

Crime & Punishment
by Moyra Turkington

A Game Chef Submission
For 3 or 5 Players

Time constraint:
One session of two hours

Ingredients:
Law, Team, Actor (+ "Steele")

In the world of procedural dramas,
there are two separate yet
equally important groups:

The writers, who dream up the episodes,
and the actors who bring them to life.

This is their RPG.



About the Game:

"Here's to wearing a badge, carrying a high-powered sidearm, and hopefully being right more often than we're wrong."

~Lennie Briscoe, Law & Order, "For God & Country"

In **Crime & Punishment** players take on the roles of writers and actors in a procedural drama. In the first half of the game, players create story elements that will entice each other's investment. In so doing, they earn resources for the second half of the game when they will need them to purchase time and glory in the spotlight of the drama they have created.

What You Need to Play:

Poker Chips are called "shields" in **Crime & Punishment** and they are the currency that the players earn and spend in the course of the game. There must be three distinguishable varieties of the chips available and there must be substantial amounts of one variety (45, 5, 5 in a three player game or 75, 5, 5 in a five player game). If poker chips are not available, tokens, coins or other markers may be used, as long as there are three distinguishable types of markers available for use.

Other Materials:

- A timer that can be easily set for times ranging from 4 to 50 minutes.
- Each player will need a different colored writing implement to write down their game elements and create the frame of the story.
- Five large sheets of paper, are needed for the writing segment of play. Flip chart paper is ideal. A whiteboard or chalkboard could also work. Extra letter, legal or tabloid loose leaf will do in a pinch.
- A copy of the procedure sheets located at the end of this book, and an Investigator's resource sheet for each player if desired.

Order of Play:

To prepare for play, the players must **Choose an Agency**, which will identify the kind of case their drama will be dealing with. Then, they must **Set the Intensity** of the episode, which governs the focus of the drama, be it on the characters, the case, or the politics of the story.

To begin play, the players act as the writers of the drama, working together to **Draw the Storyboard** of the investigation. They will do so in five timed rounds of **Creating Procedures**. Each round has three components: Creating Story Elements, Investing in Story Elements and Earning Your Pay.

Once all five procedures have been framed, there will be a **Casting Call** in which the writers busy themselves with Assigning Investigators and Casting the Roles. Here, players will choose the investigators that will be in the drama and negotiate or bid for the roles that they will take on as actors in the drama.

Over the span of the last hour of the game, the players will **Act Out the Drama**, procedure by procedure. Using the storyboard that they have collectively built, they will explore the crime, track down the suspects and solve the case. Although they know from the storyboard what has the potential to happen in the story, they must now use their earnings by **Bidding for the Spotlight** to become the protagonists and highlight their characters roles in the story. The players must work together to act out the storyboard in the time allowed, or else the **Statute of Limitations** may bring an untimely end to the drama and result in an ending in which everything will go wrong.

Choosing an Agency:

Before beginning the game the players must choose a legal agency in which their procedural drama will be based. Crime & Punishment has been designed to accommodate the agencies most popularly seen on television today. Homicide Divisions, Missing Persons Squads, Special Victims Units, and Major Case Squads are all prime choices to explore in the drama that will be created.

However, if the players would like to play in Vice Squads, Forensic Science Teams or Counter Terrorism Units, this can be done as well. When choosing an Agency, keep in mind that some kinds of cases (such as Special Victims or Counter Terrorism) are especially suited to sessions where high emotional intensity is desired but should be chosen only in games when all players are comfortable with the subject matter at hand.

Setting the Intensity:

Crime & Punishment uses two different kinds of intensity to focus the drama and help ensure that the emphasis is placed on the most desired elements of the story. Both kinds of intensity are measured on a five point scale; five is high and one is low. One intensity level must be rated higher than the other, and it is recommended that at least one of the two kinds of intensity are valued at three or more to keep the stakes of the game dynamic.

Investigator Intensity governs the importance of the investigators in the story. Whether they be police, special agents of the FBI or scientists, the cases that investigators work with have a huge potential to impact their personal lives, physically, emotionally, and ethically. Collectively, the players will determine how important the investigators are to the story that they are about to tell. If a dispute arises about intensity levels, the players should put the issue to a vote.

Episodes rated low on Investigator Intensity will concentrate on the specifics and dynamics of the case. While the investigators may still have dimension and opinion, they will not be the focus of the story.

Where Investigator Intensity is metered high, the case will have a strong emotional resonance with the pair of investigators. Maybe the victim reminds them of someone they love. Maybe it will push them over the edge. Maybe they'll get hurt, or die, or have a breakdown.

Political Intensity governs the sociological, ethical or political importance in the story. When the law is in question, politics are rarely far behind. Political Intensity plots might be hot-button current issues that are ripped from the headlines. They might involve the moral quagmires that have been dogging humanity all through the modern age (e.g. capital punishment, abortion). Perhaps they deal with the new grey ground that technology is forging into (e.g. cloning) or the no man's land that occurs between the agencies (e.g. jurisdiction). Whatever the political pressure explored, the higher the Political Intensity is set, the more it will become the focus of the game.

Episodes rated low in political intensity will emphasize the investigation or the emotional impact of the crime. Those rated high will focus on ethical conundrums or political interference. These dramas are rife with complications and complexity.

Political issues in a case can also cause emotions to run high on behalf of the investigators, and so it is possible to have both Investigator and Political Intensities highly rated. If this is the case, remember, one scale must always trump the other..

Example:

Nicole, Gary and Brand have chosen to use detectives working on a homicide unit. They have decided that the focus of the story should be squarely on how the crime personally affects the investigators. As a result, they choose to set the Investigator Intensity level as high as possible: right up at level five.

They would also like there to be a little bit of political intensity in the mix in order to increase the pressure on the detectives and support the emotional intensity of the game. They have decided that they want it high enough to have an impact, but not so high as it will take focus away from the struggle of the detectives. Therefore, they have set the Political Intensity right in the middle: at level three.

Drawing the Storyboard

Preparation

It is in drawing the storyboard that the players will need to have the large sheets of paper spread out on a work surface between them. Each player will have a different colored pen or pencil to work with so as to make their contributions immediately identifiable. The timer will also be needed at this time, because each of the next five rounds of creating procedures have two timed intervals of four minutes each.

Creating Procedures

In this part of the game, there are five rounds of play, one for each of the procedures that will be incorporated into the drama. There are six possible types of procedures that can be used in any drama: Crime Scene, Interview, Forensics, Chase/Stakeout/Sting, Interrogation and Resolution. Only the first and last procedures are mandatory. The middle three procedures will be chosen by the writers to suit the kind of drama they are creating.

All of the individual procedures have specific requirements that must be fulfilled to draw the storyboard of the drama. These requirements are specific story elements like "victim", "location", or "forensic evidence" that are meant to provide the props, places and people to make a dynamic drama.

The writers do not create a script. In fact they must take care not to tie story elements to any specific player. As the elements for each procedure are invested, the plot of the drama begins to materialize, funneling the writer's efforts towards a cohesive story.

A full list of the procedure types and their requirements is available later in this chapter (see page 10). However, this section will have a look at the mandatory first procedure on its own in order to help illustrate the process that the writers will follow to Create, Invest and Earn.

The first scene of any procedural drama is a **Crime Scene**, because all crime dramas start with a victim. All Crime Scenes must have a victim, a location, at least two pieces of forensic evidence, a suspect or a witness, and a lead.



Step 1 - Creating Story Elements

The requirements for the procedure should be announced at the beginning of the round to ensure that the writing team knows what they are expected to produce. The timer is then set for four minutes. The players then spend the four minutes quickly announcing and noting story elements that could potentially be used in the drama.

Elements should not be written down in list form, but should instead be scattered out on the paper with enough spacing so that shields can be placed on each individual element when it comes to the next step.

When mapping story elements, keep in mind:

- Writers should work quickly, so as to get as many ideas out on the table in the time allowed. The more ideas available, the more dynamic and robust the story will be.
- To keep the process moving quickly, the writers should keep their ideas concise.
- If a writer gets "blocked" for more than five seconds, he should pass his turn to the next writer. Intentional stalling is not an acceptable tactic.
- The writers are not only allowed, but encouraged to create multiple options for each of the requirements of the procedure.
- This is meant to be a team brainstorming exercise. Creating an element that was inspired or wrenched out of an element already on the table is absolutely legal.
- All elements should describe potential actions or elements that are available for use by anyone in the story, rather than by any particular player or investigator.
- The more a writer pleases the other writers at the table, the more currency they will end up earning, and therefore, the more power they will have in the game.

Example of Play:

Brand: "OK, the first procedure is always the crime scene. By the end of the next four minutes, we must have: a victim, a location, a description of the crime, at least two pieces of forensic evidence, a suspect or witness, and a lead. Ready? Go"

Gary: (announces and writes down) "The Waldorf Hotel"

Nicole: (announces and writes down) "Chamber Maid"

Brand: (announces and writes down) "strangled with a pair of panty hose"

Gary: (announces and writes down) "stabbed with a letter opener"

Nicole: (announces and writes down) "pushed out the window"

Brand: (announces and writes down) "sleeping with a bellboy..."

Step 2 - Investing in Story Elements

Shields: There are three distinct varieties of shields that are used in Crime & Punishment. Blue shields are generic. They are the basic unit of currency used in the game. At the beginning of each round, three shields are refreshed into the "holsters" of each player (see detective desktop, pg 22). Shields in the holster are available for use now, while shields in the locker are not. Players use the shields in their holsters to in each procedure creation rounds to invest in the story elements that they would like to see incorporated into the game.

Investigator shields and political shields are the other two kinds of different, higher value currency that will be used in the game. They are not used, however, until the second half of the game when the players are **Acting out the Drama**.

Once the four minutes of creating elements has elapsed, the paper should be filled with ideas. Once again, the timer is set for four minutes, and starting with the same player that began Step 1, the writers take turns placing one of their blue shields on an element on the table, investing in the element, and making it a part of the storyboard.

When investing, the player should announce what the element is, and what requirement, if any, the element satisfies. The element and the requirement it satisfies should be written down. Investigator notepad templates have been included at the end of this book (see pages 21 & 22) to help with the recordkeeping of the procedural requirements.

Writers can not invest shields in any of their own elements, they can only invest in the elements of other writers. The writing team should take care to select elements that fulfill the requirements of the procedure first to make sure the story structure will be sound. Once

the first few elements are selected, players will find that some elements become more viable and others less so. They should do their best to keep the elements complementary to each other. Writers must spend all of their shields in this round. They can not withhold or keep any of the shields. In the event that there are not enough elements to invest in, shields can be placed as doubles on an already invested shield. When noting these down in the investigator notebook, underline these elements as focal to the procedures that they are in.

Example of Play:

The players have produced the following elements for the Crime Scene procedure:

Waldorf Hotel
stabbed with letter opener
jealous boyfriend
gambling addiction
stolen goods
cigarette butts in ashtray
Presidential Suite
single mom

chamber maid
pushed out the window
room key card
stripper to make ends meet
Ace of Spades tattoo
semen on uniform
affair with hotel manager
homeless

strangled with pantyhose
sleeping with bell boy
skin under nails
locker key
bloody footprint
conference dining room
estranged daughter of a cop
expensive lingerie

Gary was the first person to begin creating elements, so he will start the investing. He has been writing with a red pen (first column, above). He really likes the idea of a Hotel scene, but he can't pick his own element, so when he sees Nicole's element "chamber maid" he decides to invest in it, and so puts one of his three blue shields down on top of it and announces "chamber maid, victim" and writes it down while Nicole takes her turn.

Nicole also likes the idea of the hotel scene and thinks that Brand's "sleeping with the bell boy" would make things interesting, so she puts one of her blue shields on it, and announces the element as a suspect. Brand thinks that "affair with the hotel manager" would be a good addition to the story because it would make a love triangle, and therefore a motive, so now he announces: "Affair with Hotel Manager, love triangle, lead".

Gary invests in "strangled with pantyhose" as the description of the crime. Nicole invests in the location "Presidential Suite". Brand invests in "semen on uniform" as the first piece of forensic evidence, while Gary invests in "room key card" for the second. Since the game has an emphasis on investigator intensity, Nicole thinks that "estranged daughter of a cop" will make a good twist. Finally, Brand selects "single mom" to up the ante. The team makes sure that each invested element is written down.

Step 3 - Earning Your Pay

This step is very simple. After all the invested elements have been captured to an investigator notebook, each writer collects any shields that have been invested in an element that they have created. Different colors of pens or pencils have been used to help make this process quick and easy. The writers should put these shields in their locker (see investigator desktop at the end of the book). These shields are now saved resources that will be used later in the game. In the locker, shields are saved and can not be used until the **Casting Call**.

Lather, Rinse, Repeat:

The writing team now chooses the next procedure that the drama will feature. If making the decision does not happen quickly, the decision is left to the player that earned the most shields in the previous round. In the case of a tie, Rock Paper Scissors, or Evens Odds should be used to give authority. Once the next procedure is selected, Steps 1, 2 & 3 are repeated with that procedure, and the whole procedure process is repeated until the storyboard is completed - with five fully invested procedures that started with a Crime Scene and ended with a Resolution.

Example of Play:

In the earlier example, at the end of the round, four of Nicole's elements ("chamber maid", "affair with hotel manager", "semen on uniform", and "room key card") have received investments from the other players. Because she has created investments that other players found appealing enough to bring into the story, Nicole has earned four blue shields as her pay this round. She will continue to collect these shields in each of the six rounds of creating procedures.

Similarly, three of Brand's elements ("strangled by pantyhose", "sleeping with bell boy", and "estranged daughter of a cop") and two of Gary's elements ("Presidential Suite" and "single mom") have also been invested. Therefore, Brand and Gary have earned three and two shields respectively.

Procedure Types and Requirements

Crime Scene: The mandatory first procedure, all episodes start with a "vic". Crime Scenes must have a victim, a location, a description of the crime, at least two pieces of forensic evidence, a suspect or witness, and a lead. A serial crime story may have more than one crime scene.

Interview: Witnesses, canvassing, leads, loved ones, or simply following a trail of evidence, this procedure can contain one or more interviewees. The scene should contain the relation to victim, a reason that the main interviewee would be reluctant to talk, a formula for overcoming that reluctance, a clue, a possibility ruled out, and a new lead.

Forensic Examination: The investigators have on hand (or may be) a host of experienced technicians, laboratories and forensic scientists. Forensic Examinations should have: a complication concerning one or more of the pieces of evidence collected at the crime scene, a highlighted forensics technique, a possibility ruled out, a new discovery, and a lead.

Chase, Stakeout or Sting: A means of acquiring the primary suspect, this procedure should have a location, a tactic or plan for capturing the suspect, a complication, an action sequence, and an outcome.

Interrogation: This is the interrogation of a likely suspect. Interrogation procedures should contain a suspect, a tactic, a conflict, and a complication or confession. If the suspect has not confessed, the procedure should also contain a new lead. Interrogation procedures are an especially good exploration ground in games that have an emphasis on investigator intensity.

Resolution: The resolution scene is the mandatory end scene of any drama. It brings the action to a close and underlines the themes and statements that the story has made. This procedure must provide an outcome of the case, a reaction or reflection on behalf of the investigators and a final thematic statement that draws the episode to a close.



Example of Play:

Brand, Gary and Nicole's drama started out with the mandatory Crime Scene. For the next procedure, Gary wanted a Chase, Stakeout or Sting to start the episode off with a bang. Because they had a very solid lead that included several suspects (love triangle between the maid, bell boy and hotel manager) Nicole thought that the next procedure should be an Interview to establish which suspect was the more likely culprit. Meanwhile, Brand wanted one of the suspects to be taken into custody at the crime scene, and to dive into a hard-hitting Interrogation. As the person that earned the most chips in the last round, Nicole's idea is the one that is used.

Following the storyboard created for the Interview, invested elements indicated that both suspects would have strong motives and opportunities to commit the crime. The entire writing team easily agreed that forensic evidence should be highlighted in making the case. So the third procedure is Forensic Examination. Following it's creation, where Brand and Gary tied for the number of shields earned, they have a dispute. Gary feels that there should be a Chase, Stakeout or Sting to nab the right guy, and Brand, is still wanting that hard-hitting Interrogation. They play Rock, Paper, Scissors, and Brand wins. The fourth procedure will be an Interrogation, and the fifth, the mandatory Resolution.

Wrapping up the Storyboard

Once all six rounds of story mapping, investing and earning are completed, the writers are almost finished their job. They must only decide who their investigators will be and have a **Casting Call** before beginning to **Act out the Drama**.

Strategies for Play

Complications:

Complications that are introduced as a requirement for a procedure have a specific relationship with the procedure that they are in. For example, the Forensic Examination procedure has a "complication with evidence" requirement. The Forensic Examination scene could therefore have elements like "evidence manufactured", "no cause for search", or "chain of custody issue". These complications should be resolved as a part of the procedure they are in.

However, other kinds of complications can arise as part of the drama, especially in those games where the political or investigator intensity levels are set high. Outside agencies such as equivalent agencies in neighboring jurisdictions, the District Attorney's Office, Internal Affairs, the Justice Department, the Attorney General, the Local, State or Federal Governments, International Governments, the Military, or the Media may all have reasons to get involved in the drama and make the case more difficult for the investigators.

The writing team should feel free to introduce and invest in these elements when creating the storyboard, but should take care not to introduce too many at once, lest the case become too complicated to play out in the time allowed.

Thematic Statements

The thematic statement is not created and invested in until the Resolution procedure. The benefit of this is that by the time the storyboard is nearing completion, all of the writers will have a solid idea of the concepts that will be explored in the story. A Thematic Statement is created that works with these elements to focus all players' participation in the story and to underline the emotional, ethical or thematic importance of the entire drama.

Examples of thematic statements are: "Rough justice is better than no justice at all.", "Anyone will put their family before the law.", "Even sympathetic criminals are still criminals." or "Justice is something we want other people to get."

Example of Play:

After the first four procedures of the storyboard have been completed, Brand, Gary and Nicole's drama have a love triangle that involves a murdered girl that is the daughter of a police officer that was once the partner of one of the investigators in the story, and who was killed in the line of fire. The investigator intensity is set at maximum, and at some point, one of the two investigators will do something that will endanger the investigation.

While storyboarding the Resolution procedure, they have decided to invest in the element "Suspect gets off." and "Suspect killed in vigilante murder." The thematic statement that they have invested in sums up all of these elements in one:

"Loyalty can drive us to terrible things."

Casting Call:

The Casting Call signals an end to the players' roles as writers of the drama and begins their participation as actors. All of the shields in players' lockers now move to their holsters and are available for use.

Now that the storyboard is complete, the drama must have characters that can bring it to life. **When Acting Out the Drama**, two players will play the pair of investigators in the story (four investigators in a five player game). The one extra player will take on the role as **Captain Steele** (or Lieutenant Steele, or Senior Agent Steele, or whatever title is best suited to the Agency that has been chosen for the drama).

Steele is the direct supervisor of the investigators. He plays a part in the drama, governs the investigation, and can take an active or a passive role in the procedures. While Steele is an actor, he is also has a directorial role. He will be the player to describe the crime scene and kick off the investigation. He will also be responsible for timekeeping, and will intervene in the drama if and when the **Statute of Limitations** runs out. Steele will also play the roles of the extras in the drama, and will serve as the source of opposition and antagonism to the investigators. He receives a number of political and investigator intensity chips equal to the intensity levels as set at the beginning of the game.

Steele will be played by the player who has earned the most shields while Creating the Storyboard. If desired, Steele can abdicate this role to another willing player before Assigning Investigators to the drama.

Assigning Investigators:

From the following list, the writing team should choose the detectives that will investigate the crime of the drama. One team of two investigators will be needed in a three player game. In a five player game, two teams of two are required. Players should feel free to change the names or genders of the investigators as desired.

Tough as nails, **Warden** has fought for and earned every ounce of respect that she has gotten in the unit. She's dedicated, driven, idealistic, but despite the hard shell, there's something hidden and injured inside her. **Warden has an assumed blue shield any time she uses empathy to get through to or manipulate someone in the investigation.**

Cool, loose and easygoing, **Jones** keeps a calm head under pressure. His race or sexuality sets him apart from the other detectives, and this occasionally causes friction. However, it often allows him access to community groups that can present obstacles to the rest of the unit. **Jones has an assumed blue shield whenever he attempts to gain access to a marginalized community group.**

Quirky and cynical, **Orbach** has been around the block and seen every terrible act one human animal can wage against another. He's faced his own demons along the way, and managed in doing so, to alienate everyone he was ever close to. He's found an uneasy peace in the loneliness and these days little of the world's ugliness gets past his Teflon coating. **Orbach has an assumed blue shield whenever he diffuses a dodgy situation with humor.**

Even though **Slater** is a pillar of the community, he is tightly wound and his years on the job have given him an interior core of rage. He can be very protective of those he loves, be it his wife, his children or his partner, but there are times when the cases he works pushes him just that far over the line and threatens a meltdown. **Slater has an assumed blue shield in any situation that requires intimidation.**

Wachowski is the rookie in the unit, and he's got something to prove. He's idealistic, hotheaded, impulsive, defensive, and boastful. He frequently does all the wrong things for the right reasons and doesn't always respect the boundaries that the other investigators in his unit have learned to live with. **Wachowski's investigator shields count double when used to push other investigators into intense emotionality, but must bid double to counter the same.**

Ten days away from retirement, **Wilson's** been finding himself a little distracted. There's been a lot of victories over the years, but there's been a lot of unsolved cases too, and each of those victims haunt his nights. He doesn't want to rock the boat this close to collecting his pension, but he's worried that he'll never move on with his life without closure. **Wilson has an assumed blue shield whenever bidding to take control of an element that can put something in his history to rest.**

Grimes is a brilliant investigator, but there's something off-putting about his personality. It may be that he's a little socially awkward, a little too internalized or that he may just give people the willies. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, he's extremely perceptive and has little trouble entrapping people in his mental games. **Grimes has an assumed blue shield whenever using his smarts to trip someone into a confession, or while making leaps of crime solving logic.**

Robertson has been around the block, and weathered the journey well. She comes from a family of firefighters, cops and paramedics. Emergency Response is her family's business, and she thinks that emergency response is a business that needs a family. She keeps a careful eye on the other investigators and works to make sure that they're coping with the stresses of the job. Whether it means taking her partner aside for a heart-to-heart or stepping into the

line of their pistol's sight when they're about to lose control, Robertson's heart and courage are the kind of backup that every investigator looks for. Robertson has an assumed blue shield when trying to convince another investigator to do the right thing, plus any blue shield she bids to back her partner's play counts double.

Earnest and upright, McKay is a legacy cop. His dad was (or still is) a revered member of the big brass. He's got a lot to live up to, and he tends to attract the attention of those in control. This may mean that he's got more influence than your average investigator, but it also means that he's got to tread more softly when walking the line. McKay's political shields count double when trying to work the system against itself, but must bid double to counter any political shields bid against him.

Jennings doesn't plan on staying in the trenches forever. Since graduation day at the academy, he's had his eye on a Captain's badge, and he's not going to let anything or anyone stand in his way. Jennings does everything by the book, and has a spotless record, but he's not above undermining other detectives to get the glory he needs to get ahead. Jennings' investigator shields count double when trying to take credit for a success in the investigation, but must bid double to counter any investigator shields bid to stab him in the back.

Casting the Roles

The players will then negotiate the roles that they will play in the drama. This can happen simply by agreement, or, should disputes arise, Steele will hold an auction. The players can bid the shields in their locker against each other to buy the desired role. All shields from the winning bidder go into Captain Steele's holster.

Example of play:

After the entire drama has been storyboarded, Brand is the player with the most chips in his locker. He wants to be Captain Steele, so he does not make it available to Gary or Nicole. Collectively, they have decided that Slater and Wilson have the most potential in the drama that they are creating, and so assign these investigators to the case.

Both Nicole and Gary are most interested in playing Slater, so Brand calls for an auction. Bidding up one at a time, Nicole raises the price to three blue shields. Gary, who has the fewest shields in his holster, decides that this is too rich for his blood, and drops out. Nicole gets to play Slater and Brand receives her three shields for use in the drama.

Acting Out the Drama

When the episode begins, there should be 1 hour left to the game. Steele should set the timer for 50 minutes at this time to ensure that due process is followed. If the investigators have not apprehended their suspect nor are winding down to resolution by the end of that 50 minutes, The Statue of Limitations will be invoked (see page 19).

Procedure by procedure, the actors will now bring the storyboard to life. The drama will begin, of course, with the Crime Scene. The player playing Steele will provide an introduction to the Crime Scene, and draw the investigators in. The investors will discover the elements of the procedure through roleplay. Elements invested in the storyboard are available for use by any player in the game. Investigators can interact with any invested element freely, however, when two investigators are interested in the same element, they must resolve this dispute by **Bidding for the Spotlight**.

Bidding for the Spotlight:

In Crime & Punishment, actors bid the shields in their holster to resolve disputes in the action of the drama. Bidding occurs whenever two players come to a disagreement over ownership of an element, focus, direction or temporary complications in the drama.

The following situations are examples of times where Bidding for the Spotlight becomes necessary:

- Two actors want ownership of the same story element.
- An actor wishes to use an element in a way that another actor would like to contest.
- An actor wishes to introduce a new element into the drama (Note: a new story element can not be introduced if there is one of the same variety available in the storyboard)
- When an actor is responding to an in-drama challenge from another actor.
- When a dispute arises over the detail, description, quality or color of an element that is being put into play.
- When an actor tries to push an element onto a fellow actor against the actor's consent.
- Whenever any impasse is reached that the players can not easily resolve on their own.

An actor can proactively or reactively bid shields in the game. When an actor proactively bids a shield, it is a assertion of will. With the narration or in-character statement they are making, they push a shield out onto the table in front of them. Other actors then must approve of the action that the actor is taking or challenge the action reactively by bidding shields of their own.

When challenging a bid, the challenger must match the bid and raise it by adding another shield. Shields are always raised one at a time. An actor can not bid to tie. They must bid to win unless they tie by exhausting the chips they have at their disposal.

Escalating the Bid

At any point in the bidding if an actor wishes to raise the stakes of the bid, they can escalate by purchasing a political or investigator intensity shield and using to up the ante of the bid. The cost and value of these shields are determined by their corresponding intensity level. The intensity that is set highest, is the most valuable shield in play, and costs 5 blue shields to purchase. The intensity set lower costs 3 blue shields to purchase and is the second most valuable shield in play.

So, if the game is set to Investigator Intensity 5 and Political Intensity 1, blue shields have the lowest value, political shields have the middle value and investigator shields the highest value. Purchasing a political shield would cost 3 and purchasing an investigator shield would cost 5. In another game, where Political Intensity is set at 4 and Investigator Intensity at 3, blue shields are of lowest value, investigator shields are of middle value and cost 3 to buy and political shields are of highest value and cost 5 to buy.

Once a bid has been escalated to this level, players can not continue to bid shields of a lower value. When a political or investigator intensity shield is played, the influence of the shield must be felt in game. Where an investigator shield is played, the actor must find a way to have an invested personal reaction to the event in the drama. If an actor loses a bid in which an investigator intensity shield has been played, they must have a personal reaction in the drama.

Similarly, where political shields are played, they should be accompanied by a corresponding event in the drama. Both political and an investigator intensity shields can be played in an escalating manner in any single challenge, but in doing so, the interaction must contain both political outcomes and deeply personally affecting interaction on behalf of the investigators.

It should be noted that a bid does not need to be matched when escalating. If an actor has bid a blue shield, the challenger need not play a blue shield if they choose to escalate to a political or investigator shield. However, if matching an escalated bid, the bid much be matched and raised as normal.

Example of Play:

The drama has begun and Gary and Nicole are playing out the Crime Scene. Steele has framed the scene. Nicole then asserts herself into the drama by saying "Oh my God, that's Mary McIvor. Her dad was my first partner on the force." Gary, who is playing Wilson, contests this action because he wants control of that element. He wants the victim to be the daughter of his ex partner, and wants to feel responsible for the fact that he died, and perhaps her death too, as she grew up without her father.

As Wilson, Gary does not have to bid a blue shield to contest the action because he has an assumed one any time he tries to put an element of his history to rest. So he shakes his head and says "That's Paula Piretti. Her dad was the partner I had just before you. The one who got shot in that shakedown with the Russian mafia. Nicole still wants the element, so she puts down two blue shields, one to match Gary's assumed shield, and one to raise. Gary puts down two blue shields, matching hers and raising his own.

Nicole then escalates the conflict by purchasing an investigator intensity chip for five blue shields. She pushes the investigator intensity chip forward, looks Gary in the eye and says, "He was my partner, and he got shot because I wasn't where I should have been. I haven't had a sound night's sleep since I saw him gunned down." And she announces that Slater, normally a strong and stalwart guy, goes pale as a sheet and backs away, weak, from the body.

Gary only has ten chips left, and he doesn't want to spend the whole rest of them just on asserting control over the victim, so he nods. "I understand that. I knew a cop that lost a partner and ended up quitting the force over it. Nothing I could say to him ever made one lick of a difference to him. I always wondered if I should have tried harder."

And the victim is now Slater's dead partner's daughter. Nicole's statements are true.

Strategies for Play

If a procedure is not in the storyboard, that does not mean that elements from that procedure can not be introduced to the drama, it simply means that they are not the focus of the story. For example, in a homicide case that does not have a Forensic Examination procedure, forensic results are still available as evidence in the drama. An investigator could for instance, use the DNA from blood gathered at the Crime Scene to intimidate a suspect during an Interrogation.

Although procedures are generally played in the order that they are created, procedures can be broken up if it increases the efficiency or dramatic quality of the game. Investigators working separately, for example, might pursue an Interview and a Forensic Examination at the same time.

Being Steele

Steele does not frame every scene in the drama. Players take turns introducing the procedures. If a player wants to frame a scene out of turn, they can initiate a bid to do so.

Steele can also use his shields to aggressively frame or to introduce complications to hasten or slow down the action and keep the drama on track.. Steele's player provides the challenge to the investigators in the form of opposition. He should, for instance, make the investigators work hard for the confession in an Interrogation if the dramatic tension is not high enough, or make a suspect particularly slippery in a Chase, Stakeout, or Sting where there is not enough action in the game.

It is necessary for Steele to keep an eye on the time over the duration of play. One of his most important responsibilities is to invoke the **Statute of Limitations** if the investigators can not track down the suspects and resolve their case in time.

The investigators are considered successful once they have used all of the procedures and elements to tell a dramatic and satisfying procedural drama, and finished the story with a resolution that strongly emphasizes the Thematic Statement they have chosen. If they have failed to do so, Steele will bring the drama to shocking conclusion around them.

Statute of Limitations:

The Statute of Limitations runs out ten minutes before the end of the hour of play. If the investigators have failed to reach the Resolution procedure, Steele must intervene. The procedure in progress is interrupted by an event which forces the drama to a close. Steele gets automatic shields (up to 4 shields in the variety of his choosing) in order to force the episode to a relevant and dramatic conclusion.

Some possible events:

- The suspect flees the country, or vanishes into thin air.
- The suspect gets off on a legal technicality (a violation of Miranda rights or due process)
- Political pressure is exerted from on high to end the investigation.
- The suspect exploits a legal loophole, thereby avoiding arrest or conviction.
- The suspect is killed by a vigilante, or commits suicide.
- A key witness is murdered or kidnapped.
- The perpetrator commits another crime and is caught red-handed by investigators.
- A huge twist in which one of the known witnesses confesses or is revealed to be the true perpetrator.
- The suspect responds violently to the attempted arrest and kills or is killed by, the investigators.

Example of Play

The timer goes off just as Gary and Nicole are beginning their interrogation scene. The drama has been thick with emotional intensity, Wilson bullied a witness in the interview procedure, and ended up catching heat from the Internal Affaires Bureau.

Once the alarm goes off, because they have not arrived at a resolution, Brand now can claim up to four shields of any type to invoke the Statute of Limitations. He takes three investigator intensity shields and one political shield.

Brand uses the first investigator shield to push Slater to a hard emotional reaction to the suspect's unremorseful manner. Slater snaps and goes after the man, slamming his head into the wall of the interrogation room. Wilson tries to pull him off, but Brand uses an investigator shield to contest the old cop's ability to restrain or get through to Slater in his rage.

Brand uses the third investigator shield to push Wilson to react as Slater continues to beat the suspect's head against the wall. Wilson draws his gun and when he can not talk him down, shoots his partner in the back. As his partner's body slumps over the unconscious, bleeding suspect, Brand uses the political shield to have Internal Affairs officers rush into the room and take Wilson into custody. The game has ended by strongly making the thematic statement they have chosen ("Loyalty can drive us to terrible things").

Ending of the Game

After the Resolution procedure or the Statute of Limitations scene, the game is over. Players can spend some time talking "over the water cooler" about the case, but the game has officially ended.

Crime Scene

A Victim:

A Location:

A Crime:

Forensic Evidence (2):

A Suspect or Witness:

A Lead:

Interview

Relation to Victim

Reason for Reluctance:

Formula to Overcoming Reluctance:

A Clue:

A Possibility Ruled out:

A New Lead:

Forensics

A Complication:

A Highlighted Forensics Technique:

A Possibility Ruled out:

A New Discovery

A New Lead:

Other:

Chase/Stakeout

A Location:

A Tactic:

A Complication:

An Action Sequence:

An Outcome:

Other:

Interrogation:

Suspect:

Tactic:

Conflict:

Complication/Confession:

Other:

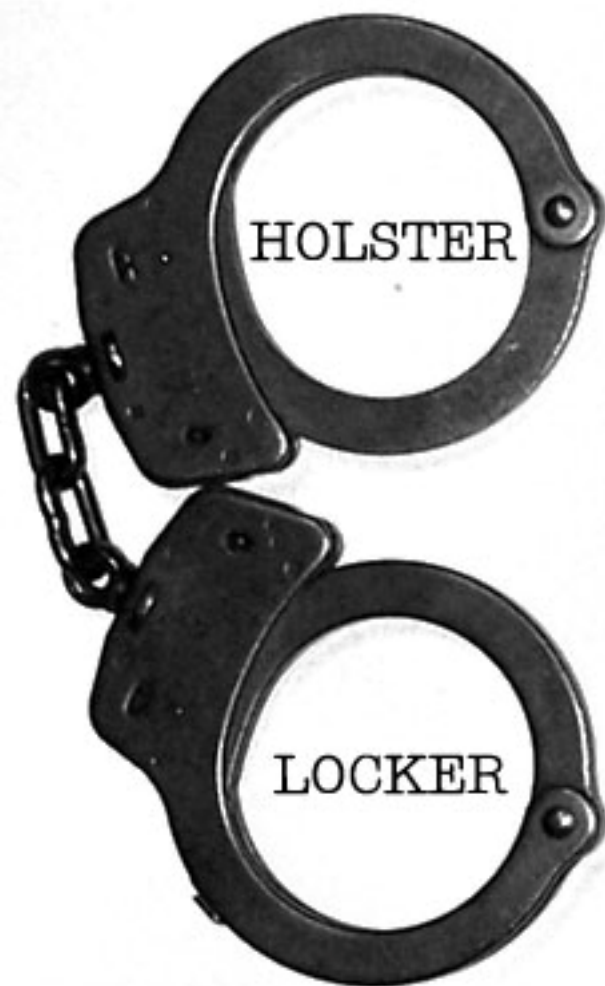
Resolution

Outcome:

Reaction/Reflection:

Thematic Statement:

Other:



Player:
Agency:
Role:
Notes:



CRIME & PUNISHMENT