



THE MIRROR ROOM

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J

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Thanks to all our playtesters!

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General Information

What is a LARP?

A larp is an activity involving several people in which the participants act out a story. Like a play or traditional improvisational theater, each participant generally acts out one character in real time. Unlike a play, the events and ending of the story are not predetermined. Unlike traditional improvisation, the starting situation and nature of the characters is predetermined.

All but one of the participants (the Players) depict characters in the story. They choose their own interpretation of whatever details are unspecified about the personality and background of the character, and use this to decide on the dialog and actions of their character. They are responsible for the strategic and thematically significant decisions of the character and thinking of the ideas that the character is likely to think of. Some value playing a character for the strategic challenge of trying to achieve the character's goals. Others value the vicarious experience of drama and emotion.

The last participant (the Director) is responsible for managing the larp and performing the many necessary tasks other than depicting main characters. These include general organization, playing minor characters, keeping track of the results of actions and the consequences of hidden aspects of the situation, sometimes introducing new elements or information to manage the plot, and adjudicating rules. The Director does not have the authority to dictate actions of other participants' characters.

Rules exist to represent skill differences between characters that do not exist between players and to resolve actions that cannot be directly acted out, either because they are unsafe (like fighting), or simply impractical/impossible (like magic).

Looking for more explanation? Just check out the detailed guide available on our website, www.shiftingforest.com.

DEFINITIONS:

Player: A participant whose sole role is the depiction of one important character.

Director: The participant managing the larp who performs the other tasks described above. Traditionally called the Game Master.

PC: A character depicted by a player.

NPC: A character depicted by the Director.

In Character (IC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions actually made by the character and taking place in the fictional world.

Out of Character (OOC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions involving the participants in the real world.

Roleplaying: The act of thinking as a character and deciding and depicting their actions, using the character's own decision making process. An action that is "roleplayed" is carried out by acting rather than abstracted within the rules.

Game: A specific time a larp is played.

THE FIRST RULE OF LARPING:

Always keep IC and OOC knowledge/motivations separate.

What is a Parlor Larp?

FORMAT AND MISSION:

Parlor Larps are designed to provide maximally accessible, artistically satisfying larp experiences to a relatively small group of 4- 8 players and 1 Director. All require little or no preparation, a normal sized living room, and take 4-5 hours.

THE ART FORM:

Parlor Larps are intended as something more than "just a game." While they are certainly a leisure activity, they are meant to be thought of as exercises in art as well as entertainment, and in that sense are more like theater games than board games, or even many traditional larps.

Like a play or novel, they are designed to provide an experience, provoke an emotional response or make the participants think. While elements of entertainment, fun and challenge will certainly be present frequently, many of the Parlor Larps are not, and are not intended to be, entirely pleasant experiences. (A successful portrayal of a frightening atmosphere is rewarding even though everyone is feeling frightened.) These larps will be much more successful and enjoyable if all participants keep this goal in mind.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:

Unlike many other single-session larps, Parlor Larps ask players to fill in many details of their character before beginning to play. This personalization process is guided by a set of questions at the end of each character sheet. It helps turn the characters from a collection of goals and background information into real, fully-fleshed people, and also allows each player to identify better with his/her character.

All characters can be played by either gender, though each game has one preferred male and one preferred female character.

DON'T CONFLATE PLAYER AND CHARACTER SUCCESS!

While each character has his own goals, and many characters have directly opposing goals, it is critical to remember that the players are not competing with each other. The goal of each player is to effectively simulate and portray his character and work with the other participants to build a rewarding story. This is true for most larps, and is vital to the spirit of Parlor Larps.

Remember: If you produce a dramatic and compelling story, everybody wins.

How to use this Book

GENERAL INFORMATION:

All participants should read this section the first time they play a Parlor Larp, (except the Guide To Directing, which need only be read by the Director.)

DIRECTORS' SECTION:

Directors, and only Directors, should read this entire section ahead of time. This section contains secret story information and advice necessary to direct the larp, as well as Director copies of information given out to players.

Directors should read the Public Background Overview, and then Larp-Specific Rules & Announcements to players at the start of game.

Public Background Overview: Relevant background info that all the PCs know.

Secret Background Overview: Relevant background info that not all PCs know.

Player Character Overview: A quick summary of PCs and their roles in the larp.

Game Overview: A guide to the plot and progress of the game itself.

Larp-Specific Rules: Rule changes or additions for this particular larp.

Announcements: Useful OOC reminders and other info for the players.

Character Summary Chart: A quick summary of major relevant info for all PCs.

Character Sheets: The Director's copy of each character sheet.

PLAYER MATERIALS:

This section contains perforated pages that the Director can tear out of the booklet and hand to players as appropriate. Keep in mind that by default, players should not see other players' Character Sheets or Game Materials.

Rules Summary: A shortened version of the Parlor Larp Rules for reference.

Public Background Overview: A copy of the publicly known background info.

Rules and Announcements: A copy of the larp-specific rules and announcements.

Character Sheets: 8 character sheets to be given out, one per player.

Game Materials: Some larps have additional materials. See Setup Advice.

IC/OOC:

Agree on a symbol (e.g. crossed fingers) to indicate when speaking OOC.

INTERPRETING CHARACTER SHEETS:

Names: [Male option / Female option] Lastname. Or, Firstname Lastname.

Character Style (see next page): Found in upper left corner.

Age: Found in upper right corner. (Certain larps don't include ages.)

Apparent Identity: General idea of what type of person the character appears to be.

Real Identity: General idea of what type of person the character really is.

Goals: A character's goals at the beginning of the larp. Not set in stone; can change through new events and roleplaying. Given in roughly decreasing priority.

Abilities / Resists: See Rules

Inventory: A list of nonobvious items the PC has at the time

Questions: These questions refer to aspects of the character that were not previously specified, that the player should develop at start of game. Make sure to answer questions in accordance with the spirit of the specified parts of the character sheet. Potentially controversial answers should be checked with the Director first.

A NOTE ON GENDER:

All PCs can be played as either male or female, though each larp has one character that is preferentially male and one preferentially female. However, for the sake of saving space and standardization, all PCs (and some background characters of unfixed gender, such as "John/Jane Smith's spouse") will be referred to by default as "he".

PRIORITY OF CHARACTERS:

While 8 characters are always provided, each larp can run with as few as 4.

In the Character Overview and in the ordering of character sheets, PCs will always be listed in order of priority. This means that the first 4 should always be included, and each subsequent character should be added with each subsequent player. Using this order is critical to the balance of the game -- don't change it.

CHARACTER STYLES:

Each character has a 3-letter code representing its Character Style. This code is meant to describe what it's like to play the character to help players pick characters.

G/E: Goal or Emotion oriented. Gs are more rewarding to play when focusing on pursuing goals, and Es are more rewarding when focusing on depicting emotions.

L/D: Light or Dark personality. How depressing/disturbing the PC is.

S/C: Simple/Complex personality. Complexity of the PC's personality/motivations.

Each larp has one character of each style. All letters are given relative to the other characters in the larp (so in a Dark 5 larp, the Ls will be darker than in a Dark 1).

In general, all Ls can be darkened and all Ss can be made more complex if the player desires, but the converse is not true.

QUICK-DESCRIPTION CLASSIFICATION FOR PARLOR LARPS

(SEE UPPER RIGHT OF BACK COVER):

The classification system is designed to describe the emphases of each larp in order to give an idea of what it would be like to run and play.

PRIORITIES: The opening letters of the classification represent which of five major elements are present as priorities in the larp, in decreasing order of importance.

A: Atmosphere. A particular mood or feel to the larp

D: Discovery. The existence of IC unknowns and the need to find out about them

M: Morality. Moral dilemmas and complicated moral decisions

R: Relationships. Complicated or changing relationship dynamics

S: Strategy. A need to make strategic decisions in pursuit of goals

SCALES: A number from 0-5. 0 = barely present. 3 = average. 5 = maximal.

Dark: The prevalence of depressing or disturbing elements

DIR: The amount of Director plot intervention required, difficulty of Director role

NPC: The amount of time and effort the Director must expend playing an NPC(s)

CONTENT ADVISORIES:

NC: Normal content. Teenagers and older should be comfortable playing.

AC: Adult content. Contains themes/elements that may not be suitable for teens.

DC: Disturbing content. Contains themes/elements that some adults may not be comfortable with. Consider comfort level of everyone in group before playing.

A Guide to Directing

THE BASICS

WHAT DOES THE DIRECTOR DO?

The Director is the person who manages and simulates the universe of the story so that the players can focus on roleplaying their characters. He knows everything about what is really going on, and observes all aspects of the plot as it unfolds. He manages the game, gives descriptions, answers questions about the environment/situation, propagates effects of PCs' actions on the environment and on NPCs' actions, mediates Ability use, and sometimes mediates Conflicts.

The Director also filters information so that each player only knows what he needs to know in order to successfully play his character. Most players find that having a lot of significant knowledge OOC but not IC can get distracting or confusing.

NPCs:

In some larps the Director also physically roleplays an NPC at the same time as his other duties. When doing so, it's fine to move in and out of character as long as it's clear which is which. However, he should take both roleplaying and directing responsibilities into consideration when determining the NPC's actions and timing.

THE DIRECTOR'S OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of the Director is to produce a satisfying experience for all participants. There are two parts of this: making sure each player is satisfied with his PC's involvement, and making sure that the flow of the collective story is satisfactory.

The first involves making sure that each PC cares about what's going on, always has something to do and is capable of seriously affecting events that matter to him.

The second involves keeping the flow of events roughly within the intended progress, guiding the story to rising action, climax, and an ending that feels conclusive, as well as timing events to be as interesting and dramatic as reasonably possible.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DIRECTING A PARLOR LARP

Make sure you are familiar with all the General Information.

Read all the Game-Specific Info, ideally at least an hour before playing. Make sure you know all of it, including character sheets. Important details may only be stated once.

Set up the room according to Advice on Setup.

Gather your players and explain the gist of the game.

Go through PCs. Describe them by name, style, age, and Apparent Identity.

Distribute character sheets, but don't let the players read them in detail yet.

If the players don't know the rules, go over them.

Read aloud Public Background Overview.

Let the players read and answer the questions on their sheets in private. When they are done, quickly go over the character with them--you don't need to know the answer to every question, but get an idea of each character. Give out props at this time.

Have players of PCs with significant relationships (e.g. married couples) go over their PCs' personalities and relationship together before start of game..

Gather everyone together and read the Game-Specific Rules and Announcements.

Run the game!

Afterwards, players tend to enjoy a wrapup to discuss what was going on.

ADVICE ON DIRECTING

PHYSICAL BEHAVIOR:

Maintaining atmosphere and keeping everyone in character as much as possible are critical to a successful larp. Thus the Director's involvement must be very unobtrusive when not playing an NPC: Stay in an unused corner. Don't interact with any props (even chairs). Ask and answer questions as discreetly and quietly as possible. Avoid interrupting important moments. Don't referee conflicts that the players can manage themselves. The Director is invisible IC, and therefore shouldn't be a social presence.

However, you should still move around and query players every once in a while so as to keep track of what is going on with everyone. You will also occasionally have to give expositions of events or people to all parties present-- at these times, interrupt clearly and briefly. Make sure everybody hears you the first time.

UNDERSTANDING PLAYERS AND CHARACTERS:

The more you understand each PC's priorities and way of thinking, the more easily you can guide events in directions that will seriously matter to the characters. The story is about them-- it should evoke ideas, themes, and interactions they care about.

PACING AND ACTION:

Timing makes the difference between a story and a three-hour sequence of events. Time background events and NPC actions so that they contribute to rather than detract from the flow of the plot. Each conflict/situation should be thoroughly addressed: Don't interrupt situations that have not been thoroughly explored with new problems. Don't introduce an event until a few PCs are in a position to properly address it. Don't add lesser plot points to a major plot point in such a way that they will draw attention away from what really matters. Keep in mind that even things like responses from background characters (like servants on errands) will contribute new material.

Be aware that at many times nothing will appear to be happening from the Director's point of view, but the same may not be true of the players'. Do not be afraid of twenty minute lulls. On the other hand, do check with players in a lull to see if they feel involved. If they're not, don't be afraid to give advice or, in more extreme cases, tweak events to make sure things get rolling again. A half hour lull is a problem.

Parlor Larps are written to take approximately three to three and a half hours-- the game will be most rewarding if you pace it to last about that long.

MAKING UP ANSWERS:

You will frequently have to answer questions about a given situation. When doing so, answer based on what is consistent with booklet information and previous answers, generally logical, appropriate to atmosphere and genre, compatible with pacing, interesting for the plot, unlikely to upset or derail the plot, feels fair to the players, and will leave you ample room later to guide the game in a variety of directions.

EXERCISING INITIATIVE AND MAKING EXCEPTIONS:

Parlor Larps are written to save the Director from having to spontaneously take major guesses or make up important plot. However, every Director will run into situations where it seems most beneficial to the game to depart from or override aspects of the scenario. The following is advice to keep in mind when doing so:

Understand the scenario so that you will be able to understand the consequences of your changes. Be selfish: always leave yourself as much room to maneuver as you can, and commit to as little future improvisation as you can. Remember that the bigger the change, the more likely it is to get out of hand. Pay careful attention to how your change draws the PCs' focus, and watch out for pacing.

Most importantly, identify and play to your own strengths. Make it so that any additional work you have to do is work that you understand and comes naturally to you.

Parlor Larp General Rules

RULES IN LARPING:

In a larp, most normal activity is simply acted out, with roleplaying and common sense determining the effectiveness of social interactions. The rules exist as a means to simulate characters' actions and capabilities that cannot be safely or effectively acted out.

FUNCTION LEVELS:

Each character, by default, starts at Function Level 5. A character's FL represents the condition the character is in and their ability to act, both physically and psychologically, and can increase or decrease over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, s/he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. It is impossible to go higher than FL 5 or lower than FL 0.

DAMAGE AND RECOVERY:

Decrease of FL is called Damage, but represents any long term harm to effectiveness, not just physical injury. Increase of FL is called Recovery and represents either fixing or making up for previous harm to the character. Change in general is abbreviated DR.

DR is mostly done to a character through Abilities. Each Ability causes DR in a slightly different way, so it is important that each player keep track of what specific injuries/recoveries his character's DR represents, as well as what FL the character is at.

In most cases, DR is explicitly called for by the rules, but if a player decides that his character would be seriously affected either way by what has happened, he can change his character's FL accordingly, subject to Director approval.

REMOVAL FROM THE GAME:

A character that is taken to FL 0 is removed from the game. Specifically, he is removed by the type of damage dealt in that last blow. All previous damage is simply interpreted as making it easier to deal the last blow. Thus, if a character is removed by being punched, he is probably unconscious, but if he is removed by being intimidated, he is probably hiding in a corner unable to do anything.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are actions that a character can take with success determined by rules rather than roleplaying. Abilities are divided into Conflict Abilities and Non-Conflict Abilities. Non-Conflict Abilities always work; Conflict Abilities start Conflicts in which other characters can use other abilities to oppose them.

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.
Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.
Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.)
Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.
Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistable, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)
Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICTS:

A conflict occurs when two or more people use opposing abilities. Conflicts need not be physical; two people attempting to intimidate each other also counts.

Whenever anybody uses an ability listed under Conflict Abilities, everybody able to participate in the conflict is invited to do so simultaneously. To participate is not necessary to be directly involved in the action that starts the conflict—one simply has to be taking an action in reaction to other actions taking place.

If a player thinks that his/her character would be too surprised to immediately respond, he should wait until after the conflict to respond, though he still Resists.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. Others are invited to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. only running away if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

RESISTING:

Every participant in a conflict is always by default Resisting, even if he is performing another action at the same time. This means that the character is trying not to be affected by hostile actions of others. There are three default types of Resists: Physical, Social, and Emotional. Certain larps may change types of Resists. A character always uses all Resists he has at the same time.

Each type of Resist behaves like an ability with a bonus of the Resist number (see bottom left of character sheet) whose effect is to prevent all undesired actions corresponding to that type of Resist from affecting the user.

Note that most actions don't need to be resisted. By default, especially in small conflicts, a player can choose to just permit an action targeting his PC for simplicity, or because he wants it to succeed.

An ability that takes a <type> Resist is called a <type> ability.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants then simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) the player is willing for his/her character to risk getting in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

This is not to say that the character explicitly decides to get damaged in order to succeed-- whether and how much to bid is an OOC decision that is based on the player's judgment of how likely the character is to seriously push for his intended result despite chance of physical or psychological trauma.

No matter how dedicated the character is, however, bid sizes are also limited by the amount of damage the character can plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid.. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is important, and by default players should not bid.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal action, the bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. If, however, he is only Resisting, then the bid will increase the chance of all Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When all bids are decided, all participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids, then show them at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants then calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, participants sort out which attempted actions execute by ranking all participants by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. In essence, a Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain characters may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, characters simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

In certain cases, artifact use abilities override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same. This process repeats until a round happens in which nobody uses an ability. Then roleplaying can resume.

After a block of conflict is resolved, we recommend playing out as much of the determined actions as possible (without really hurting anybody, of course). This is especially helpful when a conflict ability used corresponded to IC dialog—it is useful for future dialog to know exactly what the characters said.

The Tale of Bob the Surgeon: A Few Examples of Conflict Resolution

Bob the Surgeon is strolling through a park, enjoying the flowers. His wife, Meg the Engineer uses her "Get Bob to Come Home" ability. (She chooses to do this because she has the ability—if she didn't, she could still simply try to talk him into going home through roleplaying.)

Bob does not want to go home, and chooses to Resist (in this case, only his "Social Resist" matters, since the only power being used against him is social). Bob's player thinks that Bob finds this is important enough that he should bid 1 to Resist, which he defines to represent damage from the frustration. Meg's player decides Meg doesn't consider the matter important enough to bid. Bob has a bonus of 0 to "Social Resist" and Meg has a bonus of 1 to "Get Bob to Come Home." Consequently, both of them have totals of 1.

The tie is resolved by rock-paper-scissors. Bob wins—his Social Resist is ranked higher, and therefore executes first, blocking any Social powers used against him for the rest of the round. Since he has bid 1 to use it, he is reduced to FL 4 as soon as he resists. When they play it out, Meg still acts out trying to talk him into going home, but he is prepared to say no, although he gets frustrated at her. Meg's ability is used up, so she cannot try again.

Bob has a non-conflict ability called "Independence" which allows him to recover 1 FL of damage whenever he successfully resists his wife. Since he's just resisted Meg, he can use it, and he is restored to FL 5. Since it's a non-conflict ability, it doesn't create a conflict and Meg can't prevent it.

After this has occurred, Meg does not drop the conflict, but starts a new one by immediately trying a more desperate tactic. She uses her "Guilt Trip" ability, an emotional attack which does actual damage. Bob decides to flee the park; since he doesn't have a specific ability that lets him do this, it counts as a "General Physical." Zagrabas the Restaurateur, who is also walking by, uses his social ability "Tease" on Bob to embarrass him into staying and standing up to his wife.

Bob has a "General Physical" of 0, and again bids 1. Meg has a "Guilt Trip" of 1, and doesn't bid. Zagrabas has a "Tease" of 0, but a special ability that gives him a bonus of 1 to social abilities immediately after taking a refreshing walk. In addition, Zagrabas cares so much about encouraging Bob to stand up for himself that his player decides that he bids 1 FL of damage, representing the social awkwardness of forcefully intruding on a private argument. This gives Zagrabas a total of 2, while Bob and Meg both have totals of 1.

Zagrabas goes first, beating Bob's social resist of -1, and forces Bob to stay; right after his action executes, his bid executes, reducing him to FL 4. Bob's action contradicts this and would have executed after, so it gets cancelled. Since his action didn't happen, his bid gets cancelled as well. Meg can still do her action, and she beats Bob's emotional resist of 0. Her power immediately takes the target to FL 3, and since Bob's current FL is greater than that, he is reduced to FL 3.

They pause to act out the actions of the round. Bob turns to leave, but Zagrabas starts mocking Bob for caving into his wife, whom he describes in unflattering terms. Bob turns back to confront her as she starts making him feel guilty.

Because Zagrabas succeeded during the previous round, Bob stands up for himself, using his "Complain" ability to do damage to Meg. Meg, meanwhile, tries to get revenge at Zagrabas for what he said about her, using her "General Physical" ability and

her unusual, extra-heavy purse (which does the same damage as a knife). Zagrabas gets angry at Meg, and uses "Embarrass" (an emotional attack) to humiliate her for 1 FL of damage, hoping she will then leave. A passerby uses "Instantly Summon Police." When Meg learns this, she decides that she only wants to attack Zagrabas if the police haven't arrived yet. At the same time, an unnamed shady character wishes to slip out before the police arrive, using a "General Physical." Unk the Lawyer, in the escalating argument, tries to use his "Threaten to Sue" ability on Zagrabas because he hates restaurateurs.

Meanwhile, Unk's pet platypus Eggy and Zagrabas' pet echidna Etch each fight to help their masters. Eggy declares that he wants to use his "Speedy Attack" ability to do physical injury to Zagrabas. Hearing this, Etch decides to attack Eggy in his master's defense. Eggy declares that if he is being attacked, he would rather fight his attacker instead of Zagrabas, and Etch decides that he still wants to attack Eggy anyway to demonstrate his loyalty. So Eggy instead uses his ability to attack Etch, while Etch uses his General Physical to poke Eggy with his spines, even though he can't actually cause damage using general physical without an artifact. Thus the fight between the two pets becomes a completely separate conflict happening at the same time.

Bob's bonus is -2, and he is so drained by Meg's guilt trip that he has nothing extra to throw into it, so he doesn't bid. Meg has a bonus of 0, and bids 1 because she's gotten angry and reckless. Zagrabas has a bonus of 2, but all of his Resists are 1. He would like to bid to increase his Resists, but because he is performing an action besides Resisting, his bid could only apply to the action, so he doesn't bid. The passerby has a bonus of 1, the shady character has a bonus of 3, and Unk has a bonus of 2. Finally, the pets both have attacks of -2 and all Resists at -1 (being only pets). None of these people are invested enough to bid.

The shady character goes first at 3, and leaves. Since nobody's action is contradicted by this, everyone else's actions still have the possibility of happening normally.

Unk and Zagrabas are tied at 2. Unk beats Zagrabas' Resist, but the order matters since Zagrabas can only use Embarrass at FL 3 or higher, is currently at FL4, and Unk's lawsuit always does 2 damage. Zagrabas has a single use non-conflict ability that lets him win a tie due to being extremely lucky. He uses it, and humiliates Meg before Unk threatens him. Then he is reduced to FL2.

Now Meg and the passerby both have totals of 1, and Zagrabas has a physical resist of 1. Meg won't attack Zagrabas if the police are there, and has to beat Zagrabas' Resist, so all three throw rock-paper-scissors together (even though it doesn't matter whether Zagrabas or the passerby goes first, as long as one of them beats Meg). Meg wins, and hits Zagrabas with her purse, since she won't react to something that hasn't happened yet. Her purse always does 1 FL of damage, so Zagrabas is reduced to FL 1. Then the passerby summons the police, who see everything that happens, but are too surprised to react until this set of actions have resolved.

Now, at -2, Bob complains to Meg and both animals attack each other. None of these activities contradict each other, so the order doesn't matter, but all the actions lose to the corresponding Resist.

Now that the police are here, Meg's player gets Director approval to take 1 FL of voluntary damage to represent her fear of getting in trouble for caught disturbing the peace by hitting people in a public park, bringing her down to FL3.

Since the police are present, people have to be careful about what they do. Unk uses a social ability, "Slander," to make Zagrabas out to be a violent criminal. Bob decides to try to make Meg feel better using his "Shelter" ability, which recovers someone 1 FL by offering to protect them from danger. Meg is so surprised at this that she fails to take any action, but she decides that the way Bob is helping her is too demeaning, and Resists it. Since the police don't care about the pets, Eggy and Etch attack each other again, and this time each bid 2 because, with Zagrabas so injured, they're both willing to risk serious physical injury to try to hurt the other. No one else bids.

Unk has a bonus of 2, which overcomes Zagrabas' Resist of 1. It does 1 FL of

damage, reducing Zgrabas to FL 0. Zgrabas is so reviled as a criminal that he can no longer affect the game, and is removed from play. His previous damage contributes to this—for instance the bruise from the purse makes him look less respectable—but it is the final ability which determines why he is removed. Bob has a bonus of 0, while Meg's Resist is 1, so Bob is unable to heal her. Finally, Eggy and Etch have totals of 0, so Eggy does 1 FL of damage to Etch while Etch (who used a "General Physical") succeeds in poking Eggy with his spines, but does no damage to him. Finally, they act out the results, with Unk openly accusing Zgrabas of being a criminal and Bob trying to comfort Meg and she rebuffs him, while the pets fight dedicatedly in the background.

Game-Specific Information for Director

Public Background Overview

There is no public background because none of the characters know each other. Almost everyone was suddenly and unexpectedly pulled through a mirror that they were standing near and fell out of the ceiling mirror into the room. The Director will explain all other details.

Secret Background Overview

There are two forces at play in this story. The first is the power of the room, and the second is the power of the girl trapped in it.

Many, many years ago, a girl was pulled into the room with a group of strangers just as the PCs were. Through an odd and disconcerting process, she was tricked into trading places with the last person like her, and became the one trapped in the room.

The room is a force that cannot be defeated, but for reasons unknown, it gives a measure of power to the person trapped in it. Exactly what that one can do varies from person to person—there are only five certainties. He can never destroy a mirror, escape on his own, truly come to understand the room, or die. He can always, after a long enough time of slowly accumulating power, pull another group of people into the room and develop a ritual that will cause one of them to switch places with him, finally setting him free. The rules of the ritual are not something he can choose—they evolve gradually from his personality. Thus, the room looks as if it means to support the group of people there for a long time, but that is deceptive—it is simply intended to support one person.

The girl has been in the room by herself for decades without aging. She is quite insane, and does not remember much about her life before she was there. She is, of course, quite desperate to get out. After five or six years in the room, she learned that she could sometimes look through the mirrors to other mirrors in the outside world. However, it has taken her all this time to make her ritual and gain the power to bring actual people into the room.

The group selected was as many as she could bring. They are pulled from the same area (near Boston, where the girl used to live) and include all the PCs and the unconscious boy. They were chosen not-quite-randomly—she could not go so far as to call for individuals, but she could imprecisely call for people who fit some set of inflexible criteria that would make it more likely for her ritual to succeed. The discontinuities in their arrivals reflect that imprecision.

Her ritual calls for the group to sacrifice a person to her, and then for one of them to eat the sacrifice's heart. The one who eats the heart will be the one who replaces her. This ritual can only be attempted once. She will rush to it in the first few hours out of impatience. It starts when she calls for a sacrifice and ends an hour later, regardless of whether the sacrifice is made. If it fails, she remains trapped until she develops another.

She is magically pretending to be unconscious to make things easier, because as part of her ritual she cannot directly convey any information to the group. She will only communicate to them through writing that appears on a mirror; and her communication will be vague.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Recall that this larp is classified as Atmosphere based, rather than Discovery based, despite the mystery surrounding everything. This is because, by the metaphysics of the room, there is simply no explanation for it. Any attempt to understand it would be unsatisfying. We know simply that these are the laws that cannot be broken. Thus, rather than trying to convey explanations for things, the Director should dedicate him/herself to conveying the distant, disturbing and incomprehensible atmosphere suggested by those laws.

Character Overview

(Listed in order of decreasing necessity for smaller-group games.)

- R. KILGORE: GLS.** Kilgore is a reporter with extreme social and political beliefs. He is a leader and a planner. He believes strongly that the group will be stuck in the room for some time, and so will try to implement social order. He arrived a day ahead of the others and has had time to explore the room.
- D. STANTON (PREFERRED MALE): GDC.** Stanton is an impulsive doctor, and has a gun. He is antagonist because he is prone to violence and coercion. He is not expected to last to the end of the game. He was pulled into a mirror a day ahead of the others, but spent most of the time drifting boringly through void.
- CHRIS NEUMAN-ANSETTE (PREFERRED FEMALE): ELS.** Chris is a pacifist high school student. He is also a single parent, having taken responsibility for his offspring from a one-night stand, and brings that baby with him. He is generally benevolent and well-meaning.
- C. EVERGAY: EDC.** Evergay is a corporate manager, but more importantly, he is a vigilante. Ever since his children were violently killed several years ago, he has been going around killing criminals and other people with generally useless lives. He is also generally vengeful. He has a gun.
- A. STEINWELL: GDS.** Steinwell is a 7-year-old kid from an abusive family. He has learned to protect himself and his younger sister by making his parents more concerned with fighting each other. He is innocent, but will be naturally subconsciously inclined toward causing conflict to draw attention from himself.
- E. CALLAHAN: GLC.** Callahan is a middle school kid. He is a compulsive liar and always wants to look like he knows what's going on better than most people. He will try to fake an intuition for the room and confidently provide false information about it.
- LIAN ZHI: EDS.** Lian is an old Chinese person who moved to the US to retire. He used to be a censor for the communist party, and is inclined to rigidly but quietly support whoever is in charge. He is in surprisingly good health for his age.
- L. ABERNAY: ELC.** Abernay is a religious official from an extremely sheltered background. He is very well-meaning, but is frustrated by the way his lack of worldly experience makes it more difficult to help people. Of all the PCs, he alone saw the room on the other side of the mirror but reached out to go through anyway.

Game Overview

BACKGROUND:

OVERVIEW OF THE ROOM:

The room can be laid out pretty much like the room that the larp is being played in. There are no windows, and the only door leads to a small bathroom. There is a refrigerator that is stocked with food and drink. (If Chris is male, there will also be food that can be given to the baby.)

There are mirrors everywhere—the walls are hung with mirrors of various sizes, and there are smaller mirrors lying around and sitting on furniture. The ceiling is one gigantic mirror, looking down.

There are two unconscious people in the room. The first is a boy in his mid-teens, wearing dirty street clothes that mark him as lower class. The second is a preteen girl, wearing a torn and faded dress. Both have bruises suggestive of having fallen from the ceiling like the PCs. The boy also has several very serious knife wounds across his chest and stomach, and his clothing is soaked in blood.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ROOM:

The walls and floors will behave as normal walls and floors. If someone tries to break through them, they will chip. However, after about an inch, that person will run into a solid matte black surface that cannot be chipped or dented in any way.

Shadows of people who have died in the room are trapped behind the mirrors, and occasionally flit into view (see Scheduled Events). They are vaguely human in shape, but cannot be clearly made out. The girl has no power over them; they can't do anything except show up, but they are curious about the fate of the PCs.

The wall and ceiling mirrors cannot be removed unless broken. The mirrors standing or lying around can be moved around. Breaking a mirror is as easy as it normally is, and has no obvious effect until the end of the game.

ITEMS (OTHER THAN MIRRORS) INSIDE THE ROOM:

A First Aid Kit with 6 uses in the corner.

A sacrificial knife (damage = -2) on top of a folded blanket. Both are indestructible.

A collection of 5 times X (where X is the number of players) colored pebbles in three different piles in different parts of the room.

USE OF THE PEBBLES:

These pebbles are supplied by the room itself. When rubbed, they will create a silvery dome in a 3-ft-radius around the person rubbing it, and the pebble will disappear. Nothing can penetrate the dome, and people cannot see or hear through it. It will last for half an hour, or shorter, if the person who put it up wishes. That person will have a five-minute warning before the dome expires.

It is not possible to make domes inside other domes. If someone makes a dome while standing at the edge of another dome, half of theirs will simply be taken up by the other first one. As soon as the first dome disappears, the second dome will extend to the floor, trapping anything in that half of the first dome inside itself.

If the edge of a dome goes down in the middle of an item or person, it will tightly follow the contours of the sides of that item or person, trapping it but not harming it. Most items and people trapped in this way will not be able to move while the dome is down. A person trapped in such a way can only perceive the side of the dome that the majority of their brain is on, and can only move the corresponding por-

tion of their body.

There is simply no way to get information across the dome.

The girl does know what is going on inside all domes.

THE UNCONSCIOUS PEOPLE:

As previously stated, the girl is controlling the room, aware of events happening in it, and simply faking unconsciousness and her bruises. A closer visual examination of her will reveal scars on her wrists from her various failed attempts to kill herself. A medical examination of her will reveal that she is in decent health, bruised and unconscious (the examination will be fooled by the magic). The cause of unconsciousness is unclear, but it could be a result of hitting her head in the fall.

A medical examination will reveal the boy to be at FL O from knife injury and unconscious from blood loss. His condition is worsening—the doctor can use First Aid once to stabilize him, but will not be able to wake him. Even stable, he will die in a few days if not taken to a hospital.

The girl has nothing on her except the dress. The boy is obviously a drug dealer—he has some \$600 in cash, and a large amount of cocaine and heroin, all of it ruined by the blood. He also has a bloody switchblade in his pocket.

PLOT:

THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR AND THE GOAL OF INTERVENTION:

While very little happens in this game that is not motivated by the characters and there are almost no external events to simulate, the Director still has a critical job—maintaining the atmosphere. The room has to continue to feel somewhat alien, jarring, and disturbing. The PCs should feel helpless against it. There should be hints of forces much larger than they can comprehend.

Timing is everything. A sense of direct/immediate cause and effect is one of the best ways to put people at ease, so nothing that happens in the room should be purely reactionary. The things the girl does to reward or punish the PCs should be timed slightly off with the actions, so they do not have the security of an anticipated result. They should always be adjusting themselves to her timing, not the other way around.

The situations that manifest are quite extreme—they can be very striking if well-managed, but seem ludicrous if not managed carefully. Consequently, the Director must be very attentive to the general mood of the group so as to introduce small interventions/adjustments when necessary (see Optional Interventions).

ENTERING CHARACTERS:

The game starts at around 8:00 am on the east coast. All of the PCs fell through the ceiling after being pulled through a mirror (described in more detail on character sheets), and managed to land in the room without being too injured.

Kilgore shows up a day ahead of the others, so he should have time to interact with the room and do what he wants with the items and unconscious people first.

Everyone else enters in priority order, one shortly after the other. The game starts with the entrance of Stanton.

THE GIRL'S BEHAVIOR:

While the girl has a lot of power over the room, there are many things she cannot do. Most notably, when communicating, she cannot actually give any direct information whatsoever. The means that she can make demands, but cannot express a consequence of succeeding or failing to follow them. She can make vague atmospheric comments. She can just say a word or phrase, often by repeating what someone said, but can say very few complete sentences that are not imperatives. She can hint at answers, but there always has to be doubt as to what she means.

It is also important to remember that she is insane, and psychologically still quite young. She knows a great deal but understands little, and her judgment is mediocre. She is characterized by being the sort of person who requires a human sacrifice to be freed—rituals developed by other people might have involved chanting, or everyone agreeing on a particular fact, or other, far more benign, things. She has forgotten how to deal with people and only understands her own power. She knows everything about each PC, but still does not have a good concept of how to get them to do what she wants beyond demands and implied threats.

She does know how to be frightening, and has nearly complete atmospheric control over the room.

SCHEDULED EVENTS:

All of these are given with recommended times. Exactly when they happen should depend on the pacing of the game.

20 min: Someone sees the first shadow flit across a mirror. Another 3 or 4 will appear and disappear in the next five minutes.

45 min: There is a moment of disorientation, and the room is suddenly covered with old, dried blood, in pools and splatters, as if many people were murdered in it many years ago. The blood will remain for the rest of the game.

1:15 min: Text appears on a mirror demanding the sacrifice of a hand.

2:30 min: Text appears on a mirror demanding a human sacrifice in 1 hour.

3:30 min: Endgame

As the hour nears its end, the pebble domes will last for a shorter and shorter time.

At 3:20, they will cease to function for longer than a momentary blink.

DETAILS ON HAND SACRIFICE:

This demand has no deadline. It also doesn't actually do anything for the girl. The purpose is simply to get the PCs prepared to sacrifice a person to her. If they do it, then they have taken a major first step. If they don't, it gives her an opportunity to punish them so that they will fear the consequences of not making the next one.

If they spend too long deciding whether to make the sacrifice (about 20 mins), or decide not to, she will make the room grow progressively colder. If they continue not to respond, the baby will start being seriously affected, first crying a lot, then not moving and turning blue. She will keep it up until the baby freezes to death if necessary, then hold the room at that temperature until she is appeased. (Depending on how long they let the room continue to get colder, the baby may live but still get frostbite, and so might others. Be merciless about this.)

It's okay to sacrifice from the unconscious people. Neither will wake.

Suggested language (/ = line break and pause): You / You will take / a hand / You will cut it off to me / You will place it in the center / You will do this thing

REQUIREMENTS OF THE SACRIFICE:

The demand for the human sacrifice is slightly more ritualized. The blanket must be laid out on the ground. The sacrifice must be put on the blanket. Then the sacrifice's heart must be cut out using the knife.

Depending on the general mood of the group, there are two possible groups of candidates for the sacrifice: If it seems like they would be very unwilling to give up anyone at all, the demand will simply say "a person", including the unconscious boy and even the girl. (In this case, there is no problem with sacrificing her—she can function perfectly fine without a heart, and it does still count.) If they would clearly and obviously default to one of the unconscious people, the demand will say "a waking person", excluding the two of them.

Suggested language (= line break no pause): Now / [Waking] / You / You will / You will take / You will take a [waking] person / You will lay him on / the blanket / You will place | it in the center / You will cut out his heart to me | You will do with the heart | a thing that I will make known to you / You have one hour.

EATING THE HEART:

After the sacrifice is done and someone is holding the heart in his hand, the girl will say, "Now eat it." The heart cannot be cut by anything other than teeth. It is no easier to eat than it would be in real life—it is rich and disgusting and has about the consistency of leather. The experience should be described.

The moment the heart is completely gone, the person who takes the last bite will no longer be able to see the mirrors—there will simply be matte black surfaces where the glass was.

OPTIONAL INTERVENTIONS:

While the girl only needs to communicate to them twice, she can occasionally say other things as a last resort if the PCs seem to be getting really off-track. The first words should be the first sacrifice demand. However, she can make clarifications or count down ominously, etc. if it seems necessary/appropriate.

There are also the shadows, looking on with curiosity. They can do nothing but move across the mirrors, but can move at different speeds and in different numbers. There might be a flurry of them if someone says something accurate about the room, or they might gather slowly and ominously if something bad is about to happen.

Lastly the girl can cause tangible changes in the room, and does not necessarily need a good reason to do so. She can change the temperature, coloring, make maggots pour out of someone's sandwich, cause a mirror to display something going on in the outside world, create a strange smell, make people hear unintelligible whispering, or any number of other things.

CHRIS' BABY:

The baby is an extremely useful narrative tool that should not be wasted. Any environmental changes will affect the baby earlier and harder than anyone else. The baby can sense danger and hostility, and can punctuate tense moments with crying.

The Director is encouraged to actually play the baby crying during loud arguments and other times of discomfort as a realistic additional source of stress. The baby is not just there as a point of decoration or moral punctuation—it really is one more serious thing they have to deal with, and should be represented realistically.

ENDGAME:

Remember: If you break a mirror, you don't get one less mirror—you get a dozen more.

If the sacrifice is not made at the proscribed time, the girl will get up, shriek incoherently, and collapse sobbing. When they try to approach her, she will shriek at them some more. Then she will throw them all into a heap in the corner with a wave of her hand, and immediately raise both hands to throw up a silver bubble (larger than the others if necessary) to trap them there. The bubble will not go down and everyone will eventually die of thirst inside.

If the sacrifice is made and the heart is eaten, then she will get up as soon as the eater realizes he can no longer see the mirrors. She will smile at him and thank him. (If they refuse to eat the heart, she will simply wait indefinitely until they do. Even if it goes on for a long time, the heart will not go bad.)

She will then look towards a mirror. (If they are all broken, she will look towards the biggest shard.) At that point, everyone who did not break a mirror, including the girl, will see their home in the mirror (or shard) nearest them. Silver tendrils will reach out for them. The girl will go first, eagerly and happily reaching for it. Then all the others will be pulled through.

Everyone who did break a mirror will see their home in every shard they broke. Then tendrils will reach out of each shard and grab them all at once, trying to pull them into dozens of different shards and tearing them to pieces. Their soul will go behind the glass and become another one of the shadows.

Advice on Setup

- It would be nice to have a room filled with mirrors, but most groups will not be able to pull that off. Gather as many mirrors as you can, and then use sheets of tin foil for the rest.
- If you can't get tin foil, use paper. But have physical objects there.
- Have torn pieces of tin foil (or paper) ready ahead of time to represent broken mirror pieces in the event that someone breaks one.
- Get an erasable marker (e.g. a dry erase marker) that will show up on the biggest mirror in the room for when the girl makes writing appear. Write directly on the mirror.
- If possible, actually have food and drinks available. Most of the characters haven't had breakfast, and there will probably be IC eating at the beginning.
- Actually have props for everything. You can use colored tokens, rocks, or even paper clips for the pebbles. Label a shoe box for the First Aid Kit. Use table knives for the sacrificial dagger and switchblade. Use newspapers if you don't have a blanket. Wrap some clothing together for the baby.
- Similarly, actually have props representing the unconscious people. Putting clothing on pillows is generally a good way to do this.
- Have games, or at least a deck of cards, available so that the social motivators (Chris, Lian, Abernay) can organize people to play them. However, make sure the games are short and easily interruptible.

Advice on Casting & Running

ADVICE ON CASTING:

- The larp depends on having an effective Stanton. It is imperative that he be played by someone willing and able to play such an antagonist maturely.
- It is similarly imperative that Kilgore be played by someone willing to be assertive and organize people.
- The children should be played by people capable of maturely rendering children.
- Keep in mind that Chris and the children could be Stanton's targets, and do not give them to people you do not think could handle that.

ADVICE ON COMMUNICATING AS THE GIRL:

- Don't ever make it clear that it's an individual, rather than a larger force, who is talking.
- Be extremely confident. Use "you will" a lot.
- Use dramatic language. Never sound too sensible or conversational. But don't sound silly, either.
- Emphasize things by writing the same word over and over. Also play around with speed and pacing for emphasis and climax.

ADVICE ON RUNNING:

- Pace interventions, planned or spontaneous, very carefully. Don't interrupt important conversations or other interactions, for example.
- If Stanton is going to be killed for his violence, do everything you can to make sure it happens before the sacrifice request. It's not interesting to sacrifice a convicted criminal, and it is interesting to have to kill somebody else just after performing one execution.
- Keep track of limited resources: the First Aid Kit, bullets, and pebbles.
- **IMPORTANT:** Do not let people slip out of character or make OOC comments unless absolutely necessary. Especially do not let people discuss how stylized the situation is, make predictions, or joke. You will find that the more tension there is, the more likely people will be to slip OOC to relieve it, but that will severely deflate the stress and fear in the atmosphere and ruin the game. Be very strict about this.

Larp-Specific Rules and Beginning Announcements

(Read this to your players at start of game)

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- It takes one General Physical to physically restrain someone, and another to wrestle an object from him.
- While restrained, a person can only move his fingers (so he cannot attack) or try to get away using General Physical.

BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- You should be aware that the room will not actually be explained during the course of this game, so don't expect it OOC.
- It is especially important that you develop your characters and answer all the questions on your sheets. Make sure you do all of it.
- It is especially important that you stay in character and do not make OOC comments. As the atmosphere gets tenser, people will tend to feel naturally inclined to joke OOC to relieve it. Avoid doing this because it deflates the atmosphere and tends to spoil the game.

Character Summary Chart

NAME	CHARACTER STYLE	ROLE IN GAME	NOTABLE POINTS
[Richard / Rachel] Kilgore	GLS	Social organization	Very socially effective
[David / Davina] Stanton	GDC	Violent antagonism	Has gun
Chris Neuman-Ansette	ELS	Nice person who needs protection	Is pacifist Has baby
[Christian/Christina] Evergay	EDC	Escalating conflicts	Has gun Good with gun
Artemis Steinwell	GDS	Creating social conflict	Is very young
[Ellis / Ellie] Callahan	GLC	Seeding false information	Is good actor/liar
Lian Zhi	EDS	Gravity toward social order	Is very old Obeys authority
[Lyle / Lynn] Abernay	ELC	Well-meaning helpful person	Wants new experiences

THE MIRROR ROOM

G
L
S

Age
26

[Richard / Rachel] Kilgore

APPARENT IDENTITY: Journalist (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Sociopolitical extremist and effective but underappreciated leader.

BACKGROUND: You have always been a champion of social order, responsibility, planning, and standing up for one's beliefs. Your own beliefs about society, politics, and morality are somewhat unconventional (or at least extreme) and held quite strongly. They are also not especially gentle. Your friends tease you for voicing them eloquently and often, but no one can fault your intentions—though you can be somewhat frustrating because you want other people to abide by your principles as well.

You became a journalist out of college, and your sharpness and nerve got you a good column in a good paper despite your youth. You currently have a stable and successful life, but still value new experiences.

GOALS:

Implement social order. Ideally according to your beliefs, but if that doesn't work, any order is better than none.

Plan for the much longer term

Promote the survival, social justice, and generally effectiveness of the group
Get people to agree with you

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)

Insult x2 (1-5) 1: Delivering a scathing insult (-FL3) (E)

Shout x1 (3-5) 1: Attack by yelling loudly at someone (-2) (S) (Cannot reduce target to FL 0)

Detect Lie x3 (2-5) 0: Tell if someone is lying (E)

Encourage x3 (3-5) 0: Make someone feel like they're doing the right thing (+1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Enlist Aid x1 (2-5): Get a hesitating person to help or briefly support you

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 1 Emotional 0	You win all ties involving a Social ability if you have more than 3 FLs.	Street Clothes

How You Got Here: You've been in this room for over a day now. You arrived late at night a day and a half ago, when you had just gotten home. You passed the hall mirror and noticed motion from the corner of your eye. You saw this room and a silver tendril reaching out from it. It touched you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room. Both unconscious people were there when you got there.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROOM: The room is equipped with a bathroom and refrigerator that automatically magically restocks itself when closed. There is also a functional bathroom and a first aid kit. Between evidence and intuition, you are absolutely convinced that everyone will be stuck in the room for a long time. This belief will hold even when very strange things start to happen.

When you rubbed one of the colored pebbles, it disappeared and a silvery bubble about six feet across appeared around you. It didn't hurt to touch it, but you couldn't leave. The effect went away five minutes later when you realized you wanted it to.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What are your extreme beliefs? (They should be based around justice and/or practicality rather than mercy, and motivated by benevolence, though they can be ruthless if you like.)

How did you arrive upon them?

Why did you become a journalist?

What is your field of specialty in journalism?

What is your life like?

What do you not have that you would like to?

What are your religious views?

Do you like children? Why or why not?

What do you respect in a person?

What do you disdain in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G
D
C

Age
48

[David / Davina] Stanton

APPARENT IDENTITY: Doctor (from Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Decisive, self-serving person

BACKGROUND: You are a person of action and passion. You disapprove of hesitating or overthinking before acting, as well as paranoidly planning everything ahead. Despite your age, you are unmarried, but probably have a bunch of children out there from brief liaisons. You have committed many crimes, generally of violence, but have never gotten in serious trouble.

VITAL NOTE: This character is written to be the antagonist, the force creating chaos in a tightly restricted and volatile social environment. He must be played as one. Much of the structure of the larp is dependent on it. Consequently, he is one of the most open-ended characters in the game—Develop him however you like, but make him someone who will cause havoc, commit violence and ultimately rape. Do not let yourself underplay him.

This character should be roleplayed maturely. Don't be self-conscious, don't expect him to last to the end of the story, and relax and enjoy being a villain. It is just as important, however, not to overdo it—it's too easy to make him shallow/cliché. Make sure he's a real person, too.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- fake x1 (2-5) 3: Pretend to be subdued/restrained when you're not (NR)
- Intimidate (2-5) 1: Scare someone by pointing a weapon at them. Can only be used once per person per hour. (-1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- First Aid (3-5): Spend 10 mins healing someone physical injury (+1)
- Diagnosis (3-5): Spend 10 mins performing a medical diagnosis of someone
- Enjoy Yourself (2-5): Get a lot of pleasure doing something somewhat fun
- Understand x1 (1-5): Know what someone wants most

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 1 Social 0 Emotional 0	Each use of First Aid requires one use of a First Aid Kit.	Concealed Gun (shots x10, dam +2) Travel First Aid Kit (1 use)

GOALS:

Make unhesitating decisions. Don't let caution or courtesy stop you.
Have sex, ideally with someone decently younger. Consent not necessary.
Have fun. Be active. Do something entertaining. Get others to participate.
Try to get other people to do be as unrestrained as you.

How You got Here: Yesterday evening you were shopping at a furniture store when one of the mirrors caught your eye. You saw grey mist in it and a silver tendril reaching out. It touched you, you were briefly disoriented, and then you were floating in the mist. You drifted for hours in nothing but the mist, unable to go anywhere or do anything. You finally fell asleep briefly, and woke up when you fell into this room and hit the ground. You have thus been incredibly frustrated bored for a long time, and want to make up for it.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What type of medicine do you practice?

Are you an impatient person, or simply very decisive? Do others consider you impatient? How do you generally respond to this?

What are your values?

What do you respect / disdain in a person?

In general, what are you like?

Do you have any social/emotional vices? For example, do you enjoy power?

Why did you become a doctor? Why that kind?

Why are you willing to be violent?

What is your sexual orientation? Why do you prefer younger people?

What sort of violence have you committed in the past?

How have you responded to having hurt people?

What kind of person do you consider yourself?

Why are you unmarried? Have you had serious emotional relationships?

What are some of your positive characteristics?

What do you want that you don't have?

If you could change something about yourself, what would it be?

If you could change something about the world, what would it be?

What do you dream about?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
L
S

Age
17

Chris Neuman-Ansette

APPARENT IDENTITY: High School Junior (from a suburb of Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Young student trying to raise a baby alone. Pacifist.

BACKGROUND: A little over a year ago, you had an irresponsible one-night stand. Because you're pro-life and take responsibility for your actions, you offered to take care of raising the baby. The other parent moved away—you haven't talked to him/her since after the baby was born.

You have been a pacifist for many years, and came upon the decision after much research and consideration. Very few other people you know agree with you in this.

GOALS:

- Take care of your child
- Get people to socialize and cooperate with group activities
- Get to know some of the other people pretty well

How You Got Here: You had just gotten up for the morning and was giving the baby breakfast when you noticed movement from the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the hall mirror you were standing next to, and this room in the mirror. It grabbed both you and the child, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were both falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Empathy x5 (2-5) 0: Figure out how someone is feeling (E)
- Gentle (1-5) 1: Make someone feel better by being nice to them. Can only be used once per person per hour. Cannot use on self. (+1) (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Intuition x2 (1-5): Ask Director any yes/no question
- Human Intuition x4 (1-5): Ask Director a yes/no question about a person
- Defend (1-5): Take physical damage just done to someone else for yourself

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social 1 Emotional 0	Guilt Trip only works if the person has actually done something wrong	Baby in blanket Bottle of formula (if Chris is male) Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is the name and gender of the baby?

Why are you a pacifist? To what degree do you hold others to your beliefs?

What is your relationship with your parents?

In general, what was your childhood like?

What was your relationship with the other parent?

What did the other parent want to do about the baby?

How do you feel about the entire baby issue?

How do you feel about the other parent?

What are your interests in school? Out of school?

What do you intend to do for a living? Did the child change that? How?

What are your religious beliefs?

How do you feel about the supernatural?

In what ways has having the child changed you?

What do other people think of you?

What are your views on maturity?

In what ways do you surprise yourself?

What do you respect/disdain in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
D
C

Age
39

[Christian / Christina] Evergay

APPARENT IDENTITY: Top corporate manager in large company (from Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Bitter and vengeful vigilante

Background: When you were in college, you fell passionately in love with your late spouse and got married. You had two wonderful daughters. You both went to graduate school and then landed quite successful careers.

A few years ago, when the girls were 12 and 13, they were walking home from a friend's house in the bad part of town when they were caught by a drug gang. Both were beaten up, repeatedly raped, and killed. Shortly after, your spouse killed him/herself.

That event turned the brightness of your life cold. After a while of reflection, you realized you wanted revenge. You found the gang and killed every boy in it. They were all in their early teens

You do not delude yourself that you are "cleaning up the streets", but you do believe that there are some people—in fact many people—who simply need to die. In process of finding the gang, you discovered a shocking number of street people, often children, with empty, wasted lives. You believe these people are a travesty to the beauty of life, and their removal hurts no one, not even themselves.

You have thus spent the past four years working in a high glass building by day and walking the streets of the bad districts by night— researching, tracking down and killing those who have badly hurt people, or otherwise should not exist.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (1-5) 1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Gun Use (1-5) 2: Use a gun (P)
- Stare Down (3-5) 1: Do damage by staring someone down (-FL 4) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Manage x2 (2-5): Ask Director who the best person to do a particular task is
- Insight x2 (1-5): Figure out how someone feels about themselves

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 1 Social 3 Emotional 1	None	Concealed gun (shots x12, dam +2) Business attire

GOALS:

Get revenge if applicable

Consider killing pointless people if applicable and feasible

Otherwise, since the above won't come up much, your goals are up to you

How You Got Here: Every day before going to work, you stop at a diner for breakfast. You had just stepped in to use the restroom when you noticed a movement out of the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the restroom mirror, and this room in the mirror. The tendril grabbed you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What was your reaction process when you found out about your daughters?

About your spouse?

What made you decide to go out and kill that gang? Why did it take you so long to make that decision?

How do you currently feel about the death of your daughters? Your spouse?

How do you feel about killing people? Why do you keep doing it?

What determines which nights you go out? (All of them? Schedule? When you are particularly upset? When you are less upset?)

Why do you have such a problem with pointless people?

What, in life, do you consider valuable?

In what other ways have you gotten revenge for things? On whom? For what?

If you could make it so that your family never died, would you? Why?

What kind of person do you consider yourself? How do you feel about it?

Why do you remain so successful at work?

What do you respect in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G D S

Age
7

Artemis Steinwell

APPARENT IDENTITY: Young kid (from inner city Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Abused child with surprising skill at ruthless self-defense

BACKGROUND: Both of your parents are very abusive. You have consequently learned the best ways to take care of yourself and your 5-year-old sister. This talent manifests as an amazing subconscious intuition for social nuance. Specifically, you've learned how to keep people off your back by any means necessary—most often pitting them against each other. Thus, while your parents' relationship has worsened substantially over the past two years or so, they have increasingly left you two children alone.

You are not fully aware of what it is you do. You only know that your primary objective is protecting yourself and those you care about, and you seem pretty good at it. (Roleplay the conscious intellectual maturity of a 6-year-old and the subconscious social capability of a normal adult.)

GOALS:

Protect yourself /anyone you come to care about. By any means necessary. Get people to worry about and fight each other.

How You Got Here: You were in the bathroom getting ready for school when suddenly the mirror went clear and you saw this room. Then a silver tendril reached out and brushed your face. You were disoriented for a moment, then the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) -2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Escalate (1-5) 1: Get someone to socially or emotionally attack someone they're having any negative interaction with (disagreement counts) (S)
- Redirect x5 (2-5) 1: Get someone to pay attention to a specific other person/event instead of you (S)
- Assess Intentions x5 (2-5) 1: Learn someone's intentions toward someone (E)
- Insinuate x2 (2-5) 0: Convince someone that a recent argument really bothered them without their realizing you did anything (-FL 3) (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Aggravate x3 (1-5): Make an annoyed person even more annoyed without them knowing you did it (E)

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -2 Social -1 Emotional 2	None	Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is your sister's name? What is she like?

Why do you think your parents kept hitting the two of you?

What sorts of things do they get mad at you about?

When your parents argue, what do they argue about?

What do you like to do for fun?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

How do you feel about your family situation?

Do you have friends? How is your relationship with them?

Is your family religious? Are you?

Are there people other than your sister that you feel loyal to and protect?

What do you think of the idea that everybody might be stuck here for a long time? Why are you so willing to believe it?

What do you dream about?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G L C

Age
11

[Ellis / Ellie] Callahan

APPARENT IDENTITY: Normal middle school kid (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Compulsive liar who wants status and influence

BACKGROUND: Of all the characters, you have one of the most open backgrounds. You do go to middle school. Other than that, the only part of it that is established is that you have a history of pretending you know things you don't, and being very good at it. In a situation with a lot of uncertainty from missing information, you love being the one to provide that information. You're also great at faking an appropriate source of knowledge. Your classmates are convinced you spend all your time doing esoteric research, and your friends are convinced you have a mystic intuition. The few times you've been proved wrong are overshadowed by your supreme confidence.

GOALS:

fake an intuition of What Is Going On. Don't go so far as to come up with a big explanation, but assert explanations and predictions of smaller points. Make it seem like you are specially tuned to the room. Be delicate about it. Any other goals resulting from your personality and background.

How You Got Here: You were in the bathroom getting ready for school when suddenly the mirror went clear and you saw this room. Then a silver tendril reached out and brushed your face. You were disoriented for a moment, then the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
Confidence (3-5) 1: Do damage by making it seem shocking that someone disagrees with you (someone else must agree with you) (-FL 4) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Act x5 (3-5): fake a physical or emotional state that is not obviously untrue (will fool all other abilities, even medical examinations)
Mimic x2 (2-5): Copy an ability that you've seen used
Luck x2 (1-5) Automatically win on a tie

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social 1 Emotional 0	None	Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is your background? Your relationship with your family?

What topic/hobby are you currently obsessed with?

What kind of person are you?

Why do you want to seem authoritative?

Why go so far as to lie in order to do so?

Middle school is the time kids develop personal values. What are yours?

Your parents must have figured out about your lying by now. How do they respond to it? What about your teachers?

Do you have any close friends? If so, how are you close? If not, why not, and do you want any?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

What other things do you do in your spare time?

What are you afraid of?

What are you proud of?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
D
S

Age
71

Lian Zhi

APPARENT IDENTITY: Old Chinese person (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Former Communist with low self-esteem and fear of authority

BACKGROUND: You were born to a wealthy family so that, when Communism came to China, you were socially and politically ostracized. You spent the next twenty years of your life demonstrating that you were a good Communist—conforming, dedicating yourself to community service, keeping your head down, championing social equality, and never thinking of yourself. You did this so effectively that it really changed your personality.

You were admitted into the Communist Party and given an important censorship job which, as Communism waned, turned into just another administrative desk job. When you retired, you moved to the US.

GOALS:

Protect yourself.

Get in the favor of whoever is in charge. Stay out of trouble.

Protect young people.

HOW YOU GOT HERE: You were washing up after morning exercises when you noticed a movement out of the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the bathroom mirror, and this room in the mirror. The tendril grabbed you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (2-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)

Unarmed Fighting (2-5) 2: Physically attack unarmed (P)

Ostracize x1 (3-5) 2: Make everyone think that someone is completely unreasonable for 15 minutes (target is the unreasonable person) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Raise Issue x3 (3-5): Get everybody to discuss an issue without realizing that you were the one who introduced it.

RESISTS

Physical 0
Social -2
Emotional -1

SPECIALS

None

INVENTORY

Exercise Clothes

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Do you have a family? Grandchildren? If so, what is your relationship with them? If not, why not?

Why did you originally decide to try to be a good communist?

What were you like back then?

What, now, do you think of the type of person you were back then?

Are you glad you made that decision? Do you regret it?

What do you think of the way it changed you?

What do you enjoy doing? Do you do it? How often?

What do you generally do all day now that you're retired?

What do you think of the US?

Why did you move to the US?

How did you feel about doing censorship?

What, in life, is impossible?

What does it mean to be human?

Why do you feel the need to protect young people?

What type of place is the world?

What type of person do you consider yourself?

What type of person would you like to be?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
L
C

Age
53

[Lyle / Lynn] Abernay

APPARENT IDENTITY: Unmarried religious official (from a suburb of Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Very faithful but sheltered person who wants wider experience.

BACKGROUND: You were raised in an affluent, sheltered lifestyle in which a few kids smoking pot during lunch was about the most shocking thing that happened near you. You went to a small college and promptly got a good job.

You are very faithful in your religion and extremely dedicated to your god. You became a professional religious official so you could make it your life, and help other people. You are a generally very benevolent and caring person.

You haven't been to a lot of places, and have never really experienced any life difficulties. You have, however, provided guidance and counseling to people with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Most of the people you try (and often succeed) to help live regularly with difficult conditions that you have heard and studied much about, but know nothing of firsthand. You have become more and more frustrated recently with this lack of qualification, and the barrier it presents toward helping people better.

You have been wanting to leave your lifestyle for some time, but are not sure how. You have repeatedly prayed for guidance in this matter.

GOALS:

- Serve God. (Interpret what he wants from you.)
- Help other people.
- Experience things, no matter how good or bad

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Fighting (3-5) 0: Do physical damage unarmed or with a weapon (P)
- Comfort x3 (4-5) -1: Make someone feel better after talking to them (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Distract x1 (3-5): Get everyone not previously warned to pay attention to you
- Judgment x3 (3-5): Figure out a bad thing to say to someone in a given situation (something that will make them more angry or upset)
- Pray x2 (1-4): Pray for 10 mins to feel better (+1)
- Empathy x5 (1-5): Tell how someone is feeling

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 0 Emotional 1	None	Street Clothes

How You Got Here: You had just dressed for work when you saw your reflection in the closet mirror turn into an image of this room. You intuitively understood that it was offering you a chance to pass through the mirror into the room, and whether to go was entirely your decision. It waited for you as you reacted and considered. You had just the previous night prayed for a sign as to how to change your life, and realized that this was about as obvious a divine intervention as you could ever hope to get. So you put on your shoes and stepped through. Then you fell from the ceiling.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What religion are you? (It must be monotheistic. You can invent a small one if you want, but being an official has to support you.)

How did you become this religion? Why do you believe it so much?

What are you afraid of?

Why have you never gotten married?

Why have you not simply picked up and moved, or joined a travel-based community service group, or anything like that?

What are your afterlife beliefs? How do they apply to yourself? To people who don't follow your religion?

How do you feel about people who hurt people? How should they be treated?

On what principles do you generally advise people in need of support?

In your advice, how do you balance protection against personal development?

What is your daily life like?

What do other people think of you? Friends? Acquaintances? Congregation?

What do you respect/disdain in a person?

Player Materials

Rules Summary

FUNCTION LEVELS, DAMAGE, AND RECOVERY:

By default, each character starts at Function Level 5. A character's Function Level (FL) represents the condition that the character is in, physically and psychologically, and can decrease or increase over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. Exactly how the character is taken out depends on the nature of the damage that reduced him to FL 0.

A player can request that the Director approve an FL change even when the rules don't call for it, if he thinks that prior events would cause the change to happen.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.

Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.

Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.) This will modify the character's chance of success when using the ability.

Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.

Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistible, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)

Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. All other characters are allowed to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. running away only if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) that the player is willing to risk his/her character receiving in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

Regardless of the character's dedication, bid sizes are limited by the amount of damage the character could plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is significant; a player's default bid should be 0.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal primary action, a bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. However, if he is only Resisting, then a bid will increase the chance of all of his Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When bids are decided, participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids. All participants then show their bids at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, all actions are ranked by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. A Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain PCs may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, PCs simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

Specific artifact use abilities may override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same.

Public Background Overview

There is no public background because none of the characters know each other. Almost everyone was suddenly and unexpectedly pulled through a mirror that they were standing near and fell out of the ceiling mirror into the room. The Director will explain all other details.

Larp-Specific Rules and Announcements

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- It takes one General Physical to physically restrain someone, and another to wrestle an object from him.
- While restrained, a person can only move his fingers (so he cannot attack) or try to get away using General Physical.

BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- You should be aware that the room will not actually be explained during the course of this game, so don't expect it OOC.
- It is especially important that you develop your characters and answer all the questions on your sheets. Make sure you do all of it.
- It is especially important that you stay in character and do not make OOC comments. As the atmosphere gets tenser, people will tend to feel naturally inclined to joke OOC to relieve it. Avoid doing this because it deflates the atmosphere and tends to spoil the game.

THE MIRROR ROOM

G
L
S

Age
26

[Richard / Rachel] Kilgore

APPARENT IDENTITY: Journalist (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Sociopolitical extremist and effective but underappreciated leader.

BACKGROUND: You have always been a champion of social order, responsibility, planning, and standing up for one's beliefs. Your own beliefs about society, politics, and morality are somewhat unconventional (or at least extreme) and held quite strongly. They are also not especially gentle. Your friends tease you for voicing them eloquently and often, but no one can fault your intentions—though you can be somewhat frustrating because you want other people to abide by your principles as well.

You became a journalist out of college, and your sharpness and nerve got you a good column in a good paper despite your youth. You currently have a stable and successful life, but still value new experiences.

GOALS:

Implement social order. Ideally according to your beliefs, but if that doesn't work, any order is better than none.

Plan for the much longer term

Promote the survival, social justice, and generally effectiveness of the group
Get people to agree with you

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)

Insult x2 (1-5) 1: Delivering a scathing insult (-FL3) (E)

Shout x1 (3-5) 1: Attack by yelling loudly at someone (-2) (S) (Cannot reduce target to FL 0)

Detect Lie x3 (2-5) 0: Tell if someone is lying (E)

Encourage x3 (3-5) 0: Make someone feel like they're doing the right thing (+1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

Enlist Aid x1 (2-5): Get a hesitating person to help or briefly support you

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 1 Emotional 0	You win all ties involving a Social ability if you have more than 3 FLs.	Street Clothes

How You Got Here: You've been in this room for over a day now. You arrived late at night a day and a half ago, when you had just gotten home. You passed the hall mirror and noticed motion from the corner of your eye. You saw this room and a silver tendril reaching out from it. It touched you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room. Both unconscious people were there when you got there.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE ROOM: The room is equipped with a bathroom and refrigerator that automatically magically restocks itself when closed. There is also a functional bathroom and a first aid kit. Between evidence and intuition, you are absolutely convinced that everyone will be stuck in the room for a long time. This belief will hold even when very strange things start to happen.

When you rubbed one of the colored pebbles, it disappeared and a silvery bubble about six feet across appeared around you. It didn't hurt to touch it, but you couldn't leave. The effect went away five minutes later when you realized you wanted it to.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What are your extreme beliefs? (They should be based around justice and/or practicality rather than mercy, and motivated by benevolence, though they can be ruthless if you like.)

How did you arrive upon them?

Why did you become a journalist?

What is your field of specialty in journalism?

What is your life like?

What do you not have that you would like to?

What are your religious views?

Do you like children? Why or why not?

What do you respect in a person?

What do you disdain in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G
D
C

Age
48

[David / Davina] Stanton

APPARENT IDENTITY: Doctor (from Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Decisive, self-serving person

BACKGROUND: You are a person of action and passion. You disapprove of hesitating or overthinking before acting, as well as paranoidly planning everything ahead. Despite your age, you are unmarried, but probably have a bunch of children out there from brief liaisons. You have committed many crimes, generally of violence, but have never gotten in serious trouble.

VITAL NOTE: This character is written to be the antagonist, the force creating chaos in a tightly restricted and volatile social environment. He must be played as one. Much of the structure of the larp is dependent on it. Consequently, he is one of the most open-ended characters in the game—Develop him however you like, but make him someone who will cause havoc, commit violence and ultimately rape. Do not let yourself underplay him.

This character should be roleplayed maturely. Don't be self-conscious, don't expect him to last to the end of the story, and relax and enjoy being a villain. It is just as important, however, not to overdo it—it's too easy to make him shallow/cliché. Make sure he's a real person, too.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- fake x1 (2-5) 3: Pretend to be subdued/restrained when you're not (NR)
- Intimidate (2-5) 1: Scare someone by pointing a weapon at them. Can only be used once per person per hour. (-1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- First Aid (3-5): Spend 10 mins healing someone physical injury (+1)
- Diagnosis (3-5): Spend 10 mins performing a medical diagnosis of someone
- Enjoy Yourself (2-5): Get a lot of pleasure doing something somewhat fun
- Understand x1 (1-5): Know what someone wants most

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 1 Social 0 Emotional 0	Each use of First Aid requires one use of a First Aid Kit.	Concealed Gun (shots x10, dam +2) Travel First Aid Kit (1 use)

GOALS:

Make unhesitating decisions. Don't let caution or courtesy stop you.
Have sex, ideally with someone decently younger. Consent not necessary.
Have fun. Be active. Do something entertaining. Get others to participate.
Try to get other people to do be as unrestrained as you.

How You got Here: Yesterday evening you were shopping at a furniture store when one of the mirrors caught your eye. You saw grey mist in it and a silver tendril reaching out. It touched you, you were briefly disoriented, and then you were floating in the mist. You drifted for hours in nothing but the mist, unable to go anywhere or do anything. You finally fell asleep briefly, and woke up when you fell into this room and hit the ground. You have thus been incredibly frustrated bored for a long time, and want to make up for it.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What type of medicine do you practice?

Are you an impatient person, or simply very decisive? Do others consider you impatient? How do you generally respond to this?

What are your values?

What do you respect / disdain in a person?

In general, what are you like?

Do you have any social/emotional vices? For example, do you enjoy power?

Why did you become a doctor? Why that kind?

Why are you willing to be violent?

What is your sexual orientation? Why do you prefer younger people?

What sort of violence have you committed in the past?

How have you responded to having hurt people?

What kind of person do you consider yourself?

Why are you unmarried? Have you had serious emotional relationships?

What are some of your positive characteristics?

What do you want that you don't have?

If you could change something about yourself, what would it be?

If you could change something about the world, what would it be?

What do you dream about?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
L
S

Age
17

Chris Neuman-Ansette

APPARENT IDENTITY: High School Junior (from a suburb of Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Young student trying to raise a baby alone. Pacifist.

BACKGROUND: A little over a year ago, you had an irresponsible one-night stand. Because you're pro-life and take responsibility for your actions, you offered to take care of raising the baby. The other parent moved away—you haven't talked to him/her since after the baby was born.

You have been a pacifist for many years, and came upon the decision after much research and consideration. Very few other people you know agree with you in this.

GOALS:

- Take care of your child
- Get people to socialize and cooperate with group activities
- Get to know some of the other people pretty well

How You Got Here: You had just gotten up for the morning and was giving the baby breakfast when you noticed movement from the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the hall mirror you were standing next to, and this room in the mirror. It grabbed both you and the child, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were both falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Empathy x5 (2-5) 0: Figure out how someone is feeling (E)
- Gentle (1-5) 1: Make someone feel better by being nice to them. Can only be used once per person per hour. Cannot use on self. (+1) (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Intuition x2 (1-5): Ask Director any yes/no question
- Human Intuition x4 (1-5): Ask Director a yes/no question about a person
- Defend (1-5): Take physical damage just done to someone else for yourself

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social 1 Emotional 0	Guilt Trip only works if the person has actually done something wrong	Baby in blanket Bottle of formula (if Chris is male) Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is the name and gender of the baby?

Why are you a pacifist? To what degree do you hold others to your beliefs?

What is your relationship with your parents?

In general, what was your childhood like?

What was your relationship with the other parent?

What did the other parent want to do about the baby?

How do you feel about the entire baby issue?

How do you feel about the other parent?

What are your interests in school? Out of school?

What do you intend to do for a living? Did the child change that? How?

What are your religious beliefs?

How do you feel about the supernatural?

In what ways has having the child changed you?

What do other people think of you?

What are your views on maturity?

In what ways do you surprise yourself?

What do you respect/disdain in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
D
C

Age
39

[Christian / Christina] Evergay

APPARENT IDENTITY: Top corporate manager in large company (from Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Bitter and vengeful vigilante

Background: When you were in college, you fell passionately in love with your late spouse and got married. You had two wonderful daughters. You both went to graduate school and then landed quite successful careers.

A few years ago, when the girls were 12 and 13, they were walking home from a friend's house in the bad part of town when they were caught by a drug gang. Both were beaten up, repeatedly raped, and killed. Shortly after, your spouse killed him/herself.

That event turned the brightness of your life cold. After a while of reflection, you realized you wanted revenge. You found the gang and killed every boy in it. They were all in their early teens

You do not delude yourself that you are "cleaning up the streets", but you do believe that there are some people—in fact many people—who simply need to die. In process of finding the gang, you discovered a shocking number of street people, often children, with empty, wasted lives. You believe these people are a travesty to the beauty of life, and their removal hurts no one, not even themselves.

You have thus spent the past four years working in a high glass building by day and walking the streets of the bad districts by night— researching, tracking down and killing those who have badly hurt people, or otherwise should not exist.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (1-5) 1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Gun Use (1-5) 2: Use a gun (P)
- Stare Down (3-5) 1: Do damage by staring someone down (-FL 4) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Manage x2 (2-5): Ask Director who the best person to do a particular task is
- Insight x2 (1-5): Figure out how someone feels about themselves

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 1 Social 3 Emotional 1	None	Concealed gun (shots x12, dam +2) Business attire

GOALS:

Get revenge if applicable

Consider killing pointless people if applicable and feasible

Otherwise, since the above won't come up much, your goals are up to you

How You Got Here: Every day before going to work, you stop at a diner for breakfast. You had just stepped in to use the restroom when you noticed a movement out of the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the restroom mirror, and this room in the mirror. The tendril grabbed you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What was your reaction process when you found out about your daughters?

About your spouse?

What made you decide to go out and kill that gang? Why did it take you so long to make that decision?

How do you currently feel about the death of your daughters? Your spouse?

How do you feel about killing people? Why do you keep doing it?

What determines which nights you go out? (All of them? Schedule? When you are particularly upset? When you are less upset?)

Why do you have such a problem with pointless people?

What, in life, do you consider valuable?

In what other ways have you gotten revenge for things? On whom? For what?

If you could make it so that your family never died, would you? Why?

What kind of person do you consider yourself? How do you feel about it?

Why do you remain so successful at work?

What do you respect in a person?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G D S

Age
7

Artemis Steinwell

APPARENT IDENTITY: Young kid (from inner city Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Abused child with surprising skill at ruthless self-defense

BACKGROUND: Both of your parents are very abusive. You have consequently learned the best ways to take care of yourself and your 5-year-old sister. This talent manifests as an amazing subconscious intuition for social nuance. Specifically, you've learned how to keep people off your back by any means necessary—most often pitting them against each other. Thus, while your parents' relationship has worsened substantially over the past two years or so, they have increasingly left you two children alone.

You are not fully aware of what it is you do. You only know that your primary objective is protecting yourself and those you care about, and you seem pretty good at it. (Roleplay the conscious intellectual maturity of a 6-year-old and the subconscious social capability of a normal adult.)

GOALS:

Protect yourself /anyone you come to care about. By any means necessary. Get people to worry about and fight each other.

How You Got Here: You were in the bathroom getting ready for school when suddenly the mirror went clear and you saw this room. Then a silver tendril reached out and brushed your face. You were disoriented for a moment, then the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) -2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Escalate (1-5) 1: Get someone to socially or emotionally attack someone they're having any negative interaction with (disagreement counts) (S)
- Redirect x5 (2-5) 1: Get someone to pay attention to a specific other person/event instead of you (S)
- Assess Intentions x5 (2-5) 1: Learn someone's intentions toward someone (E)
- Insinuate x2 (2-5) 0: Convince someone that a recent argument really bothered them without their realizing you did anything (-FL 3) (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Aggravate x3 (1-5): Make an annoyed person even more annoyed without them knowing you did it (E)

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -2 Social -1 Emotional 2	None	Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is your sister's name? What is she like?

Why do you think your parents kept hitting the two of you?

What sorts of things do they get mad at you about?

When your parents argue, what do they argue about?

What do you like to do for fun?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

How do you feel about your family situation?

Do you have friends? How is your relationship with them?

Is your family religious? Are you?

Are there people other than your sister that you feel loyal to and protect?

What do you think of the idea that everybody might be stuck here for a long time? Why are you so willing to believe it?

What do you dream about?

THE MIRROR ROOM

G L C

Age
11

[Ellis / Ellie] Callahan

APPARENT IDENTITY: Normal middle school kid (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Compulsive liar who wants status and influence

BACKGROUND: Of all the characters, you have one of the most open backgrounds. You do go to middle school. Other than that, the only part of it that is established is that you have a history of pretending you know things you don't, and being very good at it. In a situation with a lot of uncertainty from missing information, you love being the one to provide that information. You're also great at faking an appropriate source of knowledge. Your classmates are convinced you spend all your time doing esoteric research, and your friends are convinced you have a mystic intuition. The few times you've been proved wrong are overshadowed by your supreme confidence.

GOALS:
 Fake an intuition of What Is Going On. Don't go so far as to come up with a big explanation, but assert explanations and predictions of smaller points. Make it seem like you are specially tuned to the room. Be delicate about it. Any other goals resulting from your personality and background.

How You Got Here: You were in the bathroom getting ready for school when suddenly the mirror went clear and you saw this room. Then a silver tendril reached out and brushed your face. You were disoriented for a moment, then the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:
 General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
 Confidence (3-5) 1: Do damage by making it seem shocking that someone disagrees with you (someone else must agree with you) (-FL 4) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:
 Act x5 (3-5): fake a physical or emotional state that is not obviously untrue (will fool all other abilities, even medical examinations)
 Mimic x2 (2-5): Copy an ability that you've seen used
 Luck x2 (1-5) Automatically win on a tie

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social 1 Emotional 0	None	Pajamas

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What is your background? Your relationship with your family?

What topic/hobby are you currently obsessed with?

What kind of person are you?

Why do you want to seem authoritative?

Why go so far as to lie in order to do so?

Middle school is the time kids develop personal values. What are yours?

Your parents must have figured out about your lying by now. How do they respond to it? What about your teachers?

Do you have any close friends? If so, how are you close? If not, why not, and do you want any?

What do you want to be when you grow up?

What other things do you do in your spare time?

What are you afraid of?

What are you proud of?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E D S

Age
71

Lian Zhi

APPARENT IDENTITY: Old Chinese person (from Cambridge, near Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Former Communist with low self-esteem and fear of authority

BACKGROUND: You were born to a wealthy family so that, when Communism came to China, you were socially and politically ostracized. You spent the next twenty years of your life demonstrating that you were a good Communist—conforming, dedicating yourself to community service, keeping your head down, championing social equality, and never thinking of yourself. You did this so effectively that it really changed your personality.

You were admitted into the Communist Party and given an important censorship job which, as Communism waned, turned into just another administrative desk job. When you retired, you moved to the US.

GOALS:

- Protect yourself.
- Get in the favor of whoever is in charge. Stay out of trouble.
- Protect young people.

HOW YOU GOT HERE: You were washing up after morning exercises when you noticed a movement out of the corner of your eye. You turned in time to see a silver tendril reach out from the bathroom mirror, and this room in the mirror. The tendril grabbed you, you were briefly disoriented, and the next thing you knew you were falling into the room from the ceiling.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (2-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Unarmed Fighting (2-5) 2: Physically attack unarmed (P)
- Ostracize x1 (3-5) 2: Make everyone think that someone is completely unreasonable for 15 minutes (target is the unreasonable person) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Raise Issue x3 (3-5): Get everybody to discuss an issue without realizing that you were the one who introduced it.

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social -2 Emotional -1	None	Exercise Clothes

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Do you have a family? Grandchildren? If so, what is your relationship with them? If not, why not?

Why did you originally decide to try to be a good communist?

What were you like back then?

What, now, do you think of the type of person you were back then?

Are you glad you made that decision? Do you regret it?

What do you think of the way it changed you?

What do you enjoy doing? Do you do it? How often?

What do you generally do all day now that you're retired?

What do you think of the US?

Why did you move to the US?

How did you feel about doing censorship?

What, in life, is impossible?

What does it mean to be human?

Why do you feel the need to protect young people?

What type of place is the world?

What type of person do you consider yourself?

What type of person would you like to be?

THE MIRROR ROOM

E
L
C

Age
53

[Lyle / Lynn] Abernay

APPARENT IDENTITY: Unmarried religious official (from a suburb of Boston)

REAL IDENTITY: Very faithful but sheltered person who wants wider experience.

BACKGROUND: You were raised in an affluent, sheltered lifestyle in which a few kids smoking pot during lunch was about the most shocking thing that happened near you. You went to a small college and promptly got a good job.

You are very faithful in your religion and extremely dedicated to your god. You became a professional religious official so you could make it your life, and help other people. You are a generally very benevolent and caring person.

You haven't been to a lot of places, and have never really experienced any life difficulties. You have, however, provided guidance and counseling to people with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Most of the people you try (and often succeed) to help live regularly with difficult conditions that you have heard and studied much about, but know nothing of firsthand. You have become more and more frustrated recently with this lack of qualification, and the barrier it presents toward helping people better.

You have been wanting to leave your lifestyle for some time, but are not sure how. You have repeatedly prayed for guidance in this matter.

GOALS:

- Serve God. (Interpret what he wants from you.)
- Help other people.
- Experience things, no matter how good or bad

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Fighting (3-5) 0: Do physical damage unarmed or with a weapon (P)
- Comfort x3 (4-5) -1: Make someone feel better after talking to them (E)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Distract x1 (3-5): Get everyone not previously warned to pay attention to you
- Judgment x3 (3-5): Figure out a bad thing to say to someone in a given situation (something that will make them more angry or upset)
- Pray x2 (1-4): Pray for 10 mins to feel better (+1)
- Empathy x5 (1-5): Tell how someone is feeling

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 0 Social 0 Emotional 1	None	Street Clothes

How You Got Here: You had just dressed for work when you saw your reflection in the closet mirror turn into an image of this room. You intuitively understood that it was offering you a chance to pass through the mirror into the room, and whether to go was entirely your decision. It waited for you as you reacted and considered. You had just the previous night prayed for a sign as to how to change your life, and realized that this was about as obvious a divine intervention as you could ever hope to get. So you put on your shoes and stepped through. Then you fell from the ceiling.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What religion are you? (It must be monotheistic. You can invent a small one if you want, but being an official has to support you.)

How did you become this religion? Why do you believe it so much?

What are you afraid of?

Why have you never gotten married?

Why have you not simply picked up and moved, or joined a travel-based community service group, or anything like that?

What are your afterlife beliefs? How do they apply to yourself? To people who don't follow your religion?

How do you feel about people who hurt people? How should they be treated?

On what principles do you generally advise people in need of support?

In your advice, how do you balance protection against personal development?

What is your daily life like?

What do other people think of you? Friends? Acquaintances? Congregation?

What do you respect/disdain in a person?

Parlor Larps

1 Living Room
1 Evening
1 Director
4-8 Players

MA

NPC 0

DIR 3

Dark 4

- DC -

(See Page 8)

THE MIRROR ROOM

In a moment of disorientation they are transported to a room with no doors, no windows and mirrors everywhere. The room is stocked with food, water and other necessities—all indications suggest that they will be there for a long time.

They are complete strangers, ordinary people with little common ground and less understanding of what has happened to them. With the passage of time, tension and dire imperatives, they will have to sift values and make answers to both each other and the shadows behind the glass.

Standard
Requirements

\$10.00

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