JONATHAN GILMOUR & DOUG LEVANDOWSKI

KIDS ON BIKES

STRANGE ADVENTURES IN THE '80s
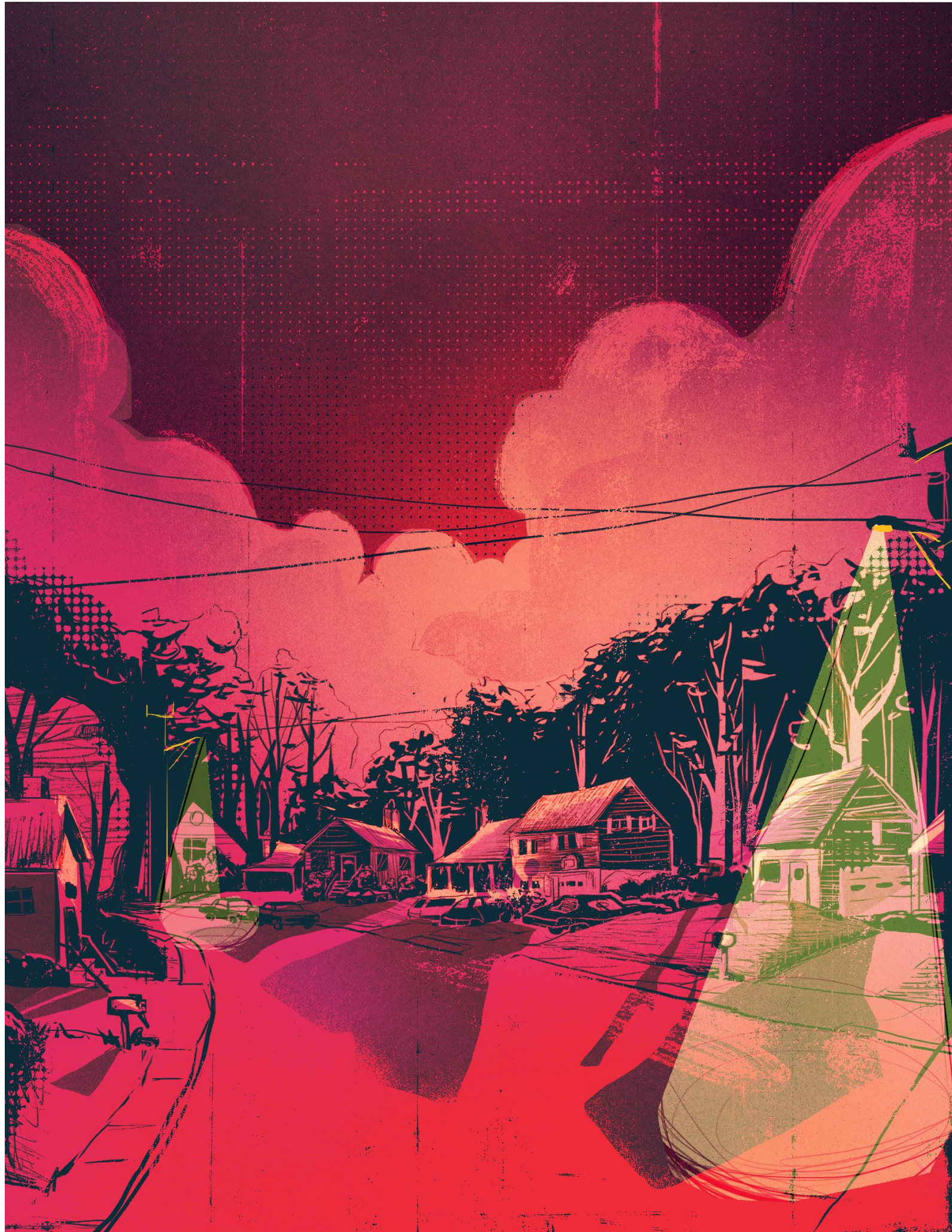
Kids on Bikes

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– OVERVIEW–

In order to play, you'll need two to six players (one to serve as the GM and the rest to be players), these rules, and a set of polyhedral dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20) or an app to simulate dice, and two distinct kinds of tokens.

Unlike many role-playing games where the GM calls almost all of the shots, the players and the GM will work together to craft the story of the game. Think of this as a collaborative effort where you all work together to tell an awesome 80s story where strange things happen.

–SETTING BOUNDRIES –

In RPGs, it's important to make sure that everyone has a good time. To that end, have a quick conversation about what content in the game everyone is okay with seeing and what content they'd like to avoid. Be honest with your friends - and if something comes up later in the game that you didn't think of, you can always add to the subjects you'd like to avoid.

Generally, there are four levels of content:
1. What we want to see: What are players excited to experience in the game? As a group, you should try to make those things happen. (For example, "I want there to be some mystery in the game - like a case we have to solve!")

2. What we're okay with: What are players neutral about? That is to say, what doesn't matter to them if it's there or not? Most of the content will fall into this level, and anything the players don't discuss will fall into this level. (For example, if no one at the table mentions spiders, it's safe to assume that there can be spiders in the story.)

3. What we want to gloss over: What don't players want to experience in the game - but are okay with having as subtext? Sometimes, we're okay with things being alluded to at the table - just not described. These are things that no one will be describing but that might serve as back story. (For example, "I don't want to have to describe or hear any descriptions of bullying. That can happen in the story - just let's not describe it.")

4. What we want to avoid: What don't players want to happen in the world of the game? These are things that shouldn't occur anywhere in the game - on or off camera. (For example, "I'm terrified of spiders. Like, not in a fun way. Nothing about spiders!")

Be sure to respect your friends' boundaries while playing to make sure everyone enjoys their experience.

– YOUR TOWN –

In the full version of *Kids on Bikes*, there is a collaborative process for creating the town - but for this version, we've gone ahead and done most of that for you! You and your friends are in Perkins, Colorado in 1982. Perkins is a mid-sized mining town, where everyone knows everyone... for better and for worse. The local high school, Perkins High School, is pretty good at football (Go Cougars!!) and not much else. The middle school (where you go) is a cesspool of hormones and homerooms. It's named John Smith Middle School - a name so generic that no one really knows who it's named for. There's not much to do in Perkins. An arcade just went in. That's pretty good, I guess. There are the abandoned mines, but those are pretty scary. Uh, there's the water tower. That's about it...

To finish creating the town, starting with the player to the left of the GM and going clockwise, each player at the table should say one rumor that they've heard about the town. It can be serious, silly, likely, or tremendously outlandish. These rumors might be true - or they might not be. It all depends where the game takes you.

– CHARACTER CREATION –

The core of any RPG is the character you'll be embodying. In this streamlined process, you'll pick a character from the Tropes provided, flesh them out a bit, answer some questions at the table, and get the game started!

SELECTING A TROPE
In the ashcan version of Kids on Bikes, we've shortened the list of Tropes you can choose from. In the full game, you can choose from various ages, too - but for this version, you'll all be middle school children.

TROPES TO CHOOSE FROM	
Brilliant Mathlete	Lone Weirdo
Bully	Popular Kid
Funny Sidekick	Scout

Multiple characters can have the same Trope. Give each player a copy of their Trope's sheet, and have them write their character's name and age (11 to 14) in the spaces provided. Hold off on the rest; you'll fill that out later.

STATS

Your sheet will already have stats assigned to it in the six boxes, representing the dice that you'll use for stat checks involving those stats. The higher the possible value on a die, the better your character is with that stat. The six stats are:

Brains: This stat determines how book smart a character is. It will determine how well they understand problems, how well they did or are doing in school, and how quickly they're able to solve academic problems.

Brawn: This stat determines how much brute strength a character has. It does not determine how well they can fight - just how well they can lift things and how much physical damage they can take. It also determines how physically intimidating a character is.

Fight: This stat determines how good a character is in combat and with the weapons that they know. While a character with a high Fight stat won't be able to pick up a gun and use one effectively having never fired one before, it will make them good with weapons that they have experience with. Also, they'll be able to learn how to use new weapons and fighting skills more easily if given proper training.

Flight: This stat determines how fast a character is - as well as how adept they are at evading their problems (both literally and figuratively). Characters with a high Flight will be fast and tough to trap both physically and verbally.

Charm: This stat determines how socially adept a character is and how good they are at reading the emotions of another person or group of people. Characters with a high Charm will be able to talk themselves out of tough situations and into good ones with relative ease - but within reason.

Grit: This stat determines how hard it is to break a character emotionally or physically. Characters with a high Grit will be better able to keep a level head in the worst of situations and will be able to keep their cool even when pushed hard. Finally, Grit also determines how street smart a character is.

The higher a stat is, the better a character is at skills involving that stat - and the more likely they are to succeed when using that stat. While there's no guarantee that you'll roll your maximum, generally, characters will be better able to pass checks with their higher die.

As a Child, your characters will add +1 to all checks involving Flight and Charm. That's already indicated on your Trope sheet.

D20   *Superb* - Even upon first meeting you, anyone would be able to readily tell that this is a strength of yours. You are remarkably good with respect to this stat.

D12   *Impressive* - People who know you would say that you're pretty good with respect to this stat, but it wouldn't be something that's obvious during a first encounter.

D10   *Above Average* - You aren't remarkably good in terms of this stat, but you're slightly above average.

D8   *Below Average* - You aren't too bad in terms of this stat, but you're certainly not good, either. You're just slightly worse than average.

D6   *Bad* - People who know you would say that you're pretty bad with respect to this stat, but it wouldn't be something that obvious during a first encounter.

D4   *Terrible* - Upon first meeting you, people would immediately be able to tell that this is a weakness of yours. You are remarkably bad with respect to this stat.

Stats will also be used to resolve skill checks and combat, but there's a little more to talk about with your Trope sheets before going further.

STRENGTHS

In the full game, when you select your Trope, you'll also select Strengths and Flaws for your character. For this version, to get you started faster, we've selected Strengths for you - and we'll skip over the Flaws.

TROPE	STRENGTHS
Brilliant Mathlete	Intuitive & Prepared
Bully	Protective & Tough
Funny Sidekick	Easygoing & Gross
Loner Weirdo	Cool Under Pressure & Unassuming
Popular Kid	Lucky & Wealthy
Scout	Prepaired & Treasure Hunter

In addition to being ways to describe your character, these Strengths are ways that you can use Adversity Tokens. You'll start with three Adversity Tokens and earn one whenever you fail a stat check or lose in combat. Throughout the game, as you accumulate Adversity Tokens, you can spend them to activate your Strengths, as described in the table on the next page.

STRENGTH	DESCRIPTION
Cool Under Pressure	You may spend an Adversity Token to take half of your die's value instead of rolling on a Snap Decision.
Easy Going	Gain 2 Adversity Tokens when you fail instead of 1.
Gross	You have some kind of gross bodily trick (loud, quiet, smelly... up to you) that you can do on command
Intuitive	You can spend an Adversity Token to ask the GM about your surroundings, an NPC, or the like. The GM must answer honestly.
Lucky	You may spend 2 Adversity Tokens to re-roll a stat check.
Prepaired	Spend 2 Adversity Tokens to just happen to have one commonplace item with you (GM's discretion).
Protective	You get a +3 bonus when defending one of your friends.
Tough	If you lose a combat roll, add +3 to the negative number. You will still lose the roll no matter what but could reduce your loss to -1.
Treasure Hunter	Spend 1 Adversity Token to find a useful item in your surroundings.
Unassuming	You can spend 2 Adversity Tokens to not be seen, within reason (GM's discretion).
Wealthy	May spend money as though you were in a higher Age Bracket. For example, even a wealthy child would be considered to have the disposable income that a typical teenager would have. A wealthy teen, that a typical adult would have. Wealthy adults would be considered to not have to worry too much about money - they would certainly be able to buy anything they need, and likely able to spend their way out of a lot of situations.

INTRODUCTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Since in this version you're all middle school students going to the same school, you all know each other - but that doesn't mean you all like each other all that much. Spend a few minutes discussing how your characters know each other. It might be that you know someone well - like, best-friend well - or it might be that you barely know them at all - like passed-in-the-halls barely. But it's a small town. You certainly all know each other by name. Even if one of you is a new kid in town, word spreads fast. Not a lot of people move to Perkins, Colorado. Usually, it's the opposite.

Having established how you know each other, each person will answer questions about who they know and who they don't know. You'll do this one at a time, passing the list of questions around the table and collaborating to make the established relationships more complex and to hint at information about who you don't know. This process will make the story of the game richer, even before the strange events start happening.

QUICK START QUESTIONS

(Time: about 2 minutes per player)

In the shortest version of setup, each of you will answer one question about the person to their left at the table. Before answering the questions, you should move so that you are sitting next to someone you have a close relationship with (counting the GM's seat as empty). These relationships don't have to be positive ones, though!

Starting with the player to the left of the GM, do the following:

- Decide whether you want to answer a question about what's positive about your relationship with the character to your left - or if you want to answer a question about what's negative about that relationship.

- Roll a d20 and answer the corresponding question from the "Character You Know - Positive" or from the "Character You Know - Negative" list at the end of this version of the rules. (If the question doesn't fit your relationship with that character or if the question you roll has already been answered, you may answer a question above or below the one you rolled that hasn't been answered yet or re-roll.)

- Cross out that question.

Once each of you has answered a question about the character to their left, this part of the setup is complete. Remember, skip over the GM when answering questions; thus, the character to the right of the GM should answer a question about the character to the left of the GM.

FINISHING TOUCHES
Now, we'll add the last details about your character and get started! You'll find places for all of these details on your Trope sheets, so write them in there.

Motivation: Write down something that strongly motivates you. It might not be the thing that drives all of your decisions, but it should certainly drive most of them - and especially their big decisions. It could be a specific motivation (e.g., "impress Tom so that he'll go out with me" or "get back at Jessica for what she did to me in 6th grade"), it could be more general (e.g., "look cool" or "learn"), or it could have to do with concealing some information (e.g., "don't let everyone know I'm terrified of the dark" or "don't let anyone know I'm the thief in town"). If appropriate, share these with other players - but most likely, you'll just be sharing this motivation with the GM.

Fears: Think about what it is that scares you. There will be some mechanical implications for this fear that will be addressed in "Planned Actions and Snap Decisions", which we'll talk about soon. More broadly, though, you will, of course, want to avoid your fears, and when faced with them, you'll behave more irrationally when facing that fear. Ultimately, what you fear in the game is up to you.

Children usually fear things that, rationally, they shouldn't fear - and don't fear things that they ought to. They're more likely to walk up to a stranger covered in blood to make sure they're okay than they are to open up their closets in the middle of the night. Generally, children fear the unknown and what they can't see. Kids are also generally not ashamed of their fears; they'll gladly declare them to friends and strangers alike.

Backpack: Indicate what you have in your backpack, literally and figuratively. Literally speaking, what items are you never without? For kids, these might literally be in their backpack. What would make the most sense for you. For example, a good Scout would never be caught without their pocketknife - except at school, of course.

Figuratively speaking, the backpack is also a good place to list advantages that you have over other people. While this doesn't have to consider all of the ways in which you are privileged, it would be a good place to think about the more intangible resources you have at your disposal. For example, Azra's backpack might indicate that her parents are exceptionally supportive and do everything they can to give her the resources to succeed at school. Ibrahim's backpack, on the other hand, might indicate that his bad relationship with his parents has given him a strong sense of self-reliance and

ability to do for himself. The intangible resources in your backpack won't have a mechanical impact on the game, but they should give you places to turn if you need help in getting out of a problem - or create tension if that resource is suddenly not available.

Trope-Specific Questions: Finally, each Trope sheet in the playbook has two questions about your character. Now that you have a good sense of your character, use these two questions to put on the finishing touches! The answers to these questions do not need to be shared with the other players at the table - but they could be if you would like to. Certainly, though, your responses should be shared with the GM.

Now, you're ready to start your adventure in *Kids on Bikes*!

− Playing the Game −

The game will take the form of a story that you, the other characters, and the GM tell together. The GM will help guide the action of the story and will make the "big picture" stuff happen, but you'll have a lot of control over what you do and how you face the situations that the GM throws in your way.

STAT CHECKS
While you're playing, any time you do something that runs the risk of failure, the GM will look at the next table and set a numerical difficulty for the action and tell you that number. If you still want to take that action, you will then roll the appropriate stat die and check the value of that die against the value of the difficulty. If you roll above the number needed, you've succeeded and you do what you're trying to do! If you roll below the number needed, you don't get to do what you tried to do - but you do get an Adversity Token, which you can use to activate your Strengths or to add to later rolls.

When rolling, if you roll the maximum value of the die, your die will "explode" - meaning that you re-roll the die and add the maximum value that you rolled the first time to the new roll. Your die may explode multiple times on a check - but once you succeed at that check, your die no longer explodes for that check. (For example, Andrea has a d20 in Brawn and needs a 14 to pass their check. She rolls a 20, so since she has passed the check, the die does not explode. If Doug, who has a d10 in Brawn, needs to pass the same check, if he rolled a 10 on the first roll, his die would explode since he has not passed the check yet.)

Keep in mind that the most you can roll (without the luck of exploding a die) is 20, and that number is extraordinarily unlikely. However, that doesn't mean that the difficulty can't be higher than 20 in cases where a feat seems truly impossible for mere mortals.

DIFFICULTY	EXPLANATION & EXAMPLES
20	A task at which only the most incredible could even possibly succeed - but if they succeed, it will be one of the most impressive things a person has ever done. This is a nearly guaranteed failure. *A person lifting a car off of another person trapped under it.* *A character solving a nearly impossible math problem simply by glancing at it.*
19-17	A task where success would be incredible and impressive. This, too, is a nearly guaranteed failure. *Talking a police officer out of arresting you when you have clearly broken the law and have no relationship with the officer.* *Breaking a school record in track.*
16-13	A task where success is extraordinary - but decidedly possible for those who are truly skilled at it. *A very lucky person finding the right item on the first try.* *Someone trained in espionage withstanding police interrogation.*
12-10	A task where success is impressive - but completely expected for those skilled at it. *A strong person prying open a heavy, locked door.* *A computer whiz repairing a computer quickly and under pressure.*
9-7	A task where success is certain for those very skilled at it - but not for those who aren't. *Sweet talking a wealthy person into giving your friends a round on the house.* *Running a message from one end of a building to another in very short time.*
6-3	A task where success is likely for all but those who aren't skilled or have a low stat in that field. *A lucky person drawing a card from a deck that isn't a face card.* *A character silently withstanding a verbal berating.*
2-1	A task where success is nearly guaranteed except in extreme cases. *A character lifting a 10 pound weight over their head.* *Reciting a multiplication table.*

CHOOSING A STAT FOR THE CHECK

As in life, there are always multiple ways to solve a problem. For example, if you're being confronted by bullies, it may seem like you have to start swinging (Fight) and hope it goes well or turn heel and run (Flight) and hope you're faster than they are. But depending on who you are as a character, you might use other stats instead.

If you have high Charm, you might try to convince the bullies that you'll show them a secret entrance into the movie theater if they don't beat you up. High Grit? Show them that you've taken worse beatings before breakfast and make it not seem worth their time. If you have high Brains, you might talk them in circles until they're too confused to punch. High Brawn? Physically intimidate them so you don't have to show you're not as tough in a fight as you look. There are always multiple ways you can solve your problems.

When you're not sure what kind of check something will call for describe what you're doing and the GM will tell you what check to make. For things like deceit and lying, it's probably going to be Charm. But if you're throwing around a lot of science-y words to convince the sheriff that the mine shaft where you're actually hiding the half-goat, half-child creature is structurally unsound so he should stay away, that might be Brains. Or if you're threatening your way into a secure area past a young, scared guard, that might be Brawn - or Fight if you're describing what you'll do to him if he doesn't step aside. The bottom line is that the stats are here to help guide your storytelling and help you have fun. If you aren't sure what to do, ask the table - and if they aren't sure, go with your gut.

PLANNED ACTIONS AND SNAP DECISIONS

Although the GM always sets a numerical difficulty, there are two distinct kinds of skill checks: Planned Actions and Snap Decisions. Planned Actions are skill checks when you have time to think about the best course of action and, perhaps, work with your friends. If the characters are sitting at a kitchen table trying to break a coded message that someone left for them and have all night to do it, that's definitely a Planned Action. Or, if your character needs to climb up a wall to sneak into an abandoned factory and has the cover of night and no one in pursuit, that's a Planned Action. In short, Planned Actions are when the conditions are relatively optimal to achieve something.

Snap Decisions, on the other hand, are choices that have to be made quickly under bad conditions - and are thus more chaotic and unpredictable. For example, if your character is being chased through a cave, checks they make while fleeing in panic will definitely be Snap Decisions. Or, if the character is under any kind of great pressure, that would likely be a Snap Decision, too. Combat rolls, too, are always treated as Snap Decisions.

Except in combat, it's the GM's call whether a skill check is a Planned Action or a Snap Decision. Players, though, should feel free to try to convince the GM of how they can get a moment of calm to make a Planned Action in a setting that would seem to call for a Snap Decision.

In order to make a check for a Planned Action, go through the following steps:
- Once you decide to resolve a problem with a particular stat, the GM sets a numerical difficulty. [For example, if you are trying to crack a safe in the privacy of your own home with the right tools, you might try to muscle your way in (Brawn), crack the safe (Brains), or sweet talk a buddy of yours to apply their safe-cracking skills (Charm).]
- Because you have time to think and react calmly, you may either roll the appropriate die for that stat or you may take half the value of that stat's die. [For example, if you have a d20 in Flight, you may choose to take a score of 10 for Planned Actions involving Flight instead of risking a roll.]
- If the value first rolled is the maximum value of the die, the roll "explodes." Roll the same die again, adding both values together. This may be repeated as many times as you roll the maximum, though you must stop when you have succeeded.
- Since all of the characters in this rules-light version are Children, after determining whether the die explodes, add +1 if it's a roll for Flight or Charm.
- You may also discard any number of your Adversity Tokens (earned after any failed checks), each token adding +1 to the roll. As with age bonuses, these additions do not count toward exploding the roll.
- Other players may also spend Adversity Tokens to help you with the same +1 benefit as above, though they must also narrate how their actions are also helping your cause, and this is at the GM's discretion.
- If the total roll is greater than or equal to the value set by the GM, you have succeeded. You and the GM will narrate the success collaboratively.
- If not, you have failed. The GM will direct the narration with minimal input from you (the greater the failure, the less input from you). The more you miss by, the worse the failure. You also receive one Adversity Token, which can be used to activate Strengths or used after future rolls to increase the value at a rate of 1 Adversity Token for +1 to the roll.

When things are dicier and you're under more duress and stress (or if you're in Combat), you'll have to make a Snap Decision. In most ways, the process works as above with the following changes:

- First, you cannot take half of the value of the appropriate die. You must roll to see if you succeed since this is a rushed attempt that you cannot plan.
- Second, although you may spend Adversity Tokens to help yourself, other players cannot spend Adversity Tokens to help you. There's no time for the kind of planning that collaboration requires.
- Third, the GM should make the consequences for failing a Snap Decision less weighty than failing a Planned Action. Narratively, when everything's on the line, the tension is already there, and you aren't doing something stupid - you're just in a bad spot. (On the other hand, when you have time to plan and still fail, that usually means you've decided to take a risk.)

When deciding on the consequences of a stat check, GMs should keep the following in mind:

- Success by 10 or more is an unbelievable success. There will likely be some additional positive results from that success, at the GM's discretion.
- Success by 5 or more is the character making it look easy.
- Failure by 5 or more should be accompanied by short term consequences, but not bad ones.
- Failure by 10 or more is staggering. There will likely be bad short term consequences - and possibly even some long term ones.

FAILING A ROLL

Remember, in *Kids on Bikes*, failing a roll isn't all bad. First and foremost, it gives you an Adversity Token, which you can use to succeed when you really need it - especially if you pool it with other Adversity Tokens - or to activate your character's Strengths. Adversity Tokens give you more options later on, so failing is actually helpful to your later play.

Second, failure can and should push the narrative forward. Remember, a failed roll means that what the character wants to happen doesn't happen - but that doesn't mean that what happens is bad for the story. For example, if the characters try to hack a computer but aren't able to, it might mean that they have to seek out a non-player character to help them with it. That character might, in turn, inadvertently give them a clue that helps them puzzle out a mystery. Or, if a character tries to escape on foot from government forces pursuing her, she might be brought to a facility that holds the secret to the next part of the narrative - or even the powered character.

So, while failures won't be what your character wants, they should almost always feel good for the story - and should give the group more directions to take the narrative you're building together.

EXPLODING ROLLS AND NARRATIVE

When you roll the highest value of the die and thus re-roll (when the roll "explodes"), the narrative should reflect that you have done something beyond what you could accomplish on your own. When working with a player to narrate an "exploded" success, the success should come, in part, from external forces.

In the case of success as a result of an exploding die, again, that success will have to come as the result of forces beyond the character's control. For example, Penelope is trying to run away from a group of government agents pursuing her on foot. She has a Flight of d8, and the GM sets the difficulty at 12: impressive, but certainly possible for someone skilled. She rolls an 8 on her first roll, then 6 on her next roll for a total of 14 - a success! Perhaps, as she's running from the agents, a gate comes down, separating them. Or, perhaps as she's running she knocks over a container of motor oil on which the pursuing agents then slip and fall, allowing her to escape. Whatever it is, it's not that Penelope simply outruns them.

COMBAT

Combat in this game functions in the same way as other Snap Decisions, though sometimes you will be rolling against another character to determine success or failure.

As with the other tasks in the game, fights can be resolved in multiple ways. Suppose you are about to be physically attacked. You could stand firm and take the hit (a Brawn check). You could attack first and hope to be a better fighter (a Fight check). You could try to talk very fast and talk the attacker out of it (a very difficult Charm check before the punches start flying). You could try to intimidate the attacker from carrying out the assault (a Brawn or a very difficult Grit check). You could run (a standard Flight check) or stand your ground and dodge the punches (a more difficult Flight check).

Physical Damage: Physical attacks are more direct combat, either a fist fight or, if things have gotten really bad, knives and bats.

Roll the attacker's Brawn against the defender's appropriate stat (likely Brawn or Flight). Presumably, in a physical fight, both characters will be attacking each other, and assuming that's the case, roll attacking and defending separately.

At the GM's discretion, weapons like knives, baseball bats, and so forth, might lead to successful hand-to-hand hit being treated like a projectile hit - or a slingshot or thrown object might be treated like a melee hit. Still, whether the hit occurs or not should be calculated the same way.

Remember, there are no safe fights in this game. Any time physical conflict occurs, a character might die. Once players decide to attack each other, a misplaced blow could hit a temple or a throat. There are no "pulled punches" or "called shots." Every fight could be fatal. That said, of course GMs should allow a playful (or even somewhat aggressive) shove or a nuggie without risk of anything serious - even somewhat hostile wrestling.

Projectile Damage: Most of the time in the game, projectiles will take the form of guns, which are terribly dangerous for all characters. But, kids sometimes throw rocks or have a bow and arrows, which could land just right and be bad - but most likely won't be all that bad. Keep in mind, though, that all projectile weapons are potentially lethal.

When projectile combat occurs, roll the attacker's Fight against the defender's appropriate stat (likely Flight or Brawn, depending on whether the character is diving out of the way or taking the shot). If both characters are shooting or throwing at each other, roll separate attacks and defenses for each attacker. And remember, high differences between attack and defense with projectiles are much more dangerous than the same difference for physical combat.

Injuries & Death

During the course of the game, one or more of the characters will likely be injured. In this game, there are no hit points - but none of you are immortal. Far from it. Compared to the forces you will probably come in contact with, you're exceptionally fragile. A well-aimed bullet from a government agent, the quick flick of a monster's jaws, or a telekinetic character could end things in a moment.

In this game, violence should never be without consequence. Rather than trading blow after blow, stat and applicable skill rolls should determine the outcome of a fight before it starts. Players and the GM should then narrate the outcome. The difference between the rolls (and applicable modifications) should determine the amount of damage that a player sustains (refer to chart below) and who gains narrative control over the encounter.

RESULT OF ROLLS (WITH APPLICABLE MODIFIERS)	NARRATIVE RESULT
Defender's roll is greater than or equal to the attacker's roll	*Narrative Control:* The defender narrates the outcome. *Effect:* Defender is uninjured; the projectiles miss or the blows don't land or hurt them enough to matter.
Attacker's roll is greater by 1 to 3	*Narrative Control:* The attacker explains how they attack, and the defender narrates what they do to mitigate the harm to them. *Effect:* Defender is hurt, but only temporarily; the bullet grazes them, but they're okay; the punch stuns them but they can shake it off.
Attacker's roll is greater by 4 to 6	*Narrative Control:* The attacker explains their attack, and the defender explains how they respond. The attacker then explains how this barely mitigates the harm. *Effect:* The defender is fairly hurt; the bullet hits them and they need medical attention soon to prevent it from causing permanent damage; they're dazed and likely concussed, but they can keep going; their ribs are going to hurt for a few days and breathing might sting for a few hours.
Attacker's roll is greater by 7 to 9	*Narrative Control:* The attacker explains their attack, and the defender explains about how they respond. The attacker can alter any of these details as the defender explains them. Then, the attacker explains how this response fails to prevent harm. *Effect:* The defender is badly hurt; the bullet hits them dead on and they're losing a lot of blood and need professional care immediately or they'll die; they're unconscious and will be badly concussed when they wake up; the bone is broken.
Attacker's roll is greater by 10 or more	The defender is dead or quite nearly dead; the bullet hits them between the eyes and nothing can save them; they're beaten so badly that only immediate medical attention can help - but there will be permanent effects.
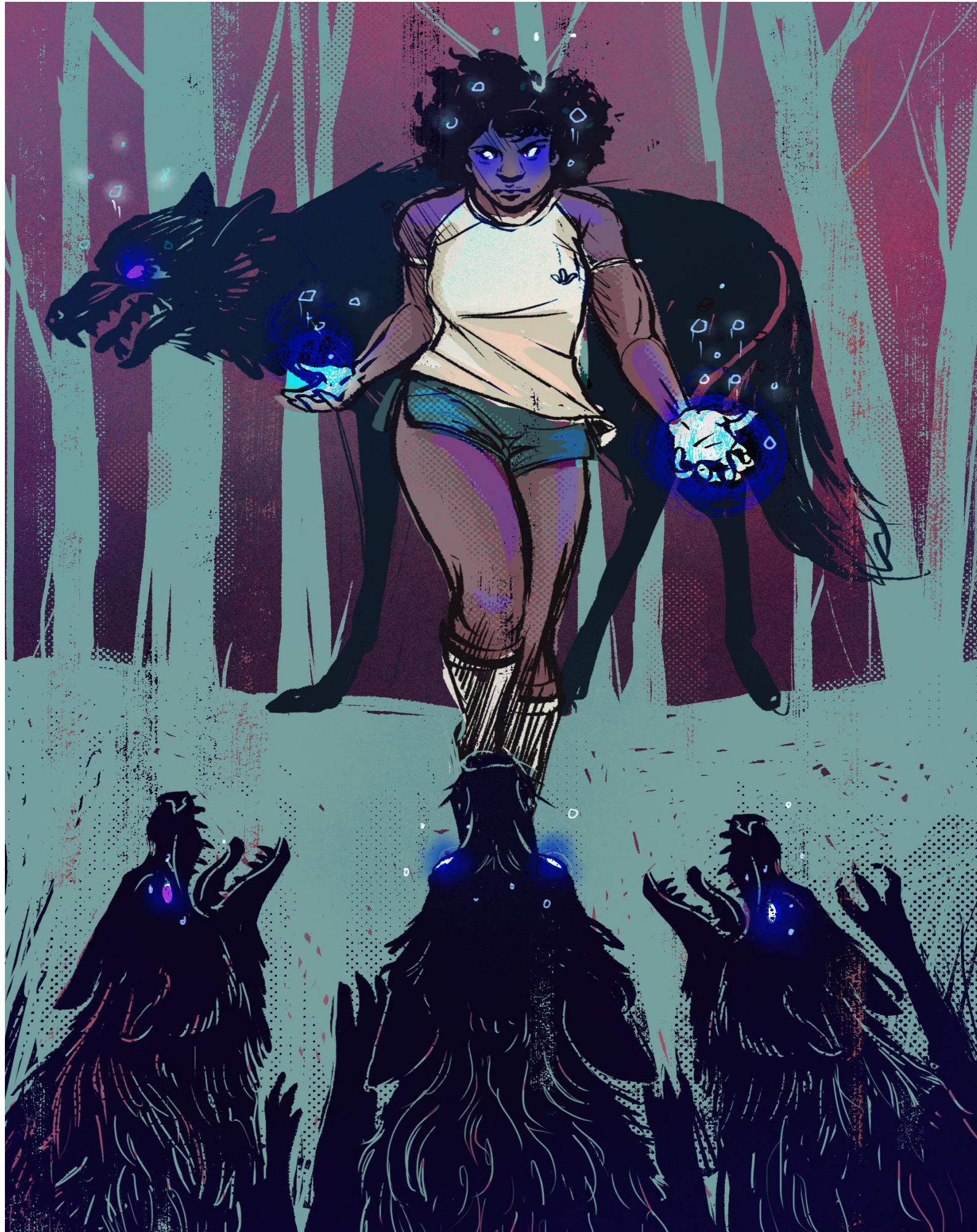
– Powered Characters –

Players cannot create a character with powers to play throughout the campaign. But, early in the session, the GM will introduce a powered character that will then be co-controlled by all of the players. When the character is first introduced, the GM will give each player information about that powered character in order to determine what aspects of the character they will control.

The character the GM creates for your group will depend on the direction that your narrative is taking: serious, silly, or somewhere in between. Upon meeting the character, the GM will give out information to specific players related to the following: how the powered character feels about members of the group, how the powered character reacts to people outside of your group, what their personality is like, and, of course, what the character's superhuman powers are. All of this information will be public, but different players will be responsible for different aspects of the character. For example, the player given information related to how the powered character interacts with people outside of the group will be responsible for those interactions.

While the narrative should drive the powered character that you meet, here are a few suggestions in case you're feeling stuck. Feel free to modify them as you see fit:

- A child, your age, who just moved to town. You've seen them around before, but they just joined your school and, when the time is right, the GM reveals their powers to you.
- A small, badger-like creature that seems to have a faint smell of maple syrup about it at all times and likes one member of the party quite a lot but clearly dislikes one member, too. It can teleport itself short distances.
- A child, your age, who wandered into town and has been living by eating out of garbage cans. They are deeply afraid of adults and very good at hiding. They are smart but don't know many words. They can create and control fire with their mind.
- A satyr-like creature that seems to be about your age that has been hiding in an aban-doned mine shaft. It is preternaturally fast and, in emergencies, can to move so quickly that it becomes a blur. It is not terribly bright and communicates in grunts and gestures, but it's incredibly loyal to your group.

Players may flesh out the powered character as they see fit, adding desires, fears, and motivations as they go. Once a player introduces a new aspect to the powered character, players should go along with it unless there are issues with established behaviors. However, the only way new powers can be added is through intervention of the GM. Players cannot, under any circumstances, give the powered character new powers.

When narrating what the powered character does, there should ideally be roughly equal input from each player and the GM. As a player, you should have enough information to make decisions about what the powered character does. If you don't, ask the GM for more guidance - and remember that *Kids on Bikes* is a game where players have strong input over the direction of the narrative of the game. As long as you're within the bounds of what other players are okay with seeing in the game, your decisions are right!

As a GM, your control over the powered character should be used to drive the narrative toward exciting encounters and stressful situations. If players are unsure what to do or seem stuck, the GM could certainly have the powered character figure something out. Or, if the characters need to be pushed toward the revelation of a secret that only the GM knows, the powered character could be very useful in this respect. Remember, though, that players' input is important in the game - and if their ideas conflict with the plan, try to adapt.

USING THE CHARACTER'S POWERS

Using powers always has consequences. When using powers, the GM will establish a numerical difficulty for the action being attempted. This number should take into account how practiced the powered character is with using their mental powers in this way and how significant an expenditure of mental energy it would represent. Then, if the player choosing to take that action with the powered character wishes to still take that action, the powered character immediately expends one psychic energy (represented and tracked by tokens) and the player rolls 2d4.

Subtract the roll on the dice from the GM-established difficulty value. If the result is zero or negative, the powered character suffers a very minor physical result (e.g., a very brief nosebleed, a muscle twitch, a momentary but painful headache). If the result is one or greater, the player taking the action has two options: either the attempt fails or the player chooses to expend more psychic energy tokens to increase the roll, expending one psychic energy token for each +1 to the roll. As soon as the sum of the roll and the psychic energy tokens spent is equal to the difficulty value, the result becomes a success.

For example, Jamie is controlling the powered character's telekinesis. She wants to use his powers to move a set of keys off a desk and over to Jamie's hands so that she can let herself out of a pair of handcuffs. The GM tells Jamie that the precision required for this task sets the difficulty at 5. Jamie expends one of the powered character's psychic energy tokens and rolls 2d4, getting 4. She then has to decide whether the attempt fails, meaning the GM will narrate the failure - or if she wants to expend an additional psychic energy token and narrate the success.

If completing such an action reduces the powered character to zero or fewer psychic energy tokens (which could happen with the GM's permission), very bad things happen to the character. Whatever their standard physical reaction to using powers is will be far worse (e.g., a violent, full-body seizure instead of a muscle twitch) and they will lapse into unconsciousness - or even die if they drop too far into negatives. The exact effects are up to the GM.

REPLENISHING PSYCHIC ENERGY

In order to replenish their psychic energy, the character needs to rest, eat, or take another appropriate action. A full night's rest should restore the character to full psychic energy - unless they have dipped below zero. In that case, recovery should take more time, though the exact duration is at the GM's discretion.

Also, there should be one or two things that can help the character recover without sleeping - or recover more quickly if they've dipped into negative psychic energy. Do they have a sweet tooth? Do foods that are high in iron help them more than other foods? Maybe it's meditation or direct sunlight that helps them to recover. In all situations, the powered character should be subtly drawn to these things to give players clues - but the GM should feel free to throw in some red herrings.

Character You Know - Positive

1. What did this character do for you that makes you owe them a debt you couldn't repay?

2. What do you admire about the character - but would never tell them?

3. What great kindness did they do for you that they don't even remember but you do?

4. What trait about this character that they despise do you genuinely appreciate?

5. Why do you care about them more than they care about you?

6. What was this character's role in the best day of your life?

7. What plan do you and the character have that you're most excited about?

8. What is your private nickname for this character and why?

9. What is the kindest thing this character has ever done for you?

10. What is this character sacrificing to protect you?

11. What length would you go to in order to defend this character?

12. Why do you have a bond with this character that can never be broken?

13. What about this character always makes you happy?

14. What is the bravest thing you've ever seen this character do?

15. What do you and this character have a mutual, weird love for?

16. What would losing this character mean to you?

17. What aspect of this character's personality do you try to use as a model for your own?

18. When did you first realize that you loved this character - either platonically or romantically?

19. What's your first memory of this character?

20. What item did this character give you that you treasure?

Reminders:
Roll a d20 and answer that question about the character you're establishing a relationship with. If the question doesn't fit what you have in mind for that relationship, feel free to re-roll or choose another question.

Once you've answered, remember to cross out the question so that other players don't answer the same question.

If you roll a question that has already been answered, choose the question above or below, choose any question on the list, or re-roll.

1. What thing that this character did in the past do you still resent them for?

2. What secret are you keeping from them that you would be devastated if they found out?

3. What could make you betray this character?

4. What are you sure this character is hiding from you?

5. What does this character call you that you hate being called?

6. What is this character doing, either knowingly or unknowingly, that hurts you?

7. What do you need to take from this character for their own good?

8. What was this character's role in the worst day of your life?

9. What is the most dishonest thing you've seen this character do?

10. What is this character doing that's putting you both at risk?

11. What does this character do that makes you immediately lose your temper?

12. How far will you go to avoid being alone with this character?

13. What part of this character's personality scares you?

14. What would this character have to do to get you to forgive them?

15. What insanity has this character shown warning signs of?

16. How far would you go to make this character suffer?

17. Why do you dislike this character when all the other characters seem to love them?

18. You hurt this character years ago. Why can't you apologize?

19. What do you intentionally do to annoy this character?

20. How did this character betray you the last time you confided in them?

Reminders:
Roll a d20 and answer that question about the character you're establishing a relationship with. If the question doesn't fit what you have in mind for that relationship, feel free to re-roll or choose another question.

Once you've answered, remember to cross out the question so that other players don't answer the same question.

If you roll a question that has already been answered, choose the question above or below, choose any question on the list, or re-roll.

KIDS ON BIKES

BRILLIANT MATHLETE

KID

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

_____

STATS

Fight	D6	D12 +1	Flight
Brains	D20	D4	Brawn
Charm	D8 +1	D10	Grit

STRENGTHS Choose Two

☑ Intuitive

☑ Prepared

BACKPACK

Adversity Tokens: _____

NOTES

Questions to ask yourself when making your character:

Why do you get satisfaction from being good at math (or your other area of expertise)?

How does your social isolation manifest itself?

KIDS ON BIKES

BULLY

KID

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

STATS

	Fight			Flight
Fight	D20	D10 +1		Flight
Brains	D6	D12		Brawn
Charm	D4 +1	D8		Grit

STRENGTHS Choose Two

☑ PROTECTIVE

☑ TOUGH

BACKPACK

Adversity Tokens: _____

NOTES

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN MAKING YOUR CHARACTER:

What motivates your bullying?

How do you feel when you hurt others?

KIDS ON BIKES

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

_____

STATS

Fight	D4	D10 +1	**Flight**
Brains	D8	D12	**Brawn**
Charm	D20 +1	D6	**Grit**

STRENGTHS Choose Two

☑ EASYGOING

☑ GROSS

BACKPACK

ADVERSITY TOKENS:

NOTES

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN MAKING YOUR CHARACTER:

What do you do that always lightens your friends' moods?

When does being in the "sidekick" role frustrate you?

KIDS ON BIKES

KID

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

_____

STATS

	Fight			Flight
Fight	D12	D6 **+1**		Flight
Brains	D8	D10		Brawn
Charm	D4 **+1**	D20		Grit

STRENGTHS CHOOSE TWO

☑ COOL UNDER PRESSURE
☑ PREPARED

BACKPACK

ADVERSITY TOKENS:

NOTES

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN MAKING YOUR CHARACTER:

Why are you happier fending for yourself?

What part of the "cool" kids' life do you wish you had - just a little bit?

KIDS ON BIKES

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

_____

STATS

Fight	D4	D12 +1	Flight
Brains	D10	D6	Brawn
Charm	D20 +1	D8	Grit

STRENGTHS CHOOSE TWO

☑ LUCKY

☑ WEALTHY

BACKPACK

ADVERSITY TOKENS:

NOTES

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN MAKING YOUR CHARACTER:

Beyond people wanting to impress you and the social capital that brings, what do you like about being popular?

How do you treat the unpopular kids?

KIDS ON BIKES

SCOUT

KID

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ (13 OR YOUNGER)

FEAR: _____

MOTIVATION: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

STATS

	Fight	Flight	
Fight	D6	D4 **+1**	Flight
Brains	D20	D8	Brawn
Charm	**+1** D10	D12	Grit

STRENGTHS Choose Two

☑ PREPARED

☑ TREASURE HUNTER

BACKPACK

Adversity Tokens: _____

NOTES

Questions to ask yourself when making your character:

Who first got you into Scouting (or more generally, the great outdoors)?

What do you have to give up to spend as much time in nature as you do?

KIDS ON BIKES

Acknowledgements