

Apex and i x

RULES AT A GLANCE

The following are outlines of how to play portions of the game. They're not meant to replace reading the rules, but to serve as useful at-a-glance reminders of what to do next after having read through the process at least once already.

SETUP

- 1 Decide on setting
- 2 Each player writes a feature for the setting on the notecard
- 3 Pick three emotion tokens you want to see expressed in the game
- 4 Decide character name, pronouns, flaws and virtues, and goals
- 5 Introduce characters
- 6 Remove a token and reveal
- 7 Find total and corresponding section of Conflict Table
- 8 Pick three tokens again
- 9 Create ~3 relationships for every character
- 10 Remove a token and reveal again
- 11 Find total and corresponding section of Conflict Table
- 12 Decide how the conflicts interact
- 13 Distribute role cards randomly; get ready for first scene

TURNING POINT

- 1 Reach trigger of a conflict
- 2 Find result on the Apex table
- 3 Use the same roll on the Conflict table to determine a new issue
- 4 Interpret result and play out end of scene
- 5 Decide what new goal means
- 6 Set the timer

ENDING

- 1 Timer runs out
- 2 Decide which events lead to characters taking action (set scene)
- 3 No role distribution—all are both musicians and characters
- 4 Players pick three tokens
- 5 Play music and characters at once
- 6 Every player must interject to get rid of their extra token
- 7 Reveal tokens after everyone has interjected once
- 8 Collective narration of the end of the game

SCENE

- 1 Distribute role cards; Player Choice card holders pick roles
- 2 Musicians select instruments
- 3 Draw feature notecards (two for first scene; one plus previous scene's created feature for subsequent scenes)
- 4 Set scene
- 5 Musicians each pick a token
- 6 Musicians play exposition
- 7 Active players roleplay
- 8 Active players may interject
- 9 Musicians trade off embellishing each others' patterns
- 10 Apex is reached
- 11 Everyone picks 2 tokens based on what they think Musicians have
- 12 Find total and corresponding section of Apex Table
- 13 Interpret result and play out end of scene
- 14 Quickly summarize the events of the scene
- 15 Create feature card based on the scene's events
- 16 Distribute role cards face-up

ROLES

Active Player

Represents their character during a scene
Acts according to their relationships with other characters and the Conductor's scene setting
Interjects by spending an Emotion Token or attempting to gain an Experience Token, often in response to a Musician's motifs
Can establish constructive elements of the world that do not aid conflict resolution

Musician

Manipulates emotional direction of story by playing according to their Emotion Tokens
Begins exposition by establishing a musical pattern for the scene
Listens to and plays in response to other Musicians' music
Can play their character nonverbally by playing music in lieu of dialogue

APEX TABLE (3/4/5 PLAYERS)

	HAPPINESS	TENDERNESS	SADNESS	ANGER	FEAR
3+/4+/6+	Jubilant and unambiguous victory.	Your connections and the people around you come together to accomplish great things.	The sadness is cathartic and channeled towards getting what you wanted.	Your determination and focus drive you to the crux of the matter.	In spite of it all, you feel a burst of inspiration and work through it.
2/3/4-5	You get what you want, but you go too far.	Cooperation saves the day but exposes new vulnerabilities and/or exacerbates old ones.	You accomplish your goal, but at great personal cost.	You achieve what you'd been hoping to, but the collateral damage can't just be swept under the rug.	You were triumphant, but something worrying lingers in the back of your mind.
1/1-2/2-3	You can't help but feel that this specific failure is pretty funny.	This does not turn out well for you. On the bright side, it brings you closer together.	Tragedy, but at least it's the kind that teaches you something.	You certainly get some things done, even if they weren't any of the things you were trying to do.	The thing you fear has come to pass, but not in the way you expected.
0/0/0-1	Gleeful self-destruction—the kind that leaves a permanent mark.	You are hurt in the most personal possible way.	Totalizing despair.	Your anger makes everything worse. Much, much worse.	Everything turns out even worse than you imagined.

APEX TABLE (6/7 PLAYERS)

	HAPPINESS	TENDERNESS	SADNESS	ANGER	FEAR
8+/12+	Jubilant and unambiguous victory.	Your connections and the people around you come together to accomplish great things.	The sadness is cathartic and channeled towards getting what you wanted.	Your determination and focus drive you to the crux of the matter.	In spite of it all, you feel a burst of inspiration and work through it.
5-7/7-11	You get what you want, but you go too far.	Cooperation saves the day but exposes new vulnerabilities and/or exacerbates old ones.	You accomplish your goal, but at great personal cost.	You achieve what you'd been hoping to, but the collateral damage can't just be swept under the rug.	You were triumphant, but something worrying lingers in the back of your mind.
2-4/3-6	You can't help but feel that this specific failure is pretty funny.	This does not turn out well for you. On the bright side, it brings you closer together.	Tragedy, but at least it's the kind that teaches you something.	You certainly get some things done, even if they weren't any of the things you were trying to do.	The thing you fear has come to pass, but not in the way you expected.
0-1/0-2	Gleeful self-destruction—the kind that leaves a permanent mark.	You are hurt in the most personal possible way.	Totalizing despair.	Your anger makes everything worse. Much, much worse.	Everything turns out even worse than you imagined.

CONFLICT TABLE (3/4/5 PLAYERS)

	HAPPINESS	TENDERNESS	SADNESS	ANGER	FEAR
0/0-1/0-1	<p>Addiction: an epidemic sweeping the community, leaving many people around you destitute in one way or another</p> <p>Trigger: Get out (or lose everything)</p>	<p>Poverty: you don't have the resources for vital basic needs.</p> <p>Trigger: Achieve safety (or someone dies of it)</p>	<p>Ruin: no one has yet begun to recover from the catastrophe</p> <p>Trigger: Inspire hope in others (or see the catastrophe finish the job)</p>	<p>Violence: an act of hanging over everyone's heads. This place is a powder keg.</p> <p>Trigger: Defuse the threat (or the threat is fulfilled)</p>	<p>Pestilence: it surrounds you. Beware consorting too closely with unknown personages</p> <p>Trigger: Secure treatment (or die trying)</p>
1-2/2-3/2-3	<p>Stupidity: the consequences of a series of rash actions from the past are just beginning to show themselves</p> <p>Trigger: Hold someone accountable (or be held responsible yourselves)</p>	<p>Famine: everyone is hungry, and if you don't do something about it quickly things are going to go very poorly.</p> <p>Trigger: Achieve stability (or someone is debilitated of it)</p>	<p>Loss of innocence: the irrevocable has happened. You found home and you can never go back there.</p> <p>Trigger: Find a substitute (or destroy someone else's)</p>	<p>Revenge: one quest for revenge leaves everyone vulnerable</p> <p>Trigger: Vengeance is fulfilled (or conclusively denied)</p>	<p>A ticking clock: there's an event looming on the horizon, and when it comes to pass, you know everything will change, even if you don't know how.</p> <p>Trigger: The clock reaches zero (or you break the clock)</p>

3/4/4-6	<p>Betrayal: a betrayal by your closest confidante leads to consequences extending far beyond your relationship</p> <p>Trigger: Confront the betrayer (or they confront you)</p>	<p>Passion: these violent delights have violent ends</p> <p>Trigger: You learn your lesson (or someone gets irreversibly hurt)</p>	<p>Pain: you'd do anything to get rid of it.</p> <p>Trigger: Triumph over it (or succumb to it)</p>	<p>Rivalry: two people or groups are trying to outdo each other. Everyone else is caught in the crossfire.</p> <p>Trigger: One group prevails (or reconciliation is reached)</p>	<p>Mayhem: chaos has started creeping in. Maybe it's dangerous, maybe it's inconvenient; either way, everyone needs to find a way to navigate it.</p> <p>Trigger: Establish your order (or have it established against you)</p>
4-5/5-6/7-8	<p>Rebellion: those in power are getting their com- appearance and they are not happy about it</p> <p>Trigger: Affirm your sovereignty (or theirs)</p>	<p>Guilt: something horrible happened. Whether or not you choose to make it right, everyone knows it's your responsibility.</p> <p>Trigger: It gets made right (or turns out to have never been what you thought it was)</p>	<p>Isolation: something distinctly marks you all as the other</p> <p>Trigger: Forge true social acceptance (or be finally and utterly cast out)</p>	<p>War: the fighting may or may not be distant, but the effects are coming home</p> <p>Trigger: The tension is metaphorically resolved (or literally resolved)</p>	<p>Tyranny: by a boss, a government, a parent; regardless, it's stifling.</p> <p>Trigger: A confrontation (or subterfuge)</p>
6/7-8/9-10	<p>Destiny: your destiny keeps getting in the way of your everyday life. It's probably time to do something about it</p> <p>Trigger: What was predicted comes to pass (or an alternate interpretation is revealed)</p>	<p>Moral doubt: you find yourselves in circumstances of dubious morality that no one else seems to question</p> <p>Trigger: You confront the situation (or acquiesce to it)</p>	<p>Death: a recent nearby death (a friend, a celebrity, a stranger) has left a hole you're all looking for a way to fill in different ways.</p> <p>Trigger: Everyone finds a healthy way to cope (or someone goes too far with a dangerous one)</p>	<p>Discrimination: from a person or a society.</p> <p>Trigger: A healing confrontation (or an escalation into violence)</p>	<p>Paranoia: there's a Great Big Question in the air. Maybe you need to know the answer, maybe it's best left as is. Either way, its consequences haunt you.</p> <p>Trigger: Answer the question (or find you were asking the wrong question all along)</p>

CONFLICT TABLE (6/7 PLAYERS)

	HAPPINESS	TENDERNESS	SADNESS	ANGER	FEAR
0-1/0-2	<p>Addiction: an epidemic sweeping the community, leaving many people around you destitute in one way or another</p> <p>Trigger: Get out (or lose everything)</p>	<p>Poverty: you don't have the resources for vital basic needs.</p> <p>Trigger: Achieve safety (or someone dies of it)</p>	<p>Ruin: no one has yet begun to recover from the catastrophe</p> <p>Trigger: Inspire hope in others (or see the catastrophe finish the job)</p>	<p>Violence: an act of hanging over everyone's heads. This place is a powder keg.</p> <p>Trigger: Defuse the threat (or the threat is fulfilled)</p>	<p>Pestilence: it surrounds you. Beware consorting too closely with unknown personages</p> <p>Trigger: Secure treatment (or die trying)</p>
2-4/3-5	<p>Stupidity: the consequences of a series of rash actions from the past are just beginning to show themselves</p> <p>Trigger: Hold someone accountable (or be held responsible yourselves)</p>	<p>Famine: everyone is hungry, and if you don't do something about it quickly things are going to go very poorly.</p> <p>Trigger: Achieve stability (or someone is debilitated of it)</p>	<p>Loss of innocence: the irrevocable has happened. You found home and you can never go back there.</p> <p>Trigger: Find a substitute (or destroy someone else's)</p>	<p>Revenge: one quest for revenge leaves everyone vulnerable</p> <p>Trigger: Vengeance is fulfilled (or conclusively denied)</p>	<p>A ticking clock: there's an event looming on the horizon, and when it comes to pass, you know everything will change, even if you don't know how.</p> <p>Trigger: The clock reaches zero (or you break the clock)</p>

5-7/6-8	<p>Betrayal: a betrayal by your closest confidante leads to consequences extending far beyond your relationship</p> <p>Trigger: Confront the betrayer (or they confront you)</p>	<p>Passion: these violent delights have violent ends</p> <p>Trigger: You learn your lesson (or someone gets irreversibly hurt)</p>	<p>Pain: you'd do anything to get rid of it.</p> <p>Trigger: Triumph over it (or succumb to it)</p>	<p>Rivalry: two people or groups are trying to outdo each other. Everyone else is caught in the crossfire.</p> <p>Trigger: One group prevails (or reconciliation is reached)</p>	<p>Mayhem: chaos has started creeping in. Maybe it's dangerous, maybe it's inconvenient; either way, everyone needs to find a way to navigate it.</p> <p>Trigger: Establish your order (or have it established against you)</p>
8-10/9-11	<p>Rebellion: those in power are getting their com- appearance and they are not happy about it</p> <p>Trigger: Affirm your sovereignty (or theirs)</p>	<p>Guilt: something horrible happened. Whether or not you choose to make it right, everyone knows it's your responsibility.</p> <p>Trigger: It gets made right (or turns out to have never been what you thought it was)</p>	<p>Isolation: something distinctly marks you all as the other</p> <p>Trigger: Forge true social acceptance (or be finally and utterly cast out)</p>	<p>War: the fighting may or may not be distant, but the effects are coming home</p> <p>Trigger: The tension is metaphorically resolved (or literally resolved)</p>	<p>Tyranny: by a boss, a government, a parent; regardless, it's stifling.</p> <p>Trigger: A confrontation (or subterfuge)</p>
11-12/12-14	<p>Destiny: your destiny keeps getting in the way of your everyday life. It's probably time to do something about it</p> <p>Trigger: What was predicted comes to pass (or an alternate interpretation is revealed)</p>	<p>Moral doubt: you find yourselves in circumstances of dubious morality that no one else seems to question</p> <p>Trigger: You confront the situation (or acquiesce to it)</p>	<p>Death: a recent nearby death (a friend, a celebrity, a stranger) has left a hole you're all looking for a way to fill in different ways.</p> <p>Trigger: Everyone finds a healthy way to cope (or someone goes too far with a dangerous one)</p>	<p>Discrimination: from a person or a society.</p> <p>Trigger: A healing confrontation (or an escalation into violence)</p>	<p>Paranoia: there's a Great Big Question in the air. Maybe you need to know the answer, maybe it's best left as is. Either way, its consequences haunt you.</p> <p>Trigger: Answer the question (or find you were asking the wrong question all along)</p>