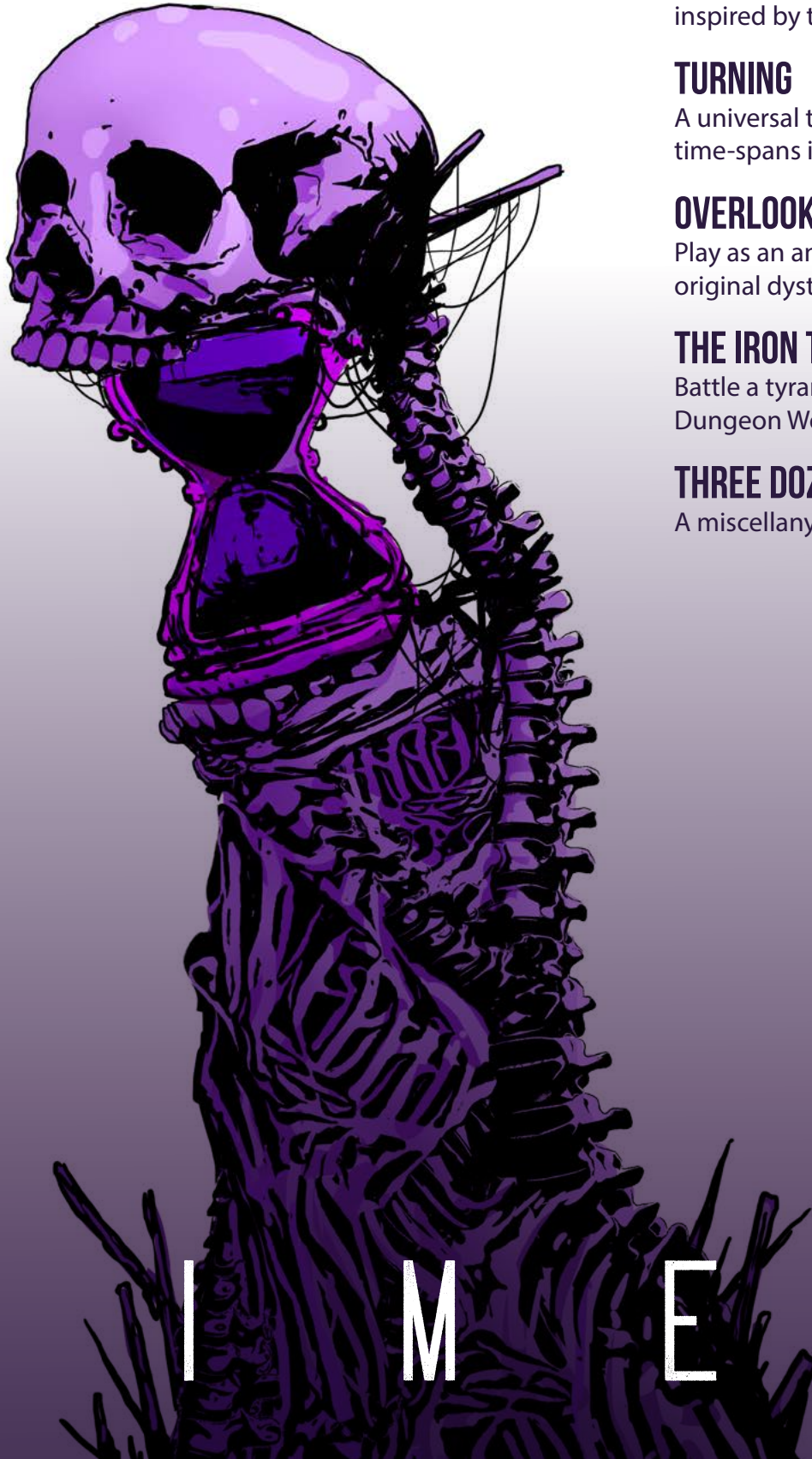


Codex

The Gauntlet's monthly RPG zine



TIMEGASM

A LARP about time travel, legal wrangling and accidental incest

RESET

A mystery story game for two players inspired by the classic neo-noir *Memento*

TURNING

A universal tool for dealing with vast time-spans in any RPG

OVERLOOKED

Play as an android hated by humans in this original dystopian RPG

THE IRON TYRANT

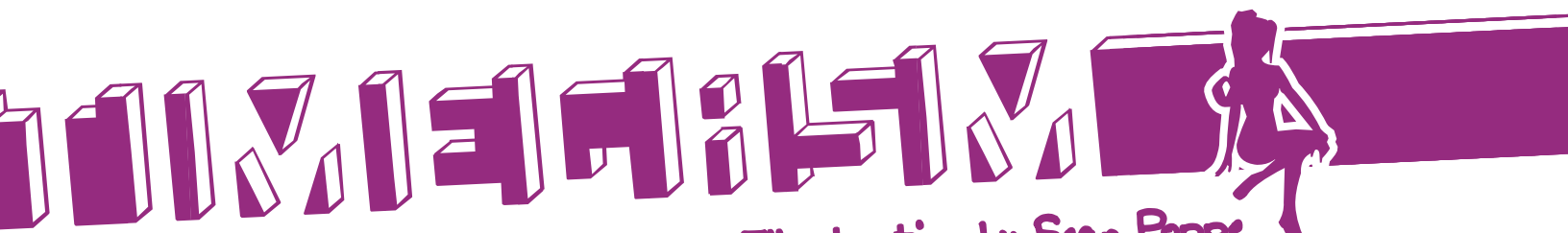
Battle a tyrant from a different time in this Dungeon World starter

THREE DOZEN IN MEDIAS RES STARTERS

A miscellany to get you into the action

T I M E





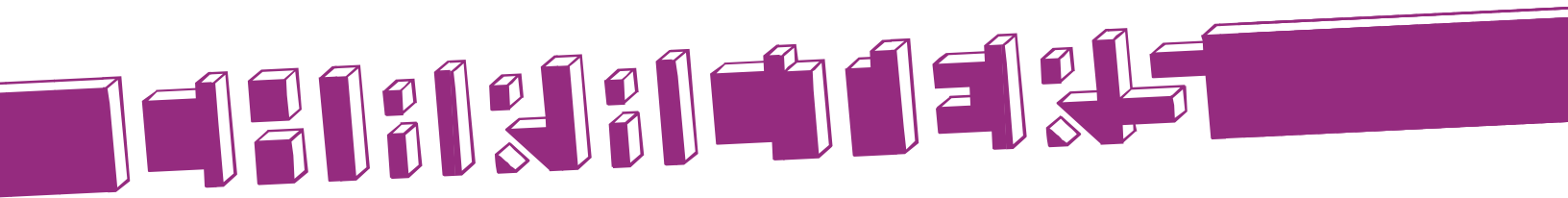
by Wendy Gorman. Illustration by Sean Poppe.

CONTENT WARNING: DISCUSSION OF INCEST

Since the advent of time travel in the year 2783, there has been an increasing number of people finding out that they are their own mother, father, grandparent, progenitor, etc. Now it is 2790, and local lawmakers have gathered to debate whether or not safe time travel should be added to the sexual education curriculum in their city in order to prevent the quite frankly disturbing revelations from continuing to rise. The issue is heated, and there are no clearly defined party lines. A majority is needed to make changes to the current law around sex education and time travel education, currently two separate courses that do not intersect.

At least 3 lawmakers should gather together wearing their best political finery of the year 2790. Lawmakers will have one hour exactly to debate the issue and come up with a compelling solution. If no solution is reached, then the fraught genealogical issues will continue. Debates are civil and polite, but people do occasionally get passionate. There is also the record keeper, who brings issues to the floor and prompts lawmakers when there may be a lull in the debate. It is also the record keeper's job to draw pictures of the ensuing proposals from the debate.





Players should choose from the following lawmakers. Not every position needs to be filled. Players create their own names.

LAWMAKER A

You believe that the sanctity of sex ed classes should not be breached by some frilly time travel nonsense. If people would just listen in sex ed and use condoms anyway, this problem wouldn't exist in the first place. You think that perhaps sex ed should be taught in time travel class, but you refuse to give up a minute of traditional sexual education for any time travel related content.

LAWMAKER B

You think integrating everything is a great idea! Basic ideas such as checking last names, adoption histories, and other mysterious backgrounds should be implemented into sex ed curriculum. After all, you've been doing this since you read *Oedipus Rex*, and you've got the DNA test to prove it — you're definitely not your own parent!

LAWMAKER C

You wish to ban time travel altogether. It's too risky! But a discussion of banning time travel is not the point of this session, which you're very upset about. Even though you can't get what you want in this session, you think you can help folks make good choices by showing them some of the dangers of time travel in both time travel class AND sex ed class — you're certain more stories of people's missteps will work as a deterrent!

LAWMAKER D

You have a dark secret: you're your own progenitor. You don't want to go into details, but what with one thing and another, you managed to become BOTH of your own parents. You wish there'd been more warnings about this in school, but then again, if there had been, you might not have been born to go on and be your own parents. This makes you deeply conflicted on the issue — you may change your mind at many times during the debate.

LAWMAKER E

You're of the opinion that the government ought to stay out of time travel — let people do what they will, and if it brings about the end of civilization, so be it! You mostly come to these meetings to eat the free cheese. To be honest, you're not a very good lawmaker. How on earth do you keep getting elected?

RECORD KEEPER

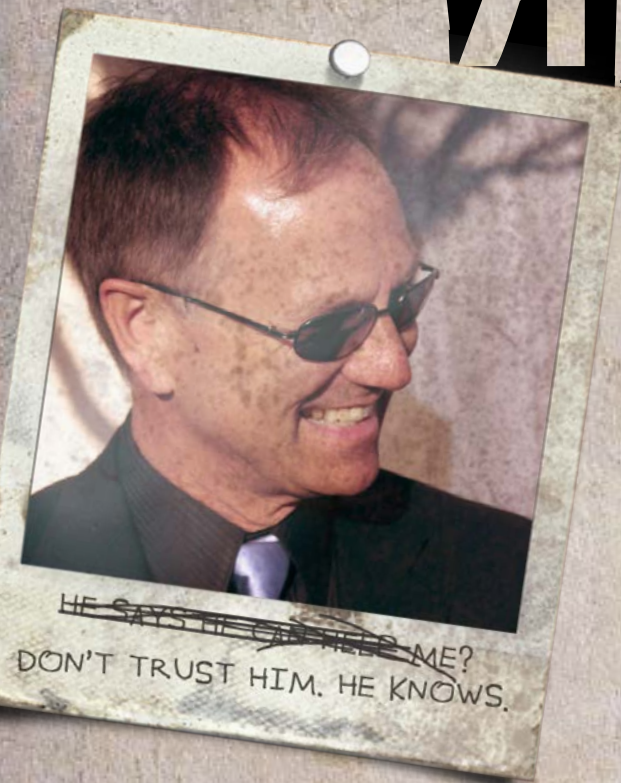
You're just here to take notes. Lawmakers come up with funny things sometimes, don't they? You keep yourself entertained during meetings by drawing possible solutions and timelines suggested by the lawmakers, and also help prod them along sometimes if the discussion doesn't go smoothly. You are, after all, an expert on both time travel and time travel law. Why, exactly, are you working as a record keeper for these people?

Reset

By Kyle Simons

Polaroids by Oli Jeffery

All photos are CC liscensed from Flickr.



Reset is a game for two players inspired by the film *Memento*. One of the players is the Game Master (GM) while the other plays the protagonist, an anterograde amnesiac trying to solve a mystery. The protagonist's condition was brought on by some sort of trauma and it prevents them from forming any new memories after that point. To simulate this, the game can only be played by any given player once. The GM is free to continue running the game for a new player each session. Recording each session is encouraged so that a narrative can be built and reviewed in the end by everyone involved.

There are several moves used throughout the game. Moves tell the players when they need to stop and make a choice about where to take the fiction next. If no move is triggered, the conversation continues until either a move is triggered or the session ends. The GM is responsible for conveying the world around the protagonist and for generating an interesting scenario for the player to react to. The player need only tell the GM what the protagonist does: how they feel and how they react to the world around them.

The GM should read this entire text. The player should only read their section, overleaf.

PLAYER: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Having anterograde amnesia means you cannot make any new memories. You can still remember everything up to the traumatic incident that caused your condition. You can still learn habits and you have trained yourself to act on instinct. You live a life of discipline in order to make your investigation possible.

Ask the GM what the last thing you remember is.



HABITS

You have conditioned yourself to have the following habits; they are integral to your survival and investigation:

Check your pockets whenever you reset for notes, Polaroids, and anything else on your person.

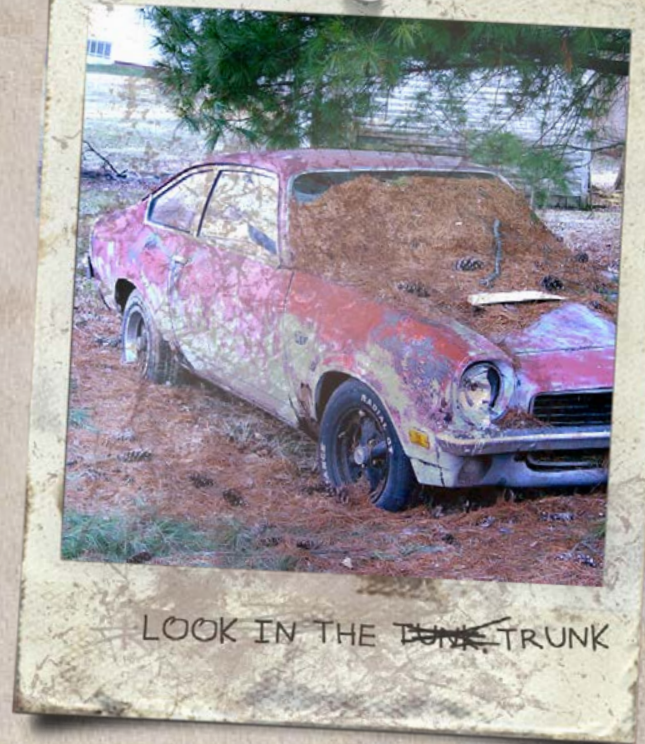
Check your watch for the time.

Trust your own handwriting, and only your own handwriting.

Trust your instincts.

Bluff if you can to save time; if someone expects you to recognize them, then pretend you do. If you can't, telling people about your condition is usually the fastest way to move forward.

Take a picture of anything and anyone important with your instant camera and write down who they are and what you need to know about them. Your house, car, friends, and foes.



FOCUS AND MOVES

To simulate your condition you have 10 Focus. Once you're out of Focus, you reset and the game session ends.

Bullshit Detector: When you look someone in the eye and read their body language to see if they're lying, spend 1 Focus to know whether they're lying or not. (You may not know why they're lying, but at least you can scribble "liar, do not trust them" on your Polaroid.) If you don't spend Focus, you can't tell one way or the other, but don't let that stop you from getting to the truth.



Bluff: When you fake it with someone in order to get information from them, spend Focus. If you spend 2, you get the information you're looking for, as well as gaining some insight into their motivations. If you spend 1, you'll get some useful information, but it will come with some sort of cost. If you choose to spend no Focus, all bets are off on whether the information you get is any good, if you get any information at all.

Hold it Together: When you try to keep a reset from coming on during a tense moment, spend Focus. If you spend 2, you push the reset back and keep control. If you spend 1, you push the reset back, but only for a matter of seconds; you better do what you need to do quick! If you have no Focus or choose not to spend any, you reset and the game session ends.



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GAME MASTER

It's up to you to describe a disorienting reality for the player as the protagonist wakes up without having any new memories from the time of their incident. Make the trail the player is on feel lived-in. They've already been doing this for awhile.

CREATING THE MYSTERY

Come up with a mystery for the protagonist to solve as well as a traumatic incident that took away their ability to form new memories. Whatever the mystery, the drive to solve it should be visceral and revenge should be a motivating factor. Another way to understand the protagonist's motivation is the following question: how do you move on from something if it's the last thing you'll ever remember?

Put yourself in the protagonist's shoes for a moment and choose some options below to form your mystery. Extrapolate what their goal is from there. For example, maybe they were a private eye who was hired to find a priceless statue, but were then double-crossed and left for dead. In that example, their goal may be to find the statue in addition to locating and killing whoever double crossed them.

I want revenge for (choose as many as you want and/or come up with your own):

- Being left for dead.
- The death of a loved one.
- A cruelty shown to me.
- What they took from me.
- A betrayal.
- How others see me now.

Treat whatever ideas you decide for what happened, who did it, and their motivations for doing it as objectively true so you can anchor the plot to these ideas. There needs to be a through line from session to session so that there actually is something that can be solved by the players, even if the player ends up skewing things or believing totally different ideas from the objective truth by the end of the game.



CREATING STARTING INFORMATION

You'll need to come up with the information they have available to them right now, both to give the player a concrete idea of their mission and to give them leads that point to courses of action they can take right away.

In the next sections you'll come up with the information the player will have to go on and the contacts they have. Remember that you've got an idea of the objective truth of what happened, who did it and their motivations, and where they are and what they're doing now. The information they have and the contacts they meet should all have a reason for being in the protagonist's story and you should have some motivation in mind for them.

TATTOOS

The protagonist has information they consider to be facts tattooed on their body as permanent notes to themselves. They already have tattoos of a few crucial details and perhaps some advice. They do not remember having gotten these tattoos and so each player will be seeing them for the first time.

Some tattoos will have been professionally done, some may have been done in a hurry. These tattoos should inform them of their motivation for solving the mystery. For example, if they want revenge for being left for dead after tracking down a priceless statue, tell them they've got "Lorraine killed you and took the statue" tattooed prominently on their chest.

Second, give some tattoos with information they would always need and they have probably already learned the hard way. Here are some examples:

- "Don't trust"
- "Camera doesn't lie"
- "PIN = 8990"
- "Consider the source"
- "Notes can be lost"



IS THIS IT?



NORTH STREET. ASK FOR CLARE.

Finally, give them some tattoos that are concrete leads. These should be immediately noticeable to the protagonist (such as an arrow on their left wrist where their watch used to be, pointing up their forearm to the tattoos in question). Here are some examples of such tattoos:

- "Fact 1: From Mississippi"
- "Fact 2: Used Jack as their Fence"
- "Fact 3: License Plate: KVR 1546"

ITEMS ON PERSON

The protagonist keeps track of pertinent information with Polaroid pictures. What car they drive, who they know and what they think of them, where they're staying, and so on. Since time is always against them, there is sure to be information written on anything they can get their hands on before a reset so they can remember when to meet someone, where to go, or what to do next.

This is what the player will find when they rifle through their pockets. They've met people and established some information, but anyone they meet they will always be meeting for the first time. Consider making some initial information found on pieces of paper or in a pocket days old. If they've got a motel room or house keys then you'll want to have some idea of what's there for them to find. If they've got a Polaroid of a contact to meet, have some idea of what the contact wants from the protagonist and how the contact is involved. Here is an example of starting information and other items the player could begin the session with:



- Polaroid picture: Dull red civic hatchback. Caption: Your car.
- Polaroid picture: Tall caucasian man, goatee, picture looks like it was taken in a park. Caption: "Jamie - he'll help you if you push hard enough. He feels guilty."
- Polaroid picture: Travelodge sign with address 1202 8th Ave SW Room 214.
- Wallet with \$100 in cash, credit, debit card.
- Polaroid camera, extra film.
- Car keys.
- Crumpled up note: Meet Jamie at 7 PM, 1702 Lexington Blvd.
- Receipt for hotel, Jan 12 (yesterday if they check). \$40.

PLAYING THE MYSTERY

Put the protagonist in stressful situations and have the Hold it Together move trigger when it is dramatically appropriate. The situation should be stressful, sure, but we should care about what happens next as well. If the protagonist is in their hotel room trying to find any information they can about Michelle, that might be stressful, but they don't need to Hold it Together unless they're desperately looking for the photo of Michelle because they just learned that Michelle has been using them to get what she wants. Resets happen in the moments when we're on the edge of our seats waiting to see what happens next.

Below are some other key aspects of play the GM should keep in mind as they drive the mystery forward to its conclusion:

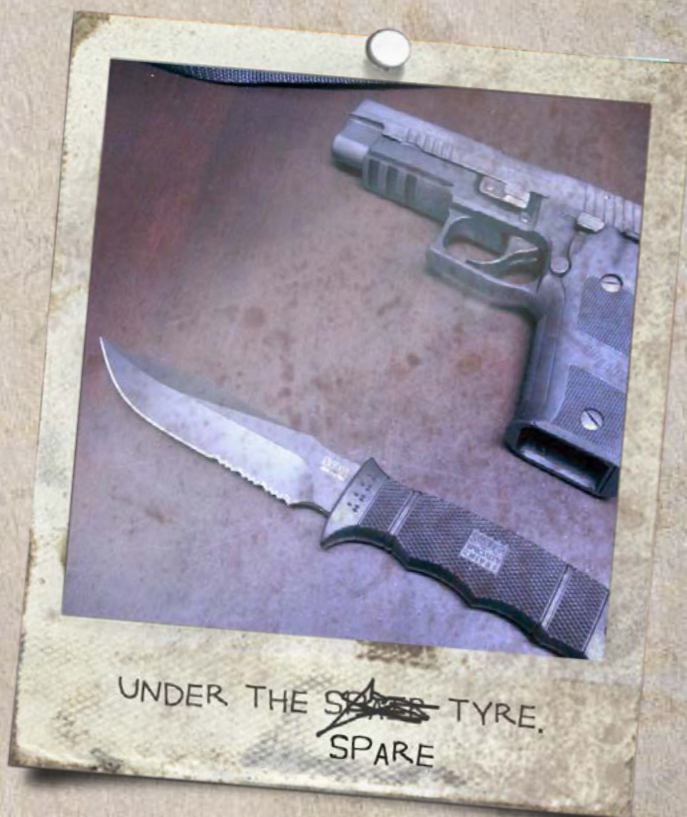
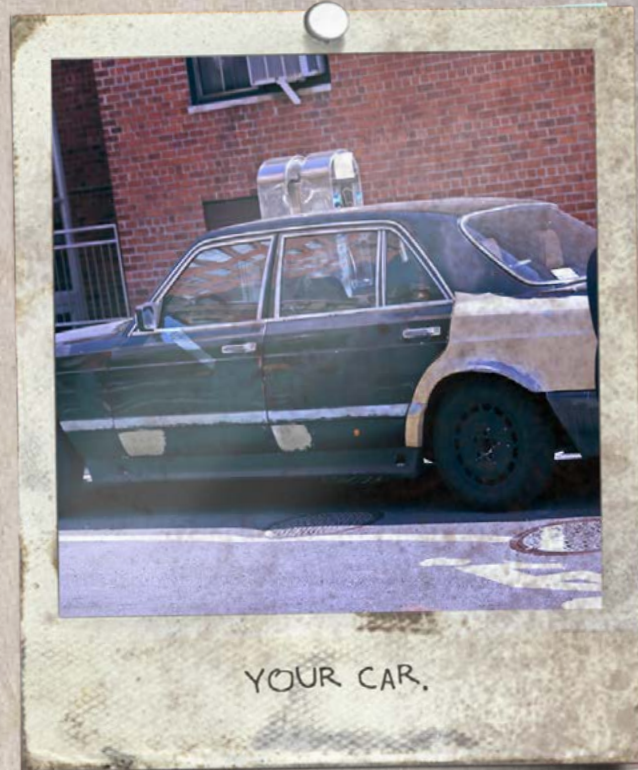
Be familiar with the moves and when they should trigger, then put them in situations where they will.

Have the player keep track of how much Focus they have left.

Don't be afraid to end the game session in moments of danger and tension. When they reset, they could be in the middle of a chase, waiting to ambush someone, struggling to remember something important as a cop shows up, or being interrogated at gunpoint.

Run it like a neo-noir story. The past never goes away. Once NPCs find out about the protagonist's condition they will probably start looking for a way to use the protagonist to get what they want.

You should give every new player some information to act on right away, as there will be situations when they wake up after a reset and won't have the chance to check out their tattoos. A couple of sentences will suffice.



TURNING

by slade stolar

Turning is a tool that can be used when playing any roleplaying game that covers large timescales. In addition to your other papers and books, print out The Six Core Values sheet and place it in the centre of the table; the players and GM will use this sheet as a reference. Any Core Values with high Consequence ratings should be the focus of charged interactions and social movements that the players see or participate in.

Values change over vast timescales. All of the really difficult decisions that we make are based on weighing the relative importance of our values. Politicians try to reach out to us using elaborate performances intended to cause sympathetic resonance with shared values. Parents try to demonstrate values so their children might develop similar values. A great deal of ink has been spilt to describe how surface-level technology and culture changes over time; however, less effort has focussed on the ways in which deep-level social touchstones change. Turning is one such effort.

The Core Values are statements of fundamental principle that underlie (at some very deep, hidden level) all human decision-making, large and small. The Six Core Values are given below. Each Core Value has a Consequence rating that indicates its prominence in the setting.

To begin, give the Six Core Values, listed below, a ranking of Consequence from 2 to 5 based on the importance of the issue to the society (go around the table, or have the GM select them). (If you want a fully bizarre situation, simply roll a d6 for each Core Value.)

Then, select 4 random Core Values to write Issues for (Issues are described below). To do so, roll 4d6 and write an Issue for each corresponding Core Value (i.e., 1 = an Issue for Reduction of Pain and Suffering, 2 = an Issue for Fairness and Equality, etc.).

Issues are short descriptions that are derived from Core Values and should complete the sentence "The Issue we are considering is ____". Players should write Issues they care about exploring during the game. Any Issue that is resolved during play because the population addressed it can be crossed out; if you see the resolution of two Issues during play, increase the Consequence of the associated Core Value by 1.

If characters in a story travel through time—via time machine, cryogenics, near-relativistic space travel, or the immortality associated with vampirism—the Core Values and current Issues of the society should change accordingly. When travelling a century (forward or backward), roll a d6 for each Core Value. If you roll under Consequence, reduce the Consequence by 1. If you roll above Consequence, increase the Consequence by 1. If you match the Consequence, write another Issue for that Core Value.

THE SIX CORE VALUES

[1] Reduction of Pain and Suffering - The goal of all good people is to ensure that pain and suffering are reduced. War and poverty, therefore, should be eliminated. Animals should not be subjected to undue pain. Prisoners should be treated well. Torture should never be used, even on the worst of our enemies. Dangerous weapons should be restricted. Child and spousal abuse should be ended. Abuse, neglect, and maliciousness are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: the use of chemical weapons during war

[2] Fairness and Equality - The goal of all good people is to ensure that people are treated with dignity and have equal opportunities. Diverse gender and sexual identities are important and worthy of respect. Accommodations should be made for those with disabilities. Privilege should be acknowledged and, sometimes, compensated for. Taxes, regulations, and incentives should be used to level the economic playing field. Nepotism, bigotry, and corruption are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: the state's ability to protect its citizens from (internal) imbalances of power and privilege

[3] Freedom of Thought and Action - The goal of all good people is to ensure that thoughts and actions that do not hurt others are unfettered. Pornography, drugs, and weapons should be widely available to people (on an age-appropriate basis). No association with any group or person or idea should be punished. Any kind of sexual activity between consenting adults should be allowed. Censorship, domination, and thought-policing are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: free speech being unhindered, widespread, and easy

[4] Authority and Control - The goal of all good people is to follow the wisdom and organization given to us by our leaders. Children should be protected and instructed by their parents. Workers should faithfully carry out the duties assigned by their employers. Citizens should follow the laws written by their politicians. Soldiers should follow the orders of their commanders. Disloyalty, hubris, and impertinence are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: citizens helping the police during their investigations

[5] In-group Thinking and Community - The goal of all good people is to ensure a harmonious community. Traditions should be passed down from generation to generation. Neighbours should be given help and hospitality. The family unit should be the basic unit of civic engagement. Outsiders should be treated with suspicion, unless they have proven that they can live peacefully alongside us or have adopted our ways. Betrayal, dishonour, and egotism are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: asylum seekers being carefully vetted

[6] Purity and Avoidance of Taboos - The goal of all good people is to protect the health of the mind, body, and spirit. Incest, adultery, polygamy, suicide, murder, cannibalism, and necrophilia should be eliminated. Pornographic or violent media should not be consumed. Certain foods should not be eaten. Certain words should not be spoken. Certain sexual acts should not be performed. Perversion, self-indulgence, and promiscuity are the highest offenses.

Example Issue: the place of sexually explicit novels in school libraries

During play, the GM and players should use the Consequence of each Core Value to determine its prominence/visibility/importance at this time in history.



by glade stolar
illustrated by per folmer

Overlooked is a standalone roleplaying game that can be used with the Turning tool above. Have the GM and players suggest, frame, and play-out scenes in any order, but containing one or more androids and ending with the android(s) "getting into trouble." When, after several scenes, the androids are driven from civil society, are trapped in a cave-in, have shut themselves down to conserve power, etc., move time forward by a century and use Turning to determine the shifts in society's values. The game ends when the androids (a) have fully corrupted all of their memories, (b) circumstances in the fiction have caused them to be physically destroyed, or (c) circumstances in the fiction have caused them to learn the origin of their memories.

You are an android. You are stronger than humans, and smarter in many ways, but you cannot always pass for human. Many humans hate you.

Your body is well understood; you must use your schematics anytime you need to repair yourself. However, your mind remains a mystery to you. Were you once human? If not, where do these vivid memories come from?

Name:

Memories: Write 3 concrete, real-life memories of exactly 12 words each. Leave a line of space between each memory.

Statistics: Assign 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, and 4

Grace

- () Blend into the crowd
- () Adopt a complex physical mannerism (e.g., smoking, stuttering, rushing, giggling)
- () Seem human during sex

Intellect

- () Seem human in deep conversation
- () Speak an unfamiliar language
- () Repair yourself

Strength

- () Use the right amount of force
- () Outrun a rapid pursuer
- () Block serious injury

GETTING INTO TROUBLE

When the player character gets into trouble, the GM hides a d6 with a chosen face pointing upward. That is, the GM does not roll the die; the GM chooses a result.

The player then rolls their d6. The character succeeds on a result that is less than or equal to their statistic value, and fails on a result that is greater than their statistic value. After their roll, the player may choose to take the GM's (hidden) die instead, without knowing what it is, at the cost of a Complication or Entanglement (described below). Once the GM's die is revealed, it becomes the new result; there is no going back.

The GM should offer a result that is what the GM would expect to happen in the situation, based on what they learn about the character during play; therefore, an honest GM will select failures some of the time and successes some of the time.

If the player uses their own die, the player narrates the outcome.

If the player uses the GM's die, the GM narrates the outcome. The player then narrates the associated Complication or Entanglement.

If getting into trouble ever results in a head injury, Corrupt a Memory (described below).

COMPLICATIONS AND ENTANGLEMENTS

When you use the GM's die, you experience Complications or Entanglements.

If your die and the GM's die are separated by 2 or more: pass or fail, someone will try to confront you now.

If your die and the GM's die are separated by 1: pass or fail, someone will seek you out later.

If your die and the GM's die are the same: pass or fail, someone will remember you, or something about you, for a long while.

The GM does not know what number the player will roll, nor whether the player will choose their die; therefore, there is little opportunity to "game" Complications and Entanglements. Statistically speaking, the extreme values of 1 and 6 are less likely to be separated from the player's result by 1. Additionally, players will be less likely to choose the GM's die if their roll is already a success (i.e., on high numbers).

ASKING THE CLOUD FOR HELP

Each other player's character collects unique datasets based on their experiences. You can use the processing power of other androids as a form of cloud computing via a system similar to WiFi (although at much longer range).

Instead of rolling your die, call upon another player character to roll using their statistic. If they agree to help, have them roll a die instead (the helped player makes the decision about taking the GM's die); if the roll/choice succeeds, the helped player succeeds on their action. If the roll/choice fails, in addition to the failure, one of you must Corrupt a Memory and the other must suffer a Complication or Entanglement

(reveal the GM's die to determine the kind of entanglement; the helped player narrates it).

CORRUPTING A MEMORY

When you Corrupt a Memory, cross out a single word in the written memory and replace it with a new one, written just below it, such that it remains a comprehensible, grammatical sentence. Don't corrupt words that have already been corrupted. Once a memory has been corrupted 4 times, it can no longer be corrupted further.

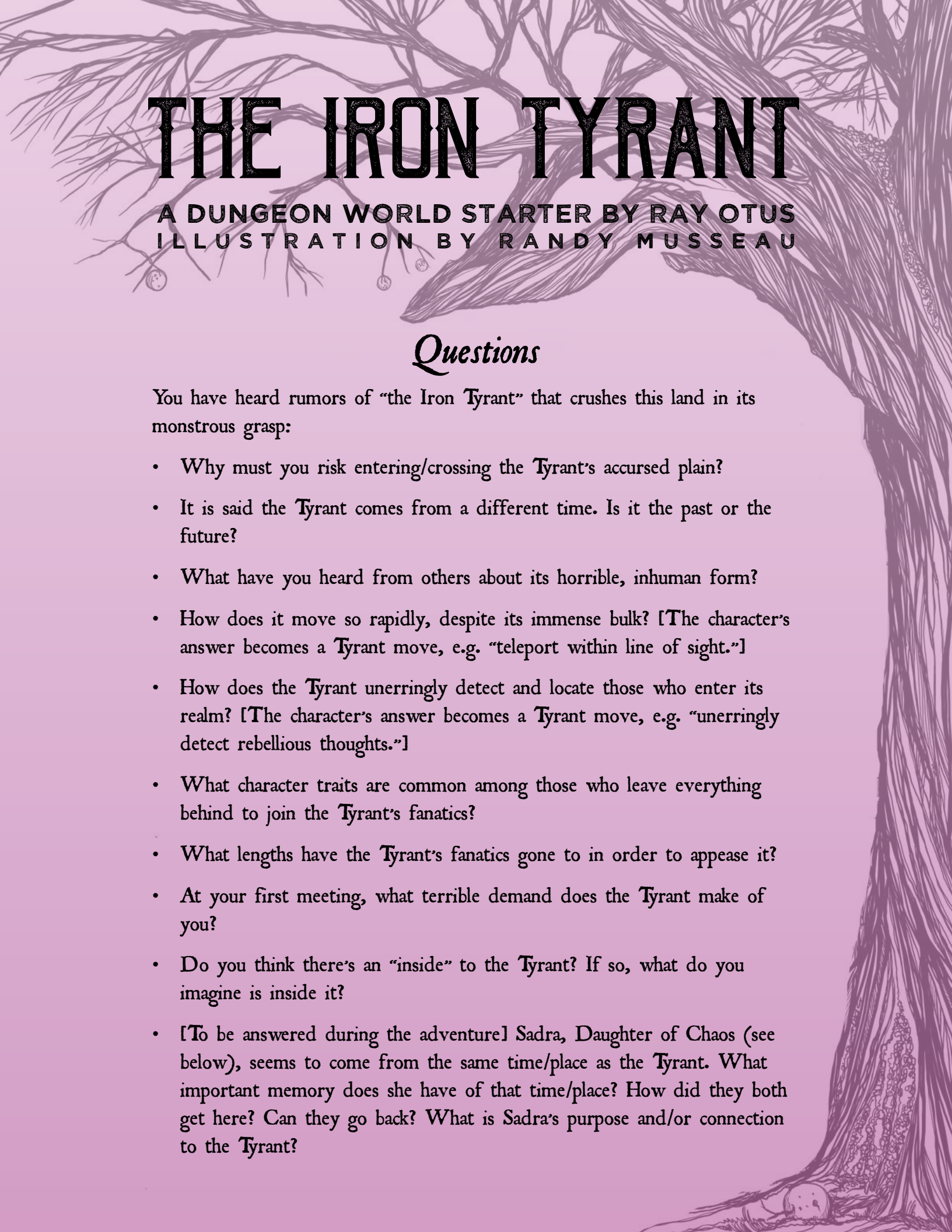
The following example memory has been corrupted 4 times:

I was ~~playing in~~ the park with my
running from
sister's ~~best~~ friend, ~~Alice~~.
only Anderson.

WHEN DOES IT END?

Because you are androids, you do not experience the ravages of time. Move through time in great jumps of a century or so. Our story ends if all memories become corrupted, if the androids learn the origin of their memories, or if the circumstances in the fiction cause the androids to be physically destroyed.

Thanks: P. Czege for Traverser, R. Bohl for Misspent Youth, and J. A. C. Newman for Shock: Social Science Fiction.



THE IRON TYRANT

A DUNGEON WORLD STARTER BY RAY OTUS
ILLUSTRATION BY RANDY MUSSEAU

Questions

You have heard rumors of “the Iron Tyrant” that crushes this land in its monstrous grasp:

- Why must you risk entering/crossing the Tyrant’s accursed plain?
- It is said the Tyrant comes from a different time. Is it the past or the future?
- What have you heard from others about its horrible, inhuman form?
- How does it move so rapidly, despite its immense bulk? [The character’s answer becomes a Tyrant move, e.g. “teleport within line of sight.”]
- How does the Tyrant unerringly detect and locate those who enter its realm? [The character’s answer becomes a Tyrant move, e.g. “unerringly detect rebellious thoughts.”]
- What character traits are common among those who leave everything behind to join the Tyrant’s fanatics?
- What lengths have the Tyrant’s fanatics gone to in order to appease it?
- At your first meeting, what terrible demand does the Tyrant make of you?
- Do you think there’s an “inside” to the Tyrant? If so, what do you imagine is inside it?
- [To be answered during the adventure] Sadra, Daughter of Chaos (see below), seems to come from the same time/place as the Tyrant. What important memory does she have of that time/place? How did they both get here? Can they go back? What is Sadra’s purpose and/or connection to the Tyrant?

Impressions

- Low rolling hills stretch to the horizon, like a green sea filled with the breaching backs of grassy whales.
- Dog-sized creatures with lamp-like eyes croak alarmingly at you from a safe distance, scuttling into large holes as you pass.
- An orchard of blighted, leafless trees still hang onto their withered, worm-ridden apples. A path of bleached-out grass, yards wide, leads to and from the orchard.
- A dreary hamlet of doleful people lies defenseless and rundown in a bleak valley beside a sluggish stream.
- A temple of rusty metal, haphazard and yet complex in its design, dominates the horizon.
- Gargantuan ruins pierce the ground in this barren plain. In the still air, you hear elusive whirring, humming, and clicks.
- A pool covered in iridescent slime looks unsafe to touch, let alone drink from. Sluggish bubbles break its surface.
- The sharp tang in your nostrils and a far off purple smear of clouds herald a violent storm.
- A tinker and his overloaded wagon cross the plains before you, seemingly heedless of the region's troubles.
- Fanatics skinned in gaily striped canvas weave in and out of temporary structures. They sing in many languages at once and play a myriad of instruments, creating a barely coherent musical stew of cultural styles.

Custom Moves

*When a fanatic offers you nectar and you partake, roll+CON. *On a 10+, you hear smells and taste sounds. A dream reveals to you some useful and interesting truth about the Tyrant, possibly a weakness and/or a vision from its time and place of origin. *On a 7-9, you receive the dream that reveals something about the Tyrant, but the experience is awful and leaves you badly shaken. Take -1 ongoing until you rest.*



Things to Find

The Rod of the Hierophant 1 weight, close

This yard-long, heavy iron rod is seemingly solid and featureless. It may be used as a club, but when held near a golem it vibrates and strange glowing glyphs appear along its surface. When you attempt to control a golem with the rod, concentrate and roll + INT. *On a 10+, it follows your commands completely, but in an entirely literal way. *On a 7-9, it struggles against your control; take -1 ongoing while you force it to obey you.

Sadra's Heart 1 weight

If/when Sadra dies, she will decay so rapidly that within minutes all that is left is her metal, plum-sized heart. If you can find a way to put it inside of you, it will take the place of your own heart, conferring protection from golems and a dramatically increased life-span (2d4 centuries). Most methods of putting it inside of you, however, mean rolling Last Breath.

Entities to Encounter

Cloudcow Herd

Amorphous, insubstantial, levitating

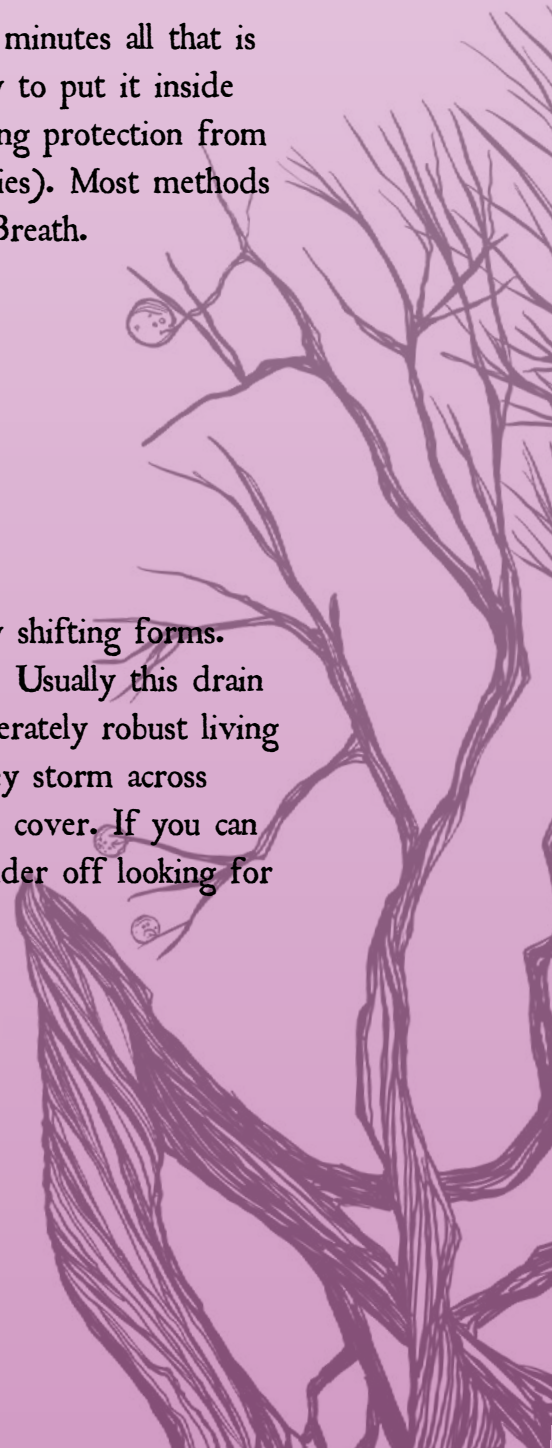
Shadowbite (b[2d10], near, ignores armor), 16 HP, 0 armor

Instinct: to 'graze' on living things below.

Cloudcows appear as small clouds with strange, constantly shifting forms. They draw energy from any exposed life they pass over. Usually this drain is distributed and not severe enough to deplete any moderately robust living thing. When the clouds gather into a herd, however, they storm across the plain and sterilize the earth of any life that can't take cover. If you can find a way to seriously threaten cloudcows, they will wander off looking for easier prey.

Block the sun.

Chase a vibrant source of life.



Fanatic

Group, organized, intelligent

Instinct: to spread the love of the Tyrant to everyone.

Relax them with food and drink.

Offer a transcendental experience.

Deliver the ultimatum - convert or die!

The Hierophant

Solitary, cautious, intelligent

Instinct: to enjoy the attentions of the fanatics.

Incite/command the flock.

Use the holy rod to ask the Tyrant for a favor.

Escape the consequences.

Sadra, Daughter of Chaos

Solitary, intelligent, magical, from another time

Instinct: to remain free and innocent.

Found as a baby on the day the Tyrant arrived 100 years ago, Sadra appears to still be in her early teens. She alone among the serfs is able to wander freely. The Tyrant seems to often be found in the same general region as Sadra, but otherwise leaves her alone and exhibits no actual awareness of her presence. The hierophant is looking for her, but the villagers would die to keep her hidden and safe from the cult.

Inspire trust in others.

Inspire others to act for good.

Die only at the chosen time.

The Tyrant

Solitary, amorphous, construct, from another time, unbreakable

Crushing blow (d12, ignores armor, messy, forceful, near) ∞ HP, ∞ Armor

Instinct: to demand obedience.

(Use characters' answers to build monster description.)

(Moves informed by answers from establishing questions above.)

Swallow whole.

Three Dozen Starters

You roll 1...

1 An anemic light is thrown on damp cobblestones before you. A dense fog rolls out slowly in the distance, creeping forward and enveloping the town, building by building. One by one the lights in the distance extinguish as the fog encroaches until it threatens to overtake everything in its path, you included.

2 You all wake up in a dimly lit, cold, locked room, feeling slightly hung over. How did you get here? Where are your things? What event are you going to miss if you don't get out ASAP?

3 The seas get choppy and you come above deck to find out what's going on. The crew is missing and the ship is out of control.

4 The little boy looks at your formal military attire and realises at once why you're here. He slams the door shut and you hear him run upstairs to his room, in tears. What do you do?

5 You struggle to keep your breathing calm as you walk through the hospital. The coat bundled in your arms starts to stir. "Oh, not now," you think as you pick up speed. Whose baby is it and how are you getting out of this?

6 The first barrage blows a hole in the wall and the water begins pouring in. What do you do?

In Medias Res

You roll 2...

1 You enter the park with the satchel of money and see them playing chess, just like the ransom note said, but where is the package?

2 The show was magnificent, and the magician on stage vanishes in a puff of smoke! What valuable items do you all find missing from your person?

3 As each of you begin to come to, you still cannot move or open your eyes. It's cold. You hear a steady beeping sound, then a voice: "Scalpel."

4 The writhing beast's colossal orgasm rends new holes in reality. Black-teethed, gnashing mouths erupt from the shadows. Your eyes are red with blood.

5 Across town, your wife is giving birth. Why aren't you there?

6 An unexpected gust of wind and your last torch gutters out, plunging you into pitch blackness.

You roll 3...

1 It's quiet. The cabin lights are dim. A snoring passenger is interrupted by the flight attendant's voice over the intercom. "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, is anyone onboard a pilot?"

2 Klaxons blare and the bulkhead in front of you disappears. Debris that was once part of the ship blocks the light of the stars you came to explore.

3 He was supposed to have been a competent thief, but when the trap went off with a twang and he fell backwards, dead, you found yourself forced to reconsider.

4 As an amalgamation of sweat-soaked bodies and kitsch pop-culture coalesce into ethereal holograms that undulate with the mass of the crowd, you see their hands stretching up desperately, attempting to touch them as they pass. A bark of a kinetic pistol is heard as the ovate glass structure explodes into a thousand shards, piercing the holograms as they fall. One by one the holograms flicker and disappear...along with the lights in the room.

5 The lightning strikes the generator and it explodes. You see the pieces of shrapnel moving towards your child and your spouse. You only have time to knock one of them out of the way.

6 "Last stop, this is as far as we go," says the announcer. Your crew has slept long past their stop. It's the middle of the night, and it's a very long way back. Where were you going? What is trying to keep you here?

You roll a 4...

1 Coming from multiple directions, you all smash into each other and fall to the ground. Your pursuers are nowhere to be seen. Why have they stopped?

2 You are careening down the side of a mountain on a piece of furniture rapidly falling apart. One of you swears this was a good idea.

3 It's at this exact point you realize you're in love.

4 You barely had time to stuff a slice of toast in your mouth as you ran to school. You didn't have time to stop before bumping into the girl, picking up her bag, and intending to run after her. What's in it that's so important that these goons are drawing guns on you, demanding you hand it over?

5 Each of the characters picks up one of the Fabergé eggs from its felt-lined case, but before they can leave the room they hear the guards behind them shout, "Hands up! Don't move!"

6 You're hung from the ceiling by your ankles, as is tradition. The judge clears its throats before calling out, "In the matter of Glorbornak vs Miscreants, how do you plead?"

Miscellany contributors

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Tomer Gurantz
Edward Hickox
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Steve Sigety

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Christopher Sniezak
Slade Stolar
Matt Stuart
Lester Ward
Devin White
River Williamson

You roll a 5...

1 Dunkirk's historic town core isn't known for its giant, fire-spitting snakes, and yet here you are.

2 "Surprise! Happy Birthday!" the gathered crowd shouts, giving you barely enough time to get your bearings. But it's not your birthday, and these are not your friends...

3 You burst forth from the jungle swamp, finally finding dry land. Before you stands the ancient temple, its doors open wide like a yawning mouth. From behind, you hear hooting and hollering of the war-party who kills all trespassers upon their sacred land.

4 Your eyes slowly adjust to the glaring sun and you finally see and hear the roar of the crowd surrounding you. A large, heavy, metal gate slowly opens up as a loud voice announces: "And now for the main event you all have been waiting for..."

5 You all come out of the fugue state covered in blood, carrying hot, emptied assault rifles. Screams and sirens are heard from outside the mall.

6 Dinner with the Baron was lovely, and he didn't mention that job you did against him at all. Maybe he's forgotten! But then you all start getting sick. Maybe he hasn't forgotten?

You roll a 6...

1 At the party in the king's palace, the well-dressed nobles begin their soup course. One of them is your mark. Unexpectedly and without preamble, the king climbs up on his table, looks around disdainfully, then vomits blood all over a nearby duchess and drops dead.

2 All four lanes of traffic squeal to a stop as your van skids sideways, balancing briefly on two wheels before rolling onto its side.

3 The guests are getting restless. You have been all there is to look at for almost an hour. You all know the truth as you glance at one another while avoiding eye contact with the lone celebrant. There won't be a wedding today.

4 "It's a simple trade," says the moose-headed troll king. "I will return the infant prince unharmed, if you will pledge one year of service to me."

5 The tower rumbles and the floor starts to tilt! The guards suddenly seem a lot less concerned with your escape.

6 Something doesn't feel right as the other party steps out of the shadows. As they emerge the leader says, "You see, the thing is, we are you, just from the future."

Codex Keepers

Aaron, Keeper of the Child Upon Whom We Dare Not Look
Rob Abrazado, Keeper of the Purple Falsehood
Acritarche, Keeper of the Diary of Sanguine is the Eye
Guillaume Agostini, Keeper of the Lists of Shame
Joaquin Aguirrezabalaga, Keeper of the Blood of Lursiss
Gary Anastasio, Keeper of the Bludgeons of Ecstasy
Dustin Andrews, Keeper of the Egg of Existential Dreaming
Simon Appleton, Keeper of the Last Tears They Shed
Vincent Arebalo, Keeper of the Dolm Sarcophagus
Daniel Backus, Keeper of the Thousand Year Cocoon
Chad Bale, Keeper of the Chimes of Misery
Joe Banner, Keeper of the Pedigree of Two-Faced Demons
Michael Barford, Keeper of the Eternal Chime
Joe Beason, Keeper of the True Name of Ashmedai
David Beaudoin, Keeper of the Nightmare Crèche
Aaron Berger, Keeper of the Echo Plantations
Patrick Bethke, Keeper of Tarnat's Song for Battle
Mick Bradley, Keeper of the Man Who is Naught but Mouths
Patrick Brannick, Keeper of the True Name of Abbadon
Simon Burdett, Keeper of the Agony Songs
Mike Burnett, Keeper of the Fire of Nal-K'aa
Neko Cam, Keeper of the Child Who Sings the Final Song
John Campbell, Keeper of the Dark Shard of Nemrath
Matthew Caulder, Keeper of the Blue Masquerade
Bay Chang, Keeper of the Heart of Lursiss
Jeremy Christian, Keeper of the Spiral Nemesis
Nic Clark, Keeper of the Torment Gardens
Ewen Cluny, Keeper of the Temple of the Golden Sky
Jeffery Collyer, Keeper of the Oneirophrenic Chords
Jonathan Cook, Keeper of the Quay of Memory and Sadness
Robert Corr, Keeper of the Ram That Whispers Lies
Luke Cox, Keeper of the Screaming Statuary
Jason Cox, Keeper of the Fabulous Fish Parade
Yoshi Creelman, Keeper of the Triton's Blessing
Jason D'Angelo, Keeper of the Merry Abbatoir
Love Dahlgren, Keeper of the Last True Pages
Darkasthme, Keeper of the Reflecting Pool of Galaurang
Kristen Davis-Owen, Keeper of the Whispering Menace
Jacob Densford, Keeper of the Rusted Metropolis
Rob Deobald, Keeper of the Child Who Turns the Key
Derek, Keeper of the Golden Scar
Mark Diaz Truman, Keeper of the Clockwork Corvid
Dan Domme, Keeper of the Teeth Tithings
Ian Donald, Keeper of the Dying Grottoes
David Dorward, Keeper of the Fetid King's Ashes
Herman Duyker, Keeper of the Beast Masks
edchuk, Keeper of the Sorrow of Morning Mist Castle
Kurt Ellison, Keeper of the Shining Sadness
Jennifer Erixon, Keeper of the Spider Tombs
Charlie Etheridge-Nunn, Keeper of the Unsolvable Riddle
Andy Evans, Keeper of the Woman Who Scrawls the Symbols
Mark Fenlon, Keeper of the Undulating Brood of Clarissa Dunlop

Kevin Flynn, Keeper of the Vermin Chaplet
Adam Flynn, Keeper of the Six-Tailed Dog-beasts
Daniel Fowler, Keeper of the Unidentified Artifacts
Josh Fox, Keeper of the Pitch-Black Sails
Lowell Francis, Keeper of the Black Quill
Francisco, Keeper of the Broken Blade
Michael Friese, Keeper of the Smoke Sylphs
Mirko Froehlich, Keeper of the Man Who Dies Every Third Day
Tomer G, Keeper of the Squamous Beast Below
Yochai Gal, Keeper of the Crying Mirrors
Josh Gary, Keeper of the Windswept Plane of Dust
Gregory Gelder, Keeper of the Knight of Mums
Edgar Gonzalez, Keeper of the Iridescent Forest
Steve Gooch, Keeper of the Little Box with a Tongue and Mirror Inside
Derek Grimm, Keeper of the Spirit Discs
Matthew Gushta, Keeper of the First Oak
Daniel Hagglund, Keeper of the First Offspring
Patrick Harris, Keeper of the Endless Spire
Michael Heiligenstein, Keeper of the Child Who Repeats the Numbers
Edward Hickcox, Keeper of the Bridge of Wanderers
Brian Holland, Keeper of the Book of Infinite Zeroes
Nicholas Hopkins, Keeper of the Passage to Dim Carcosa
Logan Howard, Keeper of the Broken Blade
Andrew Huffaker, Keeper of the Worm Bone Frescoes
Christian Hundahl, Keeper of the Nightmare Diadems
Johan Jaurin, Keeper of the Laughing Chaos
Tim Jensen, Keeper of the Pilgrim's Forge
Jeremy, Keeper of the Maddening Rhymes
Damion Junk, Keeper of the Joyous Pit
Kalahan, Keeper of the Coward's Shield
Erin Kenny, Keeper of the Child Who is Cloaked in Mist
Colin Kierans, Keeper of the Blood Binding Chamber
Matthew Klein, Keeper of the Crystal Grotto
Patrick Knowles, Keeper of the Violation Hymns
Ilmari Korpi, Keeper of the Path of Cenduwain Rose-Whisperer
Taylor LaBresh, Keeper of the Prismatic River
Maxime Lacoste, Keeper of the Silver Rods
David LaFreniere, Keeper of the Six Questions
Jesse Larimer, Keeper of the Wisdom of the Eight-Legged She
Dirk Leichty, Keeper of the First Lines
Arthur Lender, Keeper of the Dire Pigs of Moloch
Daniel Lewis, Keeper of the Unspeakable Fixation
Shane Liebling, Keeper of the Unlearnable Alphabet
Arnulph de Lisieux, Keeper of the Winter Reverie
Daniel Lofton, Keeper of the Ebony Cat and All We Deem Above Her
David Lombardo, Keeper of the World Teeth
Kevin Lovecraft, Keeper of the Flesh-Bound Book
Patrick Maguire, Keeper of the Bloody Road to Bellet Osc
Jeremy Mahr, Keeper of the Almanac of Leng
Steve Mains, the Keeper Who is Beyond Our Reach
Volker Mantel, Keeper of the Children of Malgolian
Keith Martin, Keeper of the Woman Who Screams the Prophecies
Jason Martinez, Keeper of the Woman Whose Face is Naught But Tentacles
Andrew Mayer, Keeper of the Sandstone Mysteries
Donogh McCarthy, Keeper of the Nine Dread Names

Lee McDaniel, Keeper of the Crown of King Ahanu the Laughing
Tom McGrenery, Keeper of the Two Tongues
Casey McKenzie, Keeper of the Pain Repast
Christo Meid, Keeper of the Tainted Feast
Michael Mendoza, Keeper of the Sleeping Pygmy
Darius Meskauskas, Keeper of the Unseen Moons
Christopher Moore, Keeper of the Five Poisons
Joby Morey, Keeper of the Milk-White Putrescence
Harry Morris, Keeper of the Sebayt of Silver Dreaming
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John Nolan, Keeper of the Crown of Good King Edwall
Robert Nolan, Keeper of the Furtive Manikin
Adam Nordin, Keeper of the Vault of Atrocities
Candida Norwood, Keeper of the Weeping Cells
Patrick O'Leary, Keeper of the Reel of Dreams
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Frank Reding, Keeper of the Land that is Naught but Salt and Mysteries
Gerrit Reininghaus, Keeper of the Voice of the Silent Emperor
David Rezak, Keeper of the Three-Headed Coin
Sam Richardson, Keeper of the Inscrutable Circle
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John Roberts, Keeper of the Sword of St. Murienne
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Dylan Ross, the First Keeper
David Rothfeder, Keeper of the Hull of the Void Hatred
Richard Ruane, Keeper of the Sacred Malignance
John Ruth, Keeper of the Automata Philosophica
Robert Ruthven, Keeper of the Hidden Moors
Blake Ryan, Keeper of the Words of Dissolution and Wonder
Ryan, Keeper of the Locks without Key
Ramanan, Keeper of the Book of Old Supplications and Rites
Mark Sable, Keeper of the Buried Box, Which Must Never Be Found
Jorge Salazar, Keeper of the Red King's Heart
Marius Salsbury, Keeper of the Milk of the Serpent Queen
Greg Sanders, Keeper of the Fragrant Void
Ray Sawyer, Keeper of the Oblique Atlas
David Schirduan, Keeper of the Man Who Mutters Two Hundred Words
Aniket Schneider, Keeper of Nine Rooks

Mick Schouten, Keeper of the Child Who Creeps and Crawls
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Quintin Smith, Keeper of the Silent Seat
Sean Smith, Keeper of the Jale Putrescence
Chris Sniezak, Keeper of the Undying Voice
Enoch Starnes, Keeper of the Machine That Must Not Stop
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Owen Thompson, Keeper of the Soul-Grinding Stone
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Mark Tygart, Keeper of the Soul Mill
Mikael Tysver, Keeper of the Hymnal of St. Evelyn the White
Ivan Vaghi, Keeper of the Eyes of Gormakir the Cruel
Max Vanderheyden, Keeper of Tarnat's Prayer for Peace
Brian Vo, Keeper of the Seclisium of Loshe the Living
Shervyn von Hoerl, Keeper of the Titan's Womb
Steven Warble, Keeper of the Basin of Vile Ablutions
Lester Ward, Keeper of the Golden Knot
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Steven Watkins, Keeper of the Three Wicked Kings
Luke Wayland, Keeper of the Unknowable Words
Phillip Wessels, Keeper of the Dun Putrescence
Kevin Whitaker, Keeper of the Violet Crown
Devin White, Keeper of the Venom of Lursiss
Stewart Wieck, Keeper of the Ink-Black Night
Christopher Wiegand, Keeper of the Head of Nerva Atellus
River Williamson, Keeper of the Blazing Sigil
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