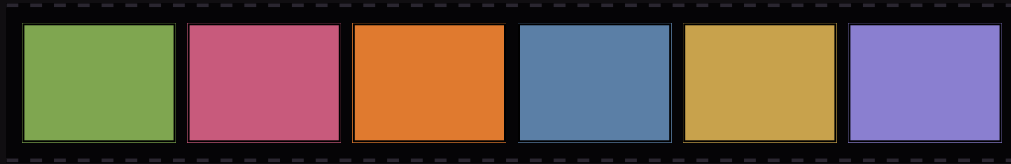




THE GENRE-MASHUP TABLETOP RPG

SPLICE

EVERY GENRE IS A REEL. SPLICE THEM TOGETHER.



PLAYTEST EDITION • V0.5

WRITTEN BY MATTHEW "TOFUWATER" JOHNSON

EIGHTEEN GENRES • BUILT FOR ONE-SHOTS AND SHORT RUNS

THE WHOLE IDEA

*Every movie has its own physics. A horror film and a heist do not obey the same rules and should not roll the same way. In **SPLICE** each genre is a self-contained film Reel with its own dice mechanic, its own pressure, and its own kind of scene. You splice two or three Reels together to run a mashup, and the genres take turns leading the camera.*

This book has everything to run the game or build your own version. If you only read one page, read this one. Three rules carry the entire system. Everything else is decoration on top of them.

***SPLICE** is built for short play: a complete Feature is a single one-shot, or a limited run of two to three sessions. There is no open-ended campaign. Everything is tuned to burn hot and end on a climax. (Loved it and want more? See "Where to Go Next.")*

RULE 01 — DIFFERENT DICE, SAME THREE OUTCOMES

Each Reel rolls dice its own way (a shrinking pool, a push-your-luck climb, exploding dice, a corruptible count, a flashback bank, a double-edged d12). But every Reel reports exactly one of three results. This is the universal socket that lets any two genres meet.

HIT

you get what you wanted

COST

you get it, but pressure rises

MISS

you fail, the genre takes over

RULE 02 — ONE REEL IS ON-SCREEN AT A TIME

A scene is filmed through exactly one genre. That genre's dice are the only dice you roll. The other genres live in the fiction as flavor and complications, not competing math. This is what keeps a mashup coherent instead of turning into two rulebooks stapled together.

RULE 03 — PRESSURE MOVES THE CAMERA

Every Reel has a Pressure Track (Horror's Dread, Noir's Case, and so on). When the on-screen Reel's pressure hits its limit, the scene CUTS and the camera toggles to another Reel, carrying the momentum. Pressure is the metronome that drives the session and hands the spotlight between genres.

// If you remember only those three rules, you can run this game.

HOW TO READ THE DICE (FOR NEWCOMERS)

d6, d10, d12 are dice with that many sides; **2d6** means "roll two six-sided dice and add them." A **pool** is several dice rolled together where you count how many show a target number. **Exploding** means a max roll (a 10 on a d10) rolls again and adds. **Opposed** means you and the Director both roll and compare. **Difficulty** is a target number the Director sets. A **Prep token** is a marker you spend, never a die you roll.

MAKE A CHARACTER

Two minutes, five choices, and you are ready to play. In a real hurry, skip to the Prebuilt Archetypes on the next page and just grab one.

A character is four **Attributes** that every genre reinterprets. A brave firefighter is brave in a mystery and brave in a horror film; only what "brave" *does* changes.

ATTRIBUTE	THE CROSS-GENRE QUESTION IT ANSWERS
Nerve	Can you stay cool when it counts? Courage, poise, bluff.
Heart	Can you connect, feel, and mean it? Empathy, passion, reading people.
Wits	Can you see what is really going on? Intellect, perception, cunning.
Body	Can you make the physical world obey? Force, speed, stamina.

1. ATTRIBUTES

Assign one **3**, one **2**, one **1**, and one **0** across the four. Attribute 0 (Weak) never forbids an action; you just roll small.

2. ROLE

One phrase: "the exhausted paramedic," "the disgraced detective." Fiction only, but the Director can Compel it for Spotlight.

3. BONDS

One or two named relationships. Invoke a Bond once per session, acting on it directly, for +2 or a reroll, in any Feature.

4. SECRET

One thing your character hides. Some genres turn it against you, and the Director can Compel it.

5. SKILLS

Pick **4** in a two-Reel Feature (5 in a three-Reel Feature) from your Feature's Reels, at least one from each. Every skill has a full in-genre effect and a smaller Boon it lends to other genres. Skills never gate what you attempt; they only add their effect.

THEN

Start with **3 Spotlight** (hold at most 5).

Creation steps are order-independent. Read the three rules, and play.

PREBUILT ARCHETYPES

In a hurry? Grab a trope instead of building from scratch. Each fixes your four Attributes and Role and seeds a Bond and Secret. Once the Feature's Reels are set, take the skills keyed to your two strong Attributes (4 in a two-Reel Feature, 5 in a three-Reel), one from each Reel. Twelve tropes, twelve arrays, so a table never clones.

THE RELUCTANT EVERYPERSON

Nerve 1 • Heart 3 • Wits 2 • Body 0

Role: "the ordinary person who never asked for this."

Bond / Secret: someone whose safety pulled you in; you already tried to walk away once.

Lean: your Feature's Heart and Wits skills. **Plays like:** the audience's eyes; empathy and quick thinking, never muscle.

THE FEMME FATALE

Nerve 2 • Heart 3 • Wits 1 • Body 0

Role: "the one everyone wants and no one should trust."

Bond / Secret: someone you are using or falling for; you are working a secret angle.

Lean: your Feature's Heart and Nerve skills. **Plays like:** charm and ice; your loyalties are the plot's engine.

THE LEADER

Nerve 1 • Heart 3 • Wits 0 • Body 2

Role: "the one who has to keep everyone alive."

Bond / Secret: you are responsible for someone here; a call you made once got people killed.

Lean: your Feature's Heart and Body skills. **Plays like:** rally the group and stand in front; the weight is yours.

THE GRIZZLED VETERAN

Nerve 2 • Heart 0 • Wits 1 • Body 3

Role: "too worn to scare, too scarred to soften."

Bond / Secret: a protege or a debt to the dead; the job that went wrong made you this.

Lean: your Feature's Body and Nerve skills. **Plays like:** unflappable and hard; you have seen worse and it shows.

THE MUSCLE

Nerve 1 • Heart 2 • Wits 0 • Body 3

Role: "the one they send when talking is over."

Bond / Secret: fierce loyalty to a person or crew; what you did for the people you owe.

Lean: your Feature's Body and Heart skills. **Plays like:** gentle giant or blunt instrument; loyalty is your compass.

THE DAREDEVIL

Nerve 1 • Heart 0 • Wits 2 • Body 3

Role: "the one who does the impossible thing."

Bond / Secret: a rival who pushes you, or a crowd you perform for; you chase a high, not a cause.

Lean: your Feature's Body and Wits skills. **Plays like:** physical genius, allergic to caution.

THE BRAIN

Nerve 2 • Heart 1 • Wits 3 • Body 0

Role: "the one with the answer and no bedside manner."

Bond / Secret: the person who still believes in you; you buried or faked a result once.

Lean: your Feature's Wits and Nerve skills. **Plays like:** the plan, the science, the clue; cool and distant.

THE FIXER

Nerve 1 • Heart 0 • Wits 3 • Body 2

Role: "the one who always lands on their feet."

Bond / Secret: someone who owes you, or you owe; who you sold out to still be standing.

Lean: your Feature's Wits and Body skills. **Plays like:** resourceful and hard to kill; every room has an exit.

THE OBSESSIVE INVESTIGATOR

Nerve 1 • Heart 2 • Wits 3 • Body 0

Role: "the one who cannot let the case go."

Bond / Secret: a victim you owe the truth; the obsession cost you your old life.

Lean: your Feature's Wits and Heart skills. **Plays like:** relentless empathy for the dead; you see what others miss.

THE LONER

Nerve 3 • Heart 0 • Wits 1 • Body 2

Role: "the stranger with a code and no address."

Bond / Secret: the one person who got through the wall; the reason you can never stay.

Lean: your Feature's Nerve and Body skills. **Plays like:** quiet, capable, unattached; do the right thing, then leave.

THE ROOKIE

Nerve 3 • Heart 1 • Wits 2 • Body 0

Role: "the new one, underestimated, in over their head."

Bond / Secret: a mentor you want to impress; you lied to get in the door.

Lean: your Feature's Nerve and Wits skills. **Plays like:** fresh eyes and steady nerve; you surprise everyone.

THE IDEALIST

Nerve 3 • Heart 2 • Wits 1 • Body 0

Role: "the one who still thinks it can be better."

Bond / Secret: the cause, or a fellow believer; a doubt you cannot admit.

Lean: your Feature's Nerve and Heart skills.

Plays like: courage from conviction; you hold the line on principle.

CHARACTER SHEET

NAME

ROLE (ONE PHRASE)

FEATURE (THE GENRES IN PLAY)

ATTRIBUTES — ASSIGN 3 / 2 / 1 / 0

NERVE

□ □ □

HEART

□ □ □

WITS

□ □ □

BODY

□ □ □

SKILLS — PICK 4 (2-REEL) OR 5 (3-REEL), 1+ PER REEL

BONDS

SECRET

SPOTLIGHT (START 3, MAX 5)

○○○○○

NOTES / CLOCKS & PRESSURE (DREAD, HEAT, MOMENTUM, ETC.)

THE CORE

The Core is genre-agnostic. It is the film stock every Reel is printed on.

THE DIRECTOR AND THE SCENE

One player is the **Director**. They frame scenes, decide which Reel is on-screen, play the off-screen genres as pressure, and call CUT. To frame a scene, the Director names three things: which Reel is on-screen, the scene's question, and where the on-screen pressure sits.

THE UNIVERSAL RESOLUTION FRAME

Whenever an outcome is in doubt, in any genre:

- ♦ **Declare Intent and Attribute.** Say what you want and which Attribute you lean on.
- ♦ **Roll the on-screen Reel's dice.** Only ever the on-screen Reel.
- ♦ **Read Hit, Cost, or Miss.** Each Reel says which results map to which tier.
- ♦ **Apply pressure.** Cost and Miss almost always tick the on-screen Pressure Track toward a CUT.
- ♦ **On a Miss, the genre takes over.** The Director may make that genre's Director Move, the concrete signature bad thing it does.

TWO RULINGS THAT KEEP IT CLEAN

Reels override the Core. Where a Reel's text conflicts with a Core rule, the Reel wins. Sci-Fi's pressure rising only on a 9+ is not a violation; it is the Reel's override. **A Director Move is not a complication.** Complications are fictional obstacles you can negate with Prep or Planned for This. Director Moves are the genre taking over and can never be negated, delayed, or bought off. A Miss always bites.

SAFETY AND TONE

SPLICE runs dark genres side by side. Before session one, agree on Lines (off the table entirely) and Veils (happens but not described). Anyone may call a Cut Away at any moment to skip or fade a scene, no reason required. Treat it as a normal camera direction, not an interruption.

SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight is the one metacurrency, and it is universal. The taps that fill it are wired straight into the dice, so income is automatic and scales up exactly when players are getting crushed.

Start every session with 3 Spotlight and hold at most 5. Because the game is short, Spotlight does not carry between sessions: each session is its own reel and resets to 3. Within a session it never runs dry for long, since the dice keep filling it.

FAUCETS — HOW YOU EARN IT

- ♦ **Miss: +1, automatic.** The genre took over, so you bank the drama. This is the guaranteed tap, and the reason a struggling player is never stuck. The worse the scene goes, the faster Spotlight refills.
- ♦ **Cost: +1 if you accept the Director's complication.** Take the messier outcome for a token, or keep the clean partial success for nothing.
- ♦ **Escalate on purpose: +1, once per scene per player.** Deliberately drive the on-screen pressure toward its climax through your choice. In a genre whose track only moves on dice (like Heist's Clock), deliberately complicating your own plan counts. No single track may be advanced more than 2 this way per scene.
- ♦ **Accept a Compel: +1.** Let your Role, a Bond, or your Secret drag you into trouble. Accept for a token, decline for free.

SINKS — WHAT YOU SPEND IT ON

- ♦ Call a genre's **Player Move** (1).
- ♦ **Double Exposure:** roll two genres at once (1).
- ♦ An extra **Cameo** beyond the free one this scene (1).
- ♦ Force a **Hard Cut** to another Reel now (1).
- ♦ Narrate a **Meanwhile** or flashback (1).
- ♦ **Resist a CUT** for one more beat (1).

THE CAP NEVER PUNISHES A MISS

If a Miss or an accepted Compel would pay you while at the cap, you instead gain a **Retake**: one stored reroll, hold one, it does not count against the cap. The guaranteed faucet stays guaranteed. And you cannot both negate a roll's consequence (Prep or Planned for This) and claim its Cost token; negating forfeits the token, so the specialist loop has a floor.

SPLICING REELS

THE FEATURE

A campaign is a **Feature**: two or three Reels, named as a mashup. Romance // Horror is a Gothic romance. Heist // Action is a getaway thriller. Horror // Noir is an occult mystery. Write a one-line Logline, then set the **Genre Ratio**: which Reel is the A-genre (leads more scenes, usually owns the finale) and which is the B-genre (interrupts, complicates, colors).

ON-SCREEN AND OFF-SCREEN

One Reel is on-screen (its dice are live); the others are off-screen but not asleep. Each Reel has a **Splice Rule**: the one thing it injects into other genres' scenes while off-screen. Off-screen Reels contribute fiction and can still gain pressure, but you do not roll their dice.

CUTTING BETWEEN REELS

- ♦ **Pressure Cut (automatic)**. On-screen pressure hits its limit, the scene CUTS, and the Director frames the next scene through a different Reel with the momentum carried over.
- ♦ **Hard Cut (player-driven)**. Spend 1 Spotlight to toggle the camera now, on your terms.
- ♦ **Director's Cut (framing)**. Between scenes, the Director frames through whichever Reel serves the story and the Ratio.

THE SPLICE — WHEN TWO GENRES COLLIDE IN ONE MOMENT

Sometimes a single moment belongs to both genres at once: the monster is the lover, the perfect score is the trap. Roll the on-screen Reel's dice as normal, but the result hits BOTH Pressure Tracks. Splices are how you earn the mashup instead of alternating between two separate games. Directors should frame at least one per session.

CAMEO & DOUBLE EXPOSURE

Every skill has two uses: a full **in-genre effect** when its own Reel is on-screen, and a smaller **Boon** it lends to other genres' scenes. Those Boons power the two ways a player reaches across genre lines on their own turn.

CAMEO — THE SMALL, SAFE BOON

Invoke one off-genre skill's Boon (a +2, a free fact, or ignore one consequence) while still rolling the on-screen dice. The off-genre track does NOT move. Free once per scene; additional Cameos cost 1 Spotlight each. Use it for a reliable edge without lighting a second fuse.

DOUBLE EXPOSURE — COMBINE THE DICE AND THE SKILLS

- ◆ Declare an on-genre skill and an off-genre skill that both fit.
- ◆ Pay 1 Spotlight.
- ◆ Roll BOTH Reels' dice. Read each on its own Hit / Cost / Miss ladder.
- ◆ Your action resolves on the **better** of the two tiers.
- ◆ But **both** Pressure Tracks tick, and if either die came up Miss, that genre still bites you (its Director Move).

The merge, once: best tier for what you tried, both meters rise, any Miss still hurts. The 1 Spotlight is the entry fee: it does not soften a Miss, a failed die's Director Move fires even through a merged Hit, and a Miss die pays no Spotlight (you already paid to roll it).

WHY NOT JUST ADD THE DICE TOGETHER

Because a shrinking d6 pool, an exploding d10, and a double-edged d12 do not share a number line. They share the Hit / Cost / Miss ladder. Double Exposure combines the outcomes, never the raw numbers. You physically pick up both genres' dice, roll each, read two tiers, and merge, with no props to juggle. Playtested: a competent character lifts their Hit chance from about 42% to 56%, and when one genre alone gave a 0% chance to Hit, crossing bought a coin-flip's chance to win, with the failed genre biting more than half the time.

WORKED EXAMPLE — A DOUBLE EXPOSURE AT THE VAULT DOOR

Odile pays 1 Spotlight and declares Heist (Sell the Cover) + Sci-Fi (Commune). She rolls both. Heist comes up a **Miss**; Sci-Fi lands an exact **Hit**. Her action resolves on the better tier, a **Hit**: the door opens. But the Heist Miss still bites, so the Director fires Heist's **Director Move** (the plan cracks), and both tracks tick a Cost each. The Miss die pays her no Spotlight; the 1 she spent is gone. She got the door and the knife at once. That is the mashup.

RUNNING A FEATURE

SPLICE is built for short play. A Feature is one complete movie: a single one-shot, or a limited run of two to three sessions. There is no open-ended campaign, and the whole system is tuned to burn hot and end on a climax.

THE SHAPE OF A FEATURE

Pick your two or three Reels, name the mashup, set the Genre Ratio, and play it to its finale. Then you are done. A new Feature is a new movie, with new characters if you want them.

ONE-SHOT (A 2 TO 4 HOUR SESSION)

Budget about **4 to 6 scenes**. Let the A-genre's Pressure Track climb toward full across them, and land the finale as it fills. Do not slow pressure down to make the night last; a SPLICE session is supposed to accelerate.

SHORT RUN (TWO TO THREE SESSIONS)

Treat each session as an act. Session one sets up and swings between genres; a middle session hits a midpoint **Splice** with both tracks rising; the last session is the finale. Let pressure breathe only where the fiction earns it.

THE FINALE IS A MANDATORY SPLICE

A Feature ends on a scene that belongs to both genres at once. Frame the last decisive moment as a **Splice**: roll the on-screen dice, and the result hits *both* Pressure Tracks. A player at the center may **Double Exposure** into it. This guarantees the mashup pays off at the end instead of the two genres just taking turns, which is the reason the whole game exists.

WHY PRESSURE BURNS FAST ON PURPOSE

Dread hits 6, The Case hits 5, the Clock hits 4 in only a handful of rolls. In a long campaign that would be a flaw. In a one-shot it is the design: the meters are a countdown to the finale, and Spotlight resets each session so nothing needs hoarding across a run that will not happen.

THE REEL TEMPLATE

Every Reel, existing or homebrewed, has exactly these eight parts. Fill in all eight and your genre is guaranteed to splice cleanly with every other Reel. This is the socket.

#	PART	WHAT IT IS
1	Logline	One sentence on how the genre feels to play.
2	Signature Dice	The randomizer in one sentence, how Attributes plug in, and how results map to Hit / Cost / Miss.
3	Pressure Track	The genre's meter: what fills it, its thresholds, and what happens when full (the CUT or climax).
4	Signature Skills	Three or four genre-specific actions, each keyed to an Attribute, each with a cross-genre Boon.
5	Scene Type	The kind of scene this Reel introduces and how the Director frames it.
6	Splice Rule	The one thing this Reel injects into other genres' scenes while off-screen.
7	Player Move	The genre's one heroic lever, callable by any character for 1 Spotlight when this Reel is on-screen.
8	Director Move	The genre's one signature hard move, fired free on a player Miss or bought by spending this Reel's threat pressure.

THE TEACHABILITY LAW

A Reel's Signature Dice must be explainable in one sentence with one example. If it needs a page, it is wrong. Every Reel in this book obeys this. Boons cap at +2, one free fact, or ignore one consequence; keep homebrew in that band or you will warp the math.

HORROR

Competence erodes as the fear closes in; the longer you look, the less you can do.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll a pool of d6 equal to Attribute + 2, counting each **4, 5, or 6** as a success; the Director removes one die per point of **Dread** before you roll, to a minimum of one die.

Ex: Wits 2 gives 4 dice. At Dread 4+ you are down to one die: you can survive or fail, but no longer fully win.

HIT

2+ successes

COST

1 success, Dread +1

MISS

0 successes, Dread +1

PRESSURE: DREAD (0 TO 6)

Rises on Cost, Miss, and when you investigate or provoke the threat. At **Dread 6** the threat acts and the scene CUTS. Drops only through genuine safety, light, or human warmth.

SCENE TYPE: THE DESCENT

Safety erodes beat by beat. The Director adds one new wrong detail each time the spotlight passes.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **wrong detail** into another genre's scene and ticks Dread. The reflection in the window is not doing what you are doing.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

INVESTIGATE Wits

Learn a true, awful thing; it ticks Dread. **Boon:** ask one yes/no question about the scene's hidden danger.

ENDURE Body

Take the harm and keep moving. **Boon:** ignore the physical harm of the first Cost this scene.

STEEL YOURSELF Nerve

Spend 1 Spotlight to add a die to a Horror roll. **Boon:** reroll one failed die or ignore a fear penalty.

SENSE THE WRONG Heart

Feel it before it reveals itself. **Boon:** the Director must say if you are being deceived.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

FINAL GIRL

Usable only at Dread 4+. Reroll your entire Horror pool and add 2 dice for this roll, ignoring the die loss from Dread. Cornered is when you are strongest.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 DREAD

IT'S ALREADY INSIDE

The threat strikes from where a character felt safe: harm them, corrupt their refuge, or reveal it was never safe. Dread +1.

ROMANCE

Wanting is easy; reaching for it, and being seen while you reach, is the risk.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d6 + Attribute**; you may **push** by rolling extra d6 one at a time and adding each, but any pushed die of **3 or lower** means the feeling leaks and a Hit drops to a Cost. You may push after already reaching a Hit, but you rarely should: a low pushed die can only cost you.

HIT

10+ no leak

COST

6–9, or leaked 10+

MISS

5 or lower

PRESSURE: TENSION (DISTANCE ↔ INTIMACY)

Starts in the middle. Slides toward Intimacy on vulnerability, toward Distance on a Miss. At either end the scene CUTS: a confession, or a rupture.

SCENE TYPE: THE TWO-HANDER

The Director strips the scene to two characters and one choice: reach or retreat. No one else's dice matter.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **longing or a Bond at stake**, and may slide Tension. In the firefight, you see them go down.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

CONNECT Heart

Close the distance; slide Tension to Intimacy.

Boon: a present Bond lends a hand, +2.

READ THEM Wits

Learn what they truly want. **Boon:** learn a target's desire or fear before a roll, +2 if used.

VULNERABLE TRUTH Nerve

Say the exposed thing; advance Tension, earn 1 Spotlight. **Boon:** admit something costly to clear 1 pressure on you.

CHARM Heart/Body

Command the scene's attention. **Boon:** pull a threat's focus onto you for one beat.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

THE GRAND GESTURE

Declare a bold, public act of the heart, then roll. Hit or Cost slams Tension to Intimacy and forges a Bond. Miss is public heartbreak: take the wound hard and earn 2 Spotlight.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 TENSION

THE WEDGE

Drive a rival, secret, or obligation between two hearts, put a Bond at risk, and force a character to choose.

ACTION

Fast, loud, escalating; every exchange should be bigger than the last.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll one **exploding d10** (a 10 rolls again and adds) + Attribute, opposed by the Director's exploding d10 + the threat.

HIT

beat by 3+

COST

beat by 1–2

MISS

tie or lose

PRESSURE: MOMENTUM (0 TO 5)

Rises when you win an exchange. Spend it for stunts: extra targets, high ground, turn the environment into a weapon. At 5 the scene explodes into a Set Piece finish and CUTS.

SCENE TYPE: THE SET PIECE

A destructible environment with a countdown the Director ticks every round.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **ticking physical threat**. The confession is lovely; the car has no brakes.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

CHARGE Body

Force the exchange on your terms. **Boon:** act first this scene, once.

IMPROVISE A STUNT Nerve

Spend Momentum for the impossible. **Boon:** turn a nearby object into a one-use tool, +2 or remove an obstacle.

COVER / PROTECT Heart

Put yourself between threat and ally. **Boon:** redirect one Cost/Miss from an ally onto you.

READ THE BATTLEFIELD Wits

Find the exit, weakness, leverage. **Boon:** name an advantage, party gets +1 to the next roll using it.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

SET PIECE

Make one exchange enormous: turn a Hit into a scene-defining moment (clear multiple threats, make the impossible leap) and gain +1 Momentum.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR ONCE PER ROUND

ESCALATE

The situation worsens: the environment breaks, reinforcements arrive, the countdown jumps. +2 to the threat and a new hazard.

NOIR

Slow, smoky, and moral; the truth is out there, but so is everything you have done.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll a pool of d6 equal to **Attribute + 2**, each **4, 5, or 6** a lead; every live secret you are keeping lets the Director turn one lead into a failure **after** the dice land, so your own past corrupts your results.

Horror strips dice before the roll (dread you feel coming); Noir rips a success away after (the rug-pull).

HIT

2+ leads

COST

1 lead

MISS

0 leads

PRESSURE: THE CASE (0-5) & HEAT (0-3)

Clues accumulate on Hits; at 5 the truth surfaces and the scene CUTS toward confrontation. Heat rises on Cost and Miss; at Heat 3 the city turns on you.

SCENE TYPE: THE INTERVIEW

Someone knows something. Give them one true thing and one lie, and make every answer cost.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **hidden truth, or the fact that someone is lying**.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

INTERROGATE Wits

Get an answer that costs. **Boon**: know if anyone is lying to you this scene.

TAIL / OBSERVE Nerve

Watch without being seen. **Boon**: the Director hands you one concrete useful fact.

LEAN ON SOMEONE Body/Heart

Apply pressure, raise Heat. **Boon**: +2 where a threat of force helps; Heat may rise.

FOLLOW THE MONEY Wits

Find the connecting thread. **Boon**: ask how two named things connect, get a true thread.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

THE HUNCH

Voice a theory aloud. The Director must say whether it runs warm or cold; if warm, bank one free clue.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 HEAT

THE FRAME

The city closes in: evidence points at a character, or an ally is revealed to be lying. Heat +1.

HEIST

Plan the impossible, watch it go wrong, then reveal that you planned for it going wrong.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d6 + Attribute**; on a Hit you may bank a **Prep token** (a spendable marker, never rolled; cap 3, persists across scenes and CUTs). Spend banked Prep to declare "we planned for this" and resolve a *complication* via flashback. Prep cannot negate a Director Move.

HIT

10+

COST

7–9

MISS

6 or lower

PRESSURE: COMPLICATION CLOCK (0 TO 4)

Fills on Cost and Miss. At 4 the plan falls apart and the scene CUTS to another Reel in your Feature (a getaway, a betrayal, whatever the fiction hands you).

SCENE TYPE: THE JOB

Segmented obstacles, each its own roll, the clock ticking between them.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **plan**, a **con**, or a **hidden objective** that recontextualizes the scene.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

CASE THE JOINT Wits

Learn the layout, bank Prep on a Hit. **Boon:** carry one Prep token outside a Heist scene.

SLEIGHT Body

Palm, pick, or plant one small object, no roll, once per scene. **Boon:** +2 to a roll to hide, plant, or spot a small object.

SELL THE COVER Heart

Be someone you are not. **Boon:** ignore one consequence that would blow your cover.

COOL UNDER FIRE Nerve

Downgrade one Miss to a Cost, once per scene (declared after the dice land; the downgraded roll pays no Miss Spotlight). **Boon:** ignore one fear or panic penalty.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

PLANNED FOR THIS

Flash back to a preparation you never mentioned and negate one complication entirely, even with no banked Prep token.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 ON THE CLOCK

IT ALL GOES WRONG

An alarm, a double-cross, a variable no one accounted for. Advance the Clock; if it fills, CUT.

SCI-FI

Wonder and danger are the same thing wearing different faces; the further you reach, the stranger it gets.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll a **d12** + Attribute against a difficulty the Director sets (**6 routine, 8 standard, 10 hard, 12 near-impossible**); the die does double duty, because high rolls succeed loudly and the Strange hears loud.

HIT

meet it, die 8 or less

COST

meet it, die 9+ (or miss by 1–2)

MISS

under by 3+

PRESSURE: THE STRANGE (0 TO 6)

Rises whenever the die shows 9+ and whenever you push into the unknown. At 6 reality shifts: the wonder becomes a threat and the scene CUTS to another Reel in your Feature.

SCENE TYPE: THE THRESHOLD

Crossing into somewhere the rules are different. The Director reveals one new rule of reality each beat.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **strange element, or a bent rule of reality**. The dead witness answers anyway.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

EXPLORE Nerve

Cross the threshold. **Boon**: ignore fear or awe penalties for one roll.

JURY-RIG Wits

Make impossible tech behave. **Boon**: rig a device: +2, or bypass one *minor* obstacle.

COMMUNE / CONTACT Heart

Reach across the gap. **Boon**: communicate for one exchange with the incommunicable.

WITHSTAND THE VOID Body

Survive a hostile environment. **Boon**: ignore one environmental hazard this scene.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

BREAKTHROUGH

Treat your d12 as though it landed on exactly the value you need for one roll; tick The Strange by 2, and you are **Marked**: the next Director Move that targets you fires for free. The wonder answers, and it remembers you.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 STRANGE

THE STRANGE AWAKENS

Reality asserts a new rule, hostile and wondrous: physics bends, the dead speak, the machine wants something.

WESTERN

Sun-scorched patience and one honest second of violence; the man who waits longest often walks away.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **d20 + Attribute**; you may **take your time** and roll two d20 keeping the higher, but danger acts first.

HIT

12+

COST

8 to 11

MISS

7 or less

PRESSURE: THE TALLY (0 TO 4)

Rises on Cost, Miss, and every provocation. At 4 the showdown comes and the scene CUTS to iron and dust.

SCENE TYPE: THE STANDOFF

A slow, wide, near-wordless confrontation. The Director draws it out one beat at a time until someone moves.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **reckoning owed**: someone in the scene has a score to settle with one of you.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

STEADY AIM Nerve

Line up the one shot that counts. **Boon**: +2 to a roll where holding your nerve matters.

RIDE Body

Outrun or outmaneuver across open country. **Boon**: reach a place or flee a scene with no roll, once.

READ THE ROOM Wits

Spot the tell before iron is drawn. **Boon**: learn who here is armed, and who is lying.

PARLEY Heart

Talk the standoff down, for now. **Boon**: delay one threat by a beat.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

QUICKDRAW

Act before anyone else and resolve your shot first; on a Hit, the other side never gets to draw.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 TALLY

THE RECKONING

An old score comes due now: a rival draws, a marker is called, blood hits the table.

WAR

Every yard of ground is paid for in people, and the bill never comes back down.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll a pool of **Attribute + 2** d6, 4 to 6 a hit; on a Miss, one die is struck from your maximum pool for the rest of the Feature.

HIT

2+ hits

COST

1 hit

MISS

0 hits

PRESSURE: THE BODY COUNT (0 TO 6)

Rises on Cost, Miss, and every casualty. Attrition dice never return. At 6 the objective's true cost lands.

SCENE TYPE: THE PUSH

An objective under fire. The Director advances the enemy every beat, and holding still is its own kind of dying.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **casualty** or a **hard order**: the cost of the mission intrudes on the other genre's scene.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

SUPPRESS Body

Pin the enemy so someone else can move. **Boon**: an ally ignores the next Cost this scene.

FIELD MEDICINE Wits

Stop the bleeding before it stops them. **Boon**: clear one wound or condition from a character.

COMMAND Heart

Rally people who want to run. **Boon**: give an ally +2 to their next roll.

DIG IN Nerve

Hold the position under fire. **Boon**: reduce the next harm you take.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

HOLD THE LINE

You and nearby allies ignore the next Cost or Miss to keep the position, but the Body Count rises by 1.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 BODY COUNT

THE COST OF THE OBJECTIVE

Taking the ground costs someone: a wound, a death, or an order that damns whoever obeys it.

COMEDY

A small lie, a worse plan, and the growing certainty that this is all going to come out at dinner.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d6 + Attribute**; then the table votes whether a Hit or a Miss is funnier, and the vote overrides the dice.

HIT

9+ or the vote

COST

6 to 8

MISS

5 or less

PRESSURE: ESCALATION (0 TO 4)

Rises whenever the lie or the mishap grows. At 4 the bit collapses into glorious farce and the scene CUTS.

SCENE TYPE: THE ESCALATING BIT

One tiny problem the characters refuse to just explain. The Director keeps adding witnesses and worse timing.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **deflating or absurd beat**: the tension breaks into farce for one merciful, ridiculous moment.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

IMPROVISE Wits

Make it up and somehow make it work. **Boon**: reroll a failed roll by justifying it absurdly.

DEADPAN Nerve

Stay straight-faced through the chaos. **Boon**: ignore a fear or social penalty.

PHYSICAL COMEDY Body

Pratfall out of danger. **Boon**: turn a fall or hit into a harmless gag.

CHARM THE ROOM Heart

Win the crowd against all sense. **Boon**: an NPC decides they like you, +2 social.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

CALLBACK

Reintroduce an earlier bit; if the table laughs, auto-succeed the roll, but Escalation rises by 1.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 ESCALATION

IT SPIRALS

The small lie becomes an enormous one, the misunderstanding compounds, and now the in-laws are involved.

FANTASY

Prophecy, steel, and wonder; the world is old and it has plans for you whether you like them or not.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **d20 + Attribute** against a difficulty (12 standard); a natural 20 fulfills a prophecy, a natural 1 advances the Doom.

HIT

meet difficulty

COST

within 3 under

MISS

under by 4+

PRESSURE: THE DOOM (0 TO 6)

Rises on natural 1s and dark omens. At 6 the foretold catastrophe arrives, exactly as the prophecy promised.

SCENE TYPE: THE TRIAL

A legendary obstacle: a warded door, a riddling guardian, a beast out of legend. The Director makes it feel mythic.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects **an omen**: a sign, a portent, a coincidence too clean, that the prophecy is moving.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

SWORDBLAY Body

Martial prowess against blade or claw. **Boon**: +2 to a physical clash.

LORE Wits

Know the legend, the weakness, the rite. **Boon**: ask the Director one true thing about a myth or monster.

MAGIC Wits

Channel a working of real power. **Boon**: a small magical effect (light, mend, ward) with no roll.

VALOR Nerve

Stand where braver folk have fled. **Boon**: ignore a fear effect and steady an ally.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

INVOKE THE PROPHECY

Declare this is the foretold moment; treat your d20 as a natural 20 for one roll, but the Doom rises by 2.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 DOOM

THE DOOM TURNS

The prophecy advances: a foretold betrayal lands, a sleeper wakes, or a terrible price is finally named.

SUPERHERO

You can lift the bus. The question is never whether you win; it is what the win costs everyone under it.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d10 + Attribute** against a low bar of 9; you almost always land the super-feat, but every Hit that cuts loose ticks Collateral.

HIT

9+

COST

6 to 8

MISS

5 or less

PRESSURE: COLLATERAL (0 TO 5)

Rises whenever you cut loose. At 5 the public or the authorities turn on you, or a bystander pays for your power.

SCENE TYPE: THE RESCUE

Save the people or stop the villain, and the scene is built so you cannot cleanly do both.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects **innocents in danger**: someone needs saving right now, mid-scene, in whatever genre is on-screen.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

SUPER-FEAT Body

Raw, impossible power. **Boon**: +2 to a feat of strength or speed (may tick Collateral).

SECRET IDENTITY Heart

The life behind the mask. **Boon**: use a civilian connection or resource.

DETECTIVE Wits

The world's greatest, on a good day. **Boon**: deduce one hidden fact about the scene.

HOLD BACK Nerve

Pull the punch to protect people. **Boon**: prevent one Collateral tick this scene.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

CUT LOOSE

Auto-Hit a super-feat with no roll, but Collateral rises by 2. The city pays for your power.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 COLLATERAL

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

The fight spills over: a building, a bystander, or the public's trust in you takes the hit.

DISASTER

The building is coming down no matter what you roll; all you get to decide is who walks out.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **d6 + Attribute** against a rising difficulty; the Countdown ticks by 1 on every roll, whatever the result.

HIT

meet difficulty

COST

within 2

MISS

under by 3+

PRESSURE: THE COUNTDOWN (0 TO 6)

Ticks on every single roll and nothing stops it. At 6 the disaster strikes and everyone left rolls to live.

SCENE TYPE: THE EVACUATION

Get people out before the Countdown hits zero. The Director keeps the exits closing and the ground unstable.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects **the environment turning lethal**: the ground, the water, the fire itself becomes the threat.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

ENDURE Body

Survive what should have killed you. **Boon:** ignore one environmental harm.

IMPROVISE ESCAPE Wits

Find the way out that no one else saw. **Boon:** reveal an exit or a route.

RESCUE Heart

Get someone else clear. **Boon:** pull an ally or NPC out of danger.

KEEP CALM Nerve

Refuse to panic when panic spreads. **Boon:** steady a panicking character, +2 to their roll.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

AGAINST THE CLOCK

Save one more person or thing before the Countdown moves; auto-Hit, but the Countdown ticks +1.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 COUNTDOWN

IT GIVES WAY

The structure, the ground, or the vehicle fails right now: someone must be saved, or lost.

CRIME

Family is everything, and everything the Family gives you, it eventually asks back with interest.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d6 + Attribute**; you may call in a **Favor** for +3, but each Favor raises your Debt by 1.

HIT

10+

COST

7 to 9

MISS

6 or less

PRESSURE: DEBT (0 TO 4)

Rises with every Favor called and every betrayal. At 4 the Family collects, and it is always personal.

SCENE TYPE: THE SIT-DOWN

A meeting where loyalty is tested and the wrong word ends someone. The Director makes every silence cost.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **debt called in**: someone reminds a character exactly what, and whom, they owe.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

MUSCLE Body

Make it a physical conversation. **Boon**: +2 where a threat of violence would help.

GRIFT Wits

The con, the skim, the angle. **Boon**: acquire cash or goods off-screen.

LOYALTY Heart

Read who is truly with you. **Boon**: learn whether an NPC will betray you.

COLD BLOOD Nerve

Do the thing that has to be done. **Boon**: ignore a moral or fear hesitation penalty.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

CALL IN A FAVOR

The Family makes your problem disappear, but Debt rises by 2 and they will remember this.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 DEBT

THE FAMILY COLLECTS

What you owe comes due: your loyalty is tested, or a made man calls your marker at the worst moment.

SPY

Two jobs at once: get the thing, and stay a ghost while you do it. The second one is harder.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d10 + Attribute**; the higher die is the mission, the lower die is your cover, and a lower die of 3 or less cracks a Hit down to a Cost.

HIT

mission met, cover intact

COST

met but cover cracked

MISS

mission failed

PRESSURE: EXPOSURE (0 TO 4)

Rises whenever your cover cracks. At 4 you are burned: the op is blown and someone is hunting you.

SCENE TYPE: THE HANDOFF

Get the asset, the intel, or the person out unseen. The Director fills the room with eyes and clocks.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **watcher**: you are being observed, and nothing in this scene is as private as it looks.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

INFILTRATE Nerve

Get in where you should not be. **Boon**: bypass one security measure quietly.

COVER IDENTITY Heart

Be someone else, convincingly. **Boon**: ignore one thing that would blow your cover.

ANALYSIS Wits

Read the room, the intel, the routine. **Boon**: learn the layout or the target's pattern.

GADGET Wits

The right tool, prepared in advance. **Boon**: produce one small useful device, once.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

PREPARED FOR THIS

Reveal a gadget or cover you set up earlier and negate a complication, but Exposure rises by 1.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 EXPOSURE

BLOWN

Your cover cracks: someone makes your face, a mole surfaces, or the whole operation is suddenly compromised.

SURVIVAL

The wilderness is not trying to kill you. It simply does not care, which turns out to be worse.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll a pool of **Attribute + 1** d6, 4 to 6 a success; spend Supplies (one each) to add dice, but Supplies run out.

HIT

2+ successes

COST

1 success

MISS

0 successes

PRESSURE: EXPOSURE (0 TO 6)

Rises as Supplies deplete and the elements bite. At 6 the wild claims someone: gear, warmth, or a life.

SCENE TYPE: THE LONG NIGHT

Endure the cold, the dark, the thing in the trees, until dawn. The Director makes safety cost something every hour.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects **scarcity**: a resource the other genre took for granted runs out at the worst possible time.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

FORAGE Wits

Find food, water, or shelter. **Boon**: gain 1 Supply.

WEATHER IT Body

Endure cold, heat, and hunger. **Boon**: ignore one exposure harm.

TRACK Wits

Read the land and its signs. **Boon**: learn where something or someone went.

FIRECRAFT Nerve

Make warmth and safety from nothing. **Boon**: create a moment of safety that steadies the group.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

DIG DEEP

Push past your limit: add 2 dice to a Survival roll, but Exposure rises by 1 as the effort costs you.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 EXPOSURE

THE WILD TAKES

The elements claim something real: your gear, your warmth, or a companion's strength gives out.

MARTIAL ARTS

Two styles, one conversation held in strikes; whoever keeps their flow keeps their feet.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **d8 + Attribute** (plus your chain) against 8; each Hit adds +1 chain die to your next exchange, and a Miss breaks the chain.

HIT

8+ (chain +1)

COST

5 to 7

MISS

4 or less

PRESSURE: THE DUEL (0 TO 5)

Fills as the exchange escalates. At 5 the decisive blow lands, and the scene CUTS on who is left standing.

SCENE TYPE: THE DUEL

A formal exchange, style against style. The Director gives the rival a signature the players must learn to counter.

SPLICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **challenge**: someone tests a character, and honor demands an answer.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

STRIKE Body

The perfect blow at the perfect time. **Boon**: +2 to a physical exchange.

FLOW Nerve

Read the attack and redirect it. **Boon**: turn one incoming Miss or Cost aside, once.

DISCIPLINE Wits

The long study of forms. **Boon**: learn an opponent's style or weakness.

HONOR Heart

The code that steadies your hands. **Boon**: ignore provocation and steady an ally.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

SIGNATURE TECHNIQUE

Unleash your style: spend your whole chain to auto-Hit one decisive strike.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 DUEL

THE MASTER'S LESSON

The rival reads your style: your next chain starts broken, and they land a telling blow.

MUSICAL

When feeling gets too big for talking, the scene stops pretending and everyone sings.

SIGNATURE DICE

The scene's lead rolls a pool of **Attribute + 2** d6, plus one d6 for each other singer, and counts matching pairs.

HIT

2+ pairs

COST

1 pair

MISS

0 pairs

PRESSURE: THE CRESCENDO (0 TO 5)

Builds through the number. At 5 the show-stopper hits and a truth spills out that no one could say in prose.

SCENE TYPE: THE NUMBER

A song that advances the plot. The Director frames who it is for and lets the whole table join the harmony.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects a **feeling that must be sung**: the other genre's scene wants a number, and the table can grant it.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

LEAD VOCAL Heart

Carry the melody and the meaning. **Boon**: your feeling moves an NPC, +2 social.

CHOREOGRAPHY Body

Move the number through space. **Boon**: reposition the entire scene gracefully.

COMPOSITION Wits

Find the right song for the moment. **Boon**: reveal a truth through metaphor.

STAGE PRESENCE Nerve

Own the spotlight completely. **Boon**: pull every eye onto you for a beat.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

THE SHOW-STOPPER

Call a number: everyone in the scene rolls, and a single Hit carries the whole table's intent.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 CRESCENDO

THE MUSIC STOPS

The number is cut at its peak: a confession lands wrong, a rival takes the verse, the truth arrives early.

SPORTS

Down by two with the clock bleeding out, and the whole town watching the kid nobody believed in.

SIGNATURE DICE

Roll **2d6 + Attribute** opposed by the Director's 2d6 + 2; when you are behind on the Scoreboard, roll 3d6 and keep the best two.

HIT

beat by 3+

COST

within 2

MISS

lose by 3+

PRESSURE: SCOREBOARD & CLOCK

Track the score gap and a 0 to 4 game clock.

Being behind fuels the comeback dice. When the clock runs out, the whistle blows.

SCENE TYPE: THE BIG GAME

The match with the clock running. The Director keeps the crowd loud, the rival hungry, and the score close.

SPICE RULE (OFF-SCREEN)

Injects **the clock and the crowd**: a countdown and an audience the other genre now has to perform for.

SIGNATURE SKILLS

POWER Body

The big, decisive play. **Boon**: +2 to a feat of athletic force.

PLAYMAKING Wits

See the whole field a second early. **Boon**: set up an ally, +2 to their next roll.

TEAM HEART Heart

Refuse to let anyone quit. **Boon**: clear a demoralized condition from the team.

CLUTCH NERVE Nerve

Calm hands when it counts most. **Boon**: ignore a pressure penalty on a decisive roll.

PLAYER MOVE • 1 SPOTLIGHT

CLUTCH

When behind, take the comeback: reroll and keep the better result, and on a Hit you close the gap on the Scoreboard.

DIRECTOR MOVE • MISS OR SPEND 2 CLOCK

THE UPSET

Momentum swings the other way: an injury, a bad call, or the rival scores when it hurts most.

BUILDING YOUR OWN REEL

Any genre works if it fills the eight-part template. The randomizer must feel like the genre, be teachable in one sentence, and map cleanly to Hit / Cost / Miss. The eighteen Reels in this book are all built this way. Four more directions to try:

GENRE	PRESSURE	SIGNATURE DICE IDEA
Pirate — Derring-Do	Notoriety	Bank flair on a Hit, spend it to turn the rigging, the crowd, or the tide into a weapon.
Cyberpunk — The Grid	Trace	Every action on the net ticks a Trace toward your location; speed versus getting found.
Melodrama — The Reveal	Secrets	Spend a buried secret to reroll, but it surfaces publicly the moment you do.
Kaiju — Rampage	Devastation	You roll small, the monster rolls a d20; you win by surviving the scene, not by beating it.

ADVANCEMENT

SPLICE is short by design, so there is no XP and no level grind. In a one-shot, characters do not change. In a two or three-session run, between sessions you may reshape a character to follow the story: swap one skill, move one Attribute point, or rewrite a Bond. That is all. Growth happens in the fiction, not on the sheet.

GUARDRAILS

Cameo never moves the off-genre track; Double Exposure always moves both. Double Exposure always costs Spotlight. Boons cap at +2, one fact, or one ignored consequence. A Miss still bites on a Double Exposure. Do not drop that last one; it is why reaching across is a gamble and not a strictly-better button.

THE HALLOWAY CASE

A HORROR // NOIR ONE-SHOT • 2 TO 3 HOURS • D6S ONLY

A girl is missing in the Blackwater district, and the case is colder than the rain. You are investigators. The more you dig, the more the case stops making sense the way a case should, because whatever took Elena Halloway was never a person at all. This is a detective story that becomes a nightmare.

The Feature hook: Noir leads (the investigation), Horror escalates underneath. **Every clue you add to The Case also ticks Dread by 1.** The investigation is the descent. Solving it and surviving it are two different problems.

MAKE A CHARACTER (5 MINUTES)

- ♦ **Name and Role** in one phrase. "Vance, the detective one scandal from being fired."
- ♦ **Attributes:** assign 3, 2, 1, 0 across Nerve, Heart, Wits, Body.
- ♦ **One Bond** to another investigator or to the case.
- ♦ **A Secret** you are hiding. In Noir it can turn your own leads against you.
- ♦ **Pick 4 skills** from the two Reels, at least one Noir and one Horror.
- ♦ Start with **3 Spotlight** (hold at most 5).

THE TWO REELS AT THE TABLE

NOIR — THE CASE & HEAT

Roll a pool of **Attribute + 2** d6, 4–6 = a lead; each live secret turns one lead into a failure after the roll.

Hit 2+ leads (add a clue) • Cost 1 lead (Heat +1) • Miss 0 leads.

Case 0–5 (truth at 5). Heat 0–3 (the city turns at 3).

HORROR — DREAD

Pool of d6 = Attribute + 2, 4–6 = success; lose one die per Dread (min 1).

Hit 2+ • Cost 1 (Dread +1) • Miss 0 (Dread +1).

Dread 0–6 (it acts at 6). Every clue also ticks Dread +1.

GENRE MOVES IN PLAY

PLAYER • 1 SP

THE HUNCH

Voice a theory; the Director says warm or cold. Warm banks a free clue.

DIRECTOR • MISS / 2 HEAT

THE FRAME

Evidence turns on an investigator, or an ally is lying. Heat +1.

PLAYER • 1 SP

FINAL GIRL

At Dread 4+, reroll your pool and add 2 dice.

DIRECTOR • MISS / 2 DREAD

IT'S ALREADY INSIDE

The thing strikes from where they felt safe. Dread +1.

RUNNING THE CASE

Frame each scene by naming the genre, the question, and the pressure. Keep three meters visible: The Case, Heat, Dread. Play witnesses with one true thing and one lie each. When a meter fills, CUT. The Feature hook means investigators dig their own way into the nightmare, and they will feel it.

THE TRUTH (DIRECTOR'S EYES)

Something old lives in the drowned levels beneath the district. It does not take people at random; it is fed them, by a quiet arrangement between someone powerful and the thing below, which keeps that person's fortunes rising. Elena saw something she should not have. Every clue is true, and every true thing is worse than the last, which is why each clue raises Dread. The case cannot be closed cleanly. Catching the culprit means going down to where the thing waits.

THREE SCENES TO OPEN WITH

- ♦ **The Interview (Noir leads).** Question the last person who saw Elena. They lie about one thing. Build the first clue (Dread ticks to 1). Horror injects a wrong detail: the witness will not look at the window, and something is looking in.
- ♦ **The Descent (Horror leads).** Follow the lead into a wrong place: the flooded flat, the sealed tunnel mouth, the morgue at 3 a.m. Push Dread. Noir injects a hidden truth: someone with a badge was already here and took something.
- ♦ **The Splice (both).** The informant who agreed to talk is found already dead, yet answers one question anyway, in a voice like wet gravel. Roll it as a Splice; both meters move.

HOW IT ENDS

When The Case hits 5 clues, the truth is undeniable and Dread is near 6. The investigation collapses into the confrontation: down in the drowned levels, with the thing and the person who feeds it, while Heat means the law upstairs is coming for the investigators too. Whether they expose it, kill it, bury it again, or become the next names written off as runaways is decided on those last rolls. Solving the case was never the hard part. Walking back out with the truth is.

OTHER PAIRINGS TO TRY NEXT

Romance // Horror (a Gothic romance, "a love story with a body count"), Heist // Action (a getaway thriller), Noir // Sci-Fi (a neon detective story). Any two Reels in this book splice with no extra rules.

GLOSSARY

TERM	MEANS
Complication	A fictional obstacle the Director adds. Can be negated by Prep or Planned for This. Not the same as a Director Move.
Director Move	The genre taking over on a Miss. Never negated, delayed, or bought off.
Reel	One genre's rules module: its dice, pressure, skills, scene type, and two Moves.
Feature	The two or three Reels your campaign splices together.
Pressure Track	A genre's meter (Dread, The Case, Momentum, etc.). At max, the scene CUTS.
Spotlight	The drama currency. Start 3, hold 5, resets each session. Overflow at the cap becomes a Retake.
Retake	One stored reroll, gained when a guaranteed faucet would pay you at the cap. Hold one.
Prep token	A Heist marker you bank on a Hit and spend later. Never rolled. Cap 3.
Cameo	Borrow one off-genre skill's Boon while rolling the on-screen dice. Free once per scene; may be declared reactively if the Boon says so.
Double Exposure	Player move (was "Cross-Splice"): pay 1 Spotlight, roll two genres' dice, take the better tier, both meters tick, any Miss still bites.
The Splice	A Director-framed moment that belongs to two genres at once: roll the on-screen dice, the result hits both tracks.
Exchange	One statement or question and one response (used by Commune).
Obstacle (minor)	A small barrier a Boon may bypass. Scene-defining obstacles are never minor.
Compel	A Director offer to let your Role, Bond, or Secret cause trouble, for 1 Spotlight. Decline for free.
Skill-less roll	Legal. Roll the bare Attribute; you just get no skill's written effect.
Lead Genre	Optional, fiction-only. The Director aims your worst luck at the gap between your movie and the real one; once per session when that gap burns you, gain 1 Spotlight.

CHEAT SHEET

REEL	DICE	HIT / COST / MISS	PRESSURE
Horror	Pool d6 = Attr+2, 4–6 hits, lose 1 die/Dread	2+ / 1 / 0 successes	Dread 0–6
Romance	2d6+Attr, push adds d6, pushed ≤ 3 leaks	10+ / 6–9 / ≤ 5	Distance↔Intimacy
Action	Exploding d10+Attr vs Director's d10	+3 / +1–2 / tie-lose	Momentum 0–5
Noir	Pool Attr+2, 4–6 leads, secrets flip one after	2+ / 1 / 0 leads	Case 0–5, Heat 0–3
Heist	2d6, bank Prep on Hit for flashbacks	10+ / 7–9 / ≤ 6	Complication 0–4
Sci-Fi	d12+Attr vs difficulty, high rolls unleash	meet(die ≤ 8) / meet(die9+) / under	The Strange 0–6
Western	d20+Attr, take time = 2d20 keep higher	12+ / 8 to 11 / 7 or less	The Tally (0 to 4)
War	Attr+2 pool 4-6, Miss = lose a die for good	2+ hits / 1 hit / 0 hits	The Body Count (0 to 6)
Comedy	2d6+Attr, table vote can flip it	9+ or the vote / 6 to 8 / 5 or less	Escalation (0 to 4)
Fantasy	d20+Attr vs difficulty, nat20/ nat1 swing	meet difficulty / within 3 under / under by 4+	The Doom (0 to 6)
Superhero	2d10+Attr vs 9, Hits tick Collateral	9+ / 6 to 8 / 5 or less	Collateral (0 to 5)
Disaster	d6+Attr vs rising diff, Countdown ticks every roll	meet difficulty / within 2 / under by 3+	The Countdown (0 to 6)
Crime	2d6+Attr, Favor +3 raises Debt	10+ / 7 to 9 / 6 or less	Debt (0 to 4)
Spy	2d10, hi=mission lo=cover (<=3 cracks Hit)	mission met, cover intact / met but cover cracked / mission failed	Exposure (0 to 4)
Survival	Attr+1 pool 4-6, spend Supplies for dice	2+ successes / 1 success / 0 successes	Exposure (0 to 6)
Martial Arts	d8+Attr+chain vs 8, Hits chain	8+ (chain +1) / 5 to 7 / 4 or less	The Duel (0 to 5)
Musical	pool Attr+2 +1/singer, count pairs	2+ pairs / 1 pair / 0 pairs	The Crescendo (0 to 5)

EVERY ROLL

- ♦ Intent + Attribute, roll the on-screen dice, read Hit / Cost / Miss.
- ♦ Cost and Miss tick pressure. Pressure at max = CUT to another Reel.
- ♦ Miss lets the Director make that genre's Director Move.

SPOTLIGHT (START 3, MAX 5)

- ♦ **Earn:** Miss +1 auto; Cost +1 if you take the complication; Escalate on purpose +1/scene; accept a Compel +1.
- ♦ **Spend:** Player Move, Double Exposure, extra Cameo, Hard Cut, Meanwhile, Resist a Cut (1 each).

CROSSING GENRES

- ♦ **Cameo:** borrow one off-genre Boon, roll on-screen dice, off-genre track unmoved. Free once/scene.
- ♦ **Double Exposure:** 1 Spotlight, roll both genres' dice, take the better tier, both meters tick, a Miss still bites.
- ♦ **The Splice:** one moment in two genres; roll on-screen dice, result hits both tracks.

DIRECTOR LOOP

- ♦ Frame: genre + question + pressure.
- ♦ Play off-screen genres as complications via their Splice Rule.
- ♦ Spend threat pressure or cash a Miss to make Director Moves.

LOVED YOUR ONE-SHOT?

SPLICE is built to burn bright and end. If a Feature leaves you wanting a full campaign in that space, these established systems do long-form play better than a short game ever could. Find your pairing and graduate.

ROMANCE // HORROR

Monsterhearts 2 (messy teen monsters, desire and dread on one engine), **Vampire: The Masquerade** (gothic personal horror and long intrigue), **Chronicles of Darkness** (modern supernatural drama), **Thirsty Sword Lesbians** (romance with a blade in hand).

HORROR // NOIR

Call of Cthulhu (the definitive investigative horror campaign), **Trail of Cthulhu** (clue-first mystery on the GUMSHOE engine), **Delta Green** (conspiracy horror and slow moral rot), **Brindlewood Bay** (cozy mysteries that turn cosmic).

HEIST // SCI-FI

Scum and Villainy (a scoundrel crew and a ship full of debt), **Blades in the Dark** (the heist chassis everyone borrows), **Stars Without Number** (deep sandbox space), **Lancer** (if the crew wants mechs).

HEIST // ACTION

Blades in the Dark (crews, scores, escalating heat), **Leverage** (a con-artist team hitting the guilty), **Dusk City Outlaws** (one-city crime campaigns), **Spire** (heists as rebellion).

NOIR // SCI-FI

Blade Runner (neon rain, replicants, moral fog), **The Sprawl** (mission-based cyberpunk, PbtA), **Cyberpunk RED** (the genre's namesake), **Shadowrun** (crime with chrome and magic).

HORROR // SCI-FI

Alien (cinematic dread and campaigns, Free League), **Mothership** (lean, lethal deep-space horror), **Delta Green** (when the unknown is a conspiracy), **Eclipse Phase** (transhuman existential horror).

ANY OTHER PAIRING? PICK ONE FROM EACH COLUMN

Horror: Call of Cthulhu, Delta Green • **Romance:** Monsterhearts 2, Good Society • **Action:** Lancer, Feng Shui 2, Fate Core • **Noir:** Trail of Cthulhu, Night's Black Agents, Blades in the Dark • **Heist:** Blades in the Dark, Scum and Villainy • **Sci-Fi:** Stars Without Number, Traveller, Lancer. Take the two that match your Feature and let the heavier system carry the long haul.

// These are other publishers' games, named because they are great at the long-form play SPLICE deliberately is not. No affiliation.

WHAT CHANGED

SPLICE is a short-play game. These notes track how it got there.

V0.5 — PREBUILT ARCHETYPES

- ♦ Added **12 movie-trope pregens** (the Everyperson, the Femme Fatale, the Grizzled Veteran, the Brain, the Rookie, the Loner, and more), each a fixed Attribute array plus a Role, Bond seed, Secret seed, and skill lean.
- ♦ All twelve use different arrays, so a full table never clones. Grab one and be playing in two minutes; full list also in *SPLICE: Archetypes*.

V0.4 — TWELVE MORE GENRES

- ♦ Added **12 new Reels**, bringing the total to **eighteen**: Western, War, Comedy, Fantasy, Superhero, Disaster, Crime, Spy, Survival, Martial Arts, Musical, Sports.
- ♦ Each has a distinct dice mechanic (patience-vs-speed, permanent attrition, a table vote, prophecy crits, easy-win-high-collateral, an every-roll countdown, borrowed Favors, a cover die, depleting Supplies, a building combo chain, ensemble pairs, comeback dice), all reporting the same Hit / Cost / Miss.
- ♦ Full text also in the companion module *SPLICE: Expansion Reels*; the cheat sheet now lists all eighteen.

V0.3 — BUILT FOR SHORT PLAY

- ♦ SPLICE is now explicitly a **one-shot to three-session** game. Added a "Running a Feature" section with scene budgets and act shapes, and a "Where to Go Next" page pointing to campaign systems for each pairing.
- ♦ **The finale is a mandatory Splice** of both genres, so the mashup always pays off at the end.
- ♦ **Advancement removed.** No XP. One-shots do not change characters; short runs allow a light between-session reshape.
- ♦ **Spotlight resets to 3 each session** (no carryover), since there is nothing to bank it for.

V0.2 — PLAYTEST REPAIR

v0.2 was the first playtest-repair pass, after a Heist // Sci-Fi session logged 92 issues and 28 rulings. The chassis did not change; the missing sentences got written.

BLOCKING FIXES

- ♦ **Heist and Noir now use Attributes.** Heist rolls 2d6 + Attribute. Noir rolls a pool of Attribute + 2 dice. Previously both ignored your stats.
- ♦ **Sci-Fi has a difficulty ladder:** 6 routine, 8 standard, 10 hard, 12 near-impossible, set by the Director.

- ♦ **Secret is now a creation step**, since the Compel faucet and Noir both rely on it.

RULINGS PROMOTED TO RULES

- ♦ Prep is a **token**, not a die: any Heist Hit banks one, cap 3, persists across CUTs, and cannot negate a Director Move.
- ♦ **Reels override the Core** where they conflict.
- ♦ **Director Moves are not complications** and can never be negated.
- ♦ **Double Exposure** (renamed from Cross-Splice): a Miss die pays no Spotlight, closing the self-refund loop.

ECONOMY

- ♦ Spotlight **resets to 3 each session** (v0.3 supersedes the earlier carryover idea; there is no advancement to bank for).
- ♦ At the cap, a guaranteed Miss or Compel becomes a **Retake** instead of evaporating.
- ♦ You cannot negate a roll and also claim its Cost token.
- ♦ Breakthrough now **Marks** the user; Escalate works in Heist and is capped at 2 track-ticks per scene.

STRUCTURE AND CLARITY

- ♦ Skills: pick **4** in a two-Reel Feature, **5** in a three-Reel Feature (de-clones crews and settles the quickstart drift).
- ♦ Bonds gain a universal hook: invoke once per session for +2 or a reroll, in any Feature.
- ♦ Boons re-banded: "bypass one *minor* obstacle," and Heist's no-roll Sleight and safety-valve Cool Under Fire now work in Heist scenes.
- ♦ Added this glossary, a dice primer, a Double Exposure worked example, an Attribute-0 rule, and a push-on-a-Hit warning.

STILL OPEN (NEEDS LIVE TUNING)

The economy changes are directionally right but want another short-play session to confirm the cap and the Retake feel correct at a real table.

SPLICE • different dice, same three outcomes