

IMMORTAL



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COMING NEXT



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INTRODUCTION

From the dawn of time they've come, moving among us. Immortal men and women who live lives we couldn't dream of time and again. Locked together in a never ending battle that they call 'The Game' in which they challenge one another to mortal combat, the winner taking their enemies head, and with it, their power.

Some run from this inevitability, hiding on holy-ground, the one refuge that the immortal have from their kind, others get on with their lives, worrying about the game only after it comes for them. Still others understand that The Game is now part of their lives and learn to live with it, and of course there are some who forsake everything for The Game, looking for fights, addicted to the power of the Quickening.

Which path you choose is up to you, it is time to take up your sword and prepare yourself. Because in the end, there can be only one!

A World of Modern-Romance

The world in which the immortals walk is inspired by the great action and adventure stories we grew up with; King Arthur and his knights, Treasure Island, Beowulf, Scheherazade's 1000 nights, The Iliad and Odyssey. It is a romantic world in the most basic of definitions, legendary and quixotic, each immortals life a saga unto itself.

The world of darkness is a hard place to live out one lifetime, rampant violence and corruption leak into every moment, burning away any purity that may be found. How then do the immortals survive the centuries, living and growing to love those who will grow old and die? Their only other choice is others of their kind, people who in spite of their affection for one another may have to slay one day.

With so much sorrow it is a wonder that an immortal could survive the centuries, and yet they do. In fact they thrive. They learn to cope with their never ending pilgrimage across time, and simply live their lives. These intrepid, nigh-eternal souls find themselves, by dint of their age and kenning, in the most surprising of situations.

Proof of Life

Go back to any great event in history and there you will find at least one immortal. Rarely a central figure, at time nothing more than a spectator but history, it seems, draws them in, making them a part of itself one way or another.

On the occasion that an immortal loses their head, dying one last time, their lives are not lost; their

knowledge is not forsaken by the whim of some cruel foe. It is passed on by their Quickening, a store of all that they have seen and all that they know.

This transfer is imperfect and lacks context, the victor often gaining only a glimmer of a fact's meaning simply because it lacks true perspective. But it remains, that what an immortal learns and experiences is never truly lost.

Honor and the Game

It is strange that a being that has the potential to last until the end of time would choose to risk that eternity, even if it does mean gaining the power of another of their ilk, but they do. Constantly and consistently, they put their life on the line challenging one another to combat knowing that only one will walk away.

This lifestyle of constant combat has generated a code of conduct that, on some level, all immortals recognize. It is this sense of honor that allows an immortal to live with the demands of the game, and still walk amongst the mortals, feeling that they are indeed one of them.

It is not unheard of for a seasoned contender, upon losing, nodding in respect to their foe, bearing their neck to their superior, or making some self deprecating comment as the blade strikes true. These beings, despite their humanity, have become something altogether more. They are contenders in a game whose stakes include the very fate of the world... or so the legend goes.

It isn't clear how the Game got started, as far as most immortals are concerned; it has always been with them, since the very beginning.

'Two shall duel and one shall fall, until only a few remain. That is the time of the Gathering, when the last will be drawn to a far away land and fight for The Prize'. That is the Game, in its entirety, a challenge to every immortal that has ever lived. Honor dictates that each immortal has a teacher, one immortal with whom the he may feel safe in the presence of.

Their only refuge from the game is Holy Ground. Where no immortal may do harm, this aspect of an immortal's honor is upheld by the *Doom* a sense of loss on the part of immortals who wish to break the rule.

The Codes

The revelation of the truth of The Game, is hard for someone to fathom and immortals tend to find coping mechanisms. They call them the codes, five

different perspectives on The Game and the Honor of playing it. These 'codes' are simply mindsets and do not represent affiliations or loyalties amongst the various immortals who take up one particular code over another.

Theme and Mood

While each story you and your troupe tell will have its own theme and mood, **Immortal** has an underlining theme and mood built in. While you can play against type or disregard them, they are (like the immortals themselves) always present.

Theme: **Regret**

No matter how exciting or worthwhile the immortal's life may appear to be to those around them, they are still marked by constant loss and regret. An average human being has seventy or so years on this planet, and in that time they rack up their fair share of regrets. Imagine what it must be like for those who survive the centuries? It's made worse whenever someone actually sees them 'die', or when they've grown attached to someone who they have to leave behind because people begin to ask questions.

Mood: **Romance**

The mood of **Immortal** has been mentioned once already as the setting of the book and in a way is completely contradictory to both the overall theme of the World of Darkness and this very game, but it remains true nonetheless: immortals are *romantic*. They are swashbuckling pirates and white knights; they are princesses who save the kingdom, and wise hermits whose sage advice alter the course of history. They lead fantastic lives that could alter the course of the world of darkness forever if they let it, and have done so countless times.

Lexicon

Note: *Italicized* words refer to separate entries.

Amateur: An immortal who takes up the *Code of the Mask*. They are also referred to as masks.

Challenge: A duel between two immortals.

Code: A state of mind that allows a *contender* to cope with the necessity of *The Game*.

Contender: An immortal who has been initiated into *The Game* and received a *Revelation*.

Epiphany: A time of crisis in a *contender's* life, resulting in a loss of a willpower dot and a change of their code.

First Death: The catalyst for a character's immortality.

First Teacher: The *contender* that brings a new immortal into *The Game*.

Foe: An immortal who is going to challenge, or be challenged by, the character.

Gathering, the: The time foretold when only a few immortals remain and the last will fight for the prize. Also an odd occurrence that happens whenever a particularly old or powerful immortal falls to a much weaker opponent.

Game, the: The never ending battle between the immortals; fought one on one down the centuries, until only one remains.

Gauntlet, the: One of the five Codes. The Gauntlet exalts *The Game* and *the Prize* before everything else.

Hunter: An immortal that follows the *Code of the Gauntlet*, they also refer to themselves as Gauntlets.

Knife, the: One of the five Codes. The Knife is a code for those who believe that one's survival is more important than one's honor.

Mask, the: One of the five Codes. Those who uphold the mask believe that The Game is played to live, and do as much living as they can.

Player: An immortal who takes up the *Code of the Sword*. They are often called Swords as well.

Prize, the: The mythical power granted to the last of the immortals, whoever wins the game gains the prize. No one is sure what the prize is or even if it exists, but that doesn't stop them from wanting it.

Quickening, the: The proof of life; a measure of all an immortal knows and experiences in his life time.

Rascal: An immortal who take up the *Code of the Knife*. They are also called Knives.

Release, the: The moment a defeated immortal dies, transferring their *Quickening* to the victor.

Revelation: The realization of an immortal that they may, one day, die at the hands of another immortal, and that they will have to kill; the moment that an immortal becomes a *contender* and joins a *Code*.

Shadow, the: One of the five codes. The Code of the Shadow espouses abstinence from *The Game*.

Solitaires: Immortals who take up the *Code of the Shadow*. They are sometimes called Shadows.

Student: A contender's apprentice. The one *contender* that is exempt from *The Game* in the eyes of that immortal until the time of the gathering.

Sword, the: One of the five Codes. Contenders who take up the Code of the Sword believe that shying away from the game is a dangerous proposition. This *code* tends to host a fair number of extremes when it comes to honor and the game.

Watcher: A mortal who knows the truth about immortals, and chronicles their lives.

CHAPTER ONE : THE GAME

Chapter One

From Foundlings to Fatalities

What are they? Why are they here? These questions haunt immortals that care to think on them for any amount of time. Though they live out mortal lives and love and hate just as the people around them do, immortals are different. Even on the most basic levels immortals are strange creatures.

Born of no mother and sired by no man, immortals are, to a one, foundlings. Though they always appear to look like the communities in which they are found, indeed many grow to look like their adoptive parents, no immortal has ever actually been born to the woman they call mother. It is strange too, that immortals tend to get caught up so easily in those around them, many go so far as to become caricatures of their chosen community, taking to heart every sentiment and ideal that distinguishes their society from those around it.

It is strange that beings that seem destined to last the centuries, growing and evolving like the mortals that they cling to, do not change, at least not at the most basic level. They may become more sophisticated, more refined, but at their core they are still the same men and women who died so many centuries ago.

A Child Found

It's not just that they are foundlings. It's all the more mysterious because of the fact that no one knows how they come into their circumstances. A boy who grows up in an orphanage finds that no one is sure how he got there, there may be a birth certificate but it is strangely vague; the name of his mother listed as 'Jane doe' or just left blank all together. A girl who learns from her mother that she was adopted learns that the adoption was smooth but inexplicable, maybe her mother was in the hospital giving birth to her own stillborn daughter the night that a newborn was 'abandoned' in the hospital's nursery. Others are considered miracles, the aforementioned mother learned that her daughter was pronounced dead a few hours after giving birth, only to find her hail and healthy when she went to go look in on her... except her hair had gone from brown to red.

Of course in centuries past it was even harder to keep track of the odd 'foundling' child. And even today it seems strange that so many orphans were accepted into so many homes, regardless of the adoptive parents' station or means. It's as if something were orchestrating their placement across the world, making sure that this one gets a good home, while that one goes to the orphanage, and this

one over here finds itself replacing a lost child almost seamlessly.

An Eventful Life

Once found, those destined to become immortal live their lives just as everyone else does. They grow up and go to school, get jobs and maybe get married. They may be brilliant mathematicians or cutthroat black marketers, house wives or cloistered monks, just like the rest of us.

The thing that makes them different from the mass of humanity isn't obvious. They don't live the life of an action hero. They don't necessarily become great poets or scientists or rock-stars, some do, just like the rest of us, they get their chances. What sets their lives apart from those around them can, at the time, be assumed to be strange occurrences or odd situations that force them to question themselves and their motives.

A young heiress may find herself being forced to choose between what she wants and what others need, while a poet is caught between his dream and the reality of addiction. This happens to people every day all across the world, but to someone who may one day become immortal, it happens far more often. These 'tests' don't seem to have a right or wrong answer, if the poet hooks himself on Meth, he's just as likely to be killed as he was if he forwent drugs in search of his art. The heiress may find herself holding a sword whether she is greedy or charitable. What matters is those destined to play The Game are, more often than not, possessed of a deep sense of self awareness long before they ever meet their First Teacher.

Hale and Hearty

One thing that does seem to set potential immortal apart from the rest of humanity is their constitutions. While they aren't any more immune to communicable illnesses as their peers, immortals do not and cannot suffer from congenital illness. While a potential immortal could surely contract AIDS or Rabies or even Polio she could not be at risk for breast cancer or heart disease. Though she could still suffer a heart attack because of the way she lived or ate and could possibly develop various cancers because of lifestyle or environment.

Potentials also tend to be relatively scar free, though a serious enough wound will leave (often intimidating) scars most normal nick and scratches fade completely over a surprisingly short period of time. These "lucky" few also never have to deal with situations such as kidney failure due to adolescent growth or their appendix bursting, and rarely do they

lose their tonsils (though it has been known to happen).

Perhaps the strangest facet of their "condition" is that potential immortals have perfect dentition. While this does not mean that they do not have to take care of their teeth, it does mean that they don't have to worry about orthodontics.

A Timely Demise

Things change. As the nascent immortal comes closer to the day that he lets go of his mortal coil things may become a little more interesting. The choices they've made in the past seem to come back to haunt them, reminding them of who they are and what they've become. They're given the chance over and over again to alter the course of fate.

Few ever do.

During this time they find themselves having dreams of their loved ones dying, of growing old and weary, and of betrayal, battle and pain.

In hindsight many even find that they seemed to have been preparing for something, getting their affairs in order.

Their deaths are rarely subtle boring things; sometimes they're even ironic; the poet who beats the addiction is killed by an addict, the heiress who thought only of herself commits suicide in bitter solitude. Some are fitting or bitter ends, leaving an indelible mark on the community, while others happen without anyone being the wiser for it. In any case, once someone destined for immortality dies a violent or swift, unnatural death they revive, mere hours later, Immortal.

That First Death

Strangely, natural deaths are not sufficient to trigger someone's immortality. Maybe those who live 'full' lives aren't meant to be immortal; a natural death usually does denote such things. Nor do poisons or toxins that work slowly to kill the body. Rarely is it these agents that cause the actual death, more often their presence simply leads to some other 'natural' cause.

For someone to revive, they must be killed quickly, often violently. Poisons and toxins that kill instantly do indeed activate an immortal's renewal, as does suicide and death by accident. Only rarely do these deaths happen in a pleasant fashion, and always one's reawakening takes time.

Other immortals who are present at the First Death of a nascent immortal feel him die, and often no longer feel him at all until he 'returns' some time (anywhere between a couple of hours to a day) later, when that happens the other will feel a great rushing

sensation as the immortal revives, not unlike the sense that normally accompanies the presence of another of their kind, often this sensation is lost on the new immortal who is too busy reeling from coming back from the dead completely healed and rested.

Reincarnation?

Some immortals claim that, upon their first death, they have strange dreams of lives and experiences long past that they could not have been a part of. This has led some immortal scholars to muse that perhaps those potential immortals that die a natural death or those immortals that lose their head without releasing their quickening may in fact be reborn. It's impossible to research but it's an interesting theory none the less.

While most claim that the theory is improvable it does go a long way to explaining how new immortals appear every year, when there is supposed to be a finite number.

Beyond Death, a Life Undying

It's an odd thing, to know one instant that you are dead, or dying; to feel reality slipping away from you, to feel the warmth bleed out through the wound in your chest as you slip away only to awaken hours or even days later, fully healed, feeling better than you ever had before.

Hale and Hearty Redux

Once a fresh immortal revives for the first time it quickly becomes apparent to her that something is different, even if she is still in the dark about the fact that she cannot die. The first thing many immortals notice is the lack of congestion or fever if they had been sick prior to their First Death, they tend to notice too, that many of the aches and pains attributed to exhaustion fade too quickly, that they do not run out of breath as easily and recover with amazing speed. If the immortal worked hard in life and had calloused hands he finds them smoothing out and becoming supple, if no less durable, after only a few days off. With minimal care an immortal whose teeth were rotted and pitted in life finds that they seem to repair themselves, though any missing teeth are indeed lost forever.

Immortals that died their first death late in life find that their senility and arthritis both fade quickly, leaving them clear headed and relatively spry, relatively.

The most astounding changes occur in those immortals who had previously suffered from fatal illnesses or were trapped by addiction as they revive

cleansed of the diseases and physical dependences, though any mental addiction still lingers.

This effect recurs each and every time an immortal dies, resetting their bodies to as near 'perfection' as possible.

Further, an immortal finds that it becomes harder for them to alter their appearance in meaningful ways as gaining and losing weight become harder. An obese man who, upon triggering his immortality, attempts to get into shape finds that he can lose only about fifty pounds, while a mousey woman who hits the gym to gain muscle finds herself incapable of gaining the necessary weight. That being said, the man may find himself growing faster and immeasurably more graceful despite his girth, while the still small woman will find herself far stronger than she appears, and while tattoos and piercings are possible, requiring no special treatment or care, they can be removed with surprising ease.

The Revelry

A new immortal can go years, even decades, without ever knowing the truth of what she is. In centuries past it wasn't unheard of for an immortal to wander for as many as fifty years before running across one of their own for their first time, while others meet their first teacher before they ever experience their first death.

Some immortals, upon awakening to their undying nature, go about their lives unaware that they ever died in the first place; others awaken inside their coffins or family crypts, or even in the morgue, unable to hide from the fact that they were dead. Whatever the case, an immortal knows something's different, though they rarely make the leap from "what the hell" to "I must be Immortal!" without help from another of their kind.

When one realizes that they cannot die there is one reaction that is almost universal though, and it's called the Revelry. Imagine what it must be like to learn that you cannot die, or even be hurt for long, that you never need feel fear again, that you will live to see all your enemies die of old age, and have all the time in the world to go to school or make money or whatever you want. Never again do you have to be part of the rat race never do you have to worry about your cholesterol or your heart, or even gaining too much weight.

Of course, it really only takes a few broken bones, a death defying hangover or two, or maybe dying horribly a second time, for the immortal's attitude to change. As the immortal learns that, after that first death, one does not Revive fully healed and unharmed.

First Contact

However long it takes, an immortal will eventually encounter another of their kind. If they are lucky that immortal will either become their First Teacher, or guide them to someone who will; if they are unlucky then their immortality will have been short lived indeed.

The first time an immortal senses the presence of another of her kind is a terrifying experience. They feel something inside and around them all at once, creeping across their skin and through their mind. It is pain, it is pleasure. Many feel the wounds that caused their First Death as if they were happening for the first time.

The sense is accompanied by adrenaline as their body's natural defenses go into overdrive, enhancing the immortal's metabolism and constitution. Their vision blurs and their ears are filled with a high pitched ringing. Soon all the immortal can do is look around for the source of this sensation. When they see the other for the first time all is chaos, except the Immortal standing before them, who stands out in stark relief, appearing to almost glow. Once they set eyes on the other the sensory overload fades, leaving behind only an echo.

Once the uninitiated immortal calms down, it is up to the other to usher them into the game.

The First Teacher

An immortal who finds himself with a student has a great deal of information to impart on her with very little time to do it.

The first thing they usually explain to their charge is The Game, though rarely does the concept sink in right away. More often it is laughed off, after all, what can kill an immortal? In spite of that, the Teacher will impart upon their student a great deal of knowledge, including the ability to use a sword. In fact, it is usually during this training that the immortal begins to understand the stakes of The Game.

Each Teacher is different. Some only teach the basics over the course of a couple of weeks before riding off into the sunset, never to be seen again. Others keep their student close for months, years or even decades, teaching them intricacies of The Game as well as other, more esoteric, things. The best Teachers impart a modicum of wisdom upon their pupil, training them in ways long since passed, as well as giving them a proper education in art, history, etiquette, as well as survival skills that will get the immortal through the ages and proper swordsmanship.

The bond between Teacher and Student is a strange thing, as though the student begins as a child in the eyes of their Teacher they often grow to be the closest of friends, and even into lovers. This bond is sacred to many immortals and it is often said that the only place an immortal is truly safe is in the company of their Teacher. Those that break that bond and kill their Student (or Teacher) are seen as monsters with no Honor in the eyes of their fellows and if incapable of protecting their lives, often find themselves targets as well.

Revelation

At some point, usually early in their training, the realities and consequences of The Game become apparent to an immortal. While this may seem odd to a mortal, the idea of being granted immortality only to have it be taken away bears heavily on the minds of those aren't supposed to die.

This traumatic realization may take moments or it may cripple the immortal for days, but when they come through it they are changed. What do they decide? Do they stand and fight against those who would dare take their lives from them or do they decide to take the lives of others and maybe with it, one day, the Prize? Do they protect the life they've made for themselves or do they simply prepare for the day that they have to leave it behind because someone comes for them? Or do they simply run and hide, finding the closest Sanctuary they can and settling in for the long haul? Whatever their decision they take to their training more willfully, learning all they can from their teacher. Whether they are grimly resolute or incessantly pester them with questions, the Revelation of what they are changes the immortals view of themselves and the world, setting them down the road of Honor and making them take up a Code of conduct that will allow them to cope (or thrive) with The Game.

In All Things, Honor

The code of Honor that immortals uphold is unlike one that we would recognize as moral. It allows the immortal to accept murder, but only that of those that cannot die, and sets ground rules for a 'game' in which the participants actively try to kill one another.

Strangely, while the basic tenants are taught to a young immortal such as the prohibition of fighting on holy ground, that challenges are to be duels between two immortals only and never, ever bring a gun to a sword fight, most dishonorable acts are more intuitive as an immortal's own morality often informs them of the relative honor of a given action. Of

course the rules are also based on how one looks at them, and though the idea of cheating at The Game is morally reprehensible to most immortals, some learn to stomach it in the face of their own death.

Even the most honorable and gentle amongst them can hear of one immortal killing another in some underhanded fashion and simply nod, saying simply that the victor was simply playing The Game, doing what they all do to survive, mortals who hear the same facts and see the same thing are aghast by the reactions of those that play The Game and yet those same immortals become horrified by the death of a single mortal. It is a strange dichotomy that these two states of mind could be held by a single immortal but by grace of whatever god or gods made them, the immortals seem capable.

Weapon of Choice

Most of the time, an immortal will train from the very beginning with the sword he will make his way into the world with. Often the blade will hold great meaning to the Teacher, perhaps it is the first blade they wielded, given to them by their master, or perhaps it belonged to the first Foe they vanquished. Sometimes it is the blade of a master long gone. Whatever the case, an immortal's first sword often has a great deal more history than the immortal wielding it, and though it is to be cherished by their teacher and often represents their hopes for their student, the first blade wielded by an immortal rarely says anything about the Contender herself.

It is only later, after she has staked a claim of her own in the world, and maybe taken a head or two that they find a sword they feel best suits them, this *sword of choice* and how it is used often speaks volumes of the immortal wielding it.

Releasing the Bonds of Tutelage

Only two people can decide to end an immortal's education: the Teacher or the Student. The parameters are not set in stone. For some the day comes when the Student can best the Teacher; for others it is when the Pupil decides, for good or ill; for many it is when the student first challenges another. On occasion an immortal's tutelage ends with the Death of either the Master or the Pupil, and on the worst of those occasions it is when the one takes the other's head.

As the immortal, now a fresh Contender for the Prize, walks away from her Teacher, perhaps for the last time, out into the world they are often more afraid than they ever had been. They are no longer ignorant of the truth of their world, and no longer protected by one of greater skill. They are, for the

first time, alone in the world with only their future to keep them company.

That First Hurdle

No matter how much time passes, the first time they encounter another immortal is always too soon. Their training tells them that the other is their foe, but their natural, human reaction is to treat them as a friend. If they're supremely lucky, they're right.

Sadly, that is not usually the case.

The first challenge, whether issued by or to the young immortal, is inevitable as it is terrifying. What if they didn't train enough, what if they forget some vital maneuver, what if the other guy doesn't give them a chance? These, and many others, are questions that speed through the novice's head as she raises her sword that first time.

Unfortunately, for many immortals, it is also the last time. Most immortals do not survive their first bout against another immortal and it is either luck or cunning that gets them through it when they do.

Even the most timid of fighters is bound to pick up on a thing or two over the course of centuries, and the most lax of immortals would annihilate any mortal 'master' swordsmen after only a century or two.

But if experience were the whole of the variables in the equation of any fight, then the eldest would always triumph, and the young would never have the chance. Luckily for the young, there are other factors, and there is many unexpected moves to be played in The Game.

The Day to Day and Life Eternal

After that first quickening, should an immortal receive it, she quickly finds herself becoming aware of just how weird the world truly is.

She begins to look at everything with new eyes. The shadows seem longer and the nights are darker. The odd sounds that we've all grown accustomed to seem to have a greater significance than before. Driving across the city becomes nerve racking as they feel immortals as they pass them in the street, too fast to catch sight of.

She begins to see that immortals are everywhere, in the background, working with or dominating humanity as they see fit, molding the people around them to fit their view of how things should be. And then there are the other things. Scariest things you only hear about in monster movies and fairy tales.

Even as she attempts to get back into her life, or craft a new one, she finds that she must always be mindful of The Game. She devises clever ways of never being too far from her sword, quickly learning

all the secret places within her town where she can go when challenged, to fight in privacy.

She may also seek out new Teachers, wanting to learn all there is to know about The Game, and if she's wise, life as well.

Immortals, especially young immortals without centuries to build their net worth, have to live life the same way as the rest of us. They get hungry, they get tired, and they have to pay for just about everything. They need jobs and social contact. They need friends. All these things are easily possible; it's just trying to explain away some strange habits, like having a sword in relative plain view within his home, his reticence of talking about the past, his seemingly firsthand account of various historical events. All these things are pretty easy to get around. It's everything else that makes life hard.

Constant Vigilance

The hard part is everything else. Coping with the death of friends and family over and over again, having to leave behind lives that they've worked so hard to build. And then there's the Game, trying to deal with other immortals showing up and making hell for him as he goes about his business. Even if it is only for a few moments, an immortal can never allow himself to become rusty when it comes to the game.

The immortal's First Teacher is rarely his only source of education. Many immortals quickly search out other sources of knowledge, from universities to churches to dojos and the streets, they often look for the best mortal authority on a given subject, even if it means going across the world to learn from them.

When it comes to The Game though immortals must be doubly attentive, they seek out and learn from many masters and teachers, attempting to hone their skill. They know that just because you've succeeded once doesn't mean that you will always do so, one can never become too good with their sword work. Though most immortals don't spend even a majority of their time bettering their sword work the most lax immortal tends to be among the best duelists in the world. Of course they must constantly keep their true capabilities a secret; they must stay ever vigilant to go unnoticed, for fear of drawing down more and more challengers who wish to best 'the best', mortal and immortal alike.

All this being said it's not easy tracking down a suitable teacher and harder still to get them to take on another student. If an immortal is lucky, the new teacher will simply want money to give up their knowledge, or maybe some small service. If the prospective student is unlucky, the master will expect him to prove himself in some fashion.

Once an immortal has procured a teacher he may spend weeks, months or even years with her. The relationship with a second or third teacher is often far longer and more intimate than it is with that First Teacher, as they come together as Student and Teacher but on their own terms.

If the Teacher is immortal then the student may even be considered an equal on some level, as the two learn from one another's experiences and skills.

If the Teacher is mortal then the relationship can become a strange mix of respect as the student may in fact be a great deal older than the teacher, taking her under his wing in other matters.

Once the student has learned all there is to learn from his teacher they may be friends for the rest of the teacher's life time, or they may never see each other again, some debt now paid. Whatever the case the immortal is forever different. Walking away with far more than just the lessons the teacher thought he should learn. In the centuries to come he may even be able to impart those same lessons on students of his own, taking those techniques learned from his myriad teachers and making them something new, something powerful.

Long after an immortal outgrows his teachers he never stops learning, even if the lessons are taught by fate or circumstance, even the most ignorant immortals take care to learn their lessons carefully if they can, because one day it they will save his life. One day they may be all the proof that he lived at all.

An Immortal's Weapon of Choice

People have a way of making things that they love seem more important. They humanize them, call them 'she' and 'her' or even give them names. They talk to them, comfort them, hold them close when they are upset. Though it is more common in the very young we see it every day on the street, at work and even at home. Immortals are no different; they have the same foibles and quirks as the rest of us. It would seem natural that an immortal would do the same thing with their sword. As it is far more important to them than a car or gun or boat, but they don't.

For an immortal to name or humanize their weapon would require them to admit that it was a separate entity. It would be like naming an arm, an eye or their heart. To the immortals a weapon is as much a part of them as their skin or their name; in fact it may be even more important.

One of the first things they learn is how to maintain and clean their blade, a process that becomes extremely ritualized amongst most

contenders. For many young immortals the first weapon they wield is a gift from their mentor, it carries with it little emotional weight for them even though it may mean the world to their teacher. They may respect the power and history of the weapon but it does not usually resonate with their own soul.

For some this changes when they first use it to defeat a foe, as that victory seals their connection to the blade. Their training and the blade's own power combine seamlessly to defeat a great foe. Others find that a blade taken means more than one that is given, as the weapon of a great foe means far more than one their teacher had granted them. For some it is an aesthetic choice, as they simply swap one weapon for another because of the way it looks or feels.

Whatever draws an immortal to the weapon that *she* chooses; there is a strange harmony between the blade and its bearer. The weapon becomes a part of her.

What this means differs from immortal to immortal. For some it means that the blade never leaves their side. Others honor the weapon, displaying it in their homes when it is not being used. For others it becomes so much a part of them that they do not acknowledge it, as it is simply another limb.

Whatever the case, the immortal puts their faith and will into their weapon. It is as much a vessel for their soul as their body, and any immortal who knows another's preferred tool know what it means when they find it in another's possession.

The weapon one carries says a lot to one's foe. One can see the uncertainty in an enemies form if the blade is ill suited to the immortal carrying it. When an immortal does find their weapon of choice it shows in the way they fight. The brutish sailor who wields a gilded rapier with a dancers grace may be more than he appears. An immortal's great sword and the aggressive ease with which he brandishes it say far more about him than the overly expensive tailored clothes he wears or the company he keeps.

If a blade were to ever break, many immortals feel as if they've been dealt a horrible blow. If they know how to repair the damage they do so somberly, as if they were nursing an old friend back to life. If they must take it elsewhere to be repaired they worry and are restless until it is put right again. If they cannot undo the damage and must take up a new sword they may actually weep as if they had lost a beloved friend. When a weapon of choice is replaced it is with a great deal of care and forethought, with the immortal possibly crossing the globe to find a replacement suitable for their needs.

The Ubiquitous Trench Coat

One of the first things a young contender is taught by his teacher it's that he must never leave his sword behind, to keep it with him at all times. As little as one hundred years ago it wouldn't have strained credulity for someone to be seen with a sword at their hip. Unfortunately since then it has become increasingly difficult for an immortal to carry their blade on their person.

While some immortals know a trick that allows them to hide their weapon in plain view, most must find other, less fantastic means of getting by without showing off their blade.

Some immortals, expecting their foe to allow them to retrieve their blade, simply leave their weapon in the car when they are out and about. Often having hidden compartments in their trunk or cab in which they hide their weapon.

Others simply don't carry a weapon in their day to day at all, only 'sporting' their sword when they feel that their life is in danger or when they're on the hunt. These immortals tend to be more naïve than their contemporaries but rarely end up worse for wear because of it.

Most immortals though rely on long over coats to hide their blade, often going so far as to have one specially tailored to fit a blade or its scabbard comfortably into the lining, allowing it to go relatively unnoticed.

While even this final track has its downsides, as going to the airport or a government building becomes particularly difficult. They must also learn to move and handle their coat in ways that do not reveal their hidden accessory, though many immortals quickly learn how to do just that, allowing them to go through their life assured that they are never too far from their only means of protection.

On Names

Names are very important to those who play The Game; without them they can be forgotten, but they can also become chains around one's neck. If your name becomes too well known then you'll become a target for sure.

When two immortals meet for the first time, the first thing they do is introduce themselves, whether or not they're looking for a fight they start with their name, whether real, current or simply the most well known does not matter.

This may be followed by a title or statement of entitlement, either marking where they come from or who they see themselves as usually prefixed by the words '...of the...' for example a particularly young

immortal who grew up in New York City may introduce themselves as "Lori Baker", or as "Lori Baker of New York" or "Lori the New Yorker". As an immortal's reputation grows they tend to take on titles that are relatively identifiable. If Lori survives long enough she may drop her last name entirely, if she connects herself to a specific neighborhood she may become "Lori of the Bronx" or if she goes the other way and becomes a sort of family legend she may become "Lori of the Knox Street Bakers", though this may seem odd or even silly it means something to immortals that others know who they are dealing with. If the immortal lives out the centuries and spends a great deal of time protecting their identity, they may find their occluded past playing in with their reputation. As people become less sure of her true name, she may simply become "the New Yorker", a title that she adds to whatever she goes by at a given time.

Knowing Your Own

The first time an immortal feels the presence of another of her kind she's inundated with sensory input. All of her senses go into overdrive trying to locate the source of this new stimulus. Many describe it as a sense of pressure in and around them, crushing them painfully while, at the same time, making her feel as if she were more alive than ever before.

Luckily this only happens once. Once the source of the sensation becomes apparent an immortal's body adjusts. The sensation caused by the presence of another immortal becomes less gut wrenching and more intuitive.

Many describe it as a buzzing sound or a tingling in their bones, maybe as a fluctuation in the light or a strange smell or taste that only fades when she's acknowledged the presence of the other.

It is important to understand that this sensation is neither naturally foreboding nor particularly calming. More, it's as if whatever it is that made immortals what they are wanted to make sure that they could find one another. It takes a great deal of training and experience for an immortal to make up his mind as to the nature of this sense.

When an immortal comes too close to the hallowed ground of sanctuary they feel something akin to the sense, though it tends to be more a shadow of that of the presence of another immortal this sensation is tinged with a sense of what some immortal refer to as 'the doom'.

Where this term came from is unclear, but it is fitting, as many feel as if their very soul is suspended

over a great void whenever they step foot on sanctified soil.

When one immortal feels another they often find themselves searching for them, though the sense that tells of their presence also hints at their location. An immortal will often drop what she is doing to locate the other, and upon finding him will recognize his presence even if otherwise engaged in conversation, acknowledging them as an equal and as possible friend or foe.

Not doing so is considered a grave error in etiquette, and has led to more than one otherwise avoidable challenge between two overly proud opponents.

When the two immortals are in a suitably private location where they feel comfortable enough to speak plainly the most common greeting between two immortals is one or the other introducing herself and asking a variation of "are you here for me?" or "are we going to have a problem?", often with both immortals already reaching for their weapons if they haven't already been unsheathed.

More often than not the other replies in the negative, as such a question almost always expresses that the asking immortal doesn't want a fight. If on the other hand the immortal introduces himself with just his name and nothing more while pointing his blade at his opponent, the immortal is probably looking for a fight. Proper etiquette says that the other immortal either accept the challenge with his own name and a touch of his sword or suffix the introduction with something along the lines of "I'm not here for you."

This is referred to as an "Informal Challenge" and occurs between two immortals that have come together without apparent foreknowledge, while informal challenges are, ideally, refused many immortals have died because of them. It should be noted that such challenges are not considered dishonorable, in fact many immortals, most notably players and hunters, consider it the purest expression of The Game.

A Formal Challenge

While a shockingly large number of immortal challenges occur between two immortals who have never met, most challenges are between two immortals that have a beef with one another. All that is required for a challenge to take place is for one immortal to raise her blade to another who has acknowledged his presence. For it to be accepted, all that need be done is for the other to raise his in turn.

Once a challenge is accepted an immortal's opponent is referred to as her "Foe". While

challenging another immortal is considered by many honor bound immortals to be crass, so too is refusing one that is made formally.

The most formal of challenges are made in the company of others, often discretely if mortals are present, while the sun is high in the air. While the challenged is allowed to name the place and time it is customary for combat to take place an hour past night someplace outside and away from others, though anytime would do.

On the Field of Honor

The 'Field of Honor' is whatever place that two immortals can fulfill a challenge. Once these places could be found anywhere, as the world has become progressively smaller in the last few centuries many immortals spend a great deal of time staking out relatively open locations to deem whether or not they're acceptable locations for a challenge to be satisfied.

Empty rooftops, parks, alleyways, stadiums and parking lots all make good proving grounds for immortals who don't want to be seen. When a challenge is unexpected or cannot wait it often takes very only a few minutes to find a place remote enough for the two to go after one another.

More and more often immortals are challenging one another indoors, showing a blatant disregard for the structure in which they fight, as a particularly powerful quickening can weaken or even destroy the sturdiest of structures.

The Game, Itself

As the two immortals circle one another, sizing up their foe, they are risking centuries for the chance to become stronger. This strange Game that they play requires confidence and cunning as well as grace and skill. Even the most blatantly one sided battle can turn in an instant, and a thousand years of knowledge and experience are gone just like that in a blinding flash.

Immortal challenges do not occur with two immortals attacking and repelling one another statically. When in the presence of one another their supernatural recuperative power becomes truly astounding, allowing them to fight for hours without growing tired. Their legs can carry them for miles in that time as they fight for their immortality. Each immortal uses every edge that they have to its full advantage, pulling every trick from their bag to survive.

Though the battle is rarely heroic it is often grand as two swords clang endlessly like hell's bells across the rooftops and down corridors. Even wounds that

would put a mortal man to his knees can be ignored by the two warriors, healing even as they retreat to higher ground. Even the most honorable of contenders must admit that it is exhilarating in the moment, to feel the full effect of one's immortality.

Though it is surely possible for fighters as skilled as most seasoned immortals to simply lop off the head of their opponent as they raise their sword it is considered poor form and to do so is considered a sign of great disrespect. No, it's only after one or the other immortal has lost his edge and played every card does the duel come to an end, both immortals tired and beaten and bloody. It is then, when the fallen foe has been made helpless by the victor that the challenge is satisfied.

The Coup de Grace

It is strange that, as the fallen immortal stands (or kneels) defeated and alive despite the wounds he has received, that more often than not, it is not anger or rage or fear that should be expressed. Oh sure, they feel it and some do weep, but more often than not what is expressed, especially amongst those that actively play the game, is admiration at a Game well played. More than one ancient player has saluted their vanquisher or given a roguish grin and quipped even as the blade comes down on their neck.

How one can be so flippant in the face of one's own demise is beyond many mortals, and even many less active immortals. It is as if he accepted, in an instant, that The Prize is not his to win or that his time is done. Some even wonder if the immortal actually wanted to lose, to end his eternal existence once and for all.

Of course the victor may decide not to end The Game, choosing to spare their foe's Quickening a few more days. If the immortal does indeed allow her overcome enemy to live it is considered extremely dishonorable for the other to challenge or attack her again until they meet again.

The Release

As her foe's head comes away from his neck an immortal feels her heart skip a beat as a wave of relief and dread pass through her. Indeed many claim to hear a clap of thunder or some other ominous portent as their foe falls as well.

Within a few moments of his demise the other's corpse begins to emit a strange whitish haze. This cloud of light billows and grows, some even claim to see faces within it as it forms. Whatever the case the energy seems to move towards the victor as it expands until finally it reaches its full volume; when it does so it thrusts towards the victor, enveloping

her and penetrating her skin, sinking into her heart in a matter of moments. Many describe it as being hit by a title wave or a gust of hurricane force wind, whether that is true or not, rarely does the immortal actually get pushed back by it. In fact many find themselves rooted to the ground on which they stand.

What happens next is extraordinary and impossible to explain in terms that do it justice.

As the whitish light fades the immortal's ears pop, as if the air pressure in the area had simply rushed out. She feels the wind pick up even as her eyes are forced shut by the growing pressure in her head. With the pressure comes ideas and thoughts that are not her own. Memories flood her mind's eye too quickly for her to make any sense of them. She's only dimly aware of the chaos going on around her as her body and mind are rejuvenated by her own foe's Quickening.

The Corona

While the immortal is inundated with the power, knowledge and experience of her enemy, the world around her is being torn apart by the Quickening's Corona. Sometimes called the thrust because of the way it feels, the Corona is a localized lightning storm of extreme power. Capable of destroying less durable parts of the immortal's environment; as lightning strikes and wind whips object and people, ozone fills the air. Flammable objects ignite and water freezes, the very laws that govern reality are turned upside down, as objects seem to lift off the ground of their own accord.

The immortal herself is often struck by lightning multiple times, and whipped and lashed repeatedly but her momentarily heightened power heals the wound instantly. Despite their momentary invulnerability immortals caught up in a quickening feel as if she is being rent asunder as pressure continues to build within her body as she is transformed through the release into something else.

Proof of Life

The definition of the word quickening can be summed up as a 'proof of life', a sign that an unborn child is indeed alive and (hopefully) well. For immortals the Quickening is a supernatural measure of all that they have seen and done. When they are alive it envelopes them in an invisible aura of power, only becoming apparent through certain tricks of their Kenning and when they call on it to heal their wounds, when they die the last time it is all that there is that proves that they were here. A released Quickening bonds with another immortal as quickly

as it can; trying to make sure that there is something to save of itself before burning out. The storm generated is caused by the Quickening of the victor and the defeated coming together to better the immortal. While most immortals walk away from an average quickening with a sense of déjà vu and weird half memories, others find themselves actually changed by the process, capable of utilizing skills and talents that they had never possessed previously, or picking up habits that their foe demonstrated before.

Afterwards

What happens after the corona ends is up to the survivor. Does she try to hide the body? Does she just walk away? While there's a good chance that the corpse of their fallen foe was severely damaged by the Quickening's thrust, it's unlikely that it was actually destroyed.

What amazes many contenders is the lack of scrutiny given to the discovery of a headless body that has obviously been put through a great ordeal. Rarely does the game even obliquely make headlines and few immortals ever have to deal with the authorities after the fact. To many, this is just another of the mysteries that surround immortality and The Game, but other, more pragmatic contenders wonder if maybe there is something else at work, cleaning up after them and making sure that they remain hidden from view. They begin to wonder if maybe, they are not alone in their eternity, if perhaps they are being watched.

Technically Dead

Even if an immortal is lucky enough to have gone through her first death without anyone becoming the wiser for it, she must eventually face the idea that she's going to have to move on.

Most immortals though, don't get the choice of sticking around for another one, two or ten years. They die publicly, or are found dead by loved ones (or strangers) before they can revive that first time. Others still meet a spectacular 'end' later in their careers and have to make a hasty escape. To many contenders, legally dying is a rite of passage, to others it is a painful but necessary custom that must be acknowledged if they are ever to live any life at all.

Setting the scene

This step is necessary, and on some level almost fun, though on occasion it comes without consent or forewarning. To die both legally and in a quick fashion, the immortal must do so in front of witnesses.

For some this part is almost enjoyable as they make a game of it, trying to outdo one another (or themselves) while going out with a bang. For others it simply requires a bit of poison or a trusted friend to end their 'life'.

Getting Out of Dodge

Once the deed is done, an immortal must be willing and able to uproot herself completely from the city, state, country or continent if necessary. If their death is too public then they'll be recognizable for years over vast distances. Once one revives she'd better have packed well in advance and be gone before anyone realizes that her body is gone.

Finding a New Name

Many immortals actually do this bit of homework before they take the leap (pill, bullet or knife in the back, whatever). It helps to have all the relevant papers in order well in advance. Some though are unable to plan ahead, and so they have to set up shop with a rush job.

The best place to do this is, sadly, the cemetery. Finding someone around the right number of years ago, who also died long enough ago for the name to go (mostly) unforgotten allows the immortal to have a quick frame of reference. From there it's "just" a matter of finding the birth records and social security number of their new identity. Obviously a *lot* of money goes a long way in this stage of planning.

Crafting a New Identity

Once you have a name and basic (read childhood) history, it's time for the immortal to come up with everything else. It's harder than it sounds. Where did you go to school? Do you have a college degree, and in what? Who was your first love? Have you ever been married? Why not? Where's your family? Of course you're rarely going to be asked all these questions at once (though if you're on a particularly bad date...) but they will need to be answered eventually. This is a step in the process of creating an identity that is actually relatively easy, as she can take her time with it.

Covering Your Tracks

Just because you've gone through all the trouble of moving and stealing a name for yourself doesn't mean that you're out of the woods yet. Identity theft is a growth industry and because of that, the same old tricks that have worked since the days of FDR don't work as well any more, much the same way that immortals were ill prepared for the social security system that he put in place.

Getting Settled

By far the easiest step in the creation of a new you, settling down and taking roots is also the most enjoyable. Like an actor really getting their part, immortals tend to blend in with their new lives, sometimes changing old habits or outlooks in the process of becoming someone new. An immortal can almost forget about The Game for a time.

The down side to this is, of course, that it'll end eventually. Even if the game never once intrudes upon this new life an immortal has, at most, 20 years in any given place and that's only if they can pass themselves off as physically younger or older.

Mortal Wounds

For most immortals a so called "fatal" blow is little more than a nuisance. Beyond the frightful but momentary pain and a few minutes (hours tops) of unconsciousness there is little for her to be afraid of. In fact, many immortals use mortal death as a means of cleaning the slate and starting fresh, thinking about as much of it as mortals think of breaking a toe or getting a black eye.

There are exceptions though. These deaths make even the most hardened immortal tremble.

Drowning: If an immortal drowns and lacks the means of reviving himself, there is a good chance that he will spend quite some time 'in the drink' floating as driftwood or worse, sinking to the depths never to be seen again.

Those immortals that do come back from this death must succeed in a Resolve + Composure (without penalty) or gain an appropriate mild derangement (aquaphobia or something similar).

Entombment: Sometimes when an immortal fakes his own death he does too good a job, ending his life and accidentally halting his ability to revive in some manner. The end result is the immortal being buried alive or locked in a stone vault. Other immortals simply fall prey to rock slides or a particularly twisted sadist and suffocate or are crushed to death. This form of death is particularly bad, as the immortal may revive only to run out of air and die again multiple times, even reviving into a suffocating state in an endless cycle of horror.

An immortal that is entombed and then revived must make a Resolve + Composure roll with a negative modifier of 1 for each subsequent resurrection (maximum 5) before being released, failure results in a mild derangement that is appropriate to his situation.

Exposure: Immortals who find themselves at nature's mercy often are in for a slow, agonizing

demise as their body attempts futilely to heal wounds that are only symptoms of greater issues.

Whether blasted by the heat of the desert or frozen in a blizzard this sort of death is relatively swift but tends to end an immortal's life for long periods of time, until the weather changes enough for the immortal's cooked or frozen body to heal.

Those caught up in such situations roll their Resolve + Composure without penalty upon reviving. Failure grants them an appropriate severe derangement.

Hunger and Thirst: If an immortal finds himself somehow trapped with air to breathe but no food to eat find themselves in an even worse situation than one who suffocated to death, as when he revives he will have *days* in which to contemplate his demise over and over again, living in perpetual hunger and thirst until he is finally rescued.

An immortal who survives such a situation must roll his Resolve + Composure with the same modifiers as one who had died from suffocation. If he fails however, he receives a severe derangement that is appropriate to the situation (Obsessive Compulsive would be a good example).

Burning: If there is one thing that immortals fear as much as losing their head, it's death by fire. Smoke inhalation isn't such an issue, you suffocate, your body burns, the fire goes out and you get better. You're in extreme pain for a few hours as your body heals the most extreme of the burns, but an immortal can deal. But death by burning, when you're being cooked alive and aren't able to dull the pain with unconsciousness? There's nothing worse. With an immortal's constitution they can burn for up to an hour, screaming the whole time as their flesh burns sloughs off and burns again. When it finally ends they may, in fact, still be alive, healing slowly, their edge gone. Many an immortal wishes for one of his kind to come by and release him from the pain, but all too often that release never comes.

Ever.

An immortal that is burned alive must make a resolve + composure roll, the roll is penalized one die for each minute that the immortal survives before expiring (maximum -5). If he fails the roll he receives an extreme derangement or multiple severe derangements contingent on the experiences that lead up to the burning as well as the burning itself.

A World of Eternal Darkness

Once an immortal steps into the World of Darkness with his eyes fully open to the possibilities that it may hold. He is still, more often than not,

completely oblivious to what creeps within the darkest shadows.

Despite their nature, immortals often shrug off the idea of things that go bump in the night as either silly superstition or as misunderstandings caused by mortals witnessing immortals and the Game.

Tales of vampires and other undead monstrosities are just folktales that spring up when an immortal is forced to dig himself out of his own grave.

Sorcerers? Some immortals are indeed capable of magic, but more likely than not it's someone witnessing the release of a quickening or an immortal doing something far beyond the capabilities of a mortal man. Werewolves? Haven't you ever heard of LSD? Fairies and monsters are odd tales to be sure but not outside the scope of simple mythology. But of course, this is the World of Darkness and those things do exist, and so it's perfectly logical that immortals would eventually become aware of the fact.

The Truth Will Drive You Mad

Immortals don't just wake up and realize that monsters and stranger things exist. For many it is a single moment of clarity as a vampire slips from the shadows, hissing with its fangs jutting nakedly from its lips, or as a warlock twists reality and sets a demon onto him or a wolf chases him through the forest only to become a man when it draws near.

For most though, the realization comes more slowly, as the immortal becomes entrenched in the day to day and begins to hear... things.

If an immortal achieves four dots in Streetwise he begins to hear stories. Urban legends and ghost stories and fairy tales that are told from a first person perspective, accounts that seem too real to just be made up.

If the Immortal also possesses three dots in Survival he may have heard tell, or seen firsthand evidence of, werewolves and other feral things; nothing concrete per se, but enough so that he may choose to investigate further.

If an immortal possess three or more dots of Politics and four dots of Streetwise then he begins to hear murmurs of unholy unions with undead things, of creatures that have had the ear of every mayor in a city for the last 100 years and of blood drinking beasts that control vast resources. These tales are not proof in and of itself, and even when presented with proof such as a CEO looking overly tired or seeming to stay young despite his apparent mortality doesn't immediately give away his connection to the Kindred.

If the Immortal possesses three or more dots of Occult and four dots of Streetwise than he begins to find evidence of true magic, not just parlor tricks or sorcerers and alchemists who spend years in dark rooms perfecting their art, but of real sorcerers, conjurers and witches. If they've actually seen magic they may not completely buy it at first, but it's only a matter of time before they uncover the truth.

If the Immortal possess three or more dots in both Occult and Survival along with four dots of Streetwise he may have heard stories about things that look human but are actually walking animated cadavers, brought back from the dead by some bizarre alchemy.

If the Immortal possesses three or more dots of Politics and Occult as well as four dots of Streetwise than he's also heard tales of fairytale creatures and other stranger things that may in fact be true, but without further research he is unlikely to uncover any sort of proof.

On the other hand the other denizens of the world of darkness, especially mortals, can stumble across the truth about immortality through rigorous study, any mortal who possesses four dots of Academics and three dots of Occult may catch onto certain names and situations popping up again and again throughout history – accidentally discovering the truth about immortals in the process.

Abominations

Sadly, immortals are affected by a Promethean's disquiet just as if they were normal mortals, though many seem to have the wherewithal to temper the effects successfully. Though immortals do tend to fight off the Disquieting aura that surrounds the Created they often find that they have little in common with the wretched creatures once they have. On the rare occasion that an immortal makes a Promethean friend they often find common ground in their mutual disassociation with the world at large, though in the immortal's case it is more often than not self imposed.

When a Promethean learns of the existence of immortals they often scoff apathetically unless they also learn of the Release. To them the Corona of a Quickening is too similar to pure Azoth to be a coincidence and often try to track down and study the immortal, perhaps even deciding to try and take a quickening himself. Not only do all such attempts prove fatal to the immortal (obviously), but they also do not fuel a Promethean's Pyros, even on the off chance that a Corona forms at all.

The Good Folk

Immortals rarely, if ever, knowingly interact with the Lost. Many immortals tend to take their own stories to heart when they hear tales of children swapped out from birth. When an immortal does run into one and is granted the power to see through their illusion he is amazed that he had missed so much. Though this sense of wonder is often short lived as he realizes that there is no way to stop the dream and it soon becomes a living nightmare.

The Lost on the other hand are fascinated by the presence of immortals, as they seem both touched by, and immune to, the effects of arcadia. They live fantastic lives that do not end but seem almost invisible to the gentry, who will often fail to acknowledge the immortal at all. Many a changeling has gone to an immortal for help when his keeper comes for her, hoping to find safety in his presence.

The Undead

One would expect immortals and vampires to find common ground with relative ease. Both are undying and can last for centuries, neither appears to age all the while growing ever stronger. Indeed some immortals do create lasting relationships with these "kindred spirits" but those relationships are rarely friendly. More than one Immortal has been ambushed and pressed into mystically enforced bondage by a vampire that he trusted with his secret.

The idea of an immortal defender or a forever filled vessel is a prospect that few kindred can refuse. Because immortals are *not* immune to the blood bond, kindred will often force it upon them as soon as possible. Blood addiction too is a powerful tool with which the undead ply their pet. They also rely on their many powers that allow them to twist an immortals will but do so less because of the immortal's Kenning induced resistance. Yes, it seems that the immortal that crosses a vampire is doomed to eternal slavery.

Until the vampire kills him, that is. The first time that she uses her pet immortal as "cannon fodder" or drains her blood doll dry his body 'resets', expunging the addiction and releasing him from the blood bond. Many immortals then simply wait for their would-be master to slumber again, and dispatch her will little fan fare, disappearing into history long before anyone becomes the wiser.

The Wise

Of all the supernatural entities that make the world of darkness their home, the wise are the ones that immortals are most likely to come across in there day to day lives, though they rarely realize it. More often

than not an immortal is going to mistake a true Mage for just another charlatan, if he sees him do magic at all.

Immortals are not fully immune to the effects of disbelief, though they often do not count as 'sleepers' for the purposes of paradox, they must still try to wrap their minds around the reality of magic. As such they may add their Kenning to their Willpower to determine the effects of Disbelief. Immortals do not unravel the spells of the Awakened.

With the appropriate knowledge in various arcana, mages of any stripe can detect the presence of an immortal, though she is unlikely to understand what it is she is seeing. Mages who become aware of the immortal's lot are often fascinated by the inner workings of its apparent magic. The most arrogant among the Awakened will poke and prod the immortal, testing the full limits of his healing abilities and even attempt to manipulate his Quickening so as to draw power from it or even to take it into herself. None have ever succeeded in doing anything more than killing their subject.

The Wolves

When it comes to the forsaken, most immortals in the know simply walk the other way. It's not for fear of death, most wolves don't go for the head or neck specifically, it's something deeper, engrained into even the immortal psyche that things such as these should not exist. When they do interact it is usually in much the same way as they would with anyone else, as the Uratha's savage nature rarely comes up.

Strangely, immortals are not immune to the effects of Lunacy, though they are resistant to it. Whenever an immortal would be affected by Lunacy he is considered to be 'wolf blooded' adding two to his willpower rating as well as his Kenning score. So an immortal with 4 willpower and 2 Kenning who witnesses one of the Uratha in her Gauru form would have an effective willpower of 8 to combat Lunacy.

When a werewolf becomes aware of an immortal's immortality he is often met with fleeting curiosity as the wolf decides whether he is a threat or not and then moves on. Rarely is the subject broached a second time.

The Exception

There is one exception to statements made above, and it's a pretty big one. If an immortal is killed for the first time by a supernatural being he is forever connected to the thing that killed him, and all others like her, able to sense them much like he can sense those like himself.

At character creation, or sometime after his first death, the immortal may develop an appropriate 'unseen sense' merit. This merit must be purchased normally and is not granted as a 'bonus' ability unless the storyteller deems otherwise.

Immortals who possess this second 'sense' feel it as a burning rage in their gut, feeling instant animosity for the thing that killed them. Indeed, many begin their eternity as hunters with a very specific prey in mind.



CHAPTER TWO : CHARACTER CREATION

Chapter Two

Character Creation

Character Creation

Now that you understand The Game and its place within the world of darkness, it's time to get down to business and create a contender who's ready to play.

Try not to think of the traits and dots on your sheet as simple dice, instead think of each dot as an experience, lesson, or quirk. If you give your character three dots of academics, think of three strange or interesting things that happened to them in school. If they have brawl two, think about a couple of memorable fights or training days. If they have Contacts 2, come up with the names and faces of those contacts, and how and why they put up with your characters questions.

Character Creation Process

Use the Character Creation Rules from the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. Add the following features and traits during Step 5:

Choose a Code

Add one dot to one skill from that Code's Associated Skill list. Also choose one Trick from its Associated Trick list.

Immortals may choose from additional merits found in this book.

Immortal Morality is called Honor.

A Note on Skill Specialties

If one wishes he may, after character creation, choose to repurchase a specialty up to two more times (for a total of +3 when dealing with their specialty) but doing so requires a great deal of time, roughly one additional specialty every fifty years or so.

Step 5: Add Immortal Template

Here is where a character suffers some personal catastrophe and becomes unburdened by their mortal coil. The character's first death sets them apart from the rest of humanity in that it not a true death, transforming them into something eternal, endowing him with special abilities and allowing them to look upon the world from a new perspective.

With the introduction, by their First Teacher, to The Game, the immortal is made aware of just what is at stake, and they are properly prepared for the day that a challenge is made.

Code

A character's Code is chosen during their time with their first teacher, it is how neophyte immortal copes

with their place within the Game. Though it is rarely a conscious decision, it is one colored by the one who teaches them the rules of the Game. Often Teacher and Student become of one mind in all things pertaining to it, and an argument over the way one or the other plays The Game is often a large factor in how the tutelage ends.

Examine the five Codes to determine which one best reflects the character and his reaction to learning of The Game. One's death also has some bearing in the choice, as a foolish or particularly violent death may cause the immortal to look at The Game in a way that they would not have before. When choosing a Code the Storyteller may deem certain codes inappropriate for the Game he wants to run; make sure to take this into account when creating a character.

Favored Skills

The Epiphany that leads to an immortal choosing their first code is often due to the study and training done at the feet of their First Teacher. While their study affects their Epiphany, their Code colors their study, leading to the immortal taking more from some lessons than from others. Immortals who follow one code are more likely to learn some skills than others.

Each Code has three skills that they are better trained in and have better practice with. Once a Code is chosen the immortal may choose one of those skills, gaining a free dot in it.

Code	Favored Skills
Gauntlet	Crafts, Intimidation or Weaponry
Knife	Larceny, Politics or Subterfuge
Mask	Academics, Socialize, Stealth
Shadow	Empathy, Occult or Survival
Sword	Athletics, Investigation or Persuasion

Associated Tricks

When an immortal takes up a code they're choice has an effect on their view of the world as well, on the way they use their knowledge. They learn to use their Kenning in a new way that reflects that Code, this knew found skill is called a Trick, and grants them another edge over other players in the Game.

Each Character begins play with one Trick, which they may choose from their Codes associated trick list which can be found in the Code description later in this chapter.

Kenning

A character's Kenning represents how well the immortal perceives the world around them, and how well they can use what they see and experience to their advantage. Immortals with a high Kenning are very old, or extremely good players of The Game, and are capable of accessing vast stores of knowledge, gathered from their own experience and the experiences of every immortal they have defeated. An immortal with low Kenning has experienced relatively little in their time on earth, or are simply poor players of the Game.

Immortal Characters possess 1 dot of the Kenning advantage at character creation; though it may be increased through the expenditure of three merit points per dot.

Immortal Merits

In addition to the initial points all immortals receive the following merits for free:

Unseen Sense: Immortals, which allows them to sense one another.

Unseen Sense: Holy Ground, which allows them to know when they are near holy ground.

Eidetic Memory, which represents the immortal's supernatural memory, is made manifest after their first death.

Step 7: Determine Advantages

Rules regarding advantages can be found on pages 90-105 of **World of Darkness Rulebook**. What follows concerns itself less with game mechanics and more with the importance of certain advantages to immortal characters.

Willpower

Living forever is harder than it sounds; it's not a curse per say, but watching someone you care for time and again eventually wears you out after a while, because of this immortals who lack the willpower turn in on themselves, or worse they become dangerous to others.

Because of their long lives and longer view of events immortals are capable of recouping the loss of their willpower dots through the expenditure of eight experience points.

Honor

After the Revelation the Game demands that an immortal live by their Code, something that requires honor. Some Codes make it hard to be honorable, but they still demand some level of principle to survive. An immortal known for taking advantage of the other Immortal's sense of Honor isn't long for

this world, as *Hunters* and *Players* will come out of the woodwork to remove them from The Game.

An immortal's honor often has little to do with whether they are a good person or not, it simply represents what the immortal is willing to do to win the Game. For many Immortal's their Honor is all they have; after centuries of the Game they can no longer separate Honor from Morality and honestly it doesn't matter.

As an optional rule, the Storyteller may allow a player two turn in dots of honor for experience or quickening, which may be spent before play begins.

Step 8: Spark of Life

At this point your character is done, at least mechanically. You have everything you need to make you immortal a contender for the Prize. Now all you have to do is bring him to life.

Role-playing is more than dots and dice. The steps you have taken thus far have crafted the body and mind, now it's your turn to give it a soul. And yeah, I'm laying it on thick. It's important. It's time to think less about what he can do and more about why he can do it. Why did he decide to go into medicine? What made him get into martial arts? Why does he have so many contacts and absolutely no allies? What drove him to take flying lessons? And why did he ultimately send his plane spinning into the ocean? What kind of immortal is he? If his code is how he survives the Game, then how does he live by his code? Questions like these should be in the forefront of your mind when you sit down to play, they will after all flavor your character's reaction to a given stimulus.

What does having Strength 3 mean? Is your character a muscle bound jock? Is his possessed of a wiry frenetic might? Did he gain it honestly through grueling labor or did he spend hours in a gym worrying whether his coach was going to make him do another blood test.

While these questions seem trivial they are necessary, lest your Player look like every other player, or your sanctimonious solitaire fall into the background with all the other more solemn pacifists.

Finally, after all that hard work and careful planning it's time to leave your character's past in the hands of fate. With the roll of a single die (or more if you begin play with a higher Kenning) you decide your characters beginning (natural?) quickening. Finding out just how well you've played the Game up to this point.

IMMORTAL TEMPLATE QUICK REFERENCE

For the Beginning steps of Character creation, see the World of darkness Rulebook, pp. 34-45. The Immortal Template summarizes the changes made to an Immortal Character

Code

Choose a Code, the immortal is a contender in The Game, their Code is the way they look at and live with The Game and its other players. Each Code is best summed up with a word that best sums up how those who take up any one code live out their own personal eternity.

The Gauntlet – “Win”: The *Hunters* have nothing but the Game to keep them going, they live for it, and die for it, they’re the boogiemens of the immortal world, and they take with them a legacy of fear and death wherever they go. *Hunters gain a free dot of Crafts, Intimidation or Weaponry.*

The Knife – “Survive”: The *Rascals* know better than to believe that they have a shot at the Prize if they play by the rules, so they don’t. Many don’t play The Game at all, but those that do, rely on their gut, and their wits to carry them through to victory. *Rascals gain a free dot of Larceny, Politics or Subterfuge.*

The Mask – “Thrive”: The *Amateurs* play The Game to *live*, refusing to let it destroy everything they’ve work so hard for, but while they won’t go looking for a fight they won’t back down from one either, many hunters learn too late, that that they are often more than they seem. *Amateurs gain a free dot of Academics, Socialize or Stealth.*

The Shadow – “Exist”: The *Solitaires*, for whatever reason, refuse to take part in The Game, they don’t want to risk their lives or the lives of their fellow immortals, and all they want is to see what happens next. *Solitaires gain a free dot of Empathy, Occult or Survival.*

The Sword – “Fight”: The *Players* take their code seriously, they *fight* to live, they *fight* for those important to them, they never give up, and they never give in. Even if the whole world is against them, they stand, sword in hand, and they *fight*. *Players gain a free dot of Athletics, Investigation, or Persuasion.*

Tricks

A character gains one Trick at character creation, a Trick is an aspect of the immortal’s training that has been flavored by the immortal’s Kenning. The Trick that an immortal learns is often telling of their personality. Three Tricks are associated with each of the 5 codes, and they are:

Gauntlet: Cruel Barb, Ignorant Flesh or Quickened Shield

Knife: Echoes, Hidden Steel or Know thy Enemy

Mask: Impromptu Weapon, Incredible Speed or ‘Who, Me?’

Shadow: Calming Influence, ‘Here I am’ or Recognition

Sword: Immortal Coil, Knowing Defense or Living Blade

Kenning

A character’s Kenning, their supernatural insight into their world and the people in it, begins at 1, but may be purchased with Merit points. The rate is three Merit points per extra Kenning Dot. In other words, you may spend three of your merit points for Kenning 2 or six of your seven for Kenning 3.

Edge

A character begins play with a full pool of edge.

Merits

Players may purchase the following special Merits for their immortal characters: Blood of Kings (.....), Friendly Watcher (··· or), Occluded Past (· to), Poise (·· or), Reputation (· to), and Sanctuary (· to).

Experience Point Cost		Quickening Point Cost	
Trait	Experience point cost	Trait	Quickening Point Cost
Attribute	New dots x 5	Kenning	New dots x 8
Skill	New dots x 3	Skill	New dots x 3
Skill Specialty	3	Skill Specialty	3
Merit	New dots x 2	Merit	New dots x 2
Honor	New dots x 3	Trick	5

"You should be asking yourself..."

The questions that follow can be used to wrap up your character's background quickly and relatively thoroughly, providing insight into areas a player might gloss over during previous steps of character creation. Even when there is for a prelude, or the player simply wants to get down to business and start a story you should try to get her to answer as many of these questions as she can, either by writing out a small back story or simply by talking it over with the storyteller and other players. The Devil is in the details, as they say, and these specifics help make your character more real once the story begins.

- How old are you?

When were you born? How old were you when you died the first time? How long has it been since then? How old do you look to others? Are you more or less mature than you seem?

- What was unique about your childhood?

What do you remember about your early years? What forged your basic motivations and attitudes? Where did you go to school? Were you a good student? Who were you immediate family members? What is your clearest childhood memory? Did you go to high school? How about College? Did you have a hometown, or did your family move often? Did you know that you were adopted? How did you find out? How old were you? Did you run away from home? Did you play sports? Did any of your childhood friendships last until adulthood?

- What kind of person were you?

Were you a kind and gentle person or an arrogant bastard? Were you popular or a social outcast? Did you have a family? How did you earn a living? Did you have any real friends, or just acquaintances? What kept you going from day to day? Will you miss anyone? Will they miss you?

- How did you die the first time?

Did you see it coming? Was it your fault? Was it painful? Do you regret the events leading up to it? Did anyone else get hurt? Were you aware of what you were? When did you meet another immortal? Did they frighten you? Do you have any regrets?

- How has immortality changed you?

How did your First Death change you? Did anyone see your resurrection? Did you enjoy it? Did it somehow make sense? Are you grateful for this

'second chance'? Do you wish you died in the first place?

- Who was your First Teacher, and how did he treat you?

What do you know about your First Teacher? Was he forceful, abusive, cryptic or open? How long did you stay with your First Teacher? Did he teach you well enough? Where did you go when he left? Did you meet any other immortals during your time with him? Did your sire survive the encounter? Did you take up the same Code as him? Do you play the Game the way he expected you too?

- When did you meet another immortal as a contender?

Where were you? Were you properly prepared? Was a challenge made? Did you accept? Did you run? Did you win outright? Did you spare her? Did she spare you? Did they help you? Did they take you under your wing? Are you friends now?

- Do you maintain connections to your life from before?

Have you been legally declared dead? Do you still watch over your family and friends? Do they even know something happened? Have you abandoned that life entirely?

- What motivates you?

Are you bent on revenge? Do you long for your life before the Revelation or even your first death? Do you want the Prize? Do you just want to survive? Do you want to live forever? If you could have anything in the world what would it be?

A Final note:

Those without the will to live do not play The Game for long, nor do they weather the centuries on sanctuary very well. Although an Immortal's perception of life has been irrevocably altered by their first death and the Revelation they are still at their heart human beings, and as such must have something to live for, or he will likely fall to the first Challenger to come looking for his head. Take a moment to think on where your character has been, and where he's headed. Whether it's some great cause or a simple life surrounded by friends and family, this is a storytelling game, and immortals do not sit idly by while the world moves around them. They make history. They are history. Once you know what your character wants or needs you've made him all the more real for it. Now, go Play!

Traits

New Advantage: Kenning

While an immortal is mostly unchanged after their first death, they do find themselves possessed of a new perspective and capable of moments of pure clarity in which they understand everything, allowing them to grasp concepts and practices that would normally be beyond them. That clarity is referred to as the Kenning.

Every immortal describes it a different way, a flooding of knowledge, the clearing of their mind, the freeing of their consciousness. They are all describing the same thing though, they are describing a perspective that seems to be all encompassing, something that draws all of the immortal's knowledge to the fore, and then enhances it beyond imagining.

While some young and inexperienced contenders would argue with such melodrama, they have not yet released their quickening and allowed their Kenning to grow. For them it's a sense of *déjà vu*, a sense that what they are doing that have done a thousand times.

For those more experienced immortals, that feeling is accompanied by memories that are not their own.

With thoughts that think in a symphony of languages that the immortal can somehow decipher and learn from, these immortals sometimes describe the Kenning as being one with their surroundings, in the past and the present.

For those who have survived the Game for centuries the Kenning becomes so much a part of them that it allows them to surpass their human limitations. Each movement is made with the grace of thousands of combined years of grace and agility. Every swing of a sword is made by hundreds of hands.

Of course there are those who are more powerful, those who have survived for thousands of years, who are said to know what those around them are thinking, and can speak a gaggle of tongues, they say that these ancient immortals remember the Babel tongue that came before and can remember things that have yet to happen. Of course these are just stories, but still, one has to wonder what it would mean to have so many memories belonging to other people, what must it be like to wield such horrible perspective?

An immortal's Kenning rises naturally once every thousand years, but may be raised through the use of Quickening much more quickly.

Kenning	Max Trait	Max Edge	Max Edge per turn	Tricks
1	5	10	1	1
2	5	11	1	2
3	5	12	1	3
4	5	13	2	4
5	5	14	3	5
6	6	15	5	6
7	7	20	7	7
8	8	30	8	8
9	9	50	10	9
10	10	100	15	10

New Advantage: Edge

An immortal's Edge isn't some metaphysical source of power, it is simply a way of measuring the advantage an immortal has over those around him. When an immortal uses his edge he is lessened for it, if only temporarily, but when he enters combat with another immortal it becomes paramount that he has as much as possible over his opponent. Obviously a more experienced immortal with a greater Kenning is going to have the Edge when challenging (or is challenged by) another, younger immortal. But

because it can be used in their day to day lives and how slow it is regained, the playing field has a good chance of being even.

Edge is measured in points and may be *used* to perform surprising feats, primarily allowing an immortal to heal, activate a Trick or use a Kenning Ability. Edge and Willpower can be used in the same turn, though one Willpower may be spent in a turn; the number of Edge that may be used is based on the immortal's Kenning. An immortal may use Edge to:

- Activate a Trick.
- Enhance an Immortal's healing factor.

- Heal any one wound no matter the type after the immortal's healing factor has been enhanced.
- Use an immortal's intuition pool

Once an immortal has used his edge each encounter with another immortal becomes more dangerous. What's worse is that the difficulty in gaining one's edge back:

- An immortal gains one Edge everyday they go without using it *after* they've lost it completely.
- An immortal can choose to gain one Edge instead of gaining their willpower for taking advantage of their Virtue or Vice. Gaining their edge back for acting out their defining Virtue grants them only a number of edge points equal to the total number of Willpower they would have gained from doing so. An immortal with 7 willpower that has spent 4 and acted in a charitable manner will only gain 4 edge not 7.
- An immortal will gain all of their Edge back whenever they play The Game and take another immortal's head, or in some other fashion are able to take the quickening of another immortal.

Modified Advantage: Morality – Honor

It is at once both a simple thing and an unearthly burden. Through it, an immortal can forge a path to greatness or walk blindly into oblivion, but in all things it is what guides them through their eternity, and when they've lost everything else, it is their Honor that acts as a cloak in the dark night of their immortal existence.

An immortal has been granted the dual gifts of a long life and wide view and it becomes increasingly easy for one to forget that they are in fact, simply human. Honor is a reminder to immortals that though they live many lives and see things mortals could never dream of, that they are still men and women, and still beholden to the laws of men. Beyond that though, they are bound by the unspoken laws of the Game: Play honorably, let your opponent know why they face. Never kill an unwary opponent. Never fight on Holy Ground. There can be only one.

Dishonor

It is cruel that, after the Revelation, an immortal finds themselves bound to a Code of

Conduct that is mostly made up of unspoken rules. That being said, when an immortal breaks one of these rules he knows it, and is dishonored for it. Most of the time the immortal feels the shame of his act and alters his actions accordingly, sometimes though the immortal throws honor to the wayside and acts as he chooses to.

An immortal is still expected to act in a moral fashion just as any member of civilization, and their morality and sense of honor reflect one another. An immortal that sees no reason not to rape or torture isn't going to worry too much about hunting immortals for sport for example. The various sins against morality are detailed in the **world of darkness core**, pg. 91. The acts of Dishonor listed below are supposed to be recognized along with those sins.

As with Morality, if an immortal commits an act of dishonor they must roll to see if he loses a dot of Honor. An immortal will intuitively know when he's about to commit an act that goes against his honor and the storyteller should warn a player when their character is about to cross the line so that they may choose to alter their course of action.

Honor	Acts of Dishonor
10	Living on Holy ground.
9	Revealing the nature of the Game to a Mortal.
8	Letting a challenge go unanswered.
7	Killing another Immortal in fair combat.
6	Challenging another immortal to combat.
5	Hunting another immortal.
4	Using a mortal as a pawn in the Game.
3	Cheating.
2	Killing another Immortal without a challenge.
1	Killing a Student.

A failed degeneration roll means the immortal's player must also make an Honor roll to resist acquiring a derangement. See the **World of Darkness Core**, pp 96-100, for information on derangements. The new derangement is linked to the lost dot of Honor; it persists until the character recovers the lost

dot, regaining his Honor and becoming balanced enough to reject the personal flaw.

Effects of Honor

- An immortal with high Honor is recognized for their diligence by others of their kind. Immortals that possess honor 8 or higher gain 1 bonus die to all social rolls to interact with other immortals. While those who possess 3 or fewer dots of Honor take a penalty of -1 to all social rolls with other immortals.
- An immortal with low honor is unlikely to be trusted by others of their kind and quickly find that they are hunted by others. Immortals with an honor of 2 or less gain a free dot of Reputation, as word travels fast amongst even immortals, and everyone knows that they are not to be trusted.
- Immortals with Honor 9 or higher find that they too gain a free dot of reputation, as other immortals come to learn at the feet of such a sage player in the Game.

Regaining One's Honor

When a contender stumbles from his path because of a Dishonorable Act he must struggle to regain his footing. Experience points must be spent to raise his Honor. He cannot be awarded Dots for honorable behavior, or acts of repentance, as mortals can.

Once an immortal has experienced the revelation, he can no longer plead ignorance or innocence, and must stand by his actions just as he lives by the sword.

Immortal Merits

The following Merits are specifically designed with an immortal character in mind.

Blood of Kings (●●●●●)

You are Immortal, you have inside you blood of kings, or you might as well have at any rate. At some point in your long life you were, in some way, attached to a noble family. Whether your namesakes were tyrants or kings of legend, you carry that legacy with you and select circles know this.

Despite your kingdom no longer existing, you still retain access to wealth and loyalties that any mortal could only hope to have in one life time. And these benefits are at your noble

disposal. Those who recognize your noble status will die for you if you ask them.

Effect: Characters with this merit gain access to 5 additional dots in any of the following merits at any given time: Allies, Contacts, Retainer, Resources, Staff or Status. The dots must be spread between at least two of those merits at any given time, but may be rearranged at any time between stories. These dots are in addition to dots you already have interspersed within those Merits normally.

For example: Roger Hillcrest first became attached to the Hillcrest name in the late eighteenth century when he married into it and took their name as his own. Since that time he's been able to capitalize on that connection by carefully nurturing the family legend of a 'great uncle' who did great things for the family in the past and who's children deserve respect and admiration. Because of this Roger has been able to gain access to the Family funds whenever he needs, granting him 3 dots in Resources on top of the 3 dots that he has access to normally for a total of 6 dots in resources, in addition he can call on any of the older generation for help or information when needed granting him an additional 2 contacts (family and corporate) on top of the 2 (Black Market and City Hall) he already possesses for a total of 4.

Fighting Style: Overwhelming Assault (● to ●●●●)

Prerequisites: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3 and weaponry 2

Effect: Your Character has mastered the art of decimating his foes through brute force. Whether utilizing the vicious blade of an axe or the devastating power of a war hammer, he can do massive amounts of damage in relatively little time.

Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers. Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. So, your character can't have "Aggressive Posture" until he has "Head-Lock". The Maneuvers and their effects are listed below, most of which rely on the Weaponry skill.

This merit is designed to be used with Axes and Hammers designed for warfare. Any other kind of weapon has a -1 penalty while using these maneuvers.

Armor Crusher (●): The intent of the battle ready axes and hummers were to be used against

heavy armored opponents that even swords could not pierce.

This maneuver grants his attacks with Armor Piercing 2 when using axes or hummers made for the battle field.

Head-lock (●●): You Block your opponents attack with the handle of your weapon and then lock their weapon under the head of your own allowing you to disarm your opponent with a shove.

Whenever an opponent attacks the character, he rolls to attack as usual. If he rolls more successes than the opponent did on his own roll he may choose to disarm that opponent instead of doing damage. The disarmed weapon lands a number of yards away equal to the successes rolled on the attack. **Drawback:** This maneuver may only be used after the character has been attacked once in a round, if he has rolled a higher initiative he must hold his action until his opponent acts to use this maneuver.

Aggressive Posture (●●●): Your character may dismiss defense for a much greater offensive advantage.

Whenever a combatant chooses to use this stance he gains a +2 bonus to all attack rolls until he leaves the stance, in exchange for losing two from his defense. He may move no quicker than his Speed while in this stance.

Crippling Thrust (●●●●): This devastating attack is intended to cripple your opponent, making for quick work in dispatching him.

You have to target one of your opponent's joints (shoulder, knee, wrist or elbow) and receive the appropriate penalty for doing so. If your attack hits and causes more damage than your opponent's Stamina he finds one of his joints wounded and therefore painful to use. He suffers a -2 penalty to his attack and defense for one turn per damage dealt.

If the damage does more than the opponent's size the joint is crushed or even severed, making the penalty last until the wound is healed or permanent if the joint is severed. **Drawback:** Your character cannot use his defense against any attack in the same turn in which he intends to use this maneuver. If he uses his defense against an attack made against him earlier in the round he may not make use of this maneuver as he is too busy parrying and blocking to ready himself.

Fighting Style: Swordsmanship (● to ●●●●)

Prerequisites: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, weaponry 2

Effect: Your character is trained in one of the many forms of swordsmanship, conditioning his muscles and reflexes for the purpose of wielding a blade in combat with deadly effect.

Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers. Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. So, your character can't have "Defensive Stance" until he has "Pommel Blow". The Maneuvers and their effects are listed below, most of which rely on the Weaponry skill.

This merit is designed to be used with long swords, great swords and other blades with a relatively heavy, straight blade. Any other kind of weapon has a -1 penalty while using these maneuvers.

Focused Strike (●): Physical conditioning and accuracy allow your character to deliver blows at vulnerable spots on targets. Penalties to hit specific targets are reduced by one. See "Specified Targets," p. 165. Even when a specific part of an opponent is not targeted, armor penalties to your character's weaponry attacks are reduced by one.

Pommel Blow (●●): With this attack, your character uses the sword's guard or pommel to set a foe off-balance. This attack is usually used when an opponent gets too close to allow you to swing your sword, but may also be used to lure an opponent close and throw him off-balance.

The attack is made at a -3 penalty and does (0B) for single-hand swords or (1B) for two-hand swords. If successful, the attack does full damage and the opponent's next attack is made at a -2 penalty, or he receives a -2 penalty to his defense for the next attack made against him, whichever comes first. **Drawback:** You may only use this attack *after* your opponent has attacked you. If you have a higher initiative, you'll have to wait for his move.

Defensive Stance (●●●): Your character has mastered the ability to fight defensively. When using this maneuver, your character gains +2 to his Defense for the turn, but any attack he makes suffers a -3 penalty. Your character's Defense trait is not penalized by multiple attacks staged against him in a turn until the number of attacks exceeds his Weaponry dots, at which point each attack thereafter reduces his Defense by -1. He can move no more than his Speed while performing a Defense Attack maneuver in a turn.

Cut & Thrust (●●●●): If your character makes a successful hit on an adversary with his sword, he may then rotate his sword and perform a quick thrust with the tip of the weapon.

This additional cut requires no additional roll; the cut does lethal damage to the opponent equal to your character's Dexterity or Strength, whichever lower. **Drawback:** Your character cannot use his Defense against any attack in the same turn in which he intends to use this maneuver. If he uses Defense against attacks that occur earlier in the Initiative roster, before he can perform this maneuver, he cannot perform the maneuver in the turn. He is too busy blocking and parrying out of the way of attacks.

Friendly Watcher (●●●● or ●●●●●●)

Prerequisites: Immortal

This is a merit that most immortals that have it are unaware of and represents the immortal having a watcher who is emotionally invested in them. Perhaps she is his neighbor, or an ex-girlfriend, or maybe even a lifelong friend, whatever the case, she will risk her place within the organization by occasionally helping the immortal out. Perhaps she innocuously says the right thing at the right time that puts everything in place for a rascal to trick an enemy, or maybe she alerts her friend to an ambush she learned of from another watcher by calling to say 'hi'. Whatever the case, the immortal has an edge over his peers.

Effect: The three dot version represents a watcher that the immortal is completely unaware of, the five dot version represents the fact that the immortal is in cahoots with the watcher to win (or survive) the Game.

Drawback: if the situation is ever found out the Watchers may decide that the watcher and immortal should be removed from the Game; permanently.

Occluded Past (● to ●●●●●●)

While in the past it was possible for an immortal to walk from one village to the next and decide to be another person, it isn't quite that easy anymore. With social security numbers and picture IDs and fingerprint technology it becomes more and more difficult to start fresh.

It's also pretty easy to leave a trail through history in other ways as well, an oil painting here, a signed manuscript there, a wedding book guest list over here and before you know it

you've left your mark on history. Immortals though, have a knack for being subtle and this merit is the result.

Effect: Each dot of this Merit causes anyone attempting to research any of the immortals identities, past or present, a -1 modifier on any roll to do so thoroughly. This modifier applies to anything from a background check to a high school history paper fact check and anything in between.

Immortal who possess four dots or more in Occluded Past are referred to by a descriptive title similar to medieval naming practices (the Nord, the Cappadocian, the Rake, etc, etc.) as no one is sure of their real name. Immortals with more than five dots in this Merit are thought to be completely mythical.

Poise (●● or ●●●●)

Prerequisites: Immortal

An immortal's life is fraught with strange and often painful experiences. From their First Death, to the revelation of the Game, to the first time they take a head, and countless other situations, an immortal's life demands a sense of stoicism and nonchalance. It helps to know that, with the exception of decapitation or total obliteration, you will be no worse for wear when the day is done.

For two dots this merit grants the immortal a +1 bonus die to any attempt to fend off fear or madness and raises the penalty to affect the immortal with fear based powers and abilities by one as well.

The four dot version works exactly as the two dot version but grants a +2 instead.

Reputation (● to ●●●●●●)

Prerequisites: Immortal

Word gets around, even amongst people who are supposed to be at each other's throats. Reputation represents word getting around about the character; it is both an immortal's status amongst other and the esteem in which they hold him.

Effect: An immortal gains 1 additional die in social actions when dealing with other immortals who have heard of him, but this bonus hinges on what kind of reputation the immortal has, a Warlord who has killed thousands in the 3000 years he's been in the Game isn't going to do a very good job seducing a pretty (relatively) young immortal. While an Immortal known for her skills at seduction and

her lack of skills with a sword isn't going to intimidate anybody... until she takes their head.

Drawback: The better known an immortal is the harder it is to hide from hunters and other immortals looking for your head, granting the immortal a -1 to any roll to cover his tracks while being hunted for each dot in this merit.

Sanctuary (1 to 5 dots; Special)

Prerequisites: Immortal

A Sanctuary is a place an immortal can go and feel safe, as holy ground no immortal can do violence there and that's a comfort to anyone looking for a safe place to rest their head. While any place that people worship is considered holy ground, not all of those places make good sanctuaries. A rose garden that was, centuries ago, a holy place for the aboriginal people may be good neutral ground, but it's not a very good place to lay low for a week, let alone a century.

Effect: Sanctuary works on two separate tracks: Secrecy and Comfort. Each can be have merit points placed into them.

Sanctuary Secrecy represents how hard it is to even locate the holy ground. Sanctuaries without this aspect tend to be cathedrals or other suitably obvious places of worship.

One and two dot sanctuaries tend to be smaller churches, monasteries and temples, while three and four dot versions can be homes built on a long forgotten holy mound, or a house with an attached family cemetery (which any good Christian knows has to be made hallow). Five dots represent those sacred isles in the middle of the woods, with a single shack, or a home deep beneath the streets of Europe within the catacombs or even a house in the suburbs that was actually built on an old Indian burial ground.

Sanctuary Comfort represents how long an immortal can stay within the bounds of a given sanctuary before being found or becoming a nuisance.

One dot allows for a few weeks, two dots allow for months of safety before needing to leave, three dots are places that are hidden well enough, or are guarded by people who know of the Game enough to allow the immortal to stay there for years. Four dots represent holy places protected by other immortals and humans who know them well. Immortals can call these places home for decades before feeling the need to move on. Five dot sanctuaries are usually ancient places, built by monks under the

guidance of an immortal master; these places were practically built for the purpose of protecting immortals. An immortal could live within its walls for centuries comfortably and with no need to ever move on.

Watcher (5 dots)

Prerequisites: Mortal, Investigation 2

Effect: You are a Watcher, sworn to observe and record, but to never interfere, it is your solemn duty to follow and chronicle the life of one or more immortals. While the work is tiring and has little in way of reward, you work towards putting down on paper everything you can about the immortals around you, of marking their passage, because their history is our history.

Because of your training and connection to other Watchers you are capable of keeping track of almost all of the major events within an immortal's life without drawing attention to yourself, maybe you're a close acquaintance, or a coworker (or even an employer), or maybe you're just really good at going unnoticed. Whatever the case, unless the immortal has reason to be looking for you, he doesn't. This knack for staying hidden applies to all aspects of your life, effectively granting you a +1 to Subterfuge and Stealth checks. You also gain Contacts: Watchers for free and may roll Wits + Academics to recall a piece of information about their charges history (no matter how long or sordid) as an instant action. Drawback: You are bound to your charge, if he moves on, you do to, family friends and fortune be damned. It also may not be too smart to get caught by an immortal.

For further information about the Watchers, see Appendix I.

THE CODE OF THE GAUNTLET

"Win"

Hunters

"Draw your weapon, boy! Don't make this an execution"

It's not hard to see why some Immortals take up the sword willingly. If you want to live, you have to win when you fight, and you can't shy away from the game if you want to stand a chance; nothing comes easy. Some few immortals though take it a step further. They aren't content with playing the game as it comes to them, or when it is necessary. They look for it, they Hunt. Those who take up the Gauntlet are called mad by their peers. They are equated with addicts looking for their next, all too lethal, fix.

The truth is, as ever, far more complex. Sure some immortals play The Game with reckless abandon, killing as many immortals as they can find. But there are others too, those who have nothing left but The Game. There are those who move down the centuries looking for revenge against an implacable foe, wiping out anyone that gets in their way. Some don't hunt immortals at all, unless the immortal in question needs hunting.

Adherents

Few New Immortals take up the Code of the Gauntlet without some major trauma in their past. Truth be told, even most of the Immortals that would quickly do the math to realize that The Game is (at least currently) not a game that can be played in their favor.

No those under the sway of the Gauntlet usually come to it later, after they've taken one or two heads and gotten a taste for the power of the Quickening. That power is a great motivator in the lives of future (and current) Hunters.

Despite their habit of (addiction to?) hunting down and killing other immortals, most hunters are relatively Honorable, some are even respected by their less fanatic peers. They are, after all, simply doing what it is that Immortals are supposed to be doing.

Unlike the other Codes, other immortals don't flirt with the Gauntlet as much, often stopping after stepping into the Code of the Sword. And of those that do, not all hunt indiscriminately, some are Players who have become fed up with this or that injustice; others are Rascals who are

done running and want others to do the running for a change, and many were once Amateurs or Solitaires whose lives have been ripped from them by some immortal (or stranger thing) and heaven help anyone who gets in their way.

Character Creation

Because of their chosen prey, Hunters tend to be physically fit, and well versed in most forms of combat. They can spend decades simply practicing, so Physical Attributes, skills and Merits all rate pretty highly on their list. That being said, it's almost unheard of for a hunter not to have a few tricks up there sleeve. A quick mind or silver tongue are not unheard of, and many other immortals often find themselves unwitting accomplices in their 'friends' hunts.

Because of their tendency to track their 'prey', many Hunters find their Honor lacking (possibly loosing 1 or 2 levels at character creation) and as far as derangements go, Narcissism and Megalomania rank pretty high up there. Because of their limited view of the world, and probably high body count they also tend to spend 3 or even 6 merit points to raise their Kenning at character creation. Those that don't, tend to learn one or two fighting styles, representing years of training.

Benefit: Hunters gain the Following Merits at half cost: Contacts, Fighting Style (choose one), Reputation, Sanctuary

Associated Skills: Crafts, Intimidation, Weaponry

Associated Tricks: Cruel Barb, Ignorant Flesh, Quickened Shield

Sample Concepts:

Good Cop, Soldier without a war, Walking Anachronism, Burnt-Out Drug Addict, Big Brother, Last Man Standing, Monster Hunter, Avid Sportsman, Union Official, Righteous Avenger, Raving Lunatic, Bored Extreme Sports Enthusiast.

THE CODE OF THE KNIFE

"Survive"

Rascals

"Of course I don't need to; it's just that I want to."

The existence of The Game comes as a shock to many new immortals. Most get over this initial distress and decide to fight for their lives, or to live their lives and hope for the best. Some decide to put their lives on hold and try and win the game, and others simply slink off and disappear hoping to last out the centuries on holy ground. There are, however, those who come to the realization that there is no way, no matter how hard they try to master it, no matter how much they want it, that they are going to win The Game... if they fight fair.

These Immortals are called Rascals. While they are taught about honorable combat just like the rest of the crowd, they take different lessons to heart. They learn to use it against their opponent. They bring guns to sword fights, they hold families hostage. They run when they are outgunned, and when at all possible, they leave someone else holding the check.

Adherents

Mortals who become Rascals tend to have an insurmountable will to live, it goes beyond reason, beyond sanity even, they will live at all costs no matter who they have to hurt to do so. Strangely many Rascals suffered their first death through acts of self-destruction and stupidity. Suicides and overdoses aren't at all uncommon. They've been given a new life only to learn that there is a good chance that it's just going to be taken away from them again. To most, that is unacceptable. Another startling (some would say counter-intuitive) trend amongst those who take up the code of the knife, is their knowledge of their own limitations. It seems that these immortals have looked into themselves and feel that what was found there was lacking. It is not uncommon for Immortals who begin The Game as rascals eventually taking up the Code of the Sword or settling into the Code of the Mask.

While it is not unheard of for experienced immortals to find themselves falling under the sway of the Knife, it is far from common. Most elders who do take up the code come from backgrounds of extended Solitude within a sanctuary, whether they were Solitaires or Amateurs who are currently between lives.

Character Creation

Finesse Traits make up the bulk of the Rascal's arsenal. Those that make up the bulk of rascals are neither good looking, or smart. And few could ever be called strong. No the rascals are small, fast and cunning. Rather than get their hands dirty, they send others into the fray to do the dirty work for them, as such Social skills are paramount, followed up with a dash of surprisingly well trained physical skills, to get them through the tough times. While they are known for their lack of honor, few actually cheat, instead opting out of The Game entirely when possible, using their words to confound there would be attacker.

Benefit: Rascals gain the following merits at half cost: Contacts, Resources, Sanctuary and Status.

Associated Skills: Larceny, Politics, Subterfuge

Associated Tricks: Echoes, Hidden Steel, Know thy Enemy

Sample Concepts:

Cat burglar, Drifter, ex-Con, Club kid, Den-Mother, Street punk, Real Magician, Hacker, Darwin Award Winner, Ambulance Chaser, High Priced Hooker, Gun for Hire

THE CODE OF THE MASK

"Thrive"

Amateurs

"I know there can be only one. do you want the beer or not?"

Knowledge of The Game can be a hard thing to process, and the idea of actually playing it is, for your average Joe, a ridiculous proposition. But what's worse is the Idea of leaving your world behind, why can't you get married, why do you have to put college on hold? Why move away? Especially if no one saw you die. Screw that, you have a life to live, and let's face it, what chance do you really have of winning The Game when some immortals have been playing for thousands of years.

That being said, these immortals, despite their refusal to actively play the game, are not fools, they train their blades, and more often then not, when someone comes looking for them, they are the ones that are left standing. They simply refuse to think that any confrontation needs to end in someone receiving the Quickenings.

Unlike the more serious minded Player, many amateurs seem almost laze-faire in their dealings with other immortals, and are often honestly surprised when someone comes looking for them specifically.

Adherents

People who lived happy lives or those who feel that they've been given a second chance make up the bulk of new Immortals who follow this code. They understand what the game is, and that not playing it is far more dangerous then stepping up, they simply strive to play it as little as possible.

More experienced immortals who find themselves settling into this code (and each and everyone of them describe it as 'settling' tend to be refugees from the Code of the Sword or the Knife who have grown weary of always being on the run and it is rare that an immortal with more then a few centuries under their belt doesn't spend some time taking up the code of Masks.

Character Creation

A great many Amateurs have remarkably keen minds. As such they favor both Mental Attributes and Skills. That being said, they are also known for their way with words and its rare to see an immortal of this Code who doesn't

make good use of their social traits. Physical Skills tend to take a back seat over all, but even the most lackadaisical amateur takes good care of their blade and tries to practice their sword hand whenever they have the time.

Because of their connection to the mortals, Amateurs make friends easily and often, meaning that they tend to have a great many social and mental merits to round themselves out.

Benefit: Amateurs gain the following merits at half cost: Allies, Occluded Past, Resources and Status.

Associated Skills: Academics, Socialize, Stealth
Associated Tricks: Impromptu Weapon, Incredible Speed, "Who, Me?"

Sample Concepts:

Antiques Dealer, Musician, College Professor, Museum Curator, Plastic Surgeon, Contractor, Bad Cop, Stage Magician, Cocktail Waitress, Desperate Housewife, Hedonist, Stunt-Man

THE CODE OF THE SHADOW

"Exist"

Solitaires

"There is no Game here my friend, you won't need that."

While not every Immortal who learns of The Game embraces it wholeheartedly, there are, on occasion those individuals who refuse to acknowledge all together. These immortals, fearing for their now eternal lives believe that they can survive the centuries by forgoing the game entirely. While most if not all do indeed learn to defend themselves, they refuse to carry a sword. Most of these New Immortals do not last, quickly being picked off by the first Rascal or Hunter to whom they tell their story. Other, more level headed Solitaires quickly surround themselves with paid protection or make their way to a secure sanctuary where they can eke out a meager existence with books and monks as their only connection to the world

Adherents

Very few New Immortals become Solitaires; the idea of hiding away from the world for eternity is far more frightening than an occasional duel. Those that do take up this Code do so because of a deeply held belief in peace or fear of violence, and one or two do so because it is the only way for them to feel really alive.

While some solitaires live normal lives amongst mortals, almost stepping into the realm of the Mask, fear almost always forces them to draw deeper and deeper into themselves until they push everyone away, becoming hermits.

Though few New Immortals take up the Code of the Shadow, older immortals come to it in droves. After countless centuries of bloodshed and death it is comforting to slip away from The Game and the mortal world and rest in solitude. But even these immortals eventually find themselves tiring of it and begin to yearn for contact with the outside world, ultimately rejoining the world and in doing so taking up a new Code. It is a truly rare (and stoic) Immortal who makes the Shadow their life long companion.

Character Creation

Immortals that approach the game under the auspices of the Code of the Shadow tend to be an introspective lot, usually possessing a keen mind and a calm heart; as such they tend to favor Intelligence and Composure. That being said a Solitaire can

come from any background, though it is rare to find one who lacks at least a few mental merits. Because of their passivity they are also very likely to draw friends and confidants to themselves, making them truly impressive negotiators and power brokers.

Benefit: Solitaires gain the following merits at half cost: Allies, Contacts, Library, and Sanctuary.

Associated Skills: Empathy, Occult, Survival
Associated Tricks: Calming Influence, Here I Am, Recognition

Sample Concepts:

Monk, High Power CEO, Concert Pianist, Librarian, History Professor, Newspaper Archivist, Conspiracy Theorist, Unabomber look-alike, Doting Step-Father, Champion Fisherman, TV Chef, Cat-Lady.

THE CODE OF THE SWORD

"Fight"

Players

"I'm sorry it came to this, for both our sakes."

Some Immortals, once they learn of the Game, internalize it. The Idea that there can be only one becomes a part of them. These immortals may not want to kill others of their kind but they understand that they must if they are going to have a fighting chance for a life. The Player's Path is an arduous one, requiring a great deal of will and spirit, as those on it actively play the game, learning all they can about other immortals, and never shying away from a fight, but nor do they look for one.

Many who follow the code take it upon themselves to police other immortals, watching for them to make one too many mistakes, it is one thing for a mortal to do horrible things, their evil has, if nothing else temporal, limit. It is quite a different thing when the offender is Immortal, and beyond mortal justice. Other, less scrupulous players will simply remove obstacles they find in their way, immortal or not. Most however simply take it day by day, hoping that no one is coming for them, but hoping just as much that they are not going to have to go after someone else in turn.

Adherents

Known for their uncompromising view of The Game, those immortals that are drawn to the Code of Swords were often leaders in life. Usually the backbone of their community, family or clique these new Immortals are used to making hard decisions living with the results good and bad. Many who had dealings with law enforcement, both as enforcers and chronic offenders tend to make their way into the ranks of the Players, as do successful business owners and politicians.

Another source of new membership is those immortals that have become comfortable with the workings of the game. Many migrate from the ranks of both Hunters who have retired from the hunt and Amateurs who are sick of sitting on the side lines.

Character Creation

At turns both strong willed and fiercely stubborn, nearly all Players possess higher than

average Resolve or Composure. These Attributes tend to be backed by high power stats and impressive social skills. Because many have background in law enforcement or politics many are also have a good helping of Investigation and Politics.

Because of their strong ties to the people in their lives it's also rare to find a Player who lacks any sort of influence or resources in the mortal world, be and tend to have a fair number of social merits as a result.

Benefit: Players gain the following merits at half cost: Mentor, Reputation, Resources and Retainer.

Associated Skills: Investigation, Athletics, Persuasion

Associated Tricks: Immortal Coil, Knowing Defense, Living Blade

Sample Concepts:

Police officer, Crime boss, Martial Artist, Mayor's aide, Step-Mother from Hell, Vigilante, White-Knight, Fashion Designer, High-School Guidance Councilor, Movie Star, Doctor, High Class Pimp

A Bag of Tricks

Each Immortal has a connection to something greater, a greater understanding of the world, and a way of looking at events from outside and drawing greater wisdom from them. They refer to this as 'the Kenning'. When an immortal learns of The Game and how to play this introspective nature manifests as a greater understanding of their place in the world. This is referred to as an Epiphany and is usually followed by developing what is often called a 'Trick'.

An Immortal's Trick is nearly unique; while there do seem to be a finite number of these tricks rarely do two immortals who know each other have the same Trick.

Each Code is associated with 3 or so tricks, as those who take them up seem to display them more often than not. Here is a list of how they are split up.

Gauntlet: Cruel Barb, Ignorant Flesh, Quickened Shield

Knife: Echoes, Hidden Steel, Know thy Enemy

Mask: Impromptu Weapon, Incredible Speed, "Who, Me?"

Shadow: Calming Influence, Here I am, Recognition

Sword: Immortal Coil, Knowing Defense, Living Blade

Before we begin, I thought it would be appropriate to explain the format of the different tricks.

Name (Code Association)

A brief explanation of the Trick.

Edge: the number of edge that need to be used to make the Trick work.

Associated Attribute: The Attribute rolled with kenning to activate the Trick

Effect: what the Trick does.

Action: what kind of action the Trick is (reflexive or instant)

Duration: the duration of the effect.

Calming Influence (Shadow)

A Trick that allows some immortals to get along without playing the game, Calming Influence allows an immortal, with just a few words to put another, more aggressive Immortal at ease.

Edge: 2

Associated Attribute: Presence

Effect: Successes on the roll must be overcome by the opponents Resolve + Composure if the immortal wishes to attack the user of this Trick.

Action: Instant

Duration: Until the end of the scene

Cruel Barb (Gauntlet)

A vicious Trick wielded by aggressive Immortals, Cruel Barb imbues an Immortal's weapon with terrifying power, allowing it to cut through steel and flesh. Those who make use of this Trick swear that they see the blade moving of its one accord, flashing the electrical arc of Quickening wherever it strikes.

Edge: 1

Roll: Strength

Effect: Success allows the Immortal to ignore a number of Levels of Defense, Armor or Durability equal to the damage bonus of the weapon being used. An exceptional success returns the immortal's edge to their pool.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: 1 turn.

Echoes (Knife)

This trick, which borders on the blatantly supernatural, allows an immortal to set off a chain reaction with an apparently innocuous word or gesture that reminds a target of something so startling that it throws them off their game.

Edge: 3

Roll: Presence

Effect: The target of this effect becomes distracted as they relive a traumatic event from an earlier time. Each success lowers their initiative by one. In addition every two successes lower the immortal's Defense. This effect lasts for the scene. Though the Immortal who uses this ability may have a good idea what they are reminding the target of this trick of, it does not necessarily confer understanding of their words or actions.

Action: Instant

Duration: Until the end of the scene.

Here I am (Shadow)

A strange ability usable only by those immortals that are not expecting to fight, this Trick allows an immortal to go unnoticed to another Immortal's 'Sense' effectively hiding his presence.

Edge: 3

Associated Attribute: Resolve

Effect: Success on the roll hides the immortal's presence from other immortal's senses for as long as they remain non-aggressive, and stay about 10 feet from the immortal.

Action: Instant

Duration: Until the end of the scene, or until another immortal comes into the 10 foot radius.

Hidden Steel (Knife)

Hidden Steel is considered the ultimate expression of those immortals most likely to employ it, the Rascals, as it grants them the ability to draw their blade from nowhere, the immortal who possesses this Trick need never where a trench coat again, as she simply casts it into the void between worlds.

Edge: 0 to hide weapon, two to draw it from twilight.

Associated Attribute: Manipulation

Effect: Once activated the weapon fades from view, truly it fades from this world entirely, waiting for its master to call on it again.

Action: Instant

Duration: until the end of the day.

Ignorant Flesh (Gauntlet)

Immortals who know this trick are particularly hard to kill, seeming to be capable of far more punishment than their peers

Edge: 3

Associated Attribute: Stamina

Effect: Success grants the immortal 2 additional health levels and 1 level of natural armor, these bonuses do not change the immortal's appearance; they simply make him appear as if he is more unstoppable than even other immortals. Exceptional successes adds 3 health levels an armor rating of 2.

Action: Instant

Duration: Until the end of the scene

Immortal Coil (Sword)

This strange Trick allows an Immortal to revive and act and even heal normally despite the persistent presence of whatever killed them in the first place, be it walking around with a metal rod through your heart or taking time to break the blocks holding you to the bottom of the river.

Edge: 3

Associated Attribute: Stamina

Effect: Success causes the immortal to immediately heal the three rightmost health levels and revive after being killed. He may then, if he chooses, remove himself from whatever situation that he is in that killed him in the first place, even if that environment is still hostile he does not take any further damage from it this turn (fire will refuse to burn for the rest of the scene. But if he removes the bar from his chest and shoves it back in, it'll probably kill him again.

Action: Instant

Duration: Until the end of the scene or the immortal removes himself from harm's way.

Impromptu Weapon (Mask)

Sometimes convenience simply will not allow an immortal to carry a weapon. On these occasions there is always a chance that an immortal is going to be challenged by another immortal. That is where this trick comes in, allowing them to use an improvised sword or mace to its full advantage, at least for a time.

Edge: 1

Associated Attribute: Wits

Effect: Each success on this roll allows the immortal to use an impromptu weapon as the fully balanced, properly prepared weapon that it was meant to take the place of for one turn. A length of piping acts as a perfectly balanced bow-staff, and a paper cutter feels as natural and comfortable as a well crafted Calvary Saber at least for a little while.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: one turn per success on the activation roll. An exceptional success allows this ability to last for the rest of the encounter.

Incredible Speed (Mask)

This trick allows an immortal to move far faster than he normally would, surprising friend and foe alike.

Edge: 3

Associated Attribute: Dexterity

Effect: Success on the activation roll adds 3 to the character's normal speed and 2 to his initiative; Exceptional Success adds 6 to the character's normal speed and 4 to his Initiative.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: Until the end of the scene.

Knowing Defense (Sword)

One of the few truly overtly supernatural Tricks, knowing defense is characterized by a slight discharge in electricity when two immortal clash swords, those who employ it however are truly impressive defensive fighters.

Edge: 2

Associated Attribute: Wits

Effect: Success on the activation roll grants the immortal a +1 to their defense for the scene; exceptional success grants a +2 for the scene.

Action: Instant.

Duration: Until the end of the physical confrontation.

Know thy Enemy (Knife)

Some, less reputable immortals seem to have an innate understanding of when they are out of their league, while others seem to always know what to say to get what they want, this trick is often the reason behind such understanding

Edge: 2

Associated Attribute: Intelligence

Effect: Each success allows the immortal to gain one of the following pieces of information about another immortal that they can sense: Vice, Virtue, Honor or Code; exceptional success also allows them to know the immortal's Kenning as well.

Action: Instant

Duration: Instant.

Living Blade (Sword)

One of the few truly supernatural tricks, the living blade becomes charged with the immortals quickening, allowing it to cut deeply and strike true. The living blade causes electricity to arc towards any inanimate object it comes too close to.

Edge: 2

Associated Attribute: Intelligence

Effect: A successful activation of this Trick grants the immortal a +1 attack for the rest of the scene, if the immortal uses a weapon that normally would do bashing damage, then the trick allows them to do lethal damage instead; exceptional success allows the weapon to gain an additional +1 on top of either previous bonus.

Action: instant

Duration: Until the end of the physical confrontation

Quickened Shield (Gauntlet)

An immortal who knows this Trick is capable of amazing acts of swordsmanship, blocking incoming attacks with an ease that is uncanny, what's more is that it is said that use of this trick has successfully cut bullets and arrows from the sky.

Edge: 1

Associated Attribute: Dexterity

Effect: Success on the activation roll allows the immortal's weapon to act as a shield for the turn, granting the immortal a bonus to his normal defense equal to the blade's damage bonus. This defense works even against ranged attacks. Exceptional success allows the immortal to regain the Edge that he used to activate this trick.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: 1 turn.

Recognition (Shadow)

A few immortals have been known to be able to tell friend from foe without ever setting eyes on them, immediately knowing who they are by the Sense alone.

Edge: 1

Associated Attribute: Composure

Effect: This Trick may be activated the moment the Sense sets off. Success on the activation roll will immediately inform the user of the trick of who the other immortal is if they've met before; exceptional success allows the immortal to regain the edge used to activate the trick.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: Instant

"Who, Me?" (Mask)

Sometimes the apparently abandoned building is full of squatters or the empty park has a cop doing his rounds through it. Either way, an immortal has only seconds to react to the mortal witnesses to The Game, this trick allows that immortal to simply walk away... often leaving their opponent looking like a loosed maniac running through the park with a sword.

Edge: 2

Associated Attribute: Composure

Effect: Each success allows the immortal to appear unassuming, despite any passed acts in the scene, to mortal eyes for 1 minute. If the immortal remains on scene for any longer the nearby mortals will immediately act on their prior bad acts. Exceptional successes allow this effect to last for the scene.

Action: Reflexive

Duration: 1 minute.

CHAPTER THREE : SPECIAL RULES

Chapter Three

Special Rules

Every immortal is unique. Yeah it's a cliché that doesn't mean much to us as mortals, but it is true. Each immortal brings to the table a unique perspective that no other immortal shares. This perspective grants them a unique view of the world that, along with their fantastic memory, allows them to do things that seems improbable to those around them. This ability to draw on their experiences in such a concrete way is called the Kenning.

When an immortal first experiences their own death, granting them immortality, their Kenning is something that a mortal would even recognize, manifesting as a sense of déjà vu or flashes of insight at just the right moment, because it is fueled only by the immortal's own experiences.

As an immortal plays The Game however their perspective is tested and elaborated upon by the quickenings of other immortals. As their enemy's knowledge and power is added to their own, their Kenning grows too. That sense of déjà vu is triggered by experiences that the immortal has no personal familiarity with. The sudden burst of insight comes far more often and in stranger and less recognizable situations than before.

As centuries pass those bursts become commonplace, and the sense of déjà vu is replaced by a certainty in every action the immortal takes. The once inexperienced immortal can now recall facts about times he never lived in, in places he's never been. His Kenning is so much a part of him that it alters his mind and body, allowing the immortal to perform feats that would astound even the most cynical of his fellows.

And that power grows. By the time the immortal sees a new millennium their perspective has become so vast that they see every action from all sides, and recognize its implications far into the future.

Behold the power of the Kenning.

Memory

An immortal's memory is vast and nearly perfect and they possess, for all intents and purposes, the Eidetic Memory Merit (**world of darkness core pg. 108**). They are also capable of remembering information they never learned, skills they never practiced and using talents they never developed.

Whenever an immortal attempts to remember something that they've never learned he may add his Kenning rating to the roll. This works only when remembering facts and trivia; an immortal that's never been to the Vatican may be able to remember the words written over the door of St. Peter's Cathedral but he can't recall where he learned them.

The sensation is very similar to that experienced by amnesiacs who find that they know how to perform some obscure task, or know some cryptic piece of information but can't, for the life of them, remember how they knew it and when asked how their most common answer is "I didn't" because the truth of the matter is that they don't. The knowledge fades again as quickly as it comes.

Enlightened Will

When an immortal decides to put all of himself into an action truly startling things happen. As they become more powerful, whether through The Game or by dint of age, their will becomes a tremendous thing. They do not just put themselves into the act but a portion every immortal whom they have ever bested too.

Whenever an immortal spends a point of willpower to add dice to a roll or an advantage, he adds his Kenning to the pool if his Kenning rating is higher than the appropriate bonus.

Immortal Tongues

Due to some strange quality of an immortal's Kenning, they seem to have a natural affinity for language, picking up on the natural flow of languages at an alarming rate.

Whenever an immortal is confronted with a new *living* language he begins to learn it instantly, developing a near fluent capacity for it within a matter of days. New Languages cost only half the amount of experience that they normally would to purchase during play (round down).

Intuition

Déjà vu, intuition, insight, precognition whatever you want to call it, everyone has experienced it at one point or another, usually during times when nothing interesting is happening. That sense that you've done something before, it's a sense of familiarity so intense that you think you're reliving a past event. Some have 'sessions' so strong that they swear that they can predict the next few minutes of dialogue, or the next person who comes through the door.

Psychologists say that it is a miscommunication between long and short term memory, or maybe it is one eye recording events faster than the other. Immortals know better. For them it is so powerful that they can, with certainty, act exactly as they must. They can move out of the way of an attacker, or sidestep an ambush. They can use it to better catch their quarry, or to outmaneuver a dogged hunter.

Each immortal has access to a pool of dice equal to twice their Kenning trait that they may spread out between as many rolls as they wish. This pool refreshes itself at the end of every story.

Immortal Senses

An immortal is, in most ways, no different than the people around him. He lives a life that, if everything goes as planned, is as normal or fantastic as the immortal wishes. They have eternity to do with as they please. Never having to fear for their lives they can live life on the bleeding edge and come away without a nick or they can live their lives in obscurity, marrying and raising (adopted) kids and all the while attempting to 'live the dream'; but all that changes when another of their kind comes too close.

They call it many things: the Buzz, the Sense, the knowing. Whatever they call it though it as vital to their survival as it is disastrous for their well being and peace of mind.

Whenever two or more immortal come within shouting distance of one another they become completely aware of their surroundings, going so far as to prematurely revive an immortal from an apparent 'death'.

This ability works exactly as the Unseen Sense Merit (**World of Darkness Core pg. 109**) and allows one immortal to sense another.

Once two immortal's sense their own kind their players immediately roll their Wits + Composure.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character doesn't locate the cause of the buzz until the other immortal presents himself.

Failure: The character fails to find the other immortal for a turn as he looks around in vain to find the source of the sense.

Success: The Character spots the other immortal, even in a thick crowd.

Exceptional Success: The character spots the immortal immediately, and has time to draw his sword or flee as he wishes before being noticed by the other.

Suggested Bonus: The character was expecting the immortal being sensed (+2), The Immortal being sensed has a great deal of Quickening stored up (+1 per 10 quickening)

Possible Penalties: The immortals are in a crowd (-1), There is more than one other immortal in the area (-1 for each additional immortal), the immortals are in separate rooms or are in impeded from seeing each other quickly (-2 to -5)

Immortals, as they grow older, find that their ability to sense another of their kind grows. Maybe

this growing zone of awareness was meant to better forewarn them of incoming threats, or maybe it's just a natural progression caused by their growing awareness do to age. No one knows, but it has saved more than a few immortals who have retired from the game, and damned more than a few who didn't see death coming quickly enough.

Sense Area	
Kenning	Area
1	10 yards
2 - 3	20 yards
4 - 5	30 yards
6 - 7	50 yards
8 - 9	80 yards
10	100 yards

Strangely this ability doesn't just grant an immortal to sense the presence of others of their kind. It also grants them the ability to sense the presence of holy ground; whenever an immortal steps near holy ground they immediately feel its presence. This sensation is often described as being a softer version of what they feel when another immortal comes too close. It is also described as having the opposite effect on immortals, as they tend to calm while standing on it... though only in a relative manner.

In addition an immortal is capable of sensing the presence of an immortal who has yet to die their first death, doing so requires that they in some way perceive them through mundane means however, whether by direct line of sight, the sound of their voice or the touch of their skin, while in their presence, the sense cannot pass through another medium (no cameras or voice recordings).

The Quickening and the Sense

When an immortal dies, their quickening is absorbed into the immortal who slew him, but other immortals nearby sense it at least to a small degree. Every immortal within a 10 mile radius can feel the death of another immortal when it happens, and those with the recognition trick also know who it is instantly. There is no roll; it's just something felt the moment it happens

The Quickening

When one immortal defeats another in battle and takes his head, she takes with it all of that immortal's knowledge and power in the form of the Quickening. Outwardly it manifests as an electrical storm centered on the victorious (or advantageously placed) immortal. Inwardly though, the immortal is

flooded with the thoughts and memories of the immortal and every immortal he had killed, and every immortal they had killed and so forth and so on, thousands of years worth of combined knowledge and power. The size and destructive capacity of the storm seem to be linked to the amount of the quickening itself.

Within the storm the victorious immortal copes with the raw power of another immortal being's soul cascading into hers. It is painful, it is ecstatic; it destroys and reforms the immortal's mind over and over again, layer by layer remaking her into a newer and more powerful being, whose own Quickening has expanded and evolved to include that of the fallen foe's.

There is more though. An immortal's quickening is very much a part of her. It is her consciousness, her soul. With each century it grows more potent and more eager for release. It is the mystical bond between the immortal's body and soul and through its power she can reshape herself in any way she sees fit.

An immortal's quickening remains a dormant but an ever-present aspect of their being from the moment of their reawakening after their first death. Over the centuries it grows as the immortal does, an ever-growing aura of potential. If an immortal were to live for a thousand years, it would grow but do little else.

The purpose of the quickening becomes apparent only after the loss of an immortal's head, when it is unleashed upon the immortal who took it (or simply the closest living immortal). With the death of one of their own, living immortals see something stir around the corpse, a billowing mass of whitish light that rushes toward its chosen recipient. The surge of power that accompanies its release causes electrical storms and fires, activates machinery and blows fuses. It stirs the winds and causes the earth to tremble and oh, the lightning.

As the now dead immortal's quickening mixes with that of victor she is imparted with all of his knowledge, all of his life. If she is able she can choose to funnel this whirlpool of knowledge into herself, making it one with her. If the power overflows, it empowers her Kenning, causing it to rise, until she can make peace with the life that is now her own.

The Quickening and Auras

To anyone with the power to see it, an immortal's aura is nearly identical to that of the mortals around

her; the difference is its size. An immortal's aura is as large as her quickening (in sq. ft), overpowering every other aura in that radius, making it slightly more difficult to read the aura of others in the room thereby imposing a -1 die penalty to all attempts to read another person's aura.

The Corona

The electrical storm created by the release of an immortal's quickening is called the Corona and is a spectacular event, covering a number of yards equal to 10 times the combined Kennings of the two immortals. It does damage equal to the higher of the two Kennings to anything with a durability of one or less. This damage can take any form the player of the victorious immortal wishes. From combustion to crushing, anything is possible.

Anyone caught within the Corona is dealt a number of dice of bashing damage equal to the higher of the two Kennings as well, though they may ignore one level of damage for every dot of Stamina they possess.

The storm lasts for 1 minute; an additional minute is tacked on for every dot of Kenning the immortal purchases.

The Power of the Quickening

Each immortal begins play with a pool of Quickening Points equal to the number rolled on a single die (or more than one die if they start with more than one Dot of Kenning). When an immortal takes another's head, the Victorious Immortal gains the loser's pool of Quickening points, as well as an additional three Quickening Points for each Dot of Kenning he possessed and 1 quickening for every 50 years that immortal was alive.

These points are added to the victor's pool and may be spent immediately.

- If an immortal, directly after taking the Quickening of another immortal, has a large enough pool to raise his Kenning one or more times he is obliged to do so only once. If he then chooses to do so again he can but is not required to.
- The player may spend Quickening points on any Skill or Skill Specialty that the fallen immortal possessed, up to their dot in it.
- The immortal's player may with the Storytellers permission take an appropriate Merit that the deceased Immortal possessed. Though reason should hold sway, remembering that an immortal's body cannot change too drastically. Giant should

never be allowed, while Ambidexterity or Strong Back is more reasonable.

- The player may choose to raise the Immortal's Honor, as long as the deceased Immortal possessed a higher rating than he did.
- The player may spend 5 quickening to learn one trick of his choice from the decedent's own suite of tricks, as long as his total Trick suite does not exceed his Kenning.

There are, sadly, less positive aspects of a quickening, they are rare, but do happen when an immortal embraces too much of their foes worse aspects.

- An immortal may lower his Honor by 1 dot during the quickening as long as his new honor does not become lower than their foe. In doing so they take on all of the dead immortal's derangements developed down to that level, even if they had already fought off a derangement previously. Doing so grants them 5 additional Quickening.
- An immortal may choose this time to have an epiphany, gaining the opponent's Code without the normal cost of a Willpower dot.
- An immortal's player may decide to take on one of their foes mental or social flaws for 3 quickening.

Releasing the Quickening

Jamal Muhammad and Harry Morgan find themselves locked in a challenge. Harry, the younger and far less experienced of the two, is fighting for dear life against the Hunter. With one final swing the (rightfully) overconfident Jamal overextends himself, misjudging his opponent's alacrity. With a mighty heave the inexperienced and broken grifter lops off his opponents head.

Harry isn't quite sure what happened, and at first doesn't believe he won. Because he has no problem conning people out of their well earned money his Honor is already 6, which means he doesn't have to make a roll for honor.

After a few seconds Jamal's body is enveloped in a whitish glow that then charges towards the unsuspecting vanquisher.

The Quickening's Corona has a radius of 400 yards, dealing 3 damage to everything within that radius that does not have a Durability rating of 2 or higher and 3 dice of damage to any people who happen to be in the zone (luckily there are none). Harry's player describes it as an intense pressure building up inside or underneath the objects, causing them to explode outward.

Meanwhile Harry is bequeathed Jamal's excess quickening (23) as well as five times his Kenning (15) for a total of 38 Quickening. Adding that to his own pool (8) grants him a total of 46 Quickening points. As he has enough Quickening to raise his Kenning (twice if he so wishes) he has to purchase the second dot of it. That leaves him with 30 Quickening to do with as he pleases. His first thought is to take the third dot as well but he decides against it. Instead he decides that the fight was too close and he wants to purchase a few dots of Weaponry, unfortunately he already had two and Jamal has only three, so he purchase the third dot for nine experience. He also notes that Jamal has a Weaponry specialty (Machete) but prefers his cavalry sword and ops not to take it. Looking over the sheet of his opponent he decides that Jamal's inherent aggression should bleed through a little bit and decides to take on the first two dots of intimidation for a total of 9 experience. He then notices that Jamal possesses the Gladiatorial Combat fighting style up to three and thinks that it would fit nicely into his repertoire taking two of the three dots for a total of six experience. He checks over the sheet one more time but realizes that he's down to six Quickening, and decides that he should probably hold onto some for later (one never knows after all).

After two minutes of destruction and mayhem, the Quickening ends and Harry Morgan walks away, more powerful, more aware, and hopefully a little better prepared for The Game ahead.

The Gathering

An unseen aspect of the Quickening, but an important part none the less, is what happens when a particularly powerful immortal loses their head.

During each Quickening there is a second, unseen aspect of the Corona that reaches far beyond the more obvious storm. This wave streaks out on all sides of the immortal, looking for another of equal or greater strength than the one who has fallen. If the victor was more powerful, or at least became as powerful as the fallen immortal, then this effect never takes place. If, as in the case of Harry Morgan, the victor was technically weaker than their foe, then this wave moves outward 1 mile for each dot of Kenning that the more powerful immortal had. If it still doesn't find another like it, it moves outward again and again for five days, until it has a radius of 5 times that of the Kenning of the dead immortal. If during that time it still doesn't find another immortal of equal or greater Kenning within that radius, every immortal within it must roll Resolve + Composure with a penalty equal to the difference

between their Kenning and that of the Fallen immortal. If they fail the roll, they become a part of The Gathering.

During a gathering the immortals who become a part of it find themselves drawn together. No matter how they try to fight it, it's as if God or Fate or Something wants to make sure that they end up where they are supposed to be, in the path of other immortals.

In a gathering strange accidents and odd occurrences become common place as the immortals are drawn to one another. But at the same time the immortals involved feel a great weight put upon them. Horrible nightmares, bad omens and worse days at the office all put the immortal on edge, until they feel the presence of another immortal. Then they slip over it.

Whenever two immortals that are part of a gathering come across one another they intuitively understand that it is time. There is no getting out of it, the gathering must be appeased, and there can be only one. This does not mean that friends will blindly attack one another, though it might. It simply means that they take one last meal with their friends, saying goodbye one last time before each goes out to face her destiny.

Once only one immortal is left standing that immortal's Kenning is checked against the Kenning of that of the first fallen immortal's; if it is higher than the other then the Gathering is ended. If it is lower, than the radius increases tenfold and every surviving immortal rolls again, even if they succeeded previously and were spared the effects of the previous gathering. Those who have rolled once already lose one die to the roll along with any other penalties.

This takes place over and over again until the final immortal's kenning equals or exceeds that of that first fallen immortal.

Gatherings are rare but destructive things. And it is easy for any immortal who survives one to see how one day they might end the game entirely, but only if a truly ancient and powerful immortal dies first...

Holy Ground

"Never fight on Holy Ground." When an immortal firsts learns this tenant they find it quaint, depending on their background, they may even find it archaic or, far more rarely, offensive. They don't understand why such a stricture should be placed on them. It's just another place right? Surely their Teacher isn't superstitious or worse, pious! Surely he means never in a church, or a mosque or a temple. He couldn't possibly mean everyone's holy ground.

It isn't usually until the neophyte immortal first steps on holy ground that they begin to understand. They feel the growing sense of calm settle over them and they feel power of the place flow through them that they begin to grasp the implications of what Holy Ground really means.

Places of Peace

Anyplace that has ever received the blessing or recognition of a community is considered to be holy ground. From cemeteries to cathedrals to sacrificial hearths to witching circles, all places blessed and cursed from the dawn of time until now are considered sanctuary in the eyes of the immortals.

It is interesting to note that it isn't the buildings or structures that are marked as sacred to Game, it is the earth beneath that is held in high regard, not the works of men. In fact, Immortals have safely burned empty churches, temples and abbeys to the ground for centuries, secure in the knowledge that they are doing no harm to anyone within the sanctuary.

Refuge

Whenever an immortal attempts to do harm to another living being they feel a sense that transcends simple dread and is best described as Doom. If the immortal is foolish enough to ignore this and insist on doing harm anyway, the experience that follows can be described as nothing less than harrowing. Though no one else can see or feel anything different, the immortal who dares to do harm finds they've become cold inside, as if a part of their soul has been stripped from them. Few wish to feel it again.

Whenever an immortal does physical harm to another being on holy ground they automatically lose one die of Honor. They then make an Honor roll to resist derangement less one die.

It should be noted that whatever set down the prohibition against harm seems to have made an exception for those who would protect themselves or others, those who do so feel no sense of doom or become dishonored for doing so.

The Doom

If it is seen as monstrous or hazardous for their soul to do harm on holy ground, taking the Quickening of another immortal is too awful to think on for long.

Even in the most apocryphal of lore, no immortal living today has ever seen or heard of a quickening on holy ground.

There are stories of those who have tried, but it was always a friend of a friend of a teacher. In all of history there is no record of such an act. But there

are situations that cannot be explained. Two immortals who meet on holy ground and are never seen or heard from again, abbeyes destroyed by mysterious acts of God, Immortals dying en masse, only to revive knowing something truly horrible has taken place.

When two immortals face each other in a challenge on holy ground and one strikes a killing blow, releasing the quickening, the game ends for those characters, as well as any mortal who witnesses it. If another immortal witnesses the exchange they revive a number of days equal to the total of the combating immortals' Kennings naked. If they fought within a man made structure it lay in shambles around the newly awakened immortal. Whether the attack took place in or outdoors all living plant and animal life, along with every mortal present is dead. Every immortal within a number of miles equal to five times the total of the two Kennings suffered a potentially fatal stroke or heart attack at the same moment that the head fell from its body.

Of the two contenders, nothing remains but their swords.

Healing and Revival

An immortal will, through the course of their immortal lives, be harmed in horribly violent and most likely lethal fashion on more than one occasion. The law of averages alone says that an immortal is more likely to be part of a 'fatal' car accident. And death by poisoning (accidental or otherwise) is far more common than you'd think. And they've already died violently at least once.

Immortality would be a horrible affair if an immortal were bound to a bed resting up whenever they are shot, stabbed or crushed. Luckily for them they have truly prodigious (some say ridiculous) constitutions. Even when they do not perceive any danger their body heals far faster than any human could hope for.

Many an assailant has murdered an immortal only to come face to face with them as they turn to leave, and with the exception of the removal of their head or the complete disintegration of their corporeal form there is no way known to man that allows for the final and permanent death of an immortal.

Most of the time an immortal heals just as the mortals around him do, though at a noticeably more rapid rate.

Immortals heal one level of bashing damage every minute, whether active or at rest. Their remarkable recuperative powers also allow them to heal one level of lethal damage an hour, mending torn flesh

and broken bones seamlessly with no need for medical aid.

Finally an immortal's body restores even the most grievous wounds so swiftly that medical science cannot begin to explain it, healing one aggravated wound every day. No matter how extreme the damage is the wounds mend as if by magic, even allowing severed limbs (with the exception of the head) to be reattached as long as they do not spend any length of time completely separate from the body.

Regeneration

Were those an immortal's only recuperative powers, he would still be a truly amazing creature. As any immortal knows, in the presence of their own kind or when in imminent danger, their bodies fortify themselves to an even greater extent.

During these trying times an immortal heals one level of bashing damage a turn. In addition, an immortal who suffers lethal damage during this time, finds the wounds closing once every minute. Finally, their enhanced regenerative abilities allow them to restore wounds lost to aggravated damage once every hour.

These extraordinary powers are granted to an immortal within the presence of their own kind, but they may also be called upon in time of need (for the rest of the scene) for one Edge. During these times the wound closes quickly and with little fanfare, it's there one minute and gone the next.

Instantaneous Restoration

On the rare occasion when an immortal's enhanced regenerative capacity has been accessed but still proves to be insufficient, the immortal may call on his edge to heal one level of damage no matter the type.

To do so an immortal need Use only a single Edge to instantly remove a single level of damage from his health chart. While this does take a moment of concentration (and an Instant Action as well) the immortal can heal a wound of any type (bashing, lethal or aggravated).

When an immortal uses his edge to close his wounds it is usually accompanied by a flash of the quickening, revealing the supernatural nature of the immortal even as it saves his life.

Revival

On the rare occasion in which an immortal is actually killed by someone, but retains their head, that death is only a temporary one. Unlike the rest

of us they will, in time, rise again and live another day.

When the last health level is filled with aggravated damage, but no one removes the immortal's head he heals the wound normally after 2 minutes or 3 hours, depending on whether or not his regenerative powers have been activated. Once a single level of damage has been repaired, they revive! Sore, bloody and often confused, the immortal will attempt to make their way to relative safety, both from their attackers and prying eyes, while they recover the their remaining wounds.

An immortal's revival is often accompanied by a sharp intake of air and a much belated scream as his consciousness returns to his once dead corpse.

Age and Maturity

As an immortal makes their way through the centuries, they accrue a great deal of knowledge and skill through experience and, on occasion, through the Quickening. These facts send a character well beyond the confines of character creation and experience, and require special systems.

Age and character Creation

Because of the great spans of time an immortal can live through, it quickly becomes tedious calculating the amount of experience that they receive over the centuries before the game even begins.

For the purpose of expediency we have age points which can be added to a character at character creation to represent the decades and centuries before the game begins.

Years Alive	50	100
Attributes	1	2
Skills	2	4
Skill Specialties	1	2
Merits	2	4

These dots are added to the initial points at character creation and are not added together, a 250 year old immortal, for example, would gain an additional 5 Attributes, 10 Skills, 5 specialties and 8 merits.

An immortal more than 50 years old may spend up to half of his beginning Quickening points at character creation. It should

Maturity through Experience

Once a character has been created and played, the above option becomes less viable as it no longer allows the player to have complete control over their character's development.

For this we have an experience chart to represent down-time between sessions that stretches out through the centuries. While this is not needed for a game that jumps days, weeks, or even months, it isn't usually something to be used for a game involving mortals.

During the intervening centuries the immortal may only spend experience to raise a trait by one for every fifty years that pass.

Years of Down Time	Experience Awarded
1 to 5	4 each year
6 to 15	2 each year
16 to 40	1 each year
41 or more	1 for every 2 years

This experience is sublimated by certain factors, based around how Honorably the immortal goes about spending their eternity.

- The Immortal gains 1 experience point for every dot of Honor they possess.
- They also may choose to give up a dot of Honor for five additional experience or quickening points, on top of the above bonus. If this option is used then the immortal must also roll honor to determine if they gain a derangement. Also this feature may only be used once a century.

The player must also decide how they spend their eternity in more broad terms, are they aggressive players of the game? Do they spend eternity in a monastery away from others of their kind? Do they simply try to enjoy the time they have with mortal friends and lovers? All of these help to determine the amount of experience and quickening they receive throughout the century.

- Active immortals of the game receive a single die to roll for every fifty years that pass, adding together the total of each number that is rolled. This die represents the total amount of bonus experience and quickening points during the intervening centuries.
- Aggressive Contenders make a similar roll, only each die they roll is a chance die. Each die should be noted as a failure, dramatic failure or a success. For every 'failed' die the immortal's player rolls 1 die as the active player does.

For every die that rolls an exceptional success the player rolls 1 die, but is allowed to reroll any 10s rolled.

After the following two rolls are made the player rolls every die that originally rolled a

1, these dice also reroll 10s, but the total is subtracted from the immortals total experience and quickening point pool.

- Solitaire or in other ways secluded immortals roll one die for each century that passes, as opposed to one for every fifty years. They may opt however, to raise any trait by 2 over a fifty year period, as they have longer to contemplate and practice in relative safety.

Maintenance

As the immortals make their way through the ages the world changes around them constantly, making it hard to keep track of their many friends, contact and resources.

For every century that passes an immortal must spend 1 experience point to maintain each dot of any of the following merits: Allies, Contacts, Friend, Mentor, Resources, Retainers, Staff and Status. This cost is mitigated if the immortal buys a new dot in the Merit. If one of these merits is part of the immortal's Code affinity list then 1 experience will maintain 2 dots. In addition, maintaining the sixth or higher dot of a Merit costs 2 points (one if it is part of their code).



APPENDIX I

THE WATCHERS

For four thousand years the watchers have observed the lives of the immortals, watching as The Game unfolded. These men and women dedicate their lives to watching and chronicling the lives of the immortals that walk among us in hopes that through their understanding they may come to comprehend the purpose of The Game.

To the watchers immortals are living history, each a breathing microcosm of the culture that bore them and watching one make his way across the pages of history says a lot about that culture. Does the immortal falter under the weight of change; dying out like his people? Or does he adapt, adding the new and altering his world view so as to survive? The answers to these questions fascinate the watchers just as much as the question of who will win The Game and what The Prize may be.

Their Beginning

According to the chronicles themselves, the Watchers began with a single man, called Ammaletu of Akkad.

According to his writings Ammaletu was the vassal of the god-king Gilgamesh, charged with putting down the ruler's life and history so that future generations could learn from his story.

When Gilgamesh was swept away by a raging river while attempting a crossing, Ammaletu and the rest of his entourage were horrified. Many men died trying to retrieve their king's body. Later that night as they prepared to cremate their king he rose as if from a sleep completely unaware that he had died only hours before.

Ammaletu goes on with his duty, worshipping his god-king just as the others do, and all the while taking down his life as he had been charged.

According to Ammaletu Enkidu was a real man, a wild thing from the forest who came to challenge the god-king. When he entered the god-king's court Gilgamesh reacted violently to his presence, holding his head and collapsing.

At this point Ammaletu's view of his king is shattered as the foreigner is in fact immortal, just as Gilgamesh. He is also present, at his king's behest, when Enkidu teaches the god-king that he is not, in fact, a god that he must one day abdicate the throne.

Though the chronicler is disheartened to learn the truth of his master's immortality he becomes resolute in keeping to his duty. As he grows older he brings in an apprentice and then another, teaching them the truth of their king.

These learned men watch Gilgamesh long after Ammaletu himself dies and longer, after Gilgamesh indeed does pass on, going into his next life. As this brotherhood grew they began to take note of the other immortals that Gilgamesh interacted with and assigned them their own chroniclers.

By the time that that Gilgamesh's own quickening was released the Brotherhood of Ammaletu had grown both in size and scope, observing and cataloguing every immortal they found.

Over the centuries they grew more and more adept at infiltrating the lives of their charges, inducting friends, family and lovers into their ranks to better understand them.

The Brotherhood of Ammaletu

One thousand years before Christ, the Brotherhood of Ammaletu had spread out over the known world as it sought to learn more of the immortals that it discovered. The brotherhood existed as a loose network of cults each with no more than ten or so adherents and each centered on a single immortal.

Many cults were family affairs, with each member being somehow related by blood to the cult leader. This was done to insure that secrecy was kept at all time but was also used by the more paranoid cults to ensure that their members were not immortal.

Though members of the brotherhood had to travel on occasion when their charge moved on; they always kept a small library in which they could compile all of the chronicles of the one that they watch.

To recognize one another they marked themselves with a symbol, whether on their flesh or with jewelry did not matter. The symbol itself was called the "Seal of Ammaletu" and was said to be his personal mark.

The Brotherhood came together only once a generation. The leaders of each of the cults would come to a place appointed at the previous assembly, most commonly in the city of Babylon. They would bring with them a list of the deeds that their charge had done and a list of the immortals that he had

met. On a rare occasion they would announce a name to be removed from the records as one or another immortal killed him. It was during these meetings that the Roster was first made; a list of every known immortal in the world, along with their description and origin if possible, and a listing of their deeds. At each meeting the Elders would come together and update the roster, to make sure that no one was falling through the cracks.

It became apparent to many of the better founded cults that some of their newer fellows were misinterpreting the purpose of their work. Some branches of the brotherhood had become true cults, worshipping their charge even openly at times. Others had become hostile to the idea of immortals and The Game, killing their charge or using him to find and destroy those immortals he met in his journey. Worse, some branches were vanishing all together, disbanding with the loss of their charge or assaulted by the renegade aspects within the Brotherhood.

Something had to be done.

Jerusalem

One of the Oldest and most well respected branches, led by a descendant of Ammaletu, called Benjamin in the chronicles, came to the young city of Jerusalem, where their charge had chosen to stay. They quickly learned that the metropolis had many immortal inhabitants, each with their own branch of the brotherhood watching them.

Benjamin came to the leaders of each branch with a proposal. Each cult had great resources at their disposal, as well as a great store of knowledge in the form of the chronicles. Taking that along with the fact that they were constantly interacting by dint of their immortal charges, they were acting in a redundant fashion. Benjamin felt that the cults should join together.

This new faction called itself "Those who watch Jerusalem" and with their combined resources they built the first true archive.

The Faction's most fundamental policy was that it was bound to Jerusalem and its territories. No more were there separate cults within the city working alone.

The leader of each cult was made the *Archivist* of his immortal, and was to appoint a single member of the faction to watch and chronicle her life.

The rest of the old cult was dispersed throughout the city, where their charge would be most likely to go. They lived their lives, watching for her or

another immortal to come close, keeping tabs on their movements and reporting back to the chronicler.

The Archivists meanwhile worked hard on the Chantry, cataloguing the lives of their immortal wards, checking and rechecking old dates and interactions amongst the other chronicles.

Benjamin himself acted as the director of the faction, as opposed to the leader, making sure that no one stepped on anyone else's toes.

As other branches entered the city they were inducted into the faction, though many remained nomadic. They spread the message that when next the brotherhood came together it would be within Jerusalem.

When next the Brotherhood came together it was indeed within the halls of the Library of Jerusalem. Benjamin, then still only thirty years old, showed the leaders of the various cults the majesty of the Archive. He bade that when they next came together it would be in seven years, and each should bring with them copies of all of their chronicles.

Within only a few years word came that other cities too had shaped themselves into similar societies, and they corresponded with Benjamin and his "Watchers of Jerusalem" as often as possible.

The Convention of Watchers

In 932bc, after only seven years, the Brotherhood once again convened but under much different circumstances. The halls of the Archive were filled with only a few factions as opposed to numerous faceless cults. The Watchers were by far the largest of the factions but there were others. The Hunters were made up of purely militaristic cults who wished to destroy the immortals, and with them the brotherhood if need be, while the Votaries wished to reveal the immortals to the world, to worship them as the divinities that they were. The Watchers themselves were unsure as to their stance, as many wished to use their newfound solidarity to maneuver The Game to best insure the survival of mankind.

Benjamin took the floor early in third day of the Convention, after the Roster had been updated and the archive was stocked, if not sorted. He then revealed to the assembled body his vision of the future of the Brotherhood.

Each city would have its own hierarchy of watchers, who recorded the lives of the immortals that resided there. They would not interfere in the lives of their charges. The hunters were furious that they weren't to put an end to the immortal menace, while the

votaries were devastated that they could not take part in the lives of those that they adored.

Benjamin quickly and decisively brought both factions to heel, threatening those who could be reasoned with and slaughtering the rest.

The convention saw the ascendancy of the Watchers from cult to Order.

It would be foolish to suggest it was a smooth transition, but as they were first and foremost scholars, many took to the new hierarchy well. Those that did not were branded Renegades and banished or destroyed.

It was decided that each city's coordinator would come together once every seven years to further advance the Roster and the Archive in Jerusalem. In addition, each cell would send its members to the Chantry of the Order so that they could be properly schooled in its arts as well as conditioned to ensure their adherence to their protocols.

The Coming of Alexandros

In the later part of the 9th century a Greek mason called Alexandros joined the Order in Jerusalem. Though he was placed into the Archives as a historian, cataloguing the various chronicles and placing them into context within the historical record, Alexandros was fascinated with the complexities that shaped the immortals. He asked incessant questions about their mentality and the way their bodies worked. He wanted to know about Quickenings and the Game and the Prize, most of all he wanted to know where they came from. Could they have children? Did they have parents?

After only ten years within the order Alexandros had a following amongst the archivists. The then leader of the Order, Benjamin the Younger, conceded that the questions should indeed be answered and created the position of Researcher.

It was the Researchers' duty to unlock the many mysteries that surround The Game and they've worked tirelessly ever since.

Babylon

Four centuries would pass before any change came to the Order, but when it did the Watchers nearly found themselves destroyed.

Babylon conquered the city in 586 BC, and in doing so inadvertently destroyed a great deal of the archive. Luckily it was kept in the ancient – and dead – language *Akkadu* so the secret of the Order was kept safe, but a great many chronicles were lost. What was saved was sent with the surviving

members of the order to Babylon, where they took refuge with the Watchers of Babylon.

When the Order once again convened it was decided that never again would there be a single Archive or a single Chantry. Each city would keep one of its own.

In addition they created the Tribunal, a governing body that would act in the stead of the Chantry, coming to the aid of individual cells and deciding who was fit to watch a given immortal. This last act was a response to the resurgence of the renegades in the form of Vraj, a watcher who used the chronicles to help his charge in playing The Game.

From Then to Now

It seems strange to say that a society has changed little over the course of three millennia but it's true. Though they've become even more adept at hiding, and their records have grown large enough to fill warehouses, the Watchers are much the same, simply on a larger scale. In the last internal census there were 19,784,128 watchers in the world, watching the lives of approximately 200,000 immortals; infiltrating every level of every society across the globe but for the sole purpose of watching The Game, rooting for this or that immortal but never interfering.

Renegades

A shadow over the watchers has, since that first convention, been the Renegades. Those who forswear the Oath toward their own ends tend to show up from time to time, either using their contacts to ensure their charge's success, or worse destroying them outright, killing immortals wantonly to ensure that no one wins the game.

The Watcher Society

Today, the order is organized much as was laid down by Benjamin the Elder, with each cell in charge of a single region, working independently but with a common goal and ensuring the Order's survival. But the society itself is vast, with members who are completely oblivious as to its nature. Many of the lowest tiers of the organization are simply people who know that they fund a secret organization. Some are criminals, others businessmen.

Secret Societies

At the lowest strata of the Watcher organization is a collection of businesses that work together to ensure that the Watchers never are short on funds.

These individuals believe that they belong to a secret society such as the Free Masons or some other fraternal order, enjoying small privileges in exchange for certain activities that range from the mundane to the abstract. Few if any of these "watchers" ever learn the truth of the organization's purpose though.

New Watchers

Those who have been initiated are rarely actually drawn from the ranks of the many "secret societies" that the watchers keep as a front. Instead they tend to be made up of normal men and women who have stumbled across the existence of The Game and have been approached by a Watcher. Before a potential member is even approached though, they are subject to a complete background check as well as a full psychological and physical workup, often without the subject being aware of the inquiry.

Once the okay has been given by the Order, a *handler*, often in the form of a Regional Supervisor, will offer her a position within the organization. If she accepts she will be sent to *The Academy*, where she will be trained in subterfuge, history, memorization and stealth. She'll also be conditioned subtly to be loyal to the Order and the oath of secrecy.

Once a new watcher has successfully finished their training at the Academy she is often sent home where she contacts the local coordinator who places her in the Archives as a *Historian*.

Historians

Often made up of the newest recruits, Historians are the grunts of the organization. One part researcher one part gopher, it is the historian's job to study the combined chronicles of all of the immortals in a region, looking for discrepancies and holes. If they discover one though they pass it onto the immortal's current Chronicler or contacts a Researcher to look into it, as they must return to their fact checking and compilation.

When and if they are placed in the field or given a promotion to Researcher it is because they have proven themselves to their superiors, either as being particularly knowledgeable of a specific subject or having some skill that would prove valuable to other researchers or to a chronicler.

Bystanders

One step up from a Historian, a Bystander's duty is to watch one or more immortals and report back to their chronicler. Often placed strategically

throughout a region, Bystanders are expected to be familiar with every immortal found on a region's Roster. Their notes are never complex, often simple notations and mnemonics written on a notepad or spoken into a recorder, but they prove invaluable to Chroniclers and Researchers.

On occasion a Bystander is put onto a specific Immortal's case, if that immortal is known to move around a great deal or is particularly cunning, he must be watched more carefully, that is when the Bystanders become particularly useful. Those Bystanders who watch a specific immortal are often the ones who replace a current chronicler when he retires or moves on.

Researchers

Archivists, who are particularly adept at deciphering dead languages or recognizing particularly obscure references to this or that immortal, often find themselves within the ranks of the Researchers. Each Researcher possesses a specialty, something that they do better than other watchers, that makes them particularly adept at a specific field.

Some researchers study the banking methods of the immortals, while others study particularly archaic documents or chronicles. Others still study mortal history throughout the records, observing how the immortals affect their surroundings. Many Researchers however study specific immortals who may or may not exist or who have a habit of slipping past their watchers.

The latter type are often considered the chronicler of that immortal, despite his absence from any sort of observable record, and if (or when) he shows up, she is often put into the field to study him first hand as best as she can.

Chroniclers

Considered by some to be the *true* watchers within the order, a Chronicler's duty is to watch a single immortals every move, recording his *deeds* and his interactions with others of his kind. While a chronicler does indeed get a great deal of help from Bystanders it is her duty to most of the leg work, and to stay close to the immortal without him becoming aware of the situation. She is also considered the most knowledgeable living person when it comes to her Charge.

Though the Order has rules against fraternization between watchers and immortals it is vital that the Chronicler can insinuate herself into his life in some

way that gives her reason to be close but allows her to keep her distance.

Though Chroniclers are usually chosen from the best within the organization, there are exceptions. Most notably when it concerns a new immortal, in which they usually try to find someone who is already part of his life, as opposed to insinuating someone new.

Coordinators

Drawn from the most experienced and trusted of the Watchers in a city, the Coordinator of an area has the added duty of making sure everything runs smoothly within her jurisdiction. What an area or jurisdiction means is different from place to place, in some places a single city (such as New York or London) may be considered the whole of the jurisdiction, while in others it is a far larger geographical area that rarely adhere to international borders the whole of Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio are considered one region along with a great deal of Ontario.

Supervisors

The Leading most Coordinator on a continent is called the Supervisor or Director, it is her duty to keep in contact with each of the Area Coordinators as well as communicate with other Regional Directors.

The Tribunal

Made up of the mass of the Regional Supervisors, the Tribunal meets formally once every seven years, and is mandated with mediating disputes and doling out punishment to those who break the laws of the order.

They also promote individual watchers to the post of Area Supervisor and are vote to determine the replacement of one of their own when he retires.

Becoming a Watcher

While the Watcher Merit represents the basic training given to every watcher when they go through the academy, possessing it does not make one a chronicler. In fact it simply allows the character to be a member.

A character with just the prerequisites needed for the merit is a Bystander or Historian but even then a player may wish to make their character more adept at her assignment, below are some *suggestions* for players who want their character to better fit the mold of a watcher of her station.

Historians

The Grunts of the scholarly Order, the historians are the ones that look up information or cross reference the lives of the immortals that others watch; many who have been in the Archives for too long, or who have chosen not to pursue field work eschew social skills altogether, focusing all of their attention on the archives themselves.

Trait Suggestions: (Attributes) Intelligence 3, Resolve 3, Stamina 3; (Skills) Academics 2, Investigation 2, Occult or Computers 2, Stealth 1, Larceny 1; (Merits) Encyclopedic Knowledge, Contacts (Academic).

Bystanders

The eyes and ears of the Chronicler, entrenched around the city in odd places, Bystanders make it their job to not be seen. They are scenery at best, often trained in disappearing fast and leaving few clues behind if things go bad. Though they are well studied they are expected to be able to blend with a crowd, forcing them to interact with the people around them.

Trait Suggestions: (Attributes) Intelligence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; (Skills) Investigation 2, Stealth 2, Socialize 2, Streetwise or Subterfuge 2 (merits) Eidetic Memory, Contacts.

Researchers

Those who dedicate their lives to discovering the truth about the most obscure of references wind up as Researchers. Masters of bizarre facts and vague clues, researchers can be as much Indiana Jones as they are librarians.

Trait Suggestions: (Attributes) Intelligence 3, Resolve 3, Stamina 3; (Skills) Academics 3, Investigation 3, Occult 2, Computers, Medicine or Politics 2, Athletics 2, Firearms 1, Survival 3, Persuasion 2, Streetwise or Subterfuge 2; (Merits) Eidetic Memory, Encyclopedic Knowledge

Chroniclers

The elite in a group of elites, Chroniclers are Bystander and Historian as well as a borderline sociopath, knowing that one day they're going to have to watch a possible friend die knowing that they could have stopped it. It's a hard life, but well worth it.

Trait Suggestions: (Attributes) Intelligence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; (Skills) Academics 3, Investigation 3, Politics 2, Larceny 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3; (Merits) Allies, Contacts, Eidetic Memory, Resources, Status

APPENDIX II

CONTENDERS FOR THE PRIZE

Each is a living vessel of all of the knowledge and wisdom that come with centuries of experience. They see and do things that would leave any man in awe if accounted. But for all of that they are still human, they are still fallible. They make bad decisions that color the rest of eternity and spiral out and touch the lives of millions. And they get to sit there and impotently watch it happen.

But there is a glimmer of hope. If they can reach the Gathering, they have a chance at the prize, a chance to make everything right again. Below is a sampling of just a few of the contenders in The Game. Each has their own, often bizarre, history filled with romance and regret, and each is dangerous in their own way.

The following are a sampling of just a few of the Contenders that an immortal may face. Each is a possible danger to an immortal's life, as well as a possible ally in the centuries ahead. Are they friend or foe? That's up to you.

Because of the nature of The Game, all of the immortals below are written up as combatants even if they do not currently (or never have) wielded a weapon.

George Bertrand

The Lay-about

Quote: "*Dunno, whachuannado?*"

Background: Georges Bertram was, in every sense of the word, a rake. He lived hard and fast and bedded just about every respectable girl in the small village where he grew up. Not coming from money himself Georges was still living comfortably at a relatively young age due to a knack for business.

One summer day not too long after his 18th birthday Georges was rollicking with his boss' wife by the sea. While trying to take off a boot, he lost his balance and plummeted thirty feet to his death. When he awoke some hours later it was dark and he was soaked to the bone. When he reached his village he learned that the woman had returned many hours earlier hysterically crying out that she had killed him. Not one to argue (he was finished in the town anyway) Georges headed to Paris. He'd always wanted to travel anyway.

Georges' first teacher, Elda Baton, was surprised at the speed in which he took to the sword as, while in no way a master, he was able to best her consistently in only three weeks. But what really amazed her was

his skill at making money. The kid seemed to draw wealth to himself like offal draws flies. It wasn't too long before every noble and bourgeois, immortal and other otherwise, wanted him to help them with their financial affairs.

Georges snapped. One night, shortly after defeating the immortal financier Maud Dufay, Georges stepped onto a ship headed for the Americas and vanished.

He reappeared, as Vartan Durko, in Montreal 7 years later. Meaner and more dangerous still with a sword, Bertram made a splash when he purchased a shipping company outright. Over the next century he was able to parlay the profits of the venture into a small fortune, and then tripling that fortune by playing the American stock market.

In 1916 George "Jerry" Bertrand purchased a modest home outside of Portland, Michigan, far from the bustle of New York and farther still from The Game. He lived there with his wife Denalda until 1929 when she left him, taking their adopted son with her the day after Black Tuesday.

Broken and Penniless, Bertrand went a little crazy that day and for the next 40 years, did little more than sit and watch his house fall into ruin. In 1966 George reemerged into the world. Since that time he has worked odd jobs around Portland using different names, trying to make back every red cent he lost that day. In 1988 Bertrand walked into a broker's office in Detroit with five thousand dollars and a list of stocks he picked randomly from the newspaper. When three of those stocks bottomed out in the first six months he realized that whatever gift he'd been given was gone and he went back to his life. The last stock he purchased is now worth 100 times what it was worth twenty years ago and Bertram doesn't even know it.

The people of Portland know him by many different names, but they know him nonetheless. He's spun a web of kind words and crooked grins so that should he ever need it, he's got the whole town on his side. Despite his hermitage taking him away from the world for a generation, it didn't protect him from The Game as he's been challenged 12 times over the past 80 years. His garden of automobiles grows larger after each one.

Description: Tall and Lanky in a dangerous way, George has a way of making friends fast with just a smile. Often seen wearing little more than a pair of carpenter pants, some high tops and a wife beater, George still has the arm of any lady in town when he

wants it, which is impressive considering his complete lack of style or anything resembling 'good looks'.

Storyteller Hints: You've gone native, despite who you were way back when, you're nothing without your do-re-me, so you live in a creepy old house out in the middle of nowhere and flip burgers at the local greasy spoon, it's not exactly where you expected to be on your 216th birthday but you have to admit, its growing on you, a fact that scares the ever living crap out of you.

When it comes to the game, George plays up the defensive side almost to a fault, refusing to attack and often simply going where they want him to until they slip up, leaving themselves open to a single devastating (and usually fatal) blow.

Real Name: Georges Bertram

First Teacher: Elda Baton

Apparent Age: 18

Real Age: 216

Code: Mask

Known Aliases: Bert Durko, Durk Bertrand, Jerry Bertrand, Al Rand, Vartan Durko

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Politics (Business 2) 4

Physical Skills: Larceny 2, Stealth (Blending in) 3, Survival 3, Weaponry (Broad Sword 2) 4

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Persuasion (Women) 3, Socialization 4, Streetwise (Them Kids) 4, Subterfuge (Fake IDs) 3

Merits: Occluded Past (●●), Fighting Style: Swordsmanship (●●●), Reputation (●), Allies (locals) (●●●●), Resources (●●●●)

Willpower: 5

Honor: 6

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 7

Integrity: 3

Defense: 4

Speed: 12

Health: 7

Kenning: 3

Tricks: Impromptu Weapon, Knowing Defense, Quickened Shield

Edge/per turn: 12/1

Weapon: Scottish Broadsword (12L)

Quickening: 16 (releases 29)

From the Chronicle of George Bertrand

Current Alias: George Bateman

Born: 1792

Cultural Affiliation: French

First Death: Rolled off of a cliff during foreplay Champagne, France 1810

First Teacher: Elda Baton; Paris, France 1811

Current Base of Operation: Portland, MI, USA

Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: Shiftless lay about

Watcher: Ernie Brewbaker (2007 -)

It's the damnedest thing. I'm still not entirely sure what I witnessed. one minute George is sitting there having a laugh with that creep Horatio and then bam he's on the ground looking up at Horatio like it was his fault and not two seconds later he was dead, just dead. Honestly if I didn't know any better I would have thought it to be a stroke.

Evidently George was right though, because with a quick look around Horatio (that cannot be this greasy freak's real name) starts digging a freaking grave *right there in his back yard*. After an hour or so he finishes digging the hole and drops George in, who by the way hasn't gotten up yet. seriously I was starting to think maybe George wasn't really *the* George Bertrand, we've been wrong before, anyway, he throws one shovel full of dirt on good ole George and sure enough that bum starts sputtering and bellowing up from the grave. I'll be damned if that Horatio kid didn't up and faint right there. George must've really thought he did it too because within ten minutes it was Horatio that was buried four feet down.

That hick even parked a station wagon on top of the kid.

The damnedest thing I have ever seen.

E. Brewbaker 4/08/2008

Maximilian Cabrillo

Hunter with a vendetta

Quote: "I'm looking for someone, maybe you can help?"

Background: The middle son of a wealthy Mexican land owner, Max grew up believing that he could have what he wanted until he was 20 when his parents were murdered and the family land confiscated by soldiers. Max and his brothers struck out on their own.

It wasn't long before they turned to illicit means to support themselves; robbery, blackmail and horse theft. By the turn of the century Max and his brothers had made quite a name for themselves throughout Mexico and the American south west as

murderous bastards who were not, under any circumstances, to be messed with. It wasn't until the graduated to robbing banks and trains that they started getting real heat though.

In May of 1905, Max and his brothers decided to rob a bank in Tucson; they weren't expecting the sheriff to be waiting for them when they tried to leave the bank. That sheriff, one Jeb MacMillan, had a reputation for never missing when he drew his pistols but Max opened fire on him anyway. Jeb took the three of them down in moments, though he was wounded in the gut in the process.

Unfortunately for the trio, the wound wasn't fatal, as Sheriff MacMillan was immortal. But as he'd taken a near fatal wound, he realized that it was time to move on. He hadn't realized in all the commotion that the gunfight had been with a potential immortal. Nor did he realize that he had triggered that immortality. By the time Max revived the next day the Sheriff had left town quietly.

Max was discovered by a Brit called Cormac Fitzhugh, a horse thief by trade, Cormac was looking for the Sheriff as well when he came across the angry young immortal. Over the next two years Cabrillo traveled with his teacher, learning The Game and nursing a near-irrational hatred of the man he blamed for his brothers' deaths.

When he caught wind of MacMillan in Hastings, Nebraska Max killed Cormac when the old rogue tried to stand between him and his prey. It was just the first in a long line of immortals that he felt got in his way. Even though Max tends to lose track of his quarry every few years he always ends up picking up the trail again, once he even did so in 1944 while invading Normandy. Though both were on the same side of the war effort, Cabrillo couldn't help but trying to hunt the solitaire down. Now 64 years later Cabrillo is considered one of the most dangerous immortals in the American South-West, with 34 heads taken, all in search for the coward "Dead Eye" MacMillan.

Description: Tall and predatory in bearing, Maximilian is built for killing, often seen wearing simple, utilitarian clothes with a black leather duster over them to hide his English long sword (the sword that he took from his Teacher when he beheaded him). at the turn of the 21st century Max Dyed his hair Platinum blonde for unknown reasons, though it is shocking next to his dark skin, it tends to make people steer clear of the immortal, which is probably just what he wants.

Storyteller Hints: You're angry, always and forever angry. Despite the fact that MacMillan killed your brothers in self defense when *you* opened fire over a

century ago, you still cry vengeance and will not rest until you've taken his head. After that it'll be only a matter of time before someone else does something to enrage you all over again, and so the wheel spins.

First Teacher: Cormac Fitzhugh

Apparent Age: 29

Real Age: 132

Code: Gauntlet

Known Aliases: Max Cobrillo

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Craft 2, Occult 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (running) 4, Drive (Ride) 2, Firearms (revolvers) 3, Stealth (cities) 2, Survival 2, Weaponry (long swords) 5

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 1

Merits: Disarm (●●), Fighting Style: Gladiatorial Combat (●●), Allies (Organized Crime) (●●●), Danger Sense (●●),

Willpower: 5

Honor: 5

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 3

Integrity: 1

Defense: 2

Speed: 11

Health: 9

Kenning: 4

Tricks: Cruel Barb, Ignorant Flesh, Recognition

Edge/per turn: 13/1

Weapon: Long Sword (13L)

Quickening: 14 (Releases 28)

From the Chronicle of Maximilian Cabrillo

Current Alias: Max Cobrillo

Born: 1876

Cultural Affiliation: Mexican

First Death: Shot to death by Sheriff while robbing a bank; Tucson, Arizona 1905

First Teacher: Cormac Fitzhugh

Current Base of Operation: Mobile

Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: Hunter

Watcher: David P. Grisham (1991 -)

Well, he's done it again. This guy just won't quit. Tonight he took on that Willie Bly fellow, they evidently had some grudge going back to 1912, when Willie beat him at poker and Cabrillo accused him of

cheating. Not that it matters, Max would have been pissed off at him for some other reason had it gone different.

How can someone burn so hot twenty four hours a day for over a century? I'll never understand it-

Oh shit, I thought he spotted me for sure, he came right at me, all he wanted was a smoke though, I gave him the pack, I think I just quit anyway.

D. Grisham 7/13/2007

Giulietta Malatesta

The Beautiful Monster

Quote: "I've always loved you."

Background: Julia Room is a name on just about everyone's lips these days. She's beautiful, elegant, extremely talented, what's not to love? Of course most people don't realize that she's actually much older than 18, in fact she remembers a time when there was no "new world" let alone a Hollywood.

Julia was born in Rimini Italy in 1378, brought up in the house of the Galeotto Malatesta. When he died she was left in the care of her older brother Carlo, whom she would often argue with as he refused to allow her to marry. One night in her 18th year Giulietta slipped out of their home to meet with the captain of Carlo's guard. After a quick romp she headed back to her room when it became apparent that her brother was still up and around. As she leapt from a tree to her bedroom, something she had done before, she slipped on the dewy ledge knocking her unconscious as she fell to her apparent death.

No one missed her until the next morning when she was discovered by Alberto Prospero, an architect hired by her brother. Alberto's presence triggered the girl's immortality and she awoke. After shooing her up to her room he found her again and explained to her what she was, and that he had been watching her for some time.

He trained her in secret for the whole of his time at the chateau and she became well versed in the way of swordplay but lacked the necessary follow through to be a strong player. She knew that if she were to survive it would have to be through guile.

And that was the way of it until 1583, when her guile failed her. The immortal Flavius, called the Roman by others, turned her tricks against her, making her love him before attempting to take her head while she slept. His Quickening was her Epiphany and that night, her mind broken, she became a hunter.

Unlike others who take up the Gauntlet, Giulietta plays The Game only fitfully, when she feels that she's been betrayed. She takes a young immortal as a

lover and showers him with gifts and money and other pleasures, all the while making him feel a prisoner with her jealousy. When (not if) they grow tired of her constant accusations she takes their head, both to punish their betrayal of her "love" and to make sure that they can be together forever.

This is not a game to her, it is a psychosis. She really does believe that she loves these men and that their death and the deaths of anyone who gets between them are the only way that they can be together.

Today though, she is the pop-star Julia Room, and her celebrity suitor, Eric Tremain, has made her the happiest she's been in a long time which bodes ill for the young actor and his wandering eye. However, despite her astounding number of Quickenings Giulietta hasn't actually raised a blade in challenge since the late 18th century and as such would be in dire straits if an immortal actually came looking for her.

Description: Giulietta was blessed with an beauty that is, in a word, transcendent. No matter the place, time or style in which she moved she has always been regarded as the apex of what it is to be beautiful. Light hair and dark skin, full but lithe figure, with a voice fit for heaven and a body built for the bedroom she has cut a swath through history, modeling time and again for artists the world over. Only when she is threatened with being alone does her madness touch her dark eyes, brightening them with starbursts of hysteria. Only then does she reveal herself to be the threat that she is.

Storyteller Hints: Beautiful, graceful, startlingly talented, these are the things that everyone sees when they meet her. She seems sure of herself. It's only when someone comes between her and her "Love" that her façade cracks, if it's a mortal she'll kill him outright, if it's an immortal... well she'll probably kill him outright too if she can. If it's her lover that wants to end the relationship she won't even let him draw his blade. He's dead the moment the words leave his mouth unless he's wily enough.

Real Name: Giulietta Malatesta

First Teacher: Prosper

Apparent Age: 17

Real Age: 631

Code: Gauntlet (Previously a Rascal)

Known Aliases: Julia Room; Juliet Montfort, Julie Harper, Jules Montgomery, Julianne DuPont

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Crafts 2, Investigation 2, Occult (Vampires) 2, Politics (High Society) 5

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Drive 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 3, Weaponry (Long Sword 2) 4

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression (Music 3) 5, Intimidation 1, Persuasion (Seduction 3) 6, Socialize 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Striking Looks (●●●●), Reputation (●●●●), Sanctuary (Comfort) (●●), Fame (●●●●), Occluded Past (●●●●), Contacts (Hollywood, High Society, Music Industry), Resources (●●●●), Fighting Finesse (●●)

Willpower: 6

Honor: 3 (Irrationality- 7, Fixation- 6, Hysteria- 4)

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 7

Integrity: 3

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Health: 8

Kenning: 4

Tricks: Hidden Steel, Know thy Enemy, Recognition, Incredible Speed

Edge/per turn: 13/2

Weapon: Long Sword (13L) (8L while rusty)

Quickening: 13 (releases 37)

Flaw: Rusty (Weaponry)

the box, but I kind of want to see if can make anything of himself... if he survives Her first that is.

M. Duvall 9/02/2007

Oda-Hanshi

The Cruel Samurai

Quote: "Are you prepared for this?"

Background: Sato Kenji (Mr. Sato to gaijin) is the CEO of a major Japanese automotive company. He spent twenty years climbing the ladder to that position and he is a man to be feared. To walk into his office is like stepping into an arsenal. Every wall is covered with swords, spears, shields and armor. The man himself may be old but when he speaks one gets a sense of looking upon a mountain god. His business acumen is keen to the point of being supernatural; his eye for corruption is uncanny. And his heart is as cold as stone. So say those who work for him.

Among the immortals of Tokyo know him by a different name. He is Oda-Hanshi, The teacher of teachers. Most of the immortals living within the city have spent at least some time at the feet of this master, and those that haven't know the name well. They don't know how old he really is, though they know that he was the apprentice of the legendary Taro, Japan's oldest immortal.

They know that he is a man of honor, and any who know him say that if you are challenged by the master that you have committed an atrocity worth dying for.

Born in the year 1331, Masakatsu was the greatest samurai that Clan Oda had ever produced. Granted by the gods themselves, Masakatsu seemed destined for greatness even as a child. By the year 1388 he had become one of the greatest generals in the Owari Province, when a particularly bloody skirmish with a neighboring tribe turned on him, the general committed jumonji-giri, only to awake many hours later unharmed. Horrified that he somehow survived and was without a wound, Oda Masakatsu believed himself damned and left his people.

Sometime later the general became acquainted with Taro, Japan's oldest immortal, who taught him a great deal of who and what he was and for a long time Masakatsu was once again that man who lived for honor. Something changed in him though, something horrible. Twenty years ago Oda-Hanshi challenged an immortal gaijin called Walter Conroy. Conroy was everything that the Japanese feared from the outside world, a pillaging rapist and mercenary who killed for pleasure, Conroy killed Oda-Hanshi's youngest pupil without a challenge, after raping her.

From the Chronicle of Giulietta Malatesta

Current Alias: Julia Room

Born: 1378

Cultural Affiliation: Italian

First Death: Fell from a window while attempting to meet with her lover; Rimini, Italy 1396

First Teacher: Prosper; Rimini, Italy 1396

Current Base of Operation: Los Angeles, California/
Mobile

Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: Pop Star

Watcher: Michael Duvall (2004 -)

She's done it again. She's all over the papers; I don't know what to do. How am I supposed to keep something like her a secret? Julia actually demanded that we let the paparazzo get through the gate before attempting to "stop" him. She wanted the photos to leak! She thinks she's invulnerable as well as immortal and its going to get her killed.

On a side note I saw E. last night making time with that Dancer Veronica, I hope she's discrete for both there sakes. He may not be the brightest crayon in

Enraged Oda-Hanshi challenged and bested the cur with little effort, but in so doing released more than his Quickening. Something else passed into Oda-Hanshi that day: a masochistic urge to destroy any woman who dared call herself his equal. Of course no mortal was capable... but the idea that a woman would dare to try and take a man's quickening... Oda-Hanshi refused to stand for it. These days he can barely keep his urges in check, he waits to go on business trips before going on the hunt for his prey. In the last twenty years he's racked up quite the count, always targeting the most powerful women he can find.

Description: An elder Japanese man of noble bearing who never smiles, Oda-Hanshi is never seen wearing anything but the most immaculate of suits. Though he prefers pinstriped double breasted coats that were popular in the 1930's he isn't opposed to a well tailored simple black suit either. His salt and pepper hair, and pencil mustache tend to date him a bit but no one seems to notice. Oda-Hashi tends to keep his Katana hidden within a thick charcoal overcoat that is never far from his side. Despite his modest frame (standing just over five feet tall) Oda-Hanshi still manages to fill up a room.

Storyteller Hints: You're calm, eternally calm, even when you're so angry you could murder everyone in the room, you keep your cool. Beyond that, act with honor and dignity in everything you do. When in the presence of other immortals you are all business, deciding whether they are a threat first and conversing second. Unless that other immortal is a woman, then your attitude changes, as soon as you're able you will find a way to challenge her and take her head. If you hear of a notable immortal woman with a reputation in a city you visit you will hunt her down and you'll challenge her, and before she dies, she'll know that the whole time, you were playing with her.

Real Name: Oda Masakatsu

First Teacher: Taro

Apparent Age: 57

Real Age: 677

Code: Gauntlet

Known Aliases: Akechi Masakatsu, Oda Mitsuhide, Oda Hidemitsu, Oda Kanehide, Sato Kane, Sasaki Denjiro; *Sato Kenji*

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Academics (Strategy) 3, Investigation 1, Medicine 1, Politics (Imperial, Corporate) 5

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Martial Arts) 2, 4, Drive (Ride) 3) 1, Stealth 1, Survival (Travel) 3) 2, Weaponry (Kendo) 3) 6

Social Skills: Empathy (Knowing the Enemy) 3) 2, Expression (Inspiration) 2) 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge (New Identities) 3

Merits: Blood of Kings (Contacts +●●●, Resources +●●), Contacts (*Political, Corporate, *Yakuza, Military, *Family, Media) Danger Sense (●●), Fighting Style: Kendo (●●●●), Fighting Style: Kung Fu (●●●●●), Friendly Watcher (●●● *Ishihara Tamaki*), Iron Stamina (●●●), Reputation (●●●●●), Occluded Past (●●●●●), Corporate Status (●●●●●), Resources (●●●●●*●●)

Willpower: 8

Honor: 5 (Fixation)

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 6

Integrity: 3

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Health: 10

Kenning: 6

Tricks: Immortal Coil, Living Blade, Ignorant Flesh, Recognition, Know Thy Enemy

Edge/per turn: 20/4

Weapon: Katana (16L)

Quickening: 16 (Releases 48)

From the Chronicle of Oda-Hanshi

Current Alias: Sato Kenji

Born: 1331

Cultural Affiliation: Feudal Japanese

First Death: Committed jumonji-giri after a spectacular defeat by a rival clan; Owari Provence, Japan 1388

First Teacher: Taro; Owari Provence Japan 1388

Current Base of Operation: New York City, New York/Tokyo, Japan

Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: CEO of a multi-national corporation

Watcher: Ishihara Tamaki (1987 -), Julian Wentworth (2002 -)

I got a call from Ishihara last night telling me that "Sato-san" would be in the states by this afternoon. Evidently he'd heard rumor of some woman immortal getting "uppity" in NYC and he wants to silence her. Evidently that's enough these days to drop a few

grand just to throw down with some chick you've never met because she has the "nerve" to be successful at The Game.

Ishihara goes on and on about how great this guy is and how he is the eldest and most wise immortal in Japan. I guess I'm just a barbarian though, because I don't see it. Whatever the case, I better get to work, he's got to have his office ready for him when he comes in or he'll have *my* head.

J. Wentworth 9/8/2003

Ophelia St. Croix

The Assistant District Attourney

Quote: "*Sit Down, Shut up, and wait for your lawyer because if you say one more word I swear to God I will break you in half!*"

Background: The District Attorney of New Calais, Louisiana has a secret weapon in the form of his deputy Olivia Cross; she's got a keen mind, a cruel wit, and a passion for justice that has brought her through two centuries of prejudice and hate.

Born in Rabat in 1784, the woman that is now called Ophelia St. Croix was stoned to death after being raped by her uncle in 1810. When she awoke a few hours later she found a large black man standing over her, instead of hitting her he reached down and lifted her gently, carrying her to his litter and then out of the city.

It took two weeks for her to talk to him, and by that time he was already calling her Ophelia in place of a name. He introduced himself as Kastigan, a white name for a black man.

He taught her The Game, and after her revelation stayed with her for a mortal lifetime, instilling in her a strong sense of justice (something very important to her teacher).

She spent a great deal of the next one hundred and fifty years touring Africa, Asia and eventually Europe and America, where in the '30s she went to college and attained a masters degree in Law. From there she never looked back. She's been a member of the District Attorney's office in 9 Cities over the last 75 years. Soon though, if she draws any more press, she's going to have to move on, lest someone in her last office in Louisiana recognize her.

Description: Beautiful and exotic, at least by American standards, St. Croix tends to draw looks from her peers. Silky black hair frames almond shaped eyes, and her petit frame moves with a feline's grace. Though she dresses mostly in severe suits, there is always a sense of free flowing movement.

Storyteller Hints: When she's not in the courtroom or her office, she is soft spoken and quiet, but put her in front of someone she's marked as guilty and the lamb quickly becomes the lion. Her approach to the Game is much the same as her approach to the justice system, once she's decided an immortal has crossed a line she brooks no trespass. And few immortals have been arrested in New Calais without hearing from her, and if their actions were dire enough, they won't be heard from again.

Real Name: Unknown

Apparent Age: 26

True Age: 221

Code: Sword

Known Aliases: *Olivia Cross*, Nashida Rabatiyya, Cynthia Nashita, Rebecca Waters, Julia Stone

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Law) 3, Crafts 2, Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Politics 2, Science 1

Physical Skills: Larceny 1, Stealth (crowds) 2, Survival 1, Weaponry (Challenges) 3

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression (swaying opinion) 4, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 2, Persuasion 2, Socialize 1, Subterfuge (Falsifying Records) 3

Merits: Striking Looks (●●), Status (city) (●●●●), Resources ●●●, Kendo (●●●●), Reputation (●●), Mentor: Kastigan (●●)

Willpower: 6

Honor: 6

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

Health: 7

Kenning: 3

Tricks: Ignorant Flesh, Knowing Defense, Living Blade

Edge/per turn: 12/1

Weapon: Falchion- 8L (9L when chopping from a higher ground)

Quickening: 17 (Releases 30)

From the Chronicle of Ophelia St. Croix

Current Alias: Olivia Cross

Born: 1784

Cultural Affiliation: Islamic North African

First Death: Stoned to death for being raped; Rabat 1810

First Teacher: Kastigan; Rabat 1818

Current Base of Operation: Chicago, Illinois
Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: Assistant District Attorney
Watcher: Luisa Gomez (2000–)

The DA came sniffing around here again, wondering why Ms. Cross spent so much time in the archives. Her success makes him nervous, he doesn't realize that there is no way on God's earth that she would ever go for his job- too much press.

I heard her talking to Kastigan last week outside the courtroom. She's thinking about moving again, and I'm not sure I could reasonably watch her if she does, we've gotten pretty chummy and she might get the wrong idea if I show up at in the next city.

I have to remember to catch up to Elson though, Kastigan mentioned that he's getting itchy too, I think his watcher might want to have a heads up.

L. Gomez 4/1/08

Sidor von Sydow

The Gambling Poet

Quote: "What can I say; when I'm hot, I'm hot."

Background: 402 years ago a Hungarian poet by the name of Sidor Szarka was busy reciting a newly minted poem when he turned his heel on a crushed tomato and fell from his table-cum-stage and cracked his head on a chair, sadly he did not die immediately, as the blow caused a brain hemorrhage that killed him over the next three hours. When he awoke two days later with what he believed was an insanely intense hangover Szarka thought nothing of it. Within a week he met his first teacher, whom he claims to be a barbarian called "Hardwick".

The next two centuries are a blur even to Sidor, what he does remember is making his way slowly north to Sweden, moving from city to city as a poet and a clown. Once there he took the surname von Sydow and it was under that name that the watchers became aware of him with.

Though he takes his prodigious poetic talent seriously, Sidor is a man of excess. Often gambling a century of savings in a matter of hours and spending an equal sum on food, wine and... other pleasures.

A hedonist to the core, Sidor hasn't changed at all in the last four centuries only the means and the quality of his conquests have. Even The Game does not affect him overly much, as he plays with the same reckless abandon with which he experiences the rest of his life.

Sixty years ago an immortal called Lemuel Glass, a hunter and a master swordsman came looking for the poet. How Sidor took his head is anyone's guess, but afterward he has demonstrated a startling aptitude

for fighting with two weapons that he had never exhibited before, he may well be an actual contender for the prize – if he can get his gambling in check.

Description: Between the gray/white hair, the bleeding edge fashion and his reedy stature, few would recognize Sidor as a threat, which to be fair isn't too far from the truth. The poet doesn't even try to be confrontational and instead will only fight after jocularly and alcohol refuse to quell his foe's anger or bloodlust.

Storyteller Hints: You seem crass to others when it comes to your immortality and to be honest, it's not an act. You're a middling swordsman at best, even if you got lucky against that guy that time and found yourself able to wield two blades at once. When it comes to poetry though – it's your breath, it's the reason you're here in the first place

Real Name: Sidor Szarka

First Teacher: Hardwick

Apparent Age: 44

Real Age: 446

Code: Player

Known Aliases: Sandor Rask; Sylvester Von Sydow, Sebastian Rask, Sebastian Von Sydow, Sidor Rask.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Literature) 3, Crafts 1, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 3, Science 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Stealth (skulking) 2, Survival (Travel 2) 2, Weaponry (two weapons 2) 3

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression (poetry 3) 5, Persuasion 3, Socialize 4, Streetwise (Gambling) 3, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Ambidextrous (●●●), Contacts (Underworld, Financial), Fame (●), Fighting Finesse (●●), Fighting Style: Two Weapons (●●●), Inspirational (●●●●), Resources (●●●●), Occluded Past (●●)

Willpower: 5

Honor: 6

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 7

Integrity: 3

Defense: 4

Speed: 12

Health: 7

Kenning: 3

Tricks: "Who, me?"
 Edge/per turn: 12/1
 Weapon: Duel Short Swords (11L)
 Quickening: 13 (releases 27)
 Flaw: Addiction (gambling)

From the Chronicle of Sidor von Sydow

Current Alias: Sandor Rask
Born: 1562
Cultural Affiliation: Hungarian
First Death: slipped on a tomato; Pest, Hungary 1602
First Teacher: Hardwick; Buda, Hungary 1602
Current Base of Operation: Stockholm, Sweden/Mobile
Status: Active
Current Lifestyle:
Watcher: Sasha Petterssen (1994 –)

He's at it again. This year it is Macao, last time it was Vegas, he can't keep this up *and* keep his money, it's just not possible, just last night he burned six million francs, it's a wonder he has any money left at all. Of course last time the girls were... well they were boys. The old rake was a bit taken back but it didn't really slow him down too much. One of these days one of these binges are going to get him killed.

S. Petterssen 5/11/98

The Thessalonian

The Novice

Quote: "*Who are you? What do you want with me, and why are you carrying a sword!?"*"

Background: Dr. Paul Hewett is the leading cosmetic surgeon in the United States today, his procedures have revolutionized the practice and his patients often claim that he performs miracles. Based out of his offices in Chicago, Dr. Hewett's multimillion dollar practice has been involved with nearly every A-list celebrity who wants work done but doesn't want anyone to know about it.

Paul himself is known for throwing parties that leaves those same celebrities green with envy. Nothing but the best he always says.

When Noel Thomas discovered him two years ago, while visiting a friend who had come in for a relatively invasive procedure, she was shocked to discover that the celebrity practitioner was in fact a young immortal. Since then she's been training him to play The Game as best she can, though he's only been apprenticed to her for two years, she recently released him, granting him the rapier she took from her first duel eighty years prior.

What Noel doesn't know won't hurt her of course. 'Paul' has in fact been playing at being a 'novice' for centuries, allowing himself to be 'discovered' every few centuries by some pretty thing who wants to show him the world.

Ever since his mistress stabbed him to death at a celebration that marked his thirtieth birthday in 821, the Thessalonian has moved through the centuries lightly and with great confidence. It was in the twelfth century that he became interested in medicine, but it wasn't until 1690 that he began to play his little game, when his reputation had grown to the point that the hunters came looking for him in force.

Despite his lackadaisical approach to the game, the Thessalonian has become an adept player, never staying in one place, or identity for too long. Currently he's the dashing doctor, but forty years ago he was the movie producer, and before that a visiting nobleman from some obscure noble French line, and before that he was pilot and so on and so forth.

His recent foray on the front page of the USA Today has rattled his cages though, he's never actually liked the limelight, he just likes to feel the afterglow, but after Hurricane Katrina hit he couldn't refuse to help and so now he's in Louisiana, keeping his head low, hoping that no one who could recognize him is holding a grudge.

Though his "game" is a risky and cruel one, he doesn't take too much advantage of his "teachers", who often come away from their time together all the better for it.

Description: The Thessalonian is, in all things, beautiful. There is no other way to describe the ancient. In his first life he never did a day's work and it shows in his perfect complexion and fine features. His adroitness and constitution come from centuries of practice but his well toned musculature is mostly for show. His current sword, a finely crafted and exquisitely decorated rapier with Italian flare, is also one of his favorites and he is indebted to his 'Teacher' for it.

Storyteller Hints: You've survived for over a thousand years on your wit and beauty, and you've had the time of your life doing it. But that doesn't mean you don't take the game or your 'teachers' for granted. You've seen enough death in countless operating theaters and battlefield medical tents to respect the mortals around you and to know that their pain is real and even feel that it is your duty to help when you can.

While he'll try to talk his way out of a challenge, if it comes down to a duel, the façade falls and his

opponent is left with an ancient and deadly immortal ready to retire anyone who raises a sword to him.

Real Name: Pavlos of Larissa

Apparent Age: 30

Real Age: 1224

Code: Mask

Known Aliases: Petros of Larissa, Simon Petros, Simon Paulson, Peter Adrian, Simon Peters; Paul Hewett

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 5, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 6, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Academics (History 3) 6, Computer 1, Investigation 2, Medicine (Surgery 2) 6, Politics (Bureaucracy) 6, Science 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Running) 3, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 2, Stealth (Disappearing) 3, Survival (Travel) 2, Weaponry (Elegant Swords 3) 5

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy 3, Expression (Oration) 3, Intimidation 2, Persuasion (Seduction 3) 6, Socialize (Carousing) 5, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge (Feigning innocence) 6

Merits: Reputation (●●●●), Striking Looks (●●●●), Status (medical) (●●●●), Fame (●●), Resources (●●●● ●), Staff (●●), Fighting Style: Fencing (●●●●●), Contacts (Medical, Political), Mentor: Tessa Noel (●●●●), Blood of Kings (●●●●●)

Willpower: 7

Honor: 7

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4

Speed: 11

Health: 9

Kenning: 6

Tricks: Calming Influence, Echoes, Hidden Steel, Knowing Defense, Know Thy Enemy, 'Who, Me?'

Edge/per turn: 15/5

Weapon: Ornate Rapier: 12L

Quickening: 25 (Releases 67)

From the Chronicle of The Thessalonian

Current Alias: Dr. Paul Hewett

Born: 781

Cultural Affiliation: Byzantine Nobility

First Death: Stabbed to death by his mistress while celebrating his 30th birthday Party; Thessaloniki 821

First Teacher: Flavius, The Roman; Larissa 828

Current Base of Operation: New Orleans, Louisiana

Status: Active

Current Lifestyle: Plastic Surgeon to the Stars

Watcher: Dr. Louisa Barnes (2002 -)

I understand that he's immortal and has little to fear when it comes to his own safety but to see a man dive headlong into that current to save someone he didn't even know for sure was still alive... I've never seen heroism like that.

Three years ago, when I received this assignment I thought my time was being wasted on a pretty boy with a lot of time on his hands because of my medical degree, but to see him performing real, life and death surgery, using techniques that are, well superhuman. I can't thank the coordinator enough for assigning me to him.

L. Barnes 9/6/2005

Eric Tremain

The Super Star

Quote: "We're killing the planet and we need to... uh... do something... about it."

Background: Walt Jr. was raised with everything he ever wanted. After his parents split in 1985, Walt's mother doted on him, working 4 jobs to make sure that he could have everything that he wanted. When he was 7 he talked her into letting him audition for a part in a commercial. That was just the beginning.

When he was eleven Walt graduated from child model and commercial actor to child star when he found himself up for a roll on a second rate soap-opera called "Till Death". Walt's agent informed his mother that the producers were wary about bringing someone named Walt onto the show, as it made him sound "dated". After thinking it over Walt and his mother decided to legally change his name to Eric.

Within five years Eric had sued for emancipation from his mother, whom he accused of embezzling funds from his bank account. Once released Eric gave his agent full power of attorney over his assets.

By the time he was twenty Eric had everything he could possibly want, an entourage of yes men, an army of women, and a heroin addiction that was costing him \$5,000 a day. Of course, because of his agents (actual) embezzlement, he was also completely broke, given an "allowance" that barely covered his bills. The worst part was that he was an amazing actor, capable of doing things on camera that others could only dream about. But between jobs he was a mess.

One night in the early summer of 2004, after the premiere of his most recent blockbuster smash, Eric walked out of a party to catch a smoke and disappeared. What happened was that Eric, high on heroin the movie star walked onto a busy street and

into oncoming traffic. He was hit by an SUV that kept driving, his body being thrown to the side of the road.

He awoke days later, sore and thirsty but sober for the first time in six years. When he got back to his hotel room he was confronted by paparazzi and his agent, all of them wondering where he'd been.

The disheveled actor fired his agent on the spot.

After his revival as an immortal, things went well for Eric, he got his life together, though he still enjoyed drugs he found, after a few subsequent revivals, that he'd lost his taste for addiction. But also found that he needed something to believe in.

He put his money on the environment. Unfortunately his reawakening did little to dissuade his habit of putting his faith into others. And it wasn't long before the fringe elements of the eco-rights movement found him. Praying on his naivety and his need to feel important a group called the Gaian Liberation Front contacted him about funding them in their quest to bring the message of the danger to 'the mother' to the people.

Unfortunately the GLF was actually a terrorist group who used his funding to obtain enough material to detonate a college medical laboratory. Since then they come to him to help further fund their efforts. Though Eric has no direct knowledge of their dealings around the world, he is smart enough to have connected the dots. He just doesn't have the balls to cut ties with the terrorist organization.

In late 2005, while hosting Saturday Night Live Eric met Julia Room, the pop idol. When he laid eyes on her his world spun, literally. The two have been together ever since. Unfortunately for the young immortal, his lover isn't what she appears, and grows ever more controlling as the years pass on. He's even begun sleeping around on her, seeing other women when she's on tour, as if attempting to snub her behind her back as a child might, not realizing the danger he's really in.

The Game is yet another subject in which the youngling is confounded by, seeing it as a barbaric anachronism and refusing to learn any sword play. While that does indeed suit Julia just fine, she still worries for her paramour's safety, especially when he goes on about bringing the immortals together and getting them to throw down their swords. Surely they'd listen to him; he's a celebrity! Perhaps, in the end, all can be one.

Description: young, good looking in an asexual kind of way, and charming. Eric's willowy frame is almost heroin chic. Between his pretty boy image and immaculately tailored suits he's got nearly every

woman on the planet wanting (at least) an autograph. Years of practice have refined his massive natural talent for acting to such a level that he often appears far smarter and better read than he actually is. That along with his Kenning enhanced memory and near superhuman charm allows him to get what he wants when he wants.

Storyteller Hints: You're vapid, but good looking, oblivious but talented, and that means you get what you want. Until you don't. The Game scares you but you think you'll be fine as long as Julia's there to protect you, though you see her more and more as a mother figure as opposed to a lover... it's a good thing you don't know what an Oedipal Complex is.

When it comes to the environment you, again, are out of your depth, believing what your "Friends" tell you and blindly giving them a good chunk of your fortune. You know people are being hurt but blindly cover your eyes to the facts as you don't want to think about the consequences.

Real Name: Walter John Tremain Jr.

First Teacher: Giulietta Malatesta

Apparent Age: 20

Real Age: 24

Code: Shadow

Known Aliases: Eric Tremain

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Computer 1, Medicine 1, Politics (Hollywood) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy 2, Expression (acting) 4, Persuasion 1, Socialize 2, Subterfuge (Faking it) 3

Merits: Striking Looks (●●), Resources (●●), Fame (●●●)

Willpower: 4

Honor: 5 (Narcissism, 6)

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 3

Integrity: 1

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Health: 7

Kenning: 1

Tricks: Calming Influence

Edge/per turn: 10/1

Weapon: Long Sword (4L)

Quickening: 0 (Releases 3)

From the Chronicle of Eric Tremain

Current Alias: Eric Tremain

Born: 1984

Cultural Affiliation: American, Limousine Liberal

First Death: Hit by a car while strung out; Los Angeles, California 2004

First Teacher: Giulietta Malatesta; New York City, New York 2005

Current Base of Operation: Los Angeles, California USA/Mobile

Status: Inactive

Current Lifestyle: A-list movie star

Watcher: Michael Duvall (2006 -)

They found the Dancer today, she electrocuted herself while blow drying her hair while still in the shower. Right. She's dead because Eric couldn't keep his Oscar in his pants where it belonged. That's not important though. Eric's *friends* contacted him today to get some more cash. I think he's catching on to the situation because he was a bit more reticent but he caved eventually. These friends are bad news. They talk big talk about helping the environment but it sounded like they were talking about causing a disaster to blame on the English government... I don't get it.

I know we're not supposed to get involved but I have vital information about a possible terrorist attack on a sovereign nation, I'm contacting my coordinator to get feedback. Something needs to be done.

M. Duvall 9/17/2007



IMMORTAL

Name:
Alias:
Player:

Virtue:
Vice:
Concept:

Code:
Age:
Chronicle:

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	Intelligence	00000	Strength	00000	Presence	00000
FINESSE	Wits	00000	Dexterity	00000	Manipulation	00000
RESISTANCE	Resolve	00000	Stamina	00000	Composure	00000

SKILLS

Mental

(3 unskilled)

Academics _____ 000000
 Computer _____ 000000
 Crafts _____ 000000
 Investigation _____ 000000
 Medicine _____ 000000
 Occult _____ 000000
 Politics _____ 000000
 Science _____ 000000

Physical

(1 unskilled)

Athletics _____ 000000
 Brawl _____ 000000
 Drive _____ 000000
 Firearms _____ 000000
 Larceny _____ 000000
 Stealth _____ 000000
 Survival _____ 000000
 Weaponry _____ 000000

Social

(1 unskilled)

Animal Ken _____ 000000
 Empathy _____ 000000
 Expression _____ 000000
 Intimidation _____ 000000
 Persuasion _____ 000000
 Socialize _____ 000000
 Streetwise _____ 000000
 Subterfuge _____ 000000

OTHER TRAITS

Tricks

Merits

_____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000

Flaws

Size: _____ Speed: _____
 Defense: _____ Armor: _____
 Integrity: _____
 Initiative Mod: _____
 Experience: _____
 Quickenig: _____

Health

00000000000000

Willpower

0000000000

Kenning

0000000000

Edge

Honor

10 _____ 0
 9 _____ 0
 8 _____ 0
 7 _____ 0
 6 _____ 0
 5 _____ 0
 4 _____ 0
 3 _____ 0
 2 _____ 0
 1 _____ 0

Weapon/Attack	Dice Mod.	Range	Clip	Size
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

