

FIASCO REPLAY

INTRO

STEVE: Hi Fiasco replay reader, allow us to introduce ourselves before we play. I'm Steve. I brought the game over tonight and I've played a few times. I'm kind of a weak player, though!

MONA: That is definitely true.

STEVE: Thanks. Other than games I'm into the usual stuff – delicious toast, Patrick Swayze's performance in Red Dawn, my two cats and horror movies.

MONA: I'm Mona, the token girl, and I'm fairly new to role-playing. My favorite games so far, other than Fiasco of course, are 1001 Nights and Best Friends. I have two sweet dogs and I like making things. I sew my own cosplay outfits and knit and have a blowtorch.

JOEL: I'm Joel. I've been gaming pretty much all my life. Right now I'm running an L5R campaign and playing the second season of a Prime Time Adventures show. I work for the government and that's about all I can say about that.

JEFF: Hi, I'm Jeff. Like Joel I've been playing games a long time, but only recently got interested in shorter-form games like Fiasco. I've got a regular D&D group that's been playing together for years. I like to cook, and I'm into anime as well.

MONA: That's all of us. Let's get this show on the road, shall we?

STEVE: Right. From here on out we're focusing on the game.

THE SETUP

The rules for The Setup begin on page XX.

JOEL: Steve, since you've played before, can you try to keep things on track and answer any rules questions if they crop up?

STEVE: Sure thing. I assume we're playing straight - no rules tweaks.

They agree and begin the Setup.

JEFF: We need a Package, right? Any preferences?

MONA: Let's use "A Nice Southern Town."

JOEL: Sounds good. Why don't we set it in ... let's see ... Robin Hood, North Carolina.

JEFF: I like that; it already sounds off-kilter. How many dice do we need?

STEVE: Four players, four dice each, so 16. Eight black and eight white.

They gather the dice.

MONA: Can I roll them?

STEVE: Sure!

Mona rolls all sixteen dice. They come up 

JEFF: Who goes first?

STEVE: Who grew up in the smallest town? Not me.

JEFF: Not me either. Joel? Mona?

JOEL: 2,000 people?

MONA: You win. My home town is tiny, but not that tiny.

Joel looks at the Package lists, reviewing Relationships, Locations, Objects and Needs in a small southern town. They are seated Joel, Steve, Mona, Jeff, so Joel is first and Steve is last in rotation throughout the game.

JOEL: Hmm, there's only one five, and I definitely want a crime Relationship so I'll take that.

Joel writes "Relationship: Crime" on an index card and places it between himself and Steve – they will have a criminal relationship of some sort. He puts the die on top of the card.

STEVE: I'm next. How about a work Relationship between Jeff and Mona?

Steve writes "Relationship: Work" on a new index card, puts it between Jeff and Mona, and places a two die on it.

MONA: Work, huh? All right. I'll take a two and make us co-workers. Where and how, we don't know yet.

Mona finishes the Relationship card between her and Jeff by adding "Co-workers" and putting her die on it, beside the other two already on it.

JEFF: The details will come, Mona. I want some community involvement in our story here. I'll take a six. Joel, your turn.

Jeff adds the information to a card and puts it between himself and Steve, with the six die on top of it.

JOEL: Right, nobody added a specific to my criminal Relationship with Steve, so I'm going to grab another six and declare it a drug thing. Meth, I think.

STEVE: Sounds great. Let's be a skeezy husband and wife team!

JOEL: Absolutely. I'll be ... let's see ... Stephen Caney, and you can be my child bride.

STEVE: We'll see about that – let's not get too specific yet. My turn, and I'm going for the Relationship between Joel and Jeff. I'll take a one, family.

MONA: Nice. Let's just finish that up. How about a one, in-laws?

JEFF: I like that. Joel, what if I was the meth cooker's father-in-law?

STEVE: That'd make me his daughter!

JOEL: Awesome. Can your guy be the town doctor?

JEFF: Definitely. Dr. Benjamin Futrelle...

Jeff scans the Locations list for random, colorful inspiration.

...who lives in a mansion out by Hickory Terrace! This is getting good – I want a weapon to get between the doctor and his son-in-law.

Jeff takes a three and selects from the Objects list- he chooses the Weapon category and authors an index card: “Object: Weapon”. Joel, next in rotation, eyes the Object list and grabs a one from the dice pool.

JOEL: A shotgun. It’s a short-barreled pump. Of course I’m paranoid, and I keep it around the house. It’s a point of tension between me and my wife’s dad.

Joel puts his die on the Object card attached to the Dr. Futrelle and Stephen Caney Relationship, and completes it by adding “Shotgun”.

STEVE: What about Needs, people? I’m going to throw down the three there, as a Need for me and Joel. We Need to get rich, obviously. So what do we have so far?

MONA: A creepy pair of shotgun-toting meth addicts, Stephen and Joy Caney, the wife is the black sheep of the high-class Futrelle family.

JEFF: Her father’s the town doctor, and Dr. Futrelle wants to make good with his son-in-law Stephen and maybe help him out, but he’s scared of him.

MONA: OK, time to up the ante. I’m putting down the last six as a Need between my guy, as yet unknown, and Joy the meth princess. Somebody Needs to get laid.

JOEL: I love it.

JEFF: Maybe your guy is a businessman. I’ll use that one to add a Location to your Relationship with Steve – Downtown, on the north side of Center Road.

JOEL: I’ll take the three and make that Royall’s Drug Store.

Joel places the completed Location card for Royall’s Drug Store next to Steve and Mona’s Relationship card.

MONA: Sweet. My guy’s the pharmacist. His name is Pete Branch.

JEFF: We work together at the regional hospital twice a month, and I visit him at Royall’s. It’s one of those places with a lunch counter, right?

MONA: Right. And Pete was a classmate of the Caney’s back in high school.

STEVE: Maybe we dated.

MONA: Oh! Steve, take that four and put it in our relationship, making the Need “to get laid by a former lover, to rekindle the flame.”

STEVE: Oh hell yes.

MONA: Branch and Joy Futrelle were engaged before my guy went off to college. My straight-arrow pharmacist never got over her.

Steve takes the four and adds this extra detail to the existing “Need to get laid” card, finishing it.

JOEL: We still need to know how Mona's guy Branch is currently connected to the meth princess, and how the Caney's are going to get rich.

MONA: I'll take the two and put it in your Need – you losers need to get rich by robbing a business. I think we all know whose business that is going to be.

JEFF: Cool. That leaves the last die to explain how Joy and the pharmacist are in a relationship – it's already community, and if you want to go with it, now you guys are ... a social services worker and client. Hmm.

MONA: That doesn't really fit.

STEVE: Who cares? The last last die can be any number, so I think it is a three - church volunteers. Joy may have made some bad choices, but she still has connections to the respectable community. I teach youth group! Her and Pete Branch teach youth group at Peace Haven church together.

MONA: That's horrible. I love it.

STEVE: And I'm acting really sweet to you, giving you signals, buttering you up, because we are going to fucking rob your pharmacy.

MONA: I guess that Need to get laid is sort of one-way, huh?

STEVE: Indeed, but we're both going to suffer for it. Everybody happy with this?

JEFF: It seems like poor old Dr. Futrelle is a little removed from the action.

JOEL: True, but he's got strong connections to everybody else. And there's always that shotgun. Maybe that's a fun angle - maybe he wants to get it away from Stephen Caney. I bet it won't be long before he's in the thick of things.

JEFF: Good point, Joel.

STEVE: OK, reroll all the dice into a pile and then let's play!

The Setup ends and the players begin The Score.

THE SCORE

The rules for The Score begin on page XX.

MONA: Who goes first?

STEVE: I believe Joel does. Joel?

JOEL: First scene, huh? No pressure. OK, I want to establish.

MONA: Oh good, because we want to resolve.

JOEL: I know you do. I want Stephen and Joy to have a scene. I want to convince her to seduce Pete Branch...

Everyone nods - it's understood that the group will be deciding whether Stephen Caney manages to talk his wife into seducing Pete. The rules for choosing to establish a scene are on page XX.

...It's a Friday night and we're in my trailer. "Time Cop" is on the TV, and Caney's on the couch in a bath robe, potato chip crumbs in his beard.

STEVE: Can I add something?

JOEL: Sure!

STEVE: The place smells like ammonia and chicken fat. The shotgun is propped up against an arm of the couch.

JOEL: That's a nice touch, Steve.

Steve and Joel play out the scene in character.

STEVE: We're out of everything, Stephen.

JOEL: Yeah.

STEVE: We got no food, Stephen.

JOEL: I heard you. I got some things in the works.

STEVE: Selling drugs? That's been really fruitful. You're being undercut by those Mexican guys.

JOEL: They're from El Salvador.

STEVE: Well they are moving all the meth in this town and eventually they are going to come over here and beat the shit out of you or worse.

JOEL: Maybe. I got some plans.

STEVE: What plans? What plans do you have, you nuclear genius?

JOEL: People around here don't want street-cooked mess, Joy. They want pharmaceuticals. Stuff in foil packets, so you can see where it came from, who made it.

STEVE: Terrific. So are you going to get a job with Eli-Lilly? Jesus, Stephen, be sensible.

JOEL: Well, Joy, I am a sensible guy when you come right down to it. I know where all the good shit is.

STEVE: Sure, me too, Sherlock - Royall's God-damned pharmacy.

JOEL: Exactly.

STEVE: What's the matter with you? You want to rob the drug store?

JOEL: Well I do and I don't. I want to walk in with the keys and just fill up some bags after hours, no fuss and no shouting. I want you to get me the keys to the place. The code to the alarm, too. We'll do it easy.

STEVE: Me? How am I supposed to ... oh now wait a minute.

JOEL: That's right, you know the guy. You more than know him, Joy.

Steve, Mona, and Jeff all exchange glances, thinking about whether Stephen Caney is going to get what he wants

STEVE: That was a long time ago. Me and Pete...

JOEL: You guys were the golden couple in high school I hear. Most likely to succeed and all that.

STEVE: Pete Branch is a decent guy. He teaches Sunday school, for Christ's sake.

JOEL: I bet. Look, Joy, I got it all worked out. You start teaching Sunday school up at Shady Grove with him. Make them googly eyes at him. Tell him what a bastard I am.

STEVE: That's not a stretch.

JOEL: Whatever it takes, you get him in your pocket, Joy. You get those keys.

A positive outcome for Stephen is too good to pass up. Jeff picks up a white die, and Steve and Mona nod in agreement. Jeff puts it in front of Joel, and we all know how the scene will end. Steve, playing Joy, has everything he needs to know to finish the scene.

STEVE: I'm not going to seduce Pete Branch.

JOEL: Yeah you are. And you'll probably like it. Hell Joy, you can do the guy if that's what it takes. I don't care.

STEVE: That's good to know.

JOEL: You do this and I'll handle the rest. We clean the place out and it'll be money, Joy. Big money. Get out of Robin Hood money. We can move to Raleigh, Charlotte, wherever you want. It'll be the break we need. Get away from your old man.

STEVE: That sounds pretty good, Stephen.

JOEL: So you'll do it?

STEVE: Pete's so nice. It'll destroy him.

JOEL: So you'll do it?

STEVE: Yeah, I'll do it.

JOEL: And that's the scene.

MONA: That was great. You guys are terrible.

JOEL: Thanks.

Joel considers what do to with his white die and decides to keep it. If he can build up enough white dice, maybe he can engineer a happy ending for Stephen Caney, which seems satisfyingly perverse.

STEVE: I like Joy, she's so ... mean.

Steve is up next, and asks to resolve. They set up a scene where Joy is confronted by her father, who wants her to leave Stephen. It turns into a shouting match, and Steve decides it's going to end badly for Joy. He grabs a black die and Jeff, taking the hint, browbeats her into furious silence. At the end of the scene, he keeps the black die.

JOEL: Wow, that was rough, Steve. She really is nasty. Mona, you're up!

They begin the third scene.

MONA: You know, I want to establish. Not sure where it's going.

STEVE: That's fine.

MONA: Pete Branch is in Royall's, nursing a cup of coffee. I'd like Dr. Futrelle to be there.

JEFF: For sure. Do you have something in mind, Mona?

MONA: Not really. Let's say Futrelle looks worried and sad.

Jeff and Mona play out the scene in character

MONA: Hey, Doc, want some company? Mornings are slow around here.

JEFF: Sure, Pete.

MONA: How's business down at the hospital?

JEFF: Steady. The usual cuts and bruises now that school's out and the kids are back on the farm.

MONA: Yeah, it's all hay fever and corn husker's lotion here. How's the family?

JEFF: Fine, fine.

MONA: And ... Joy?

JEFF: Oh, Pete, I wish you two had stayed together. That Stephen Caney - she just married him to spite me. To punish us. He's no damn good.

MONA: Aw, he's not that bad. He loves your daughter. I've seen them around town - he really loves her, Doc.

JEFF: He's straight from the devil is what he is. He's a drug-dealing punk and if I had my way he'd be ridden out of town on a rail.

MONA: Don't talk that way.

JEFF: He keeps a loaded shotgun in his living room, Pete!

MONA: A lot of people do. Look, I know you don't like him, but you ought to try. It's been hard for me to accept it, because you know I care for Joy, but it is what it is. We don't get to change it....

There's a contemplative pause, and Mona finally breaks character.

...OK, I think this is mostly color. I just wanted to showcase the relationship between Pete and the Doctor.

JEFF: I really like how innocent and kind you are making Pete, Mona.

STEVE: It's excruciating.

JEFF: We've established that Pete's a wonderful guy and that I hate my son-in-law. I love it! So is it positive or negative for Pete?

JOEL: I'd say negative overall.

MONA: For sure. Defending Stephen Caney? That doesn't bode well.

Mona takes a black die from the pool and sets it in front of Joel.

JOEL: Thanks. I was hoping for nothing but white dice for my drug-dealing cretin tonight. Anyway, Jeff, you're up.

JEFF: Could my scene just continue the one you started?

MONA: I don't see why not. Is that legal, Steve?

STEVE: Sure! Do you want to literally keep rolling, or would you like us to change things up so you can resolve?

JEFF: The latter, I think. Surprise me.

They begin the fourth scene, which sees all four characters interact in Royall's. Since it's Dr. Futrelle in the spotlight, Joel has Stephen Caney force Joy to approach her father and apologize for their fight earlier, demonstrating the humiliating and scary hold he has over her. Jeff takes a black die, almost gets the nerve to confront Stephen Caney, and backs down. He gives the die to Joel, whose scene is next. Several crazy scenes are played out - some half-assed gunplay, and a comedy of errors involving Joy, the El Salvadoran gangsters and Pete Branch's Ford Escort - until it is Mona's turn again.

MONA: I don't actually have anything in mind, so I'll resolve. Set me up, guys.

The rules for choosing to resolve scenes are on page XX.

STEVE: A scene for Pete Branch.

JOEL: I've got an idea. Let's have Joy make her first move at Sunday school.

STEVE: OK by me. Are you cool with that, Mona?

MONA: Definitely, since I get to decide whether Pete falls for it or not. So it's a flashback to a few days before everything started getting really crazy. Shady Grove is a Baptist church, up on a hill, picture perfect. There's a little rec room for Sunday school and all morning Joy's been brushing up against him, making meaningful eye contact, that sort of thing.

STEVE: She's looking good, too - a little too good for Sunday. She smells nice.

MONA: The last kid has just been picked up. It's just the two of them, tidying up, a moment Pete's been dreading...

Mona and Steve play out the scene in character

...Glad you're here, Joy. An extra set of hands helps a lot with the Hudspeth twins.

STEVE: Oh, I know it! It was fun, though. Like old times. Remember youth group?

MONA: Oh, man, those were the days.

STEVE: We had a lot of fun, didn't we, Pete?

MONA: We sure did.

STEVE: I miss those good times.

MONA: Well, you're a married lady now, you've got certain responsibilities. You can't go running off to the swimming hole whenever you please.

STEVE: No, I sure can't. I sure can't.

MONA: Aw, Joy, you look so glum! Stephen's a nice fella. You're lucky.

STEVE: Am I?

MONA: Sure you are. I mean, look at me. What do I have to show for myself? Nothing.

STEVE: That's not true. You're still a good man, a decent man, Pete. OK, Joy sidles up and touches his face. She looks in his eyes and gets really close.

Mona grins and picks up a black die, choosing for her character, Pete, to fail

Pete can feel her warmth, smell her perfume - the same perfume she wore in high school.

MONA: And he turns away and grabs a broom, beet red and flustered. And she follows him, backs him into a corner.

STEVE: Pete, I'm so lonely.

MONA: And against his better judgment, against every instinct, he kisses her. Then he runs away.

JOEL: I'm so happy right now. This is all going to end in a terrible tragedy.

MONA: Oh yes.

Mona and Steve share a high-five.

STEVE: We're down to the final die before the tilt, and Jeff, it's all yours.

JEFF: I want to establish! Here's the deal, if it's OK with you, Joel.

JOEL: Bring it.

JEFF: Stephen Caney has a garbage bag full of fentanyl patches and a bullet wound in his calf. It's

swollen and his shoe is full of blood and he can barely walk.

STEVE: Joy is still God knows where.

JOEL: Cool. So he's going to pay his father-in-law a visit.

JEFF: Stephen Caney wants to find out just how far he can push the old man - he wants his leg patched up, but more than that, he wants the man subordinate to him - a quavering minion, at least for the moment. He shows up at the Futrelle's upscale home late at night, filthy, bleeding, and carrying a pump shotgun.

JOEL: Fantastic. We're resolving, too. You're so hosed, Jeff!

Joel and Jeff drop into character.

JEFF: Where is my daughter?

JOEL: I'm hurt bad.

JEFF: Where the hell is Joy?

JOEL: She's fine and I'll take you to her, but you gotta stitch up my leg first.

JEFF: What's in the bag?

JOEL: Fentanyl patches, loads of 'em.

JEFF: My God, you are the worst scum I have ever met.

JOEL: Well likewise and so forth. Now get the bullet out of my fucking leg.

JEFF: OK, Dr. Futrelle clears off the kitchen table and gets to work.

STEVE: It's a clean wound and the bullet comes out easily.

JOEL: While Futrelle is disinfecting it and putting on a bandage, Stephen Caney is ripping open a patch and slapping it on his shoulder. Then he points the shotgun at Futrelle and says, get your keys and your ATM card, old man, we're going to find Joy.

JEFF: I thought you knew where she was?

JOEL: Well, I got a good idea anyway.

JEFF: I'm not going anywhere with you, son.

Mona, Jeff and Steve exchange some furtive glances and Steve reaches for a die - a white die. It's a good call, and everybody nods in agreement. Joel sees the die and takes his cue to play out a success for his character.

JOEL: Maybe you ain't and maybe you are. Maybe you'll stand up and be a man and I'll find your little girl all by myself and just take her someplace far away. Maybe without you and her Momma and all the nice people at Peace Haven church she'll fall into some kind of disrepute. Maybe the fact that you just aided and abetted a known felon will come back to cause some kind of problem, who knows? I sure don't. And he hands the doctor the shotgun.

JEFF: Dr. Futrelle's brave front collapses, he gives in, his head hung low, and the two of them roar off into the night in his big white SUV.

Steve hands the die to Joel, who places it in front of him.

STEVE: Man, if you'd decided to resolve, I totally wanted to have Stephen Caney show up at the hospital while Doc Futrelle was on duty. That'd be a different set-up entirely. That was great, though!

JEFF: Ugh, I hate your guy so much, Joel!

JOEL: Thanks, I think.

THE TILT

The rules for the Tilt are on page XX.

STEVE: What dice do you all have? I've got two black. Dang.

The rules for adding complications before the Tilt are on page XX.

JOEL: Two white and one black. Thanks for screwing up my white die dominance you guys.

MONA: You asked for it. I've got a single white die.

JEFF: One black and one white.

Everybody rolls their dice. Steve rolls a six and a four, for a total of ten black. Joel rolls a black four and six white combined, for a total of two white. Mona rolls her white die and gets a one. Jeff rolls a pair of sixes, one black and one white, for a grand total of zero.

JOEL: What just happened?

STEVE: You and I get to decide the Tilt, Joel.

JOEL: Weird. I win with a two.

STEVE: All right, we get to decide what elements to introduce in the Tilt.

The eight unused dice, rolled after The Setup, show 

JEFF: What's it going to be, you two?

Joel looks at the Tilt list.

JOEL: Can I go first?

STEVE: Absolutely.

JOEL: I want something from Paranoia. That seems appropriate.

Joel puts forward the five.

STEVE: OK, I'll use a six for Failure. And something specific from the Paranoia list. I like "A sudden reversal", so that's a four.

JOEL: Excellent...

Joel looks at the Failure sub-list.

...I'm leaning toward either "A good plan comes unraveled" or "A stupid plan, executed to perfection."

JEFF AND MONA: Stupid plan! Stupid plan!

JOEL: Tell me how you really feel, guys! OK, a stupid plan it is.

Joel and Steve write up two new index cards with the complications on them: "Paranoia - sudden reversal" and "failure - stupid plan".

STEVE: Cool new elements, guys. Remember that these are community property, and we can all think about how they could be incorporated into the story. OK, we're done with The Score. Let's take a break! Who wants a root beer?

They all relax - stretch, get snacks, use the restroom and talk about the game. When everyone is ready, the Tilt begins. So far eight of the sixteen dice have been allocated. Everybody keeps the dice they've already earned in front of them. The Tilt plays out in the same fashion as the Score, with scenes in rotation, and a die allocated after the conclusion of each. The unfolding disaster escalates as Pete Branch tries to defend Joy from a gang of hardened narcotraffickers and Stephen Caney and Dr. Futrelle try to enlist the help of the sleepy local sheriff. Eventually, Mona grabs the final die, declares it a failure, and the Tilt ends with a bang as Stephen Caney's shotgun goes off.

THE AFTERMATH

STEVE: OK, it's time for the Aftermath. What dice do we have? I'm looking at two white and two black.

The rules for the Aftermath are on page XX.

JOEL: Three black and two white.

JEFF: Two black and three white.

MONA: One white and one black.

STEVE: All right then- what we need to do now is roll our dice and add them up by color, subtracting one total from the other. You don't want to get zero. I'm looking at you, Jeff.

JEFF: I know, I know.

MONA: Uh oh.

They roll, adding each color and then subtracting the low total from the high total. Steve rolls a three and a two on white and a six and two on black, for a total of five white and eight black; his end result is three black. After rolling, they consult the Aftermath table.

STEVE: Three black. "Painfully harsh" - that's about right.

JOEL: Two black. Ouch. "Brutal. Horrible nightmare and maybe death".

JEFF: Unbelievable. Dead even again. Holy crap, what's the worst thing in the world to Dr. Futrelle?

JOEL: Going to jail for killing his son-in-law maybe?

MONA: Huh, look at that, a six and a one - five white. Miserable and humiliated but not too bad, makes sense. So Pete's going to skate out of this mess, minus his good name. Who would have figured?

STEVE: Looks like we're hip-deep in the Aftermath. Ready for the montage?

JEFF AND MONA: Yes!

JOEL: OK, we know what to do.

JEFF takes one of his dice. He has a total of five.

JEFF: This is Dr. Futrelle, his eyes closed, shooting Stephen Caney in the back with the shotgun.

JOEL: That was quick.

Mona takes one of her dice. She has a total of two.

MONA: This is Pete emptying the till at the pharmacy into a duffel bag.

STEVE: Nice! This is Joy nervously smoking a cigarette, waiting for Pete in the car.

JOEL: This is Stephen Caney writhing in a pool of his own blood, struggling to breathe and mouthing the word "why?"

JEFF: Flash-forward, This is Dr. Futrelle in a courtroom, nodding his head as a judge berates him.

MONA: This is Pete in the darkened pharmacy, calling the police.

STEVE: This is Joy in handcuffs, spread out on the hood of her car, with a detective talking with Pete.

MONA: I really need more dice.

JOEL: Have some of mine.

MONA: Is that legal?

STEVE: Go for it.

MONA: This is Pete retrieving the duffel bag from the dumpster the next day.

JOEL: Awesome.

JEFF: This is Dr. Futrelle, in prison, learning that his daughter was sentenced to five years for a drug-related robbery.

STEVE: This is Joy, in a bare knuckle brawl in the prison rec yard.

MONA: And this is Pete Branch back at his old job at Royall's, like nothing had happened. He's changed though; he's got a dark aspect about him. He's a bad man now - everybody in town knows what happened, even if the law never caught up with him. He's sort of a pariah.

STEVE: Cry me a river.

MONA: Holy cow. Yep, I think that's a wrap, guys!

JEFF: I love these people. Good game.