



The Apocalypse



Chapter One: Introduction

*"Doomsday... the Final Battle...
Doomsday... Apocalypse..."*
—Ministry, "Grace"

What is Mind's Eye Theater?

This game is probably different from anything you've ever played before. Within the pages of this book, you'll find all the information necessary to catapult your imagination beyond the boundaries of traditional tabletop games. Rather than sitting around a table and rolling dice to determine your character's actions, you create the action; as stories unfold, you become both actor and screenwriter.

Mind's Eye Theatre is akin to improvisational theatre: you are given, or create, a character who has a personality and goals. You enact a story that takes place in a live setting. The players interact with one another as though they are their characters. Narrators occasionally step in to play the parts of antagonists or adjudicate rules disputes. Often, though, especially in larger games, the players themselves play the antagonists. Most scenes are played out in real time. Interruptions are only made when there is a rules dispute or a change of scenes.

In **Mind's Eye Theater**, there are no limits to the worlds you can explore. In this game, no dice conven-

tions or bulky rulebooks hamper your freedom of expression. This is the quintessential environment for telling stories. Through this game, you will come to discover the impending Apocalypse that threatens the world. You will assume the persona of one of Gaia's guardians and learn what it is to be a Garou. **Apocalypse** is a living embodiment of storytelling.

The Art of Storytelling

Many years ago, long before compact discs, Dolby stereo and cable television, there was storytelling. It was a social activity, one where families and friends could gather in comfort and share the experiences of life, passing on the wisdom gained from living. Storytelling was a proud tradition, a tradition that brought entire communities together to share stories and celebrate in the joy of being alive. As time passed, however, storytelling eventually took a distant backseat to other art forms; television, radio, film and multimedia assaulted our senses.

We do not intend to condemn the modern world. On the contrary, the wonders of today's civilization have given us the ability to disseminate ideas and receive information from all parts of the world. Technology has also brought us closer to the written word, allowing



everyone access to the triumphs and failures of our history. The purpose of this book is to convey the idea that storytelling can still be a vital medium in the modern world, and maybe, just maybe, it can give us a broader understanding of our world, along with the ability to make it a little brighter.

Live-action storytelling is a step up from tabletop gaming. Instead of having a gamemaster direct you through various encounters created by her imagination, you are free to guide yourself through another world. You have control over the character you play, and the decisions are still left to you. A mediator, known as the Narrator, will settle conflicts with other players and detail the world with which you interact. Beyond that, everything depends on you.

There are no secrets to pass on about storytelling, no great mysteries that remain shrouded and forgotten. Storytelling cannot be taught. The art of telling stories must be practiced and experienced. There are fantastic stories hidden within us all, tales screaming for escape and waiting to claw their way into the light of day. They're waiting to be experienced by others. **The Apocalypse** gives us the ability to tell our stories and share our dreams with others. Live-action is our device for reaching into the past and bringing the art of storytelling to its rightful place in the present.

The Narrator

The Narrator is, without a doubt, the foundation of the stories told in **The Apocalypse**. It is her responsibility to detail the world that the players live in and settle disputes when they arise. The rules in any game are important, but in **The Apocalypse**, a game played in a live setting, the basic rules are even more important. It is mandatory that the players do as the Narrator instructs to prevent any disruptions to the story.

During the course of a story, the Narrator will be called upon to play many roles. It will be her task to assume the personas of all the characters the players meet. In **The Apocalypse**, she will play many roles, ranging from the most loyal of allies to the most hated of villains. Her portrayal of these characters must be believable. If she can do that, she will add greater depth to the game and heighten the enjoyment of it for everyone.

As a rule, it is advised that there be one Narrator for every six or seven players. Although this number may vary, this guideline allows for the Narrator to interact more often with the players and helps them to delve deeper into the story.

Responsibilities

As a Narrator, the content and flow of the story is dependent on you. Indeed, the players have gathered to explore and conquer the world you have created for them. There is a lot riding on what you do and how you

do it. Don't let this discourage you— the rewards of narrating are great, and although the task can be exhausting, the sense of accomplishment gained from a successful story makes the whole process worthwhile.

The Narrator has the responsibility of hosting the game and getting the story started. In addition to this, the Narrator must keep the story going, insuring that it does not bog down or get out of control. She must make sure that the players have plenty to do and do not become bored. During the course of a game, you will be called upon to do a variety of tasks, such as settling disputes, roleplaying a wide variety of characters and setting the stage for the various scenes. Throughout all of this, you must remain patient and attend to your players. After all, without them, your story would be nothing.

Another responsibility of the Narrator— without a doubt, the most important responsibility— is safety. The Narrator must make sure that the area chosen for the game is safe for play and must ensure that all the players abide by the rules.

In the end, the goal of **The Apocalypse** is to have fun. As a Narrator, you are a storyteller, a judge and a member of the supporting cast. Although you have your work cut out for you, the rewards are worth it. If you can tell a great story, your players will be appreciative. They'll also admire you because of the hard work you undertook for their enjoyment. Don't be intimidated. Weave a tale you and your players will always remember.

The Character

The characters in **The Apocalypse** represent the majority of the characters involved in the story and ultimately control the outcome of the game. A character can be anyone from any walk of life. A character is nothing more than a reflection of the person who plays him, and the facets that make up the entirety of any given player are infinite. The only limit to a character is the player's imagination.

Creating a character for **The Apocalypse** is easy and only takes a few moments. Unlike other games, there are no extensive character sheets to fill out with volumes of statistics and abilities. Instead, only a few abilities are necessary to define a character. However, once this step is completed, the character is only a skeleton. It is up to the players to flesh out and breathe life into the character, defining her personality and determining her role in the story. To do this, the player must reach within herself and find a spark of life that will make her character complete. Only then

will the character be ready to join the story.

Responsibilities

As a player, your responsibilities are not as varied and demanding as those of the Narrator, but you play an important part, nonetheless. Players are the heart and soul of a story. Without you, all the patient efforts of the Narrator would be for naught. Appreciate the efforts of the Narrator by respecting the rules and, first and foremost, take an active part in the game. Have fun.



Winners and Losers

Unlike most games, the object of **The Apocalypse** is not to “win”. In fact, there are no rules covering such events. The goal of **The Apocalypse** is to tell stories, not to achieve superiority over the other players. Your character possesses motivations and ambitions that make her a vital part of the story. When coupled with the depth of the other characters who take an active part, it makes the game complete, ensuring that everyone is a winner no matter how well their characters “succeed”.

Ultimately, the goal of **The Apocalypse** is to have fun. After all, this is more of a story than a game.

Props

In order to compliment your storytelling and increase your enjoyment of the game, props may be used. Props can be anything that helps to define your character, including costumes, makeup and jewelry. It is forbidden to use guns, fake guns, stakes, staffs or anything that can be misconstrued as a weapon in **The Apocalypse**. These items could bring undue attention from people outside the parameters of the game and could also prove dangerous. Have fun and employ any props that you feel are necessary to enhance your character. However, if you have any doubts as to whether a prop will be allowed, consult your Narrator and heed her decision.

Elegantly Simple

This game was designed to be simple to play. The rules are intended to be easy to understand and use. In this game, the story is more important than the rules, and, to a certain extent, the rules are elements of the story. We use the words “elegantly simple” to describe our goal in game design.

The Apocalypse is a storytelling game and, as such, might be different from other games you have experienced. The rules are aimed at resolving conflicts quickly and allowing players to remain in character without losing track of the story. Indeed, the rules are created so that players can resolve confrontations without ever stepping outside the confines of the story or their characters. We have made every effort to create rules that maintain the integrity of the story and the background in which the story is set.

The rules are intended more as guidelines than absolute laws and are meant to be used at your discretion. This game is yours. Make of it what you will. Modify and adapt this game as you see fit.

With this book as your guide, you will be able to tell stories about the horrid blight that plagues the world as you and your werewolf brethren frantically heed Gaia’s cry for help. Welcome to **Mind’s Eye Theater: The Apocalypse**.





The Rules of Safety

Due to the nature of this game, certain rules as to the conduct of the players must be heeded. You have to be very careful as to how you conduct **The Apocalypse**. Behave yourself so that you and your fellow players can enjoy the game. Do not bring attention to yourself from outsiders. This game is to be played in the home, at conventions or at other safe locations. Caution must be taken for the preservation of the story.

- **Don't Touch!** You should never actually carry out any sort of physical contest. This is the stage where you need to start playing pretend. Act out only those things that don't require contact. This doesn't mean you can't shake hands, but it does mean you should give other cast members a lot of space.

- **No Stunts!** Don't get physical. Never climb, jump, run, leap or swing during a game. Use the rules when you want to do something even slightly outlandish—keep your roleplaying low-key. Werewolves are violent creatures, but the need to represent such things as violence and combat is the reason we have rules: players have to resolve conflict without physical contact. Avoid attracting attention, and use your imagination to its fullest.

- **No Weapons!** Fake and real weapons of any sort are absolutely forbidden. This includes staffs and guns of any sort, or anything used to represent a weapon. Use your imagination! Things can get out of hand when such props are used, and they can give other people wrong impressions.