

*Under Skin*  
**TABLETOP**  
*who do you love?*

A role playing game  
by Emily Care Boss



First Edition  
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# Other Ways to Play



## VARIATIONS ON THE GAME

There are other techniques that can be used to play this game. Experiment with different ways to play. Also, a table-top role playing game variant.

### MORE TECHNIQUES FOR THE MAIN GAME:

1. Everyone Directs, p. 38
2. Internal Monologues, p. 39
3. Re-play scenes, p. 39
4. More Flashbacks, p. 39
5. Doubling, p. 40
6. Expressionistic play, p. 40
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#### 4. THE STAGES OF THE GAME

**SETTING THE STAGE:** Partners in their daily life: simple stresses and joys  
Singletons with Best friend: looking for love

~Flashbacks for Singletons

**INITIATION:** (Group Scene) everyone is together and the New Flames ignite

**FOLLOW-THROUGH:** the New Flames alone together

If a character is Left Out, have scene with Friend: how is life?

~Flashbacks for Left Out or any character

**DEVELOPMENT:** back with the Partner, how is this going to work?

Singletons, scene with Best Friend: what is happening? with who?

~Flashbacks for any characters

**ESCALATION:** New Flames negotiating lines of their relationships. Will they cross them? Angel and devil prompt characters during scenes.

**REVELATIONS:** how do they find out? what is like to be with their old Partner now?

~Flashbacks for any character

**RESOLUTION:** (Group Scene) the whole group is united, what has been lost? What can be saved?

**DENOUMENT:** Looking back on the events of this game from the future

The Stages form the arc of a story:

~ *People live their lives, either in couples dealing with the issues of life and the changes their lives have undergone, or singly seeking love and companionship.*

~ *They meet someone who they become madly attracted to or fall for someone they already know (who is not their mate).*

~ *The new love interests talk and see what there is between them, and then go back to their partner or good friend and talk about what the new interest has brought up.*

~ *The new potential relationships escalate, and an opportunity comes to take a step that would cross a line in their current relationship. What do they do?*

~ *This decision, full of doubts and desires, has fall-out on their life. They face the consequences or reap the benefits, and life goes on.*

~ *At the very end, the characters speak from a future point, showing us how these events have shaped their lives, or faded away from memory.*

### 3. TABLETOP VERSION OF UNDER MY SKIN

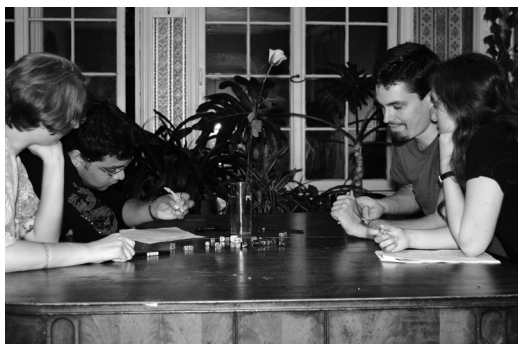
**Number of players:** 4 or 6

**Length of time to play:**

approx. 4 hours

**Dice size:** Six-sided

Use pencil to fill out sheet,  
to allow for changes during play.



If instead of acting out the story of these relationships changing and going haywire, a group wishes to play a tabletop version in which the players simply describe in words what happens, use these rules modifications of the main game.

---

1. Create characters as in the main game, except that there are no Singletons. Also includes three additional aspects of the characters and modifications of others:

**A. INSIGHT POINTS:** These represent areas of knowledge that the character (or at least the player) has about the character and their relationship. This number of dice may be used in Scenes after Setting the Stage, to *Respect Lines* and potentially *Gain Desires*. Start with one. Each is associated with a specific explanation of their Core Issue that the player writes down.

**B. DRAMA POINTS:** These represent areas of tension for the character in their relationship with their Partner, or in their daily life. This number of dice may be used in Scenes in Follow-Through, Development and Escalation to *Gain Desires* and potentially *Respect Lines*. Create during Setting the Stage. Individual Dramas are also written down on the character sheet.

**C. DESIRES:** Something the character wants from or to do with their New Flame. Character tries to GAIN DESIRES (see page 45). These express the attraction they feel for the other character. May conflict with the original Couple's Lines. First Desire for each pair is *to have sex*. Two others are created over the course of play. When Desires are Gained, new levels of Connection are created between the New Flames.

D. LINES: Lines in this game represent areas of the relationship that are RESPECTED or not Respected by a Partner or Friend. Players will play out scenes in which they try to Gain Desires while Respecting Lines. If Lines are not Respected, Connections between the Partners (Intimacy, Passion, Commitments) erode and levels are taken away between the Partners.

Lines are also established between Friends. Choose one to start and may add two more during Friend scenes. Not respecting them can degrade these relationships. At any time, if a character crosses the Line of a Friend, the player of the Friend can point out what was done and reduce a Connection between them by one Level (High to Moderate, Moderate to Low, Low to None). If reduced to None, this relationship has been destroyed and they may not have Friend Scenes together. **Friends cannot be New Flame.**

2. At the end of scenes in the Follow-Through, Development and Escalation Stages, roll dice to determine what the outcomes of the scene are. Players must choose whether to roll Insight Dice or Drama Dice.

USING INSIGHT DICE: Play out a Flashback (as in Main Game) for your character in order to use Insight Dice. Add one die to your Insight score. Roll that many dice. If roll two Successes in a given category, you may Respect a Line or Gain a Desire (see next page). Dice count once only.

Insight Outcomes:

- 1-2 Failure
- 3-6 Success: Respect Lines
- 5-6 Success: Gain Desire

USING DRAMA DICE: During the scene act in a way to flaunt the wishes of others or to express your emotions in a strong and selfishly direct way. Roll dice equal to your character's Drama points to Gain Desires or Respect Lines. Must have three or more successes. At end of scene, gain 1 Drama.

Drama Outcomes:

- 1-2 Failure
- 3-6 Gain Desire
- 5-6 Respect Lines

May roll dice equal to the Drama Dice of *another character* by TRIGGERING that character. Use Drama Outcomes, but now Respect Lines only on a 6.

**Note:** Dice can count only toward one success. To gain success in both categories, two separate sets of Successful dice are required.

**TRIGGERING A CHARACTER:** In the scene, have your character act aggressively or manipulatively toward this character in a way that will bring their Core Issue or Drama levels into play. All players may make suggestions about how this is done. Player of character being Triggered has final say on how this occurs. Normally a player can Trigger only one character per scene.

#### OUTCOMES OF INSIGHT OR DRAMA ROLLS:

##### RESPECTING A LINE

**Success:** The character respects the relationship and does not do whatever would make their Partner feel betrayed. If both Partners Respect their Line in a given Stage, they may increase the level of one Connection by one step (Low to Moderate, Moderate to High). Describe what this means for them.

**Failure:** The character crosses a Line important to their partner. Reduce one Connection (Intimacy, Passion or Commitment) by one level. (High to Moderate, Moderate to Low; cannot be reduced below Low) Other players (not players of this Couple) choose which Connection goes down. Describe what this means.

##### GAINING A DESIRE

**Success:** The New Flame does something the character wants (e.g. rely on them, open up etc.), or they are able to do something together (e.g. have sex, kiss, talk, etc.). Say how this occurs. If either or both of the New Flames Gains a Desire, increase the level of either Intimacy or Commitment between the New Flames by one level.

**Failure:** The character does not get what they were hoping for. Connections remain the same.

### 3. Play Scenes in these Stages:

**SETTING THE STAGE** — A scene between the original Partners in which they are dealing with some contentious issue between them. *Drama points may be gained.*

**FOLLOW-THROUGH** — The New Flames are alone together. *FLASHBACK* may be played out to gain another Insight Die.

**OPTIONAL FRIEND SCENE** — Character talks with their Friend about life. *Insight point may be gained.*



DEVELOPMENT — Original Partners together again. *FLASHBACK* may be played out to gain another Insight Die.

*OPTIONAL FRIEND SCENE* — Character talks with their Friend about life. *Insight point may be gained.*

ESCALATION — Scene with Original Partner and New Flame. *FLASHBACK* may be played out to gain another Insight Die.

DENOUMENT — Final scenes with the characters reflecting the changes in relationships.

#### 4. Playing out Scenes using the following rules:

##### I. SETTING THE STAGE — The original Couples are together.

**FRAMING THE SCENE:** The players of the characters in the scene choose where their characters are. The other player suggest a conflict that may be occurring between the characters. Based on the events of play, each player may choose to gain an additional Drama Point, and if half or more of the other players so chooses, each character can gain a third Drama Point at the end of this scene.

New Drama Points are recorded on the character sheet. For each new level add an additional area of tension in the relationship or the character's life inspired by events in the Scene. Write this on the character sheet. Player or players who gave the character the new points in this Scene describe it.

##### II. FOLLOW-THROUGH — The New Flames now have a scene together. In it they discover their attraction for the other.

**FRAMING THE SCENE:** The players of the New Flames choose where their characters meet. The player of the Partner of each character that is in the scene picks a Line to be in question. This means that there is a chance the character will cross this line at the end of the scene. Once this is chosen, play out what the characters do in this situation.

When the characters arrive at the decision point about whether they will cross the line or not, players roll dice to determine what happens. Each chooses to roll either the Drama dice or Insight Dice in order to see whether Lines or Desires are respected or gained. In this Stage, before the Roll choose an additional Desire and record it on the character sheet.

III. DEVELOPMENT — Scenes between the original Couples. We get to see how they deal with what the new relationship has brought up for each of them. Choose a Desire that the character is angling for in the scene. If they Gain this Desire, they will have established with the Partner the possibility for this to come to pass. No lines will be crossed in this scene, but if Roll is unsuccessful for that category, Connections are Reduced as when Lines are not Respected.

FRAMING THE SCENE: Partners choose setting and other players choose what characters are doing.

Roll for outcomes as in the Follow-Through Stage at the end of the scene.

IV. ESCALATION — Everyone is together and conflicts break out into the open. Original Partner and New Flame are present at each Scene, or all characters may be present. Players choose Desires to try to Gain.

FRAMING THE SCENE: players choose Location together. Players of original Partners chooses which Lines are in danger of being crossed.

Roll for outcomes as in Follow-Through Stage with changes: *multiple characters may be Triggered in Escalation Stage*. However, an additional 6 is needed to successfully Respect Lines. So, four 6s would need to be rolled.

V. DENOUMENT — Play out final scenes with the characters reflecting the changes in their relationships. No rolls.

VI. Optional Friend Scenes — Player may choose to have one after Follow-Through and one after Development. These are scenes where Friend characters get together and talk about their life, their feelings and what they are doing. Gain an Insight Point. May not have this type of scene if relationship with Friend is destroyed.

4. Endings and Resolutions: Debrief and reflect on game. As described in the Endings and Resolutions chapter.