



THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES



AGENDA

- ★ Make the darkness unrelenting.
- ★ Make the performers' lives compelling.
- ★ Play to find out what happens.

PRINCIPLES

- ★ Cover the world in dust and poverty.
- ★ Address yourself to the performers, not the players.
- ★ Shroud your moves in shadow.
- ★ Treat them like freaks, but always offer a promise of more.
- ★ Name everyone; give them all hungers.
- ★ Ask compelling questions and build on the answers.
- ★ Be a fan of the players' characters.
- ★ Show them that darkness lingers.
- ★ Remind them everything rests on their shoulders.
- ★ Put them in their place.

MOVES

- ★ Get the rubes involved.
- ★ Reveal the darkness within someone trusted.
- ★ Pit characters against one another.
- ★ Present help for the wrong reasons.
- ★ Offer a horrible bargain at the right moment.
- ★ Remind them that they will never belong.
- ★ Isolate, separate, or hurt them.
- ★ Turn a move back on them.
- ★ After every move: "What do you do?"

THE TOWN

Name:

Industry:

Hunger:

NOTES:

NPC NAMES

Billie, Shirley, Gerald, Rudy, Sylvia,
Wallis, Boyce, Delores, Grace, Mae,
Eugene, Guadalupe, Miguel, Martha,
Fernando, Josefina, Jorge, Rosalyn,
Rhode, Stanley, Ursula, Klaus, Hans,
Edith, Margot, Annelise, Friedrich,
Pieter, Bartek, Magda, Pawel, Tomek,
Clementine, Alma, Beauford, Palmer,
Gordan, Horace, Minnie, Ulysses, Meta

APOCALYPSE TRACK

The stars go out one by one until night is only darkness
 Unspeakable things lurk in the darkness, lonely & waiting



The dead begin to rise, restless & grieving
 Death can be found walking amongst the living



The sun will glow a bloody red forever more
 Disease, famine, & war can be found in every home



The darkness snuffs out the red sun
 The earth opens up, swallowing good & evil alike



A sandstorm blots out the sun
 A plague of locusts & jackrabbits descend



The apocalypse is complete

PATH OF REDEMPTION



A prophet awakens whispering the future
 A scarcity becomes plentiful



A herald awakens bringing hope
 A gift arrives exactly when needed



A saviour awakens with newfound purpose
 An enemy becomes an ally when least expected



A weapon is found to smite the darkness
 An army is formed from those redeemed



A death is undone with the gift of life
 A monster is given humanity

PATH OF DESTRUCTION

A harbinger is awoken promising despair
 A source of comfort becomes poison



A horror is spawned from the earth
 A child of darkness awakens with newfound power



The beast awakens with dark purpose
 An ally becomes an enemy when least expected



A safe haven is corrupted wholly
 A guardian is lured to the darkness and consumed



A loved one becomes an irredeemable monster
 An army arrives to burn the world





Offer Comfort

When you **offer comfort** to someone in need, roll +grace. On a hit, choose 2. On a 7-9, their player gets to ask 1 of you as well.

- * Who here frightens you?
- * How can I get you to _____?
- * What disgusts you about yourself/another/this place?
- * How can you be redeemed?
- * What do you desire from _____?

Keep An Eye Out For Trouble

When you **keep an eye out for trouble**, roll +guile. On a hit, take +1 forward on the answers you found. On a 10+, ask 2. On 7-9, ask 1.

- * What dark truth is hidden here?
- * What tragedy is about to happen?
- * What is my best way out of this mess?
- * Who here is stained by the darkness?

Endure the Darkness

When you **endure the darkness** in the face of danger, tell the MC what you want to withstand and roll +breath. On a hit, you do it. On a 10+, you also learn an unexpected truth about the situation. On 7-9, the MC will offer you a wicked bargain, a painful choice, or a price paid to the darkness.

Lash Out With Unsettling Violence

When you **lash out with unsettling violence** against someone, roll +bones. On a hit, exchange harm as established. On a 10+, choose 1. On 7-9, choose 2.

- * You attract unwanted attention
- * You take it further than you intended
- * Someone precious to you pays for your rashness
- * Mark darkness as the blood stains your hands

Strike a Deal

When you **strike a deal** by offering up something precious, roll +guile. On a hit, the deal is struck with a shake of hands. On a 7-9, you have to mark darkness or choose 1:

- * You pay more than you reckoned
- * Someone else pays a price
- * Blood will need to be spilled
- * The darkness takes a cut

When you **strike a deal** with another PC, they can mark darkness to weasel out of it later or mark experience when they finally follow through. Either way, you know the outcome.

Indulge Your Inner Monster

When you **indulge your inner monster**, hold 1. Mark darkness to spend your hold 1 for 1 to choose 1 from the list. Your hold disappears at the end of session.

- * Become invincible: ignore all harm from a single source
- * Become omniscient: force another to reveal their hidden truth
- * Become indomitable: turn a miss to a 10+ result
- * Become undeniable: summon the darkness to face you

Embrace the Darkness

When you **embrace the darkness**, mark darkness and roll +breath. On a 10+, choose two from the list. On 7-9, choose one:

- * Show someone true pain: rip the darkness from their soul (2 harm)
- * Show someone true fear: they must either run from you or freeze in place, your choice
- * Show someone true disgust: extend your abilities to do something inhuman
- * Show someone true grief: take something valuable from them



CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Rusty, Tiffani, Pippa, Bart, Rory, Enzo, Wilder, Marquel, Dolores, Harriet

Look: mangy, groomed, grotesque, scruffy, devilish

Eyes: predatory, begging, gentle, soulful, playful

Origin: bitten by a beast, born under a full moon, spirit of the wolf, raised with the pack, man's best friend

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones +1, Breath +1, Grace -1, Guile -1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * What do you chase even though it will be your death?
- * What does your transformation cost you each time you change?

Sideshow Alley

- * Who here do you hunt, crave, and want to taste more than anything in the world?
- * Who is part of your pack and how did they earn your loyalty?
- * Who threatens the safety of the carnival and how do you plan to stop them?

The Monster Within

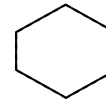
Your pack must be kept safe and those that cross that boundary must pay. You regain control when you feel safe within the embrace of a trusted friend.

Solace

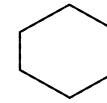
When you find solace in another, tell them what you find beautiful about them and ask them what they find beautiful about you. If you believe them, erase a mark of darkness. If you don't, tell them why they're wrong about you, and mark darkness.

STATS

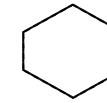
Bones



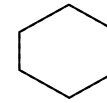
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You get **Beast Within** and choose one:

Beast Within

When you transform into a terrifying werewolf, roll +bones. On a 10+, choose two. On a 7 - 9, choose one:

- * Gain +1 to Bones until you change back
- * Do an extra harm when you **Lash Out With Unsettling Violence**
- * You can easily transform back
- * Heal all of your harm

On a miss, you are lost to your true nature. Upon recovering your human form, you discover that you did something you'll regret.



One of the Pack

When a loved one is in danger, add +1 when you **Lash Out with Unsettling Violence** to keep them safe.



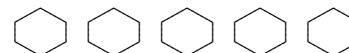
True Nature

When you tap into your wolf to sense the monstrosity in others, roll +breath. On a hit, ask two. On a 10+, take +1 forward to acting on the information you discover. On a 7 - 9, they get to ask one as well.

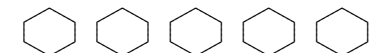
- * What is your secret weakness?
- * What kind of monster are you?
- * How could I tempt you?
- * Who quiets your hunger?

On a miss, their monster captivates yours. Mark darkness.

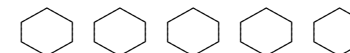
XP



DARKNESS



HARM





CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Katherine, Homer, Dylan, Noir, Norman, Ozymandias, Myrtle, Marvel, Adrienne, Otaku

Look: damaged, barbaric, hollow, haunted, corpulent

Eyes: penetrating, wistful, pained, empty, obsessed

Origin: walking shadow, nightmare given flesh, forgotten god, fallen angel, neglected devil

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones -1, Breath +1, Grace -1, Guile +1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * What comfort do you seek in drink and other debauchery?
- * What promise do you always make and never keep?

Sideshow Alley

- * Who supplies you with your choice of sustenance and how do you pay them?
- * Who have you seen at their worst and how did you comfort them?
- * Who did you see at their best and how did you tear them down?

The Monster Within

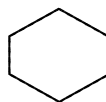
You shout to the skies all the hoarded secrets that will hurt the most people. You regain control when you feel you are someone instead of no one.

Solace

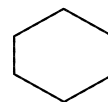
When you find solace in another, tell them how they give you light in the darkness and ask them what gives them hope. If it gives you hope as well, clear a point of darkness. If it doesn't, mark darkness and lash out: at them, at your friends, or at the world—whatever denies you hope.

STATS

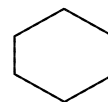
Bones



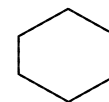
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You start with **Headless Beasts** and choose 1:

Headless Beasts

When you make a show of beheading living creatures for dinner in front of someone, roll +breath. On a hit, choose one below. On a 7 - 9, they also mark darkness.

- * They give you something valuable
- * They tell you something immediately useful
- * They promise you one favor, given now or later

On a miss: You disgust, frighten, or disquiet them into physical or verbal action against you. Prepare for pain.



Hidden in the Hills

No matter the place or the time, you know of somewhere safe. Add the following option to the list when you **embrace the darkness**:

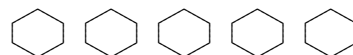
- * escape to safety



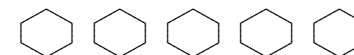
Shameless

When you hide from your betters in plain sight, roll +guile. On a hit, you remain unnoticed, quietly observing. Ask the MC one revealing question about the scene you observe; pressing any further will reveal your presence. On a 10+, you may ask a follow up question about the scene or the people in it. On a miss, you are discovered at the worst possible moment.

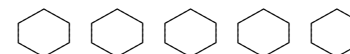
XP



DARKNESS



HARM





CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Coral, Ondine, Neriss, Mishell, Lorelei, Araxie, Mazu, Thetis, Dani, Tristan

Look: ethereal, pearlescent, rotting, predatory, starving

Eyes: nervous, brooding, aloof, distracted, whelmed

Origin: followed true love, seeking revenge, banished from the sea, forgotten purpose, captured by lies

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones +1, Breath -1, Grace +1, Guile -1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * How do you navigate land with no legs?
- * What did treasure did you bring with you from the ocean?

Sideshow Alley

- * Who helps you get around on land more than anyone else?
- * Who are you in love with? What about them draws you in, and what disgusts you?
- * Whose eyes can you feel linger on you too long and why don't you stop them?

The Monster Within

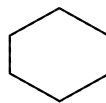
You destroy anything in the way of what you believe will make you truly happy. You regain control when you feel loved for who you are.

Solace

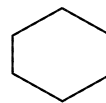
When you find solace in another, tell them a story of who you were before you came to land and ask who they were before the carnival. If they tell you a story in return, clear a point of darkness. If they don't, tell them what kind of horrible monster you think they were and mark darkness.

STATS

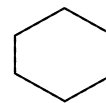
Bones



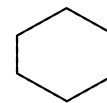
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You start with **Siren Song** and choose 1:

Siren Song

When you use your lovely voice as a weapon, roll +grace. On a hit, choose one:

- * Shriek until their ears bleed: deal 2 harm
- * Mesmerize even the hardest heart: an PC takes -2 on their next roll
- * Slip under their skin: dictate an NPC's physical actions for a short time

On a 7 - 9, also choose one:

- * leave yourself exposed to danger
- * drive a NPC mad with need for you
- * endanger someone you care for

On a miss, a terrible thing is called by your song and wants something only you can give.



Beauty from Below

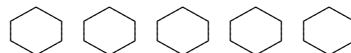
When revealing your aquatic features, you may roll +grace instead of guile to **Strike a Deal**.



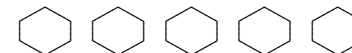
Soulless Beast

When someone offers you comfort, you may either always ask them a question of your choice in return, or simply lie to them and mark darkness.

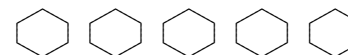
XP



DARKNESS



HARM





CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Valeska, Pama, Alexander, Zoltar, Cato, Orion, Murdoch, Sofia, Airlia, Keller

Look: mystic, haunted, dangerous, disheveled, nomadic

Eyes: ancient, faded, laughing, piercing, someone else's

Origin: chosen by spirits, descendant of Sibyl, family trade, an ancient ritual, an unwanted and irrevocable curse

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones -1, Breath +1, Grace -1, Guile +1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * What sinister destiny is coming to claim you?
- * What lingering spirit haunts you and why?

Sideshow Alley

- * Whose future are you always trying to keep one step ahead of and why don't you tell them?
- * Who comforts you when the darkness of your visions leaves you fearful and sleepless?
- * Who has a malicious spirit following them and why are you helping the spirit?

The Monster Within

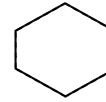
You must fulfill the visions that come to you, regardless of who they hurt. You release your inner monster when you see how your visions help save someone.

Solace

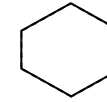
When you find solace in another, tell them how they make you feel truly seen and ask if they believe you know who they truly are. If they believe, clear a point of darkness. If they don't, tell them their grim future, true or not, and mark darkness.

STATS

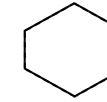
Bones



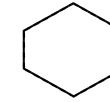
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You start with **The Cards** and choose 1:

The Cards

When you read the cards to see past the veil of time, roll +guile. On a hit, you can ask three questions of the MC about the past, present, or future; they will answer honestly. On a 7 - 9, the truth you see shakes you; mark darkness. On a miss, the cards reveal an immediate danger that is impossible to avoid.



The Touch

When you try to feel the truth inside someone, touch them and roll +breath. On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7 - 9, ask 1.

- * What are you afraid I'll see?
- * What secret do you know about _____?
- * What are you thinking right now?
- * What would you protect at all costs?
- * How do you truly feel about _____?

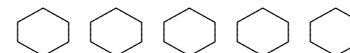
On a miss, you see the darkest of their futures and take -1 ongoing to prevent it.



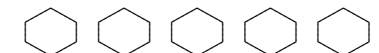
Portents of Doom

Whenever you **strike a deal**, you may mark darkness to foresee how this might end poorly and remove one consequence.

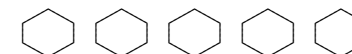
XP



DARKNESS



HARM





CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Nula, Beatrix, Zelick, Korianna, Kou-Bao, Tamsin, Pavel, Tanith, Draco, Phineas

Look: exotic, modest, mysterious, ravishing, provoking

Eyes: dangerous, alluring, mocking, serpentine, teasing

Origin: ancient bloodline of sorcerers, half gorgon, daughter of Lamia, sacrificial offering, child of a basilisk

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones +1, Breath -1, Grace +1, Guile -1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * What makes your cold blood run hot, no matter how much you resist?
- * What or who has your snake killed that you're keeping hidden?

Sideshow Alley

- * Who acts as though they own you and how do you show them they don't?
- * Who tastes like fear and how do you frighten them deliberately?
- * Who do you turn to when you need to feel loved and how do you pay them?

The Monster Within

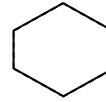
You must follow your base animal instincts and feed them until they are sated. You regain control when you fulfill the deepest needs of another.

Solace

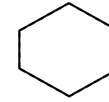
When you find solace in another, tell them how they've earned your trust and ask if they trust you in return. If they trust you, clear a point of darkness. If they don't, tell them a painful truth about themselves and mark darkness.

STATS

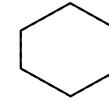
Bones



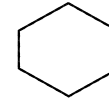
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You start with **Forbidden Fruit** and choose 1:

Forbidden Fruit

When you dance sensually with your snake for an NPC, tell them what you want from them and roll +grace. On a 10+, they'll do it for just a glimpse of your flesh. On a 7 - 9, they're going to want more than a glimpse.

On a miss: they'll take what they want from you, with violence if needed.



Viper's Kiss

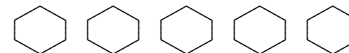
When you deliberately poison someone with a kiss, roll +bones. On a hit, they take 3 harm, become paralyzed, or take -1 ongoing until the poison leaves their system, your choice. On a 10+, choose two options. On a miss, you infect them with your venom, turning them into a monster like you.



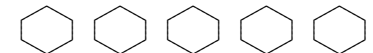
Shedding Skin

When you **Embrace the Darkness**, you may add "shed your skin" to the list of options. You shed your skin, allowing you to change your appearance slightly. If you would change your entire appearance to something completely new, mark an extra darkness and be born anew.

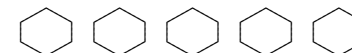
XP



DARKNESS



HARM





CHARACTER CREATION

Circle one from each

Name: Atlas, Janne, Sebastian, Mila, Svend, Sandor, Chyna, Kasia, Vladimir, Aneta

Look: god-like, imposing, despairing, desolate, ruined

Eyes: painful, judged, appraising, distant, dominant

Origin: failed experiment, demigod, last of a giant race, cursed by a bitter rival, in service of an infernal master

Indulgence: _____

Beginning Stats (Add +1 to any of the following):

Bones +1, Breath -1, Grace -1, Guile +1

Pitch Card

- * How did you end up at the carnival?
- * Why are you fighting on the side of humanity?
- * Why don't you give in to your monstrous nature?
- * What about your strength frightens you?
- * Whose innocence did you destroy in your anger?

Sideshow Alley

- * Who do you view as yours and how do you show them?
- * Who did you last put in their place and how bad was the damage?
- * Who is a friend you believe would never betray you?

The Monster Within

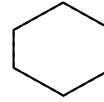
You release your built up rage on anything and everything, destruction your only salve. You regain control when you feel the power of gentleness.

Solace

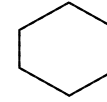
When you find solace in another, tell them something you're afraid of and ask them what their weakness is. If they share their weakness, clear a point of darkness. If they don't, frighten them into submission and mark darkness.

STATS

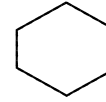
Bones



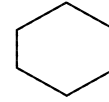
Breath



Grace



Guile



MOVES

You start with **Strength of 10 Men** and choose 1:

Strength of 10 Men

When you threaten to bring the pain in order to get what you want from someone, tell them what you want and roll +bones. On a hit, they can choose to:

- * stand up to you but take three harm
- * give in and do what you want

On a 7-9, they can also choose:

- * You mark darkness
- * You make a worse mess of things

On a miss, you can't bring yourself to follow through and expose an emotional weakness to your would-be victim.



Unflinching

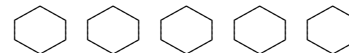
When you endure the darkness by suffering in stoic silence, roll +bones instead of +breath. On a miss, bones break instead of giving you strength; you take 2 harm.



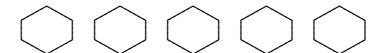
Man of Action

When you charge into trouble without thinking the situation through, deal +1 harm whenever you deal harm.

XP



DARKNESS



HARM

