

Will You Do the Fandango?



You were born with the gift of laughter and the sense that the World was mad.

In *Will You Do the Fandango?*, you play as members of a traveling troupe of Commedia dell'Arte players. As improvisers of the old and noble Italian school you make your way from town to town in France, a country teetering on the brink of revolution, seeking your fortunes.

Colourful personages all, you each come from different backgrounds. You each have different strengths and different outlooks on life, but you all have your reasons for joining the company. For some, it may be love of the art form, for some the camaraderie or the promise of a warm meal or a soft bed every now and then. Perhaps you are on the run from something and your costume is the perfect disguise.

As actors, you also each have a Mask. The mask represents the part you play, both on the stage and off it. Perhaps you are *Arlecchino*, the acrobatic and impudent clown; *Pantalone*, the rich and miserly elder; one of the *Innamorati*, the passionate lovers, or *Scaramouche*, the witty little skirmisher. Your mask needn't be a physical mask, but it represents the demeanor you present to the world. As a versatile actor you can of course change masks as need be!

Will You Do the Fandango? was written for the *Gaming Like It's 1923* game jam. It is inspired by Rex Ingram's 1923 film *Scaramouche*, an adaptation of Rafael Sabatini's novel of the same name. Other sources of inspiration are the Commedia dell'Arte, swashbuckling stories like Dumas' *Three Musketeers* in various adaptations, Vincent and Meguey Baker's *Apocalypse World* and other Powered by the Apocalypse games, especially John Harper's *Blades in the Dark* and *Monsterhearts* by Avery Alder, as well as Harper's *Lasers and Feelings* and *Lady Blackbird*.

Preparations

Print out this rule sheet. Print out the Personages and the Masks. Use a knife or scissors to make slits where indicated on the Personage sheet, and cut out the Masks so the tabs fit into the slits.

Gather some friends. Get some six-sided dice (D6) and some pencils, maybe some scrap paper to keep notes.

Talk about what the game is about. There are three major elements in the setting: the theatre, the social conflicts of pre-revolutionary France and swashbuckling romance.

The theatre and the troupe is what brings the player characters together, as well as a vehicle for them to move from place to place and encounter new situations. It is also one of the main ways the characters have of influencing the setting: by swaying crowds, up-ending social conventions or revealing hidden truths to the audience.

The social conflict is predicated on the idea that the status quo isn't working. Many of the nobility are corrupt and complacent, social inequality runs deep and the citizens are at the end of their rope. On the other hand, when the mob starts to march, you can rest assured there will be blood on their hands as well.

Swashbuckling romance, in this instance, means that feelings are always grand, the action exciting and romantic entanglements a distinct possibility.

Decide who will be the Gamemaster (GM). The other players each choose a Personage to play, and a Mask to represent their role in the acting troupe. There's no overlap, so only one of each Personage and one of each Mask, but you can switch Masks with each other.

MAKING A CHARACTER

When you choose a Personage and a Mask, you get all the moves for your Personage, and all the bonuses and moves listed on your Mask as well. Everybody gets one Drama point to start with.

STATS

Action: think "a person of action". This is a measure of your physical ability and your drive to physical action.

Passion: means depth of emotion but also your ability to control your feelings and to convey emotions to others.

Wit: means intelligence, reason, quick thinking. It's your ability to come up with a quip or retort or composing a treatise or compelling argument.

The Gamemaster

As GM, your job is to be a facilitator, to help set up situations for the other players to react to. However, *Will You Do the Fandango?* works best if all the players share the authority over what happens and you play to find out what happens.

STRUCTURE OF PLAY

The flow of play is to follow the player character's acting troupe as they go from location to location and interact with the townfolk.

Always be introducing melodrama, adventure, romance and social unrest or class struggle.

When the PCs arrive in town and meet the locals, confront them with the problem in a direct and dramatic way.

As they interact more with the townfolk, they get a deeper understanding of the issues, maybe they meet representatives for the different parties.

When the time feels right, push for them to put on a show, and see how they want to influence the crowd.

Then, deal with the fallout from the show and keep the ball rolling.

At the end of the session, check the characters' Keys. Talk about which Key they played to the most, and ask the player to narrate what happens to the character after the session based on that.

GAVRILLAC

As a starting point, the troupe has just arrived in Gavrillac, a provincial village in Brittany, northwestern France.

Places of interest: the château; the inn and posting-house; the church; the town square; the road to the regional capital, Rennes, where civil unrest is brewing.

Who's who in Gavrillac:

The marquis de La Tour d'Azyr, an arrogant and cruel nobleman who is also a fencing master.

Aline, a young noblewoman whom the marquis is wooing. She does not love him, but sees him as a way to climb the social ranks.

Philippe de Vilmorin, an idealistic student for priesthood who is sympathetic to the peasants' plight.

Mabey, a hungry peasant who poached a pheasant from the marquis' woods and was shot dead by the gameskeeper on orders from marquis de La Tour

Madame Mabey, the dead peasant's widow and mother of three. Wants justice for her dead husband.

The King's Dragoons, stationed in Rennes, these mounted soldiers are armed with muskets and ready to uphold the law.

How to play

CONFLICT

Every conflict in *Will You Do the Fandango?* is a social conflict between people. If there's not two sides of people who want different things, then there's no conflict. In those cases the GM and the other players are free to decide what happens according to what makes most sense in the fiction.

When there is a conflict, look at the Conflict tree and decide which of the moves fits the situation. The side on the left are more about social manipulation, whereas the ones on the right are about violent conflict. To do a move, the character must actually do a thing that qualifies as that move in the fiction!

For each move, there are two character stats listed, like "Wit vs Passion". That means the acting/instigating character rolls as many dice as the first stat, in this example Wit. The so-called defending character rolls as many dice as the second listed stat, so here it would be Passion. Any dice that show 4-6 is a hit, and the character with the most hits is the winner in the conflict. Dice that come up a 6 count as a hit and then you can reroll them.

Modifiers are in the form of dice you add to or subtract from your die pool. If you have an especially advantageous position you get +1D. If, on the other hand, you are at a disadvantage, for example if there's a condition that affects you, you get -1D. You never roll less than one die.

THE RESULTS

If no-one rolls any hits: Treat it as a tie, but both parties take an appropriate condition.

If you tie for hits: An impasse! If either party wants to, they can escalate to another move by following the arrows on the Conflict tree. Otherwise, this conflict is still unresolved.

One party gets more hits: the winning party claims the benefits of the move. After that, if either party wants to, they can escalate the conflict. Otherwise, it's left at that.

DRAMA POINTS

Gained as rewards for certain moves or for hitting your motivational keys.

Can be used to:

- Give any character a +1D bonus or a -1D penalty to a roll.
- Give it to another PC to use as they want. Either as a gift or in exchange for something.
- Heal a condition.

CONDITIONS

Conditions can be social or physical, and they denote something that is true about your character, for a short or longer time. You can gain a condition if a move tells you. Any players whose characters were involved in the move may weigh in on what the exact condition is, but the GM has the final call.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

When you're putting on a play, you use the same moves as normally, but you read the results differently.

The plays are, of course, the acting troupe's *raison d'être*, but they are also a way to sway the crowd, to expose some injustice, to reveal deeper truths to those in the audience or to make the crowd fall madly in love with you! One thing's for certain: no-one will be quite the same after seeing your play.

When you put on a play, treat it as a miniature story within the larger fiction. The players can choose an evocative title and come up with a short description of the play if they like.

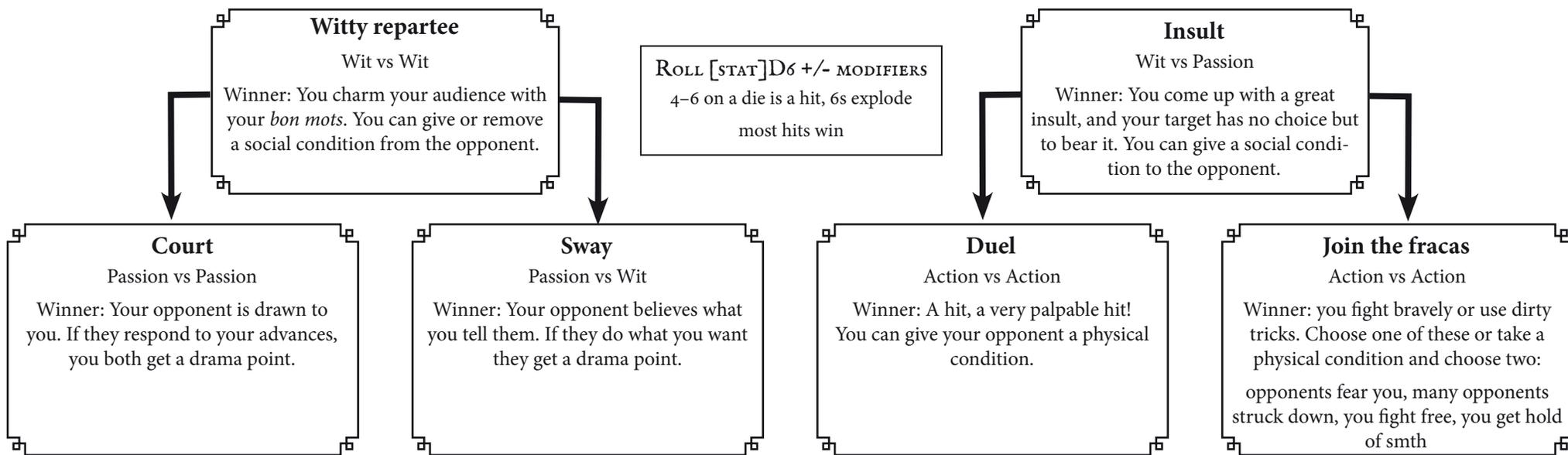
Choose a scene or short vignette to represent some central conflict between two of the Masks on the stage. Describe the conflict and roll for it as if it were a regular conflict. However, the way you read the results are as follows:

If no-one rolls any hits: You've lost the crowd and the play is effectively over. Maybe they boo you off the stage or they just don't get it.

If one of the players rolls a hit but the other does not: You manage to sway the crowd, but the way they spring into action catches you off guard in some way. Maybe it escalates into violence or some unintended targets get caught in the fray.

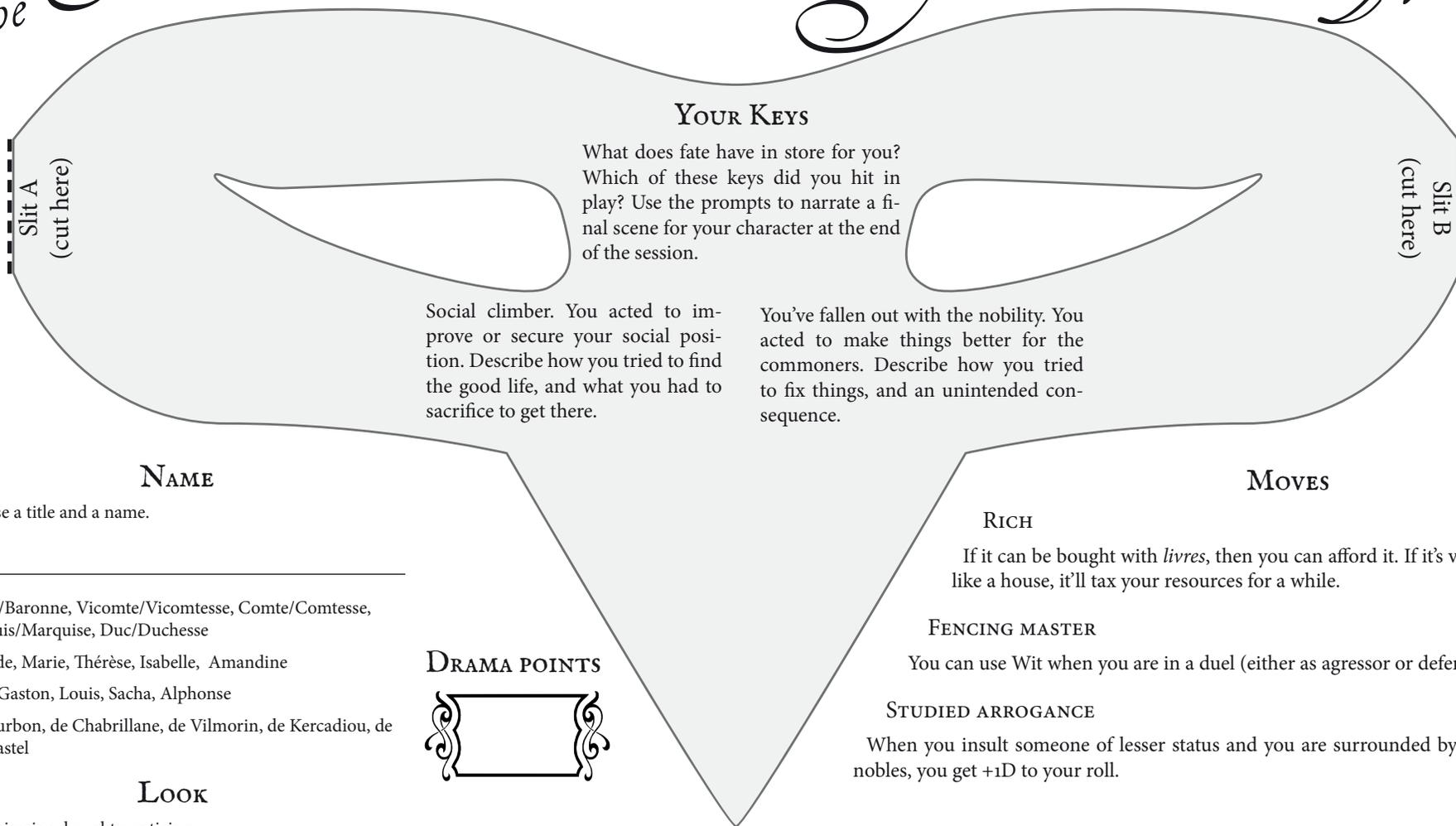
If both players roll hits: The show is a resounding success, and you get exactly the reaction you wanted from the crowd.

The player who rolled the most hits gets to choose how they want to sway the crowd or how to direct their anger or excitement.



The Noble

Will You Do the Fandango?



YOUR KEYS

What does fate have in store for you? Which of these keys did you hit in play? Use the prompts to narrate a final scene for your character at the end of the session.

Social climber. You acted to improve or secure your social position. Describe how you tried to find the good life, and what you had to sacrifice to get there.

You've fallen out with the nobility. You acted to make things better for the commoners. Describe how you tried to fix things, and an unintended consequence.

NAME

Choose a title and a name.

Baron/Baronne, Vicomte/Vicomtesse, Comte/Comtesse, Marquis/Marquise, Duc/Duchesse

Clotilde, Marie, Thérèse, Isabelle, Amandine

Noel, Gaston, Louis, Sacha, Alphonse

de Bourbon, de Chabrilane, de Vilmorin, de Kercadiou, de Plougastel

LOOK

Eyes: piercing, haughty, enticing

Face: well defined, imperious, graceful

Body: graceful, lithe, well-fed

Dress: finery, tattered finery

MOVES

RICH

If it can be bought with *livres*, then you can afford it. If it's very expensive, like a house, it'll tax your resources for a while.

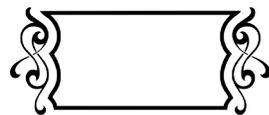
FENCING MASTER

You can use Wit when you are in a duel (either as aggressor or defender).

STUDIED ARROGANCE

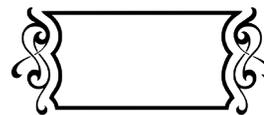
When you insult someone of lesser status and you are surrounded by at least some nobles, you get +1D to your roll.

DRAMA POINTS

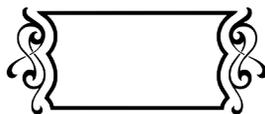


ACTION

STATS



PASSION



WIT

CONDITIONS

MENTAL

- Tired
- Angry
- Confused
- Humiliated
- Charmed

PHYSICAL

- Bruised and cut
- Wounded
- Unconscious
- Dying

You get Action 1, Passion 1, Wit 2, and you can add +1 to any one stat.

Pantalone

Tab A

Tab B

COSTUME
A red jacket and pants, as well as a black and red robe. Pantalone has yellow Turkish slippers, and a coin purse at their belt. The mask is one with a long nose, mustache and pointy beard.

MOVES

When you are Pantalone, you get +1 Passion, -1 Action.

THE FOIL

Whenever you are the butt of somebody's joke, you get a drama point.

CHARACTERISTICS

One of the vecchi (old men), you are rich, high in status, greedy and miserly. Your role in the drama is often to stand in the way of the lovers. Arlecchino may be your servant.

LAZZI

Serenade somebody, but get a chamberpot emptied on you.

Practice fencing to duel another character, but when they show up, become comically afraid.

Tricked by your servant or some other scoundrel into a sack, which is then beaten because of some mix-up.

SOME COMMEDIA PLAYS AND SCENARIOS

The Marriage of Pantalone
The Shy Lover
The Terrible Captain
The Servant of Two Masters
The Fortunate Isabella
The Tooth Puller
The Farce of the Worthy Master

HOW TO USE YOUR MASK

Donning the Mask: you can choose any free mask to wear, or choose to go without a mask. Maybe you slip into character as easy as changing a pair of socks, or maybe you need some piece of costume to get into it. Here's a tip: if you want to persuade someone to trade masks with you, you can always offer them a drama point to sweeten the deal.

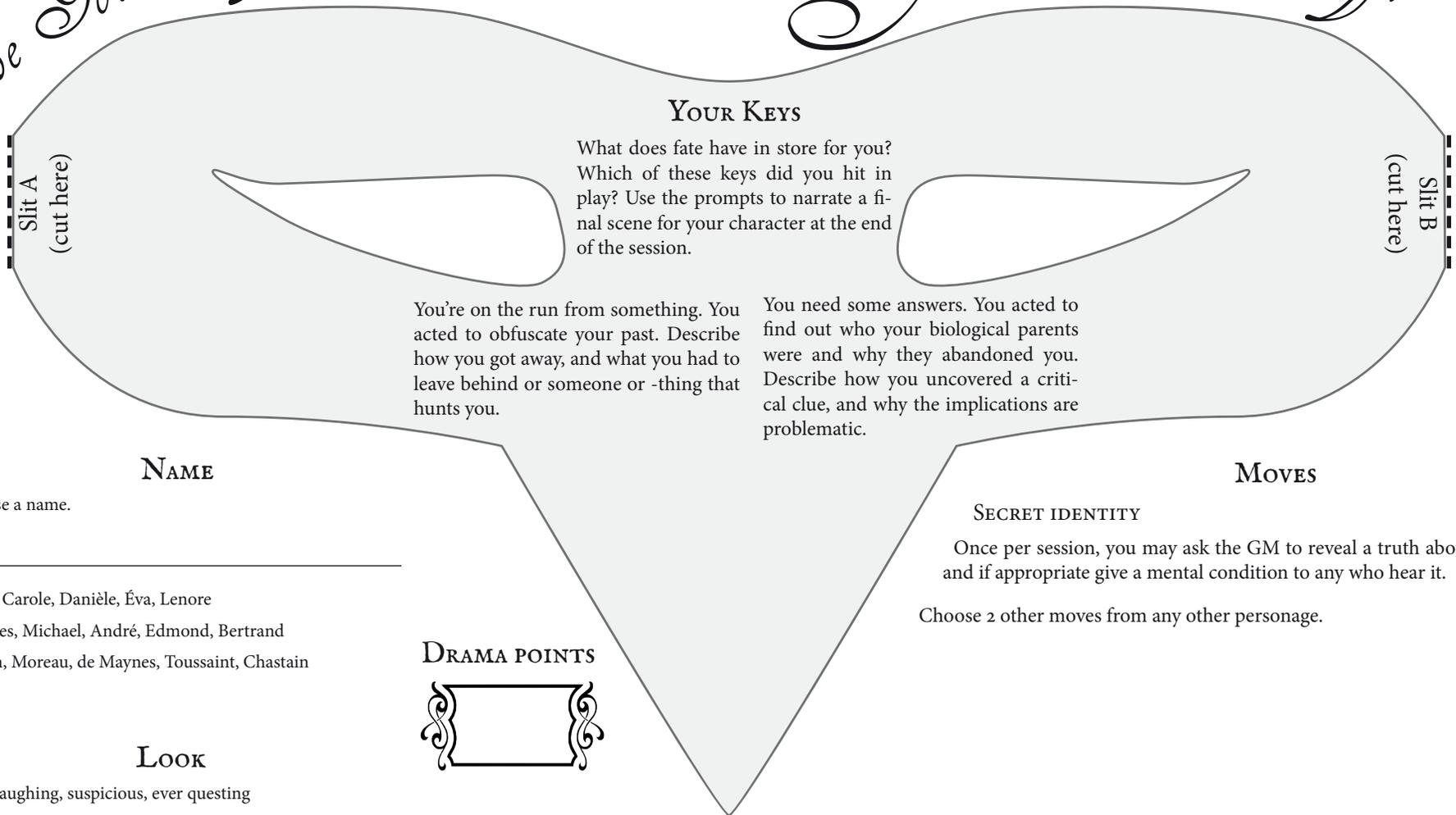
The Moves: each mask affect your stats, and come with a special move. As long as you wear a mask, you must abide by these.

The Lazzi: *Lazzi* (singular *lazzo*) are stock jokes that embody some aspect of your character, often some exaggerated human weakness or flaw. The audience knows these and has come to expect them (or something like them) to be a part of the play. You can use them as inspiration to come up with scenes in your play.

The Costume & Characteristics: these are descriptions of what the character is like and what they usually wear.

The Foundling

Will You Do the Fandango?



YOUR KEYS

What does fate have in store for you? Which of these keys did you hit in play? Use the prompts to narrate a final scene for your character at the end of the session.

You're on the run from something. You acted to obfuscate your past. Describe how you got away, and what you had to leave behind or someone or -thing that hunts you.

You need some answers. You acted to find out who your biological parents were and why they abandoned you. Describe how you uncovered a critical clue, and why the implications are problematic.

NAME

Choose a name.

Aline, Carole, Danièle, Éva, Lenore
 Georges, Michael, André, Edmond, Bertrand
 Fabian, Moreau, de Maynes, Toussaint, Chastain

LOOK

Eyes: laughing, suspicious, ever questing
 Face: open, mysterious, quizzical
 Body: lean, diminutive, marked
 Dress: rags, a mix of various items, suspiciously fine

MOVES

SECRET IDENTITY

Once per session, you may ask the GM to reveal a truth about your past, and if appropriate give a mental condition to any who hear it.

Choose 2 other moves from any other personage.

DRAMA POINTS

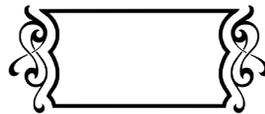


ACTION

STATS



PASSION



WIT

CONDITIONS

MENTAL

- Tired
- Angry
- Confused
- Humiliated
- Charmed

PHYSICAL

- Bruised and cut
- Wounded
- Unconscious
- Dying

You get Action 1, Passion 1, Wit 2, and you can add +1 to any one stat.

Scaramouche

Tab A

COSTUME
A black spanish dress, and a mask with a small beard

HOW TO USE YOUR MASK

Donning the Mask: you can choose any free mask to wear, or choose to go without a mask. Maybe you slip into character as easy as changing a pair of socks, or maybe you need some piece of costume to get into it. Here's a tip: if you want to persuade someone to trade masks with you, you can always offer them a drama point to sweeten the deal.

The Moves: each mask affect your stats, and come with a special move. As long as you wear a mask, you must abide by these.

The Lazzi: *Lazzi* (singular *lazzo*) are stock jokes that embody some aspect of your character, often some exaggerated human weakness or flaw. The audience knows these and has come to expect them (or something like them) to be a part of the play. You can use them as inspiration to come up with scenes in your play.

The Costume & Characteristics: these are descriptions of what the character is like and what they usually wear.

MOVES

When you are Scaramouche, you get +1 Wit, -1 Passion.

UGLY TRUTH

Before you insult someone, you can ask the player of that character to tell you an ugly or embarrassing truth about their character. If they do it, they gain a drama point.

LAZZI

Make a flashy and unexpected entrance.

Trick someone and suckerpunch or kick them from behind.

Give a sarcastic or cynical remark, especially in response to another character's emotions.

Tab B

CHARACTERISTICS

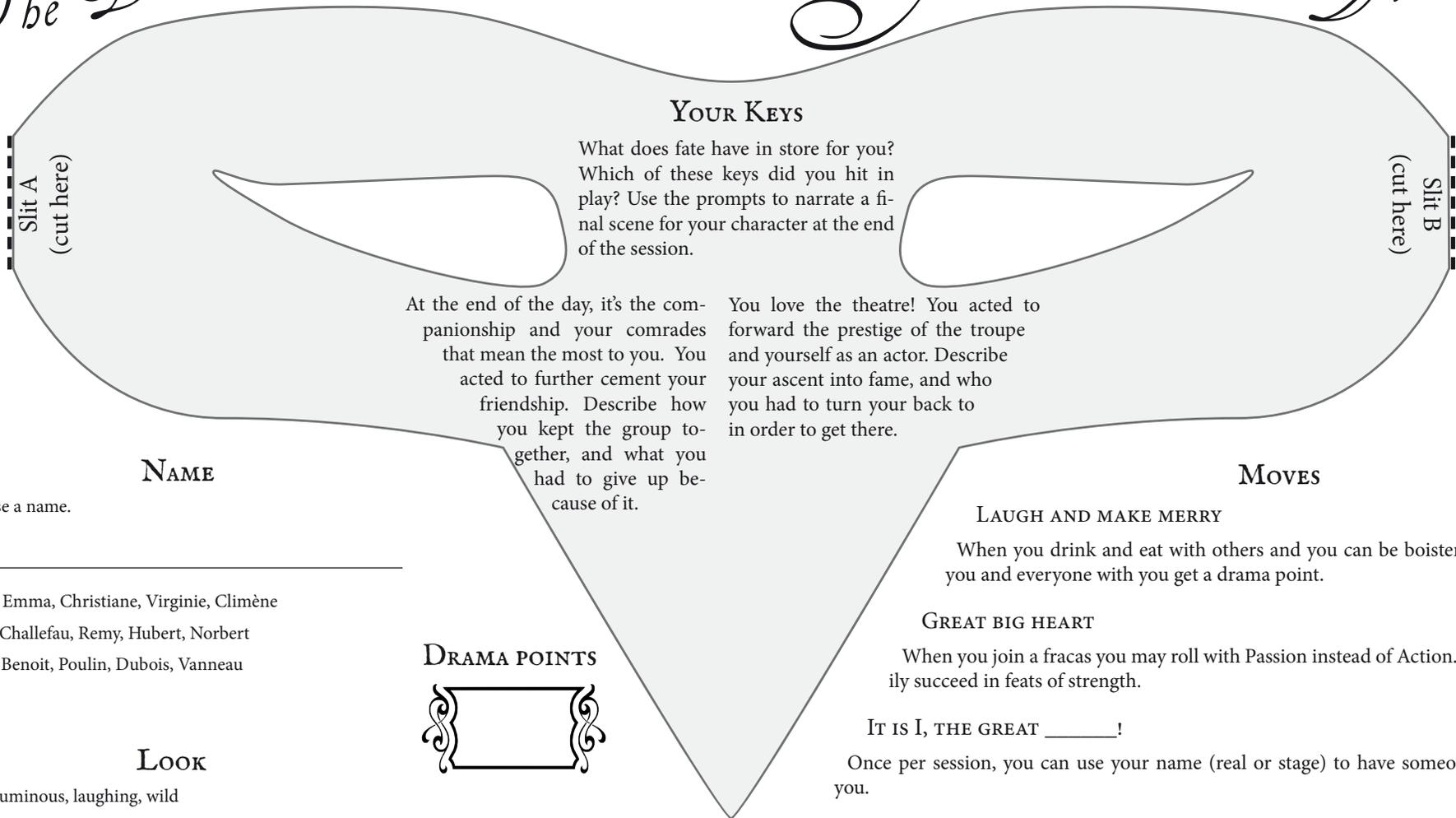
You are a rogue, a sly, slippery fellow who combines attributes of the clown and the masked henchmen. Nobody quite knows what to make of you, except for the fact that you have a sharp tongue.

SOME COMMEDIA PLAYS AND SCENARIOS

- The Marriage of Pantalone
- The Shy Lover
- The Terrible Captain
- The Servant of Two Masters
- The Fortunate Isabella
- The Tooth Puller
- The Farce of the Worthy Master

The Buffoon

Will You Do the Fandango?



YOUR KEYS

What does fate have in store for you? Which of these keys did you hit in play? Use the prompts to narrate a final scene for your character at the end of the session.

At the end of the day, it's the companionship and your comrades that mean the most to you. You acted to further cement your friendship. Describe how you kept the group together, and what you had to give up because of it.

You love the theatre! You acted to forward the prestige of the troupe and yourself as an actor. Describe your ascent into fame, and who you had to turn your back to in order to get there.

NAME

Choose a name.

Anne, Emma, Christiane, Virginie, Climène
René, Challefau, Remy, Hubert, Norbert
Binet, Benoit, Poulin, Dubois, Vanneau

MOVES

LAUGH AND MAKE MERRY

When you drink and eat with others and you can be boisterous about it, you and everyone with you get a drama point.

GREAT BIG HEART

When you join a fracas you may roll with Passion instead of Action. You can easily succeed in feats of strength.

IT IS I, THE GREAT _____!

Once per session, you can use your name (real or stage) to have someone recognize you.

DRAMA POINTS



LOOK

Eyes: luminous, laughing, wild
Face: broad, friendly, comely
Body: herculean, muscular, flabby
Dress: last year's fashion, threadbare, ostentatious

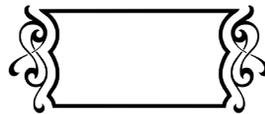


ACTION

STATS



PASSION



WIT

CONDITIONS

MENTAL

- Tired
- Angry
- Confused
- Humiliated
- Charmed

PHYSICAL

- Bruised and cut
- Wounded
- Unconscious
- Dying

You get Action 1, Passion 2, Wit 1, and you can add +1 to any one stat.

Innamorata

MOVES

When you are Innamorata, you get +1 Passion, -1 Wit.

TRUE LOVE

When acting in pursuit of your love, roll Passion instead of Action in any move that you'd roll Action. When you embrace your love, gain a drama point.

LAZZI

Either challenge someone to a duel, or demand your lover challenge them.

Become so emotional that you faint.

Try to compose poetry about your love, all of which turns out terrible.

...or Innamorato

CHARACTERISTICS

You are, first and foremost, in love. Your feelings are real and deep, and your love is the central focal point of the play. You are also completely naive and unable to fix problems by yourself.

SOME COMMEDIA PLAYS AND SCENARIOS

- The Marriage of Pantalone
- The Shy Lover
- The Terrible Captain
- The Servant of Two Masters
- The Fortunate Isabella
- The Tooth Puller
- The Farce of the Worthy Master

COSTUME

Usually the most beautiful costume on stage. The Innamorata often plays their part with no mask on their face.

HOW TO USE YOUR MASK

Donning the Mask: you can choose any free mask to wear, or choose to go without a mask. Maybe you slip into character as easy as changing a pair of socks, or maybe you need some piece of costume to get into it. Here's a tip: if you want to persuade someone to trade masks with you, you can always offer them a drama point to sweeten the deal.

The Moves: each mask affect your stats, and come with a special move. As long as you wear a mask, you must abide by these.

The Lazzi: *Lazzi* (singular *lazzo*) are stock jokes that embody some aspect of your character, often some exaggerated human weakness or flaw. The audience knows these and has come to expect them (or something like them) to be a part of the play. You can use them as inspiration to come up with scenes in your play.

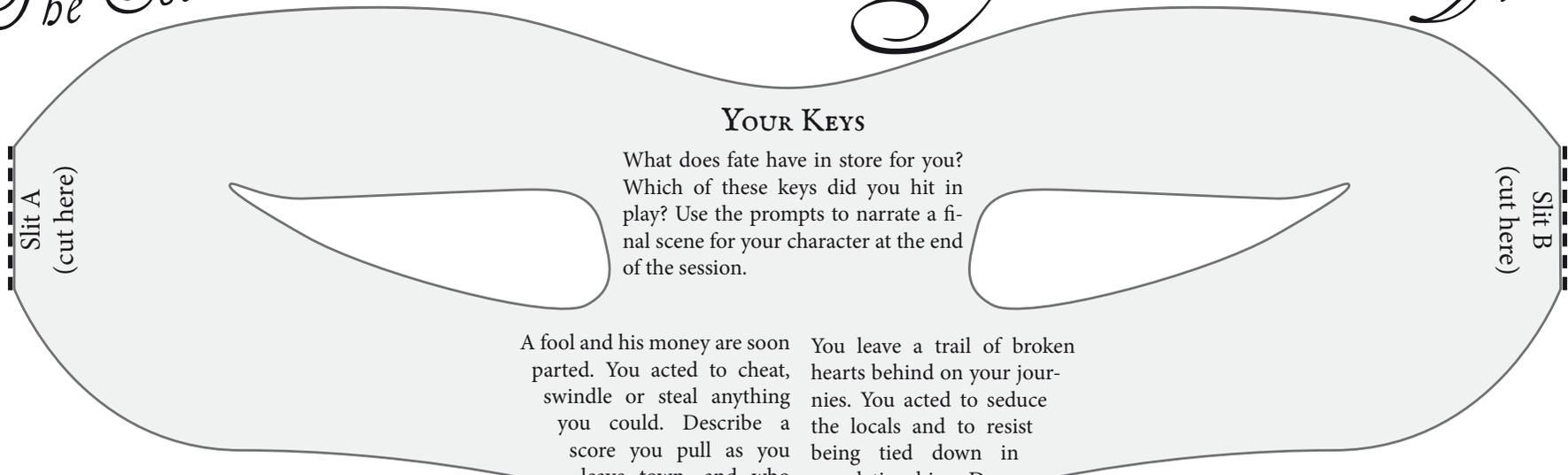
The Costume & Characteristics: these are descriptions of what the character is like and what they usually wear.

Tab A

Tab B

The Scoundrel

Will You Do the Fandango?



YOUR KEYS

What does fate have in store for you? Which of these keys did you hit in play? Use the prompts to narrate a final scene for your character at the end of the session.

A fool and his money are soon parted. You acted to cheat, swindle or steal anything you could. Describe a score you pull as you leave town, and who suffers because of it.

You leave a trail of broken hearts behind on your journeys. You acted to seduce the locals and to resist being tied down in a relationship. Describe how you left someone who was smitten, and how it affected them.

NAME

Choose a name.

Céleste, Coraline, Nina, Gwendoline, Marine
Philippe, Arsene, Quintin, Ignace, Thibault
Durand, Dubuque, Lagron, Fournier, Delacroix

MOVES

PICKPOCKET

If your mark is distracted, you can easily steal a small item they are carrying with them.

HUSTLER

When you arrive in a new village, town or city, you can always suss out any shady happenings in the area.

CARD SHARP

If you engage someone in a game of chance and cheat, roll Action vs Wit. If you win, you get away with it. If you lose, you are caught red-handed.

DRAMA POINTS



LOOK

Eyes: calculating, shifty, seductive
Face: beautiful, weasely, smirking
Body: small, quick, branded
Dress: flashy, inconspicuous, hooded cloak

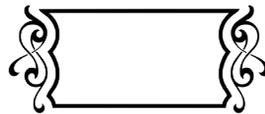


ACTION

STATS



PASSION



WIT

CONDITIONS

MENTAL

- Tired
- Angry
- Confused
- Humiliated
- Charmed

PHYSICAL

- Bruised and cut
- Wounded
- Unconscious
- Dying

You get Action 2, Passion 1, Wit 1, and you can add +1 to any one stat.

Arlecchino

Tab A

Tab B

COSTUME
A colourful, full body costume made up of chequered fabric, and a red-and black mask.

MOVES

When you are Arlecchino, you get +1 Action, -1 Passion.

ACROBAT

When you perform an act of gratuitous acrobatics, you get a drama point.

CHARACTERISTICS

You are the most physical of all the Masks, always tumbling or cartwheeling across the stage. As a trickster, you are clever and resourceful and often manage to thwart your master's plans.

LAZZI

Leap from the stage to run acrobatically around the railing of the balcony.

Use another character as shield when about to be struck.

Gluttonous appetite. Arlecchino can and will eat as much as possible at any given opportunity.

HOW TO USE YOUR MASK

Donning the Mask: you can choose any free mask to wear, or choose to go without a mask. Maybe you slip into character as easy as changing a pair of socks, or maybe you need some piece of costume to get into it. Here's a tip: if you want to persuade someone to trade masks with you, you can always offer them a drama point to sweeten the deal.

The Moves: each mask affect your stats, and come with a special move. As long as you wear a mask, you must abide by these.

The Lazzi: *Lazzi* (singular *lazzo*) are stock jokes that embody some aspect of your character, often some exaggerated human weakness or flaw. The audience knows these and has come to expect them (or something like them) to be a part of the play. You can use them as inspiration to come up with scenes in your play.

The Costume & Characteristics: these are descriptions of what the character is like and what they usually wear.

SOME COMMEDIA PLAYS AND SCENARIOS

The Marriage of Pantalone
The Shy Lover
The Terrible Captain
The Servant of Two Masters
The Fortunate Isabella
The Tooth Puller
The Farce of the Worthy Master