

The Darkness of my Heart



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Children of the Night.
A sourcebook for *Kult*.

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This document describes additional rules for the horror roleplaying game *Kult*, currently published by 7th Circle. This sourcebook is based on the second edition of the rules, and some parts of this document can be seen as an alternative to the official rules, as it is not 100% true to them. This sourcebook contains offensive material. Do *not* read it if you are easily offended.

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Contents

1	Forewords	6
I	Nightfall	9
2	Of Light and Darkness	10
2.1	Down into the abyss	11
2.1.1	Low mental balance	12
2.1.2	That last grip of Reality	13
2.2	The way up to heaven	14
3	the Darkness within	15
3.1	the Firstborn	16
3.2	the Tainted	16
3.3	the Chosen	16
3.4	the Fallen	18
3.5	the Darksouls	18
4	Living in the realms of Sanity	19
4.1	Understanding Humans	22
4.2	Another day in paradise	23
4.2.1	Limitations	24
4.2.2	Powers	30
4.3	Of what my heart is full	34
4.4	The human connection	37
5	Hallucinations and their kin	38
5.1	Darkness take its Share	39
5.2	the Lore of Darkness	41
5.2.1	the Rituals of the <i>Childhood</i>	43

6	Ageing and decay	47
6.1	That tinding hope	48
6.1.1	to Remain among the Living	49
6.2	Hell and rebirth	50
7	For Reason and Loyalty	52
7.1	the Devourers	53
7.1.1	Jackals	53
7.1.2	Nosferatu	56
7.1.3	Lorelei	57
7.1.4	Devastators	58
7.1.5	Maran	60
7.1.6	Cariath	61
7.2	the Purgatides	61
7.2.1	Succubi	62
7.2.2	Nepharites	63
7.3	the Infested	64
7.3.1	the Legionaries	64
7.3.2	the Herolds	64
8	Sanctuaries	65
8.1	Metropolis	65
8.2	the Underworld	67
8.3	the Kingdom of Maniacs	68
8.4	the Countryside	69
8.5	Gaia	70
8.6	the Children of Misery	70
II	Playing and GM'ing	72
9	Playing a <i>Child</i>	73
9.1	So, why play <i>Children of the Night</i>	73
9.2	Ideas and background	74
9.3	Differences from normal rules	75
9.3.1	The dark Art	75
9.3.2	Immortality	75
9.3.3	Undeath	75
9.3.4	Light and Dark	75
9.4	Wordlist	76

Chapter 1

Forewords

“ The patient seemed unusually restless, loud screams and the sound as from a big wet sponge being smashed into a wall, roared through the corridor. She had been specifically told not to discuss this patient, but it was hard to get it out of her mind. The sound made all the present nurses freeze, intimidated by what they knew about. . . that patient. Talking would have relieved the burden.

They had brought it here a few weeks ago, a seemingly lifeless corpse. It. . . for she could not say whether or not this was a man or woman, the body was in a kind decaying. It wasn't lifeless. She and two other nurses had been ordered to clean it, and take care of its wounds. The creature had turned out be all wounds. It's whole body was a mass of decaying flesh, full of maggots. They had eventually got rid of both the dead flesh and the maggots, and the creature had started to look like a piece of boiled meat instead. Thin trails of seemingly fresh blood, discovered new paths right through the clean "skin" of the creature. They had wrapped the patient up in so many compresses that it was completely covered afterward. They had named it "the mummy", until the director heard it. Now it was just the "patient 17/3".

After what seemed to be forever, the head nurse started to move. She fumbled a long time with the keys, and at the time she had managed to unlock the door, the patient had already stopped screaming. She opened and listened, but didn't immediately enter. The room lay in darkness. And a faint buzz from the ceiling was the only sound she could hear, but she was unable to see the source of it. Probably some kind of insect. She opened the door a bit wider, and let light from the corridor pour through the opening. The bed had been thrown upside down. Bits and pieces of something that might had been the illumination lay scattered

across the entire floor, together with pieces of blood soaked cloth. Her eyes slowly adjusted to the darkness. The patient had folded itself up in a fetal position in the farthest corner of the room, eyes locked against some imaginary thing moving along in the ceiling.

She didn't expect it to approach the door. It was afraid of light, but usually even a bit fascinated of it. Before they installed the thick green curtains that now shielded off light from the window, it had spent all days curled up in that very same corner where the sun never reached. They had tried to move the patient out of the corner once. After that incident they had decided to install new curtains instead. Curtains that shielded the light out. Afterward it had got increasingly obvious of how obsessed the patient was of the light. Some times she had seen it stretching its hands into the thin rays of sunlight that filtered through, just to quickly retract. And then repeating the whole procedure, without seeming to notice anything else.

She called for another of the nurses with a low soft voice, careful not to make the patient upset. As soon as the other nurse had arrived, they entered. The patient made no resistance at this time. It just tried to curl up some more, covering its face with the things the nurses called "hands". It made a short whimpering sound.

Before they carried it away to the shower room, they always covered it with a thick blanket. This was so it shouldn't get too worried about the bright corridors outside the room. Meanwhile, the other nurses would clean up the room, while she and her colleague would put on fresh compresses and care for the wounds. They usually had to wash out some new maggots as well, so they always did this in the shower. She tried to tell herself that it liked to shower, but inside herself she knew that this creature didn't like running water. Deep within herself she knew that it wasn't dirt they washed away. They washed away bodyparts.

After the other nurse had put the blanket on, they lifted the package together. It felt light, and smelled faintly of rotten fish as they carried it to the shower.

She never saw it again. The next time she was at duty, about two days later, "patient 17/3" was gone. Someone had not locked the door properly, and the patient had found its way out of the room. Trails of dried blood leading out and away, had made it easy to follow. The patient had been found in front of a huge panorama window at the end of one corridor. Rays from a bright sun danced over the remains. It had collapsed facing south. Two

trails of a sticky substance followed the glass down, ending at what was left of the patient's hands. Wet rags kept it together, and when seen at a distance one could almost imagine that the body still pulsed of life. The maggots had already owned it for hours. Flies swarmed all over, showing a special interest in the tar-like lines at the window. Still one year after the incident, the window attracted flies whenever the sun would raise. "

I am greatly annoyed by the way "supernatural" creatures are pictured in modern literature, film and RPGs. Especially ridiculous is how various "damned" creatures are viewed. Nobody seems to realize what "damnation" actually feels like. Damnation is not to be immortal, to have supernatural powers or to be able to foretell the future. Think instead of a pedophile, someone almost universally despised and looked down upon. Pedophiles are sexually attracted to children. Pedophiles fall in love with children. Any pedophile who follows their desires will destroy what they love, and there exists no cure against a sexual deviation. A pedophile must eventually choose between sacrificing themselves, or others.

Darkness, is the absence of light.

Damnation, is an absence of hope.

This is my interpretation of how the *Children of the Night* ought to be played in a *Kult* adventure. It has been assembled mostly from the second *Kult* rulebook (Swedish edition), but filtered through my own impressions and thoughts during my youth and childhood. In *Kult*, dark characters get their (possibly supernatural) abilities from the darkness within themselves, and "darkness within" means that you feel bad. Not really angry, not really violent. That is not darkness, for anger and violence will aid you in times of peril. Anger and violence are of course important ingredients in any dark story, but it is not the violence in itself that is the darkness. Sorrow, guilt and desires you do not wish to admit to yourself, that is darkness from within. Darkness breaks you down. Darkness can give you advantages, but it always cost more than it gives.

Part I
Nightfall

Chapter 2

Of Light and Darkness

“ I should have known better, but now I was stuck and the proud father was holding his son. He was holding him high, both arms stretched against the sky, like holding a crucifix to ward me off. I had to get out, away from these fearsome creatures smelling of happiness and love.

– “Leaving so soon?”, she smiled.

She stood in my way, cutting off my only escape to freedom. Dense love oozed around them, searching, finding, trying to fill my lungs. Pain poured down within me. Stumbling forth I tried to reach past her, but she caught me.

– “Is there something wrong?”.

They seemed worried, and she gripped for my hand. It must have been then I started to cough up blood, and I realized that it was me or them. A vase! I smashed the boy’s head with it. The shock made them both freeze, life pouring out of them. Their joy, my doom. Their doom, my survival. ”

Most people live with a balance between light and darkness in their hearts, and few of them has ever had a need to realize their divine glow or the shadows they cast. Since they are so balanced, they seldom do really terrible or beautiful things. They generally think of themselves as ”good”, without ever defining this word. Those who dare to try, often end up saying to themselves that ”light” is good, because ”light” feels good. It is nice to be good. Thus light is good.

If light is good, then it comes naturally that dark is evil. Light brings knowledge and order. Light brings clearness and control. Light brings contrast, and makes the ugly even uglier and the pretty even prettier. Darkness on the other hand covers up. Darkness let’s the ugly hide and survive. Darkness is to lose control.

In *Kult* every character has a *mental balance*. Typically it starts at zero, but a character who has enjoyed a wonderful life or was born to misery, might start with other values. The *mental balance* is normally viewed as a path to divinity, which can be climbed in either direction. The more distant you are from normality, the more you regain of your divinity. To most characters, this divinity is forever out of reach. Although the *Children of the Dark* could be thought of as closer to the divine state, the typical *Child of the Night* will be much harder fettered to the illusion than normal humans. Their limitations effectively holds them away from

Of Light and Darkneſſ

the light. At the ſame time, their everyday life is far too buſy to let them ſlip further down into the darkneſſ. Life ſimply becomes too hard for thoſe that do fall too deep.

2.1 Down into the abyſſ

MB	Typical description	Event
+250	Messiah	Long viſit in paradise.
+150	Apoſtle	Growing up being treated like a god.
+100	Holy	Abandoning all dark emotions and actively avoiding ſad people.
+75	Superior	Overcoming the need for love and understanding.
+50	Enlightened	Experiencing a religious awakening.
+25	Bleſſed	Becoming a (proud) parent.
+20	Beloved	Becoming loved by a loved one.
+15	Adored	Being admired by others.
+10	Successful	Becoming rich and famous.
+5	Happy	Falling in love.
0	Normal	-
-5	Sad	Your girl/boy-friend leaves you.
-10	Worried	Failing to follow up your ideal. Concern about the world.
-15	Aſhamed	You are forced to give up your ideal.
-20	Depreſſed	Your friends leave you.
-25	Mentally ill	Your friends ſtarts to deſpise you. The ſociety freezes you out.
-50	Traumatized	Your children die.
-75	Psychotic	Surviving a concentration camp.
-100	Paranoid	Growing up in a concentration camp without parents.
-150	Tormented	Growing up with ſadistic pedophilic parents who like to injure children.
-250	Damned	Long viſit in hell.

Simple liſt of events, and the typical effect on people with zero mental balance.

beſt friend die, then this would typically not bring you deeper down than to -35. A ſkilled psychiatrist will be able to recognize ſomeone at -25, but moſt normal people will ſimply not get it.

In general, what brings a normal perſon down (or up) by X points will bring a perſon already at X points of *mental balance* down (or up) by $\frac{X}{2}$. A perſon at

Normal With a *mental balance* of zero, you are completely normal. Thoſe who fall below zero are dark. Thoſe that aſcend over zero are light, or *enlightened*. The hiġheſt mental balance any *Child of the Night* can obtain, and ſtill be a *Child of the Night* is -25. Any *Child of the Night* who aſcends towards the light, will hit a barrier there. Aſcending over it would require the character gain advantage(s) worth an equal amount of light as three times the ſum of all its remaining limitations in a ſingle blow – a proceſs known as "redemption". Moſt *Children of the Night* that reach this barrier will never paſs it. Thoſe that ſtill manage to aſcend over it loſe all ſupernatural abilities and limitations, but many ſtill appears to be "tainted" by the darkneſſ. The *Children of the Night* call them *darksouls*.

Mentally ill With a *mental balance* of -25, with or without ſupernatural abilities, you are conſidered to be "ſtrange" by common men. This is equivalent of being traumatized, or ſeverely depreſſed. You avoid company and are not eaſily amused, but you can pretend to be happy if there is a need. Friends will conſider you to be enervating. Watching your beſt friend die will typically bring a normal perſon down to -25. However, if you already are at -25, watching your

Of Light and Darkneſſ

$X + \frac{X}{2}$ points, would be brought down (or up) by $\frac{X}{4}$ and so on. . . In general we would say that what brings you down from one level, will not bring you down to the next level. What affects you once, will not affect you when it happens over and over again. It will hoverer prevent you from "recovering" (that is, becoming normal again).

Traumatized A *mental balance* of -50 means you have severe problems, and you are not able to cover it up. Watching your child die might bring a normal person down to -50, but no deeper. Normal people that watch you will realize that you are in a bad shape, but will not realize the magnitude of it. They will start to avoid you, and blame you for pitying yourself. If you stray too long at -50, you risk being locked up in a mental asylum. When shocked, you might temporarily alter reality or yourself. This effect reminds slightly about having a nightmare in a dream, and can actually be mastered by people skilled in the art of dreaming. Normal people will try to deny the changes, and will be shocked themselves if they fail to do so.

Psychotic At -75 you are psychotic, but medication can help you to act sane. A psychosis is a diverse state and not all psychoses give hallucinations. Psychiatrists define the psychosis as when you lose the ability to realize the difference between reality and fantasy, but this definition is quite blurry. Some psychotics are quite sane even without medication, most of the time. You might still be able to take care of yourself at -75, but you probably forget to wash, clean and dress properly. People will try to make you move away. You feel literally like you are living inside a dream, and if you are shocked you can permanently alter reality. Those that feel drawn to the darkness and become shocked, or are shocked by supernatural events, might turn into a *Child of the Night*. Psychotic people are generally very frightened of the world, and becoming a *Child* usually does not make this situation better. Most *Children* (unlike what normal people might expect) feel immensely vulnerable.

2.1.1 Low mental balance

Paranoid At -100 you are constantly paranoid, and basically unable to handle your situation. You are constantly hallucinating, and if you have any friends left then they are probably psychotic themselves. In fear and misery, you might be protecting each others from the darkness that surrounds you. Those who are obsessed with the dark can slowly start to turn into *Children* by themselves, although this is uncommon. The only way you can avoid being locked away, is by isolating yourself from the sane people. You can live in the sewers, in the forest or in abandoned buildings. Countless stories have been written about insane people living in these places, where they always are described as dangerous and violent. The truth is that very few people with a *mental balance* of -100 are violent. Some paranoid people have been known to hide inside their apartments for decades. As long as nobody can see you, or as long as nobody cares, you will be free. Most are insanely afraid of everything that moves. . . and everything that doesn't move. The typical behavior is to flee from anything shaped as a human, but there exists a few of these people who really are violent.

At this level a *shadow* of yourself, but as light as you are now dark, will start to form. You will not be confronted with your *shadow*, but instead you will find

Of Light and Darkneſſ

messages from it. It will try to interfere with everything you do, and it will appear to know your every move. Your light *shadow* will sometimes try to make you turn around and seek redemption, sometimes it will try to have you killed. It will change things when you are away. It will encourage "good" people to hunt for you.

Tormented Anyone reaching -150 is guaranteed to become a *Child*. At this level of darkness, the reality will shatter around you. Normal people usually describes this as you are radiating *evil*, and will avoid you at all costs. Time and space will not be so obvious to you as it will be to other people. If a wall has been newly constructed, you might be able to walk through it. If something was built and destroyed a long time ago, but was considered of great importance and lasted a long time, then you might *not* be able to walk there. You might even be physically injured if you pass through areas where people have suffered greatly. To all normal people this will appear as a kind of "holy force", because the places of great buildings and severe sufferings are places known to history as the places where people has prayed for mercy from the gods. Some *Children* might be able to sense these areas even though they have higher *mental balance*, but they will not be affected from them. You probably do not trust the friends you might have left, but you fear them less than the sane world. You act out of fear or hunger, but you are still able to think, and even reason logically. Intelligent and logical reasoning is not as hard as most normal people think, but your perception will not give you a correct impression of the world any longer. Actually, you might even alter reality by logic reasoning. Typically you will not be able to make anything good happen from this, but you will be able to twist reality in ways that frighten yourself. Those that are skilled in the *art of dreaming* or have mastered the *dark Art*, might be able to make good things happen - but this usually comes with a cost. To use your *darkness* to injure somebody is not hard. To use your *darkness* to heal a severed limb would be hard, and would perhaps result in the limb becoming an *undead* body part full of worms that forces it to heal over and over again. If you are caught by normal people, they will probably not consider you to be human, and kill you.

2.1.2 That last grip of Reality

Damned If you reach -250, reality will finally shatter around you. You are no longer part of the physical world, although you still have some kind of body. Nephairans and other creatures from inferno will start to recognize you as dead, and hunt you down in order to bring you "back" to where you belong. Flies and maggots from *Gaia* will track you down, and most people with a balance this low develops an insane fear of insects and fungi. You are more limited by your own beliefs than by walls. If you think you are able to walk through a wall, you will much likely be able to do so. People with a knowledge of symbolism will find it very easy to trick you into believing things that they tell you. Some magicians actually specialize into keeping these *Damned* prisoners, but that is probably the closest you will be of having a friend. Your *shadow* will now start to confront yourself directly, to at any cost prevent you from sinking deeper into the dark.

Lost Soul The lowest you are able to sink by your own, is to -400. At this level you have no mind left, and can no longer act on your own behalf. The only thing which exists to you is pure terror. Fear in its truest form. The only way you are

able to get out of this situation, is if someone harms you enough to push you down to -500 (in which case you will merge with your *shadow*, and awaken). Your *shadow* will try to prevent this from happen and might even be able to make you "recover" to a higher *mental balance*.

2.2 The way up to heaven

Approximately the same is true for the light path, but here you lose emotions instead, gaining control over your life. People with a high *mental balance* do not like being involved with violence, they like their hands clean. The higher *mental balance*, the more will you seek out peace and personal perfection, at the same time warding darkness off. At low positive levels you will tend to be nicer than at negative levels near zero, as you start to develop a better understanding for the motivation behind the actions people do, but at high positive levels you will act more and more like a psychopath. You stop to care about other people, especially those in peril (they are typically dark, or at low positive levels). You stop experiencing wild emotions, and grow more intellectual. The light path exchanges initiative and fantasy against control, physical strength against a sharp mind.

Because the positive path is more favored, people under +50 are generally considered to be nice normal people. At +50, you will typically act like a kind of cheerful high-school character in a cheap TV-series, and people over +100 will be considered either as new-age nutheads, or as psychopaths, depending upon their behavior.

At +400, you enter nirvana and have no desires, no emotions, no urges left, and cannot act on your own behalf.

Chapter 3

the Darkness within

“ Damn you! One day I shall find you, be sure of that! Damn you! I will find you, and, and... I never understood. Not until it was too late. What had my son done to deserve what you did to us? Why did you deny us what we had strived for so long... so many years? Afterward... we tried to hold together but it was of no use. What life did we have left? After the separation I decided that I needed to get away from it all. I didn't really accept what had happened, and I thought that perhaps a vacation could set things right. It didn't. Things will never be right again. I do not know when I started to realize that, but it must have been before... No, it was after I had started to... I had bought a little bird in a pet shop. I thought it would give me a company, but it didn't. The little animal was just afraid. It didn't sing, it just screamed all days long. So I ate it, while it still was screaming. Why should I let it scream, when my son is no longer with me? Funnily enough, it seemed to help. It was a new start, and it helped me to forget what had happened to me... to us. To our son. Yes, it actually did help. For some time. Soon enough, it started to wear off. I curse you! I curse you! You damned... my son. It hurts from the depth of my soul! My face is so strange these days. My hands I do not recognize anymore. Oh, yes... it started to wear off. It didn't ease the pain anymore... but now I have a better cure. I travel a lot, these days, I do. I catch them here and there, when they play alone. Cure for the pain. Much better than the birds. Why should I let them be, when my son is dead? ”

All *Children* are really disfigured by their own inner darkness; their fears, their desires, their expectations and beliefs. All their supernatural *abilities* and *limitations* are physical changes that their own mind has done to themselves, even though many of them think that they have received a curse. Of course, the exact event which pushed you over the borderline will be of great importance for what you become. Those who is assaulted by a bloodsucking creature are very likely going to develop *limitations* which has something to do with blood, but in the end it will be their innermost fears and expectations which finally decides exactly what kind of *limitations* they are affected by. Their supernatural *abilities* are a kind of “emergency response” to the new burden their *limitations* lay upon their lives.

They may or may not develop at some later stage.

Few *Children* think of themselves as blessed, as all their supernatural abilities have a strong link to the darkness. The only way to become more powerful, is to feel worse, to despair and shrink. Those who get better, always lose their most precious abilities first and their worst limitations last.

3.1 the Firstborn

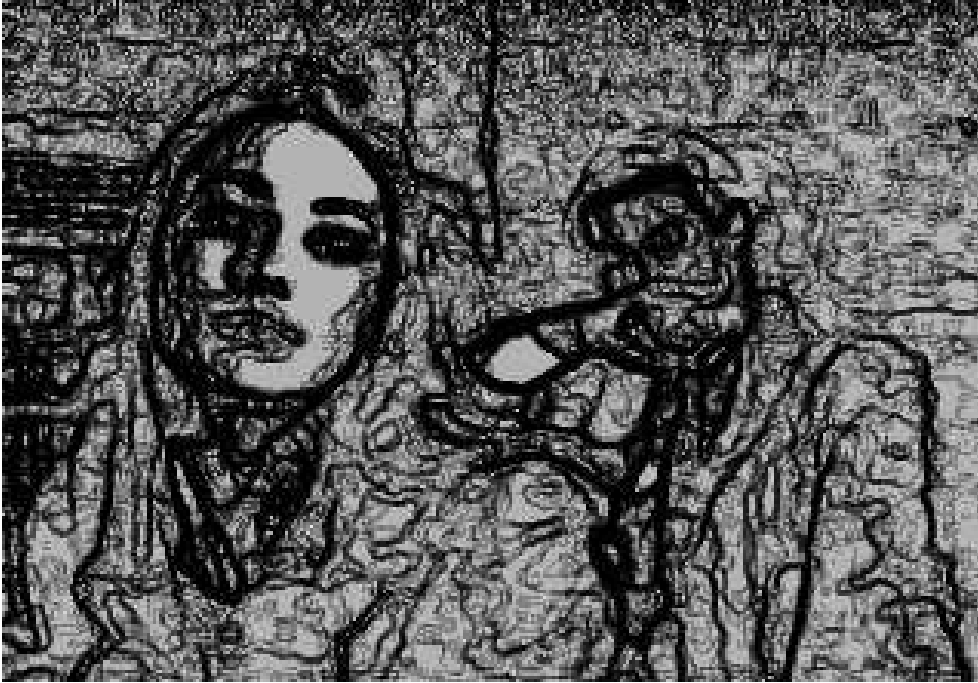
Some *Children* has been brought up under traumatic events, which alone are responsible of turning the young human into a *Child of the Night*. Other *Children* call them "the *Firstborn*". As a young child, you are much more sensitive to shifts in *mental balance*. Small children under five years of age are able to develop permanent supernatural *limitations* already at -25. In early years the human brain learns by killing off nerves that are less used, in favor of those that are more used. These *Firstborn*, or "those born out of the darkness" are generally the kind of *Children* which most easily develops supernatural *abilities*. They generally have lower appearance than normal people, and typically live alone. Most tend to be remarkably sane, in between -25 to -50 of *mental balance*. Other *Children* fear them, and try to avoid them. True *Firstborns* are rare, but sometimes the epithet is also used about *Tainted* who have managed to regain their sanity, and who have learned to live within the humans society. To a normal human, *Firstborns* usually appear shy but calm. Odd people with few friends, if any.

3.2 the Tainted

Most *Children* have been psychotic people who have been through some kind of supernatural trauma. Few are even close to sanity, and this group has more supernatural *limitations* than any other. Other *Children* do not trust them, but like to use them for their own purposes. They are easy to dominate, since they thirst so much for compassion and friendship. Say a kind word to a *Tainted*, and win a servant for life. They are also easy to scare. Generally these *Tainted* do not even look human. Even if one would have regained their sanity, it would still have to hide from the sane humans. Most *Tainted* fear humans almost as much as other *Children*, and are seldom of any real danger to normal humans. They are by far the most common kind of *Children*, and are most commonly found in the sewers, shanty-towns or as servants for other *Children*.

3.3 the Chosen

Living close to anybody with a very low *mental balance* can in itself slowly pull a quite sane person down, the *limitations* and *disadvantages* are to a certain extent of contagious nature. Given time, a human in the presence of a *Child* will start to share its most prominent *limitations*. This effect is immediate if the *Child* has a *mental balance* lower than -200. When the *Child* has a higher *mental balance* this process is slower and may pass rather unnoticed for long periods. It typically takes several years of living close together with a *Child* of about -50 MB, before a



human begins to develop *limitations*. The human need to have a rather low mental balance itself (at least around -40) before the effect becomes noticeable.

Once enough time has passed the shared *limitations* may become permanent, but normally they disappear if the "parent" (the *Child* they are living with) is killed, abandons them, or are forced to let them be. As long as the changes are temporary, the human will gain roughly one fourth of the *Childs* limitations. As soon as the affected human begin to identify itself as a *Child*, the *limitations* will remain even without the "parent". If the human has a lower balance than than the *Child*, it may be that the *Child* temporary gains *disadvantages* from the human as well.

Such people that become *Children* by living one way or another with a *Child of the Night*, are called the *Chosen*. Normally one is required to have a mental balance of more than -75 to be considered *Chosen*. Otherwise you are considered to be *Tainted* no matter how you became.

People who become *Chosen* think that they are about to be given supernatural powers in exchange for a few years of service. Originally they have a mental balance near -10. They are hand picked humans, often tempted with dark powers. The name *Chosen* does not mean that a person belongs to a privileged group, but just means that someone has chosen them. Often they are just meant as willing servants or sources of food for the "parent". Usually they are disposed of as soon as the "parent" discovers that one in their "herd" is turning supernatural. Those *Chosen* who are allowed to live, are normally people that are very good looking.

The *Chosen* believe that they have been "turned" into *Children* by some ritual. Few are aware of the actual mechanism. Frequently they will develop similar *powers* and *limitations* as their parent, but this is not always the case. Especially *powers* tend to be lacking. Many of the most highly praised *powers* tend to be very rare.

The *powers* do often spring out of the immediate needs that the *limitations* require, and have little to do with immortality or superiority – but why tell an aspiring human everything about *Childhood*? Young *Chosen* act and think as if they are better than normal humans, until they discover that they are not immortals, just *limited*...

Old *Chosen* are involved in criminal activity more than any other group among the *Children of the Night*. They tend to be filled with bitterness and a deep despise against young *Chosen* and aspiring humans.

3.4 the Fallen

A few people grow so mentally ill, that they turn into *Children* by no other cause than their own fear and desperation. They normally only develop one or two, but very serious *limitations*. Their *balance* is mostly below -150. These are the "Fallen" and the other *Children* try to keep them away from themselves. Not only are they dangerous, but they also smell bad and leave trails of decay where they threads. Practically all of them will continue their fall deeper into the darkness, and as they do, their bodies will slowly become increasingly harder to tell apart from a dead one. As they pass below -250, all differences between them and a *living dead* ceases to exist.

3.5 the Darksouls

Although not really *Children*, *darksouls* are frequently treated almost like the *Children* themselves. Sometimes people might be called *darksouls* although they really never have been *Children*, because they are considered to be 'tainted' by the dark. Common for all *darksouls* is that they tend to feel drawn to misery, sorrows and darkness. A small number of them spend their entire life by cycling through a "darksoul - *Child* - darksoul" chain, but the vast majority will never have or regain any supernatural *limitations*. Many of them try to live normal lives, but few manage to do so. Most of the *darksouls* will instead act as a channel between the "supernatural" world of the *Children* and the "sane" world of the normal humans. Some of them try to redeem themselves and wash the darkness out of their hearts by hunting and killing *Children*, but this is rare. Most *darksouls* remember too well what being a *Child* means to harm any of them. There might even be *Children* around who treats them as their friends. It can actually be easier for a *Child* to trust a *darksoul* than another *Child*.

Chapter 4

Living in the realms of Sanity

“ I had always been very fond of the taste of iron. I must have been four years old, and I cut myself. I had never tasted anything so good and I immediately got hooked. All the other children were fond of sweets, pasta, chocolate and pancakes. Those kinds of things. My favorite food was blood. I was in deep shame, and never directly answered questions about my favorite food, color and such because I knew that they better not know. . .

I never felt like the other children and the differences seemed to grow with increasing age. Instead of a heart, I imagined that I had a black pulsating mass with swaying tentacles. I could feel it grow within me. At the age of fifteen it finally hatched, and darkness fell upon me. It came like a friend to me, and suddenly I knew I was at home. In darkness I belong.

I went into a psychosis. . . or perhaps it wasn't a psychosis, but I was not sane. I cannot know anymore. I find it hard to recall. My memories are foggy and distant, like if they are memories belonging to something else than myself. Sunlight, reflections and the eyes of men frightened me. From the bottom of my heart I truly believed that I was damned and that I was no human. I was convinced that all humans knew about me and kept me imprisoned. When the time comes, as soon as I started to feel safe, they would strike against me. . . though I had no clear idea of what they would do to me. Wherever I went, humans monitored every single step I made. I was born evil, and I would be punished for it. ”

The *Children* tend to govern their own society within the society, but they are far from as organized as some people believe. Since most *Children* are more or less unable to take care of themselves, they tend to die young. Sometimes a particular *Child* is sane enough to take care of both themselves, and perhaps a few individuals of the same kind. Thus formed packs can survive for several decades, mostly in the darkened sewers below the city cores over the world.



Chosen ones are otherwise the most likely to possess the kind of sanity needed to meld into the human society. Truly *Chosen* ones are rare. They commonly have a quite normal past as humans, and tend to remember human whereabouts and customs well. With time they will care less and less for the people they knew, but initially they might have a sane relation to human parents and friends. Compared to other *Children*, the *Chosen* are natural organizers and can manage to uphold a quite decent standard. They are the "fixers" among *Children* and for many a life in crime comes natural. Often, they gather other, less sane *Children*, usually *Tainted*, around themselves. Sometimes they do so out of pity, but more commonly to use them as cheap minions. More seldom do several *Chosen* cooperate, and rumors about entire mafia organizations run by *Children* tend to be nothing more than rumors.

<u>Chosen</u>	Edu 2D10 (11)	element, Bound, Cursed, Sign of terror
Str 10+2D10 (21)		
Con 10+1D10 (16)	Dark secrets: Guilty of crime, Guardian, Family curse,	Advantages: Man of the world, Street wise
Agl 10+1D10 (16)	Betrayal	Powers: Telepathy,
Com 7+1D10 (13)	Disadvantages: Wanted,	Telekinesis, Enhanced primary
Ego 2D10 (11)	Sworn enemy, Intolerant, Bad	attributes, Commanding voice
Per 2D10 (11)	reputation, Liar	MB: -30 to -75
Cha 2D10 (11)	Limitations: Sensitive to	

Firstborn are rarely involved in criminal matters. They tend to live by themselves, avoiding contact at all cost. Few are violent, and even those who carry more nefarious limitations often avoids confrontations. Often they have odd works with low salaries, and lives in cheap apartments among humans with a low mental balance. They normally know more about human life than of other *Children*, which occasionally makes them an easy prey to some opportunistic *Child*. All *Firstborn* have had a severely traumatized childhood, and many spend a lifetime trying to flee from it. Ironically they normally end up where it all began, sooner or later. Anyone knowing the dark secrets of a *Firstborn* will find them quite easy to control, most break down completely if confronted with their past. Still, *Firstborn* are the only *Children* who have a chance of developing a relatively sane relation to parents and siblings. Exactly how sane will depend upon what role they played during the *Firstborn's* childhood. Some of the "sanity" of their relation probably depends upon the dense respect most *Firstborn* experience towards anything which holds a piece of their secrets. The more sane their relation is to their human family, the more other *Children* will shun them. Such relations are considered a bit perverted, perhaps even frightening, by other *Children*.

<u>Firstborn</u>	Edu 2+1D10 (8)	Coldblooded, Wailing precense
Str 2D10 (11)		
Con 2D10 (11)	Dark secrets: Family secret,	Advantages: Empathy,
Agl 10+2D10 (21)	Victim of crime, Victim of	Human friends
Com 2+2D5 (8)	medical experiments	Powers: Blessed, Mercy,
Ego 2D10 (11)	Disadvantages: Nightmares,	Causal influence, Slow aging,
Per 2D10 (11)	Naive, Amnesia, Rationalist	Nodal time perception
Cha 10+1D10 (16)	Limitations: Slanderous mind,	MB: -25 to -50

Tainted sometimes live among the outcasts in the society, and outcasts they are themselves. Some *Tainted* can be found hidden away at institutions, or perhaps

in the cellar of a family that no longer wishes to admit their existence. This usually ends with the death of the *Child*, or that the "taint" starts spreading to other inmates of family members. *Tainted* often have hygienic problems, like bleeding directly through the skin or that they spread mold, which rules out normal apartments. This problem can be adequately handled by letting them sleep directly on "cat litter" or soil (preferably in a moist-tolerant room), and using thick layers of easy-to-wash clothes (to absorb slime, blood or whatever). Unfortunately the *Tainted* themselves do not put as much attention to their hygiene, and living by themselves they often catch lethal diseases. *Tainted* are often held under the same fashion as dogs by *Chosen*, and sometimes by ruthless humans with a knowledge of the occult.

<u>Tainted</u>	Edu 1D10 (6)	Abnormal aging, Sensitive to sunlight, Compulsive self-mutilation
Str 5+1D10 (7)		
Con 1D10 (6)	Dark secrets: Victim of supernatural event, Forbidden knowledge	Advantages: Sixth sense
Agl 10+1D10 (16)		Powers: Shadow existency, Enhanced senses
Com 1D5 (3)	Disadvantages: Nightmares, Hunted, Phobia	MB: -50 to -150
Ego 1D10 (6)		
Per 10+2D20 (32)	Limitations: Bleeder,	
Cha 1D5 (3)		

Fallen cannot live among people at all. Nothing stays willingly with the *Fallen* perhaps with an exception for suicidal death-magicians. Reality bends and shatters regularly around the *Fallen*, and creates a living nightmare. They are a constant target to *Nepharites* and leave trails of rotten flesh where they have been. Their dense stench renders it impossible for them to hide unnoticed anywhere near humans.

<u>Fallen</u>	Cha 1D5 (3)	Limitations: Undead, Corrosion, Inhuman appearance
Str 3D20 (33)	Edu 1D5 (3)	
Con 10+2D20 (32)		Advantages: (none)
Agl 2D20 (22)	Dark secrets: Pact with dark powers, Family tragedy, History of mental illness	Powers: Wrath, Natural weapons
Com 1		MB: -140 to -400
Ego 2D10 (11)	Disadvantages: Death wish, Public enemy	
Per 2D20 (22)		

4.1 Understanding Humans

Most humans are unable to recognize even the most common sources of darkness such as depressions, despair, hopelessness and hate. Of those that are able to sense such emotions, only a few actually understand what they have encountered. Because of this, people with strong negative emotions are often regarded as "strange", "uncomfortable" or even "scary". They are left alone, to nourish their own darkness.

Every single moment of the life for a *Child* is defined by its *limitations*. It is seldom more possible for a *Child* to counteract a *limitation* than to stop breathing. Those who try typically risk their life. This everlasting struggle to satisfy whatever *limitations* they got, forces even the most endarkened *Child* to pull itself together, and take care of what's needed to take care of. The rest of them rush towards a quick and merciless death. Because of this constant struggle, the average *Child* will

give a healthier appearance than what could be expected. Where a human at a *mental balance* of -50 would do nothing but lock itself inside a dark room and cry, a *Child* might be successfully running a small business. Together with the fact that most *Children* goes quite far to ensure that their secret stays with themselves, this makes it very hard for an untrained human to identify a *Child*.

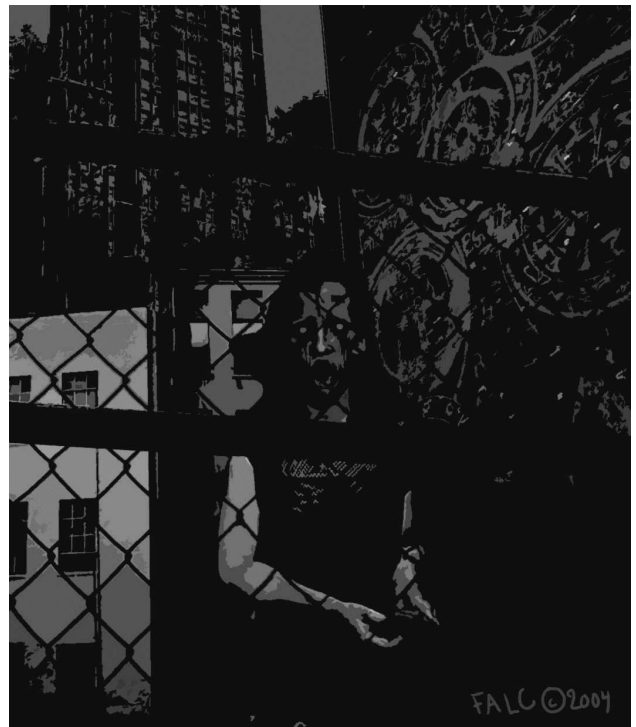
Perceptive humans will note something "unnatural" about any *Child*, and are likely to be afraid of it. However, what most humans recognize, is that *Children* are quite keen of poetic expressions. Psychotic humans tend to ward off their own darkness using their words. Some speak gibberish or rhyming. *Children* usually use very poetic language, in order to pretend that their world is brighter than it is. Humans frequently mistake this with a romantic mind, and countless stories exist about romantic and "sexy" *Children*. Romanticism can be used to ward off a harsh reality, but this is not very common among individuals with a lower *mental balance* than about -15, which excludes all *Children*. *Children* are seldom romantic.

4.2 Another day in paradise

Among all the difficulties of life, money is one of the more important to a *Child*. You need money to rent an apartment, you need money to pay for water and electricity. You need clothes. Getting a job is just one part of the hard task. Humans avoid hiring people who seem a little bit strange, and *Children* usually have special handicaps. Humans usually avoid hiring people with handicaps.

The *Tainted* avoid the problem by an exchange of services, sometimes with human outcasts, to get blankets, clothes and suitable places to sleep. Needless to say, humans will not deal with *Children* if they are occasionally hunted by them. Humans can however be persuaded into giving up blood, health or even pieces of skin and flesh if offered the right price. *Chosen* sometimes exploit humans with a dim knowledge of *Child* whereabouts, by offering them "immortality". Normally humans will not sell anything they cannot heal or recover with time, and to most *Children* this is not a long term solution.

The police is another constant problem to most *Children*. *Lictors* run the police, and they do not like *Children* since their existence might prove to humans that there exists more behind the *Illusion*. *Children* are usually very careful not to allow humans to know what they are, but they are *not* very concerned about whether or not humans know about *other Children*.



Lictors however, are very keen about covering up the existence of *Children*. They seldom assign humans to do these kinds of jobs, instead they hire *angels*, and occasionally *azgouls*. There is even a special task force within the FBI whose sole purpose is to locate and root out *Children*. Rumors claim that the leader C. Uzilski is a warrior angel and that the force was originally created by the archangel Gabriel himself. . .

As long as the *Children* do not leave trails of dead humans, or injure cattle, the servants of the law might leave the *Children* alone. They will still monitor *Children* activities, and brutally wipe out them if people starts getting concerned about too many missing dogs or whatever. Humans with a knowledge of the *Children* are dealt with the same way.

Children with severe limitations have a short life expectancy, unless they live in poor areas nobody cares for, or near *Gaia*. It is simply not possible to kill people on a regularly basis if lictors have any kind of interest in the area. A mafia-like organization might get away with lots of murders, but that's because the murders can be planned. Regular murders once per week cannot be planned the same way. Even if corpses are disposed of, humans will start asking why people are disappearing. Once they start asking, the lictors will get worried. The only possible way to get away with such a thing, is if the victims are imported from an area outside the interests of the lictors. While this is possible, most *Children* simply do not have enough resources to run such business. Besides, lictors sometimes strikes down at *Children* as a purely preventive measure.

4.2.1 Limitations

Limitations are supernatural obstacles, and they can be as diverse as disadvantages. This is only a short list of some common, and spectacular limitations. They can vary from individual to individual, but generally they have these properties. The general idea is that a limitation worth 5p is a nuisance that affects your way of living, but nothing more. For 10p, you have an obstacle that is a serious trouble to you. It is still possible to live a civilized life. A limitation of 15p will color your whole life. It will be impossible to live a civilized life, but you might succeed in looking civilized. A 20p worth limitation can no longer be hidden. It will be obvious for anyone who observes you. Only by hiding will you manage to go on.

Bleeder [5p] The *Child* is constantly bleeding. Sometimes through small wounds all over the body, but frequently right through the skin, not unlike sweat. Does it cry, it cries blood. The bleeding will not make a severe loss of blood, but it will stain all clothes, papers and other things the *Child* is in contact with. If they sleep at a the same place for several nights (or days), a distinct smell of old blood will taint the area and be hard to wash away. Black clothes will cover up most of this limitation, but blood often starts dripping in just those social situations where bleeding gives a very bad impression. . .

Slandorous mind [5p] The mind is overwhelmed with a roaring paranoia or a paralyzing shame, too strong to hold secret. The *Child* is an open book and its thoughts can be heard near it as a soft whispering somewhere in the air. Busy creatures will not notice and neither will rationalists, but in silence those who have

nothing to do will hear. It takes a perception throw to note and an Edu throw to realize from where the voices originate. Once the origin has been identified, it takes a perception throw to read the *Childs* mind at will.

Abnormal aging [10/20p] The *Child* is aging several times faster than a normal human. At 10p, the *Child* ages about five to ten times faster. The expected life is about 10 to 20 years. At 20p, the *Child* is aging about ten years a day. This limitation is sometimes found in shapechangers, where the abnormal aging only affects the creature in one particular form. Abnormal aging can develop late, as a result of a terror throw. *Children* encountered with this limitation usually have an ability to "steal youth" from prey, while the vast majority of bearers die alone and silent.

Coldblooded [10p] When at sleep, or physically inactive, the body temperature will fall to that of the surrounding air. Humans and *Children* (without a special resistance to cold) do not survive a lower body temperature than about 15 degrees Celsius, because the body fat freezes at that temperature and this will stop the heart. This means that if the *Child* falls to sleep in an area colder than 15^c, it will die. Isolation, like clothes, won't help since the *Child* doesn't produce any body heat. Moreover, the *Child* won't regain consciousness unless the temperature raise higher than 20^c. It will have 1p endurance when it awakens, and be freezing cold to humans. Even when awake the *Child* must be careful with the surrounding temperature, since body temperature will fall during inactivity. If the surrounding temperature is colder than 20^c the *Child* will lose 1p of endurance each minute of inactivity. It will fall asleep once endurance reaches zero.

When combined with the ability *Resistance to Cold*, the *Child* still lose endurance from low temperature and ultimately fall asleep. Only by heating it to more than 20^c (thereby awakening it) or performing a successful obduction (and probably killing it), is it possible to realize that the *Child* is alive.

Inhuman appearance [10/15p] One cannot identify the *Child* as a human. It may have partially transparent skin or no skin at all, limbs might have been replaced with machinery and hair with tentacles. As an alternative it may look like a big hairy goat walking upon its hindlegs. For 10p worth, you still have a humanoid shape that humans can relate to and interpret reasonably correct. It may be possible to tell a human friend that you have got some strange genetical disease.

Completely inhuman appearances such as a pulsating mass of tentacles, mouthes and eyes (giving a terror throw to any bystander) are worth 15p. Humans will kill such *Children* at sight.

Sensitive to element [10p] Sensitivity to one of the following: electricity, fire or cold, is worth 10p each. *Children* with any of these limitations will take +10 damage when exposed to lethal levels of the element which hold their bane. The *Child* will naturally be afraid of the dangerous condition and find it hard to deal with. Those who are sensitive to electricity will not be able to live near electrical equipment, their skin itches, they feel weary and old. Lightning seem to strike near them, it must be the wrath of God. Those who are sensitive to fire or heat will need

the courage of an Ego throw to hold a candle lit. Even though they may freeze, going near a bonfire would be out of the question. For them the fire is a divine creature, ready to spring forth and devour. Those who cannot stand cold, will feel tired in the embrace of frost. Their skin goes numb and a burning sensation of cold slowly eats its way into the flesh. Their bones ache, they stumble and fall.



Mental infestation [10/20p] The *Child* is under control of another creature (known as the "master") and must obey any order given from it. If the master has a lower mental balance than -200 or is a deity, they will share a kind telepathic bond between them. The master can in these cases give orders from anywhere. Any human with a higher mental balance than +250 will interfere with this. Should the *Child* be hidden near a "holy" force, the master will temporary lose the connection with the "infested" one. The limitation does not alter the personality in any way, it doesn't bring new emotions. Orders simply has to be carried out, no matter what.

If the *Child* is completely unable to refuse to do its masters bidding, the limitation is worth -20p. Otherwise it is worth 10p. It is sufficient that the *Child* truly believes that an order has been given by the master.

Corrosion [15p] The *Child* carries a sorrow too dense to be kept within the boundaries of its body. It brings sadness to whoever it comes near. Light sources seem to lose their brightness and food becomes tasteless and boring. Happy discussions fade into silence and only the memory remains. People who learn to know the *Child* will feel like their very life slowly pours out of them and risk to develop the disadvantage *Death wish* if they cannot find a distraction.

Anything will start to wither about a week after it has been touched by the *Child*. This requires skin contact. Organic matter will begin to rot, food will start to mold, metal will corrode and clothes turn to dust. Stone, sand and soil is the only resistant matter. Living creatures who fail an automatic Ego contest will be struck by illness and infections, sometimes by bad luck. People with a mental balance below -50 might develop the limitation *Abnormal aging*. The *Child* can prevent the corrosion to taint something with an unmodified Ego throw, but this does not happen automatically. It must be an act of will.

Skilled psychiatrists will be able to recognize this as a kind of depression. This is not too far away from the truth, the limitation can be cured in the same way as a depression.

Southirst [15p] Something has gone missing within themselves. They cannot say what, but the loss is painful in an imprecise way. Their mind is numb like a frozen limb. Their souls slowly melt away like beautiful sculptures of ice under the desert sun.

What is a soul after all? What happens with a soul who gets eaten? Monotheistic religions say this is the true death. Their mind and consciousness *is* the soul, a person without it can no longer awaken. On the other hand, shamanistic religions often divide the soul into distinct layers: The free spirit, who is mortal, followed by our identity and finally the innermost self. The free spirit is our sense of where we are located, it is our memories and will. This is Edu, Cha and Per, without them we become feverous and delirious. Then there is the identity. It may be mortal, but it can also survive death. It defines the way we feel and the way we think, this is Ego. Without it we lose our willpower and the ability to think clear. We feel blurred and forget who we are, like in a nightmare. Last they talk about "the self", the border we instinctively know separates self from not-self. Most religions pray it's immortal and some say we all share the same "self". They don't tell what happen if we lose this part. Perhaps it's the end of all things, perhaps we would never have existed?

This limitation makes the spirit wither and shrink. Those who suffer from the normal variant temporary bleeds 1d5 points away of ego and constitution every week, but there are a few less common forms as well. Regaining this normally requires skin contact with a suitable prey for a longer time. Should ego or constitution ever reach zero, they die. Some can restrain themselves if they want. Most are able to live quite normal lives. The law ignores them as they do not kill, all they do is to leave their prey intentionless and dull behind.

The few who cannot avoid to feed by the slightest touch, are bound to live alone. They can only tell their secret to the stones and their only company shall be the wind.

Bloodthirst [5/15p] The *Child* needs about one liter of blood, each day. It has to be eaten fresh, directly from a living creature. Although it is possible to live at a farm, holding cattle to feed of, most *Children* with this limitation live in run down areas. Such areas have often sanitary problems with stray dogs, wild cats and rats. Feeding from them will provoke people, but buying live animals is far too expensive to most. Hunting small furry animals is a full time occupation, and is very hard to combine with any kind of income. As a consequence, many of these *Children* have serious problems with their economy. Most will end up at the street, being in severe debt to nasty human organizations.

For 15p worth, only blood from humans¹ will be sufficient. This will give a short life on the run, unless it is possible to make humans volunteer their blood willingly. It might be possible to find enough of such people at closed clubs, oriented towards unusual sexual behavior. Feeding from people no human believes in might sound

¹An uninjured human of 70Kg has about 5 liters of blood, and can lose about one liter without needing healthcare. Blood banks only tap about a half liter, and this takes about a week to recover. Loosing a whole liter, is likely to cause unconsciousness. A human can lose up to about three liters of blood, if immediately replenished. Actually, it is not the amount of blood cells which is important, but the amount of liquid. Humans can survive with only one liter worth of blood cells, if they just have enough liquid in their system.

safe, but lictors will believe their stories anyway. Only people that live hidden from the eyes of the public, like "illegal immigrants" or other *Children*, can be considered relatively safe to feed from.

Cannibalism [15/20p] The *Child* needs about one kilo of human flesh, each day. For 20p it needs to be taken fresh from a living human, otherwise it may be frozen and stored. Making humans volunteer flesh is close to impossible, but it is told that some *Children* have managed to get jobs at clinics which perform plastic surgery and fat suction. At least it is legal...

Otherwise, the best a cannibalistic *Child* can do is to join a criminal organization. Criminal organizations do not kill off people regularly, but with a good freezer a human can be made to last for about 1 month. The good part about this limitation is that one eats the evidence against the crime. Gnawed bones are much easier to dispose of than dead bodies. The problem is to obtain healthy humans, who nobody will be missing. The obvious solution is to smuggle humans from poor war plagued countries, pretending to be aid organizations. Smuggling needs resources though, and contacts. It does not require many contacts, but it requires good contacts. Good contacts requires money. Humans do usually have the money, so the criminal organizations to join tend to be human organizations. Human organizations are often run by lictors, and only those *Children* who are aware about this can expect to survive in their service.

The rest will try to survive by themselves, living in small groups who catch and kill lonely prostitutes, homeless and drug addicts. Now and then they are taken by surprise, as their prey unites together against their common enemy. The life expectancy is normally a few years, unless they are so many that the police starts to take a note of them.

Sensitive to sunlight [15p] We often associate sunlight with "good", as it is the purest of light. Among those who belong to Darkness, many are simply afraid of the bright one. The bright one is the mark of God, the sunlight His gaze. The immense fear of the holy one rips through the sanity of the *Child*, tearing the endurance away until nothing is left and the *Child* no longer owns the strength to hide. Unless saved they lie there paralyzed, slowly drained from constitution and health. As death comes, this is only the beginning...

Those with a sensitivity to sunlight will have severe problems with getting a job. While it might be possible to use protection like motorbike clothing this will be cumbersome, not to mention that it looks strange – and strange draws the attention of the lictors. Most *Children* with this limitation spend their lives in the sewers outside the society.

A few might get away with a private business, perhaps a night open shop, an artist or a freelancing writer. But the problem remains as most people will expect them to be available at daytime. Phone calls have to be done during work hours, authorities will expect you to be present just before lunch, deliveries will be made at daytime. *Children* with this limitation are very sensitive to fraud, blackmail and false accusations. They cannot attend at a court, as courts work in daylight. They will find it very cumbersome to study, even evening courses sometimes place their examinations at day.

Each minute in direct sunlight draws 10p of endurance. Once the endurance

reaches zero, they temporary lose 1p of constitution per minute instead. It takes about 12 hours to recover, far away from any sources of light. Indirect sunlight, clouded weather and windows only gives a limited protection and the *Child* still loses 1p of endurance per minute.

Sign of terror [15p] The plain sight of a certain symbol will send cold shivers down the spine. The *Child* will feel sick by fear by just knowing that the symbol is near, but takes no damage from it. Touching the symbol, or believing that it has touched the symbol, will start a chain reaction that continues independently of what happens with the symbol. The *Child* will develop one scratch per round, emerging from the bodypart that touched the symbol. This can be stopped by either an Ego throw, or by cutting off the part (which dissolves into rotten meat). Once the *Child* has obtained a light wound, the reaction continues with one light wound per round and +1 modification for the throw. This will continue until the *Child* is dead, or the reaction is broken. The chain reaction will spread to other *Children* in physical contact with it.

This limitation is completely unrelated to effects of light, divinity or mental balance. It is linked to a *dark secret* or self-consuming emotions like sorrow or guilt, and the symbol should be a reasonable common symbol. It may be a *human child* to someone who unwillingly killed its children, *running water* to someone who failed to prevent a friend to drown, a *holy symbol* for someone with religious shame, a *knife* for someone who betrayed a loved one or the *color "red"*...

Wailing presence [15p] The *Child* cannot handle when other people look at them. Perhaps it is ashamed of what it has become, perhaps it believes that humans can read its mind. In any way, the *Child* will lose endurance whenever anybody (including itself) catches a sight of its body. Once their endurance is zero, they lose constitution permanently instead. Each person who can establish visual "skin contact" with the *Child* will receive 1p of endurance each minute. The *Child* must seek out a solitary place to recover or at least prevent people from watching. Many live their lives totally covered up in rags, far down in the sewers, but not all live such lives. History tell stories of some high lords among the *Children* who criminalised the observation of them. A *Child* with this *limitation* will always know if somebody watches them, but not necessarily from where. They are not harmed by surveillance cameras, but they will *feel* just the same and try to avoid them.

Bound [5/10/15p] The very life of the *Child* is bound to something outside its body. It may be a medallion they carry around their neck, a coffin with their name or their worst enemy. *Children* with this limitation will often develop strong protective abilities and they defend this "heart of their life" with a furious obsession. If the object they are bound to is harmed, the *Child* is equally harmed. If the object is destroyed, they die as sure as if their own heart had been plunged out. The reason to the bond can often be found in the *dark secret* of the *Child*, if it is possible they will always carry it with them. Many believe that they are dead, that they do no longer own a heart. They think of the object as the missing bodypart and strives to become one with it.

Being bound to anything that declines and inevitably breaks down, is worth 15p. If the object is outside the direct control of the *Child*, it is worth 10p.

Compulsive self-mutilation [20p] Some people define themselves by their misery. Many such people are only masochistic, living in a kind of sexual relation to pain, but some have fallen even deeper. There are *Children* who have grown not only addicted, but physically *dependent* of injury. Something deep within themselves has grown far worse than physical wounds. Once they filled their life with an endless escape away from themselves, but now their own emotions have turned into a machine of torment, constantly grinding them down from the inside. There is nowhere left to run. They have become their own purgatory, and their mind can no longer handle the massive amount of stress this puts upon their living brain. They need a distraction. They need pain as a liberation from oceans of shame and despair, or perhaps an all-consuming hatred. Pain as a mean of distraction. As a reliever.

But not any pain will do. Being hurt is not enough, they need physical damage and the only means they have is to injure themselves, or to make other injure them. They will die if their wounds heal and if somebody prevents them from carving new ones. Their endurance is limited to about 5p per scratches worth of wounds worn. Once it reaches zero, they die within ten days, seemingly without a reason.

In any other respect, injury works exactly the same as for other people. Infections are still lethal. Severed body parts will not be usable. The only possible place for these kind of *Children* to find in society, is like punch-bags for the *Chosen*, but who wants a self-mutilative *Child* at home? For the unprepared, the mere sight of their torn faces will require a terror throw. Getting a normal life is out of the question and most live a short life in the sewers, or an even shorter life at a mental asylum where well meaning nurses prevent them from injuring themselves.

Imagine a *Child* who counts four scratches as one light wound and three light as one serious.

If this *Child* has three light wounds, it will thus be limited to $3 \times 4 \times 5 = 60$ pt of endurance.

Undead [special] There are several ways for a soul to become bound in the lifeless flesh of a dead body, but none pleasant. Anybody whose mental balance drops below -250 will get this limitation, but it is also possible to obtain otherwise. Certain rituals, curses, or simply the fear of death. Some people have been known to become undead by believing that they already have had become undead. . . The undead do not need air, food or water for their "survival". They can be severed, but each bodypart they will still function properly and with a little effort, the parts can be put together. They cannot heal, neither do they have any natural defense against creatures which digest rotten meat. Fungi, maggots, flies and occasionally germinating flowers will injure them permanently or even destroy them.

A reasonably sane undead who embalms itself regularly, might be able to find some obscure place in human society. Most undead are not sane. It hurts to rot, and most of them have problems to stick together.

4.2.2 Powers

Powers are the supernatural abilities the *Children* might possess. Some are of questionably usefulness, others are highly prized and envied by those who do not own them. They differ from normal advantages in that they do not make you a "better person". Instead they make you stronger, faster, more dangerous and harder to kill. This list does only contain a few of the more spectacular powers. Generally a power worth 5p is a useful tool in the day-to-day life, but nothing more. For 10p worth, you have a power that can give you some protection when the going gets tough. A real life-saver is worth 15p. This is the kind of ability that many

humans would give their left arm to win. A power worth 20p will reshape your life, and ease the burden of your limitations. There are humans who would sell their souls to gain this kind of ability.

Blessed [5p] Other *Children* will experience the presence of the blessed as frightening, within a radius of about Ego meters. It is a strange and irrational fear, like the infamous Fear of the Dark among young humans, and intensifies with a decreasing MB. *Children* of very low balance (-100 or less) will need an Ego throw just to touch an object previously in the possession of the blessed one.

This is a quite rare power. It comes mostly to *Firstborns* with a mental balance near -25, who feel more closely related to the humans than other *Children*.

Normal humans feel curious and *fascinated*, drawn to the *Child*. The attraction decreases with increasing MB, and humans with a MB of +100 or more are not affected.

Mercy [5p] Any creature who talks to the *Child*, will feel a slight compassion towards it. Normal humans must succeed an Ego throw before they can kill the *Child*. Even creatures who normally make a living of rooting *Children* out, will have a second thought about it. It does not prevent them from torturing the *Child*, just makes them hesitate about killing or injuring it permanently. The power does only work if the *Child* actually begs for mercy, or acts like someone one could feel sorry for.

Wrath [5p] The power grants its wearer to force anybody to make a terror throw. This normally requires some special action, such as eye contact or to beat the subject up. Those who once failed the throw will need to make an Ego throw, any time they wish to disobey when given a direct order, face to face, by the *Child*. It does not work over a phone or television, the subject needs to be in the actual presence of the *Child*. Even if an order is given face-to-face, no Ego throw is needed to disobey as soon as the *Child* leaves. If the order takes very long time to carry out the subject may make a new Ego throw once per hour. Abuse of this power is an excellent way to gain enemies.

Infravision [5p] The *Child* can see infrared radiation as an additional color. This allows to see how warm an object is. Warm objects will glow in the dark, very warm objects will even be able to light up a smaller area. The warmth of a human will not be enough to illuminate a room, but it will be clearly visible in absolute darkness. It does not matter if there is normal illumination present, the power will always work. It is specifically sensitive to the wavelength radiated by humans, mammals and birds (5 to 15 μ m) and can distinguish temperature differences down to 0.003 $^{\circ}$ C. This makes it possible to see where a human has rested, up to about one hour afterward.² As a rule of thumb, the distinct trace of body heat can be assumed to linger for about 20 minutes. Noting this will not require any special throws up to this amount of time. Even in very hot or very cold climate, the heat mark can be assumed to remain for a few minutes.

²Those who are very interested in this matter, can use "Newton's law of cooling"
 $\frac{dT}{dt} = k(T_0 - T)$, where T is the temperature of the object, T_0 is the surrounding temperature and t is the time.

Regeneration [10/15p] The *Child* heals very fast. Exactly how fast will depend upon the individual, but normally about three times faster than a normal human (10p). A few might heal up to ten times faster (15p). Wounds will never be infected, no matter how dirty they are. With some time, even whole body parts may grow back.

Endurance [10p] The *Child* never loses endurance and only needs about two hours of sleep per day/night. It may run for weeks, fight several days or perform acrobatic stunts for a whole night.

Natural armour [5/10/15/20p] The skin of the *Child* is unnaturally tough. It works similar to a ballistic armour and absorbs two points less than its worth from any physical damage. A 10p natural armour thus absorbs 8p of effective damage, a 20p armour absorbs 18p of damage. The skin cannot absorb damage from heavy weapon.

The protective properties of the skin may or may not interfere with the primary attributes. It may be smooth as the skin of a baby or have the look and feel of concrete. As an alternative, the creature may be an amorphous blob of living slime and the only physical damage it takes is when pieces of it are torn away.

Shadow existence [10p] This power grants the power to pass unnoticed as long as its owner so wishes. The *Child* can walk right through high security areas, provided that they do not expect anyone to break in. The power does not make its owner invisible, it just makes it seem unimportant. The power does not work against alerted creatures, anybody the *Child* bumps into, or technical surveillance equipment. An exception is automatic face or voice recognition, which will fail.

Enhanced primary ability [15p] The *Child* has one very prominent primary ability. It is raised 10p by this, the effects of multiple "enhanced abilities" are cumulative.

Commanding voice [15p] The *Child* can give a certain tone to its voice. Everybody who hear the voice must win an Ego/2 throw or obey. The only requirement is that they must understand the order. If the order seems to be utterly impossible, is very long and complicated or is something they never would do normally (such as to commit suicide), they only need to make a normal Ego throw. The *Child* cannot give the same order twice to people who once resisted it, but it may try to give a different order.

Nodal Time Perception [15p] The *Child* perceive nodal points in time that are important and that will start chains of causality. It is not likely to see exactly to the hour when a change will occur, and not exactly what will happen. The probability is higher to see changes which induce a danger to oneself. Sometimes alternating timelines are revealed to the *Child*, making it possible to deduce information about the event(s) that will shape the future. The *Child* will always feel how important an event was to the future, as soon as the event already has taken place.



Domination [20p] The *Child* can with an initial skin contact establish a mental connection to somebody. Some *Children* are able to use eye contacts instead, but nobody can initiate the contact with several individuals at the same time. An Ego contest is required to be won in either case, otherwise the connection will be lost afterward. The dominated person will adopt a personality that is similar to the *Child* after this, but it will keep its identity, and can consciously refuse to do the bidding of its master. The catch is that because of the personality change, the dominated *wants* to carry out the will of its master. No Ego throw is needed to resist, but the dominated must be capable of intellectually make up a reason to disobey. This is normally not possible, unless the dominated has an advantage such as *Code of Honor*. The dominated is however quite easy to talk out of something with clever logic, but will not be possible to reach with emotions. It is possible to dominate any number of persons at a given time, but the effect wears off if they become separated from their master for more than a day. Afterward everything will feel right, but they may consciously understand that they have been manipulated.

Causal Influence [20p] The *Child* is not just extremely lucky, but will unknowingly reshape the illusion around itself to suit its needs. Anything the *Child* needs will come drifting. If the *Child* needs a particular event to happen, this event will happen. If the *Child* needs a specific thing, a person or information, this will show up comfortably within reach – but the *Child* cannot know where, how and when. A missed chance will be lost forever, and the chains of causalities that creates the opportunity might have unforeseen side effects.

In many cases the power can be considered to work autonomously and safe. A *Child* with this power will always be elsewhere, when the police makes a razzia. It will always find suitable prey. Dangerous proofs against it will get accidentally lost or forgotten, and spectacular information will surface about its enemies.

There is of course a limit to how far this can be pushed. It is not possible to control more than one chain of causalities at a given moment. If there are several important problems at the same time, only the most important will be resolved by this power. Note that there is no guarantee that this power will solve anything in practical ways, and to fully solve a problem, at least a minimum of work will need to be done.

Youth Eternal [special] All *Children* fear hell and this power is the cure. Few will ever hold it. If the power slows down the pace of aging to half the normal rate, it is worth 10p. A full stop of the aging process cost 20p, but this power has a

nasty habit of turning into the limitation *Obsession with youth* (10/20p) in many cases; *Obsession with youth* works similar to the limitation *Abnormal aging*, but the *Child* grows younger until it reaches the embryonic state and is reborn without going through Inferno. This is a very common complication among those people who fear death more than anything else, people who know they will be cast into the abyss and would do anything to prevent this.

4.3 Of what my heart is full

Emotions are the essence of the soul, and the source of all changes. Few ideas start without a faint emerging emotion, and the very definition of *mental balance* is based upon emotions. Our actions might define us in the eye of the beholder, but it is our emotions that define us in the minds of ourselves. Identity is closely tied to how we feel. Hope and passion are the two most important emotions. They are the spiritual manifestations of body and mind, life and soul.

The actual limitations and powers a *Child* carries, always fit well with their emotional state. If the *Child* starts to feel differently, its limitations and powers will follow if given time. Alternatively, some limitations might appear to be controlled by the emotions. A certain limitation (or power) will perhaps only function as the *Child* enters a special emotional state. This list does intentionally not list all possible emotions, just a few of the more interesting.

Shame

Shame is one of the stronger emotions. It causes its followers³ to turn inwards, and become passive. Shame is also the easiest emotion to induce within someone else, it is an emotion known to be able to kill those affected. Some *Devastators* are known to kill their prey this way. At the same time, it represents a will to remain ones "humanity". More precisely, shame is the emotion which screams within our soul as we move away from a mental balance of zero. Because of this *Children* who follows the path of shame, often have higher mental balance than -50.

Shameful has been known to physically summon their light *shadows* even though they have had a mental balance as high as -35, but only for short periods of time. Additionally, they also have a tendency to draw the interest of *nepharites*, but these cannot directly locate the shameful because of the strong protective component of shame. People close to the shameful, is at risk however.

Their powers are mainly defensive, often affecting aging or resistance to damage and infections. Their limitations are usually painful, and directed inwards against themselves. Common limitations include stigmata-like physical changes, physical damage through religious symbols or being *coldblooded* (p 25).

Anger

Anger is actually a relatively "positive" emotion. It is one of the most activating emotions, and its followers tend to be devoted and powerful. Anger is associated with offensive powers, like enhanced strength, and suits any *Child* with a mental

³A "follower" of an emotion is a person whose life is mainly controlled by that emotion.

balance higher than about -250 well. As an irrelevant side note, anger suits anyone with a lower mental balance than about +100. Anger is a rather logical emotion, and angry *Children* are easy to control. Their limitations are frequently associated with hunting and fighting, such as *hunting instincts*.

Hate

Hate is frequently mixed up with loathing. Hate is a negation of Love. One wishes to be near those one hates, just as we wish to be near to those we love. To be "near" should not be taken literally. A better word would perhaps be to "keep an eye on". People who hate do not wish to please those they hate, but to make their lives as painful and terrible as it possibly can become. It is the wish to devote ones soul to the damnation of the objects of ones hate, and to make them know who caused their misery. Hate is a perverted emotion, but not necessarily a strong one. Many times hate can be a weak emotion lingering in the back of your mind, ready to pop out if there would be a chance to succeed. Sometimes we are not even aware of this emotion, it can be very subtle. But hate can also be an all-consuming emotion, and a powerful source of devastation.

Children who follow the path of hate, almost certainly develop into more parasitic creatures, rather than predatorious. Their *limitations* are usually connected with pain, and because of the self-consuming nature of hate, they seldom have any higher mental balance than -50. Their *powers* are often of a kind that snares and keeps a victim down, like *domination* or *paralysation*.

Love

Yes, even *Children* can experience love. Strictly speaking, passion is not the same as love. When you love you want to please someone, whereas passion more closely resembles addiction. Although conceptually different, the two emotions work as one in the realms of darkness. With people below -25 MB, there is no significant difference between love and passion. Love is most commonly associated with the light and as such is uncommon among *Children* in general. It is near absent among those lower than -100 MB, but then there are also stories about lovers bound inside their rotting flesh, or beloved brought back from the halls of inferno.

Love is a powerful emotion, but because of its "enlightening" properties, *Children* who follow the path of love are often shunned by other *Children* as odd or even dangerous. Love burns, when you live in darkness. After all, darkness is never so dark as when a tiny light pierces it, blinding and taunting us. The followers of love (regarding *Children*) are lonely, and usually possess parasitic limitations. It is not uncommon that their lifeforce is somehow bound to the object of their love, and their powers are often associated with the power to impress or mimic. Sometimes they even possess abilities to tear down the very fabric of time and space, that separates them from their beloved. If they possess offensive powers, it is almost exclusively powers to ward other *Children* off.

Sorrow

Sorrow represents "memory" and is the most passivating of all emotions. It makes its followers to consume themselves, abandoning contact with the world. Strong

sorrow may decrease the metabolic rate of a *Child* or lower its immunological defense against disease. Unlike *shame*, it gives no protection for the darkness below. Sorrow is associated with *limitations* which drains effort, life and abilities in an area, turning its beloved into empty black holes of darkness where the world itself is swallowed. It is not associated with any other *powers* than *eternal youth*, but contains huge powers which *Children* experienced in the "Lore of Darkness" (p 41) can tap.

In combination with *fear* or *anger*, sorrow can create the most terrifying monsters imaginable. This usually works such that the offensive emotion lies dormant most of the time, but can be activated by certain events. Many are the atrocities known to history, that sorrow can account for.

Fear

Fear is the chameleon among emotions. It ranges in strength from *Worry* to *Paranoia*, and is actually a very offensive emotion. Otherwise fear is mostly associated with "awareness". Followers of fear tend to be quite inhuman, unpredictable and dangerous. Their senses are unmatched among other *Children*, and their limitations are often associated with their senses. Sensitivity to sunlight, followed by fire, is by far their most common limitations. They tend to kill for defense, rather than to feed. The lower their mental balance, the more likely they are to "defend" themselves at any given time...

Hope

Hope is the most resistant of emotions, and effectively barriers anyone to sink deeper than to a mental balance of -250. It is simply not possible to sink deeper with a sense of hope. As a mental balance below -250 is associated with death, some people claim that aging is the slow loss of hope during a lifetime. Any normal person who loses their hope will quickly decay, and ultimately give up. How fast this process comes varies from person to person, but it is possible to regain a kind of life by taking the hope out of others. Hope is not associated with any powers, but its absence among *Children* are associated with undeath.

Despair

Despair is one of the most potent emotions, and also one of the most devastating. Followers of despair are likely to avoid contact with other people, and even to wish them away. Many predatorious (as opposed to parasitic) *Tainted* follow this path, and their actions tend to be unpredictable. Most truly desperate *Children* have a mental balance between -75 and -150, but seldom lower as desperation is a very activating emotion. It burns within ones soul, and forces its followers to act – it doesn't matter what they do, as long as they somehow act. Limitations often include *cannibalism* and *soul thirst* of some kind. Powers commonly associated with despair are similar to those associated with anger, but perhaps more related with killing. Natural weapons, or supernatural abilities to spread diseases are good examples. Despair is one of the emotions known to affect aging. Most commonly it causes its follower to age faster.

4.4 The human connection

Our limitations grow stronger the more we give in to them. It is possible to get rid of a limitation, but it is hard. Only by understanding the mechanism that sustains a limitation can it be effectively counteracted. After all, directly trying to counteract a limitation is often lethal, but there is always a reason to why a certain *Child* has a certain limitation, but not another. Sometimes there is an obvious connection, like in the case of the limitation *Sign of terror*.



All limitations are connected with dark emotions. By counteracting both the emotion and simultaneously counteracting the limitation, the limitation may come undone. An emotion is not easily defeated. Fear can be defeated by repeated confrontations with it. Shame can be resolved by trying to make things right. Anger can be handled by trying to calm down. Any dangerous limitation must be counteracted with care. It is not always possible to get rid of the limitation completely, but it may grow into an easier form. Limitations that are successfully undone, will usually turn into a similar disadvantage. The example above, *Sign of terror*, will often linger in the form of a phobia. No longer lethal, but still a shadow remains, a memory of what it means to be damned. Physical changes will normally remain.

To most *Children* this is purely academic knowledge. They have once and for all lost control over what they are, and just struggle to stay alive. Only the *Children* with a mental balance over -35 can be expected to successfully undo one of their limitations. Professional help is needed, from somebody who knows what goes on (which rules all mental asylums out). This is where the *Darksouls* fit in. They are the *Children* who have reached a kind of redemption. They have walked the valley of death, and they have returned to the light. Many of them are deeply religious and wish to help other *Children*. The *Chosen* often find them irritating. Why try to become a human again, when you only will become a *half-human*? *Darksouls* are often seen as bizarre by the normal human population, and the *Chosen* call this to be *half-human*.

Limitations that cannot be directly defeated, like *Abnormal aging*, can only be defeated if they are connected with a *dark secret* or another memory with a strong symbolical meaning to the *Child*. If this is the case, resolving the *dark secret* would resolve the limitation. Confronting the bad memory, and make it lose its strength, would have the same effect. Either way, to get rid of a limitation will require three times the worth of the limitation in experience.

Chapter 5

Hallucinations and their kin

“ I do not like the new post box they have put up. The post office came with it a few weeks ago. What’s wrong with the old one, I asked but they just told me to mind my own business. Nobody likes to hear what an old lady thinks, I preferred the old post boxes they had when I was young. Like when at last week, when this nice old gentleman who I had been taking to so many times. . . what is his name now again? He was about to post a small letter for his sister I think, anyway he was using one of these new boxes – and it swallowed him whole! At first I thought he had been stuck with his hand and I asked him if he needed any help, but he just gave me a surprised face. Then he was sort of sucked into the post box. They have been putting up several of those boxes now, there are at least five around my hose and I feel afraid to go out. I don’t like the boys who put the boxes there either, grim faces, all the same. I don’t like how they look at me at all. Today they put one new box just outside my front door and the phone don’t seem to work any longer. I wonder why. ”

Our perception of the world will tend to be right most of the time. As long as the world behaves rationally, in ways that we think it always have, reacting as we have learned to expect – as long will we also see the world for what it is. Certain drugs and rituals are known to make it easier to hallucinate, as well as lack of sleep or low mental balance. What we usually call hallucinations, is the way we sense the world around us when reality doesn’t seem to fit together. They are usually a product of our own mind, trying to adjust to an unexpected and impossible situation. We sense that something is wrong, but cannot explain what or why. Sometimes this might be an actual glimpse of the world beyond, of the real world, but most people are unable to tell the difference.

Not all hallucinations involves seeing or hearing things. A common type of hallucination exist where the subject suddenly *knows* or truly and wholly *remembers* something. This ”knowledge” then appears to be more real than all other knowledge that the subject actually possesses. Feeling strange things move under the skin is another kind of hallucination.

Whenever somebody with a low *mental balance* hallucinates, one can expect the hallucination to be a rough mixture between their expectations of the world, their

emotional state and the reality behind the illusion. Generally, a simple hallucination do not actually touch anything. It might hurt, it might look dangerous, but it will not attack or try to make any adjustments of reality. People experienced with hallucinations can often make an educated guess whether or not they are faced with reality, by the way their hallucinations behaves. They usually grow too overconfident for their own health, especially those who use drugs to summon hallucinations. Sometimes the shadows are real.

5.1 Darkness take its Share

“ To submerge oneself into the darkness is to give up the control normal people have over their lives. The glitches that make us fail to act rationally grows to fill our surroundings until the vision becomes completely blurred. So much harder it will become, to restrain oneself from doing wrong, when terror falls from above and the heart is full of fear. ”

Humans often imagine that *Children* feel safe in the dark, being creatures who belong to the darkness after all. In reality there are more *Children* than adult humans, who fear what the shadows hold. They know what darkness covers up. All they need is to have a look in the nearest bathroom mirror.

When we descend through the darkness, we gradually become more and more sensitive to our emotions. We slowly lose the grip of reality, and find our own negligible faults and problems to grow into obstacles that no longer can be handled. Our *disadvantages* begin to rule our lives, the free will slowly becomes tethered by the chains of the *limitations* we wear.

A *Child* who encounters something unspeakable hideous the elders only dare whisper about, must succeed a terror throw or lose control over itself. A terror throw is a normal Ego throw, modified according to the *mental balance* of the *Child*. The throw may be further modified if the *Child* has experienced a similar situation before (-5), or if it has been able to prepare itself (-10).

There may be other reasons to why one slips out of control as well, like severe loss of blood or suddenly running into a very uncomfortable situation. Worth noting may be that to a *Child*, not only the encounter with the darkness may be frightening, but also the encounters with the light and the justice.

Gaining *limitations*

The primary effects of a failed terror throw is to enter a state of "shock". The typical reaction may be something like panic, apathy, or just curling up to cry in a corner. The shock reminds a lot about the situation when someone lose their hope forever (p 49 *That tundering hope*), but the effect only lasts for a few (d20) minutes. Usually the effects of the terror throw and the *mental balance* of the subject, they may or may not be permanent. If the *Child* has a *mental balance* lower than -75, it might undergo permanent physical changes as a direct result of the shock. Anybody who fails a terror throw with an effect of +10 or more, will start develop a new *disadvantage* or possibly a *limitation*. The exact change will depend upon

the situation that spawned it, as well as the mind of the affected *Child*. Often the physical changes have a connection to ones *dark secrets*. *Disadvantages* are normally directly connected to the event that caused the shock, whereas *limitations* tend to be more linked to ones own mind.

Failing the terror throw with a +10 effect will give a new *limitation* worth 5p, a +15 effect gives a 10p *limitation*, etc... If it fits well together with the situation, a +15 effect may instead create two 5p *disadvantages* or similar. The effects may vary, in the end it is the mind of the *Child* who failed the throw, that unknowingly modifies its own situation.

Limitations may also develop as a result of a low mental balance in itself. Often the failure to handle an existing *disadvantage*, may slowly change it over some time. Unless the subject can get a grip of reality, it finally turns into a supernatural *limitation*. An existing *limitation* may develop into a worse *limitation* by the same means.

The real danger is not in the primary shock, but in the loss of control that follows. After the initial shock has calmed down, after the immediate danger has passed, we are left to live with our failure. A new throw may be tried every 12'th hour, but as long as we continue to fail, every day of living will be governed by our *limitations*. All our *disadvantages* will be active, all our *limitations* demands to be satisfied, all at once. Symbols will demand to be protected or avoided at all cost. Blood, flesh, spiritual energy or whatever must be found as fast as possible, and we need the immediate protection from machines, light, reflections or what it might be that we fear most in this world. Sometimes several *limitations* will clash against each other, causing hard to manage emotions of uncertainty and angst.

Gaining powers

The shock situation can sometimes induce new powers, although it is more common that powers grow forth with time. New powers are closely connected to the emotional state the *Child* is in and usually develops as an answer to sustain certain limitations or something needed to stay alive. Sometimes they grow forth as a reaction to the *Child's* expectations, but they are mostly something needed here and now. It is not possible to develop powers worth more than the sum of the *limitations* and *disadvantages* one has got.

The *Child* itself can normally not decide what powers it develops, although old *Children* may know about certain dark rituals that can induce a specific ability in a *Child*. There exist a few "commonly known" such rituals, most notably those that grant *life eternal*, and *causal influence*. Both contain terrible sacrifices; The

MB	Mod	Possible control
±0	+0	Subject can control itself if it tries hard.
-15	+3	<i>Disadvantages</i> can be controled by an Ego throw.
-30	+5	Subject may be persuaded to behave.
-45	+7	Ego throw needed to prevent subject to hurt others.
-60	+10	Ego throw needed to prevent subject from injuring itself.
-75	+15	<i>Limitations</i> uncontrollable, permanent physical changes.
-100	+20	—

Regaining control over a limitation: Ego throw modifiers.

ritual to gain *life eternal* demands the death of a loved one, where the ability may develop to allow for eternal mourning. Gaining *causal influence* involves to "mark" oneself as a target for a nepharite, the praised ability may develop as a result of the immediate need to escape. The most well known ritual that grants *domination*, needs a trusted friend to become living entombed, symbolizing that the *Child* has power over everyone.

As a result, few *Children* try those rituals out. Rituals that grant the less praised powers may or may not be as violent. Generally the more violent rituals are the ones more commonly known, and most *Children* would not be friendly against somebody who had achieved a power this way. *Children* who deal with any kind of ritual magic are likely to be frozen out by other *Children*.

5.2 the Lore of Darkness

" We see the pretty butterflies, but do not realize it is our own bodies they're hatching from. "

If your *mental balance* is low enough or you are a *Child*, a failed terror throw can make your hallucinations real. This means that even other people can start to experience them and their outcome will more or less affect our world. Normally one refers to such hallucinations as *projections*.

People who are experienced in magic, dream control or just have a strong will, might be able to gain some sort of control over such hallucinations. With some training it might even be possible to call forth the hallucinations and shatter the illusions of reality. The *Children* call this the "Lore of Darkness" or the *dark Art*. It is hardly ever possible to do anything sophisticated this way, nor is it possible to create any "nice" effects. An attempt of healing a wound would most likely result in a seriously unwanted effect, like the wound becomes permanently infected with worms and maggots so that it heals infinitely. Anything destructively is likely to work flawless and can be used as a quite effective weapon.

The *dark Art* is an Ego based ability that works more as an extension of the emotions rather than the will. How well you can wield it depends on your actual ability score, but the power comes from the darkness you carry within your heart. The effect is determined by a coarse balance between your Ego and your *mental balance*. The higher Ego, the more likely you will accomplish your wishes, and the lower MB, the wilder the outcome will be.

Wielding the *dark Art* at different levels of *mental balance*. The effects listed are what might come out of an *successful* attempt to wield it. Each try will cost 10p of endurance.

0 MB You are able to make small and subtle changes in the world, like making the car-keys appear on the wrong place. Nobody can actually see the changes take place, that would counteract your efforts, and you are not either able to make anything unlikely to happen. You can make the car-keys appear on

Hallucinations and their kin

the toilet floor instead of in the wallet, but you can not make them appear sewed stuck in a coat.

Anybody can make an attempt to destroy a hallucination or projection, by denying its existence. This requires a successful Ego throw.

- 15 MB** You are able to make changes in the world, of the kind which are hard to rationalize away. Nobody can actually see the changes take place, but they can happen very quickly. A shiny new car can turn into a rusty wreck in a matter of days, and important letters can change their contents, not just go missing.

It becomes possible to sense other peoples hallucinations.

- 25 MB** You are able to break apart dead things, or make them move slightly. You are able to affect about one kg dead matter per Ego in a radius of about Ego meters around yourself.

It is possible to make existing hallucinations visible to others, by succeeding an Ego throw against your target(s), but they do not become real.

- 50 MB** You are able to hurl objects around, and animate them like an extension of your own will. They may have a maximum weight of your Ego in kg.

It is possible to force another creature to temporary develop one of your limitations.

- 75 MB** It becomes possible for you to directly affect living creatures, and harm or change them. You are able to inflict up to Ego points of damage to a creature.

The difference between hallucinations and reality starts to become "blurred". You can make an existing hallucination become like a precognition of a real event. The hallucination will not actually become real, but *something* will happen sooner or later, that closely resembles about the hallucination.

- 100 MB** You are able to tag other creatures, so that they becomes a channel for your presence. This will effectively make any creatures tracking down yourself (including nepharites) to easily mistake them for yourself. You are also able to summon creatures, inmates and properties of *Hell*.

You can willingly project an existing hallucination (make it "real").

- 150 MB** You are able to possess other creatures. Time and space can be controled to a lesser extent. You can slow the time down, and teleport things about a mile. You can control projections and hallucinations, as if they were real objects. To gain control over a projection already controled by someone else, you need to win an Ego contest against that creature.
-

-250 MB You are able to create self-consistent beings out of your own darkness. How well they resembles what you tried to create, and how well they obey your will, depends upon the effect of the spell.

You are able to construct permanent portals, and create supernatural traps or wards which lay dormant waiting for a predefined event to occur.

-300 MB You can speed up or slow down time – or completely grind it to a halt. Anything you have touched will keep a kind of spiritual connection with you, making it possible to know approximately what is happening near the object. You are able to teleport things between different continents or connect different places in time and space. It is possible to play tricks with the dimensions, so that you are only partly located in the physical world.

There is no longer any difference between hallucinations and the "real" world. You can permanently curse a creature or an object with any limitation of your choice.

-400 MB You are able to alter the entire landscape around yourself, in the present as well as in the past or the future. You can travel unlimited distances through time and space, stop or alter the speed of time completely.

5.2.1 the Rituals of the *Childhood*

Some magical rituals are forever associated with the *Children* and their society. The rituals differ from the Lore of Darkness in such way that they always work, provided that they have been carried out correctly. That is what most *Children* know about them, but this is not completely true. There are plenty of those rituals related to the *Children* who do work almost always, but not every time. This is a short list of the more well known rituals associated with *Children* and what they do. Most of them require one to be a *Child*, in order to work. Note that anybody who performs one of these rituals will be shunned forever by all other *Children*, these rituals are eerie. Still, it might be a life saver to know about them. They can grant the conjurer huge powers if done correctly. From history we know they have been used.

Theft of Youth This ritual requires the worst form of the limitation *Abnormal aging*, which is described in more detail at page 25. It will always succeed. People without this limitation may or may not develop the limitation if they perform the ritual.

The actual ritual is not important, but there has to be occasional skin contact between the prey and the *Child*, while the prey is physically injured. Each hour of the ritual where the victim is kept alive, steals d20 years. Wise *Children* will keep several prey imprisoned together, feeding just a little each day. This way they will last longer, and the dangerous collection of new prey and disposal of the old can be somewhat planned. Since these *Children* do not need their prey to be healthy, they have a much wider options for feeding than most other *Children*. Many simply move into an apartment with some

people and capture them. This can be anything from drug junkies to young families on holiday. A lot of time is spent looking for new groups which can disappear for a while without alerting anybody, and by the time when they are used up they will be hard to identify. Death comes from overconfidence. The police is not stupid.

Summon shadow The ritual requires a living person and a mental balance below -50. It does not matter how this ritual is carried out, as long as it involves to cut loose parts of the victim, eat them and scream oneself's name. The victim must be held alive for at least 1d5 days and at least one apple-sized piece of the victim must be cut out per hour. It is customary to cry out something like "-You cannot stop me from doing evil!" or "Try to stop me if you dare!" followed by oneself's name, before eating each piece. The ritual will permanently lower the mental balance ($10+2d10$ MB) of both victim and the performer, down to a minimum of -150. It often involves lighting a lot of candles and draw strange symbols all over the place, but these are completely unimportant. Their only purpose is to keep the conjurer awoken for the duration of the ritual.

After several days the *shadow* will manifest, even if one really is too bright for the shadow to form physically. If one has a mental balance over -150, the shadow will manifest by informing the police or a mental asylum. Below this level of darkness, the shadow will step forth physically in the same room as the ritual has been carried out. The shadow will become very offensive after this ritual. It will behave as if one had a mental balance -100 below ones actual level, thus making it possible to awaken already at a mental balance at -400. The shadow will also fight *very* dirty. The effect will not last more than a year, but this year the police will frequently receive anonymous calls about where to find you. The ritual makes it possible to negotiate with the shadow, but there is usually little point in doing this. The shadow can be persuaded into saving somebody or something similar, if one submits to the law and order. The shadow is no stronger than the conjurer, but is indestructible for as long as the conjurer stays alive.



Mimicry The ritual requires a human victim with a mental balance as close to zero as possible. The victim must be alive and the ribcage should have been cut open. It is very important that the victim is held conscious, for this reason the ritual is often carried out with a lot of distracting candles, symbols and

things that give off smoke. By removing the heart and eating it before the eyes of the victim, it is possible to take over the victims identity. This grants a *Child* the ability to blend into a crowd of humans. Angels and lictors will not be able to recognize the *Child* as a supernatural creature and neither will humans with a mental balance over +100, as long as the *Child* is surrounded by at least 6 normal humans. Normal humans who perform the ritual will additionally gain at least one limitation. The heart must be eaten within the ten seconds it takes for a heartless human to become unconscious or the ritual fails.

Nail the dead The ritual requires a person, a long stick and some soil. Most *Children* think that a wooden pole through the heart will destroy the soul of a *Child*. This is not true, but it will kill any *Child* without *Physical Invulnerability* or a similar ability. Additionally, as long as there is a stick of any non-living material going through the heart of the *Child* and down into the earth below (some soil will work), the spirit will remain bound to the body. This is a kind of undeath, but it does not grant the ability to move. The spirit of the *Child* will remain until the body decays or the stick is removed, at which time it will be fetched by the nepharites. The body can be used as a safe source of darkness and suffering. The mental balance of the spirit will quickly fall down to -250, but lacks all ability to interact with the physical world. The ritual is most commonly used as a punishment among the *Children*, but some magicians practice it as well; Anybody with the ability to possess a creature at -250 MB, will be able to wield the Lore of Darkness using the power of an undead. . .

Gain ability: Youth Eternal This ritual requires at least 30p worth of limitations, at least 10p must be unused. The ritual requires a true love to be sacrificed and grants *Youth Eternal* (worth 20p) for as long as the *Child* mourn the loss. *Children* who manage to overcome their deed, will only keep the lesser form *Slow aging*. Many descriptions of the ritual are clobbered with unimportant spells, candles that should be lit and recitements that should be made. The ritual will always work, as long as the requirements are met. You don't even need to know what kind of ritual you are performing.

Gain ability: Causal Influence This ritual grants the ability *Causal Influence* to roughly half of those who perform it. The ritual requires one to have at least 60p worth of limitations and no higher mental balance than -50 MB. The ritual begins with that one is carving symbols directly upon ones skin. One of the symbols must be the name of a nepharite or a symbol that mean "guilty". It does not matter in what language. One must have an object with some kind of relation to ones dark secrets. A hand written confession will do. The object should be smeared with ones blood and saliva, the name of the nepharite one has carved (or the word "guilty") should be cried over and over again. More symbols and words should be carved into the skin and the ritual continue this way for several days. Within a week, a nepharite will come to fetch the guilty one.

The more the word "guilty" and the name of the nepharite is written, the more likely the ritual is to succeed. Many descriptions of this ritual involves a human sacrifice, lots of candles and smoke. This makes no difference to the ritual. Those who succeed will feel a darkness falling over the room a few

minutes before the nepharite comes forth. They will be filled with an insane fear of going to Hell. Wailing voices cry within their head, lights go out and the walls begin to crack. After the incident, any survivor must make a terror throw and suffer the consequences.

Gain ability: Domination The ritual requires supernatural powers worth 20p, a maximum mental balance of -45 and to have somebody to entomb themselves. The conjurer must have planned to perform the ritual for at least a month with the explicit goal to gain the ability *Domination*, it will never work by accident. It is actually the planning in itself that awakens the ability. It grows forth, but remains dormant until the ritual has been successfully performed. This will require the conjurer to win both an Ego contest against the victim and an additional (modified) Ego throw to believe his own lies. The more the conjurer is planning and thinks about the power he shall gain, the more likely is the ritual to work.

The easiest way is to have someone who fully trusts the conjurer, to dig a deep hole in the ground. The ritual will work even if the conjurer "helped" to entomb the victim after the hole has been dug. As long as the victim or the remains thereof stays within the earth, the conjurer will then hold the ability *Domination*.

Planning for just a month will give a +10 penalty for the Ego throw, for a year a +2 penalty. Many descriptions describe years of preparations; One should steal a human child and raise it as ones own, to ensure a victim that fully trusts oneself. Following such guidelines will make the required Ego throw unnecessary, the ritual will always work.

Soulsell This ritual grants a supernatural creature (possibly a *Child*) the ability to control another creature. The requirement is that the one supposed to gain control (known as the "master") must have at least one 15p worth limitation and one supernatural ability. The kind of ability is not important.

It grants the worse form of the limitation *Mental infestation* to one of them and after the ritual, the controlled creature can no longer refuse to carry out an order given by its master. The ritual requires the creature to be controlled (known as the "infested") to sign a paper with its own blood. It does not matter what the paper says. The paper may be completely blank, but it is commonly written as a contract where the infested gives up all right over its soul to the master. The infested must then eat something of its new masters body. Commonly a drop of blood is used, but anything that has been part of the masters body will do. After the ritual, the limitation can only be broken if the signed paper is destroyed.

The ritual does not grant anything besides this limitation and is most commonly used against humans who know nothing about the supernatural. Sometimes the infested develop more limitations and a few powers, but they have not anything to do with the ritual. Neither does it change the personality or the will of the infested, it just removes the ability to resist orders from the master. Even written orders will do. No Ego throw is needed, the infested cannot even refuse to commit suicide.

Chapter 6

Ageing and decay

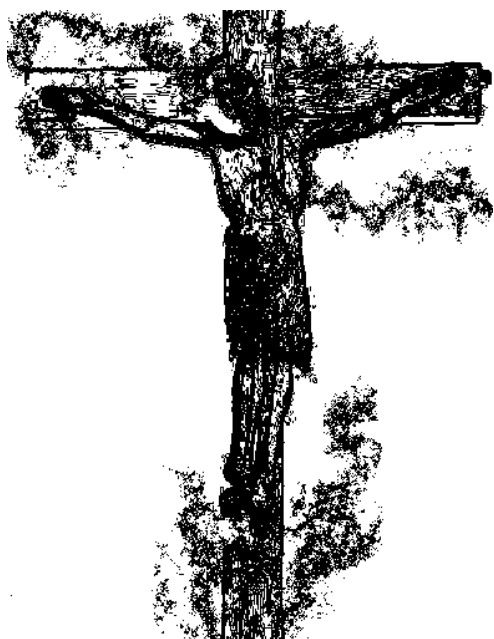
“ She had done everything correctly. The old lady had been most detailed, not leaving a single unimportant detail out. Everything was right. At the beginning she had been almost as excited as when she had learned the old ones’ secret. Who would have guessed that the old stories held the truth? She had learned the knowledge of eternal youth. The moment she had fallen in love with him, she knew that she had to make him as herself! She just had to do it and this was it. He had been curious at first, but when he found out what it was all about he had been afraid. She had literally been forced to drag him back and hold him down. Emptying him for blood was harder than she had imagined, but it got easier as he weakened. There was far too much inside him for her to swallow, instead she let it pour down onto the carpet. They would clean it up later, but first they would celebrate. She had prepared for him, for his moment, for over a month now. Their moment. This moment! She cut her palm and let her own blood pour down, filling him again. Now he would open his eyes again and they would live together forever. With a soft voice she whispered his name.

When an hour had passed, she started to feel uneasy. No, everything had been performed exactly as the old lady had told her. Everything was in order. He would soon wake and join her. Again she whispered his name, but not so soft any longer.

Still as the sun started to rise over the city, she was sitting there holding him tight. She was no longer whispering. ”

Many people, including many *Children*, believe there exists a loophole from death in becoming a *Child*. This is only partially true. Any person with strong emotions will be able to change their rate of aging, or how easily infections and injuries will take them down. With a positive *mental balance* aging grows slower by the diminishing of each sorrow, but with a negative balance it is the terror that holds mortality at an arms length. Normally this means that no *Child* which actually enjoys their own existence will ever gain immortality. The only known exceptions are those few who are constantly overwhelmed by an insanely paranoia of everything that death stands for, whose whole life has turned into a long desperate escape. Only someone which has been completely abandoned by all hope can cultivate such

emotions within themselves, and few people over -250 have a reason. Normally a *Child* is aging faster the higher their *mental balance* is, and the better they feel. Fear of death do also often makes aging go faster, especially when it has been tainted by despair (as is the case for many *Chosen* when they discover that they are still mortal).



When a *Child* has stopped its growth, and no longer grows older, it is almost universally due to a fear of remaining in the living world and being "left behind". Such emotions are mostly rooted in a *dark secret*, and normally connected with shame or sorrow. Perhaps the *Child* has betrayed someone near them, or they have been forced to give up something of great value to them. It is short to impossible to find any immortal beings among *Children* higher than -100, though there exists many a *Child* with a different pace of aging than normal humans. It is not too uncommon that *Children* as high as -50 can go through the decay two or even three times slower than humans, but one must not forget that more than half of all *Children* are actually aging *faster* than humans. The hard life, in combination with a desperate desire to stay alive, takes its right.

Most *Children* die young, and by a grim circumstance this helps keeping the myth of the "creatures of darkness, liberated from death" alive. Since most *Children* die young, most *Children* will also look young.

At the same time, the belief that aging and mortality is something not really of concern to the *Children*, is the primary source of "wannabes" which makes the life of the *Chosen* relatively easy. This knowledge must be kept secret at any cost. Sometimes older *Chosen* practice the systematic killing and mutilation of the younger *Chosen* as soon as they start to reach an age where they might realize that they still grow older despite their new state. Some *Chosen* have even made it into a personal quest to make many humans believe in a self-glorified and god-like society of *Children*. Mistakes such as *Tainted* are tracked down to be exterminated. *Children* in general are quite careful not to make the world aware of their existence, but not so with these older *Chosen* who instead seek out lonely people to invite them into "immortality".

6.1 That tinding hope

" To those who have it all, everything shall be given. From those who have nothing left, this shall be taken. "

Among emotions there is one who is more powerful than any other, yet most humans hardly know its name. Only those who already lost the one, can understand the power it wields. Deep down in dark sewers and abandoned buildings, the names it has been given is whispered; the Will to Live, Thirst of Life, Last straw to Grip. The names are all that is left for those who once took it for granted.

Ageing and decay

It is said that hope is the last to abandon us. Nobody with a hope of any kind can fall below -250. Nobody can survive without a hope. With hope the will to live dies, and with it the body. Among these *damned*, hope is life and they take it by violence if necessary. Anybody can improve their quality of living with a little hope, but to the *damned* the "will to live" is of much more importance than food, air or water. Hope may burn and harm, but without we are brought down to wither and despair.

As hope abandons us, the long night falls. A part of us dies and becomes forever lost.

Hope is life!, but life can be taken.

*" Others have it... how it burns in the eyes of those who have it not.
Sweet it is for dead souls, to bring others with them in their fall! "*

To destroy the hope of others when oneself has no hope... There is one way to the abandoned, one way to bring a new kind of hope. A way to give themselves a new meaning to their existence. Hope can be harvested – this is what ultimately keeps the *Damned* alive. To make other suffer in their place. This make them notorious devastators of all that means anything to the people who are unfortunate to cross their path.

At the same time, they become even more sensitive to emotions than physical damage. Being abused becomes a lethal danger. Cruel jokes and kindness alike corrodes them from within, as if their hearts had been torn away and replaced with a parasite of boiling tar. Being cursed tears through their soul, biting and burning like fire. Literally, like *fire!* Watching the joy of others, to become reminded about what they have been denied themselves... is *death*. The journey through the dark often ends here. During their entire lives the *Damned* have strived to exchange physical weakness against mental vulnerability. Mental stability against physical strength. This is the power that darkness grants, and this is where its followers realize what path they are threading. This is where they realize what they have done.

Experience	Damage
Being cursed, praised or welcomed, seeing ones own reflection	+1 scratch
Experience kindness, being ridiculed, fooled	+1 light wound
Being blessed, touched by an <i>Enlightened</i> , touched by <i>Angel</i> or being raped	+1 serious "
Realizing ones situation, protecting the innocent, heroic deeds	+1 lethal "
Crush friendship, crush love, make people sad	-1 scratch
Create misery, cause death, shatter dreams	-1 light wound
Cause suicide, rape, betray friends, make war	-1 serious "
Cause genocide, turn human into a <i>Damned</i>	-1 lethal "

Optional rule: To the Damned mental experiences become lethal, and can only be healed through the torment of others. The damage gives no visible wounds.

6.1.1 to Remain among the Living

The possibilities among those below -250 to steal their hope from normal humans are limited. They can seldom cope with society, and are mostly forced to live by the taking from others of their own kind. A few of them may make a living deep down in the basements of run down hospitals, or in the sewers just below the living's pretty gardens. Young humans do so easily fall down into the holes in the

pavement, or hurt themselves when they examine rusty junk yards. The police will of course investigate anything that so affects the wealthy, which will make that kind of lifestyle dangerous. As the situation of the *damned* among the living becomes more and more problematic, they will be forced to move further and further away from society until they only have themselves to deal with. Many seek out other parts of reality such as Metropolis, Thoropolis and Necropolis or succumb to Inferno and rebirth. The "will to live" becomes a rare treasure here, and the only source of commodity comes from the young damned who have recently been forced to flee to these pastures.

It is possible to become abandoned by hope earlier than -250, by means other than undeath. The reasons are often tightly knitted together with *dark secrets*, and the most common one is treason against something one once hold dear. Many magical rituals used to become immortal contain terrible sacrifices, such as ones children or loved ones. Usually the actual ritual is of no importance, it just serves as a mean to fall beyond redemption. Sometimes this is what we do anyway, without really meaning it. A moment of stupidity, a moment of inattention, and all that remains is eternity.

Such *Children* will develop a special behavior, and other *Children* are often afraid of them. They live by spreading misery and sorrow to other people around them, and often meld surprisingly well within the human society.

6.2 Hell and rebirth

"... and when it runs out, I grow tired and weary. It does not stop. Without the ability to replenish myself, I grow so tired, that I cannot even gather enough strength to close my eyes. Like a lifeless doll, I rest, waiting for a peace that never comes. At any second I expect my body to break apart, from the weariness I feel. Any position seems unsuitable for rest, and yet I am too tired to move. It is at those times I wish for death, and pray that death really is the final rest."

Hell is something that all *Children* will encounter sooner or later, in one way or another. The main purpose of Hell is to restore our *mental balance* to zero, and the kind of advanced torture we are going through there might seem an odd choice for this goal at the first glance. Indeed, many inhabitants of *Hell* will sink perhaps more than 100 points worth of *mental balance* before the effect is reversed. There are even rumors that some have been able to awaken down there.

It might be because of this it is not customary for the *Nepharites* to fetch people with a *mental balance* lower than -350. Such people commonly draw the personal attention of the *death angels* themselves. Especially *Gamaliel* and *Chagidiel* have been known to collect these people, storing them as possible weapons and keeping them away from their *shadows of light*. A silent understanding between *archons* and *death angels* grants the *archons* the same right to the *shadows*.

But the torture is not there to lower us, it is there to make us regret and forget. The torture is meant to make our lives seem so far away, that the memory of the living world fades into mist. Pain and regret is all there is, until we no longer have any strength left even to suffer. At this stage Hell has finished the work God

Ageing and decay

intended it to do, for this time. Those that haven't been completely destroyed are queued for rebirth, but the torture continues until just before birth. Still the painful memories of Hell follows most of us back into the living world, it is normal for a baby to scream and cry. We are nearly almost reborn into the same kind of group that we have belonged to in earlier lives, although not necessarily the same sex or with the same gifts. The close encounter with Hell makes the newborn very fragile and receptive to darkness, and quite moderate emotional distress can wake the slumbering darkness once again. Such children are known as *Firstborn*. Not until the age of three years does this sensitiveness start to decline, and lingers until about six years of age.



Chapter 7

For Reason and Loyalty

“ This was the fourth day and he was worried sick. Since the event he had started to avoid the other kids. As soon as he had had some time off, he either spent it locked up inside his room or down by the dump. He wasn’t really allowed to play there, especially not since the old supervisor had been found dead. Sharp objects covered the area and there was plenty of room for a child to accidentally become trapped inside. He liked to be there now. He had been imagining that he had an older brother who could put things right again. The brother knew what had happened, but told him that it was alright and that he had to leave. He enjoyed the idea that they would run away somewhere. Together they would leave everything behind.

The loud scream echoed through the building, interrupting the whispering discussion between the boy and his brother. He was already sitting huddled up in the far side at the bed, but instinctively crouched together even more as he heard his father’s cry. The brother dwindled away, becoming another ordinary shadow. They must have found the corpse. It wasn’t really his fault, the younger boy had started it all. He had answered by biting off a big chunk of the boy’s arm. It was just something that had happened. He didn’t really mean to do so, but he had been unable to stop afterward. He had hoped that nobody should discover the remains where he had stuffed them away in the basement, but they had started to search as soon as the night fell and the neighbors couldn’t find their son. They didn’t find him immediately, it had passed almost five days. He had been sneaking down now and then to have another bite, but the last two days the body no longer tasted any good. Apparently it had begun to smell now and they had found it.

He had locked the door, but his father wasn’t careful this time. His father had bolted the door down and stepped into the room without a word, eyes filled with disgust. This time nobody would blame him for mistreating his son! He gripped for his boy, but wasn’t fast enough. The boy fled crying out of his grip and hid under the bed. At that moment he was all too busy to be aware of one shadow who suddenly had started to move. Only a moment later, something grabbed the surprised father

by the waist and torn him open. Bits and pieces of flesh rained down over the bed where the young boy lay covering. His father didn't scream, there was only this ripping sound reminding of a carpet being torn into pieces, followed by wet thumps as the body parts fell. Then there was silence. "

Depending of the local folklore, common expectations and beliefs most *Children* living in the same area, or "created" by the same means or events tend to have rather similar *limitations*. Through the years a few distinct groups of *Children* has formed, each with a common set of *limitations*. Odd combinations, or uncommon *powers* are seldom found outside the *Firstborn* or the *Fallen*.

This brings a sense of reason to the endarkened world, each group will appear as different non-human species. Not many *Children* are aware of the fact that their *limitations* and *powers* come from their own darkness, and the distinct groups have very limited cooperation.

Those *Children* who are just limited in a seemingly random manner, with occasional supernatural powers thrown in, live as outcasts among the *Children*. They are treated as lesser beings, as failures or freaks of nature. The "normal" *Children* do not deal with them. They are a disturbing anomaly in the world the *Children* wish to believe in. Dangerous is the fact that their existence may prove to the aspiring humans that not everybody will become what they expect. Because of their random nature, nobody can be really sure whether they are dangerous or not. Therefore they are not hunted in the same way as most *Fallen*. As long as they do not make a fuss of the fact that they exist, other *Children* let them be.

7.1 the Devourers

Devourer is the common name for those who need to feed in one or another way upon either humans or other *Children*. This group is the one that most naturally comes to mind when talking about *Children*, and it includes some of the most well known groups to men.

7.1.1 Jackals

Jackals are a diverse group of *Children* who suffer from the limitation *Cannibalism*. Most Jackals are *Chosen*. It is a quite serious thing to get eaten alive, so there are not so many psychotic survivors that may become *Tainted*. More so, the few *Tainted* who exist, risk being eaten by the other Jackals. Being selected and brought in to become a *Chosen* is not near as traumatic as becoming a *Tainted*, therefore will *Chosen* seldom have the more serious variant of cannibalism. In other words they will be able to feed upon meat from dead humans, as long as it isn't rotten or heated. They will also be able to store meat for later use. This is a good thing. People who need to eat living humans, will not last long.

Jackals are almost exclusively involved with criminal matter. They tend to be low-ranked members of small criminal organizations, alternatively scruffy looking gangs who kill lonely people. Very few have got a higher standard of living than that they afford a small apartment. Many could theoretically reap the economical benefits of belonging to a criminal organization... but eating humans turn in

For Reason and Loyalty



For Reason and Loyalty

reality out to be tearing very hard upon ones mind. It is a far easier mental burden to just kill a human, and let it be... than to carry it home, cut it up, and eat a large hump each day. Many Jackals are haunted by nightmares, and develop terrible limitations as they grow older. When their mental balance sinks below -50 (in most cases this is a matter of time), they will no longer be welcome in human organizations. Sometimes other *Children* might use them as a way to dispose of bodies.

Firstborn who develop cannibalism are typically locked into the cellar by their parents, or left to a mental asylum. They usually die before 6 years old.

Fallen often develop cannibalism, but they are not welcome in the Jackal society. In fact, most *Children* do not even recognize them as Jackals. They are given names such as "borderlines" or "zeloth" and are quite indiscriminate about whom they eat. Human or *Child* do not matter, anything that moves is considered to be edible. Some of the more organized *Children of the Night* actively fight the *Fallen*, forcing them away from their areas of control. The further one approaches the borders or reality, the higher the probability is to run into packs of *Fallen*. Most live outside *Elysium*, in Metropolis or down in the labyrinth.

Jackal

Limitations: Cannibalism,
Hunting instincts

Powers: Natural armour,

Enhanced strength and
constitution
Skills: Climb 10, Hide 15,
Guns 15, Impact Weapon 15,

Search 15, Net of contacts 5
(jackals), Sneak 20, Swimming
15

Foreign partner association is one of the largest and richest organizations entirely controlled by *Jackals*. It has about 300 members worldwide. Most work in the field and have no knowledge about what's going on in the organization. The main office is located in the central Amsterdam. A few smaller can be found in various cities around America, one office with about ten employees is in Calcutta and a somewhat larger one located in former Leningrad. The offices are normally empty, safe for some phones, uninteresting papers and a locked freezer. Their main business deals with "wife import". Officially they are a contact service.

The organization seeks out people with social problems, mostly poor lonely females with few relatives. At first a meeting is arranged with an agent, who explains that they are a kind of "dating service". They claim to offer juridical help, immigration to a rich western country and a loving husband. Those who become interested may sign up, nobody is forced to participate. It is possible to order a wife from most of the west via the organization. A "date" is set up between the two and a semi-official marriage is arranged. Both travel away together, and apply for citizenship in the husbands home country. Sometimes the marriage works, but the organization keeps no record of how the wives get along in the new country. If anybody cares to check, about 80% lose their new citizenship and become expelled within a few years. A few times now and then, no wife is registered when the married couple arrive. The organization manufactures a number of letters in these cases, where the wife tell her relatives that she wish to give up all acquaintance with them.

The organization is run by one of the few known *Firstborns* among the Jackals who survived childhood. He is known as Juan Paulo and was once saved by an older Jackal with a few valuable contacts. They managed to work a capital together and were finally able to start a business by themselves. Only the twelve highest ranked

For Reason and Loyalty

members (all Jackals) have a clear view of how the organization works and what it really does.

Juan Paulo never deals directly with the "raw goods". One could easily imagine that he does this to keep his hands clean, but the truth is that he is afraid of blood. He repeatedly dreams nightmares about his father being torn asunder by a huge monster, and thinks humans can read his mind. Some say he is beginning to lose his grip of the organization. The real benefit he has found in his organization is not money, but to be served dinner in ways that makes it almost possible to forget what his food consists of.

<u>Juan Paulo</u> (jackal)			Ht 180cm	Init Bonus 0		
			Wt 80kg	Dmg Bonus 0		Limitations: Cannibalism (15p), Slandorous mind
Str 12	Con 10		Actions 4	Mv. 9m/rnd		Advantages: Wealth, Empathy
Agl 18	Com 10					Powers: Telepathy, Telekinesis
Ego 11	Per 16		Dark secrets: Forbidden knowledge			Skills: Net of contacts 20 (jackals), Occultism 7, Info Retrieval 16, Gun 16, English 18, German 15, French 18
Cha 14	Edu 10		Disadvantages: Mental Constriction, Nightmares, Sexual Neurosis			
MB: -75	End 80					
4Scr 3Lw	2Sw 1Fw					

7.1.2 Nosferatu

The vast majority of nosferatu live as small packs of *Tainted*, of about four to six members. The group mainly provides protection and warmth, hunting is more effective when each member handles themselves. Nosferatu feed exclusively upon blood, either from humans or the small mammals that live in sewers and garbage dumps. Small animals are best hunted alone (or with traps) as large team would disturb the prey.

Humans are dangerous prey. Even homeless and outcasts can swing an iron rod, and most nosferatu are killed by their own prey. A single nosferatu can feed from a human without killing it, but several ones cannot. An occasional human death may pass, but many kills will attract the attention of the police. It would of course be easier for a large group to attack a human, but only seemingly safer. While it is tempting, and not too uncommon, for a pack to hunt together, none of these packs survive longer than a few weeks. The Nosferatu has many severe limitations, including sensitivity to sunlight, which makes them very vulnerable for any kind of revengeful attacks.

Chosen are rare among the nosferatu. Those who exist are often farmers of some kind, because hunting for blood takes too much time and effort. Farming can mean to have a herd of cows, but it probably means to have a herd of *Tainted*. Human herds are uncommon. They must be locked in, they are hard to maintain in a decent state, and frequently commit suicide or start to transform into *Tainted*. Humans with little knowledge about *Children* whereabouts often believe that the *Chosen* should be more common among the nosferatu than they in reality are, but not everyone can live by farming. There cannot be too many *Tainted* in a given area, and the competition between the *Chosen* among the nosferatu for these *Tainted* is sharp as a knife. Those who fall along the way do not live long. The rate of turn-over is high among the nosferatu. Most *Chosen* have been lured into "Childhood" just to serve as willing blood donors when the existing *Tainted* were too few. When they finally realize why they have been picked, the route to escape has been closed.

Bloodthirst is one among the most well known limitations and sometimes a *Firstborn* develops it, but will in that case normally not be affected by many other limitations. This puts the *Firstborn* in a special position among the Nosferatu society. Their lives are still hard, often with many odd stray jobs at the verge of what the law admits. They are still restrained to feed from a living being, and cannot store blood for later use. Some of them might be able to buy living animals, or attain closed clubs where humans willingly bleed for anybody. As a drawback, their fraternizing with the human society will put them at risk of being noticed by Lictors or Angels. They are often naively unaware about the dangers they expose themselves to, and the rest of the Nosferatu try to keep them on an arms length, just in case...

Nosferatu

Limitations: Bloodthirst,
Sensitive to sunlight

Powers: Heightened senses,
Regeneration, Endurance
Skills: Climb 25, Hide 20,

Unarmed combat 15, Search
15, Sneak 20

7.1.3 Lorelei

Most humans think that the worst a child can experience, is to be raped by their own parents. They are wrong. The worst a child can experience is to be denied any emotion, and never being allowed to share a bond with someone else. They might have been locked up in a lightless cellar or beaten up everytime they dared to express an emotion. They have been prevented from making friends with "bad" people, where all people outside their family have been "bad". Some have not been allowed to speak, play or make any kind of sound. Most have been dressed in proper clothes, and taught all the "good" manners in the world. They have been treated as dolls and they have become dolls.

A single friend, a parent who at least sometimes shows compassion or even a teddy bear they can confide their secrets to, can be enough to prevent the change – but without such a saviour, the child is utterly doomed. Something dies *physically* within a child who is prevented to show emotions, its not just an expression. A raped child who grows up will never fully trust anybody, but the one who has been denied to feel emotions will be *physically unable* to trust somebody. They still know fear, sorrow, shame and longing, but they have no means to express them. It tears them down from the inside, makes them eat their own soul. Unless they can gather new "spiritual energy" from another being, they will die as a mindless colli.

The Lorelei are the remains of a human infant, denied the right to feel. After a lifetime of ignorance, they have now become adults. All they have left from their childhood is a painful thirst to become somebody, a thirst for a soul. They seek the emotions they never will be able to hold. They long to be filled by the big passion so much that they will draw the very soul out of a human being, if they are given the opportunity.

Normally they pass rather unnoticed through the human society, they seldom do anything that cannot be rationalized away. Many of them act quite sane, and it is not impossible that they have a decent work where they can pass as humans. Pretending an emotional state is no problem for them, they know how to make a warm smile with a ringing laughter. They are excellent seducers, with good taste and intellectual understanding about the world... but very dull friends, a combination that makes them practically invisible to the world around them. The other *Children* call them the "mentally undead". As parents they are the

For Reason and Loyalty

worst imaginable possible, completely unable to make any emotional bonds to their children.

Most Lorelei have a very disturbed sexuality. They seek out any sexually active humans, which they engage in more or less perverted games. The climax ends with the Lorelei drinking the soul of their "partner". They usually do not drain the whole soul out of their prey, but do not leave as much either. Sometimes a Lorelei can restrain itself from feeding upon a lover and try to create a *Chosen*, but such relations will seldom work smoothly. Only another *Firstborn* Lorelei will accept their sexual pattern, with new lovers anywhere and everywhere except for with their true love – since Lorelei associate sex with feeding, most Lorelei would have second thoughts about trusting a Lorelei lover. They usually live alone, keeping occasional contacts with others of their own kind, or in loosely held collectives.

<u>Lorelei</u>	Man of the World	Search 12, Etiquette 24,
Limitations: Soulthirst,	Powers: Enhanced charisma,	Seduction 18
Coldblooded	Domination	
Advantages: Good reputation,	Skills: Hide 13, Dodge 15,	

7.1.4 Devastators

The Devastators are *Chosen* who physically need to steal the "will to live" from others, although they are not undead. Left alone a devastator is a sordid creature, a follower of *Nahemoth* without any initiatives or desires. Each week without a victim in their presence, they lose 1 point of Ego and initiative. Once their Ego has reached zero, they will care for nothing and die, unless force-fed and cared for by someone else. They "feed" on hope by lowering the mental balance of those already with a mental balance lower than -10. Each tenth point of mental balance anyone loses while mentally bound to the devastator, will make the devastator regain one point of Ego (up to normal). Suicide will transfer the Ego of the victim to the devastator, and may temporary raise its Ego above normal. The effect of several suicides are cumulative, but cannot grow to more than twice the normal Ego of the devastator.

Devastators are usually charming people, with a supernatural ability to find out *dark secrets*, desires and painful memories. They have the special ability to "bind" people to themselves. Anyone with a lower mental balance than -5 who talks to a devastator (including another devastator) must succeed a normal Ego throw, or becoming gradually obsessed by it. This will initiate a mental bond between them both, which is very hard to break once it has been established (after failing a number of times equal to ones Ego). It is partially a two way connection, and the devastator may lose Ego to its victims if it fails to keep its own mental balance stable! The only other way to break the bond is by a successful exorcism. The bond to a devastator should not be confused with the connection created by the ability *domination*, where the dominated wants to do the will of the *Child*. The bond is very subtle, the victim will just feel drawn to the devastator. It cannot refuse to listen to what the devastator says, but have no problem to disobey orders.

<u>Devastator</u>	Commanding voice,	10, Info Retrieval 20, Net of
Limitations: Damned, Cursed,	Telepathy, Bind creature	contacts 15, Psychology 19
Bound	Skills: Forgery 20, Persuade	
Powers: Enhanced ego,	16, Guns 15, Unarmed combat	

When two devastators meet, one will quickly gain control over the other and use it to feed. Devastators usually live alone, or in a "pimp - prostitute" like situation. The work of devastators is very subtle, leaving a trail of suicides, drug addicts and shattered lives behind. All in all, things which can be rationalized away as personal failures or social problems.

Jonna "the Ogre" is an old lady living in the suburban area to Stockholm. She actively seeks out teenagers with a mental balance of about -10, who have broken with their parents and old friends. She tells them about the supernatural, and offers them immortality. Jonna looks like being about 90 years old, and initially few believe her. Who would believe a toothless old hag who claims to be an immortal vampire?

There is something unnatural about her though, she moves with the grace of a cat and she is far stronger than most untrained men. Sometimes a glimpse out of the corner of an eye makes her appear to be surrounded by a transparent shell, shaped like a huge winged creature, but a moment later the vision is gone. A strange light seems to glow inside her eyes, and to meet her wrath, face to face, requires a terror throw.

As soon as she has got the attention she wants, she tries to make the young dependent of her. She usually keeps 4 to 5 young together with her. They are encouraged to give up contact with the human world, many of the arguments she uses are based upon modern fiction about vampires. She claims to be a high lady, more than 600 years old. She claims that vampires rule the world, and she claims to offer vampirism in exchange for being in her service. She will gradually become a more and more demanding master, and the young need to stand increasingly worse humiliation. Girls will be encouraged to prostitute themselves, boys will be encouraged to sell drugs to children. They will be encouraged to drink human blood, to "get used to it". She will make sure that they fall in love with somebody, and order the execution of their loved one. At all times she is very careful. She will never physically force anybody to break the law, she just encourages them. In the end she drives them to commit suicide.

Sometimes her young start to develop supernatural powers, and manage to escape from her. She will try to kill these. She has many contacts, and will consider them to be her "property". There is a good chance that a *Child* brought up in Stockholm will be related to her in some way or another. Most are still afraid of her, and never use her name directly, as if they feared to summon her.

Her own story is similar to what she puts her young through. She was caught 17 years old, by a male *devastator* sometime around 1850. She was raped and mutilated by him for several years, but in the end she started to develop powers that he could not handle. She killed her jailer, but later gave birth to his son whom she both loves and hates. Her son represents the root of all evil to her. She never gave him a name, and he hardly resembles a human anymore. She keeps him locked up in her apartment, to be used as a punchbag. But he is also her son. She wishes that she could have given him another life, but would rather die than admit this to any living creature. She has three severe limitations; She believes herself to be cursed, and that she will die if she ever shows kindness to anybody. Her life is bound to her son, whom she keeps alive by means unknown to all but herself. Finally she is completely unable to touch anything that reminds her about a human infant. Dolls will effectively ward her off.

<u>Jonna "the Ogre"</u> (devastator)		Ht 165cm	Init Bonus +12	agility, Commanding voice
Str 21	Con 13	Wt 65kg	Dmg Bonus +5	Skills: Dodge 21, Sneak 18,
Agl 23	Com 8	Actions 4	Mv. 16m/rnd	Disguise 16, Unarmed combat
Ego 17 (34)	Per 7	Dark secrets: Victim of crime,		15, Daggers 20, Net of
Cha 15	Edu 18	Guilty of crime		contacts (authorities) 17 and
MB: -50	End 95	Limitations: Cursed, Sign of		(other <i>Children</i>) 5, Occultism
5Scr 4Lw	3Sw 1Fw	terror, Bound to creature		25, Poisons and drugs 13, Info
		Powers: Wrath, Slow aging,		Retrieval 14, Swedish 20,
		Enhanced strength and		French 16, German 12,
				English 9

7.1.5 Maran

Maran are shapechangers with a taste for blood and health. Most maran have a severely split personality, at least one per form. In their human appearance, they tend to be rational but tormented by nightmares about becoming a monster which preys upon their loved ones. The other forms of a mara includes a black swirly fog, which draws constitution, blood and endurance from any living creature it touches. The effect on human prey is very similar to rapid aging, and induces a strong sense of suffocation in the victim. It takes several weeks to recover from the damage, and the victim may never regain full strength. Those maran who need blood usually draws it via the eyes of the victim, causing blindness, or through the skin leaving large damaged regions which look like burn marks (about 5d5 scratches).

Needs vary from individual to individual, but as a rule of thumb; Each day without prey, they will lose health equivalent to the development of one scratch. They can drain health directly from a victim, thereby transferring any kind of damage. They cannot regain endurance by normal means, and each day they will lose an additional 10p of endurance. Some maran additionally bleed away a daily amount of blood, but this is less common. If their endurance drops to zero, they begin to lose 1p of constitution instead.

Loved ones of a mara tend to be struck by strange diseases and a short weary life. The relation to their parents is very disturbed. They often glorify their parents as some kind of saints, but cannot tell a single good thing about them. Their parents probably died as it reached puberty. If accused to have anything to do with the death of the parents, the mara will need to make a terror throw.

Old maran often go paranoid. They believe they are followed by a supernatural monster, perhaps a demon, which kill anyone who establishes any kind of relationship to them. The more they care for something, the more it wither. They cannot even hold pets, or potted plants, for a longer time. The home of a maran is unnaturally clean, there are no flies, mites or even mold to be seen. Maran usually attack sleeping creatures, and are drawn to anything they wishes to protect in human form. Maran seldom have a chance of becoming grandparents, because their children tend to die very young.

To the mara itself, the shapechanges feel like dreaming and usually comes when the mara grows tired. Sunlight does not damage the mara, but usually "awakens" it to human form. It's name, a certain smell or something else that reminds about the human life can also cause the same effect. Certain anti-psychotic medication have been known to repress the mar-form and give a kind of control over the shapechange process, but the mara still needs to feed. A mara with a knowledge of magic, especially Lore of Dreams, will have a limited ability to control itself when

mar-formed. Otherwise their behavior is purely unpredictable, and they cannot decide what prey they attack. When not attacking a sleeping creature, they can transfer roughly 1 scratch per turn. There are rumors about maran-wizards which haunt together, but most maran live alone and the maran in general are so rare that this is probably not true.

<u>Maran</u>	precense, Sensitive to	Dodge 10 (25), Search 15 (3),
Disadvantages: Nightmares,	electricity	Sneak 15 (30), the Lore of
Multiple personalities,	Powers: Blessed, Slow aging,	Dreams 5 (0), Drugs and
Manodepressivity	Invulnerable to physical	Poisons 15 (1), Medicine
Limitations: Uncontrolled	attacks (while mar-formed)	5 (0), Occultism 5 (5)
shape changes, Mindless	Skills human form and	
(while mar-formed), Wailing	(mar-formed): Hide 10 (35),	

7.1.6 Cariath

The Cariath are a group of *Fallen* whose bodies have decayed into a formless mass of flesh. With time they will incorporate other living or dead organic matter with their bodies, and sometimes metal, stone and glass. All of them have fallen below -250, and care only for "feeding" or the incorporation of more flesh. Living flesh is not immediately consumed, instead it slowly merges with the cariaths body while still alive. There are normally multiple, more or less living, twisting and moaning bodies attached to it. They do not have any known supernatural powers, besides that they, in a way, is not traditionally aging. Their old flesh is constantly decaying, and if they don't replenish their body with fresh meat, they will rot away and die. They are unable to ingest creatures who secrete enzymes which break down tissue, and so they are rather defenseless against maggots and bacteria. If two cariath meet, only one survives.

Cariath are able to speak, but they do normally not have a reason unless for taunting possible prey. They can change their shape in quite spectacular ways, but are bad imitators. If they speak, they have a wet sluggish voice, and typically speak single words or makes sounds it has heard lately. Some Cariath are worshiped as gods by other *Children* of the *Underworld*, and are intelligent enough not to claim too many of its believers. In exchange for a suitable sacrifice, such Cariath may even do favors to its believers, especially if it involves devouring something.

<u>Cariath</u>	Natural armour (5p), Natural	lw 7-10, sw 11-14, fw 15+),
Limitations: Undead,	weapons	Bite (scr 1-5, lw 6-12, sw
Sensitive to light	Skills: Hide 20, Search 10,	13-19, fw 20+)
Powers: Infravision, Sonar,	Sneak 20, 1D5 Claws (scr 1-6,	

7.2 the Purgatides

Some *Children* do not consider *purgatides* to be "real" *Children*, but the mechanism that creates *purgatides* is the same as the one which creates *Children*. The difference is that the *purgatides* have been "professionally treated" to feel miserable, while the *Children* had to do it to themselves. A *purgatide* is a refugee from hell, and bears the marks of torture written all over their souls. Not all are visibly scarred, for there are many ways to inflict pain, and not all can be seen from the outside. No *purgatides* have a mental balance over -150, and few have a chance of recovering as it would take far too much precious time. Not that they age in a biological sense.

They can however rot, and they are wanted by both the forces of light and the legions of darkness. To let humans out of inferno with their memories reasonably intact, is dangerous to the illusion. All refugees are assigned at least one personal tracker, usually a nepharite, to bring them back.

Purgatides mainly differ from normal *Children* by the effect they cause to unprepared minds. They can flee from their torturers and they can flee from inferno, they might even bring a few memories from their human life, but they cannot flee from the memories of hell itself. The purpose of hell is to forget, and by escaping they deny themselves this favor. For as long they hide, their memories will twist and bend the illusion around them in ways that slowly turns any place to an image of their purgatory. This effect is quite slow, and starts by affecting the minds of the moral majority. Initially there are no really disturbing changes, and everything wears off as soon as the purgatide has moved away.

The mental change would best be described as a mild variation of that which happens to a human who descends into the palace of an *Angel of Death*. A person under influence might notice the change, but will probably rationalize it away. Collectively, they will start to change their behavior, the way they think, the way they feel. All their new ideas will seem perfectly rational. Everything that the others do, will seem obvious and decent. They will start to get annoyed, worried or attracted by various stuff, and it will feel absolutely natural. What they actually think, feel and do in the end, depends largely upon the earlier experiences the purgatide brings.



Purgatide
Dark secrets: Visit in hell
Limitations: Bad aura, Corrosion, Undead

Powers: Telepathy, Telekinesis, Resistant to element
Skills: Occultism 20, Info

retrival 15, Sneak 20, the Lore of Darkness 5
MB: -150 to -350

7.2.1 Succubi

Succubi are what becomes of those women who die from sexual abuse. Although not so common, their male counterpart is called "incubi" and are usually associated with homosexual violence. They are commonly used as objects of "recreation" by torturers. If they get a chance, other inmates will use them too. Inferno is a place without hope, and hope is life. Even in death people are desperate to steal the hope that others still might have left. The succubis are the perfect victims of such behavior, being already "experienced" from life. For this reason, they are

usually treated in a way that does not completely ruin their looks, but they are far from as pretty most people imagine. They are however, surrounded with an aura that inflicts a strong emotion of sexual desire towards the succubi (or incubi), with a violent touch. The mere touch of a succubi, are known to turn anyone of the right sexual alignment into a raving rapist. Anyone failing an Ego throw, will lose their ability to control their sexual behavior near a succubi. At all time (especially afterward), they will be absolutely sure that the succubi wants to be sexually engaged with them. Anything the succubi says or does, will be taken as a proof of this.

Despite the common ideas about succubi, they do *not* like sex. Any kind of sexuality is a remainder to them of the horrors they have been put through in hell, and if they can, they kill anyone in range who shows sexual emotions. Succubi are generally no stronger than a human, but they can take almost any amount of damage. They need two fatal wounds to die.

<u>Succubi</u>	12Scr 10Lw 8Sw 2Fw	Limitations: Bad aura (sexuality), Wailing precense, Corrosion
Str 5+1D10 (10)	165cm Init Bon 0	Powers: Telepathy, Infravision, Heightened senses
Con 40+2D10 (51)	65kg Dmg Bon 0	Skills: Climb 20, Hide 20, Occultism 15, Info retrieval 15, Daggers 20, Guns 15, Sneak 20, Seduction 30, the Lore of Darkness 5
Agl 2D10 (11)	Act 2 Mv 6m/rnd	MB: -200 to -300
Com 5+1D10 (10)		
Ego 10+2D10 (21)	Dark secrets: Victim of crime, Visit in hell	
Per 10+1D10 (16)	Disadvantages: Sexual neurosis, Phobia, Nightmares, Death wish	
Cha 10+2D10 (21)		
Edu 2D10 (11)		
Endurance 285		

7.2.2 Nepharites

Nepharites are creatures of inferno, and do not really belong to this section, or even to this book. It is however possible to become one by the same paths as those to become a purgatide. *Children* with extremely low mental balance may be turned into Nepharites by the *Death Angels*. Little is known about the life as a nepharite, other than that they need pain and suffering for their existence. Most nepharites stay forever in hell. They need at least two lethal wounds to die.

The Care Taker is something as odd as a nepharite who has taken the other side. He has gained some reputation for his habit of sometimes helping out people chased by the forces of *inferno*, in exchange for pain. Once a human, he now serves *Malkuth* by trying to awaken other humans with the aid of torture and suffering. Not a single time has he succeeded, but he struggles on anyway.

He has however been able to turn more than 700 humans into *Children*, all with a very low mental balance. It is clear that he is very inspired by *Malkuth's* earlier work. He has never been quite able to grasp Her scientific side, but works hard to master Her style and artwork. Whether his creations can use their "improvements" or not appears to be of less importance. . .

In many ways he behaves like a grotesque child who wants to show a mother how skillful he has become. The more She ignores him, the more passionated he has been working. Many of his newer creations are living monuments to Her glory, made of steel, glass and the living flesh of some unlucky individual. It is unclear what *Malkuth* herself thinks of this, but She has made no efforts to stop him.

Humans who unknowingly spends time near the Care Taker, will start to becoming increasingly interested in medicine. If given time, they will start to perform small scale surgery on each other.

<u>the Care Taker</u> (nepharite)		Ht 210cm Init Bonus +19 Wt 100kg Dmg Bonus +9 Actions 5 Mv. 15m/rnd	mental balance between -50 and -100
Str 52	Con 43	Limitations: Bad aura (questionable medical experiments), Dependant of pain Powers: Telepathy, Direct control over people with a	Skills: Automatic Weapons 15, Handgun 15, Heavy Weapons 15, Sneak 25 Dodge 25, Dagger 25, Whips and chains 45, Unarmed Combat 20, Seach 15, Medicine 15, Torture 80, the Lore of Death 50, the Lore of Darkness 45
Agl 37	Com 1		
Ego 20	Per 12		
Cha 7	Edu 14		
MB: -350	End 160		
10Scr 9Lw	7Sw 2Fw		

7.3 the Infested

The *Infested* are those who have sold their souls to other deities, and by that path has been granted the powers and limitations of the *Children*. They can at many times be impossible to separate from normal *Children* for the untrained eye, but most of the *Children* fear and mistrust them. Normally they run their own business, which usually means to do the bidding of their master.

Being "infested" is a quicker and easier way to obtain *life eternal* than by becoming a *Child*, but the price is often higher.

7.3.1 the Legionaries

The *Legionaries* are *Damned* in the service of *Astaroth*. All have been recruited among the inmates of inferno. It is told that they still remember their human lives, but they cannot carry out a single action which interferes with the will of the Dark Lord himself. Death is denied to them as long as they are in the service of Him. Their bodies will reform if destroyed, and their influence to normal humans reminds of that of a *purgatide*.

7.3.2 the Herolds

The *Herolds* are the followers of *Baal Reshef*, lord of the plague. Their purpose is to create and spread epidemic diseases. As long as they serve their lord faithfully, he grants them the right to follow their own mind. They live their lives similar to the *Damned*.

Most countries have severe punishment against people who deliberately spread diseases, and the *Herolds* are always on the move. Other *Children* will try to kill them on sight, if they become aware of their presence.

Chapter 8

Sanctuaries

“ I can still hear her, in my dreams, wherever I seek shelter. She was one of the younger ones, I think she had been running from home. Drunk parents, bad school or something like that. We gave her a home... No, the lidless gave her a home, gave all of us a home. All the world he promised to us, the glory of darkness. But he accused her, she was sentenced to soul sacrifice. I remember her screaming. It didn't strike me as odd that everytime one of us started to become, he accused... not then. There was a time when I still believed those fair words... How she screamed as the nails were driven through her. We held her down, we had to hold her. Who would dare to disobey? I knew the ritual. I dared not, therefore I live. Not until he drew the thick wooden pole through, her screams were silenced into a wet bubbling sound as the blood started to flow out of her open mouth. Her body shivered as if it had been electrified and her eyes came to catch mine and from that instant I knew. I could almost hear her voice inside my skull crying out the secret we all had realized but could not accept:

All there is has been a lie. We are lost souls beyond salvation. There is no God, there never was. Destiny is written in my face, for you alone to read.

To us the only eternity is suffering.

I can still hear her cry. The change is faster, now I know I never will walk the daylight again. To whatever deity who still would listen for me, please let him not find me! ”

Paradise is forever out of reach for the *Children of the Night*, but there are places outside the control of the *Lictors*. Realities where *Children* may live without the risk of being ensnared by watchful eyes and lawful citizens. Some find it worth the risk.

8.1 Metropolis

It is told that Metropolis once was the place where the Gods ruled. Many older *Children* claim that they have been one among those ancient mythological creatures



who ruled the earth. Some of them even claim that this time was just a few hundred years ago. Today it is known as the *Fallen City* among *Children*, cunningly because the *Fallen* often have fled to this area. The city is outside the control of the *Lictors*. Sometimes Angels sweeps down at those *Children* who dare to enter its streets, but it seems largely to be a safe haven from the forces of light. Instead *Azghols* live here, and they hunt *Children* for fun. They are rarely seen eating any *Child*, but once they manage to catch one, they come flocking from all directions. The *Child* is carried away and often kept alive for days – forever if the *Child* is immortal. Sometimes the torture itself seems to grant immortality to their victim. Their screams can be heard all over Metropolis and even inside the dreams of people with a close relation to the unlucky one. Relatives of a *Firstborn* they have denied and cast out, often find themselves visited in nightmares and visions.

Below the streets, those *Fallen* who have been expelled from the normal *Children* society are hunting. They have not forgotten what the other *Children* did to them, and find great pleasure to drag them down to be devoured. A lonely *Child* might be accepted as one of them, if it has a mental balance below -150 and is lucky – a rather unusual combination. The rest are skinned and eaten alive. Some human wizards deliberately brings a powerless *Child* with them if they must go to Metropolis. The

Fallen who hunts below, always prefer a *Child* before a human if they are given the choice.

Necropolis is the old cemetery of Metropolis. Creatures who have been dying for the millenia are buried here and some undead have turned up here as well. Undead do not really need to sleep, but if they don't at least try to sleep regularly, strange visions will start hunting them. At first this will be strange dream-like sequences, where they recognize a certain person – always the same person. The person will do something spectacular, like scream out loud while cutting itself in the face, or catching a passer-by and start eating from its head. Then the vision fades away. Later this person will show up in various disturbing situations. It will start talking to the undead, at first just pronouncing the name of the undead. If the undead ever speaks back to the person, it will explain that the undead must travel to a place called Necropolis. It must find a grave with its name there. The undead is often told that it must enter that grave and impale itself to save its immortal soul, or something similar. The exact phrasing of the advice differs from time to time, but it is always delivered in horrifying details: What tools the undead should use, what prayers it should read and when, exactly what organs it should dig out of its own body, etc. . . . The person may be persuaded to show the way. The visions will grow increasingly persuasive and frequent if the undead fails to obey. Nothing particular will happen to an undead who refuses to follow the advices, except for these visions. They are a hoax from its shadow.

8.2 the Underworld

The Underworld is the vast labyrinth which all major cities rests upon. The subway system, the sewers and the service tunnels below our streets are all part of the Underworld. The further down into the Underworld one get, the more different the surroundings becomes. The topmost layers consist mainly of wet sewers, where homeless and runaway children live. Below the sewers open up into tiled tunnels, sometimes with flickering electric light and strange machines of an unknown origin and purpose. Electric wires cling the walls like thick blood vessels or hang from the ceiling like swaying tentacles. If the wires are cut, they will twist and grow together with a grinding sound. Sometimes one can find dead people ensnared in the cables and most are electrified.

The Underworld is not silent. Rattling pipes let steam out and gigantic cogs rumbles inside the walls. Sometimes cracks make it possible to catch the sight of enormous machineries somewhere on the other side. Dark oily water drops from the ceilings, sometimes flowing down old and seemingly dissolved walls and down into huge bottomless drains. Passages may have collapsed centuries ago or they may fall apart just before the eyes of a wanderer. At some places the tunnels groan and shake with random intervals, the walls seem almost to pulsate. One might find strange half-digested remains buried inside them.

Thoropolis is the grand city of the Underworld. It is covered in an eternal darkness, attracting all kinds of creatures with a sensitivity to any kind of light. It is ruled by the high lords among the kult known as the "Guardians of the Labyrinth". The city is partially carved directly from the rock, with tall buildings of iron and

stones. Nothing besides the endless roar of the water can be heard here. The city appears dead and empty, yet here is life. This is a sacred city, outside the weave of time. Nine black rivers fall down into the darkness below the city, to be consumed by the nothingness that awaits. The rivers are leading down into the innermost labyrinth, where Her spirit alone floats above the *void*.

From time to time, thousands of prisoners caught in the upper parts of the Labyrinth is cast down into the rivers, as a sacrifice to Her. To the children of the Underworld, She is known as Minothorgon. Nobody knows what She looks like, or what She is. In dreams She often manifests as a huge glowing eye, shrouded in a gray chaos or as a swollen female, floating in the dark. All of those who dwells too long down in the Underworld, will dream of Her. She calls for them, shows them something horrible and yet fascinating beyond empty halls and dry rivers filled with dust. She is guarding the end of all things. She is the one who waits below and She alone can grant a creature the gift to never have existed. Many are the souls among the *Damned* who cry for Her blessing!

8.3 the Kingdom of Maniacs

This is a place in the protection of Inferno. Angels and Lictors can not thread this ground. Many are those *Children* who have fled to *The Kingdom of Maniacs*, about 20% of all inhabitants are *Children*. *The Kingdom* is the City of Fools, old abandoned buildings below the earth and forgotten vaults in the halls of mental asylums and hospitals. A few run down areas that have been deserted by their governments, have also been granted amnesty within *The Kingdom*.

The realm is governed with the aid of ancient rituals and complex rules that nobody understands the meaning of anymore. Perhaps nobody has ever understood their purpose, but many of them seem to be spells of protections. Some areas cannot be entered by anyone with a mental balance above or below a certain limit. Those who try are either struck dead by the wards or punished by being eaten for their crime. Special rules may apply when moving between any two areas. Sometimes because invisible one-way portals open up there, leading to Inferno or the Dreamworld. Sometimes just because the punishments are severe for those who disobey.

Limitations and *disadvantages* become infectious within *The Kingdom* because of the extreme gathering of negative mental balance. There are places where a visitor immediately is struck by certain unusual limitations like *Compulsive Self-mutilation*. Disoriented Maniacs who have developed immortality as a way to sustain this limitation, can be seen wandering about these areas. They are mortifying their flesh, cutting their arms and faces with the rusty hospital equipment littering the ground and long dead corpses. The Illusions shatter more or less frequent the deeper down in *The Kingdom* one can get, machinery comes alive, walls burst open with maggots and the way back is seldom the same way as the one just thread. At some particular places, the walls do partially swallow those who walk there. Long corridors can be coated with the living flesh, bodies still twitching, faces who still breathe and bewails, arms who pull the uncaredful in. The path may be threaded under reasonably safe conditions with the aid of a decent guide and the right rituals. People with mental balance over +150 will be able to walk by unharmed, granting the wailing faces peace and rebirth.

Katze is the high priest of *The Kingdom*, the official servant to the Prince of Fools. Sharp tongues sometimes claim that Katze himself is the true ruler, but they soon disappears without a trace. Katze arranges all major religious celebrations that protects *The Kingdom*. Deals are regularly made with Nepharites. In exchange for human sacrifices, the Maniacs (particularly Katze) are given protection and knowledge. Katze himself own the permission to walk unharmed through *Inferno* and claims that he knows *Tipareth* herself. It is possible to travel to *Inferno* and back with the aid of his protection. Traveling with Katze requires several days of purification rituals and sacrifices, including self-mutilation, starvation and to have symbols burned into ones skin. He can also take willing people into Metropolis and the Dreamworld. All *Children* feel an instinctive fear of Katze, it requires an Ego throw to disobey him. Normal humans find him strangely fascinating. Women with a mental balance below +25 will find him sexually attractive, even though his body is covered with old wounds stinking of blood and dirt. It is impossible to deduce how old he is, but he has relatives all over *The Kingdom*.

Katze, high priest

Str 8 **Con** 9
Agl 12 **Com** 5
Ego 16 **Per** 11
Cha 20 **Edu** 18

MB: -100 End 75 (60)
4Scr 3Lw 2Sw 1Fw

Ht 175cm Init Bonus 0
Wt 60kg Dmg Bonus 0
Actions 2 Mv. 6m/rnd

Dark secrets: Betrayal, Pact with dark powers

Disadvantages:
Manodepressive, Intolerant, Bad reputation, Mortal enemy

Limitations: Compulsive Self-mutilation, Sensitive to sunlight

Advantages: Protected by deity, Protected by Inferno, Loyal servants

Powers: Blessed, Dominance

Attack modes: Beg for mercy or call for help. *The Kingdom* is full of loyal servants.

Skills: Net of contacts 30 (Inferno, deites and maniacs), Occultism 20, Daggers 14, Hide 18, Info Retrieval 25, the Lore of Madness (40), the Lore of Passion (25), the Lore of Darkness (15), Native language of *The Kingdom* 18, German 10, English 5

8.4 the Countryside

The populated areas outside the cities are commonly known as the Countryside. The control *Lictors* have here, is far less than inside the cities. Some groups of *Children* have managed to settle down and build small collectives here. One can find peaceful farmers, who at closer examination turns out to suffer from *bloodthirst*. Sometimes bands of cannibals roam the area by night. As a young *Child* it is often impossible to be accepted by an already existing collective of *Children*. Starting a new collective will often provoke the older collectives that might exist in the area.

Children on the run from a nearby city often finds this behavior oppressive and unjustly, but there is a good reason: Even though the *Lictors* show less interest in these rural areas, there are seldom room for a larger population of *Children* here. The only reason to why these areas appear to be uninteresting to the law, is because there is not many people here. As soon as the population density goes up, governments will show interest and as soon they do, all *Children* risk being rooted out. Unfortunately, it is the friendly and openminded collectives of *Children*, who are the first to be recognized and destroyed.



8.5 Gaia

Gaia is probably the most dangerous place imaginable to the Undead. Everything, including all normal flowers, will try to devour Undead who unknowingly strolls into Gaia. Though, many *Children* live here, mostly because the influence of Gaia turns many humans into *Children* – or at least into creatures who hunt and eat constantly. *Children* in Gaia will quickly develop either cannibalistic tendencies or become eaten, frequently both. Gaia is not a safe place to hide, something many a *Child* trying to escape the cities to hide in the forest has learned the hard way.

8.6 the Children of Misery

“... satellite photos showing what might be factories to construct illegal weapons, and I wish to remind all journalists present that entering the area is prohibited. We believe that many terrorists still operate in the area, those who enter will do so at the risk of their own lives. You can see here what might be an underground facility in the northern area, and I cannot stress enough that...”

The *Children of Misery* have become their own worst enemies. They are those who have fallen beyond all help. Gradually their identity has shifted away from anything normal, and they can no longer define themselves by other means than the misery they call “life”. They consist mostly of *Children* with a mental balance

between -300 and -400, and their existence is an endless path of pain and self-humiliation. This is not a choice of theirs anymore. They would sell anything to escape their situation, if there just was anything left to sell. They are drawn to places of great suffering, and the darkness within themselves has grown far outside their control. The mere presence of what they have become, will actively strive to connect different periods of atrocities through history, creating a tomb of darkness where the *Child* will lay dormant waiting to hatch into awakening or die.

Their shadows will at this point bring in the aid of international military organizations. The aim is no longer to pull the *Child* back into the light, but to root out suffering people and thereby isolate it.

If the *Child* falls down to -400, an abrupt change in politics occur. The troops and the shadow will now become keepers, officially to uphold the fragile law. In reality to prevent any contact with the outside that could threaten to awaken it. Only a selected number of human aid organizations will be allowed to get near the area, in order to ease up the suffering to acceptable levels around it. Such areas that have been entombed together with a *Child of Misery* may suffer for centuries.

This is a state of Death, but the gates of Hell are closed. Nepharites walk the surrounding landscape, but do not interfere. *Archons*, *Angels of Death*, sometimes even the Dark Lord himself, take personal control of the area. For the *Child* time is of the essence. Memories fade. Once they have dried out, the *Child* shall be reborn. The key to awakening is to remember, and only by the guidance of a "shadow from the past", someone who once walked the same path and know the way, is there a chance for the *Child* to finally hatch.

As the *Child* descends towards -500, the *shadow* and the *Child* will be drawn together. This is the final struggle. The one who succeeds to bring the other self home, will win the final victory. Should the *shadow* be able to lead the *Child* back into the light, then it will be reborn into imprisonment. If the *Child* can drag the *shadow* down with itself, they will rejoin and awaken. Still, the one who has awakened by the aid of Darkness, will always be marked and always remember the path.

"... I cursed him, my tormentor and stalker. ... those were the times when I was still unable to grasp the meaning of what he would put me through; he always reminded me of who I had been and what I had lost.

... and we stood there for the last time, face to face, the untouchable beauty that seemed to fill the world with its bright warm shine, and the barred remains of what once had been a life. The angelic one bid me by the hand, promised me a better world, if I just would follow... nothing more, it must end here... I bid the light oblivion – instead, I offered my own extinction.

... in that way we became to unite into a whole singular being, but one torn by the memories of the millenia, of which many are not even my own. I look back and out through the shadows. It is time for me to go. This is no longer a safe place, and one who once was made a prisoner can be made a prisoner again. I would never make it a second time. "

Part II

Playing and GM'ing

Chapter 9

Playing a *Child*

9.1 So, why play *Children of the Night*

And where does this fit into *Kult*? *Kult* is a horror role-playing game set in the modern society. You are an insignificant human who unravels the secrets of the world and slowly begin to lose the grip of reality. Soon enough you'll need to fight for your life against far more powerful creatures than yourself. Most notably your goverment will fight you. I find this an important issue to keep when playing the *Children*. If the *Children* are too powerful, then you'll lose some of the horror of being chased around by unknown forces. Fortunately *Kult* does not claim *Children* to be in charge – they are completely unrelated to the monsters that control us.

My idea of the *Children* is far older than the role-playing game *Kult* itself. In all the stoires I've heard it's been almost exclusively the "heroes" that slayed, imprisoned and tormented people, always justified by some kind of higher goal. The "monsters" were lonely outcast and they killed to survive, if they killed at all. This has colored my whole view of light and dark, good and evil.

In this document I have tried to describe this world "beyond humanity" as a dark world ruled by emotions. Their lifestyle is in conflict with the moral majority, with the law and with all politics. They are and must be outcasts. Can they live as organized criminal organisations? No, because criminal organizations cannot kill all the time. There is a strong difference between killing for food and killing for profit, but we might be less aware about this in the modern society where you *buy* your food for *money* (as opposed to risking your life). People in general seem to think of predators as a higer state of being than their prey. In the real world the predators are more *dependent* upon the prey than superior to it. In the real world most predators die killed by their own prey or starve to their death because the prey is faster.

But supernatural creatures of the dark are usually pictured as strong, powerful and immortal. Perhaps even ruling the world behind the scenes. Why? It's a lie of course! After all, everything we know in *Kult* is a lie. They just appear powerful, and their real life turns out to be a "run for your life" situation. Why would they lie about such a thing? Oh, everybody wants to look sucessful, don't we? As young *Children* we belive everything is possible, but then the rules gradually change... Accepting that we have chosen the wrong path is to accept failure. Especially if

we have worked hard to accomplish something ourselves, we are eager to keep the appearance up. I have strived to create an atmosphere of entrapment within this sourcebook, the feeling of a path that closes behind yourself once you have learned its secret.

Some names or descriptions might interfere with other rules, but remember that this sourcebook is supposed to describe the *Children of the Night* out of their own perspective. There are four rough categories presented, sorted after how easy they are to roleplay: The *Firstborns* who behave quite similar to humans. They are easy to play, and work well together with humans. The *Chosen* who at first glance behaves like most hollywood settings describe Vampires. They are not hard to roleplay, but work less well with humans. The *Tainted*, are hard to play. They make excellent NPC's however. Finally the *Fallen* are not really meant to be played, although I think this is doable. A possible setting with a *Fallen* character, could cover a "rescue" mission to "cure" the character. I admit that many of the rules presented here will be very hard to roleplay, but it's a hard life as well. "Reality bites", as they say...

9.2 Ideas and background

I have heard so many people asking themselves: Why is there Evil? How is it possible to do such Evil things, etc. . . This sourcebook is in one way my answer to the two first questions. Those who read between the lines might also find my answer to the third and much more important question: Why is there anything we can call Good?¹

I have always been very interested in various folklore – as opposed to most modern fiction. The reason is that folklore (and religious ideas) is about things that people *really* have been believing in. Nobody believes in the stories Anne Rice writes. . . or so I hope. Where *Kult* lacks information about the *Children*, I have filled out with things often told in folklore. When it comes to the behavior of the *Children* themselves, I have decided to model it after how real people with psychoses and mental problems do behave. By the way, in case you wonder: The leading text describing a Lorelei (p 57), is taken from a description of Adolf Hitlers childhood. I have of course modified it, to fit the rule system of *Kult*.

All text in this book have been written out of my memory, to ensure that it's my own words everywhere. Obviously many rules and ideas have been assembled from the roleplaying game *Kult* itself, you probably need to own a copy of it to understand all the references I give. *Kult* itself is not a game about being a supernatural creature, it just gives that opportunity. The game is focused upon humans who tries to escape or fight various powerful beings. The main idea is that the humans are imprisoned Gods, stripped of their memories and powers. Many creatures have taken the opportunity for payback, for all the things their old Gods has put them through. There is not much written about what to expect if a human regains some of its power. Most notably, there is not much written about the *Children of the*

¹And my answer is: Because we want to be nice to each others! We are constructed in a way that makes us fragile while we are alone, but we are also made in a way that allows us to cooperate better than any other individualistic creatures. We gain from cooperation. The many will always be more powerful, more successful, more clever – than the lonely monster. That is why it is so painful to be expelled from society.

Night – those humans who have regained a slight fraction of their original powers through the aid of *Darkness*.

9.3 Differences from normal rules

9.3.1 The dark Art

I have always thought that the "dark Art" should be directly connected to your mental health. In the normal rules, the art of darkness is instead described as an Ego-based skill, leaving it very decoupled from who you actually are. As an example, the normal rules allows an *Angel* with a very high mental balance to wield the art of darkness with exactly the same consequences as if a *Fallen* would have done the same. In the ruleset I define herein, I suggest that *at least* the effect and outcome should depend heavily upon your mental balance. After all the "dark Art" is the art of tearing down reality, using only the pain and terror inside your own heart.

9.3.2 Immortality

Yes, I know that most people think that Vampires and their likes should be immortal... I just don't agree. Besides, I think my version fits Kult better. Angels are immortal. The *Children* just feel bad, and depend upon things that normal humans don't. They just pretend to be immortal.

After all, pretending is not that hard. Everybody *wants* to believe that vampires have super powers. As an aspirant you'll only hear about the successful ones, they don't tell you about the failures.

9.3.3 Undeath

The normal rules consider undeath to be a state, like being dead, riding a bike or undressing, rather than being a result of your mental balance. Instead, undeath is described as a state which will lower your balance.

But the normal rules do also say that death is an illusion, and so I think it should be a state that is under the control of our mental balance. Anybody who ever has experienced that "all hope is lost" (even if for just a few seconds) should know what I am talking about in "that tinding hope" (p 49). I like to think that there is a corresponding emotion that you must lose to rise higher than +250 as well, probably passion.

9.3.4 Light and Dark

I am not sure whether the way I picture "light" and "dark" differs from the normal ruleset. Darkness should not necessarily be "evil" or "violent". Darkness is about feeling bad. Of course darkness can mean violence and evil, but depression, sorrow, regret and hopelessness are much more closely connected to darkness.

The same for "light". Light is about feeling good. Not only saints feel good, but also psychopaths and other people that simply assume they are in their right to do whatever they like. In this sense Nazi leaders, Dictators and Terrorists belong

to the "light", just as a devoted healer might do. Perhaps this is the only true darkness... that the light can be even more merciless and evil than the dark itself.

9.4 Wordlist

- Anger** Represents change and power, the negation of sorrow (p 34).
- Children** Short for the *Children of the Night*. Those who have forsaken their humanity to become something not quite human.
- Chosen** Handpicked aspiring human or a *Child* who once was a handpicked aspiring human. Some might be food that run away. They have been turned into *Children* because they have been living near another *Child* for many years, slowly identifying themselves with the supernatural. (p 16, 19)
- Damned** Those below a mental balance of -250 (p 13). Commonly known as "undead". See also "That tindinger hope" (p 49) and table (p 11).
- Darksouls** A human who has been cured of being a *Child* (p 18). See also "The human connection" (p 37).
- Despair** Represents resistance and activity (p 36). "Fools rush in where fools has been before".
- Effect** The effect of an Ego throw is the difference between the outcome of the dice and a person's Ego.
- Ego contest** Two creatures make an Ego throw, the winner is the one with the highest effect. The effect of the contest is the difference between the effects of the two throws.
- Fallen** A human who has been turned into a *Child* just by its own darkness. The difference from a *Firstborn* is that they entered the supernatural world as adults, which requires a lot lower mental balance. (p 18, 22) See also "*Damned*".
- Fear** The emotion representing awareness or protection (p 36).
- Firstborn** *Child* born into the darkness. Perhaps they carry a curse from past lives, or they have been traumatized while still a sensitive infant. (p 16, 21)
- Hate** The emotion representing torment (p 35).
- Hope** The emotion representing motivation or *life* (p 36). See also "That tindinger hope" at page 49.
- Passion** The emotion representing initiative or *soul*. See under "love" at page 35.
- Romantic** Humans with a mental balance of ± 10 often have a very romantic mind. People with a negative mental balance normally give up their romantic view of the darkness when they reach below -15. See table (p 11).
- Sanity** A *Child* is considered to be "sane" if it has a higher mental balance than -50. Humans need a higher mental balance than -15. See table (p 11).
- Shame** The emotion representing humanity or morale (p 34). "Animals die, friends die. Even you will die, but one thing I know that never die: The Judgement over a dead man".

Playing a Child

Sorrow The emotion representing death and memory, the state of frozen inactivity (p 35). "Only the memory remains".

Tainted A human with a very low mental balance, who has been shocked by a supernatural event. Probably a feeding mistake who got away alive. They are the most abundant *Children of the Night*, but they are rarely seen because they live outside the society. They are outcasts. (p 16, 21)

Terror throw A special Ego throw, modified according to the particular situation and ones mental balance.

Undead A living soul bound in a lifeless corpse (p 30). The lucky ones can move. Other related sections are "Thoropolis" at page 67 and the ritual "Nail the Dead" at page 45.

