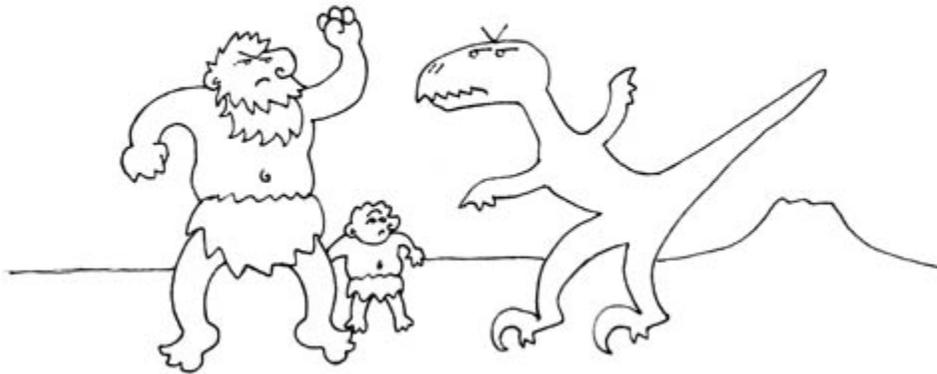


# Prehistoric Ties

A game by Dave Cleaver

Art by Vincent Baker

It's caveman days and you and Mate have to care for Baby. Baby likes to ride dinosaurs and get into all sorts of mischief. How will you and Mate deal with the shenanigans and what will the experience teach you?



In *Prehistoric Ties*, you and your friends tell a story about a prehistoric family living in a world populated by dinosaurs. The story you tell will detail the family's trials, adventures, and the things they learn along the way. You will need a pack of regular playing cards with the list of obstacles provided, this document, and two friends. It's also best to have some paper and writing utensils on hand.

## Setting Up

Before you and your friends can begin to tell your story, you will need to set up the details of your family and the world. First, you will each pick a character to portray within the story. Next, you flesh out the characters and the world. Finally, the players of the parents will establish tensions that exist within the family.

## Choosing Characters

There are three members of this family: two parents and a child. Each of you needs to choose a character to play. The players of the parents will mainly control the actions of their characters. The player of the child will be responsible for framing scenes and presenting the adversity that the parents will face. If you are not comfortable with this responsibility, then you should choose to play one of the parents. In addition to choosing characters, the group should pick a gender and an age for the child. Generally, the child should be between two and five years old.

*Dan, Mary, and Randy sit down to play. Dan has read the game and chooses to play the child. Mary takes the father, and Randy will play the mother. Dan thinks that it would be interesting if the child were a girl and around three years old, and the group agrees.*

## Distributing Skills

Each parent has a set of Skills. A parent's Skills represent the tasks that the character performs better than the other parent. If you are playing one of the parents, take a look at the list of Skills below. The Skills need to be split between the two parents. Each parent will end up with four Skills and no two Skills in common.

The Skills are: Chasing, Cooking, Crafting, Foraging, Hunting, Reasoning, Sneaking, and Trapping. The Skills will inform the actions that your character takes during play and also contribute to tensions between the parents.

*Mary and Randy look over the list of Skills, and decide that Mary's character, the father, will take Chasing, Cooking, Trapping, and Foraging. This leaves the mother with the Skills of Crafting, Hunting, Reasoning, and Sneaking. They take a moment and write their characters' Skills on some paper.*

## Creating Qualities

The player of the child does not write down Skills for the child, instead the player of the child needs to write down some Qualities for the child. A Quality is a single word or short phrase that describes some aspect of



the child's personality. The child's Qualities will typically be the motivations behind any mischief that the child perpetrates.

If you are playing the child, write down several Qualities for your character. The child should have at least three Qualities and no more than five.

*Dan writes down "Dinosaurs are my friends" and "I want to be just like Mommy". He can't think of a third item and asks the others for suggestions. Mary suggests "Inquisitive" and Dan writes it down.*

## Creating Issues

In addition to assigning Skills for the parents, you will need to create Issues that the parents have. Issues represent any problems that the parent perceives within the family. The Issues set up a tension between a parent and the rest of the family. Often the Issue is one sided and won't even be perceived by the other family members.

If you are playing one of the parents, come up with two Issues for your character.

Write each Issue down on the same paper that you wrote your character's Skills. Your parent's Issues will change as play proceeds, so leave room beneath each Issue to rewrite it.

Use the distribution of Skills and the child's Qualities to help guide your choice of Issues. Do the Skills raise any questions about the parent's relationship? Is there a jealousy that could arise? Does one parent always perform a task even though the other is bad at it? Ask similar questions about the child's Qualities and how your parent might perceive them.



*Mary takes a look at the Skills and Qualities and immediately decides that the father is "Jealous of mother and daughter's bond". She thinks that this and the fact that the mother is better at hunting leads him to want to prove himself all the time, so she writes "I am a worthy man". This gives Randy an idea, so he writes down "He never lets me hunt". Taking a look at the child's Qualities, he also decides to add "Daughter doesn't take dinosaur's seriously." Now the group is ready to begin playing.*

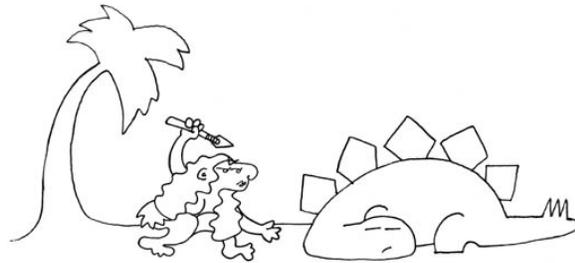
## Telling the Story

Now that you've created characters, it is time to begin telling the story. If you are playing the child, then it is your responsibility to frame scenes for the family and

present obstacles that will be drawn from the deck. When framing scenes or presenting obstacles, keep in mind the Issues of the parents and the Qualities of your character.

If you are playing one of the parents, then you will be responsible for playing your character within the scenes that the player of the child frames and narrating how your character helps to overcome any obstacles along the way.

The story is told within several types of scenes. The two types of scenes are Interlude scenes and Chase Scenes. Interlude scenes are moments when the family has a break. Interlude scenes end when the child runs off in pursuit of something that they want to do. Interlude scenes are followed by a series of Chase scenes. In Chase scenes the parents attempt to rescue the child from various dangers.



## **Interlude Scenes**

Interlude scenes are the group's opportunity to play the family during a moment of rest. In Interludes your characters will typically deal with any fallout from Chase scenes. The game also begins with an Interlude scene that you can use to establish the characters and their relationships.

If you are playing the child, then begin every Interlude scene by drawing three cards from the deck. Keep these cards to yourself for now. Use the table at the end of this document to find out what the cards mean. If any card instructs you to discard or draw more cards, do so now.

It is your responsibility to end the Interlude scene and lead the family into the subsequent Chase scenes. The cards that you've drawn will be the basis for the Chase scenes. Using the cards and the child's Qualities end the scene with the child running off in pursuit of some goal that will surely lead them into danger.

*Dan begins the game by drawing three cards from the Obstacle deck. He draws "A Dangerous Cliff!", "Oh, No! A Sabretooth Tiger!", and "Discard this card." He discards the last card. Taking a moment to think he frames a scene in the family's cave. Randy and Mary take the opportunity to showcase the parents in their normal family roles. Throughout the scene Dan narrates the child's interest in a butterfly that's flown into the cave. When he feels that the scene has shown enough, he informs Mary and Randy that their characters suddenly notice that the girl is missing.*



## Chase Scenes

Chase scenes are scenes in which the child pursues a goal and the parents take chase to protect them. In each Chase scene the child will play at least one obstacle card from their hand. The parents will have to deal with this obstacle before they can continue their pursuit of the child.

The child frames every Chase scene with the child in some imminent danger. Before the scene begins, choose the Obstacle card or cards that you will play during the scene. You may only play multiple cards if you drew a card that instructs you to do so. Use the card to help you determine the exact details of the situation at the start of the scene. Be prepared to bring the Obstacle in after the parents attempt to save the child from the immediately recognizable threat.

The Obstacle card should provide you with inspiration for the Obstacle, the exact nature of the Obstacle and how it fits into your scene is up to you. When introducing the Obstacle, play the card from your hand and narrate how the Obstacle appears in the scene.

*Dan looks at “Oh No! A Sabretooth Tiger!” and frames his first Chase scene with the parent’s coming upon the child in a clearing. She is climbing up on some large rocks and leaping for the butterfly. Randy and Mary narrate the parents moving to grab her before she cracks her head. Dan stops them, lays down the card and narrates that they hear a low growl as a Sabretooth tiger comes out from the nearest treeline.*

As the players of the parents, you should play out what your characters do in response to the situations that the child’s player presents. Keep in mind your character’s Issues and the Issues of the other parent and bring them up when you feel it is appropriate.

Once the child introduces the Obstacle you should work together to narrate how you will overcome the Obstacle.

*Randy and Mary decide that the father will get the attention of the tiger while the mother sneaks in to grab their daughter.*

As the player of the child, it's your job to add further complications to the parent's solution. When adding complications keep in mind the parent's Issues and try to put pressure on them. Also be sure to narrate some narrow escapes for the child related to the current Obstacle within the scene. Feel free to use amazing and improbable events for these escapes.

*Dan narrates the tiger showing no interest whatsoever in the father and instead turning to follow the mother. Mary thinks that her character takes this opportunity to prove his manliness as he pounces on the tiger. The tiger and father wrestle with the tiger getting the upperhand. Fortunately, the father escapes, but now the tiger is chasing the father through the rocks in the clearing. Meanwhile the child leaps from rock to rock following the butterfly as the mother tries to grab her.*

The scene continues with the parent's responding to complications that get introduced, until the child leaves the scene. At this point the parents also escape from the Obstacle and should take off in pursuit.

*Finally Dan narrates the butterfly flying to the edge of the clearing and away. The child leaps off of the rock she is standing on and lands on the back of the rather surprised tiger. She giggles with joy as the tiger runs into the woods in the same direction as the butterfly. The parents take off in pursuit of their child.*

## **Evolving the Family**

Whenever a parent's Issue comes up in play, the player of that parent has the option to change the Issue. The Issue can be changed to anything that the player feels is appropriate given the contents of the scene in which it changed. Cross off the old Issue and write down the new one.

*During the Chase scene, Mary's character attempted to prove he was a worthy man. Mary decides that the embarrassing run in with the tiger warrants a change in the father's Issue. She crosses off "I am a worthy man" and writes down "I will not back down from a fight".*

The child's Qualities can also change after any scene in which the child's player feels that one should change. Just as with Issues, the child's player creates a new Quality that the player feels is appropriate. Cross off the old Quality and write down the new one.

*After a lecture from her mother on the dangers of befriending unknown dinosaurs, Dan decides to change the child's "Dinosaurs are my friends" Quality to "I can be friends with Dinosaurs that I know." He crosses off the old Quality and writes in the new one.*

## **Finishing the Story**

The story ends under one of two circumstances. Either you decide as a group that the family's Issues have evolved to a point where you no longer need to explore them, or there are no more cards in the Obstacle deck.

The next Interlude scene will be your last scene. Use this scene to resolve anything that you feel needs to be resolved within the family. Not all Issues need to be resolved before the story ends, and you should use your judgement as a group on whether or not it's appropriate for your story.

*After they've played for a while Mary, Dan, and Randy decide that the family has evolved to a good stopping point. They wrap up the story with a touching family scene in the cave and a fade to black.*

## **Obstacle Cards**

### **Spades**

- A - Stampede!
- 2 - Watch out for the lava
- 3 - A dinosaur nest - Mommy's home!
- 4 - Waterfalls
- 5 - Sleeping Tyrannosaurus Rex
- 6 - Carried away by Pterodactyls
- 7 - Oh No! A Sabretooth Tiger!
- 8 - A Dangerous Cliff!
- 9 - Those aren't logs!
- 10 - Imminent Eruption
- J - Danger, falling rocks
- Q - Discard this card. Draw two more.
- K - Draw a new card. Combine two Obstacles.

### **Clubs**

- A - Those aren't vines!
- 2 - An irritated Triceratops
- 3 - Quicksand!
- 4 - Deadly Steam Geysers
- 5 - Mudslide
- 6 - Riding a Brontosaurus
- 7 - Tyrannosaurus on the the rampage
- 8 - An injured dinosaur
- 9 - Stegosaurus protecting her young
- 10 - A Pterodactyl attack
- J - Two dinosaurs fighting
- Q - Repeat one Obstacle
- K - Repeat one Obstacle

## **Hearts**

- A - Whirlpools
- 2 - Velociraptors on the hunt
- 3 - Lost in a herd
- 4 - Trapped in a tree
- 5 - Crossing a tar pit!
- 6 - Don't crush the eggs
- 7 - Vines too thick to walk through
- 8 - Don't disturb them while they are eating
- 9 - Several stacked stones form an unsteady bridge
- 10 - Another family protecting their lands
- J - Piranha-like fish in the water
- Q - Discard this card. Draw two more.
- K - Draw a new card. Combine two Obstacles.

## **Diamonds**

- A - Mommy dinosaur adopts the child.
- 2 - Wildfire
- 3 - Earthquake
- 4 - An uncrossable chasm
- 5 - A swarm of small dinosaurs
- 6 - A sudden storm
- 7 - Flash flood!
- 8 - A young T-Rex wants to play
- 9 - There's something else in this cave
- 10 - An injured velociraptor calls for help
- J - Sinkholes
- Q - Discard this card
- K - Discard this card