**, you have a game that enables you to enter that wish-fulfillment universe, where you can be the *Last Action Hero*, except in this world, *Last Action Hero* is a good movie. You can be not just a fantasy version of a muscle-bound hero who can do splits in his underwear on folding chairs, but also a fantasy version of a muscle-bound hero who can shoot helicopters out of the air with a bow-and-arrow. And happily, **ACTION MOVIE WORLD** is much more egalitarian in its approach to race, sex and gender! You can fulfill, subvert, overturn, or deconstruct the character roles in ways that deepen your gameplay experience and connect action hero fantasy to real-world power relationships. No matter who you are and how you identify, you have to admit Jason Statham is sexy. Wait, I lost my train of thought. No matter who you are and how you identify, if you can appreciate the black-and-white-and-gray world of action flicks, you're in for a good time. So read on, action warriors.¹⁹ Play hard, and remember, you ain't got time to bleed.

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18 *I Come in Peace*, starring Dolph Lundgren. Classic.

19 Reading is as important to action movie stars as human growth hormone. Don't forget, Stallone writes and directs most of his movies, Lundgren has a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering and came to America on a Fulbright, and Van Damme is acting in his third language.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

This is a roleplaying game. There will be no long treatise here about what roleplaying games are, how to play them, or what they aspire to be. The text of this game assumes that you know what one is. Flatland Games is a small press; we know that you sought out **ACTION MOVIE WORLD: FIRST BLOOD** because you already like roleplaying games, not because you stumbled upon it in your local bookstore.

This is a stupid roleplaying game. That's not to say that there is not an examination of action movies going on within this book. It is to say that this examination probably shouldn't be foremost in your mind as you settle down for a game. Just be dumb when you're playing this. Dumb and loud and happy.

This is an inclusive roleplaying game. **AMW** is not overtly political, not because overtly political is bad (overtly political is awesome, actually), but because stupid roleplaying games should be as inclusive as their more serious peers. The action flicks of yore were male dominated sausage fests. The action flicks of **AMW** are not. The term "brotastic" and action movies' basis in stereotypically masculine, physical friendship should not be read as being exclusionary.

This game stands on the shoulders of those which came before it. Primarily, it stands on the shoulders of Vincent Baker's *Apocalypse World*. **AMW** is powered by the same rules as *Apocalypse World* and it is no exaggeration to say that, without Vincent's generosity in allowing anyone to use his rules, **AMW** wouldn't exist.

This game also owes debts to *Feng Shui*, by Robin D. Laws, and *Hong Kong Action Theatre!*, by Gareth-Michael Skarka. *Feng Shui* worked its way into my brain years ago and seemed like an homage to the goofiness of action movies as much as the violence and drama. *HKAT!* gave me the idea of what to do with players whose characters die during a session, a problem which I agonized over for a long time.

A debt is owed to Nathan Paoletta. He and I came up with a similar idea at the same time during the development of our respective *Apocalypse World* engine games. In *World Wide Wrestling*, Nathan refers to this idea as the Imaginary Viewing Audience, that group of imaginary people watching a show on TV. I've pinched the terminology and a few of the refinements of that idea from Nathan with his permission.

I'd like to give special game design thanks to my good friend, Bret Gillan. He's been my brainstorming partner and sounding board for a few years now. When I came

to him with my ideas for **AMW**, it was about an alternate reality in which every trope of the old action flicks I love was true. I was aiming to play it straight. Bret shook it up and planted the idea that players should portray actors who themselves portray a succession of movie characters; that the game should be about a weird version of the movie industry rather than some literal action movie world. This would be a very different, lesser game without Bret's influence. He's not on the author's header but this game is as much his as mine.

Lastly, a dedication, since I've indulged in listing my influences. I sincerely enjoy bad movies at least as much as good ones, probably more. My formative years were all about bad barbarian movies, kung-fu flicks, and Mystery Science Theater 3000. But it wasn't until I began putting **AMW** together that I realized the great cultural influence in my younger years was central North Carolina's creature feature host, Billy Bobb.

The B-movie host was a staple of the nation's television viewing before local stations were snapped up by the networks in the late 80s and early 90s. Chicago had Svenghoul, everyone had Elvira, but in North Carolina we had Billy Bobb, a goofy redneck who at one point hosted a daily kids' show, a Saturday monster movie, and a Sunday kung fu movie, all at the same time. My dad and I would watch on Sundays, while my brother and I would watch every weekday. Billy Bobb was ubiquitous and he was awesome. I've never spoken to the man but, for good or ill, he shaped my tastes in film and television like nothing else.

So **ACTION MOVIE WORLD: FIRST BLOOD** is dedicated to the B-movie hosts of American yesteryear generally, but Billy Bobb from WGGT in High Point, NC, specifically. Thank you, Billy Bobb. Too funny.



THE BASICS

Since this is a game which is bought online, meaning you sought it out, I'm saving the traditional spiel about what a roleplaying game is. The odds that you don't know are miniscule. If you don't know, it's playing pretend with rules.

To play **ACTION MOVIE WORLD: FIRST BLOOD** (or **AMW**), you will need three or more players. One player serves as the Director, what most roleplaying games call a Game Master. The Director will narrate and guide the game's progress in interesting and fun ways, describing the characters' surroundings and serving as both storyteller and referee.

Everyone else is a player, or actor. Or character. **AMW** blurs the lines between these things pretty drastically, which we'll get to shortly. But for now, it's enough to know that each player is in charge of one character. That character will be an actor in the action movie industry.

AMW uses the same basic rules as *Apocalypse World*. All you need are two normal six sided dice, or 2d6. Only the players roll on behalf of their characters. The Director never rolls.

Vincent Baker's maxim from *Apocalypse World* holds true here: a roleplaying game is a conversation. People take turns in a conversation, but it's not the same way we take turns in a board game. We breathe and defer to one another during conversational turns. The rules exist to mediate the shared conversation which is a game of **AMW**.



Moves

The primary mechanism for mediating the conversation is called the move. A move is an action which drives the fiction of the game forward. A punch is a move. A stunt is a move. Delivering a speech is a move. Players have a list of general moves, which anyone can do, as well as a list of moves based on what type of actor they're portraying. The latter moves are listed on the character sheet, or Playbook, for each character.

The guiding principle of moves is to do it, do it. This is, again, Vincent Baker's maxim. What it means is that moves are only triggered when a character performs an action which counts as a move. This is the only time you roll. If you narrate your character jumping out a window, you are using the "Stunt" move. Drinking coffee is not a move and won't be treated as such, unless your character is drinking coffee while jumping out of the window, which is a rad stunt.

Sometimes the Director will ask you if a move has occurred. In the window example, you might state that your character is jumping out of a window, whereupon the Director would ask if you're making a Stunt move, just to be sure.

Other times, you'll state upfront that you're making a move. Using the window example once more, you might declare that you're making a Stunt move by jumping out of the window. Either way is fine, so long as you remember that, once a move is declared and rolled for, it's done. Remember: to do it, do it. And once it's done, it's done.

For more on moves, see p. 28.

The Director does not make moves in the same way. Instead he or she has a list of special moves to use in reaction to the players' successes and failures; additionally, the Director gets some special moves depending on the movie's villain.

The Director can also make moves when the pace of the conversation begins to flag. That sounds kind of mushy, but just think about how conversations work. Sometimes the subject changes or there's a pause before picking it back up. That's when the Director makes a move. It's the changing of subjects for **ACTION MOVIE WORLD**.

Remember that, no matter what, the Director never rolls the dice, instead making his or her moves based on what the players do. This is a hard and fast rule.

The Director's moves are described on p. 57.

How To Roll

When it's time to make a move, you usually roll dice. This is the only time you roll dice. If it's not listed as a move, then it doesn't need to be rolled for and the action succeeds. If it is a move, then you always roll. Rolling dice works like this:

Roll two normal six sided dice (2d6) and add them together.

Add or subtract the rating in the relevant statistic. A +Drama roll would be 2d6+Drama; if you have +1 Drama, it's 2d6+1.



Compare the result to the chart attached to the move you want to pull off. Each move has its own table describing results, but they broadly look like this:

10+ means the move succeeded and it was completely awesome

7-9 means the move succeeded but there's a catch or limitation of some sort.

6 or less means you failed. The Director may make an immediate move against you.

And that's it. Simplicity itself. Remember: the moves shape the conversation and the Director only makes moves if you fail or if the conversation begins to slow down.

Overview

A campaign of **AMW** consists of several distinct stories which often have nothing to do with one another. These stories usually last for two to four sessions and represent different movies. Rather than play a single character bound by genre and setting, as you do in most roleplaying games, you take on the primary role of an actor. Your actor then takes on a different role for each movie, switching roles when a new film begins.

A campaign, then, can be considered an actor's entire career. He or she will work all sorts of movies, from kung fu action to barbarian epics to buddy cop flicks. The catch is that action movie stars are, in the real world, tied to a larger image and, subsequently, build a brand based on it. Arnold Schwarzenegger has played a lot of different roles but they all tie back into the Arnold Schwarzenegger brand. You can find this pattern in almost all action movie stars. Whether it's based on acting ability, sense of humor, athletic skill, or lung capacity (hi Reb Brown!), an action movie star picks a niche and sticks with it.

It's important to understand that, while you play an actor playing a character, the events within a movie are "real" in the sense that the fiction of the movie world takes precedence over the real world concerns of the movie business. If the group is playing in a barbarian movie, nobody should break character to represent their actors arguing with the Director over lighting or contracts. That session is about being barbarians, every bit as much as a game of Dungeons & Dragons is about playing pals going dungeon delving. The Hollywood stuff is more subtext than text once a movie starts, becoming more apparent as the actors' careers progress but never becoming the primary mode of play.

This may seem a little confusing, particularly if you're coming from other roleplaying games. Just remember: a movie is real while it is being played. You are not an actor, but a character inhabiting the world of that movie. You'll be a different character in a different world for the next one, but don't worry about that. Just treat each movie as a self-contained narrative world and you're golden.

If you're a player, you will pick the sort of actor which you want to play. These are presented as Actor Playbooks, film star archetypes which offer you a list of moves to do, no matter the subgenre of action movie you're currently in. These moves tend to be calling cards for your actor that appear in movie after movie. Note, though, that the Actor Playbooks are not tied to a specific subgenre of action movie. They are geared toward creating a persona tied to the meta-genre of "action film". Your Actor is both archetype and brand, independent of the role taken in any particular movie.

You can find the Actor Playbooks on p. 69.

Example: Ian's decided to run a campaign of AMW. He asked his friends Bret, Carly, and Nathan if they want to play and, because AMW is such a rad game, they're readily onboard.

After looking at the Actor Playbooks, Bret decides he wants to play a Musclehead named Edgar Von Muslestrassen. Nathan's more into dextrous, Van Damme types, so he picks the Pugilist and decides his actor's name is Fumihiro Ito. And Carly likes to yell, so she picks the Yeller, naming her actor Contita Estrella. The players dig into their moves and customize their characters.

Once Actor Playbooks have been chosen, the group collectively chooses a second Playbook representing the genre of action film to be played through called a Script. A Script is finite in both scope and duration. It's only active for the duration of the movie, whether that's one session or five. Scripts also offer a way of picking a very rough framework for how the movie will proceed. After the movie is over, a new Script is chosen. As part of this process, the actor who portrays the Lead role is determined. For your first session, either vote or pick by whatever method feels right. In subsequent sessions, the Lead is chosen by whoever has the highest Star Power.

We provide 6 Scripts in this book on p. 78.

Example: Ian suggests picking between a Cop movie and a Ninja movie, but wisely butts out of such an important decision. He's an extremely wise Director, concerned with his players' happiness, and leaves it open to the group beyond this gentle nudge.

The players discuss things. Bret and Nathan are extremely into ninjas, so they advocate for the Ninja movie. Carly's neutral, but finds the idea of a ninja who yells pretty funny, so she agrees. With that settled, a title needs to be picked. This is super important because it sets the tone and helps the brainstorming process. Carly yells, "Red Mist of Death", which everyone loves. The title is set and everyone can move onto the next phase.



Discussion turns to who is the lead. It's Nathan's birthday, so everyone agrees that Nathan should get dibs. Nathan blushes, because he's a humble guy, but inwardly grins at his good fortune.

In addition, Scripts provide more moves for your character. These work exactly like other moves, whether they're from the basic moves list or from the Actor Playbooks. In terms of the conversational style of **AMW**, Script moves provide conversational cues for speaking about specific genres of movie, just as Actor moves do for specific types of actor. We think of and speak about cop movies differently than we do barbarian movies, so the Script moves for the former genre are accordingly different from those for the latter.

Importantly, moves chosen from a Script are temporary (though they can be made permanent through expenditure of XP; don't worry about that for now). Each player chooses one and only one move from the Script. That move is his or hers for the duration of that movie only. Once the movie is over, it goes away.

Example: The players now turn to the Script moves. Knowing that they're temporary, for the duration of this movie only, Carly decides she wants Opossum; yelling and falling over pretend dead is what Carly considers her killer combo for Red Mist of Death. Nathan considers and decides to go with Dim Mak, which makes perfect sense with his fists of fury style actor. Finally, Bret thinks big vascular guys disappearing into thin air is awesome, so he picks Puff of Smoke.



The same holds true for gear. Gear consists of all of the weapons, armor, and gadgets a movie character possesses. This varies from Script to Script just like the Script moves. The Barbarian movie Script has swords, axes, and such. The Cop movie has guns, body armor, drugs, and such. You pick a set of gear and it's yours for the duration of the movie in question. You pick new gear with each new movie.

Example: Gear in Ninja movies is pretty simple. Looking at the Script, the players see that everyone gets a ninja outfit and a preset selection of swords and shurikens. Each player also gets one choice from a small list of extra ninja gear. Bret picks the choking gas bombs to go with his Puff of Smoke move. Carly and Nathan both think bows are good ideas for flexibility in their offense, so they both go for that option.

The Director will also need to pick the highlighted stats for this particular movie. See *Star Power and Highlighted Stats* on p. 48 for more on this process.

Example: Ian now needs to pick the highlighted stats for the actors. This is for the duration of one movie only, and represents the Director giving off-camera direction and acting tips. Each actor has two highlighted stats. One is already picked: it's the Playbook's primary stat, so Muscles for Bret and Carly, Agility for Nathan.

Ian wants things to go in unexpected places, so he tells Bret that he wants Drama to be his other highlighted stat. For Carly, he wants to see if her Yeller can go soft-spoken and poignant; he tells her that hers is Drama, too. With Nathan's Pugilist, Ian decides that he wants to actually go with type; Nathan's informed that his second highlighted stat is Magnetism in the hopes that he sees some awkward love scenes.

Villains are also presented in the Scripts. Every action movie has a villain. The choice of villain is important, as it shapes both the way the movie proceeds and provides a list of moves the Director can make against you when the time comes. A heist movie about a diamond thief is very different from one about rival drug lords stealing cocaine from one another.

Example: Ian gets to put a lot of input into the choice of Villain. He's only got two, though AMW is designed to let you create your own stuff. He decides to go with the Master Ninja as villain. He asks the players if they're cool with this, which they are, and he begins to think a little. Perhaps the person who trained our ninja heroes is still out there and angry with them...

After Script moves, gear, and the movie's Villain have been picked, each player will establish a relationship with the person on his or her left. If you've played Fiasco from Bully Pulpit Games, it works in a similar way. Scripts provide lists of relationships, things, and places in common with your neighbor. It's presented as a 2d6 (2-12) roll but that's more for quick ease of use. Making up your own relationships to suit whatever you want to do is not only expected, but encouraged.

Example: The characters everyone's playing are really starting to coalesce. Names were picked a little while ago; remember, actors have names and the characters they play have names, too. Bret's Musclehead is playing Django Slapblast, Nathan's Pugilist is playing Akira Funaki, and Carly's playing Maria Takanawa.

Ian tells the players that their characters need in-movie relationships with one another. The players nod in agreement and look at the sample list in the Ninja Script.

Nathan decides to go first, opting to roll and let the dice do the talking. He rolls a 10: the war. He looks at Bret, to his left, and asks him which war.

Bret says, "World War II?"

Nathan nods. This says certain things about the setting of the movie. It has to be when WWII vets were alive and young enough to be ninjas. Bret and Nathan discuss this relationship and decide that they were on opposite sides, with Bret's Django Slapblast an American GI and Nathan's Akira Funaki the ninja who trained him during the occupation. Ian, for his part, makes a note that the film should take place in the early 1960s.

Bret's up next. With Carly to his left, he decides he's not going to roll for their relationship, instead picking from the sample list. Bret picks that their souls are claimed by the same demon. Ian suggests that perhaps this demon is the

titular Red Mist of Death, which Bret and Carly agree sounds cool.

Carly's last and has Nathan on her left. She decides she doesn't like any of the options and makes up her own. She tells Nathan that Maria Takanawa is Akira Funaki's lost daughter, born out of wedlock and just having found her father. Nathan thinks that sounds cool and the relationship web is set. Ian considers the Villain in light of this, deciding that the evil ninja master trained Akira and is displeased with the infidelity which led to his daughter's birth. This hatred of Akira's line, both students and progeny, leads to an alliance between demon and evil ninja master.

All this will provide structure for the movie. In summation, the Script provides roles for your actors, relationships between your actors' characters, the beginning of the film, and a MacGuffin to chase in the form of a nefarious villain doing bad things.

I mean it when I say make up your own relationships with this. The number of relationships portrayed in action movies is infinite and silly (infinitely silly?). The 2d6 roll is shorthand only. Make up your own!

The Big Secret

So, here's the key to making this work. **AMW** should be played as though there actually is a movie going on and that there's an audience somewhere watching it. This should never be directly acknowledged. It's not often reflected in the mechanics. There's no actual audience feedback at the end or paychecks to collect. But it should always drive how the game is presented. This audience which is watching and judging your action movies is referred to as the Imaginary Viewing Audience. They determine the success of your movies and your stars' careers.

This is addressed later on in the *Agenda* section on p. 51. In shorthand, it means thinking about what's awesome about watching an action movie. Note that this is not the same thing as treating a fantasy world as though it's real.

Most roleplaying games want you to treat the game world as real. **AMW** urges you to take the opposite tack: the game world is all artifice, a movie set, ready to disappear as soon as the current film ends. Nobody dies forever, nothing is permanently destroyed. To that end, make it crazy. Think about your favorite movie. Is anyone really going to say "yippee ki yay motherfucker" over and over, particularly while

things are blowing up around him or her? Is the standard way to celebrate a killing (if it's celebrated at all) a hi-five with wailing guitars in the background? If you're melting in a pool of molten metal, are you really going to give a thumbs up?

Of course not. All of that is awesome, in part, because it's completely ridiculous. This has always been the wink and nudge of action movies. It ain't Shakespeare. Make that ridiculousness happen in your games. If you go too far, fuck it. There's another movie to come in a couple of sessions.

The Imaginary Viewing Audience also shows up in how the character statistics are described. A character with high Agility is good at stunt rolls involving that in raw terms. He or she can do backflips with flair and jump out of airplanes with ease. That's all in the fictional world of the movie. But he or she is also convincing in that portrayal for the audience. It's not just that the star is good at it; he or she makes it look good. This is most bluntly illustrated in things like the Love Scene move. A character with high Magnetism is particularly talented in bed and can get what's needed from that in fictional terms, but he or she also puts on a hot sex scene for the IVA. Rather than being ridiculous or uncomfortable, as a negative Magnetism would represent, an audience would be enthralled or turned on by it.

AMW works best when you're thinking in this dual manner. Always keep it in mind. It's never enough to do a successful stunt if the audience doesn't gasp with delight. Pretend that audience is watching.

Roles and Plot Immunity

Have you ever noticed that we watch action movies even though everyone knows the hero is always going to win? **AMW** recognizes that reality by providing a very big change from other roleplaying games: one of the players' Actors is the lead character and he or she can't die.

The way it works is pretty simple:

At the beginning of a new movie, one of the Actors is designated as the Lead. The process for this is explained a little bit later and reviewed on p. 62, but for now know that it's a rotating gig and every player gets a turn.

The Lead cannot die. He or she basically has plot immunity. If death is supposed to happen, it doesn't; he or she can come back in dramatic fashion next scene. He or she will get the girl (or boy) and is guaranteed to beat the bad guy. He or she can and will be beaten up and suffer terrible setbacks, but a win is on the horizon.

The other characters are in supporting roles. Not only can they die but at least one of them probably should. They still get a certain amount of immunity; a supporting character can usually only die when he or she reaches five harm. Even then, there's a lot of choice in the matter, as detailed below. If a supporting character dies, for whatever reason, he or she gets an immediate 2 XP. That's a lot. They also get post-death jobs (see *You're Dead* on p. 66) so they're not bored.

Once the movie is wrapped up, the mantle of Lead rotates. The character with the highest Star Power is Lead for the next movie. In case of a tie, either roll off to see who gets dibs or talk it out until an agreement is reached. You cannot be Lead again until every other player gets a turn at it, even if you have the highest Star Power.

Breaking this down a bit more:

The Lead

You cannot die. If you would die, you are merely set back.

You can be set back any number of times, but you will succeed. There's absolutely no guarantee that you will succeed right now, however; it can drag out a bit.

You are the only one who can kill the Villain. The Villain has death immunity from everyone else, though his plans are (obviously) not guaranteed to succeed.

You're only the Lead for the duration of one movie. Once the movie ends, someone else gets a turn. You don't get to be Lead a second time until everyone has a turn. If you're not the Lead, you're in a supporting role.



Supporting Roles

You're tough to kill but it's not impossible. You can die one of three ways:

Whenever it makes sense to you. This is your call and your call alone. If it's dramatic and cool and you want to do it, do it. Describe it well!

When you reach 5 harm, you can choose to die. It's too much for you. You don't have to die! You simply have the option. This makes it a lot like the above die when you want option, but this serves as a good dramatic cue.

There's a catch, though. When you reach 5 harm, the Director can dictate that you die. The Director doesn't have to do it right then or do it at all; consider it a hold that he or she can spend to kill you whenever it makes dramatic sense.

When you take any amount of harm from a weapon with the -deadly quality. Deadly weapons are just that: deadly. You get hit, you might die. Just as above, you can die right then if you want or the Director can dictate that you die.

When and if you die, you get 2 XP. Any survivors gain access to the Vengeance move, a special move which can be used in your name once per movie.

You can absolutely help kill the big bad guy if you survive, but the bulk of the glory is going to the Lead. That's okay. You'll get your turn.



Knowing the Answer vs the Flow of Conversation

If roleplaying games are a conversation and we already know the answer (the Lead kills the Villain), why have it at all?

AMW is a game about the way the conversation flows, rather than the outcome. It's about the journey to the inevitable answer, not the answer, itself. This, too, models action movies. Nobody ever goes to a big budget action flick expecting the hero to fail. You know how it's going to end. What you don't know is the specifics of how he or she gets there. An action movie shifts the drama from the outcome to the journey. The genre is about big heroes, big explosions, and big stunts.

So you all know how a game of *AMW* will end. But you don't know the precise contours of the ending, and that's where the fun comes in. What does the kill shot look like? How many explosions happen on the way? How many car chases? Does your best buddy die in your arms, providing the impetus to carry the plot across the finish line? Knowing the general shape of things isn't the same as knowing the specifics; *AMW* wants to revel in the specifics of the scenes between beginning and end.

Let go of the need to have variable endings and you're golden. Throw yourself into those intermediate scenes. This is one of the keys to making *AMW* hum at the table.



GLOSSARY



Actor - A player's character in AMW.

Actor Playbook - A set of guidelines and instructions for characters in AMW.

Agility - A statistic representing how fast, agile, and dextrous your character is.

Assistant Director - A role giving narrative control of specific types of scenes. Granted upon an Actor's death in a movie.

Camaraderie - A communal rating of how awesome a group of friends the Actors are playing in a given movie.

Character - An actor's role in a particular movie.

Death - The cessation of life. In AMW death is never permanent but happens often. A character's death only lasts for one movie.

Director - The person in charge of setting scenes and keeping the game flowing well. Should always be given snacks.

Drama - A statistic representing how good an Actor is at delivering dramatic, heavily emotional scenes.

Experience - Measures how your character progresses. Used to unlock new moves and options.

Gear - All the stuff which action movie heroes might use. Guns, cars, and explosives are just a few examples.

The Gunfighter - An Actor Playbook which emulates the gun-fu style of Hong Kong cinema.

Harm - A measure of how injured your Actor appears.

Highlighted Stats - Stats which are designated as super important for the duration of a movie. Experience gains are linked to them.

Hold - A type of advantage granted by some moves. A hold is traded for a specific advantage on a 1:1 basis.

Lead - The main star of a movie. The role rotates among players.

Magnetism - A statistic representing sex appeal and raw charisma.

Move - The mechanical basis of **AMW**. Moves allow you to attempt the sort of things you see in action films. Players must roll for moves, while the Director never does.

Muscles - A statistic measuring how strong and muscly a character is.

The Musclehead - An Actor Playbook which emulates the beefy action stars of the 1980s.

PC - Short for Player Character, another term for a player's character.

Playbook - A set of guidelines and mechanics for a specific type of character or movie. Playbooks are divided into either Actor Playbooks or Scripts.

The Pugilist - An Actor Playbook which emulates martial arts stars.

Quality - A briefly worded modifier to an action or outcome, usually associated with gear.

Rolls - Whenever players roll dice in **AMW** they roll two normal six-sided dice and sum the result. A roll is usually modified by a statistic.

Script - A Playbook for a specific genre of movie.

The Smartass - An Actor Playbook which emulates wisecracking heroes of the 1990s.

The Smooth Operator - An Actor Playbook which emulates heroes relying on sex appeal and pure cool.

Star Power - A measure of how famous an Actor is. More Star Power means a bigger career.

Stats - The mechanical measurements of how good or bad an Actor is at various tasks. Used to modify rolls for moves.

Supporting Cast - All of the Actors who aren't the Lead.

Swagger - A statistic measuring how cool, funny, and impervious to humiliation a character is.



Take Forward - A mechanical effect which takes place on the next roll a character makes.

The Thespian - An Actor Playbook which emulates the serious, dramatic type of action hero.

Ticks - Measures Star Power.

Villain - The main bad guy in a movie. Grants special moves to the Director.

The Yeller - An Actor Playbook which encourages you to yell like you're Reb Brown.

XP - An alternate game jargon name for experience.

THE ACTORS



In the following chapters, we'll go deeper into the rules and roles which make **AMW** tick.

In most roleplaying games, you play a character. You, the player, are in the stance of the actor, making a role exciting and collaborating with other actors playing their own characters. The story may be long or short, serious or silly, but everything is taken at face value as being "real".

AMW skews this. You play actors who then play characters in movies. There isn't really much depth to the portrayal of the actor portion of this equation. But, then, action movie stars are self-consciously living brands. It's no good being a versatile actor. The whole point of being an action actor is to be typecast forever. That's where the money is.

So if you're a player in a game of **AMW**, go all in on the one-dimensional nature of your role. To funnel you toward this style of play, **AMW** relies on Playbooks (more specifically Actor Playbooks to differentiate them from Scripts) to create those big, one-dimensional goofs we call action movie heroes.

You'll find the Actor Playbooks online at www.flatlandgames.com/amw/, on p. 69, and at the end of this book. The Actor Playbooks are looked at with more depth in the appropriate chapter, but a brief overview will suffice for now.

Actor Playbooks have your stats, which modify your move rolls, and a list of moves you can pick from to customize your character's career approach. Each Actor Playbook is of a different type. There's the Musclehead for you Arnold Schwarzenegger types, the Smooth Operator for the Bond fans, the Pugilist for the Van Damme nuts, etc.

The moves, which we touched on in the very first part of this book, are the engine of the rules. They're actions and reactions, the stuff your character does. They allow interplay between Director and cast. They make the game go and regulate the conversation at the table. The light version has been discussed, but let's go deeper and explain the ins and outs of how the move rules work.

Making Your Move

The main way the characters interact with the movie world around them is through moves. Moves are how the conversation taking place in **AMW** is structured. When you do something which affects the conversation, it's almost certainly a move. When a move happens, you roll the dice to see how, precisely, the conversation is altered.

Remember that the guiding rule, the same in **AMW** as it is in Apocalypse World, still applies: to do it, do it. There is no doing things by implication in **AMW**. When you perform a move, it is done. Even if you, the player, aren't explicit about it, a move can happen. That's where the Director comes in. He or she will let you know when you do a move and double check to make certain that it's intended. Once those dice come out, though, it's done. To do it, do it, and once you do it it's done.

The way it works is simple. When your action triggers a move and you're going to follow through, pick up the dice and roll them. Add or subtract the move's associated stat. Consult the move's chart. As written at the outset, a 10+ is awesome, a 7-9 is pretty good, a 6 or less is terrible.

Some moves provide mechanical effects which last longer than the immediate duration of the move. These moves alter the game in the following ways:

Take X forward - This means that you add or subtract X to your very next roll, whatever that roll is, whenever that roll occurs.

Take X for the scene - This means that you add or subtract X to all rolls for the rest of the scene. The duration of a scene is deliberately vague; it's exactly the length of one scene in a movie, which may be long or short. You'll usually know when a scene change happens, usually by a change in location, circumstances, or what would be a fade to black moment in a movie. The Director will tell you if you're in doubt.

Hold X - A hold is sort of like a trading card. You get X holds and you can trade them to do Y, usually on a one for one basis. So if you hold 2 and can trade them for +1 harm each, for instance, you can get up to +2 harm on one move or +1 now and +1 later or 0 now and some combination up to +2 later. You get a lot of flexibility with these.

There is no initiative order to combat or other conflicts in **AMW**. Since it's a conversation as much as it is a game, the order you apply moves is as simple as conversing. You know how, in a normal conversation, when you get done with what you're saying you stop to let the other person respond? That's how the order of moves works, too. So treat it like a conversation at all times and defer to the rules of conversational order if you're in doubt. To do it, do it. Say what you're doing. Commit. Roll.

Your Stats

Your move rolls are modified by your Actor's stats.

You have five stats, rated from -3 to +3; 0 is included in this scale. Your numerical rating in your stat tells you how much to add or subtract from your 2d6 roll when you make a move. Straightforward.

These are the stats in **AMW**:

Muscles - How strong and good in a close-up fight you are. Beefiness and physique.

Agility - Manual dexterity and how good a shot you are. Toned, lithe, or just quick.

Magnetism - Sexiness and raw charisma. Good-looking or persuasive.

Drama - Gravity and emotional conveyance. Maybe you're serious. Maybe you're just really believable when you're talking about things that matter.

Swagger - Sense of humor and stone cold nerves. Unshakeable, funny, or too cool for words.

Stats are best thought of in two ways. The first way is the way that most roleplaying games think of them: as a measure of how capable your character is. A character with high Muscles is good at physical combat, brawny, beefy. A character with high Magnetism is charismatic, sexy, persuasive, compelling. Easy.

Stats in **AMW** work on a second level. Remember the Imaginary Viewing Audience sitting in an invisible movie theater? Your stats double as your method of communicating with that audience through the movie screen. Stats make the movie a good one. It's not just that a hero with high Muscles is good at combat, he or she makes combat scenes believable and awesome. High Magnetism means that your charisma bleeds into the theater; those sex scenes make people swoon you're so hot.

The Director will help navigate this space between the types of success and failure, as will be seen later in the Director Moves. For now, don't dwell on it too much. Just know that this meta-gameplay, even if it doesn't always directly impact the game, underpins much of the tone of **AMW**. Without at least a little attention to this, it's not a game about actors, but a game about characters, just like any other roleplaying game.

This dual nature is extra, super important when thinking about the Drama stat. On its own, Drama could easily be folded into Magnetism; they're both related to charisma and force of personality. But Drama is a very special stat in that it's wrapped up in how good an actor is at conveying seriousness to the audience. We all know bad actors, with stilted dialogue and blank expressions. The high Drama hero is not that person.

Basic Moves

Basic moves are the moves every Actor, regardless of Playbooks, has access to. These are your bread and butter. The guidelines bear repeating: when something in the game's fiction occurs which would trigger a move ("I punch him"), roll for the move's success.

Each move has an associated stat. We call the roll plus your stat "rolling a stat". So you roll +Drama for the Emote move. You roll +Magnetism for the Love Scene move. Roll your 2d6, add your stat, compare. Again, broadly: 10+ is awesome, 7-9 is success with a catch, 6 or less is a terrible failure.

We're going to get to the Director's reactions to your failed rolls (ie a 6 or less) in a later chapter (see *Director Moves* on p. 57). For now it's enough to remember that the Director never rolls the dice and has a list of Director moves to make in reaction to your rolls. The Director's move might be really hard or it might be easier to deal with. That's up to the Director, based on what he or she feels the conversation demands. Trust your Director.

You'll also notice a few terms here which will be clarified later on in this chapter. Harm is how much damage you do. Actors have five levels of harm. When you take five harm, you might die. Attacks and such do harm.

Some of the moves have things like (-messy) next to them. This is what's known as a quality. Qualities modify the fiction of a move's outcome. So (-messy) means just that: it's messy, gory, or otherwise noticeable. You get a lot of leeway in how it's interpreted, but the quality must come into play.

In reading the moves, you'll notice that some of them have specified outcomes for a miss, while others don't. If a move has a specified result, then that is the outcome. It may or may not offer a choice, to either you or the Director, but the miss creates the listed result.

If there is no text for a miss, the Director chooses a move from the Director's move list. How hard he or she goes for you and what move is chosen is entirely up to the Director.

Violence +Muscles or +Agility

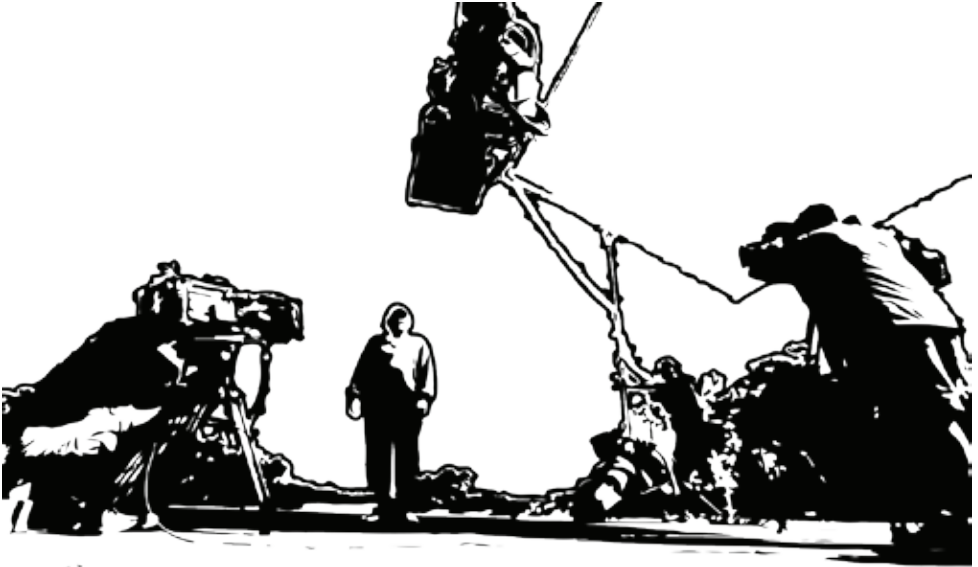
Violence is exactly what it sounds like: trying to hurt or kill people. The stat you roll depends on how you're going about it. If it's up close, with a melee weapon or fisticuffs, roll +Muscle. If it's from a distance, with guns, bows, bazookas, grenades, or anything else of that ilk, roll +Agility.

On a 10+, choose three:

- Inflict terrible harm (+1 harm)
- The target drops something
- The target is knocked down
- You make a mess (-messy)
- Something explodes (-loud)
- You hit a whole bunch of people (-area)
- You can escape or close in

On a 7-9, choose one:

- You inflict harm but you take some, too.
- You inflict harm but are driven back.
- You inflict harm but a friend is hurt badly in the fight.



Slow Motion

This is purely for narrative purposes. No rolls required. Whenever a Violence, Stunt, or Love Scene move succeeds with a 10+, the player can declare that the effects are in slow motion, in addition to the other effects of the roll. This is because slow motion is cool.

Getting What You Want +Magnetism

Sometimes you want something and you need to talk in order to get it. What that something is is irrelevant to the way we do this. This includes intimidation. If it's pursued through sheer force of personality, it's this move. When you seduce or manipulate someone in order to get something (goods, sex, money, information, etc), roll +Magnetism.

On a 10+, you get what you want with no strings attached. It might even be better than you expected. If used against a PC, he or she can refuse but takes a -1 forward until he or she gives in.

On a 7-9, get what you want but it comes with an added cost. A PC can outright refuse.

On a miss, you've managed to infuriate someone. The Director may make an appropriate move against you.

Emote +Drama

Action stars sometimes like to show off their acting chops (or lack thereof) by displaying emotion in a non-violent context. No subtle acting in action movies, though; when action stars let loose, it's big, loud, and messy. Pick an emotion to convey via speech or physical movement. When you display that emotion in a melodramatic fashion, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, as below and you take +1 forward when acting on your emotions, as well.

On a 7-9, choose a PC or NPC to witness to your emotional display. He or she feels the same emotion as you. It is up to the Director to decide how the witness reacts. If a PC acts on the emotion, he or she takes +1 forward

On a miss, the rawness of your emotions has exhausted you. Take -1 forward.



Love Scene +Magnetism

Love scenes (read: sex scenes) are part and parcel of action movies. Emotion is usually expressed physically and there's no more physical expression of love than sex. When you have sex with someone, PC or NPC, roll +Magnetism.

On a 10+, choose two.

On a 7-9, choose only one.

- +1 when you protect or help your lover for the rest of the film
- Your head is clear for days; +1 for the scene.
- The head of your lover is clear for days; he or she takes +1 for the scene.
- Your lover will die during the course of the movie. When he or she does, you may invoke the Vengeance move just as though a fellow PC had died.
- Your lover will show up during a moment of danger to provide critical aid.

On a miss, the Director may use your lover to complicate your life in the near future. It may be that he or she is captured. He or she may betray you. Maybe it's just a quick death. Whatever it is, you will take -1 for the scene from the stress it causes when it happens.

Killer One Liner +Swagger

After stunts and senseless violence, one liners are the connective tissue of the action film. Note that this is a move for which a miss implies that the line fell flat for the imaginary audience. It might be a legitimately funny line at the table even with a miss and still misfire with the audience. When you deliver an awesome one liner or catchphrase roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, your line is hilarious, well-timed, and cutting. Choose one:

- Take +1 forward to your next roll.
- Your buddies are impressed. +1 to Camaraderie

On a 7-9, as above, but also pick one of the following

- Someone is enraged and immediately attacks you.
- Someone you care about is hurt.
- The comment slows an action scene down (and not in a good way).

On a miss, the line falls flat. Take -1 forward as you're rattled by how lame your line was.

The Director may make a move against you.



Stunts +Muscles or +Agility

Stunts are the lifeblood of the action film. A Stunt move is any physical act which involves danger or wowing the audience. The Director and players should be very lenient with what's considered possible. Go absolutely nuts with this move. Bear in mind subgenre conventions, however; unless it's a superhero movie, it's probably not cool to jump over Lake Michigan or use two train cars as nunchucks.

When you perform a badass stunt, roll either +Agility or +Muscles, depending on the type of stunt. Lifting a portcullis, throwing someone into the air, tackling someone through an open window, carrying logs over your shoulder, or swimming the Amazon are all +Muscles. Jumping out of a helicopter to land in a small pond, backflips through a laser detection system, or snatching an arrow out of midair are all +Agility.

On a 10+, you do the cool stunt you were attempting and you feel like a total badass doing it. Take +1 forward. You may pass this +1 forward to one of the other PCs instead if you can work them into the stunt.

On a 7-9, the stunt is successful. Take +1 forward. However, you've left yourself in a precarious position; choose one below.

On a miss, choose one

- You fall
- You lose something
- You leave something behind
- You hurt yourself (1 harm)
- Tell the Director to make a move against you.



Read a Situation +Swagger

Sometimes you need to know what the heck is going on in a dangerous situation. When you read a charged situation, roll +Swagger. If you succeed, you ask the Director questions. Whenever you act on one of the Director's answers, take +1 forward.

On a 10+, ask 3:

On a 7-9, ask 1:

- where's my best escape route / way in / way past?
- which enemy is most vulnerable to me?
- which enemy is the biggest threat?
- what should I be on the lookout for?
- what's my enemy's true position?
- who's in control here?

Read a Person +Drama

When you read a person in a charged interaction, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, hold 3.

On a 7-9, hold 1. While you're interacting with him or her, spend your hold to ask their player questions, 1 for 1:

- is your character telling the truth?
- what's your character really feeling?
- what does your character intend to do?
- what does your character wish I'd do?
- how could I get your character to ___?

Vengeance

When a PC dies, his compatriots are allowed to make a Vengeance move. This works a bit differently from other moves and may only be used once per character in a given movie. There is no roll involved. Instead, the Vengeance move gives you a special hold. You may spend this hold to get an automatic 10+ on a Combat or Stunt move provided it is done in direct pursuit of avenging your comrade's death. If more than one PC dies, you still only get one Vengeance move per movie. Use it wisely.

A few moves allow you to make a Vengeance move when an NPC dies. In all other ways, a Vengeance move coming from an NPC death in one of these situations is exactly the same as one coming from a PC death.

The Vengeance move should be accompanied by a high pitched wail or sobbing. Always.

Camaraderie

Camaraderie takes the brotastic friendship of action movies and makes it an inclusive measure of team spirit. It's the back slaps, the commiserations over the bodies of enemies, and the drinking contests which make up action movie friendships. But more than anything, it's intense.

With very few exceptions, friendship of some sort is at the heart of every action movie, good or bad. And that friendship's intensity is measured by its physicality. This doesn't necessarily mean touching and almost certainly isn't hugging. Rather, it's friendship via a shared physical action, whether that's drinking, killing, or competing in a sport.

This is an incredibly important concept in AMW. Friendship serves as a motivator, especially in its absence. By that I mean that betrayal and death stalk the action movie friendship like shadows. Think about the ways friendships play out in action movies. Perhaps a friend betrays the Lead Actor and he or she uses it to fuel the drama of the rest of the movie. Or a best friend dies, blown apart by an errant grenade, scarring the psyche of our hero forever. This is reconfigured in countless ways, but the same basic formula is at play in movie after movie.

Camaraderie is a stat which measures the depth of the friendship between the Actors. There's a single score for everyone, which moves from -3 to +3 in the course of play. It is only ever rolled for the special Camaraderie move, as detailed below.

At the beginning of a new movie (not session), Camaraderie is 0. It is adjusted in the following situations:



Camaraderie goes up by one when:

- A PC is saved from a seemingly sure death situation by his friends.
- The big bad guy's plans are set back by the group. It MUST be a group situation; no solo scenes. This means at least two heroes helping each other. The Director decides what counts as a setback for the villain.
- As an option when a PC rolls a 10+ on the Killer One-Liner move. These are the big, memorable friend moments and one-liners in a movie. It's "I'll be back!" or a Tango and Cash hi-five.

Camaraderie goes down by one when:

- A hero dies.
- ANY hero attempts a Camaraderie move. Success or failure is irrelevant; just attempting it lowers it by one. This penalty is applied after the roll is made, so the decrease won't affect the declared roll.
- Any PC double-crosses another one.

If Camaraderie is at +3 at the end of the movie, all surviving PCs gain an extra XP (see *Experience and Improvement* on p. 44).

Camaraderie Move

A Camaraderie move isn't an actionable thing like most of the other moves. Where other moves are distinct actions, Camaraderie is a little hazy and ill-defined. This is on purpose. Mechanically, it's like any other move: you either state that you're performing the Camaraderie move or the Director asks you if you're performing it.

But what do you do with one of these moves, narratively? At first, narrate doing something cool which involves your fellows. It doesn't have to be physical, though it can be. It can be mental or emotional, instead. The important thing is that you're attempting to draw on the strength of your fellowship to accomplish great feats.

It can be things like a killer hi-five at a point of climax in the movie. It might be thinking back to when you and Roscoe were in 'Nam together, saving one another's butts, the type of memory which might give you inner strength and resolve. It could be going out for beers with the whole gang before the final battle. If you were watching an action movie, this moment would be something memorable and touching which speaks to the friendship at the core of the film.

Each player may only roll the Camaraderie move once per movie! Not per session; per movie. Remember that Camaraderie decreases by 1 when any character attempts this move.

Roll 2d6 and add +Camaraderie:

On a 10+, pick two:

On a 7-9, pick one:

- Heal one level of harm
- Find an awesome new weapon for the duration of the movie
- Do an extra level of harm to the film's Villain
- Get inspired by your friends. Hold one to make a future roll an automatic 10+
- The characters gain a great insight into their friendship and themselves. Give all the PCs one XP and lower Camaraderie by -3 (to a minimum of -3).

On a miss, pick one:

- Lower Camaraderie by a further -1.
- Automatically fail your next roll in your primary stat.
- GM makes an immediate move against one of your compatriots (not you!)
- A fight breaks out immediately between you and one of the other PCs.

Giving a -3 to Camaraderie is all well and good, but what does that mean in the fiction? Well, Camaraderie is meant to represent friendship but also the way friendship waxes and wanes as you discover new things about your comrades.. When you lower it by 3 in exchange for 1 XP, it's meant to represent one of those wanes. You've all discovered something new about one another, which means that you have to start anew the next time you want to experience such a revelation again.

This is subtly portrayed in the action, if it's shown at all. Just know that it represents feeling secure that you've learned something new about your friends and yourself.

Example: "Red Mist of Death" has been rolling over two sessions of butt-kicking, shuriken-throwing action. Ian's Directing is on point and Bret, Carly, and Nathan have inhabited their roles like champs. The movie is beginning to reach a climax and the group's Camaraderie is sitting at +2.

The characters are sneaking through the mean streets of Kyoto to corner the Red Mist (the head evil ninja) for a final conflict. They find their rival's dojo tucked away in a dark alley in the redlight district. Before they head in for the final conflict, Nathan decides that he wants to make sure the climactic scene goes well. He tells Ian that he wants to try to make a Camaraderie move. Ian reminds Nathan that, after the roll is done, Camaraderie will take a -1 to its current rating. Nathan thinks this is fine and Ian approves.

Nathan takes the dice, blows on them for luck, and gives them a throw... a 6! With the +2 added, a score of 8 gives Nathan a choice of one from our list. Nathan looks it over and decides he wants to do an extra level of harm to the main villain sometime during the coming scene.

Ian asks Nathan to narrate something cool. Nathan obliges. His PC walks up to Bret's and Carly's. "My daughter and pupil, you have been with me since the beginning", Nathan's PC says. "You're the tops. Now let's go kick some ass!" They engage in an electric hi-five and wailing guitars announce their brotastic moment.

Ian knocks the group's Camaraderie down from +2 to +1.



HARM

Harm is not a measure of how badly injured you are; harm is a measure of how badly injured you appear. This is an important distinction. Odds are, you're not going to die from harm. You will get more and more beaten up as the harm meter fills up, but you won't outright die.

- 1 **harm** - Minor cuts and scrapes. Your hair is mussed.
- 2 **harm** - Minor bleeding, dirty. Your clothes are torn.
- 3 **harm** - Limping, sore, a good wound or two.
- 4 **harm** - Serious damage, broken bones (which mysteriously don't matter most of the time). You probably have at least one item of clothing shredded to bits.
- 5 **harm** - Near death if you want to be, otherwise very similar to 4 harm.

Dying

When a character (other than the Lead) reaches 5 harm, either from one blow or from many, the character either dies or is close to death. From that point forward, either the player or the Director can choose to have the character die at any point in the movie. When a character dies, he or she immediately gains 2 XP and can take on a new Assistant Director role.

See p. 66 for more on Assistant Directors.

Player characters and villains have five harm levels. When someone gets injured, they tick off the appropriate amount of harm and carry on. PCs and the Villain tend to be able to carry their harm with a lot fewer complications than standard mooks and scrubs. The nameless horde of generic bad guys which every action hero chews through drop out when they've taken two harm. They're not necessarily dead (though they might be!), but they are definitely disabled and, at least, thoroughly beaten up.



Leads don't die, as stated. Instead they look really badass. Once the Lead hits five harm, take that bit about harm representing how injured you appear, not how injured you are, and turn it up to ludicrous levels. There's no better way to make your Lead look awesome than to have him or her powering through broken limbs and traumatic head wounds in an effort to get the bad guy.

Leads with 5 Harm

So what happens when the Lead reaches five harm? Remember, the Lead cannot die. Instead, when the Lead receives the fifth level of harm, he or she wipes all of his or her Star Power ticks. See p. 48 for more on how ticks work. For now, it's enough to know that these ticks help a character's Star Power increase and give a chance at more XP.

When this happens, the Lead stays at 4 harm. If, for any reason, the Lead should take another point of harm, he or she loses all ticks again.

This represents the desire to see the Lead vulnerable, but not too vulnerable. We want Schwarzenegger and Van Damme to overcome odds and to get beaten up in the course of their adventures. The second they go overboard or look less than badass, it breaks the flow of what the viewer expects. That has knock-on effects for an actor's career: they find it harder to pull bigger action movie roles, their paychecks are smaller, and they're tagged for lower profile movies.

Star Power and ticks represent that ineffable "something" which makes the best better than the rest; the wiping of ticks in a Lead's moment of vulnerability represents an actor spinning his or her professional wheels in a movie.



GEAR



Every piece of gear has a quality which makes it interesting. These qualities are noted in parentheses next to the name of the piece of gear in the Scripts' gear sections.

Unlike a lot of roleplaying games, **AMW** doesn't have a ton of variables related to weapon damage, armor soaking, and the like. Rather, gear offers narrative consequences, good and bad, when it is used. Qualities reflect this and are cues which the Director should bring into play when a piece of gear is used.

Most of the qualities can be good or bad, depending on the outcome of a roll. A few are only one or the other. Rather than dictate which are which, it's left to the Director and the players to decide; creative people can make any perceived shortcoming into a net boon. For example, -area allows you to affect more than one person. On a 10+, -area might let you work a one shot, ten kills situation into the fiction. On a miss, however, someone you love (or yourself) might be caught in the blast.

One quality deserves special consideration, however. -deadly causes automatic kills to anyone without plot immunity. This does not mean it does 5 harm. It simply means that, if it does any harm to an Actor, the Director or player can choose death as an option. On an NPC (including the Villain, provided it is the Lead pulling the trigger), it causes instant death.

Both players and Directors should work the qualities into the fiction of the game, using it as a springboard for dramatic situations. This is doubly true for the Director, who has the advantage of reactionary moves when a player fails a roll. Directors: the qualities are your excuse to screw with the players in fun ways. When a roll fails, use the qualities as drawbacks in your moves.

Ranges - Not all weapons can be used at all ranges, obviously. This constraint lets you know whether the gear can be used at a given range. The ranges are:

Intimate - Close enough to hug or kiss someone. Poisoning drinks, etc.

Hand - About an arm's length away. Swords, axes, etc.

Close - Close enough to have a conversation with one another. Pistols, shotguns, etc.

Close/far - Can be used at either close or far range. Modern assault rifles, small bore hunting rifles, etc

Far - Can only be used at far range, due to either sight restrictions or danger. Sniper rifles, etc.

N-armor - Reduces harm taken by N.

N-harm - Does N harm.

+N-harm - Adds +N to the harm it does.

+Bonus (+1 Muscles going forward, +1 love scene, etc) - Adds +Bonus to a particular statistic or move.

Alive - It's alive

AP - Armor piercing. It ignores armor entirely

Area - it affects everyone and everything in the target area

Autofire - Can make an area attack if the character desires, but must reload afterwards.

Deadly - The weapon will automatically kill NPCs if it hits, regardless of N-harm. Against PCs, it will inflict N-harm and allow an instant kill if either the PC or the Director desires. See p. 40 for more rules on harm.

Loud - It's extremely loud, alerting everyone nearby to what's going on, waking people up, makes children cry, etc.

Messy - The weapon makes a huge, over the top mess: blood, guts, gore, puke, whatever. You can't cover it up.

Refill - It's one use unless a refill is handy.

Reload - After it's used, it must be reloaded. This is rare in action movies outside of dramatic situations, but is always present with Autofire.

S-harm - The weapon inflicts no harm but it disables the target.

Tag - Only the briefest of touches is needed to use it.

Two-handed - You must use both hands to wield it properly.

Unwieldy - It's awkward to use.

Valuable - People want this. If they know it exists, they'll come for it.

EXPERIENCE + STAR POWER

Actors grow at least a bit over their careers, or so we hope. Certainly, their star wattage and earning power wax and wane over years of activity. Experience and Star Power are measures of these types of growth.

Experience and Improvement

Experience is, in simplest terms, a way to measure how the actors get better as they perform in more movies. It offers a sense of momentum in the imaginary careers of the actors. They do their scenes, survive their stunts, and get new moves to play with. And, in keeping with the nature of action movies, they learn, not through failure, but through success.

Experience (or XP) in *AMW* is more than a measure of individual achievement, as it is with most roleplaying games. It also serves as a measure of overall success for the movie. In this latter sense, it's a much more collective thing, reliant on the actors playing their roles well and the film gelling for the imagined audience. You can look at it like this: if you get XP for rolling a 10+ on certain stats, and a 10+ denotes success with the audience, then everyone getting lots of XP means that the movie was good.

Experience can be gained several ways.

- If a Supporting Character dies, he or she gains 2 XP.
- The use of a Camaraderie move can grant 1 XP to everyone.
- If Camaraderie is +3 at the end of the movie, everyone gains 1 XP.
- The Thespian can gain XP (for him or herself or for everyone, depending on success) via the Wrap-Up move.
- At the end of the session, everyone gains 1 XP.
- Everyone should also vote on the movie's MVP. Do it via little scraps of paper, written in secret. Players can't vote for themselves. Whoever has the most votes gains 1 XP. Most valuable is entirely and deliberately subjective. Maybe it's who brought the most laughs one movie, while it's who brought the most awesome fight scene the next; that's totally cool. The Director casts the deciding vote in case of a tie.
- The character who gains the point of Star Power for the movie gains 1 XP. Star Power is explained in more detail in just a second, but for now it's enough to know that this is the character who rolls the most 10+s in his or her primary and highlighted stats.

So you have lots of experience after a couple of movies. What do you do with it?

If you've played a roleplaying game before, you know the answer: you spend it to improve your character. It's no different here. Spending experience represents the actor getting better at his or her craft. This takes on a fair number of forms; characters can give in to the stereotyped brand established in the Playbooks: the Musclehead doubles down on physicality, the Thespian hones his or her acting chops, etc. But experience also allows for actors to begin breaking out of those molds, exploring other aspects of his or her field.

Mechanically, experience expenditures are simple. When a character has gained 5 XP, he or she trades those in for an improvement. XP is reset to zero when this happens. This happens immediately; if a character reaches 5 XP in the middle of the movie, zero XP out and make a note to pick something up at the end of the session. While unlikely, you could earn more than one advancement in a single session.

At the Director's option, an improvement can be bought during normal session play, so long as it doesn't slow things down. The Director should always err on the side of caution here; nothing's worse than out-of-character level up chatter in the middle of a movie, so feel free to wait if that's liable to happen.

The improvements which can be bought are as follows:

- +1 to a statistic (maximum rating +3, meaning, for example, Drama+3 is the max rating, not that you can add +3 to Drama over the course of a campaign)
- A new move from your Actor Playbook
- A move you're using from the current movie's Script can be made permanent
- Once all moves from your Actor Playbook have been bought, you may buy moves from other Actor Playbooks.



Making a Script move permanent merits a bit of extra detail. These are your calling cards which carry over cross-genre. It's meant to be a little wacky and doesn't map neatly to real action movies. It's just cool, fun, and can lead to wild situations. It can also lead to really powerful characters; that's totally fine.

Example: Bret really likes the Puff of Smoke move from the Ninja movie Script. The thought of his Musclehead, Edgar Von Musclestrassen, disappearing periodically like a nimble ninja warrior in any movie seems equally cool and funny to him. When he gets to 5 XP during the current Ninja movie with Nathan and Carly, he decides to buy Puff of Smoke. He lowers his XP to 0 and writes the move on his Actor sheet, just as he would with an Actor move. Puff of Smoke is now available to him in any movie.



It should also be noted that a permanent Script move doesn't count toward the one Script move per character rule if you end up playing the same sort of movie more than once. For example, if you've taken the Supercop move from the Cop movie Script and made it permanent, you still get to pick another move from the Cop movie Script if you do another one. It works just as normal. The only catch is that you can't pick the same move again; so, in this instance, you can't take a temporary Supercop move to stack with your permanent one.

Permanent moves also do not count toward the rule which states that each Script move may be picked by only two characters per movie. In the above example, you could have three people with Puff of Smoke: the player with the permanent version and two players with the temporary version.

Example: Bret's ready for a new movie. The other players are Nathan and Carly. Everyone decides to go for the Ninja movie Script a second time, a sequel to the last ninja flick they were in, Red Mist of Death. Nathan and Carly both decide they want the Puff of Smoke. Bret opts for Dim Mak.

Two things are happening here. Ordinarily, only two Actors can have the same Script move. However, since Bret chose Puff of Smoke as one of Edgar Von Muscustrassen's permanent moves after the last ninja flick he played in, it doesn't count towards that limit. For the duration of Red Mist of Death II: Blood over Kyoto, there are three characters with Puff of Smoke: Bret's PC (permanent), Nathan's PC (temporary script), and Carly's PC (temporary script).

Bret's also chosen Dim Mak. Since Puff of Smoke is now a permanent move for him, it doesn't break the rule about not having more than one Script move per character.

All of this combines, by accident or design, to create a motif and to ask answerable, interesting questions. Why does everyone have Puff of Smoke for this movie? Did the ninjas discover a new technique? Did they start a new school with this move in common for everyone? And how do the answers fold into the fiction of the movie? All of this serves to make the movie a more vibrant thing than it might otherwise be.

Star Power and Highlighted Stats

Star Power is a measure of how great a box office draw your character is. It's not the same as experience, which measures how good he or she is at a particular niche in the acting world. Plenty of good actors can't put butts in theater seats, while plenty of terrible actors can.

Remember how the success of a roll works on two tracks? One is success in terms of game fiction (I punch the guy hard), while the other is how good it looks to the audience (I punch the guy and it looks rad on screen). Star Power quantifies the latter. You become a star by stealing the show, by making the audience gasp or swoon, and generally proving yourself as a bankable star. This is, of course, not always the Lead.

We track Star Power by keeping track of rolls of 10 or more in certain statistics over the course of a movie. A 10+ represents a notable sequence in the movie. It's an excellent fight scene, a moving piece of dialogue, a steamy sex scene, a memorable one-liner, etc. It's what legendary careers are built on.

Those certain statistics are highlighted stats and they work simply. One is your primary stat, as determined by your Playbook. This will never change. The other is determined by the Director and changes at the start of each movie. The Director can't pick the same stat as an Actor's primary statistic. In other words, no, the Musclehead can't have Muscles, its primary stat, picked by the Director as highlighted stat. Why does the Director get to pick? He or she is the Director. That's not just a fancy name for gamemaster in AMW. The Director picking a highlighted stat represents an actual Director's interactions with the actors. He or she is asking the actor to emote more, to flex less, to smile in this scene, frown in that one, etc. A highlighted +Drama represents the Director trying to eke more gravitas from an actor's role, while +Swagger would represent him or her asking for more... well, swagger.



So, how does this work?

Each time you achieve a 10+ in either of your highlighted stats, make a tick on your character sheet in the appropriate spot. Do it each time that happens, no matter what. Whoever has the most ticks at the end of a movie increases his or her Star Power by one. He or she also gains 1 XP. Everyone starts the process over at the beginning of each new movie.

Ticks are based on the concept of punctum from French philosopher and critic, Roland Barthes. He was writing about photography, but the concept of the punctum applies to lots of other media, particularly film. The punctum is, in film terms, a moment which sticks with you, even if (especially if) it has nothing to do with the text. It's "I'll be back" or the Nazis melting when they open the Ark. The sort of thing a 10+ represents: memorable, punchy, and maybe a little out of place.

That's a little highbrow for a game about lowbrow entertainment, but it really captures something which no other word does. Action stars live and die by their ability to create those puncta.



Remember that a Lead who reaches 5 harm has all of his or her ticks immediately wiped. See p. 40 for more on harm.

The actor with the highest Star Power gets first dibs on the Lead role for the next movie. This is still subservient to the rule that everyone gets a turn at the Lead before anyone gets a second turn; Star Power just orders the people in line. If there's a tie, roll off or otherwise decide amicably.

All ticks are wiped at the end of the movie. Everyone starts with a clean slate of zero ticks for the next movie.

THE DIRECTOR

As Director, your job is to facilitate the conversation which is happening at the table. You'll describe things and ask questions. You'll also throw obstacles in the path of the players. They play the action heroes, you play the villains, ninjas, and love interests.

During play, your main job is to use your own Director moves. You do this when a player fails a roll unless the player's move has another specific penalty listed. Much more importantly, when there's a pause in the action or when the players look to you for what comes next, do one of your moves. Don't hesitate. Do it. This is how you play the game.

A movie has a traditional script; **AMW** does not. Rather, **AMW** has a non-traditional Script, one which is being written by the players as the game progresses. Nudge the players toward the conclusion which was chosen during the Script choosing process. When there's a lull, move things forward quickly. Never let them rest, never let them think too much. Action movie!

As the Director, you have three tools at your disposal: the Agenda, the Principles, and the Moves.



Agenda

The Agenda is what you should use as your guiding light. This is what you're trying to achieve.

Subgenre first...

There's one overarching genre which is being emulated (big budget action movies of the 80s and 90s) and a bunch of individual subgenres based on the Script (movie Playbook) being chosen. The subgenre (as represented by the Script) should be given deference if the two ever come into conflict. If you are doing a barbarian movie, don't bring in guns and explosions.

... but they're all action movies.

That said, don't get away from the action movie feel. You're not doing a Bergman flick. Everything should be fast, big, and a little implausible. In the aforementioned barbarian movie, no guns or explosions, but wild decapitations, massive weapons, and scantily clad people of both sexes are the way to go. Ham it up and be a little cheesy!

Play to find out what happens, but make it seem like it was a scripted movie afterwards.

Do not, under any circumstances, come in with a set plot. You're going to have a basic framework with the aid of the Script you choose (character relationships, setting assumptions, gear) but the way the actual narrative unfolds should be left open. Let the players lead you. Let it develop at the table through actual play. If you don't know something or can't make it up quickly enough, ask the players: "I don't know, what is the name of this bar you're meeting Scumbag in?"

However, it's important to remember the meta aspect of this. You're shooting a movie and movies have scripts. Be plausible with where you nudge the players and make it seem like it's all planned. Rely on them to fill holes which you can't and, when it's all over, let the credits roll like it went off without a hitch.

Principles

These are your rules. Always follow these. They're not mechanical rules, as in most roleplaying games, but they are your rules.

Be over the top and larger than life in your descriptions.

If there's one unifying motif across all action movie genres, it's that everything is BIG and LOUD. Never go small when you can go big. Even if it's silly, even if the players all laugh at a NPC's death scene meant to elicit sympathy because you opted for dropping them in a vat of acid, roll with it. BIG! LOUD!

**Kill everyone and don't hold back...
unless it's the lead actor or main villain.**

The body count should be extremely high, no matter the Script chosen. Kill everyone. Nameless hordes of mooks should charge in and be cut down like wheat before a scythe. If a bad guy talks, name him and then kill him anyway.

PCs shouldn't be immune to this if they're in supporting roles! They get experience for dying and a bite at the lead role apple later. Defer to them if they don't want to die; they have lots of ways out of dying, so it's pretty much always their choice to cash in for the experience on death or to hang on. Plus they get Assistant Director roles once they die. Boredom shouldn't be an issue. Share the GM duties with dead PCs.



The only two characters immune from your crosshairs are the lead actor and the main villain. The lead actor is already in a position that he can't die. He or she can experience setbacks, be maimed, everything he or she loves can be stripped away. In fact all of these things probably should happen to the lead, but he or she can't die.

The main villain can die but it should be at the right place and time. Only the Lead Actor can deliver the killing blow. There's no set of rules defining when this happens; you'll know when the time is right.

Be aggressive with your scene framing.

Nobody cares about downtime. We don't need to see the actors eat and sleep. We don't care about them relaxing at home after a hard day or the morning commute, except for maybe briefly, at the beginning of the movie.

AMW urges you to skip the in-between stuff in favor of hitting action scenes as quickly as possible. The reason is simple: action movies work this way. You know the drill. There's a fight scene in the jungle somewhere and it dies down with the heroes triumphant. Then it switches to the heroes in a helicopter landing back at base to meet the general. The general greets them on the tarmac and then it cuts forward to the next morning at a tactical meeting.

That's how **AMW** should work, too. In many roleplaying games, you'd let the fight scene meander to a close before following up with something directly after or, at most, later in the day. Don't do that. As soon as a scene starts to lag, you have the right to invoke your moves to make the scene change. Don't be afraid to make it a big jump in time, either; nobody cares what the journey to Mars in *Total Recall* looks like.

Fill every speech and characterization with melodrama.

Watch one of the movies **AMW** emulates closely and you'll notice that there's a lot of overacting and heavy emotional impact. It's all very exaggerated for the benefit of the audience, with very little subtlety. When someone is scared or angry or in love, it's all-encompassing. It shares a lot with old time stage acting or early movies, when actors were expected to go big in order to convey emotion to the back of a theater.

Remember this as you characterize the NPCs. Err on the side of slightly manic (not crazy, just a little too emotional) in your depictions. The players will pick up on this and follow suit. Just as all of the setting details and combat stuff should be larger than life, so, too, should the acting.

One-liners are always better than speeches.

Which do you remember more from the action movies of yore: the one-liners or the lengthy speeches? Lame, snappy, whatever, one-liners are nearly as important to action movies as violence is.

Villains have a little more leeway in this than heroes do. In fact, one of the hallmarks of the action movie villain is the explicative speech, revealing plans or motivations in a lengthy monologue. That should be used sparingly and kept to important moments. Fall back on one-liners as much as possible.

Encourage the players to do likewise. Unlike villains, heroes are almost defined by one-liners and their impact. It's arguably the defining trait of a good action movie hero.

Physicality is the ultimate expression of emotion.

Emotion is almost always expressed physically in action movies. There are, of course, the expressions of anger as violence which are central to the genre; remove that and you don't have an action movie at all.

But it doesn't just stop there. Think of the hi-five at the end of *Tango & Cash* or the scene in *Predator* when Dutch and Dillon meet with a weird handshake/arm wrestling stance combo. Those are expressions of friendship, given center stage as physical actions. Or the number of fade to black love scenes, conjured seemingly out of nowhere as the hero goes from stranger to consummation in ten seconds flat.

Play this up. If love shows up, take it to a physical level quickly. Friendship should be back pats and hi-fives. If someone wants to save a friend, don't just make it a shouted command to flee, encourage the characters to drag or pick up their rescued comrade. And, of course, anger should always lead to violence.



Be an honest fan of the characters.

I'm a Chow-Yun Fat fan. A big one. I go to his movies just about sight unseen when I can. Even when he's not great in a film, I'm enough of a fan that I can gloss over the weak spots. That's what a fan does.

Do the same for the characters. This isn't about your favorite NPC or your plot. It's definitely not about making the movie stars your characters' play seem less than awesome. Your job is to be their biggest fan. You're going to their movies. You're bringing them along the road of the badass. Even when the action's not quite clicking, be their fan and make them cool.

Reinforce the main themes in action movies.

The themes and motifs which occur across the various genres of action movies should be reinforced at every opportunity.

Vengeance, anti-establishment feelings, filial friendship, and solving problems through violence are the main such themes and you should strive to put the PCs in situations which put those front and center. Camaraderie and Vengeance exist in this game for a reason. Give the PCs excuses to use them.

Reinforce the setting in your chosen script.

While themes are largely the same regardless of Script, setting isn't. While deferring to the action movie umbrella, do everything in your power to make the setting your players chose fun and plausible. Plausible does not mean realistic. Don't worry about things being just so. Just keep the time frame, milieu, and location in mind. This affects everything from speech to gear choices. The Script does a lot of the work for you, but it's up to you to inject details, large and small, into the setting as you go along.

Things are only important if they involve the PCs.

In a movie, things only exist in relation to the characters onscreen. It doesn't matter what's going on in the local congressional election if the movie's about street brawls at the docks. Nobody in the audience cares about the history of the town they're in, who the mayor is, or what the local economy is like unless it's directly relevant to the action.

Action movies focus on characters, not places. Sometimes, they barely have a plot, serving instead as a vehicle for an actor to sell his or her brand just by being up on the screen.

So be a solipsist. If it's being mentioned, it must revolve around the characters. If it doesn't, don't mention it. If something happens offscreen or you feel the need to cut away to the NPCs (and both of those should be exceedingly rare), tie things back to the Actors as soon as possible.



Sometimes disclaim decision making.

It's hard to do things on the fly while giving things the proper depth. We all have finite creative resources which deplete over time. The big intimidating factor for a lot of prospective gamemasters, in any system, is the expectation that reactions to player actions are consistently good and consistently quick. The solution is to simply not decide.

Play your NPCs with the same intensity of purpose that the players play their characters. Would Scarjaw kill Max? If so, he does. This might feel like an arbitrary distinction from deciding out of character on a whim but it's not; thinking like a character in a movie means that these decisions are made based on what drama demands, not what you, the gamemaster, just decide.

Or put it in the players' hands. Your buddy is bleeding out. He dies if you don't help. Do you help him? If you do, let's work from there. Play it out.

Lastly, refer to the Script being played. What does the genre of action movie demand? What makes sense within the fictional universe of the movie? Which, by the way, brings us to

Tell them the consequences and ask.

Almost all actions have consequences, big or small. Never leave them in the dark about their actions. By this I mean detail how a situation is liable to evolve rather than listing definite outcomes. If a hero wants to leave cover to charge the enemy, tell the player that he or she is going to be exposed to fire. The choice is up to the player and it's okay to be risky or stupid; just make sure everyone knows immediate consequences.

Fast is better than accurate when it comes to genre assumptions in play.

This isn't a simulation of Meiji Japan or the Old West or the Vietnam War. Don't worry about getting all the details just so. Make the setting plausible, of course, but it's okay if it doesn't stand up to close scrutiny. Feel is more important than fact. There wasn't full plate mail in 487 CE? Your Arthurian action movie starring a Reb Brown clone has it? You didn't know who the contemporary king of France was so you named him Etienne because it's the first French name that came to mind? You didn't know that there was no Kingdom of France in 487? Good! Roll with it. It's fine.

Director Moves

You have moves, too, just like the players. Unlike the players, you don't roll. You simply do. Your moves happen in one of two circumstances: when a player fails a move roll or when there's a lag in the conversation. You can be as mean or as forgiving as you want. Use your best judgment and bear in mind what makes the coolest movie.

Certain Director moves are particularly appropriate as reactions to players' failed moves. These are marked by **splatter**. As well, note that one move (They succeed but...) can only be used in response to a failed player move.

Separate them

The classic action movie trope: separate them. Throw a door between them. Let an explosion hurl one of them far away. Have their cars get separated during the chase scene. It creates tension and sets up a potential for dramatic death and subsequent Vengeance moves.

Capture them

Being captured is another common trope in big budget action movies. It doesn't have to be coupled with separating them, though that's certainly implied in many cases. This move is good for setting up nice subplots involving rescue attempts.

Entice them

Action movie characters are generally impulsive types, particularly the secondary characters. It's perfectly fine to tell a character or two that they're compelled to go do something which, out of character, they know is probably stupid (the classic sexy, obvious enemy luring the hero into a trap).

Put someone in a spot

To get out of bad situations, heroes need to be put into them in the first place. This move is how you do that. When a hero rounds a corner and ends up face to face with a horde of ninjas, ready to strike? That's putting someone in a spot.

This move works best when it's really over the top. Don't send a character down a pit when you can send him or her down a pit filled with quicksand. This isn't an excuse to kill them; the characters are heroes. Let them earn their fame.

Trade harm for harm

Fights don't always go exactly according to plan. This is the equivalent of trading punches, except often times deadlier. When the characters take out a machine gun nest, but one of them takes a knife to the leg, that's trading harm for harm.

Inflict harm

Then, of course, there's just being bad at fighting and whiffing entirely. An outright miss on a combat move generally ends up with this move happening. You punch, you miss, the Nazi in the machine gun nest stabs you, and the nest is still there... that's this move.



Activate their stuff's downside

All weapons come with one or more qualities which define them. The qualities are deliberately worded so as to be double-edged swords. When it's appropriate, use the downside of the characters' gear. A -close range pistol can't be fired because the target is too far away, a -messy chainsaw kicks back and hits a character's buddy, or a -loud weapon definitely (rather than just potentially) attracts unwanted attention.

It's okay to do this with gear without a -quality, like some armor. If it makes sense to have body armor dragging a hero down beneath a raging river, do it.

Set up a stunt

By this I mean do something which inconveniences them but do it in such a way that they're able to extricate themselves via a badass stunt. Maybe a melee combat move is missed and the hero stumbles out onto the ledge of a fifth story window. It's not directly harmful, but it has the potential to be if the follow-up stunt is missed.

Make a villain move

Main villains all come with moves. Villain moves work exactly as the other Director moves, only they're designed to tie into a specific Script's fiction more. This is to help set up a uniform feel across films that they're in.

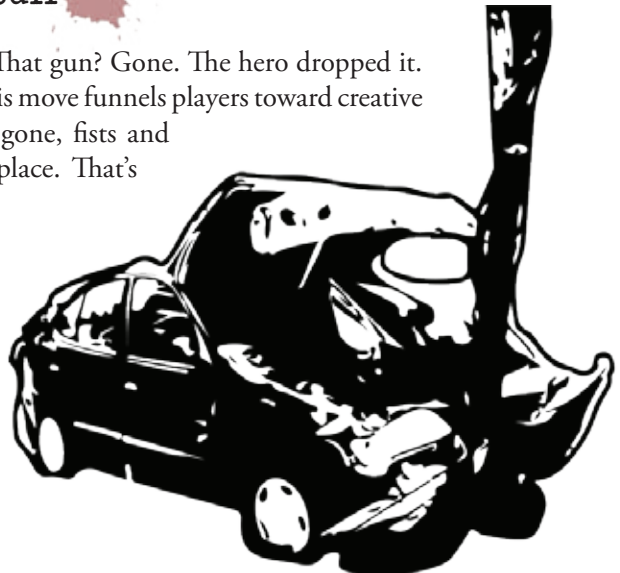
Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost

This means offering them a hard choice. Maybe Dana Fistpunch can escape the shark tank, but she leaves her weapon behind. Or Dirk Dudekick can rescue his brother, but he's going to have to break several state and federal laws to do it, rendering him an outlaw.

Offering an opportunity is always an excellent choice. Hard decisions mean drama, drama ends up meaning action, and action means a happy audience. As Director, you need to explicitly ask the players what their choices are. If it's in relation to a failed or partially successful roll, tell them what the choice is in plain language: the gun or your friend, your safety or your boyfriend's.

Take away their stuff

Does what it says on the tin. That gun? Gone. The hero dropped it. Her favorite sword? Stolen. This move funnels players toward creative thinking. If the weapons are gone, fists and ingenuity have to take their place. That's only a good thing.



Change scenes

When there's a lull in the action or a missed move where it makes sense, end the scene. Don't worry about it being too abrupt, just do it. If it seems too abrupt to you, I'd advise watching more low-budget action flicks to see just what abrupt endings to scenes really are. Move time forward, skip the boring parts, and never stop moving. A given movie is only supposed to last for between one and three sessions. Don't ever let it get bogged down.

They succeed but...

The heroes shouldn't fail often in terms of on-screen action. They're heroes, after all. But being nigh infallible doesn't mean that everything looks right on screen.

This move is a little different from the others in that it can only be used in response to a failed move by the players, not just during a pause in the action. Instead of having the move fail in fictional terms (ie the punch misses, the attempt at seduction fails, etc), it succeeds but looks incredibly goofy to the Imaginary Viewing Audience. This is the big theme in low budget action movies of the direct to video variety; the heroes are basically omnipotent, but the acting is so incompetent that the action elicits laughter rather than cheers.

When you invoke this move, whatever it is the hero was trying to do succeeds but he or she loses 1 tick. You cannot use this on an Actor sitting at 0 ticks on the Star Power track. The player also changes the move's outcome to something silly or cheap looking. The audience is laughing at the Actors and it takes a small toll on their careers each time it happens.



The Most Important Moves

Two of the Director moves deserve special attention.

“Change scenes” is vitally important for making the conversation at your table look like an action movie. The Director is almost incidental in real life action movies. The form is carried by larger than life actors who either aren't great actors or who are already settled into a given style for marketing purposes. The main way the Director's touch is felt in the real world is in the staccato scene framing. I'm not kidding about using it often. If there's a pause, particularly if the players aren't sure how a bit of dialogue should go and they're fumbling over what they should say, switch scenes.

“They succeed but...” is a very good move for keeping the heroes heroic. It's the nature of the beast that sometimes the dice let down what should be a sure thing. That's fine, but when it's something that you think should happen in the context of the movie's fiction, it can lead to a bind. This move is your out. It also emulates the type of action movies I most love: the cheap, terrible stuff clogging up video rental chains in the 1990s. Infallible heroes, very fallible actors. It also has the added bonus of letting the players take the reins if you're stuck on how to react, which ties very nicely into disclaiming responsibility.



WHAT A MOVIE LOOKS LIKE

It can't be stressed enough that **AMW** is meant to be played in a very improvisational style. You don't even know what genre of action movie you're going to be playing before the first session. The players take on an enormous amount of control, meaning that the Director can't really set up tight storylines like in a lot of other games. This is all intended.

One of the ways this free-flowing style is facilitated is by having a very firm structure in the lead-up to actual play. It takes a fair amount of pressure off of players and Director alike to set a firm foundation prior to turning loose the creative juices.

The setup portion of a movie looks like this:

X. Before the first movie begins, players should each pick an Actor Playbook and name their actors. These are their characters for the entire campaign, movie after movie. Each Actor Playbook may only be chosen once, so no duplicates. Pick moves, stats, names, etc. for your Actors.

1. The players and Director pick one of the Scripts that suits the genre of action film they want to portray.

2. Determine who is the Lead. If this is your very first movie, either select amicably or roll dice to see who gets to be the Lead. If it's not, the Actor with the highest Star Power is the Lead; roll in case of a tie. Remember, everyone gets a turn at being the Lead before anyone gets a second turn. This supersedes the Star Power rule.

3. Each player, starting with the Lead, picks exactly one move from the list for the chosen Script. Each move, unless otherwise noted, may only be chosen twice across the group, i.e. only two people in a group can pick the same move.

4. Each player picks a gear set for his or her character. At the same time, name your character for the duration of the movie. Obviously, this is different from the Actor's name. My real name is Ian, my Actor is Chase Buzzington, and he's playing Malcolm Powerstein in this movie. Why pick your names now, after your gear? Because gear has the potential to clarify details about your character. If you decide to pick the SWAT gear in a cop movie, you might pick a "tough" sounding name, while a more standard gear loadout might have you thinking in more muted terms.

5. Choose highlighted stats. Each character has two for the duration of a given movie. The first one is always the primary stat listed on a character's Actor playbook. The other is entirely up to the Director. This is to represent the Director telling the actors to emote more, drop more one-liners, etc. Every 10+ rolled on either of a character's highlighted stats nets that character a tick.
6. The Director makes the initial pick for Villain from the Script's list. The players then approve or reject the choice. With the Villain chosen, the Director should assign details to him or her: gender, name, specific motivations and techniques. Remain flexible about this and sketch broadly.
7. Each player determines a relationship with the person on his or her left until everyone has done so. Each Script has some sample relationships provided in a 2d6 format but, seriously, don't automatically roll this. This is for ease of use only. Pick one. Even better, make one up when it's your turn. Mix all three techniques, if you want.
8. Discuss these relationships in more detail. If two players are siblings in the cop movie, what does that mean? Are they both cops? Is one a former mobster trying to go good? Do they like each other or just tolerate each other? Remember, the characters are good guys. They can use questionable techniques, but nobody should be an outright bad guy, at least when the movie starts.
9. You should now have a hazy Point A (the characters, their relationships, and movie genre) and Point Z (the Villain's type/motivation and movie genre). Begin to fill in the remaining blanks and elaborate on relationships. Try to formulate the first big action scene and how to work it in as soon as possible.
10. Name your movie. This is kind of a big deal. Just as action movie characters tend to shoot for cool only to hit absurd with their names, so should your movie. What's in a name? A whole lot, actually. What's cool about the movie's name in the context of a roleplaying game is that it can really spark ideas about how things should evolve. *Commando* implies something very different than *Deadly Prey*, yet both are about lone military badasses stuck in bad situations.
11. Players and Director should roughly estimate how many sessions they want the movie to take. *AMW* is designed for 1-3 sessions per movie, but you can do deep dives on individual movies and keep a single Script in use for many, many sessions. Whatever's decided, it shouldn't be viewed as immutable. Rather, consider it a target length which will inform how aggressively the Director frames the scenes. If it's a one-shot, the Director is going to have to keep things moving at a much faster pace than he or she would with a three session game.

Thinking in Terms of Acts

Most people are familiar with the traditional three act structure of storytelling. In *AMW*, this notion is vital to keeping the game organized as play occurs.

In brief, the three act structure posits that stories have three parts: the Setup, the Confrontation, and the Resolution. Most stories can be broken down in this fashion, but *AMW* relies on it. One of the goals of *AMW* is to tell multiple stories (ie several movies) and the only way for that to happen is to keep each one be succinct and finite. This doesn't mean railroading your players or adhering to a rigid story. It simply means that you need to make things move and eventually make things end.

As a Director, never lose sight of the end. This doesn't mean that you should feel hidebound to the three act structure; false climaxes and switches are de rigeur in the action movie form. But the structure should still serve as a guide. Remember: unless it's explicitly a one night event, *AMW*'s strength is in its ability to tell stories from multiple genres. You have to end one to begin another.

The Setup should present a problem of some sort, one which is big enough that it alters the lives of the characters. The Confrontation isn't usually singular, instead consisting of several conflicts between protagonist and antagonist (antagonist in this instance shouldn't be considered human or even sentient; it might be the environment or a concept). The transition from Setup to Confrontation is usually some sort of precipitating dramatic event, one which signals the rollercoaster ride to the climax.

The climax is found in the Resolution. A transition should be provided, a plot twist or some sort of blow to the protagonist, before our hero confronts the antagonist. In *AMW*, the Lead is the hero (or heroes, if certain Script moves are chosen) and is guaranteed to win this final conflict. Once the climax is completed, things begin to reset to a new baseline normal. This isn't the same thing as nothing changing; the hero should change in some capacity. He or she has learned something new, at least, and may become a completely different person.

Think in these terms and sketch it out. Keep the map flexible; you don't know where your players are going to go, at least not precisely. Never, ever railroad them to get them back on the map if they deviate, but do sketch it out in broad terms.

Let's go through an example.



Example: We are playing through a cop drama, "Justice Town." Bret and Nathan are co-leads; Nathan was set to be the sole Lead, but Bret picked the Buddy movie move from the Cop movie Script. This makes both characters Leads, with all of the plot immunity and inability to die that entails. Ian is getting things set up. The Villain is a rogue assassin, sent to kill the mayor of Los Angeles.

Ian determines that the movie will start with Ork (Bret) and Reggie (Nathan) in their squad car in Hollywood. They receive a call that a break-in has occurred at the mayor's house. This is our Setup. We roleplay through the scenes involving the call, the arrival at the house, and the investigation.

Ian decides that something big will happen during the investigation scene to catapult us to the Confrontation phase. He jots down "fight between cops and assassin" without determining the exact parameters of what that means; remember, the players have a lot of control in how the plot unfolds.

The Confrontation phase usually takes the most time in a movie. Ian knows he wants to have some running gun battles and some sort of discovery of the assassin's employer being the head of the city council. Ian decides now that the assassin's name is Mad Bull because it seems just the right kind of ridiculous. He also jots down a few locations as ideas: an abandoned chemical plant, a used car lot, and the Academy Awards Theater. None of these ideas are set in stone; too much leeway has to be given to player control to really have anything guaranteed. But these notes and ideas do provide creative fodder when they're needed.

Ian figures that whatever happens at the Academy Awards Theater is going to be big enough to transition to the Resolution. He knows he wants to include a clue leading back to Mad Bull's employer. He jots down "intercepted cell phone call" as that clue. Again, the circumstances involving how and why the call is intercepted aren't clear, just that it's worked in.

He then notes the words "climax: four star hotel which city councilman owns". Again, a location; action movies tend to be very location specific, with plot points generally being simple and uniform from movie to movie. The climax will definitely be a fight and it will definitely end with the two Leads, Ork and Debbie, triumphing over evil.

Number of Scenes

When you watch a movie, it generally lasts about 1.5-2 hours and contains an awful lot of scenes. This is especially true in action movies, with their commitment to quick jump cuts and sometimes jarring transitions. You're liable to look at your 2-4 hours of playtime and think that you need to come up with a comparable number of scenes to make the emulation of the form complete.

Don't. Roleplaying games tend to have longer "scenes" than movies or video games. *AMW* is no different. You're going to talk at the table, rules clarifications might be needed, people will have to take bathroom breaks, and any number of other things can and will come up to make the pace slower than you might ideally like.

So don't shoot for a 1:1 mapping of *AMW* scenes to real action movie scenes. It will be exhausting and will likely kill your game. There's no "right" number of scenes a game of *AMW* should have, but there is a feel which you'll get used to quickly. Just keep it snappy and everything will fall into place.

You're Dead

It's super lame to have your character die early and end up with nothing to do for two or more hours. *AMW* is not a lame game, so it doesn't make you do that, even though lots of your characters may well die.

In real life, Directors need help. They delegate responsibility to experts in specific areas of filmmaking. In *AMW*, you fill one of those assistant roles when your character dies for the duration of the movie. It works really simply: your PC dies and you become an Assistant Director, choosing a role relating to a particular type of scene or action. First dead, first choice of Assistant Director roles.

Once you become an Assistant Director, you'll be in on the narration process from the Director's chair, albeit in a more limited fashion than the actual Director. Once you pick your role, you immediately assume co-narration duties by taking on the



power to make tweaks to scenes and actions related to your role. Your job is to make the actors look awesome for the remainder of the movie. You have the ability to interrupt the actors; perhaps their guns need to be bigger or their lines delivered with more oomph. Just speak up and make the tweak. You can make one of these suggestions per scene, and you can only do so when a player makes a move.

The actor is not without free will. Maybe he or she doesn't like your suggestion. That's fine; unlike in the real movies, nobody has to follow a suggestion. If he or she does follow your suggestion, though, a +1 is taken to the roll determining success.

You can only make suggestions about things related to your specific role. Here are the different Assistant Director roles:

Stunt Coordinator - May suggest a change to one Stunt move per scene.

Pyrotechnics Coordinator - May add an explosion to any player's move. If the player accepts, the Assistant Director gets to narrate the effects of the explosion.

Acting Coach - May suggest line changes and tweaks to dramatic scenes.

Fighting Coordinator - May suggest changes to combat scenes.

Location Scout - May make a suggestion about the way a feature of this scene's location affects the roll.

Key Grip - May suggest a different character to make the move instead. If both players accept, the new character gets the +1.

Director of Photography - May suggest lighting, slow motion, and other effects during the move.



Some assistant roles are pretty straightforward; a stunt coordinator suggests a change to a character's stunt attempt and the character either follows the advice or doesn't. Other roles are much less individual, affecting more than one person or no one at all, instead affecting the framing of a scene or the location.

This is intended. The guidelines on how and when to make suggestions should be read as expansively as possible. Consider the assistants as Directors in their own individual spheres of influence; just as the Director has broad latitude in keeping things exciting, so, too, should the assistants.

Example: Carly's character, Maria Takanawa, has died, pushed over a cliff by the evil ninja master. Ian passes her the list of Assistant Director roles and quickly explains how they work. Play continues as Carly settles on a new directorial role, eventually choosing the Location Scout. She informs Ian and then settles in, paying attention to the action.

The next scene has Bret and Nathan's characters at the lip of an extinct volcano, fighting their way to the the evil ninjas's hideout. As Nathan's Akira Funaki is kicking a ninja to death, Carly pipes up.

"What if the volcano isn't extinct? What if lava begins seeping up from dormant vents and you kick the ninja, maybe even more than one ninja, into the lava!"

Nathan thinks this is rad and agrees. Because he agrees with Carly's suggestion, he gets a +1 to his roll to kick the heck out of the ninja into the lava.



ACTOR PLAYBOOKS

Here are seven Actor Playbooks for you to use in your games. They cover broad archetypes into which almost any action movie star could fit. Well, plus the Yeller, which is pretty specific to Reb Brown, but it's so awesome we had to include it anyway.

These versions of the Playbooks have been laid out with reading in mind, so they look nice on the page. We also have 8 1/2 x 11 printer friendly versions available at flatlandgames.com and in the zip file that came with this game. Those versions are probably better for playing with at the table.

The Musclehead

Inspiration: Brigitte Nielsen, Arnold Schwarzenegger

Primary Stat: +Muscles



Stats

Choose one set

- Agility=0 Drama-1 Muscles+2 Magnetism-1 Swagger+2
- Agility-1 Drama=0 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+1 Drama-1 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger=0
- Agility+1 Drama-1 Muscles+2 Magnetism=0 Swagger+1

Musclehead Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Musclehead moves.

- **“The greatest feeling you can get in a gym is the pump”** - Add +1 to Muscles (max +3).
- **Animal Magnetism** - When you attempt to seduce or manipulate someone, roll +Muscles instead of +Magnetism.
- **Brutal Force** - Whenever you inflict harm, you have the option of inflicting +1 harm.
- **A Machine Made of Meat** - Getting hit only makes you angry. When you are hit in ranged or close combat, whether harm is inflicted or not, you can make this move. Roll +Muscles. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend one of your holds to:
 - Immediately inflict 1 harm as a counterattack against whoever attacked you.
 - Inflict an extra +1 harm on your next attack.
 - Close the gap between yourself and your enemy.
 - Perform a feat which tests the limits of human strength.
 - Gain +1 Muscles for the rest of the scene.
- **Get to the chopper/tank/bus/car/plane!** - Add +1 Camaraderie if you save one of the other Actors from harm.
- **BFG** - Roll +Muscles instead of +Agility when shooting guns. You can also use weapons with the -two-handed quality in one hand.

The Gunfighter

Inspiration: Michelle Yeoh, Chow Yun-Fat

Primary Stat: +Agility

Stats



Choose one set

- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles-1 Magnetism+1 Swagger=0
- Agility+2 Drama=0 Muscles-1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism=0 Swagger-1
- Agility+2 Drama+2 Muscles-1 Magnetism-1 Swagger=0

Gunfighter Moves

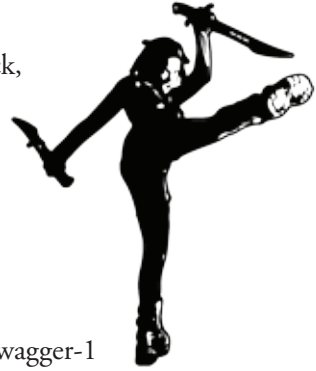
You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Gunfighter moves.

- **“Yes. I am God. You're one. A god can be human”** - Add +1 to Agility (max +3).
- **Time to Reload** - People don't usually run out of ammo in action movies unless it's dramatic to do so. You're the master of turning the reload into high drama. At any time during a scene involving ranged combat, you can declare that you're out of ammo. Reload your gun and roll +Drama. On a 10+, choose one. On a 7-9, choose one but also take a point of harm as you leave yourself open to attack. On a miss, you're stuck where you are; the Director may make an immediate move against you.
 - Escape danger scot free, leaving your companions behind.
 - Rely on your buddies for covering fire, safely moving toward danger.
 - Advance a romantic interest (help him escape, send him off on his own with a kiss, etc)
 - Gain an extra tick of star power as you deliver a line
 - An awesome shot after you've reloaded makes something explode.
- **Gun Ballet** - All ranged weapons you use, no matter the type, count as having the -area special ability.
- **Instincts of the Predator** - Roll +Agility instead of +Swagger to read a situation.
- **This Is My Gun** - Any time a ranged weapon is in your hand, combat or not, you receive a +1 to all Stunt moves.

The Pugilist

Inspiration: Jet Li, Chuck Norris, Cynthia Rothrock, Maggie Q, Jean-Claude Van Damme

Primary Stat: +Agility



Stats

Choose one set

- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger-1
- Agility+2 Drama=0 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger-1
- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism-1 Swagger=0
- Agility+2 Drama-1 Muscles-1 Magnetism+2 Swagger=0

Pugilist Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Pugilist moves.

- **“Go for the gut. He's soft there.”** - +1 to Agility (max +3).
 - **Duck and Weave** - You're tough to get a bead on from range. When you take harm from a ranged attack, roll +Agility. On a 10+, you avoid the damage. On a 7-9, you've managed to duck the worst of it, but you still got winged. Choose one:
 - You've ducked into a bad position and left yourself exposed, but take 1 less harm.
 - You're too far from your fellows for you to help each other, but take 1 less harm.
 - **Sting Like a Bee** - You may roll +Agility instead of +Muscles in melee.
 - **Fists of Stone** - Inflict +1 harm when striking with your bare hands
 - **Training Montage** - By training hard or performing a kata, you can enhance your hand to hand combat capabilities greatly. Once per session, you may roll +Drama: On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend one of your holds to:
 - +1 on a Violence roll
 - +1 harm on a Violence hit
 - -1 harm inflicted upon you
 - Increase your Star Power by 1 immediately (limit once per movie).
- On a miss, the Director chooses one:
- You're late for something important
 - You neglect a relationship
 - Someone or something is taken from you while you were occupied

The Smartass

Inspiration: Lucy Lawless, Kurt Russell, Bruce Willis

Primary Stat: +Swagger

Stats

Choose one set

- Agility+1 Drama-1 Muscles+1 Magnetism=0 Swagger+2
- Agility+1 Drama-1 Muscles=0 Magnetism+1 Swagger+2
- Agility+1 Drama=0 Muscles-1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+2
- Agility-1 Drama-1 Muscles=0 Magnetism+2 Swagger+2



Smartass Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Smartass moves.

- **“Yippie ki yay, motherfucker!”** - +1 to Swagger (max +3).
- **Better Living Through Wisecracks** - You may roll +Swagger when performing a Stunt move.
- **Nothing Sexier Than a Sense of Humor** - You may roll +Swagger instead of +Magnetism when performing a Getting What You Want move.
- **Sticks and Stones** - You’ve mastered the art of taunting your enemies until they lose reason. When you taunt a bad guy, roll +Swagger: On a 10+, pick one. On a 7-9, as above but you’re engaged in outright combat with the tauntee. This is obviously not a drawback if this was your intent!
 - Your enemy does something stupid.
 - Your enemy charges at you.
 - Your enemy tries to counter your wit by revealing his plans.
- **Smiling Through the Pain** - You’re not the strongest, biggest, fastest, or meanest, but you are the coolest. Physical punishment only serves to make you look cooler. When you take harm, dig deep into that core of resolve and roll +Swagger. On a 10+, hold two. On a 7-9, hold one. Spend one of your holds to:
 - Get an automatic 10+ on a Killer One-Liner move.
 - Substitute Swagger for another stat for the duration of your next move.
 - Add the points of harm you’ve taken so far to your next roll as a bonus.
 - Inspire your fellows with your unflappable nature; +1 Camaraderie.

The Smooth Operator

Inspiration: Sean Connery, Daniel Craig, Geena Davis

Primary Stat: +Magnetism



Stats

Choose one set

- Agility=0 Drama+1 Muscles-1 Magnetism+2 Swagger+1
- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles-2 Magnetism+2 Swagger+1
- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles=0 Magnetism+2 Swagger-1
- Agility-1 Drama=0 Muscles-1 Magnetism+2 Swagger+2

Operator Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 1 Operator move. In addition, all Operators have the following move:

You Only Live Twice - Your hair is never mussed, cuts you receive always avoid your good side, and your sex appeal is never reduced over the course of a movie. When you die, it's never horrible or nasty, just quick and clean.

At the beginning of every new movie, you receive 3 Smooth Points. Use poker chips or coins to represent them. Every time you would take a point of harm, you may spend a Smooth Point to make it simply disappear. The action still happens: the bad guy shoots at you, you're caught in the explosion, the airplane crashes. You simply get off scot free with nary a scratch on you. This can protect you from death, even if you're in a Supporting Role.

In addition, you look so damned cool doing it that you actually use the awe you create to your advantage. When you would take harm and use a Smooth Point, take the amount of harm which disappeared forward to your next move (ie, if you spend a Smooth Point to mitigate 2 harm, take +2 forward).

"Just a drink, a martini, shaken not stirred." - +1 to Magnetism (max +3).

Make It Look Good - You can use +Magnetism when making a Stunt move.

Motion of the Ocean - Receive a +1 to rolls when you make Love Scene or Getting What You Want moves.

The Spy Who Loved Me - During the course of the movie, you may designate one NPC you meet as a primary romantic interest for the Operator. This NPC becomes essential to your character's plot. The Director should alter the movie's plotline to reflect this newfound importance. In addition, you receive +2 for all Love Scenes with your romantic interest.

When you designate your love interest, roll +Drama:

- On a **10+**, your romantic interest will survive when the credits roll, though your own safety is not guaranteed. He or she has plot immunity, much like the Lead Role. Gain +1 XP at the end of the movie, should you both survive.
- On a **7-9**, hold one. Spend the hold one for one at any point to have your romantic interest:
 - Take a hit for you when you suffer +harm; this kills the romantic interest.
 - Be taken by the Villain instead of you when you might be captured or separated from your friends.
 - Sacrifice him/herself in order to prevent your death; this also fatal for the romantic interest.
- On a **miss**, the NPC becomes a secondary villain with a fixation on you. The Director may make an immediate move against you, with the new villain central to the proceedings.



The Thespian

Inspiration: Mel Gibson, Linda Hamilton, Sylvester Stallone

Primary Stat: +Drama



Stats

Choose one set

- Agility-1 Drama+2 Muscles=0 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility=0 Drama+2 Muscles+1 Magnetism-1 Swagger+1
- Agility+1 Drama+2 Muscles+1 Magnetism-1 Swagger=0
- Agility-1 Drama+2 Muscles=0 Magnetism+2 Swagger-1

Thespian Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Thespian moves.

- **“I dunno, she's got gaps, I got gaps, together we fill gaps.”** - Add +1 to Drama (max +3).
- **The Delivery** - When making a Killer One-Liner move, roll +Drama instead of +Swagger.
- **Soliloquy** - When you deliver a solo speech about what's going on in the current movie, trying to piece together the events unfolding around you, roll +Drama.
 - On a **10+**, you gain insight into the emotional or physical nature of the conflict underpinning the plot. Name one thing that will happen related to the plot, no matter how big or small. The Director will make it come true, at no cost to you (though it may involve cost to others).
 - On a **7-9**, as above but the events come true at great cost to yourself.
 - On a **miss**, your ramblings are the product of self-delusion about your abilities and/or powers of insight. Take -1 forward and the Director can make a move against you.
- **Open Book** - You receive a +1 to all Emote moves.
- **The Wrap-Up** - When a movie ends, you can deliver one final speech before the credits roll. Roll +Drama:
 - On a **10+**, you clarify what just happened for your companions (if any survive). Everyone gains +1 XP.
 - On a **7-9**, it's a good speech and helpful for wrapping things up, but only you gain +1 XP.
 - On a **miss**, you're way off in either tone or substance. It's neither helpful nor clarifying. -1 XP for everyone.

The Yeller

Inspiration: Reb Brown

Primary Stat: +Muscles



Stats

Choose one set

- Agility-1 Drama+1 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger=0
- Agility+1 Drama=0 Muscles+2 Magnetism-1 Swagger+1
- Agility=0 Drama+1 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger-1
- Agility=0 Drama+2 Muscles+2 Magnetism-1 Swagger-1

Yeller Moves

You get all the basic moves. Choose 2 Yeller moves.

- **“JAKODA!”** - Add +1 to Muscles (max +3).
- **Just Yell** - Let the power of your lungs carry you through the scene! You may roll +Muscles instead of +Drama whenever you make an Emote move.
- **Especially Yell When You Do Something Crazy** - Yelling while performing a stunt is awesome. Yell during a Stunt move to add +1 to the roll.
- **Sheer Terror** - You can terrify people by yelling at them incoherently. If you choose to do this, roll +Muscles: On a 10+, pick two. On a 7-9, pick one but the noise alerts an enemy or group of enemies to your presence. They'll be here any second, no matter where you are. On a miss, you strain your lungs, nothing happens, and the enemy takes advantage of your openness. The Director may make a move against you.
 - A single person of your choice flees immediately.
 - A group makes a fighting retreat, hastily but organized.
 - Someone falls down.
 - Someone's grip on an item is lost.
 - A friend is alerted to your presence.
- **Move, Move, Move!** - Nothing gets people moving quickly like screaming at them to hurry up. This is a proven fact. When you yell at people to “MOVE MOVE MOVE”, roll +Drama. On a 10+, all of your allies (including you) either move at double time or take a +1 to an immediate Stunt. On a 7-9, as above but something or someone important (including yourself) is left behind. On a 6 or less, you're being annoying. The other PCs decide how they react. NPCs actively ignore you. -1 Camaraderie.

SCRIPTS



Scripts are like the Actor Playbooks but for a movie. They give you pointers for the way the movie's going to go, who the villain is, why the Actors' characters are together, and provide their own moves. In this section you'll find some cool Scripts to get you started.

Odds are, you're going to play a few sessions and want your own Scripts for a movie genre which isn't represented in the **AMW** rules. I don't blame you. After I'd written my first Script (The Barbarian Movie, for trivia purposes), I thought, "There's no way I can do every genre out there".

It's simply not possible. There are too many strange subgenres of action movie to tap for me to hit them all. And people like some very specific subgenres, like Returning Vietnam Veteran Grapples With The Past movie and Hong Kong Gun Kata Melodrama movie. The list never ends.

So, before the Scripts are even listed, I'm providing some guidelines on how to create your own Scripts and Script moves. Take advantage of them! One of the best things about the Apocalypse World engine games, from Apocalypse World itself to World Wide Wrestling to Dungeon World to this one, is the ease of customization when it comes to moves. They're very easy to bend into neat shapes which do exactly what you want them to.

1. Find a subgenre you like. I highly recommend keeping this as broad as possible. By keeping it broad, you remain flexible. You can turn a Cop movie into a Buddy Cop movie; you can't turn a Buddy Cop movie into an Undercover Cop movie. This also has the advantage of being easy to share with others; one of the reasons why I opted to keep the Scripts broad in this book is because of that flexibility. The more you drill down, the more you lash the Script to the demands of your table, and your table only. Which is totally fine, maybe even desirable! But in terms of what was done in Script design for this book, expansive was the watchword.

2. Think about how you want your players to pick their relationships with one another. I'll repeat it over and over: the 2d6 method chosen for this book is for expediency only. It's perfectly valid for you as Script designer and Director to tell them to make up their own relationship. Barring that, make a list, however long you want, and hand it to them. If you really want to go 2d6, bear in mind that the highest probability roll is 7 and it gets lower on each side (ie 6 and 8 have the same chance, 5 and 9, etc) until you hit 2 and 12. So odds are they're rolling in the 6-8 range.

3. Make five moves. These are known as custom moves in the Powered by the Apocalypse hacking world. Making your own moves is pretty simple and there's a wealth of information online about perfecting the process. Some guidelines for how to make custom moves is provided in the next section, but for now know that they need to plug as tightly into the fiction of your Script as possible.

4. Make a list of gear. The guidelines here are loose, but think of iconic weapons and items from the genre of movie you're emulating. If it's a weapon, consider 2-harm to be a good standard damage. That's enough to kill a mook in one shot but not enough to kill several or the villain with similar speed. You're going to be adding your own qualities and setting damage for your gear; there is no master list. Peek at some of the gear in the existing Scripts to get an idea of how qualities are used on gear.

5. Make a list of villains. When thinking of a villain, you're thinking iconic, just like your gear. You want to think of one of two things: motivation or job description. The Darwinist is defined by motivation; he or she fights and kills to prove superiority. The Dragon is defined by its job as a dragon. Once you've settled on that, come up with two impulses which form its central personality, then some villain moves. You can get very specific with these moves; use them to define and describe reactions to your Actors when the villain is present.

6. Get feedback! Seriously, this is a big thing. Let your players look it over. Don't necessarily give them veto power, but take their feedback to heart. Do they want to play the type of movie on offer? Are the moves interesting? How about the relationships? Ask these questions and be open to criticism.



CUSTOM MOVES

Moves are the lifeblood of AMW. As stated in the early part of this book, moves are what we use to regulate the conversation between players and Director. The players have their moves, which are primarily active, while the Director has his or her moves, which are primarily reactive. The interplay between these two kinds of moves and the descriptive text at the table create a game session.

When you make a new Script, you have to make your own moves. This is just the nature of the beast. Your basics (Stunts, Violence, Love Scenes, etc) are taken care of. These are the things characters in all action movies do. Think of them as the underpinnings of the genre. But gaps appear as you drill down more and more into subgenre. Yes, the Violence move is applicable in any action movie, but what do you need for a Barbarian movie? You certainly don't need police cars or driving stunts. You probably don't need flashy martial arts. The demands which are needed to emulate different kinds of fiction are, naturally, very distinct from genre to genre.

When I created the Barbarian movie Script, I thought about what were the most common tropes in that style's heyday. There was a hatred and fear of magic; wizards were always the bad guys, or at least magical types were. The heroes were impossibly strong, but always selfish and kind of assholes. I went down the list of what I, as Director at a gaming table, would want to see the players do. I wanted to match the fiction at the table with the fiction on the screen.

To that end, I used moves to mold that hypothetical discussion at the table. If a player has a move, he or she will use it. This sounds as though it's so simple it's not worth mentioning, but this underpins a lot of Script creation. Not all rules are used all the time, but a rule which isn't used at all may as well not exist. Granting players moves via Scripts is a way of signaling to them "use this move". It also allows you to place them into situations where it will be used; you know they have it, so make them use it.

Script moves are also a window into how you interpret the genre of action movie you're trying to represent. You have only five moves. This is entirely deliberate. By limiting Script moves to five, you have to choose what you think is important in that subgenre. You can't just throw in everything you can think of.

Don't think of this as a constraint. It is, in the words of Greg Stafford, Genre versus Generic. The more you add, the more generic you get. You begin to push up against the bounds of what constitutes a genre and dilute the game you want to play. Constraint in games is often liberation, just as it is with acting.

The Anatomy of Moves

Making custom moves is pretty easy. Cribbing lightly from Nathan Paoletta's *World Wide Wrestling*, moves are created of two parts, a fictional trigger and an array of possible results.

The trigger is the more important of these two pieces of move creation. When a trigger happens in the game's fiction, the move occurs. These are tied very tightly into the game's fiction. Therefore, it's important to make sure that they relate to the genre being emulated in the Script. Use the genre you're working with to shape the triggers you create for these moves. This is your best chance to enforce the rules of the genre in your game. Think of something cool in the genre you're working with. If you want that cool thing to happen, think about why it happened. The why is your trigger.

Once you've got that, make a list of outcomes. Remember: a 10+ is an awesome success, a 7-9 is a success with a hard choice or qualification, while a 6 or less is a total failure. Think back to the trigger. You know the why, now it's time for the what. But don't just think of the solitary thing which happened after the why. Think of all the possible things which can occur in reaction to the why. Sort them out into things you want to see in your game versus things you don't, then sort them again into awesome, less awesome, and terrible outcomes.

When you've got your fictional outcomes, dole them out to the results. This can be in the form of a list (in which case a good standby is 10+ giving more choices than 7-9) or single outcomes per die roll. In all cases, 7-9 should involve some hard choice or place the character in some form of difficulty.

You also need to attach a move to a particular +Stat. This is the most relevant trait to the move's success if you saw it in a movie. Again, think of breaking down a movie into its constituent parts via rules and discussion. Does it involve brute strength? Then it's +Muscles. Is it reliant on a character's cool head or sense of humor? It's +Swagger.

You want to keep all of this narrowly focused. The more specific and narrow the move's trigger and outcomes, the better. The broad moves which represent actions common to all action flicks are taken care of in *AMW*'s basic moves. This is your chance to get specific.

10+

AWESOME

7-9

YES, BUT!

6-

OH, SHII...

Other Types of Moves

Not every move is quite so active. There are four broad types of passive moves, detached from any dice rolling. They still have triggers and hook into the fiction, but they simply happen (or change a character or scene) rather than demanding a roll.

Substitution moves allow an Actor to roll one stat instead of another for specific actions. The trigger is the action in question. (e.g. the Musclehead being able to roll +Muscles instead of +Magnetism when seducing or manipulating).

Conditional moves trigger off of specific conditions coming to pass. These can be simple or elaborate. The one which breaks the mold the most is the Smooth Operator's You Only Live Twice move. When the condition is active (the Smooth Operator takes harm), the move is triggered (the Smooth Operator takes +X forward).

Enhancement moves are straight bonuses to certain kinds of rolls. The Nimble Extreme move in the Ninja movie Script (+1 to +Dexterity Stunt moves) is an example.

Narrative control moves are the broadest passive category and encompass anything which gives the Actor a significant amount of narration altering ability. They signal very strongly what sorts of things the player wants to see in game. An example is the Corrupt Is As Corrupt Does move in the Cop movie Script.

When you make your Script, you can use any combo of those moves you want, but I strongly recommend mixing it up. All of one type or another is uninteresting. At the same time, don't try to squeeze in one of each type just for the sake of variety. Mix it up while still making sure everything makes sense.

You should also leave room for revision of your moves. Ask the players if they're fun. If they're not, tweak them. Breaking the game is less of a concern, since action movie heroes should always err on the side of being overpowered and badass, but if you feel that something crosses that line, consider changing it. As with most of AMW's guidelines, be flexible.

SCRIPT PLAYBOOKS

Here are six Scripts to get you started with **ACTION MOVIE WORLD**. These six Scripts cover a wide swath of the most popular action movie genres.

They're all pretty broad, so you should be able to use them over and over again and get a great deal of variety in your campaign. Alternately, use them as guides and inspiration to create your own Scripts as described in the last chapter.

The Barbarian movie

Description

Conan. Beastmaster. Ator. Deathstalker. Hulky dudes and buxom women fighting against the Dark, as embodied by some jerk in a temple or castle or mountain fastness, either solo or in a group.

Relationships

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 you both share a curse
- 3 teacher and student
- 4 a weapon
- 5 former slaves
- 6 siblings
- 7 heroes for hire
- 8 from the same village or town
- 9 lovers
- 10 one rescued the other from certain doom
- 11 involved in a cult once upon a time
- 12 thieves of something mysterious and powerful

Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only. XP may be spent at the end of the movie to make it permanent and usable in any type of movie.

Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Spend It Like Water - Money is generally meaningless in **ACTION MOVIE WORLD: FIRST BLOOD**, but not in barbarian movies. No matter how noble the outcome of the movie, money is almost always the prime motivator for some, if not all, of the characters. That money is meant to be spent quickly and ostentatiously.

You may throw a massive party at an inn, encampment, feast hall, or other suitable place, blowing all your cash. When you throw your party, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, hold two.

On a 7-9, hold one.

Spend your holds to:

- Gain +1 to a move
- Call in a bribe or favor
- Gain a new piece of gear, your choice
- Impress a crowd
- Get the attention of someone well over your social station

On a miss, you've overindulged or otherwise misstepped socially. Take -1 forward and you've attracted unwanted attention.

Mighty Thews - You're even more muscley and violent than most characters in barbarian movies. All of your attacks have the -area and -messy qualities.

Magic is Scary - Wizardry is to be mistrusted at all times. You hate and fear the warlock in equal measure. When you are in combat with a wizard, warlock, witch, or other practitioner of the dark arts, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, you are filled with loathing for the evil before you. All attacks against the source of your ire gain the -deadly quality.

On a 7-9, your fear leaves you open to magical attack, even as it drives you forward. You do +1 harm against magic using foes, but they do +1 harm to you as well.

On a miss, your fear has gotten the better of you. Pick one:

- You retreat quickly.
- Take -1 for the scene.



Secret Engineer - The secretly brilliant barbarian, using technology in MacGuyver-esque ways, is an infrequent but lasting trope of the genre. Technology is used here to mean appropriately low-tech but still shockingly advanced items; a hang-glider is a good example, while an airplane is beyond your reach. You are one of these technically inclined folks. When you attempt to make a device which you have no business making, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, the device works perfectly.

On a 7-9, it works but has one flaw, determined by the Director. Say what it is. The Director may activate this flaw at a dramatic moment to make things interesting.

On a miss, the device seems to work but is actually dangerously defective, either to yourself or to others. A hang glider might crash, a black powder grenade might explode in your hands, etc.

The Deadliest Warrior - You are so deadly with a weapon that enemies fall almost at a touch. All weapons you wield have the -deadly quality against anyone but the main villain.

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

- Sword (2-harm, -hand, -deadly), dagger (1-harm, -hand), throwing axe (2-harm, -close, -refill), 1-pt of armor
- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed), dagger (1-harm, -hand)
- Two hand axes (2-harm, -hand, -area when wielded together), dagger (1-harm, -hand), throwing dagger (1-harm, -close), 1-pt of armor
- Sword (2-harm, -hand, -deadly), small furry creature (-alive), 1-pt of armor
- Two-handed weapon (3-harm, -hand, -deadly, -messy, -two-handed), 2-pts of armor
- Flail (3-harm, -hand, -messy), 1-pt of armor

Villain

Priest - Wants to convert. Wants to slay unbelievers.

- Reveal the power of his or her deity
- Convert someone
- Proselytize
- Demand obedience
- Change the ideological makeup of a population
- Seek out and show heresy
- Reveal his or her sheer insanity

King - Wants to conquer. Wants to enslave.

- Display raw force
- Command an army
- Send in specialists
- Take over territory
- Exert authority
- Enforce oaths or create new ones

Wizard - Wants to dominate. Wants to exalt himself.

- Cause mass destruction with a word
- Disguise him or herself
- Alter the flows of space or time
- Spy on someone from afar
- Raise an army via magic
- Teleport or become invisible
- Conjure the elements

Crimelord - Wants to indulge. Wants to steal.

- Throw a massive party which everyone attends
- Offer someone his or her darkest desire
- Infiltrate a populace via vice
- Send in thugs and brutes
- Influence local politics
- Procure something very rare

Undead - Wants to consume. Wants to remember.

- Devour someone
- Convert someone to undead
- Emote secrets from the past
- Raise an army of the dead
- Terrify everyone
- Shrug off harm
- Harm with the chill of the grave

Dragon - Wants to acquire. Wants to devour.

- Take flight
- Add to its hoard
- Set things on fire
- Terrify everyone
- Destroy cities and countryside
- Shrug off harm
- Slay by fire and claw

The Cop movie

Description

The characters in a cop movie play, obviously enough, cops. Undercover cops, maybe, but usually uniformed cops or detectives. Cop flicks tend to revolve around anti-establishment motifs in an extremely emotional manner. Someone in a position of authority is always corrupt. It might be the police brass above them. More often it's local governmental authorities, particularly in American cop movies. Crime is usually rampant and it's abetted by the systemic corruption at play.

When creating the framework for your cop movie, it's important that all the characters are pretty tight. More than most, the bonds formed between police officers tend to be closet. This swings in bad directions, too; certain police departments are notorious for abuses which are never brought to light due to the way cops tend to close ranks. Play this up, no matter what. If they're good cops, it's a way to get through the hard times. If they're bad cops, it's a way of covering each others' tracks.

Relationships

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 in on a secret
- 3 drug money
- 4 same department
- 5 came up through the academy together
- 6 partners
- 7 precinct buds
- 8 a cop and informant
- 9 a murder weapon
- 10 rivals for promotion
- 11 grew up in the same neighborhood
- 12 saw something terrible



Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only, unless XP is spent to make the move permanent.

Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Buddy movie - This move is only available to one character; once it's picked, that's it. It also cannot be picked by the Lead. Picking this move makes you, in all ways, a second Lead, including the same plot immunity that the Lead enjoys. This move cannot be made permanent with XP.

A Cop Who Doesn't Play By The Rules - You don't play by "their" rules, whoever "they" are. When you buck authority, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, choose one:

- You inspire someone to follow your lead.
- The authority backs down.
- An enemy is distracted by you (this may happen off-camera).

On a 7-9, choose one above but you are forced to do something dangerous to remain on the force.

On a miss, someone in a position of authority is dedicated to making you pay.

Crime Doesn't Pay - Nobody does better than you when the heat is on from the scum of the city. When rolling in opposition to criminals of any sort, you add +1 to your roll.

Corrupt Is As Corrupt Does - At the beginning of the movie, state whether you're fighting or aiding the forces of corruption. You receive two Corruption Points. Spend these one for one over the course of the movie as you would a hold. Each time you spend a Corruption Point, choose one of the following:

- Gain access to drugs.
- Gain access to weapons.
- Gain access to vice.
- Gain access to stolen mundane goods.
- Gain access to an off-limits location.

Access should be read very broadly and change in meaning depending on whether the character is fighting corruption or is corrupt. For example, an honest cop with this move might gain access to drugs, with the Director setting up a scene in which following bribes leads to a city councilwoman's drug deal, while a corrupt cop would use it to snag drugs from a bust for his or her own use.

Supercop - Whether through training or natural ability, you're faster, stronger, and just generally more of a badass than your peers on the force. You receive a +1 to all Stunt rolls.

High Speed Chase - Nobody's better than you in a chase. When you're behind the wheel, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, choose both. On a 7-9, choose one:

- You get where you want really fast.
- You're safe.

On a miss, you're not as good as you thought you were. You crash.

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone has access to a police vehicle.

- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), nightstick (2-harm, -hand)
- SWAT vest (2-armor), assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), tear gas grenades (s-harm, -close, -refill)
- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), drug package (-valuable)

Villain

Drug Kingpin - Wants to sell. Wants to scourge.

- Use drugs to influence the masses
- Display incredibly violent and erratic behavior
- Offer drugs
- Offer money
- Buy someone off
- Bring in dangerous foreigners
- Wield power of an addict

Assassin - Wants to kill. Wants to hunt.

- Put someone in his or her sights (literally)
- Reveal he or she has been in disguise the whole time
- Disappear into thin air
- Whip out high tech or military grade weaponry
- Use superior martial arts
- Shoot someone in a dramatic or emotional fashion
- Make a death defying escape

Mafia Boss - Wants to control. Wants to show honor.

- Send out a hit
- Take over a neighborhood (but just one; there are rules)
- Make peace or war with another family
- Buy off a cop or politician
- Appeal to bonds of tradition or family
- Offer protection
- Get out of legal trouble
- Buy someone off
- Promote someone
- Find someone who doesn't want to be found

Police Chief - Wants to hide. Wants to bully.

- Have someone arrested
- Beat someone up
- Escape via technicality of the law
- Disappear in the nick of time
- Send the whole precinct after someone
- Demote or promote someone, literally or figuratively
- Bribe someone
- Trade integrity for power

Corrupt Politician - Wants to control. Wants to be loved.

- Exploit privatization for his or her own gain
- Deliver a rousing speech which brings the listener(s) into his or her fold
- Weasel out of trouble
- Reveal megalomania
- Turn the public against someone
- Offer a way out
- Have a closed door meeting

Master Thief - Wants to be rich. Wants to be thrilled.

- Misdirect attention to someone else
- Reveal that he or she has stolen something while you weren't looking
- Reveal a key weakness in a person, structure, or system
- Successfully feign innocence
- Reveal he or she has been in disguise the whole time
- Has just the right tools for the job
- Make a death defying escape

The Fighting Tournament Movie

Description

Once upon a time, movies involving fighting tournaments were everywhere. The formula is always the same: an underdog (or underdogs) enters a fighting tournament for some combination of pride, vengeance, and redemption. There's usually an older guy who helps train the hero for the big tournament, a tournament invariably run by a drug lord or some other unsavory type. The underdog flies through the competition like it's nothing, until the last fight against the big villain. He or she overcomes all odds and wins the whole shebang.

This might sound kind of boring, but the little details always kept these movies fresh. I'm an unapologetic fan of *Kickboxer*. The whole series, even after Van Damme left. We used to rent the third in the series on a nearly monthly basis and just watch it over and over again when we were kids. If that level of cheese bothers you, remember that one of the most beloved movies of the 80s, *The Karate Kid*, is just a better acted fighting tournament movie.

This is the sort of movie in which The Pugilist can really shine. That Playbook is made for this sort of flick. JCVD, Bruce Lee, Cynthia Rothrock, et al really made their names here. When the time comes, play up the combination of badass and underdog for the Lead. The weenies at the front of the tournament bracket should fall like wheat before a scythe. Things get tougher around the semifinals (and by all means, make an actual bracket), until the cheating, conniving final bout against whatever asshole is champion. That's when things get super tough.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 an old heirloom related to your shared fighting style
- 3 childhood friends
- 4 the villain hurt both of you in some way
- 5 teacher and student
- 6 in a war together
- 7 loved the same person
- 8 students at the same dojo
- 9 rival schools
- 10 family
- 11 own a business together
- 12 tourists in a strange land

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only, unless XP is spent to make the move permanent.

Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Not Tommy! NO! – Eventually, the friends in the movie are going to have to face each other. One of them is going to hurt one of the others, probably badly. That's a real shame. It's also an awesome time to go heavy on the pathos.

Once per movie, you can declare that you're fighting one of the other PCs in the next action scene. The Director must make this happen. When the scene takes place, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, you've killed the other character accidentally. Let out a cry to the heavens! The other party gains 2 XP, per usual, and automatically goes up 1 in Star Power. You gain 1 XP, Camaraderie goes up by 1, and you're allowed to make a Vengeance move, just as if your pal had died at the hands of NPCs.

On a 7-9, the other party is seriously injured. You both gain 1 XP. You feel really bad about this. Take -1 forward. Camaraderie also goes down by 1.

On a miss, you've flubbed your moves and delivered a silly scene where gravity was needed. Both take -1 forward. Fight the scene as normal and let things go where they will.

Obviously, this move cannot kill the Lead. Instead, on a 10+ the injury is truly dire and the star must make that much more effort to come back from it.

Hands of Stone – When fighting with your fists in an organized setting (tournament, organized fight, boxing match, etc) you gain +1 to all stunt and close combat rolls.

Float Like A Butterfly – Once per movie, you can gain an automatic 10+ on a close combat roll. Just tell the Director when you want to do it and it'll happen.

I've Seen This Style Before – You've been around the fighting circuit long enough to have seen it all. When you get ready to fight someone, declare what fighting style your opponent is using and roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, choose two.

On a 7-9, choose one.

- You will turn your opponent's best move against him or her
- You will avoid all harm in the coming fight
- You will impress the crowd more than usual, becoming a fan favorite
- You will intimidate a foe with your obvious knowledge of fighting

On a miss, you really aren't as smart as you think you are. The Director should make a move against you, preferably one that hurts.

Tell everyone some details about this school of fighting.

Work It Like JCVD – Even the toughest fighter needs a little R&R. Between fights, you like to party at nightclubs, bars, and beach lounges. You also really like to dance. When you go out carousing with the locals, roll +Magnetism.

On a 10+, you're smooth as hell and rad to the max. Launch an immediate Love Scene move with one of the people you managed to hook up with.

You also impressed the locals with your moves at the club; one of your new buds will help you when you need it most.

On a 7-9, not bad on the social front but you may have overindulged a little bit. You have a roaring hangover. Take -1 forward and choose one.

- Tell the Director how the owner of the tournament is secretly monstrous
- Tell the Director who is now your friend

On a miss, you've made a serious social faux pas. A fight breaks out at the bar or club. Take -1 for the scene while you try not to get beaten up.

Gear

Unlike most movies, no one has any special gear. Everyone has his or her fists and an outfit appropriate to his or her fighting style. That's it.



Villain

Mister Big – Wants to be on top. Wants to stay in control.

- Bring big money and influence to bear
- Disappear into his or her fortress
- Whip out military hardware
- Call on his or her bodyguards for help
- Reorganize the tournament's rules
- Throw someone out of the tournament
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills

Bloodthirsty Monster – Wants to inflict physical pain and mental anguish.

- Attack with intense savagery
- Hurt a character's dearest loved one
- Show his or her disgusting heart
- Shrug off injury
- Get the crowd to switch sides
- Taunt someone to fury

Darwinist – Wants to cull the weak. Wants to determine the best.

- Reorganize the tournament's rules
- See into someone's mind
- Obscure his or her true motivations
- Declare someone the strongest so that everyone agrees
- Call on his or her bodyguards for help
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills
- Decree a death sentence for a fight's loser



The Ninja movie

Description

Starting in the very late 1970s, ninjas began to crop up in the American and European consciousness. By the early 1980s, the ninja had blown up into a full-blown, global cultural phenomenon. Ninjas, or non-Japanese ideas of them, were everywhere, from movies to cartoons to advertisements. They weren't always stealthy, but they were always badasses, with shuriken and swords flashing every third minute of whatever media they were in.

Ninja movies, perhaps against all expectation, don't really lean on decent martial arts skills. They rely on magic. That's the secret of the movie ninja: they're less Bruce Lee, more Merlin. Smoke bombs, disappearing into thin air, playing dead, and killing with a touch are always presented as nearly magical. So play that up!

One other note on the ninja movie. It can be hard to work an entire group of ninjas into a film, as they're usually presented as solitary, mysterious figures. This Script works great as a one-on-one for that reason. In group play, the reasons why ninjas hang together are usually simple and more than a little silly. Embrace the absurdity of walking turtles and Power Rangers. You'll be closer to the style than a more serious take.

Relationships

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 reincarnated lovers
- 3 your souls are claimed by a demon
- 4 former Yakuza members
- 5 a sword, hundreds of years old
- 6 members of rival schools, now allies
- 7 loved the same person
- 8 members of the same ninja clan
- 9 a shared thirst for revenge
- 10 the war
- 11 you thought that you'd killed one another
- 12 a lost medallion

Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only, unless XP is spent to make the move permanent.

Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Puff of Smoke – You can disappear into thin air with the aid of a smoke bomb or other ninja device. When you want to disappear, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, you disappear. When you come back, you have the element of surprise. Gain a +1 for the scene to all rolls when you decide to return.

On a 7-9, you manage to get away, but you are seen at the last second.

Get away but choose one:

- Take one level of harm.
- You cannot use the Puff of Smoke move again in this movie.

On a miss, your smoke is too thin, the wind too strong, whatever, for your disappearance to work. You look pretty silly and the Director makes a move against you.

Opossum – You can play dead with amazing precision. Once per movie, declare that you are playing dead at a dramatically appropriate moment. Everyone thinks you are dead, whether your “corpse” is available or not.

You gain XP for this fake death, just as if you had truly died; this does mean that you can gain dying XP twice in a single movie should you die for real later on. While “dead”, you are safe from harm and plot complications and all observers, both PC and NPC, act as though you are dead and gone.

Dim Mak – By focusing your chi, you can kill with a touch. All it takes is some brief but intense meditation and a willingness to become an avatar of Death. When you meditate on killing with the power of chi, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, you have the -deadly quality when attacking with your bare hands. This lasts for the rest of the scene.

On a 7-9, as above but you take one level of harm as your chi is turned inward for dark purposes. As well, for the rest of the movie you gain one small but extremely noticeable deformity.

On a miss, your meditation on dark chi goes horribly wrong. Take two levels of harm. You gain one serious, overt deformity for the rest of the movie.

Nimble Extreme – You have unparalleled reflexes and balance. Take +1 to all Stunt moves based on +Dexterity.

Flying Debris – You can throw anything you're physically able to lift with the grace and accuracy of a throwing star. All such items you use as weapons have the -Near and -Refill qualities. If you throw something designed to be a throwing weapon, such as a throwing knife or javelin, you do +1 harm.

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone gets a ninja outfit, including mask, in a color of the player's choice.

Everyone also receives the following: katana (2-harm, -hand, -deadly), dagger (1-harm, -hand), shurikens (1-harm, -close, -reload)

In addition, pick one extra ninja weapon:

- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed)
- Choking gas bombs (S-damage, -close, -refill, -area)
- Bo staff (2-harm, -hand, +1 Stunt moves)
- Nunchaku (1-harm, -hand, -area)
- Layered ninja clothing, 1-pt of armor

Villain

Yakuza Lord – Wants to expand his or her influence. Wants to corrupt.

- Bring big money and influence to bear
- Summon a horde of mooks
- Reveal the meaning of his or her tattoos
- Escape
- Reveal unexpected corruption
- Bring forth a character's captured loved one
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills

Master Ninja – Wants to be hidden. Wants to show his or her clan is the deadliest.

- Disappear in a puff of smoke
- Play dead
- Attack with alacrity
- Whip out a hidden weapon
- Blend into a crowd
- Reveal a heretofore unknown tie with a character
- Challenge someone to a one on one battle

The Sci-Fi Flick

Description

Sci-fi is, and has always been, fertile ground for the movies. From the earliest days, cinematographers, directors, and actors have cast their dreams of space onto the screen. And it never stopped. Sci-fi, while far past its golden era of the 60s and 70s, still manages to crank out a few high profile movies a year. They vary in genre, from serious drama to thriller to comedy to, yes, action.

That last one is what this Script deals with. It's a particular breed of sci-fi, one with guns and big effects. Rubber suits. Explosions. *Star Wars*, maybe. *Space Mutiny*, definitely.

Lasers, space ships, and lost planets are the thing you want to aim for. Themes of loneliness and isolation are big, as are the erosion of the mind by bad guys. Space warps your senses, both of self and others. Even if that's not the primary theme, it's a subtext which should usually be borne in mind.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 clones, but you don't know it yet
- 3 served together in the space special ops
- 4 siblings
- 5 friendly rivals
- 6 work buddies
- 7 friends
- 8 made a discovery together
- 9 share an odd technical hobby
- 10 part of the same group of colonists or explorers
- 11 romantically involved
- 12 clones, and you know it

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only, unless XP is spent to make the move permanent. Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Short Circuit - Once during your movie, introduce an invention that breaks the laws of nature. Describe its purpose. Roll +Drama.

On a 10+, pick three.

On a 7-9, pick two.

On a miss, pick one, and you may make this move again later in the movie.

- Your invention mostly works.
- Your invention doesn't mutilate or transform people nearby.
- Your invention doesn't open a rift in reality.
- Your invention doesn't require all nearby power.

Integrity Breach - When in space, in a ship or otherwise, you have a new option added to the list of choices you have when you make a Violence move:

- You cause a breach through which the void rushes in.

Impossible Knowledge of the Unknown - When you encounter something humanity has never seen before, tell everyone what it is and roll +Drama.

On a 10+, take +1 forward on all moves related to this thing.

On a 7-9, gain a hold against this thing.

From Another Star - You aren't human. Take +2 to one stat (max +3) and -1 to another. Describe how you're different from humans. If you're an inhuman monster looking thing, take another +1 to Muscles or Agility (max +3), and -1 to Magnetism. This move cannot be made permanent with experience.

Alien Musk - When you encounter a member of another species, roll +Magnetism.

On a 10+, choose two.

On a 7-9, choose one.

- The alien wants to be your friend.
- The alien wants to be your lover.
- The alien won't try to harm your friends.
- The alien won't try to harm you.

On a miss, the alien definitely wants to harm you and your friends.

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

- BFG (3-harm, -deadly, -loud, -autofire, -area, -messy).
- Environment/space suit (2-armor), tools, welding kit (2-harm, -hand).
- Space armor (2-armor), standard issue side-arm (2-harm, -close).
- A lab full of cool devices, books, and tools (-valuable, +1 to science, engineering, knowledge moves), side arm (2-harm, -close).
- A space ship (-deadly, -valuable) either small and fast or big and slow, side arm (2-harm, -close).
- A gear combo from any other movie script, but add the -alive and -loud tags: they're AI powered devices.
- The clothes on your back. Hold 3, trade in one for one to get +1 to moves involving getting equipment



Villain

Alien Army - Wants to kill. Wants to conquer.

- Shell a position from orbit
- Launch a frontal assault
- Seize a strategic location
- Make someone bug out
- Send in the hover tanks
- Deploy Impossible Weapons (make plants attack, remote control cars, etc)

Hostile Planet - Wants to exhaust. Wants to endure. Wants to tear a hole in your space suit.

- Conjure extreme weather
- Cause people to get lost
- Cause people to get stuck
- Conceal the enemy
- Starve people of air or water
- Reveal locals

Bloodthirsty Alien Hunter - Wants to prove superiority and enjoy a clean kill.

- Attack with intense savagery
- Show its disgusting heart
- Shrug off injury
- Disappear into thin air
- Use superior biology

Pod People - Wants to replace. Wants to deceive.

- Appear as a character's loved one
- Create pods
- Attack in waves
- Emit a terrible shriek
- Coat in slime

Incoming Asteroid - Wants to annihilate.

- Cause panic
- Create a crime wave
- Reveal hedonism
- Break into pieces
- Escalate government overreach

Time Traveller - Special

Take a villain from another movie, give it a cool “sciencey” power like a spaceship, an amazing laser blaster, or a monofilament blade.

The War Movie

Description

The war movie has been around as long as film has existed. It's visceral stuff, the worst humanity has to offer. But it's also compelling subject matter precisely because it's so terrible. The bonds forged in war are strong as steel, whether that war is just or not or whether the particulars behaved admirably or not. Not surprisingly, war movies are some of the most common action flicks. They err on the side of high body counts and big explosions, but there's almost always a vein of the deeply personal in them, as soldiers grapple with the enormity of what they've been a part of. This tends to be true even in the most deeply silly direct to video war movies.

It's important to try to keep the line between dramatic war movie and action movie distinct in play. You can do the sort of deep character study a war drama entails, but **AMW** is more about the latter. Emotions should be punchy and loud. Characters should grapple with their emotions regarding war, definitely, but should quickly move on to gunshots and fistfights.

Characters should almost always be grunts. Officers are representatives of authority, which is almost always corrupt or incompetent in war movies. Officers send you to die in their place. The country sends you to stupid wars and civilians offer you empty platitudes. Your only friends are the other men and women who went through what you went through. This is common to almost every war movie.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. This means that, in groups of four or more, some characters will not have relationships with one another to start with; this is intended.

- 2 played a pro sport together before the war
- 3 secretly military intelligence
- 4 rivals keeping track of kills
- 5 went to boot camp together
- 6 hate the same officer
- 7 from the same home town
- 8 veterans of the same past war
- 9 a stash of hidden loot
- 10 the girl/guy back home
- 11 fellow new blood
- 12 saved you from certain death

These relationships and the randomization method are suggestions only. Feel free to make up your own, choose from the list, roll, draw cards, or whatever else works for your group.

Moves

At the start of a new movie, each player chooses one Script move. The move is yours for the duration of the movie only, unless XP is spent to make the move permanent.

Each move may only be picked by two players. If two players have picked a move, it then becomes unavailable to anyone else. There are a few exceptions to this rule; these are noted and supercede the two players only rule when they occur.

As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

All-Star Cast - This move is only available to one character; once it's picked, that's it. It also cannot be picked by the Lead. Picking this move means that everyone is subject to the same rules as the Lead. Go nuts.

Unlike the actual Lead, the other characters may die if they choose to, gaining XP normally if they do. It is entirely up to them and they will not die otherwise.

The character picking this move gains 1 XP immediately upon choosing it in recognition of the generosity of his or her player.

This move cannot be made permanent with XP.

Demolitions Specialist - On a Violence roll of 10+, something always explodes. It does not cost you one of your choices.

Barking Orders - You're both fearsome and inspiring when the heat's on. When you start barking orders, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, one person of your choice who hears your voice is inspired, taking +1 forward.

On a 7-9, one person of your choice takes +1 forward, while one other person takes -1 forward.

On a miss, everyone who hears your speech is unsettled. They take -1 forward.

Die Well - You die with panache. When you die, give a speech on your way out. Choose one listener to hear your wise and/or dramatic words. He or she gains 1 XP.

Always Something There To Remind Me - Pick a memento of something you love, like a picture of your mom or the flag of your country. So long as you have this with you to inspire you, you take +1 on all moves. However, when you miss any physical move while you have your talisman, you lose it or it's destroyed; you take -1 on all moves for the rest of the film.

Last Gasp - When you die, make one final Violence move. That move is considered a 10+ success. You then expire as normal.

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), rocket launcher (4-harm, -far, -area, -messy, -refill)
- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), grenades (2-harm, -close, -refill, -area)
- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), submachine gun (2-harm, -close, -autofire, -loud)
- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), sniper rifle (3-harm, -far, -deadly, -reload)



Villain

Enemy Army - Wants to kill. Wants to conquer.

- Shell a position from afar
- Launch a frontal assault
- Fray a relationship
- Make someone bug out
- Send in the tanks
- Sow doubt amongst the ranks

The Army You Fight For - Wants to control. Wants to waste time.

- Call for a meaningless patrol
- Throw someone in the brig
- Send a platoon into the meat grinder
- Cancel or grant R&R
- Find a code violation
- Cow someone of low rank
- Fray a relationship

The Environment - Wants to exhaust. Wants to endure.

- Conjure extreme weather
- Cause people to get lost
- Cause people to get stuck
- Conceal the enemy
- Starve soldiers of food or hope
- Reveal locals

Foreign Ideology - Wants to control. Wants to be loved.

- Seduce someone to its side
- Reveal the power of an idea
- Cause betrayal
- Inspire fanaticism
- Sow doubt amongst the ranks

CHEAT SHEETS

This section contains lots of handouts and extras for **AMW**. Here you can find handy printable versions of the Actor Playbooks, a cheat sheet containing all of the basic moves, and a handy reference detailing how to set up a movie and use a Script. All of these handouts are also available for download at flatlandgames.com and are also included in the zip file you got with this book.

These documents were laid out to be 8½ by 11 sheets for ease of use and ease of printing. They appear that way on our website, but are shrunk here to fit the book. You might find them hard to read, but they'll be fine when you download them from our site or grab them out of the zip file. We promise. They are included here for completeness.



Think Jet Li, Chuck Norris, Cynthia Rothrock, Maggie Q, Jean-Claude Van Damme

PUGILIST

Pick your actor's stage name, then choose one set of ability scores below, two moves to the right, and you're good to go.

- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+2 Drama+0 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+0
- Agility+2 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism+2 Swagger+0

NAME AGILITY



STAR POWER DRAMA



MUSCLES



EXPERIENCE MAGNETISM



SWAGGER



☐ "Go for the gut. He's soft there" - Add +1 to Agility (max +3).

☐ **Duck and Weave** - You're tough to get a bead on from range. When you take harm from a ranged attack, roll +Agility. On a 10+, you avoid the damage. On a 7-9, you've managed to duck the worst of it, but you still got winged. Choose one:

- You've ducked into a bad position and left yourself exposed, but take 1 less harm.
- You're too far from your fellows for you to help each other, but take 1 less harm.

☐ **Sting Like a Bee** - You may roll +Agility instead of +Muscles in melee.

☐ **Fists of Stone** - Inflict +1 harm when striking with your bare hands.

☐ **Training Montage** - By training hard or performing a kata, you can enhance your hand to hand combat capabilities greatly. Once per session, you may roll +Drama: On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend one of your holds to:

- +1 on a Violence roll
- +1 harm on a Violence hit
- -1 harm inflicted upon you
- Increase your Star Power by 1 immediately (limit once per movie).

 On a miss, the Director chooses one:

- You're late for something important
- You neglect a relationship
- Someone or something is taken from you while you were occupied

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MOVIE NAME


CHARACTER NAME Lead Harm

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

SCRIPT MOVES

GEAR

HOLDS



The Pugilist's portrait is based on a stock photo by Marcus Ramm.



Think Lucy Lawless, Kurt Russell, Bruce Willis

SMARTASS

Pick your actor's stage name, then choose one set of ability scores below, two moves to the right, and you're good to go.

- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles+1 Magnetism+0 Swagger+2
- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles+0 Magnetism+1 Swagger+2
- Agility+1 Drama+0 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+2
- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles+0 Magnetism+2 Swagger+2

NAME AGILITY



STAR POWER DRAMA



MUSCLES



EXPERIENCE MAGNETISM



SWAGGER



☐ "Yippie ki yay, motherfucker" - Add +1 to Swagger (max +3).

☐ **Better Living Through Wisecracks** - You may roll +Swagger when performing a Stunt move.

☐ **Nothing Sexier Than s Sense of Humor** - You may roll +Swagger instead of +Magnetism when performing a Getting What You Want move.

☐ **Sticks and Stones** - You've mastered the art of taunting your enemies until they lose reason. When you taunt a bad guy, roll +Swagger. On a 10+, pick one. On a 7-9, as above but you're engaged in outright combat with the tauntee. This is obviously not a drawback if this was your intent!

- Your enemy does something stupid.
- Your enemy charges at you.
- Your enemy tries to counter your wit by revealing his plans.

☐ **Smiling Through the Pain** - You're not the strongest, biggest, fastest, or meanest, but you are the coolest. Physical punishment only serves to make you look cooler. When you take harm, dig deep into that core of resolve and roll +Swagger. On a 10+, hold two. On a 7-9, hold one. Spend one of your holds to:

- Get an automatic 10+ on a Killer One-Liner move.
- Substitute Swagger for another stat for the duration of your next move.
- Add the points of harm you've taken so far to your next roll as a bonus.
- Inspire your fellows with your unflappable nature: +1 Camaraderie.

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MOVIE NAME


CHARACTER NAME Lead Harm

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

SCRIPT MOVES

GEAR

HOLDS



The Smartass's portrait is based on a free stock photo from b-e-c-k-y stock.

Think Sean Connery,
Daniel Craig, George Clooney

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Pick your actor's stage name, then choose one set of ability scores below, take two moves to the right, and you're good to go.

- Agility=0 Drama=1 Muscles=1 Magnetism=2 Swagger=1
- Agility+1 Drama=1 Muscles=2 Magnetism+2 Swagger=1
- Agility+1 Drama=1 Muscles=2 Magnetism+2 Swagger=1
- Agility-1 Drama=0 Muscles=1 Magnetism+2 Swagger+2

NAME AGILITY



STAR POWER DRAMA



MUSCLES



EXPERIENCE MAGNETISM



SWAGGER



Think Mel Gibson, Linda
Hamilton, Sylvester Stallone

THE SPIAN

Pick your actor's stage name, then choose one set of ability scores below, two moves to the right, and you're good to go.

- Agility-1 Drama+2 Muscles=0 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility=0 Drama+2 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+1 Drama+2 Muscles+1 Magnetism+1 Swagger=0
- Agility+1 Drama+2 Muscles+1 Magnetism+2 Swagger=1

NAME AGILITY



STAR POWER DRAMA



MUSCLES



EXPERIENCE MAGNETISM



SWAGGER



You Only Live Twice - Your hair is never mussed, cuts you receive always avoid your good side, and your sex appeal is never reduced over the course of a movie. When you die, it's never horrible or nasty, just quick and clean.

At the beginning of every new movie, you receive 3 Smooth Points. Use poker chips or coins to represent them. Every time you would take a point of harm, you may spend a Smooth Point to make it simply disappear. The action still happens: the bad guy shoots at you, you're caught in the explosion, the airplane crashes. You simply get off score free with nary a scratch on you. This can protect you from death, even if you're in a Supporting Role.

In addition, you look so damned cool doing it that you actually use the awe you create to your advantage. When you would take harm and use a Smooth Point, take the amount of harm which disappeared forward to your next move (e. if you spend a Smooth Point to mitigate 2 harm, take +2 forward).

"Just a drink, a martini, shaken not stirred." - +1 to Magnetism (max +3).

Make It Look Good - You can use +Magnetism when making a Stunt move.

Motion of the Ocean - Receive a +1 to rolls when you make Love Scene or Getting What You Want moves.

The Spy Who Loved Me - Once per movie, you may designate one NPC you meet as your primary romantic interest. This NPC becomes intertwined with your character and grants you +2 to Love Scenes. When you designate your love interest, roll +Drama:

On a 10+, your romantic interest has plot immunity, much like the Lead Role. Gain +1 XP at the end of the movie, should you both survive.

On a 7-9, hold one. Spend the hold one for one at any point to have your romantic interest:

- Die by taking a hit for you when you suffer +harm.
- Be taken by the Villain instead of you when you might be captured or separated from your friends.
- Fatally sacrifice him/herself in order to prevent your death.

On a miss, the NPC becomes a secondary villain with a fixation on you. The Director may make an immediate move against you, with the new villain central to the proceedings.

"I dunno, she's got gaps, I got gaps, together we fill gaps." - Add +1 to Drama (max +3).

The Delivery - When making a Killer One-Liner move, roll +Drama instead of +Swagger.

Soliloquy - When you deliver a solo speech about what's going on in the current movie, trying to piece together the events unfolding around you, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, you gain insight into the emotional or physical nature of the conflict underpinning the plot. Name one thing that will happen related to the plot, no matter how big or small. The Director will make it come true, at no cost to you (though it may involve cost to others).

On a 7-9, as above but the events come true at great cost to yourself.

On a miss, your ramblings are the product of self-delusion about your abilities and/or powers of insight. Take -1 forward and the Director can make a move against you.

Open Book - You receive a +1 to all Emote moves.

The Wrap-Up - When a movie ends, you can deliver one final speech before the credits roll. Roll +Drama: On a 10+, you clarify what just happened for your companions (if any survive). Everyone gains +1 XP. On a 7-9, it's a good speech and helpful for wrapping things up, but only you gain +1 XP.

On a miss, you're way off in either tone or substance. It's neither helpful nor clarifying. -1 XP for everyone.

MOVIE NAME

CHARACTER NAME Lead

Harm

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

SCRIPT MOVES

GEAR

HOLDS

The Smooth Operator's portrait is based on a photo from Morguefile.com.



MOVIE NAME

CHARACTER NAME Lead

Harm

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

SCRIPT MOVES

GEAR

HOLDS

The Thespian's portrait is based on a photo from Morguefile.com.





Think Rob Brown

Pick your actor's stage name, then choose one set of ability scores below, two moves to the right, and you're good to go.

- Agility+1 Drama+1 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger+0
- Agility+1 Drama+0 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+0 Drama+1 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1
- Agility+0 Drama+2 Muscles+2 Magnetism+1 Swagger+1

NAME	AGILITY
STAR POWER	DRAMA
TICKS	MUSCLES
EXPERIENCE	MAGNETISM
SWAGGER	

- **"JAKODA!"** - Add +1 to Muscles (max +3).
- **Just Yell** - Let the power of your lungs carry you through the scene! You may roll +Muscles instead of +Drama whenever you make an Emote move.
- **Especially Yell When You Do Something Crazy** - Yelling while performing a stunt is awesome. Yell during a Stunt move to add +1 to the roll.
- **Sheer Terror** - You can terrify people by yelling at them incoherently. If you choose to do this, roll +Muscles: On a 10+, pick two. On a 7-9, pick one but the noise alerts an enemy or group of enemies to your presence. They'll be here any second, no matter where you are. On a miss, you strain your lungs, nothing happens, and the enemy takes advantage of your openness. The Director may make a move against you.
 - A single person of your choice flees immediately.
 - A group makes a fighting retreat, hastily but organized.
 - Someone falls down.
 - Someone's grip on an item is lost.
 - A friend is alerted to your presence.
- **Move, Move, Move!** - Nothing gets people moving quickly like screaming at them to hurry up. This is a proven fact. When you yell at people to "MOVE MOVE MOVE", roll +Drama. On a 10+, all of your allies (including you) either move at double time or take a +1 to an immediate Stunt. On a 7-9, as above but something or someone important (including yourself) is left behind. On a 6 or less, you're being annoying. The other PCs decide how they react. NPCs actively ignore you. -1 Camaraderie.

MOVIE NAME

CHARACTER NAME Lead

Harm

SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

SCRIPT MOVES

GEAR

HOLDS

ACTION MOVIE WORLD

The Yeller's portrait is based on a photo from Morguefile.com.

Violence +Muscles or +Agility
 Trying is exactly what it sounds like; trying to hurt or kill people. The star roll depends on how you're going about it. If it's up close, with a melee weapon or fisticuffs, roll +Muscle. If it's from a distance, with guns, bows, bazookas, grenades, or anything else of that ilk, roll +Agility.

- On a 10+, choose three:
- Inflict terrible harm (+1 harm)
 - The target drops something
 - The target is knocked down
 - You make a mess (-messy)
 - Something explodes (-loud)
 - You hit a whole bunch of people (-area)
 - You can escape or close in
- On a 7-9, choose one:
- You inflict harm but you take some, too.
 - You inflict harm but are driven back.
 - You inflict harm but a friend is hurt badly in the fight.

Getting What You Want +Magnetism
 Manipulate someone in order to get something. On a 10+ you get what you want and it's better than you expected. If used against a PC, he or she can refuse but takes a -1 forward until he or she gives in.

On a 7-9 Get what you want but it comes with an added cost. A PC can outright refuse. On a miss, you've managed to infuriate someone. The Director may make an appropriate move against you.

Emote +Drama
 Pick an emotion to convey via speech or physical movement. When you display that emotion in a melodramatic fashion, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, as below and you take +1 forward when acting on your emotions, as well.
 On a 7-9, choose a PC or NPC to witness to your emotional display. He or she feels the same emotion as you. It is up to the Director to decide how the witness reacts. If a PC acts on the emotion, he or she takes +1 forward
 On a miss, the rawness of your emotions has exhausted you. Take -1 forward.

BASIC MOVES

Love Scene +Magnetism
 When you have a love scene with someone, PC or NPC, roll +Magnetism.

- On a 10+, choose two.
- On a 7-9, choose only one.
- +1 when you protect or help your lover for the rest of the film
 - Your head is clear for days; +1 for the scene.
 - The head of your lover is clear for days; he or she takes +1 for the scene.
 - Your lover will die during the course of the movie. When he or she does, you may invoke the Vengeance move just as though a fellow PC had died.
 - Your lover will show up during a moment of danger to provide critical aid.

On a miss, The Director may use your lover to complicate your life in the near future. It may be that he or she is captured. He or she may betray you. Maybe it's just a quick death. Whatever it is, you will take -1 for the scene from the stress it causes when it happens.

Killer One Liner +Swagger
 When you deliver an awesome one liner or catchphrase roll +Swagger.

- On a 10+, your line is hilarious, well-timed, and cutting. Choose one:
- Take +1 forward to your next roll.
 - Your badkiss is impressed. -1 to Camaraderie
- On a 7-9, as above, but also pick one of the following
- Someone is enraged and immediately attacks you.
 - Someone you care about is hurt.
 - The comment slows an action scene down (and not in a good way).

On a miss, the line falls flat. Take -1 forward as you're rattled by how lame your line was. The Director may make a move against you.

Stunts +Muscles or +Agility
 When you perform a badass stunt, roll either +Agility or +Muscles, depending on the type of stunt.

- On a 10+, you do the cool stunt you were attempting and you feel like a total badass doing it. Take +1 forward. You may pass this +1 forward to one of the other PCs instead if you can work them into the stunt.
- On a 7-9, the stunt is successful. Take +1 forward. However, you've left yourself in a precarious position; choose one below.

- On a miss, choose one:
- You fall
 - You lose something
 - You leave something behind
 - You hurt yourself (1 harm)
 - The Director makes a move against you.

Read a Situation +Swagger
 When you read a charged situation, roll +Swagger. If you succeed, you ask the Director questions. When you ask on one of the Director's answers, take +1 forward.

- On a 10+, ask 3:
- On a 7-9, ask 1:
 - where's my best escape route / way in / way past?
 - which enemy is most vulnerable to me?
 - which enemy is the biggest threat?
 - what should I be on the lookout for?
 - what's my enemy's true position?
 - who's in control here?

Vengeance
 When a PC dies, the Vengeance move gives you a special hold. You may spend this hold to get an automatic 10+ on a Combat or Stunt move provided it is done in direct pursuit of avenging your comrade's death. If more than one PC dies, you still only get one Vengeance move per movie. Use it wisely.

Read a Person +Drama
 When you read a person in a charged interaction, roll +Drama.

- On a 10+, hold 3.
 On a 7-9, hold 1. While you're interacting with him or her, spend your hold to ask their player questions, 1 for 1:
- is your character telling the truth?
 - what's your character really feeling?
 - what does your character intend to do?
 - what does your character wish I'd do?
 - how could I get your character to __?

Camaraderie Move

When you attempt to draw on the strength of your fellowship to accomplish great feats: Roll 2d6 and add +Camaraderie:

- On a 10+, pick two:
- Heal one level of harm
 - Find an awesome new weapon for the duration of the movie
 - Do an extra level of harm to the film's Villain
 - Get inspired by your friends. Hold one to make a future roll an automatic 10+
 - The characters gain a great insight into their friendship and themselves. Give all the PCs one XP and lower Camaraderie by -3 (to a minimum of 0).

On a miss, pick one:

- Lower Camaraderie by a further -1.
- Automatically fail your next roll in your primary stat.
- GM makes an immediate move against one of your companions (not you!)
- A fight breaks out immediately between you and one of the other PCs.



The Barbarian Movie

ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

Conan. Beastmaster. Aton. Deathstalker. Hulky dudes and buxom women fighting against the Dark, as embodied by some jerk in a temple or castle or mountain fastness, either solo or in a group.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 You both share a curse
- 3 Teacher and student
- 4 A weapon
- 5 Former slaves
- 6 Siblings
- 7 Heroes for hire
- 8 From the same village or town
- 9 Lovers
- 10 One rescued the other from certain doom
- 11 Involved in a cult once upon a time
- 12 Thieves of something mysterious and powerful

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

- Sword (2-harm, -hand, -deadly), dagger (1-harm, -hand), throwing axe (2-harm, -close, -refill), 1-pt of armor
- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed), dagger (1-harm, -hand)
- Two hand axes (2-harm, -hand, -area when wielded together), dagger (1-harm, -hand), throwing dagger (1-harm, -close), 1-pt of armor
- Sword (2-harm, -hand, -deadly), small furry creature (alive), 1-pt of armor
- Two-handed weapon (3-harm, -hand, -deadly, -messy, -two-handed), 2-pt of armor
- Flail (3-harm, -hand, -messy), 1-pt of armor

Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Spend It Like Water - Money is generally meaningless in AMW, but not in barbarian movies. No matter how noble the outcome of the move, money is almost always the prime motivator for some, if not all, of the characters. That money is meant to be spent, quickly and ostentatiously. You may throw a massive party at an inn, encampment, feast hall, or other suitable place, blowing all your cash. When you throw your party, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, hold two.

On a 7-9, hold one.

- Spend your holds to:
- Gain +1 to a move
- Call in a bribe or favor
- Gain a new piece of gear, your choice
- Impress a crowd
- Get the attention of someone well over your social station

On a miss, you've overindulged or otherwise misstepped socially. Take -1 forward and you've attracted unwanted attention.

Mighty Thews - You're even more muscly and violent than most characters in barbarian movies. All of your attacks have the -area and -messy qualities.

The Deadliest Warrior - You are so deadly with a weapon that enemies fall almost at a touch. All weapons you wield have the -deadly quality against anyone but the main villain.

Magic is Scary - Wizardry is to be mistrusted at all times. You hate and fear the warlock in equal measure. When you are in combat with a wizard, warlock, witch, or other practitioner of the dark arts, roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, you are filled with loathing for the evil before you. All attacks against the source of your ire gain the -deadly quality.

On a 7-9, your fear leaves you open to attack, even as it drives you forward. You do +1 harm against magic using foes, but they do +1 harm to you, as well.

On a miss, your fear has gotten the better of you.

Pick one:

- You retreat quickly.
- Take -1 for the scene

Secret Engineer - The secretly brilliant barbarian, using technology in MacGuyver-esque ways, is an infrequent but lasting trope of the genre. Technology is used here to mean appropriately low-tech but still shockingly advanced items: a hang-glider is a good example. You are one of these technically inclined folks. When you attempt to make a device which you have no business making, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, the device works perfectly.

On a 7-9, it works but has a flaw, determined by the MC. Say what it is. The MC may activate this flaw at a dramatic moment to make things interesting.

On a miss, the device seems to work but is actually dangerously defective, either to yourself or to others. A hang glider might crash, a black powder grenade might explode in your hands, etc.

The Barbarian Movie

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

Conan. Beastmaster. Aton. Deathstalker. Hulky dudes and buxom women fighting against the Dark, as embodied by some jerk in a temple or castle or mountain fastness, either solo or in a group.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

- Sword (2-harm, -hand, -deadly)
- Throwing axe (2-harm, -close, -refill)
- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed)
- Two hand axes (2-harm, -hand, -area when wielded together)
- Dagger (1-harm, -hand)
- Throwing dagger (1-harm, -close)
- Two-handed weapon (3-harm, -hand, -deadly, -messy, -two-handed)
- Flail (3-harm, -hand, -messy)
- 1-pt of armor (leather, cloth)
- 2-pt of armor (chain, plate)

Villain

Priest - Wants to convert. Wants to slay unbelievers.

- Reveal the deity's power
- Convert someone
- Proselytize
- Demand obedience
- Convert a population
- Seek out and show heresy
- Reveal his or her insanity

King - Wants to conquer. Wants to enslave.

- Display raw force
- Command an army
- Send in specialists
- Take over territory
- Exert authority
- Enforce oaths or create new ones

Wizard - Wants to dominate. Wants to exalt himself.

- Cause mass destruction with a word
- Disguise him or herself
- Alter the flows of space or time
- Spy on someone from afar
- Raise an army via magic
- Teleport or become invisible
- Conjure the elements

Crimelord - Wants to indulge. Wants to steal.

- Throw a massive party which everyone comes to
- Offer someone his or her darkest desire
- Infiltrate a populace via vice
- Send in thugs and brutes
- Influence local politics
- Procure something very rare

Undead - Wants to consume. Wants to remember.

- Devour someone
- Convert someone to undead
- Emote secrets from the past
- Raise an army of the dead
- Terrify everyone
- Shrug off harm
- Harm with the chill of the grave

Dragon - Wants to acquire. Wants to devour.

- Take flight
- Add to its hoard
- Set things on fire
- Terrify everyone
- Destroy cities and countryside
- Shrug off harm
- Slay by fire and claw

MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE



NOTES



The Cop Movie

ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

Cop flicks tend to revolve around anti-establishment motifs in an extremely emotional manner. Someone in a position of authority is always corrupt. It might be the police brass above them. More often it's local governmental authorities, particularly in American cop movies. Crime is usually rampant and it's abetted by the systemic corruption at play.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 In on a secret
- 3 Drug money
- 4 Same department
- 5 Came up through the academy together
- 6 Partners
- 7 Precinct buds
- 8 A cop and informant
- 9 A murder weapon
- 10 Rivals for promotion
- 11 Grew up in the same neighborhood
- 12 Saw something terrible

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone has access to a police vehicle.

- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), nightstick (2-harm, -hand)
- SWAT vest (2-armor), assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), tear gas grenades (6-harm, -close, -refill)
- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), drug package (-valuable)

Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Buddy Movie - This move is only available to one character; once it's picked, that's it. It also cannot be picked by the Lead. Picking this move gives you the same plot immunity that the Lead enjoys. You are, in all ways, a second Lead. This move cannot be made permanent with XP.

A Cop Who Doesn't Play By The Rules

You don't play by their rules, whoever they are.

When you buck authority, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, choose one:

- You inspire someone to follow your lead.
- The authority backs down.
- An enemy is distracted by you (this may happen off-camera)

On a 7-9, choose one above but you are forced to do something dangerous to remain on the force.

On a miss, someone in a position over you is dedicated to getting back at you.

Crime Doesn't Pay - Nobody does better than you when the heat is on from the scum of the city. When rolling in opposition to criminals of any sort, you add +1 to your roll.

Supercop - Whether through training or natural ability, you're faster, stronger, and just generally more of a badass than your peers on the force. You receive a +1 to all Stunt rolls.

Corrupt Is As Corrupt Does - At the beginning of the movie, state whether you're fighting or aiding the forces of corruption. You receive two Corruption Points. Spend these one for one through the course of the movie as you would a hold. Each time you spend a Corruption Point, choose one of the following:

- Gain access to drugs.
- Gain access to weapons.
- Gain access to vice.
- Gain access to stolen mundane goods.
- Gain access to an off-limits location.

Access should be read very broadly and change in meaning depending on whether the character is fighting corruption or corrupt. For example, an honest cop with this move might gain access to drugs, with the Director setting up a scene in which following bribes leads to a city councilwoman's drug deal, while a corrupt cop would use it to snag drugs from a bust for his or her own use.

High Speed Chase - Nobody's better than you in a chase. When you're behind the wheel, roll +Swagger:

On a 10+, choose both. On a 7-9, choose one:

- You get where you want really fast
- You're safe

On a miss, you're not as good as you thought you were. You crash.

The Cop Movie

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

Cop flicks tend to revolve around anti-establishment motifs in an extremely emotional manner. Someone in a position of authority is always corrupt. It might be the police brass above them. More often it's local governmental authorities, particularly in American cop movies. Crime is usually rampant and it's abetted by the systemic corruption at play.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

- police vehicle
- news chopper
- 9mm pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud)
- assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- SWAT vest (2-armor)
- nightstick (2-harm, -hand)
- tear gas grenades (6-harm, -close, -refill)
- drug package (-valuable)

Villain

Drug Kingpin - Wants to sell. Wants to scourge.

- Use drugs to influence the masses
- Display incredibly violent and erratic behavior
- Offer drugs
- Offer money
- Buy someone off
- Bring in dangerous foreigners
- Wield power of an addict

Assassin - Wants to kill. Wants to hunt.

- Put someone in his or her sights (literally)
- Reveal he or she has been in disguise the whole time
- Disappear into thin air
- Whip out high tech or military grade weaponry
- Use superior martial arts
- Shoot someone in a dramatic or emotional fashion
- Make a death defying escape

Mafia Boss - Wants to control. Wants to show honor.

- Send out a hit
- Take over a neighborhood (but just one; there are rules)
- Make peace or war with another family
- Buy off a cop or politician
- Appeal to bonds of tradition or family
- Offer protection
- Get out of legal trouble
- Buy someone off
- Promote someone
- Find someone who doesn't want to be found

Police Chief - Wants to hide. Wants to bully.

- Have someone arrested
- Beat someone up
- Escape via technicality of the law
- Disappear in the nick of time
- the whole precinct after someone
- Demote or promote someone, literally or figuratively
- Bribe someone
- Trade integrity for power

Corrupt Politician - Wants to control. Wants to be loved.

- Exploit privatization for his or her own gain
- Deliver a rousing speech that makes converts of listeners
- Weasel out of trouble
- Reveal megalomania
- Turn the public against someone
- Offer a way out
- Have a closed door meeting

Master Thief - Wants to be rich. Wants to be thrilled.

- Misdirect attention to someone else
- Reveal that he or she stole something while you were distracted
- Reveal a key weakness in a person, structure, or system
- Successfully feign innocence
- Reveal he or she has been in disguise the whole time
- Has just the right tools for the job
- Make a death defying escape



MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE



NOTES



The Fighting Tournament Movie

ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

An underdog enters a fighting tournament for pride, vengeance, or redemption. An older guy trains the hero up for a big tournament invariably run by a drug lord or some other unsavory type. The Karate Kid, Kickboxer III, Bloodsport: this is the sort of movie in which The Pugilist can really shine

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 An heirloom for your shared fighting style
- 3 Childhood friends
- 4 The villain hurt both of you in some way
- 5 Teacher and student
- 6 In a war together
- 7 Loved the same person
- 8 Students at the same dojo
- 9 Rival schools
- 10 Family
- 11 Own a business together
- 12 Tourists in a strange land

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone has his or her fists and an outfit appropriate to his or her fighting style. That's it.

Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Not Tommy! NO! - Eventually, the friends in the movie are going to have to face each other. One of them is going to hurt one of the others, probably badly. That's a real shame. It's also an awesome time to go heavy on the pathos. Once per movie, you can declare that you're fighting one of the other PCs in the next action scene. The Director must make this happen. When the scene takes place, roll +Drama: **On a 10+**, you've killed the other character accidentally. Let out a cry to the heavens! The other party gains 2 XP, per usual, and automatically goes up 1 in Star Power. You gain 1 XP. Camaraderie goes up by 1, and you're allowed to make a Vengeance move, just as if your pal had died at the hands of NPCs. **On a 7-9**, the other party is seriously injured. You both gain 1 XP. You feel really bad about this. Take -1 forward. Camaraderie also goes down by 1. **On a miss**, you've flubbed your moves and delivered a silly scene where gravity was needed. Both take -1 forward. Fight the scene as normal and let things go where they will. Obviously, this move cannot kill the Lead. Instead, on a 10+ the injury is truly dire and the star must make that much more effort to come back from it.

Hands of Stone - When fighting with your fists in an organized setting (tournament, organized fight, boxing match, etc) you gain +1 to all Stunt and Close Combat rolls.

Float Like A Butterfly - Once per movie, you can gain an automatic 10+ on a Close Combat roll. Just tell the Director when you want to do it and it'll happen.

I've Seen This Style Before - You've been around the fighting circuit long enough to have seen it all. When you get ready to fight someone, declare what fighting style your opponent is using and roll +Swagger.

On a 10+, choose two.
On a 7-9, choose one.

- You will turn your opponent's best move against him or her
- You will avoid all harm in the coming fight
- You will intimidate the crowd, becoming a fan favorite
- You will intimidate a foe with your obvious knowledge of fighting

On a miss, you aren't as smart as you think you are. The Director makes a move against you, one that hurts. Tell everyone some details about this school of fighting.

Work It Like JCVD - Even the toughest fighter needs a little R&R. Between fights, you like to party at nightclubs, bars, and beach lounges. You also really like to dance. When you go out carousing with the locals, roll +Magnetism:
On a 10+, you're smooth as hell and rad to the max. Launch an immediate Love Scene move with one of the people you managed to hook up with. You also impressed the locals with your moves at the club; one of your new buds will help you when you need it most. **On a 7-9**, not bad on the social front but you may have overindulged a little bit. You have a morning hangover. Take -1 forward and choose one:
• Tell how the owner of the tournament is secretly monstrous
• Tell the Director who is now your friend
On a miss, you've made a serious social faux pas. A fight breaks out at the bar or club. Take -1 for the scene while you try not to get beaten up.



The Fighting Tournament Movie

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

When the time comes, play up the combination of badass and underdog for the Lead. The weenies at the front of the tournament bracket should fall like wheat before a scythe. Things get tougher around the semifinals (and by all means, make an actual bracket), until the cheating, conniving final bout against whatever asshole is champion. That's when things get super tough.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

Everyone has his or her fists and an outfit appropriate to his or her fighting style. That's it.

Villain

Mister Big - Wants to be on top. Wants to stay in control.

- Bring big money and influence to bear
- Disappear into his or her fortress
- Whip out military hardware
- Call on his or her bodyguards for help
- Reorganize the tournament's rules
- Throw someone out of the tournament
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills

Bloodthirsty Monster - Wants to inflict physical pain and mental anguish.

- Attack with intense savagery
- Hurt a character's dearest loved one
- Show his or her disgusting heart
- Shrug off injury
- Get the crowd to switch sides
- Taunt someone to fury

Darwinist - Wants to cull the weak. Wants to determine the best.

- Reorganize the tournament's rules
- See into someone's mind
- Obscure his or her true motivations
- Declare someone the strongest so that everyone agrees
- Call on his or her bodyguards for help
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills
- Decree a death sentence for a fight's loser

MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE

NOTES



The Ninja Movie

ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

Ninja movies don't really lean on decent martial arts skills. They rely on magic. The movie ninja is less Bruce Lee, more Merlin. Smoke bombs, disappearing into thin air, playing dead, and killing with a touch! Embrace the silliness of walking turtles and Power Rangers. You'll be closer to the style than a more serious take.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 Reincarnated lovers
- 3 Your souls are claimed by a demon
- 4 Former Yakuza members
- 5 A sword, hundreds of years old
- 6 Members of rival schools, now allies
- 7 Loved the same person
- 8 Members of the same ninja clan
- 9 A shared thirst for revenge
- 10 The war
- 11 You thought that you'd killed one another
- 12 A lost medallion

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone gets a ninja outfit, including mask, in a color of the player's choice.

Everyone also receives the following:

- katana (2-harm, -hand, -deadly)
- dagger (1-harm, -hand)
- shurikens (1-harm, -close, -reload)

In addition, pick one extra ninja weapon:

- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed)
- Choking gas bombs (S-damage, -close, -refill, -area)
- Bo staff (2-harm, -hand, +1 Stunt moves)
- Nunchaku (1-harm, -hand, -area)
- Layered ninja clothing, 1-pt of armor



Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

Puff of Smoke - You can disappear into thin air with the aid of a smoke bomb or other ninja device. When you want to disappear, roll +Swagger:

On a 10+, you disappear. When you come back, you have the element of surprise. Gain a +1 for the scene to all rolls when you decide to return.

On a 7-9, you manage to get away, but you are seen at the last second. Get away but choose one:

- Take one level of harm.
- You cannot use the Puff of Smoke move again in this movie.

On a miss, your smoke is too thin, the wind too strong, etc. for your disappearance to work. You look pretty silly and the Director makes a move against you.

Opossum - You can play dead with amazing precision. Once per movie, declare that you are playing dead at a dramatically appropriate moment. Everyone thinks you are dead, whether your "corpse" is available or not.

You gain XP for this fake death, just as if you had truly died; this does mean that you can gain dying XP twice in a single movie should you die for real later on. While "dead", you are safe from harm and plot complications and all observers, both PC and NPC, act as though you are dead and gone.

Dim Mak - By focusing your chi, you can kill with a touch, the art of Dim Mak. All it takes is some brief but intense meditation and a willingness to become an avatar of Death. When you meditate on killing with the power of chi, roll +Drama.

On a 10+, you have the -deadly quality when attacking with your bare hands. This lasts for the rest of the scene.

On a 7-9, as above but you take one level of harm as your chi is turned inward for dark purposes. As well, for the rest of the movie you gain one small but extremely noticeable deformity.

On a miss, your meditation on dark chi goes horribly wrong. Take two levels of harm. You gain one serious, overt deformity for the rest of the movie.

Nimble Extreme - You have unparalleled reflexes and balance. Take +1 to all Stunt moves based on +Dexterity.

Flying Debris - You can throw anything you're physically able to lift with the grace and accuracy of a throwing star. All such items you use as weapons have the -Near and -Refill qualities. If you throw something designed to be a throwing weapon, such as a throwing knife or javelin, you do +1 harm.

The Ninja Movie

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

Cop flicks tend to revolve around anti-establishment motifs in an extremely emotional manner. Someone in a position of authority is always corrupt. It might be the police brass above them. More often it's local governmental authorities, particularly in American cop movies. Crime is usually rampant and it's abetted by the systemic corruption at play.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

- katana (2-harm, -hand, -deadly)
- dagger (1-harm, -hand)
- shurikens (1-harm, -close, -reload)
- Bow (2-harm, -long, -reload, -two-handed)
- Choking gas bombs (S-damage, -close, -refill, -area)
- Bo staff (2-harm, -hand, +1 Stunt moves)
- Nunchaku (1-harm, -hand, -area)
- Layered ninja clothing, 1-pt of armor

Villain

Yakuza Lord - Wants to expand his or her influence. Wants to corrupt.


- Bring big money and influence to bear
- Summon a horde of mooks
- Reveal the meaning of his or her tattoos
- Escape
- Reveal unexpected corruption
- Bring forth a character's captured loved one
- Show off his or her secret fighting skills

Master Ninja - Wants to be hidden. Wants to show his or her clan is the deadliest.

- Disappear in a puff of smoke
- Play dead
- Attack with alacrity
- Whip out a hidden weapon
- Blend into a crowd
- Reveal a heretofore unknown tie with a character
- Challenge someone to a one on one battle

MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE



NOTES



The War Movie



ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

War movies are some of the most common action flicks. They err on the side of high body counts and big explosions, but there's almost always a vein of the deeply personal in them. Emotions should be punchy and loud. Characters should almost always be grunts. Your only friends are the other men and women who went through what you went through.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 Played a pro sport together before the war
- 3 Secretly military intelligence
- 4 Rivals keeping track of kills
- 5 Went to boot camp together
- 6 Hate the same officer
- 7 From the same home town
- 8 Veterans of the same past war
- 9 A stash of hidden loot
- 10 The girl/guy back home
- 11 Fellow new blood
- 12 Saved you from certain death

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

Everyone gets a pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud), a uniform, and picks one:

- assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- rocket launcher (4-harm, -far, -area, -messy, -refill)
- grenades (2-harm, -close, -refill, -area)
- submachine gun (2-harm, -close, -autofire, -loud)
- sniper rifle (3-harm, -far, -deadly, -reload)

Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

All-Star Cast - This move is only available to one character; once it's picked, that's it. It also cannot be picked by the Lead. Picking this move means that everyone is subject to the same rules as the Lead. Go nuts.

Unlike the actual Lead, the other characters may die if they choose to, gaining XP per normal if they do. It is entirely up to them and they will not die otherwise.

The character picking this move gains 1 XP immediately upon choosing it in recognition of the generosity of his or her player.

This move cannot be made permanent with XP.

Demolitions Specialist - On a Violence roll of 10+, something always explodes. It does not cost you one of your choices.

Die Well - You die with panache. When you die, give a speech on your way out. Choose one listener to hear your wise and/or dramatic words. He or she gains 1 XP.

Barking Orders - You're both fearsome and inspiring when the heat's on. When you start barking orders, roll +Drama:

On a 10+, one person of your choice who hears your voice is inspired, taking +1 forward.

On a 7-9, one person of your choice takes +1 forward, while one other person takes -1 forward.

On a miss, everyone who hears your speech is unsettled. They take -1 forward.

Always Something There To Remind Me

Pick a memento of something you love, like a picture of your mom or the flag of your country. So long as you have this with you to inspire you, you take +1 on all moves. However, when you miss any physical move while you have your talisman, you lose it or it's destroyed; you take -1 on all moves for the rest of the film.

Last Gasp - When you die, make one final Violence move. That move is considered a 10+ success. You then expire as normal.

The War Movie

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

War movies are some of the most common action flicks. They err on the side of high body counts and big explosions, but there's almost always a vein of the deeply personal in them. Emotions should be punchy and loud. Characters should almost always be grunts. Your only friends are the other men and women who went through what you went through.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

- assault rifle (3-harm, -far/close, -autofire, -loud)
- rocket launcher (4-harm, -far, -area, -messy, -refill)
- grenades (2-harm, -close, -refill, -area)
- pistol (2-harm, -close, -loud)
- submachine gun (2-harm, -close, -autofire, -loud)
- sniper rifle (3-harm, -far, -deadly, -reload)

Villain

Enemy Army - Wants to kill.

Wants to conquer.

- Shell a position from afar
- Launch a frontal assault
- Pray a relationship
- Make someone bug out
- Send in the tanks
- Sow doubt amongst the ranks

The Army You Fight For - Wants to control.

Wants to waste time.

- Call for a meaningless patrol
- Throw someone in the brig
- Send a platoon into the meat grinder
- Cancel or grant R&C
- Find a code violation
- Cow someone of low rank
- Fray a relationship

The Environment - Wants to exhaust.

Wants to endure.

- Conjure extreme weather
- Cause people to get lost
- Cause people to get stuck
- Conceal the enemy
- Starve soldiers of food or hope
- Reveal locals

Foreign Ideology - Wants to control.

Wants to be loved.

- Seduce someone to its side
- Reveal the power of an idea
- Cause betrayal
- Inspire fanaticism
- Sow doubt amongst the ranks

MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE



NOTES



The Sci Fi Flick

ACTORS' SCRIPT

Description

Lasers, space ships, and lost planets. Themes of loneliness and isolation. The erosion of the mind by bad guys. Space warps your senses, both of self and others. It's a particular breed of sci-fi, one with guns and big effects. Rubber suits. Explosions. Star Wars, maybe. Space Mutiny, definitely.

Relationships

Starting with the Lead, each player establishes a relationship with the player to his or her left. Roll 2d6 or make something up:

- 2 clones, but you don't know it yet
- 3 served together in the space special ops
- 4 siblings
- 5 friendly rivals
- 6 work buddies
- 7 friends
- 8 made a discovery together
- 9 share an odd technical hobby
- 10 part of the same group of colonists or explorers
- 11 romantically involved
- 12 clones, and you know it

Gear

Each player should pick one gear combo listed below. Unlike the Script's moves, there is no limit to how many players may pick each gear combo.

- BFG (3-harm, -deadly, -loud, -autofire, -area, -messy).
- Environment/space suit (2-armor), tools, welding kit (2-harm, -hand).
- Space armor (2-armor), standard issue side-arm (2-harm, -close).
- A lab full of cool devices, books, and tools (-valuable, +1 to science, engineering, knowledge moves), side arm (2-harm, -close).
- A space ship (-deadly, -valuable) either small and fast or big and slow, side arm (2-harm, -close).
- A gear combo from any other movie script, but add the -alive and -loud tags: they're AI powered devices.
- The clothes on your back. Hold 3, trade in one for one to get +1 to moves involving getting equipment



Moves

Each move may only be picked by two players. As with relationships, the Lead picks first before passing to his or her left. This continues until each player has one Script move.

From Another Star - You aren't human. Take +2 to one stat (max +3) and -1 to another. Describe how you're different from humans. If you're an inhuman monster looking thing, take another +1 to Muscles or Agility (max +3), and -1 to Magnetism. This move cannot be made permanent with experience.

Integrity Breach - When in space, in a ship or otherwise, you have a new option added to your Violence moves to choose from:

- You cause a breach through which the void rushes in.

Impossible Knowledge of the Unknown
When you encounter something humanity has never seen before, tell everyone what it is and roll +Drama:
On a 10+, take +1 forward on all moves related to this thing
On a 7-9, gain a hold against this thing

Short Circuit - Once during your movie, introduce an invention that breaks the laws of nature. Describe its purpose. Roll +Drama:

- On a 10+, pick three:
 - On a 7-9, pick two:
 - On a miss, pick one, and you may make this move again later in the movie.
 - Your invention mostly works
 - Your invention doesn't mutilate or transform people nearby
 - Your invention doesn't open a rift in reality
- Your invention doesn't require all nearby power

Alien Musk - When you encounter a member of another species, roll +Magnetism
On a 10+, choose two:
On a 7-9, choose one:
• The alien wants to be your friend
• The alien wants to be your lover
• The alien won't try to harm your friends
• The alien won't try to harm you
On a miss, the alien definitely wants to harm you and your friends.

The Sci Fi Flick

DIRECTOR'S SCRIPT

Description

Lasers, space ships, and lost planets. Themes of loneliness and isolation. The erosion of the mind by bad guys. Space warps your senses, both of self and others. It's a particular breed of sci-fi, one with guns and big effects. Rubber suits. Explosions. Star Wars, maybe. Space Mutiny, definitely.

Gear

The bad guys will probably be using the same kind of things as the heroes, just not as well.

- BFG (3-harm, -deadly, -loud, -autofire, -area, -messy).
- Environment/space suit (2-armor)
- Welding kit (2-harm, -hand)
- Space armor (2-armor)
- Science lab (-valuable)
- A space ship (-deadly, -valuable)
- A ray gun (2-harm, -hand, -deadly)
- Artificial Intelligence powered gear (-alive, -loud)

Villain

Bloodthirsty Alien Hunter - Wants to prove superiority and enjoy a clean kill.

- Attack with intense savagery
- Show its disgusting heart
- Shrug off injury
- Disappear into thin air
- Use superior biology

Pod People - Wants to replace. Wants to deceive.

- Appear as a character's loved one
- Cause pods
- Attack in waves
- Emit a terrible shriek
- Coat in slime

Incoming Asteroid - Wants to annihilate.

- Cause panic
- Create a crime wave
- Reveal hedonism
- Break into pieces
- Escalate government overreach

Alien Army - Wants to kill. Wants to conquer.

- Shell a position from orbit
- Launch a frontal assault
- Seize a strategic location
- Make someone bug out
- Send in the hover tanks
- Deploy Impossible Weapons (make plants attack, remote control cars, etc)

Hostile Planet - Wants to exhaust. Wants to endure. Wants to tear a hole in your space suit.

- Conjure extreme weather
- Cause people to get lost
- Cause people to get struck
- Conceal the enemy
- Starve people of air or water
- Reveal locals

Time Traveller - Special
Take a villain from another movie, give it a cool "sciency" power like a spaceship, an amazing laser blaster, or a monofilament blade.

MOVIE TITLE

CAMARADERIE



NOTES



Set Up Your Movie:



Before the first movie begins, players should each pick an Actor Playbook and name their actors.

These are their characters for the entire campaign, movie after movie. Each Actor Playbook may only be chosen once, so no duplicates. Pick moves, stats, names, etc. for your Actors.



1. The players and Director pick one of the Scripts that suits the genre of action film they want to portray.
2. Determine who is the Lead. If this is your very first movie, either select amicably or roll dice to see who gets to be the Lead. If it's not, the Actor with the highest Star Power is the Lead; roll in case of a tie. Remember, everyone gets a turn at being the Lead before anyone gets a second turn. This supersedes the Star Power rule.
3. Each player, starting with the Lead, picks exactly one move from the list for the chosen Script. Each move, unless otherwise noted, may only be chosen twice across the group, i.e. only two people in a group can pick the same move.
4. Each player picks a gear set for his or her character. At the same time, name your character for the duration of the movie. Obviously, this is different from the Actor's name. My real name is Ian, my Actor is Chase Buzzington, and he's playing Malcolm Powerstein in this movie. Why pick your names now, after your gear? Because gear has the potential to clarify details about your character. If you decide to pick the SWAT gear in a cop movie, you might pick a "tough" sounding name, while a more standard gear loadout might have you thinking in more muted terms.
5. Choose highlighted stats. Each character has two for the duration of a given movie. The first one is always the primary stat listed on a character's Actor playbook. The other is entirely up to the Director. This is to represent the Director telling the actors to emote more, drop more one-liners, etc. Every 10+ rolled on either of a character's highlighted stats nets that character a tick.
6. The Director makes the initial pick for Villain from the Script's list. The players then approve or reject the choice. With the Villain chosen, the Director should assign details to him or her: gender, name, specific motivations and techniques. Remain flexible about this and sketch broadly.
7. Each player determines a relationship with the person on his or her left. Each Script has some sample relationships provided in a 2d6 format but, seriously, don't automatically roll this. This is for ease of use only. Pick one. Even better, make one up when it's your turn. Mix all three techniques, if you want.
8. Discuss these relationships in more detail. If two players are siblings in the cop movie, what does that mean? Are they both cops? Is one a former mobster trying to go good? Do they like each other or just tolerate each other? Remember, the characters are good guys. They can use questionable techniques, but nobody should be an outright bad guy, at least when the movie starts.
9. You should now have a hazy Point A (the characters, their relationships, and movie genre) and Point Z (the Villain's type/motivation and movie genre). Begin to fill in the remaining blanks and elaborate on relationships. Try to formulate the first big action scene and how to work it in as soon as possible.
10. Name your movie. This is kind of a big deal. Just as action movie characters tend to shoot for cool only to hit absurd with their names, so should your movie. What's in a name? A whole lot, actually. What's cool about the movie's name in the context of a roleplaying game is that it can really spark ideas about how things should evolve. Commando implies something very different than Deadly Prey, yet both are about lone military badasses stuck in bad situations.
11. Players and Director should roughly estimate how many sessions they want the movie to take. AMW is designed for 1-3 sessions per movie, but you can do deep dives on individual movies and keep a single Script in use for many, many sessions. Whatever's decided, it shouldn't be viewed as immutable. Rather, consider it a target length which will inform how aggressively the Director frames the scenes. If it's a one-shot, the Director is going to have to keep things moving at a much faster pace than he or she would with a three session game.

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