



CHARACTER CREATION

the Trial

Begin by writing a two or three sentence description of a problem. In *The World, the Flesh, and the Devil*, this problem is called a Trial. It does not make reference to the character being created. An example:

The problem in Nottingham is that with King Richard off crusading in the holy land, the Sheriff has grown corrupt, instituted onerous taxation of the commoners, and created an evil power structure to support his ambition. Bands of lawless men wearing the Sheriff's colors roam the countryside, terrorizing the smallfolk with acts of pillage and rapine.

the Annotations

The next step is to underline significant words or phrases from the Trial, and to annotate them with a sentence or two each, for a total of seven sentences including what you wrote for the Trial. The sentences of the Trial are a very impersonal statement about a problem. The Annotations are what make it personal to the character. In the example above, the player might underline "King Richard" and write the Annotation:

I am the bastard son of the King, and have never felt like he acknowledged me for my loyalty and the way my actions as his bishop have lent stability to the kingdom.

As a general rule, you'll want to write moderately substantial sentences. Both you and the gamemaster will incorporate aspects of your Annotations into narrating conflict resolution outcomes after re-rolls. Underlining "King Richard" and Annotating it with, "I saw him crowned," doesn't give either of you a lot of material for those narrations. More on this in the section on Conflict Resolution.

the Die

The final step is to take a blank six-sider and allocate sides to the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, creating your character's W/F/D die. The way you allocate the sides determines the comparative significance of the three forces in your character's life:

The World is the environment; it's circumstance, causality, and the power of objects.

The Flesh is strength, brainpower, sensuality, and health.

The Devil is alienation, materialism, objectification, and fear.

The only requirement is that you must have at least one World, one Flesh, and one Devil side.

There is no explicit or implied relationship between the nature of a character's Annotations and the allocation of sides to the W/F/D die. You can write Annotations that depict a very physical character and then devote four of the six sides of the W/F/D die to the Devil, placing the character in a personal narrative strongly influenced by matters of the spirit.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

the GM's dice

The game also requires that the GM have a set of five dice with different allocations of plus and minus symbols on them. The GM should create these dice with a breakdown of plus and minus symbols in black and red as follows:

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+ + + + + -
+ + + + - -
+ + + - - -
+ + - - - -
+ - - - - -

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Resolving Conflict

When a player has stated intent for the character to do something where the outcome is in question, the GM will give the player one of the conflict resolution dice with the plus and minus symbols on them. Which one depends on his assessment of the difficulty of the situation and the character's ability to accomplish what the player intends. "Average" difficulty is represented by the 2+/4- die.

The player rolls both his W/F/D die and the one the GM gave him. If the result is a Devil+, it means the victory was one in which the character transcended some aspect of the Devil, and the player narrates the outcome. If the result is Flesh-, it's a failure of the flesh and the player narrates the outcome.

Re-rolls

If a player isn't satisfied with his dice throw, he can use an Annotation to give himself a re-roll. He must identify which Annotation he's using before re-rolling, and he must throw both the W/F/D die and the plus/minus die. The re-roll itself cannot be re-rolled.

And regardless of whether the result is a failure or a success, the player must incorporate some aspect of the Annotation he used for the re-roll in his narration of the outcome.

In the Character Creation section, players were encouraged to write moderately substantial Annotations. This is because Annotations are not depleted when used for re-rolls, so a player who has written overly simple Annotations might find himself frustrated by the awkwardness of repeatedly needing to use them in narrating re-roll outcomes.

Red Symbols

There are no opposed rolls, and the GM never rolls. However, if a player rolls a red plus or red minus it means the GM narrates the outcome, rather than the player. This give the GM power to introduce bittersweet victories and dramatic, crippling failures.

And if a red plus or minus comes up when a player has used an Annotation to trigger a re-roll, it's the GM that references the Annotation in his narration of the outcome.



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