

The Resolution Cards

These cards are used to determine the outcome of an action the character attempts. They not only tell you whether or not you succeeded, but also addresses unexpected changes in the situation. The exact results of the cards are up to one of the players to describe, but it's inadvisable to let the whole plot hinge on one card. If you draw a card to "find out who the mysterious enemy is" and get a yes-card, suddenly half the adventure is over.

Whenever a player's character - or an NPC - wants to do something difficult or dramatic let another player draw a card and narrate how the situation resolves. This is important, so I'll repeat it: If you're trying to do something, someone else will draw the card and tell you how it works out.

The cards emphasize a collaborative form of storytelling/role playing. The game is viewed more as a collective exercise in improvisation and creativity than a "game than can be won/lost" in the traditional sense. The cards introduce an element of chance somewhat in the way dice usually do, but leave more of the interpretation to the player than what is common. They also affect the outcome of actions in a somewhat more elaborate way than a simple result of "success" or "failure."

Knowing when it's appropriate to ask for a resolution card is somewhat up to the fingerspitzgefühl of the group. It has more to do with the vibe around the table and the dramatic curve of the session than any clear-cut rules. Here are, however, some suggestions;

It's appropriate to ask for a resolution card when:

1. You have decided that your character is going to do something.
2. This action is too difficult for anyone to succeed at, but not impossible. There is a fair chance that the character might fail.
3. The result of the action will affect the rest of the story. Consider what is at stake. If it's of little importance whether the character succeeds or not, it's not really necessary to draw a card.

When you ask for a card, one of the other players draws the card, reads it and describes what happens. This player may overrule both you and the game master. Both things in the setting and things affecting your role may be part of the description.

Other players and the game master may also suggest that a resolution card should be drawn. The game master may demand that a card is to be drawn, if he feels it is essential to the dramatic development of the story.

The cards are:

Yes, but... You succeed, but something completely unrelated goes wrong, for someone you or someone you care about. Describe the success, but also what goes wrong and for whom.

Yes, but... You succeed, but the consequences of your actions are different from what you expected. Describe the success and how it differs from the character's original intention.

Yes, but... You succeed, and achieve more than expected. Maybe a bit too much? Describe the success and to what degree it overwhelms the character.

No, but... You fail, but another positive thing happens instead, unrelated to what you were aiming for. Describe both the failure and the positive happenstance.

Meanwhile, somewhere else... Cut the scene just before we get to know the result. Come back to the scene later. Establish the new scene (who are there, where is it, what seems to be going on?)

The conflict escalates! Tension rises as the conflict, the problem or the stakes are raised a notch. Describe how the problems are increased for the character.

You need help. You end up understanding you need the help of someone not currently in the scene to achieve this. Describe how the character's attempt is botched, and suggest his realization that he needs help, maybe even whose help is needed.

Yes, but only if... You can get what you want - but only if you choose to make a certain sacrifice. Describe how the character realizes that a sacrifice is necessary to achieve his aims.

Yes, but... You succeed, but lose something valuable in the process.

No, and... Not only do you fail, something else goes wrong, too! Describe how the character fails and what goes wrong in addition to his failure.

Yes, but only if... You achieve what you try to do, but only at the cost of getting a friend into trouble. Describe how the character succeeds and how this success brings a friend into trouble.

Yes, and... You succeed, and your success has positive side-effects for a friend.

Examples of play

Your character, a private eye with only a cat as his family, sneaks into the house of a known anarchist to steal his diary. Will he succeed? One of the other players draws a card, sees the result, and decided;

Yes, but... You succeed, but something completely unrelated goes wrong, for someone you or someone you care about.

- As this happens, the anarchists steals your cat.

Yes, but... You succeed, but the consequences of your actions are different from what you expected.

- You get a hold of the diary, but it turns out to contain a detailed description of your own life!

Yes, but... You succeed, and achieve more than expected. Maybe a bit too much?

- Skimming through the newly acquired diary on a street-corner outside the anarchist's apartment, you see that it contains a bunch of love-letters from your sister, addressed to the anarchist!

No, but... You fail, but another positive thing happens instead, unrelated to what you were aiming for.

- You're unable to find the diary, but as you search the anarchist's apartment, you come across detailed plans to blow up the local precinct tomorrow at noon!

Meanwhile, somewhere else... Cut the scene just before we get to know the result.

- You sneak into the apartment, carefully open the anarchist's desk drawer and, meanwhile, on the other side of town, one of your friends sees the anarchist crossing the street!

The conflict escalates! Tension rises as the conflict, the problem or the stakes are raised a notch.

- As you pick up the diary, you hear someone at the door. The anarchist has returned home!

You need help. You end up understanding you need the help of someone not currently in the scene to achieve this.

- The anarchist's safe is locked with a special anarchist code. You need of the help of another anarchist to open it.

Yes, but only if... You can get what you want - but only if you choose to make a certain sacrifice.

- You see the diary on top of a shelf. But the shelf appears to have been painted newly. You can get it, but only if you sacrifice your brand new trench coat.

Yes, but... You succeed, but lose something valuable in the process.

- You get the diary, but when you leave the apartment, you realize that you've lost your wallet back there.

No, and... Not only do you fail, something else goes wrong, too!

- You can't find the diary, but in the search one of the anarchist's shelves tips over and pins you under it! You're trapped!

Yes, but only if... You achieve what you try to do, but only at the cost of getting a friend into trouble.

- You find the diary, but it contains information implicating your friend in an anarchist plot!

Yes, and... You succeed, and your success has positive side-effects for a friend.

You find the diary, and it contains information about an anarchist plot against your friend!