



## CHAPTER 12

# PLAYING THE HERO

**Playing the hero answers four decisive questions:**

12

01

Intent: What are you trying to accomplish, and why?

02

Knowledge: What does the hero perceive and understand?

03

Approach: Which capabilities, teamwork, and choices make it possible?

04

Consequence: What does the decision change for the hero and the world?

Rules describe capabilities. Play begins when the player chooses an objective, accepts consequences, and acts through the hero.

## 1. State Intent, Not Only Motion

Say what the hero wants to accomplish and how.

- “I hit the console” describes motion.
- “I smash the launch controls before the countdown completes” establishes intent.

Clear intent lets everyone understand the governing rating, required color, consequences, and whether the action is possible.

## 2. Ask What the Hero Knows

Players do not need to guess rules hidden behind the screen. Ask what is visible, what the hero's Talents recognize, what an item appears capable of doing, and what consequences seem likely.

The Judge may preserve genuine mysteries. Mystery does not require concealing ordinary information the hero could plainly perceive.

## 3. Use Capability Before Probability

Do not roll simply because dice are available.

- Routine use within a capability succeeds.
- Impossible action receives no roll.
- A FEAT resolves possible, uncertain, consequential action.

A Red result reaches the plausible limit of what the hero can do. It does not invent a missing Power, access route, language, target, or causal method.

## 4. Build the Approach

When direct action cannot work, change the situation:

- find leverage;
- exploit a weakness;
- gain access;
- use terrain;
- obtain equipment;
- seek a Contact;
- coordinate with teammates;
- create an Enabler; or
- pursue a different objective.

This is not pleading for a bonus. It is changing what action is possible.

## 5. Spend Karma Deliberately

Before rolling, declare Personal Karma and the desired color, then commit the required amount. Karma is most valuable when the result matters to the hero's priorities.

Players should know the rating, required color, important shifts, and established stakes before deciding whether to spend.

Karma cannot repair a poor declaration after the result is known, combine with Pool Karma on the same FEAT, or make an impossible action possible.

## 6. Work as a Team

One qualified assistant normally provides +1CS. The helper spends the Primary Action when action timing matters and must describe useful assistance.

Teamwork does not add rank scores together. Characters may instead divide objectives: one restrains the opponent, one evacuates civilians, one disables the device, and one protects the escape route.

The Karma Pool serves agreed team purposes. The team's Pool rules and authorization do not erase personal responsibility for how a character acts.

## 7. Use Powers Creatively

A Power's description defines its core functions. Creative use may:

- apply an existing function to a new immediate problem;
- exchange damage for control;
- change the environment;
- create cover, access, leverage, or rescue capacity;
- combine with a teammate's compatible action; or
- attempt a legitimate Power Stunt.

Creativity does not mean unrestricted narrative authority. A fire aura cannot automatically become teleportation because both look dramatic.

The first meaningful, successful use of a Power in a genuinely original way may earn the Creative Power Use award-also known at some tables as the Slithering Award.

## 8. Fight for Objectives

Combat is not automatically a contest to remove every Health point.

Heroes may need to:

- rescue victims;
- prevent escape;
- protect evidence;
- hold a position;
- stop a ritual or machine;
- survive until help arrives;
- separate combatants;
- expose the true threat; or
- persuade someone to stop.

Once the objective is settled and opposition is no longer meaningful, stop rolling attacks.

## 9. Lethal Methods and Agency

The method chosen matters. A firearm, blade, destructive Power, collapsing structure, or other lethal force may produce a Lethal Threat even when the player did not desire death.

The player controls the hero's declarations. Another autonomous character's conduct does not automatically transfer Karma loss to the hero. Responsibility arises when the hero orders, knowingly enables, facilitates, or conceals conduct that violates the hero's Code.

Popularity and Legal Status remain separate. A lawful act may be unpopular. An unlawful act may be admired. Neither fact alone determines Karma.

## 10. Accept Consequences Without Surrendering Agency

A failed FEAT should change the situation according to established stakes. It should not rewrite the hero's beliefs, make the hero commit an undeclared act, or impose humiliation unrelated to the attempt.

Temporary loss, Injury, damaged equipment, exposure, legal trouble, public mistrust, and strained relationships may all matter. They do not erase permanent purchased development unless a rule expressly governs a genuine permanent transformation.

## 11. Recover and Continue

Health and Injury are different.

- Health determines whether the hero can continue acting.
- Injury records what has not yet healed.
- Restoring Health does not remove an Injury.
- Changing form does not erase damage.
- Repairing access does not require repurchasing the same permanent capability.

Use First Aid, stabilization, ordinary recovery, medical treatment, Healing, Regeneration, and rehabilitation according to the Advancement chapter.

## 12. Advance Through What Happened

Karma pays for growth. Story Points prove it.

At the end of an Issue:

- 1 record Karma awards and losses;
- 2 review whether the hero produced one or, exceptionally, two qualifying Story Beats;
- 3 add each Story Point to the Story Ledger with one sentence describing the event;
- 4 update External Traits according to what changed in the world;
- 5 advance Recovery Clocks and downtime projects; and
- 6 discuss any planned advancement or Power Stunt development.

Advancement is not a shopping phase detached from the story. The character becomes more capable because play established the training, discovery, transformation, sacrifice, or breakthrough.

## Part III: Growth and Consequences