

# TEN MINUTE CAPES DEMO

## PREPARING THE DEMO

This file contains all the printed material you will need to run the exact same Capes Demo that the author uses to pitch Capes to people at conventions. Before you get to the convention, you will need to do some work to prepare your other materials. You will need to:

- Print pages 3, 5, 7 and 9 in order to hand them out to players.
- Print pages 4, 6, 8 and 10 on cardstock, and cut along the lines. It can be convenient to color code these, so that they're easy to get back into their original stacks.

In addition to the printed materials, you will need the following:

- Six poker chips in one color (I use blue). These will be Story Tokens.
- Eight poker chips in another color (I use white). These will be Debt Tokens.
- Eleven six-sided dice in one color (I use red), eleven dice in a different color (I use blue).

Paper-clip the cards to the character pages they follow and you're good to go.

## RULES OF THE DEMO

The rules used in the demo are NOT the Capes rules. They are a much simpler, more fragile, ruleset that really only holds up long enough to run the demo itself. But they're easy to teach, easy to learn, and they feel much the same as an experienced player using the full Capes ruleset. Anyway, here's what happens in the demo:

- Each player picks a character and gets their pack of cards.
- Each player gets two debt tokens.
- Players taking Major Victory or Iron Brain get two Story Tokens.
- Players taking Hyperion or Shinobi get one Story Token.
- Each player puts one (and only one) of their Goal cards on the table.
- Whatever Goal is in play, nobody may narrate the success or failure of it, only steps on the path to success or failure.
- Each Goal gets a red die, and a blue die, both starting at one.
- Each player gets one roll for free.
- After each player has their free roll, people can spend Story Tokens for more rolls.
- Players narrate what happens BEFORE they roll the die.
- Before their roll a player may spend their Inspiration card to turn a die up to that value.
- Before their roll a player may stake their two debt in order to split a current die (of value greater than one) into two dice of equal total value.
- On their roll they simply roll a die. It's new value stands, even if they don't like it.
- If they are not winning the goal after their roll then the player who is winning gets to say "And Then" and narrate what happens next to invalidate all their successes.

Those are all the rules for the demo. There is no ability to resolve conflicts, no ability to gain inspirations, or to gloat, or to claim ... none of that jazz. Remember? It's simple!

# RUNNING THE DEMO

Gather at least two (but no more than three) other players. Demo doesn't work with only one other person, so draft somebody from the passing crowd if needed. "We need someone to stand for VILLAINY and INJUSTICE!" seems to draw people pretty well.

Present the characters for people to inspect. Before they become too entranced, give the short shpiels:

- Major Victory: "In these troubled times, America needs to be reminded that we will always stand for JUSTICE! And Justice will always lead ... to VICTORY!"
- Shinobi: "She was a heroine, and miserable. Then she realized she'd be much happier if she had a lot of money. Now she robs banks."
- Hyperion: "She's just like Superman, only without wisdom or restraint."
- Iron Brain: "He was a suave, sexy villain. Then he had one too many brushes with 'Nobody could possible have survived that!' Now he's a brain in a jar. Sucks, huh?"

Once everyone has characters, choose the Goal of your character that you think will tweak the most tweakable person playing, and put it on the table. Tell other people to choose a goal.

KEY TO THE DEMO: They'll probably choose goals that tweak you right back. Scream in distress! How dare they! Oh, you will totally thwart those goals, they don't know who they're messin' with, mutter, mutter. Do all of this in a friendly, admiring, but clearly affected tone. The whole point is to show that you're not hiding from their ability to tweak you. You are embracing it. You're happy to take on all comers.

You will also take the first roll. Pick a conflict. Spend your Inspiration (explaining to them how this works). Stake your debt (explain). Split the die (explain). There, you just taught them the rules of the demo.

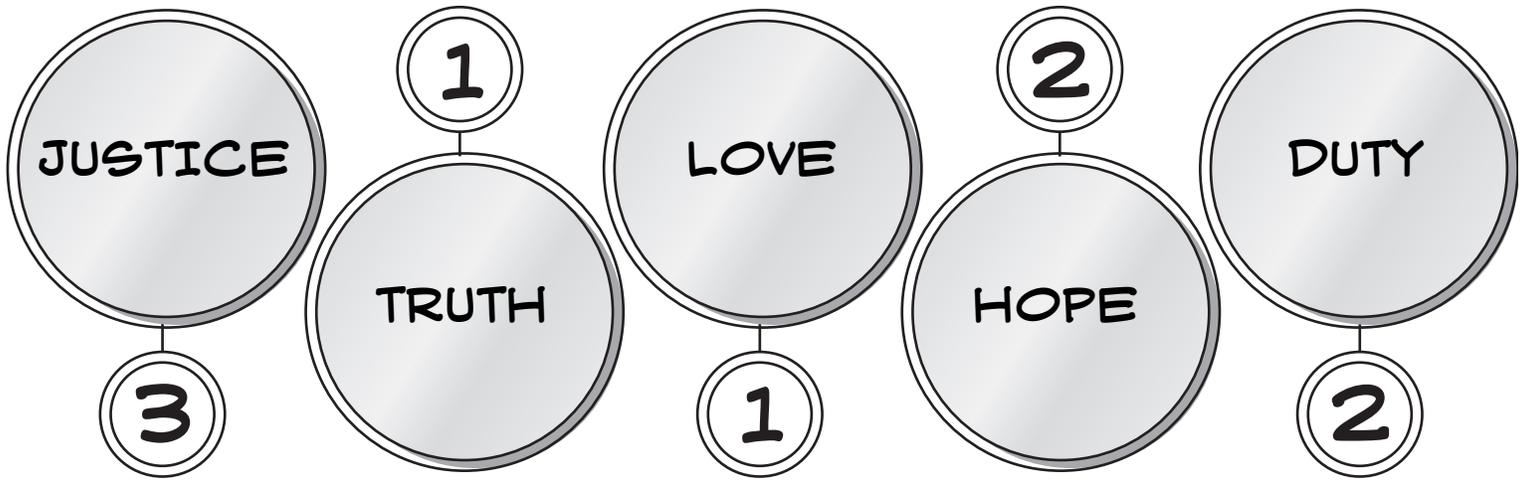
Narrate the most over-the-top, smug, self-assured affront you can manage to everything the others want their characters to stand for. Your goal is to assure, in that narration (and all that follow) that people want to see you beaten down. So savor your moment of uncontested victory. It will be your last. Roll the die.

They'll then get their turns. Help them pummel whoever they want to pummel (probably you). Point out their own Inspirations and Debt. Yyou will typically have at least one person at the table who could use a bit of advice along the lines of "If you really want to win this conflict then you can do this ..."

If they narrate something hesitant ("I punch him in the face!") get real excited and insist that they tell you what happens next. Ask specific questions ("Do I get thrown back through my own statue, crushing it?") They will, often, come back at you with an even worse elaboration ("Yeah! And the statue's head rolls away down the street, faster than he can catch up with it!")

Odds are that, by the time everyone else has taken their action, you're getting pummelled in at least one goal. Spend story tokens like water, trying desperately to achieve victory on all fronts. Again, the key is smug, assured narration, followed by howls of outraged enjoyment at their devastating counter-narrations.

When the Story Tokens are starting to run low (but not before everyone's gotten to spend at least one) say "And that's pretty much how the game feels in play." They will want more. Don't give them more. Your want to tease. Say only "Just one more thing ... you see this conflict where you've staked debt and you're going to thrash me? That debt turns into story tokens. A-huh! That's right, I get Story Tokens because you trash me. So if we played some more I'd come right back for my revenge, and I'd have the power to do it. Then you'd have story tokens for your revenge, and on and on. Cool, huh? Now, can I put this book in your hands for a mere twenty dollars?"



MARTIAL ARTIST		CRUSADER	
	Named techniques <b>1</b>		
Acrobatics <b>2</b>	<del>Face down hypoxites</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inspired <b>3</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Indomitable Willpower <b>4</b>	Improvised weaponry <b>2</b>	Determined <b>2</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Tactical Genius <b>3</b>	Infectious energy <b>3</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Judgmental <b>1</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Titanic Punch <b>5</b>	<del>Brains over brawn</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	<del>Frustrated</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Utility Belt <b>1</b>		Reckless <b>4</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

# MAJOR VICTORY

Arthur Knight's wealthy parents died on the Lusitania, leaving young Arthur with a huge fortune and a burning desire to defend his country from fascism. He funded Doctor Simon Sauran to create the Achilles Formula, and was the only person to take it (before Sauran went mad), becoming MAJOR VICTORY!

Major Victory was the first, and is still the greatest, super-hero of his age. Never listen to the naysayers who say that the time of simple morality has passed! In these complicated times, more than ever people need a symbol to remind them that America stands for Justice, and Justice leads... to Victory!

Doubt hits Major Victory like the twenty-four hour flu. He feels crummy for a while, then it passes and he's good as new.

The only worry that really sticks with him is that those around him won't live up to the same standards. The memory of comrades, once staunch defenders of the right, now turned to villainy themselves haunts him. Whenever another Guardian (particularly, his long-time sidekick Kid Savage) sets practicality above ideals, Major Victory remembers the partner he lost, and worries that history will repeat itself.

EXEMPLAR	DRIVE	RECURRING CONFLICT
Kid Savage	Justice	Savage stands up for MVs view of ideology
Hyperion		Show which of the two has less fear
Agent Scott	Truth	Protect the secrets of Guardians from prying eyes

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**PROVE THAT JUSTICE WILL ALWAYS  
LEAD ... TO VICTORY!**

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**CONVERT A VILLAIN TO  
THE CAUSE OF VIRTUE!**

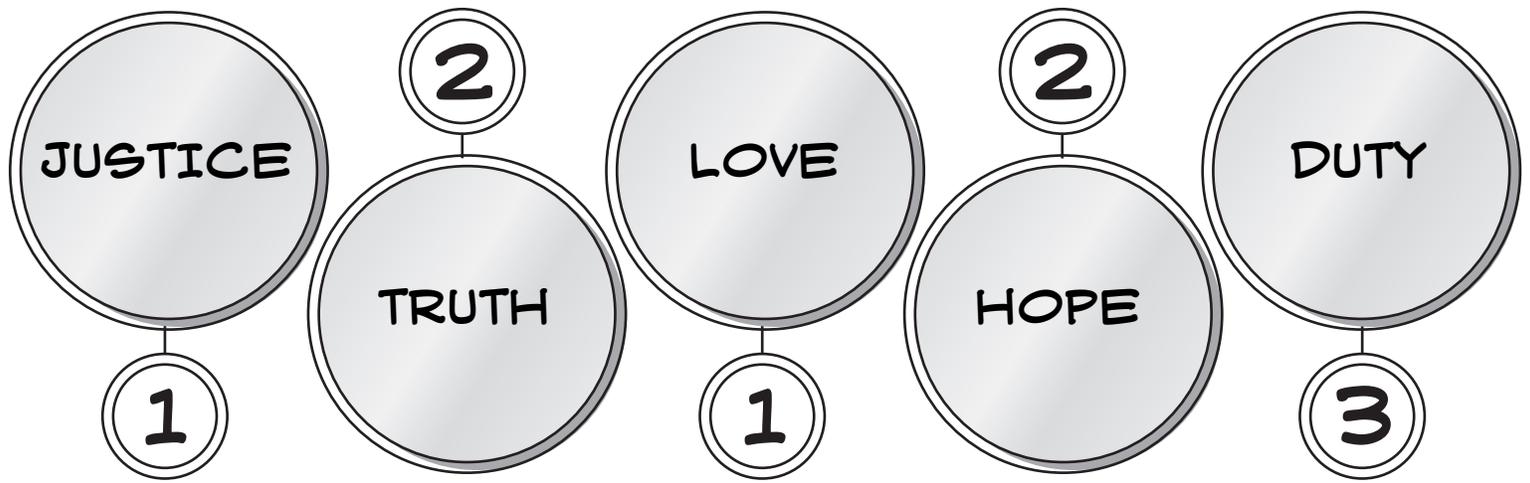
*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**PUMMEL ALL OPPONENTS INTO  
SUBMISSION AND CART THEM  
OFF TO JAIL!**

*Inspiration:* You spend this card to raise (only raise!) any die to the stated value.

**THE CITIZENS OF MILENNIUM CITY  
BUILT AT STATUE OF YOU**

**3**



GODLING		HOTSHOT	
	Casually overpower mortals <b>3</b>	Joyful <b>3</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Super-strength <b>2</b>	Thrill Junky <b>4</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unflappable <b>4</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bored <b>1</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<del>Super-speed</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	Inspire Awe <b>2</b>	Rebellious <b>2</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<del>Talkative</del> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Invulnerability <b>3</b>	Talk to the voices in your head <b>1</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<del>Laser Eye beam</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	Singlehandedly operate on a grand scale <b>5</b>		
Flight <b>1</b>			

# HYPERION

So if you're the battered remnant of the galactic Hyperium Empire it makes sense to put the knowledge and power of your people on a space-rock and jettison it across the galaxy to escape your enemies.

And when it hits Earth it makes sense for that racial memory to find a virtuous, daredevil type as a host. But having done that... having selected the perfect candidate out of billions... wouldn't you want to cut that person some slack?

Angela Harper has a bad relationship with the voices. They keep nagging. "Angela, consider the balance," or "Angela, the smallest pebble can turn the landslide." She's got the collective kibbitzers of a race of know-it-all's rattling around in her skull.

But the Hyperion Legacy does come with perks. Moving mountains with your bare hands and fighting off giant sea reptiles is a good bit more exciting than the bungee-chuting and cliff-skating that Angela used to turn to when she got bored. And teaming up with the Guardians she gets to help people, which is gratifying. So why won't the Hyperium Elders just shut up for a minute and let her enjoy herself?

EXEMPLAR	DRIVE	RECURRING CONFLICT
Hyperium Elders	Duty	"Shut up and quit distracting me!"
Kid Savage		Show which of the two is a better hero
Major Victory	Truth	Show which of the two has less fear
Photonic		Hyperion asserts leadership role in team

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**PROVE THAT YOU'RE A BETTER  
HERO THAN MAJOR VICTORY**

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**CONVINCE THE PEOPLE OF  
MILLENNIUM CITY THAT THEY  
HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR**

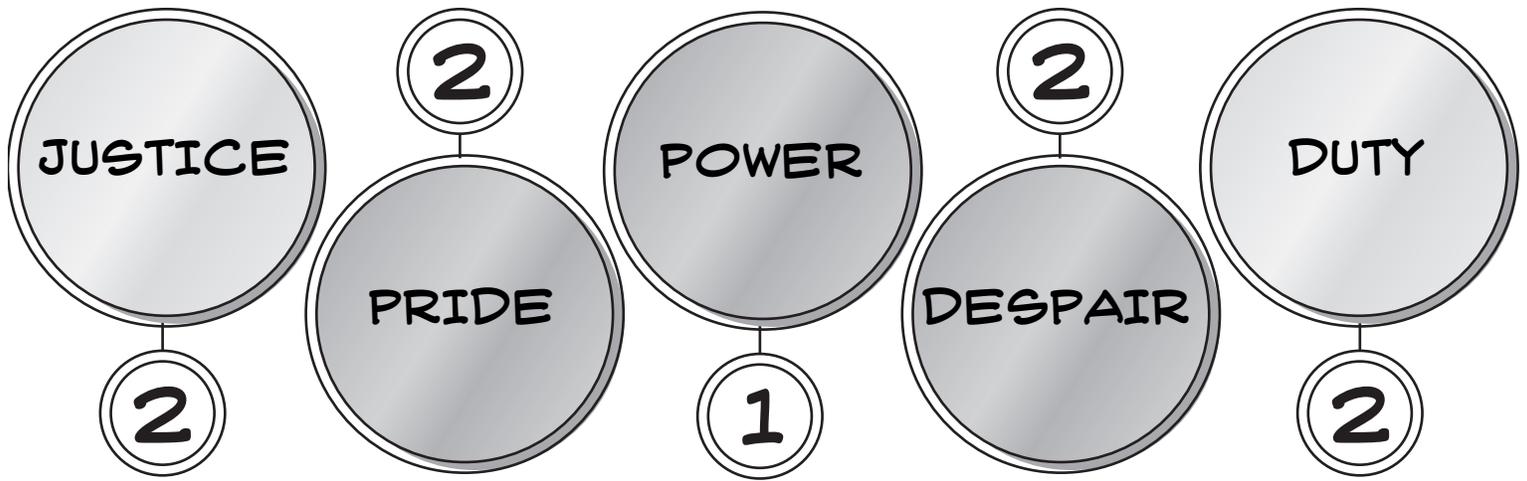
*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**GET THE VOICES IN YOUR  
HEAD TO STOP PESTERING YOU**

*Inspiration:* You spend this card to raise (only raise!) any die to the stated value.

**YOU SAVED THE CITY FROM BEING  
DESTROYED BY A PLUMMETING  
SPACE ROCK**

**5**



**MARTIAL ARTIST**



- Acrobatics 4
- Combat intuition 2
- Devastating blow 5
- Inhuman grace 1
- Ninja stealth 3

**HOTSHOT**



- Joyful 2
- Unflappable 4
- Bored 3
- Rebellious 2
- Talkative 1

Named techniques 2

Thrill Junky 2

Improvised weaponry 2

Escape without a scratch 1

Brains over brawn 3

# STARLIGHT / SHINOBI

From the mysterious Far East comes an immortal warrior-woman, raised in a tradition shrouded in the darkest secrecy, worshippers of the night, silent... oh for pete's sake. Keiko is a ninja. A ninja that found herself absorbed and homogenized by the Golden Age hero scene. For decades she bought the rhetoric, believed that if she did the right thing, sacrificed for others, eventually the world would pay her back.

Well, after saving the world more times than anyone can count Keiko Roka, a.k.a. Starlight, still lived in a rat-trap apartment and worked in a dead-end job as stenographer for an abrasive, sexist boss. One day when the Starlight Compact flashed the signal for "Bus of tourists hurtling toward active volcano! The world needs you!" she just said "Screw 'em! I've done my bit."

Now Starlight is just a memory. Keiko is Shinobi, a self-interested, mercenary villainess. She's got a sports-car, surround sound and a stock portfolio. The problem is Victor (the Iron Brain). Victor thinks that it's the good old days and they're still simmering with forbidden passion. Keiko is ready for something... comfortable. Alexander isn't brooding and brilliant, but he's sweet and nice. She could get used to that.

EXEMPLAR	DRIVE	RECURRING CONFLICT
Iron Brain	Power	Starlight and Iron Brain are just friends
Ravager II	Despair	Alexander notices her as more than a team-mate
Hero TBD	Justice	Get Starlight to Do the Right Thing
Roka Yoshi	Duty	Prove his sister unworthy of the clan

**Goal:** By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**HUMILIATE MAJOR VICTORY**

**Goal:** By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**HURT INNOCENT BYSTANDERS**

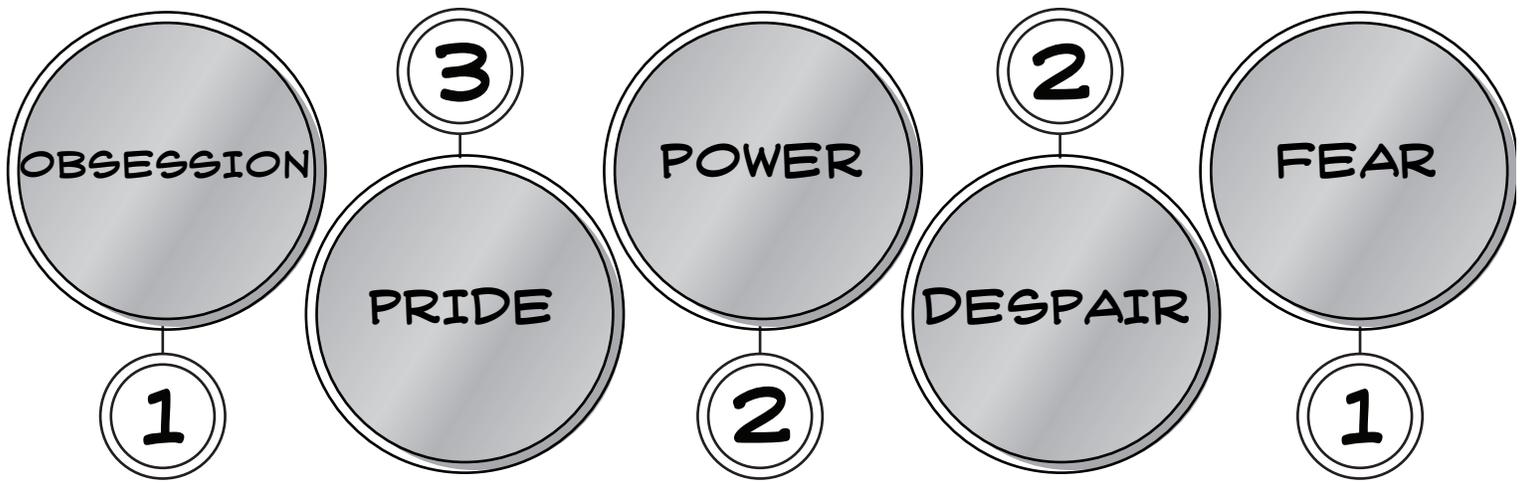
**Goal:** By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**GET AWAY WITH HUGE AMOUNTS  
OF CASH**

**Inspiration:** You spend this card to raise (only raise!) any die to the stated value.

**YOU BEAT MAJOR VICTORY TO  
A BLOODY PULP**

**6**



GADGETEER		EX-VICTIM	
	Co-opt enemy systems <b>1</b>	Bitter <b>1</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Technical Genius <b>4</b>	Reminders of the past <b>2</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<del>Untrusting</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Techno-chassis <b>3</b>	Improvise a gadget <b>3</b>	<del>Angry</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Electron Ram <b>2</b>	Snap without warning <b>4</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Untrusting <b>2</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<del>Spider-leg scuttling</del> <input type="checkbox"/>	Know weak points of any system <b>5</b>	Angry <b>3</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Spider-leg scuttling <b>1</b>			

# THE IRON BRAIN

The Ravager (a.k.a. Victor Cross) was one of the great villains of the Golden Age: An eerily persuasive supremacist madman whose nefarious cunning was feared the world over. Suave, handsome, wicked, sophisticated. Good with the ladies.

Then he had one too many brushes with "Nobody could possibly have survived that!" Now he's a brain in a jar.

He's bitter about the loss of his flesh, and driven to prove that, even in this cold, mechanical body he is still the greatest!

And now, in his darkest hour, all the pieces are coming together. He has an unquestioning pawn in his own clone-son. His enemy and beloved, Starlight, has finally turned to the darkness, as he always knew she would. The petty nations of earth been lulled into complacency, thinking they no longer needed to live in fear of Victor Cross. The time is ripe for his superior intellect to triumph over the lesser races and their self-righteous champions.

The world owes him **that much**, at least.

EXEMPLAR	DRIVE	RECURRING CONFLICT
Starlight		Starlight and Iron Brain are just friends
Ravager II		Victor says a kind word to Alexander
Archnemesis TBD	Pride	Dismiss my enemy's naive morality
Maxine Malign	Power	Maxine proves her loyalty to the Iron Brain above all

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**CONVERT HYPERION TO THE SIDE  
OF EVIL**

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**SHOW THAT THE HEROES OF  
MILLENNIUM CITY ARE POWERLESS  
BEFORE YOU**

*Goal:* By playing this, you will let people fight to either achieve or prevent this goal.

**PROVE THAT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE  
FOR ALL SUCCESSES, STARLIGHT  
IS TO BLAME FOR ALL FAILURES**

*Inspiration:* You spend this card to raise (only raise!) any die to the stated value.

**YOU ESCAPED FROM THE IMPENETRABLE  
CHARYBDIS ISLAND SUPER-PRISON**

**3**