



The Long Example

What follows is an extended example of play, demonstrating how moves chain together and play proceeds from moment to moment. It follows the same characters seen in the book's other examples: Vanessa the Witch, Robin the Mortal, and Cassidy the Werewolf. In order to better see the MC's tools in action, the example is written in first person from their perspective.

Vanessa's mom is in the hospital, so she's staying with Cassidy's family - something that she's not at all pleased about. Her pride's still wounded from the beating that Cassidy dished out to her in the locker room, even though they've theoretically made up.

*School's out for the day. I frame a new scene: "Vanessa, you probably get back to Cassidy's house before she does. Her dad's back from work already, his coat flung carelessly over the banister. TV's on, and he calls out a warm greeting from the next room. What do you do?" Since we haven't seen these two characters interact yet, I'm **putting them together.***

*I don't have any particular plan for this scene, other than to **let story emerge from the feral unknown.***

Vanessa's player shrugs and says, "Well, Vanessa doesn't have any issue with Cassidy's family, so she'll walk into the living room and take a seat next to him. 'Hey, Mr. Lupa. How's it going?'"

*Looking at the list of Principles, **Make humans seem monstrous** stands out. I say, "Mr. Lupa's got blood on his collar, and his right eye is swollen shut.*



He's managing to hold both a bottle of whiskey and a cigarette in his left hand. 'Oh, just fuckin' peachy.'"

Vanessa's player: "Vanessa doesn't care about Mr. Lupa one way or the other, but she does want some leverage over him, and a way to even the score with Cassidy."

"So, what do you do?" Even when the players speak in third person, I make sure to address myself to the characters, not the players.

"Well, I get up and walk over to the fridge. I walk in front of him, rather than behind the couch. A little slower than necessary, adding some extra sway to my step."

"Are you turning him on?" I ask.

"Yeah, in a second," Vanessa's player responds. "Is the fridge in clear view of the couch that Mr. Lupa's on?"

I see where she's going with this, and since it's my job to be a fan of the PCs, I am happy to help her set the situation up. "Definitely. And they've got one of those fridges where the freezer is on the bottom."

"Perfect. I'm going to open it up, and look through the freezer for something to use as an ice pack for the man's face. But I'm definitely going to bend at the waist, not the knees. While in my miniskirt. And for good measure, I'm going to call out to him, 'Hey, do you guys have any ice packs?'"

"Roll it," I say, grinning. Cassidy's player has an epic scowl on her face.

Vanessa's player rolls to turn someone on, and gets a 4 and 5. Her hot score is an unfortunate zero, though, leaving her with a total of 9. On a 7-9, the person being





turned on has to choose an option. “Give themselves to you” is tempting, but I don’t think it makes sense in the fiction yet. So I settle with, “give you a String against them.” I narrate my choice, “You hear the bottle of whiskey drop out of Mr. Lupa’s hand and fall onto the floor. ‘Fuck,’ he whispers to himself. He’s clearly hot and bothered by what he sees. Take a String on him.”

Vanessa’s player marks the String down, and narrates returning with a bag of peas. “I sit uncomfortably close to him, and hold the bag of peas to his head. I coo some sympathetic words at him. Is that **turning him on?**”

It probably is, but she only gets to roll that move on Mr. Lupa once in any given situation. Vanessa’s player narrates kissing a bruise on his forehead, and lingering a bit too long. I’m not sure what would be better, to have him reject her advances or respond in kind. So I choose to **disclaim decision making**, and turn to Cassidy’s player. “What would your father do in a situation like this?”

Cassidy’s player thinks for a second. In the past, we’ve seen some pretty bad parenting from this character. “Honestly, I think he’d cave. He’s a rat bastard.” I have no qualms with that answer. Since I **treat my NPCs like stolen cars**, it’s fun to watch them lose control and crash from time to time.

I wait until Vanessa’s undoing Mr. Lupa’s buttons and his hand is gripping her thigh to say, “Mr Lupa lets out a small moan under his breathe, and whispers, ‘Leanne, yes.’” I’m **accepting people conditionally**. Vanessa can have her revenge sex, but only if she’s willing to hear another woman’s name being called.





“Whatever,” Vanessa’s player says, “this gives me power and leverage over him no matter what he calls me. I bring my leg around and straddle him, reaching a hand into my backpack for a condom.”

I look around the room. The consensus seems to be that we fade to black at this moment, rather than continuing on with the nitty-gritty details of their sordid encounter. That’s totally fine with me. I ask, “What’s your Sex Move?”

Vanessa’s player reads it out, “After sex, you can take a sympathetic token from them. They know about it, and it’s cool. I think I’m going to stand up pretty abruptly once we’re done, grab the bottle of booze that he was drinking, and walk away from the couch. I leave my panties wherever they ended up, and I kept the rest of my clothes on.” The bottle of booze counts as a **sympathetic token** for Mr. Lupa, no problem.

I glance at my Principles, and remember that **happiness always comes at someone else’s expense**. Both of these characters got what they wanted, which means I might want to make a hard move in order to live up to my Principles. Ah, **put them together!** “Cassidy, this is probably the moment when you walk through the door.”

I’m right; she does. Cassidy’s player says, “Right away I see Vanessa swaggering away from the couch, my dad’s booze in her hand.” I interject, “He’s sliding his pants back up as you enter, too. Vanessa’s panties are clutched tight in his left hand. Has this kind of thing ever happened before?” I’m **asking provocative questions**.

“Once, with Leanne.” Nice.

“And what did you do about it last time?”





*“I bashed the girl’s face in, which is exactly what I plan to do now. First, I’m going to reach out and grab the bottle from Vanessa’s hand.” Cassidy’s player grabs some dice, asking, “does that count as **lashing out physically?**”*

*“Well,” I reply, glancing at the basic moves for guidance, “you’re not actually attacking Vanessa, at least not yet. I think this counts as **holding steady** in a tense situation. Can you just coolly swipe the bottle right out of her hands?”*

If Vanessa had been actively protecting the bottle, the answer would probably have been different. I probably would have said that Cassidy couldn’t get the bottle without beating it out of Vanessa’s clutches.

*Cassidy’s player rolls to **hold steady**, and gets two 4s. With a cold of -1, that gives her a final score of 7. She chooses to keep her cool, meaning that she swipes the bottle without a struggle.*

“Vanessa, how do you respond?” Cassidy’s clearly got a next move planned, but it’s part of my job to make sure everyone gets their due stage presence and opportunity to act.

*“I run a hand through my dishevelled hair, kind of rubbing her face in the fact that I just got with her dad. I smile my most malicious smile, and say, ‘Cass, welcome home sweetie.’” She’s rolling to **shut someone down**, by demonstrating that she has all the social power here, but she botches the roll.*

I have an opportunity to make a hard move here, as direct and nasty as I like. But I’m pretty sure that Cassidy’s about to deal out some punishment, and I don’t really want to interfere with that. So I focus on





the dad, and choose to **expose a dangerous secret to the wrong person**. “As the two of you are facing off in the lobby, Mr. Lupa notices somewhere weird hanging out of your backpack, Vanessa. It’s still unzipped, so he opens it up. Whatever witch-y stuff is in there, he begins to pull it out and rifle through it. Books, objects of power, all that stuff.” **I make my move, but misdirect** – so that it seems like he’s discovered this stuff because the fiction set it up, when in actual fact he discovered it because I picked an option from a list.

I gesture, indicating that they should return to their hostile exchange. Cassidy’s player says, “I’m going to take a step forward, and try to smash this bottle against the side of Vanessa’s face. Does she have any Conditions I can take advantage of here?” Nope, she doesn’t.

Cassidy’s player rolls 1 and 4 to **lash out physically**. With her volatile stat at 2, that’s just barely in the 7-9 range. She deals harm, but has to choose from a list of ugly options. “Oh, I’m totally going to turn into my Darkest Self. Werewolf transformation, here we come. First, though, I’m going to spend a String on Vanessa to add 1 to whatever harm I deal.”

Looking at the harm guidelines, I’m not sure if it would count as 1 or 2 harm by default. If it broke and cut her up, it’d probably count as 2. I decide to **disclaim decision making**, and ask Robin’s player whether the bottle breaks. “Uh, sure.”

The bottle breaks over Vanessa’s head for 2 harm, and Cassidy spends a String against her to bump that up to 3 harm. “Vanessa, your head is ringing and you can almost immediately feel the warmth of running blood on the side of your head. That’s 3 harm total, putting her one away from death. And at that moment...” I trail off, letting Cassidy jump in.





“...yeah, at that moment I reel backwards, my eyes bloodshot and glowing red. It looks like I’m rocking back and forth for a second, but it’s actually my bones realigning themselves and patches of fur bursting out of my flesh. I tear my clothes up pretty bad, but they don’t fall away. It seems like I grow a foot, and the transformation ends with a loud howl that shakes the mirror beside you right off the wall.”

Cassidy’s her Darkest Self now. Her dad’s probably sneaking out the back door, or huddled up in terror. Vanessa’s bleeding profusely and might need hospital attention. I follow up with the most important move in the MC’s arsenal.

“Vanessa, what do you do?”

