



HEART
&
LIGHTNING
BIG BAD STORM EDITION

A SWORDDREAM GAME
BY SWORDS & FLOWERS



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LIGHTNING

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Kick Ass, Make Love, Ride the Lightning

A SWORDDREAM GAME
BY SWORDS & FLOWERS

A Swords and Flowers Game

Design, Development, and Writing by

Ben Chong

Layout by

Ben Chong

The **TTRPG Safety Toolkit** is developed and compiled by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk. The TTRPG Safety Toolkit is a guide on how to incorporate safety tools into your TTRPG games to make sure that everyone is having fun. You can read more about the TTRPG Safety Toolkit at: bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit.

The **X-Card** was originally developed by John Stavropoulos to manage difficult and adult content in TTRPG games. You can read more about the X-Card at tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg.

Much of Heart & Lightning, Big Bad Storm Edition owes its inspirations to **Monsterhearts** by Avery Alder, **Urban Shadows** by Magpie Games, the **World of Darkness** series, and **Sukeban Dracula** by Ettin. Huge thanks to the incredible ideas and fun you have allowed to be brought into this book, and the space our hobbies all exist in.

The **#SWORDDREAM** is a design movement, community, and spirit that exists within and outside of TTRPG games design. The **#SWORDDREAM** stands against hate and prejudice in all forms, works to be radically inclusive, encourages use of sensible safety tools, opposes harassment and toxicity, values creators and their work, experimentation, and DIY approaches. **There is no one #SWORDDREAM, and no one may claim its canon.** Long live its power and love!

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the love, magic and strength of **#RPGSEA**. It's been an incredible time watching us grow every single day - and to see the waves we're bringing into the TTRPG industry. Let's go kick some ass, and turn the world upside down over and over again.

Thanks also to the **#SWORDDREAM** community for their wisdom, knowledge, and tenacity. Our tenets, our anti-canon, our wicked hands make light work in dire times. The spirit in this scene has inspired me countless times, and continues to do so for me and so many more creators.

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Thank you to my playtesters in the past, and in the future! Your ass-kicking is what keeps this game what it is. <3

Extra thanks to all the TTRPG Discords I joined and moderate but rarely comment on.

If I missed you in these thanks, give me a holler! You'll be included in a future update.

Fire and flowers to **DC (@DungeonCommandr)**, for their countless efforts in raising this community and scene - their impact has shaped us to be what we are today. The TTRPG industry, both indie and non-indie - ALL OF IT, owes so, so much to your soul. You are beautiful and powerful.

To any designer, publisher, industry person who reads this:
Hire Them. You are missing out otherwise.

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THE PREFACE



THE STORY SO FAR...

You are *Daughters of Lightning*, a rider of storms, and breaker of mountains. You are warriors, lovers, and legend.

You are also *teenagers*.

Barely of age for the throne, you have been kicked out of your immortal homeland and stripped of your powers for another one of your stupid (brave!) antics (deeds!!!).

As outcasts, you must work together and do what you do best: **raise as much hell as you can and go home**. Powerless and lost, you will embark on a mythic quest together as sisters and almighty adventurers in a strange, new world.

Kick ass, make love, ride the lightning.

WHAT THIS IS

HEART & LIGHTNING is a *rock-inspired tabletop roleplaying game blending sword and sorcery with urban fantasy*. It's a game about being the *Daughters of Lightning*, their rebellion, and the troubles they get into. When you play it, you and your friends (or acquaintances) tell their story together, a tale of immortal family drama, defiance, and angst. This will be done in a series of conversations, the story flowing as you speak.

In this game, each one of you will take on the role of a Daughter, speaking and making mistakes as they would, exploring interesting and emotional places together. You will be **sisters** to each other, whether estranged, tight-knit, friends or enemies. You may sometimes connect deeply with their experiences, and feel what the fee - if you're lucky. Other times, you delight in pushing your characters towards heartbreak, disaster and tragedy from a safe emotional distance.

You will break hearts, kick ass, and discover how much being a teen god can **suck**.

The rules of this game will involve some negotiation and chance. The stories you weave will often require the use of dice to find out what happens next, to keep things unpredictable and exciting instead of stagnant. Your almighty tale doesn't belong to just one person, just as it has more than one storyteller. Everyone contributes.

The stories you tell will not be as random though! As the Daughters of Lightning, you will play almighty children who embody storms, its power, rage and tenacity. Stubborn and young, you've recently been evicted from your heavenly home and must make your way home - or maybe not? It's a game about self-discovery, resistance, and growth.

IMMORTAL REBELLION

You are reckless and stubborn.

That is the nature of being a god - at least for you. So it was a surprise Father Lightning struck you out of the sky and into your strange, new time-out. *What's wrong with being yourself?* But he made sure to keep you undying and eternal. It would make him the villain otherwise. Your punishment is much worse; He wants to teach you a **lesson**.

But you are also a rebel, and you'll be damned before you let your old man win.

Rebellion is the core of HEART & LIGHTNING as a game. So to play a game is not to just enact rebellion, but also to ask and discover what rebellion means for your character. Sometimes, you may play a Daughter who must learn her lesson in banishment in order to return home. Other times may see yourself playing a Daughter wreaking havoc on a distant alien planet, having the best time ever, picking glory and deeds to show Father Lightning the galactic-spanning finger.

RACE, GENDER, QUEERNESS

HEART & LIGHTNING is designed and developed by Ben Chong (that's me!). Ben is a bisexual Malaysian Chinese tabletop game designer, and educator. By extension, that makes all his games and lessons inherently queer and by a person of colour - permanently and indefinitely. In this game, you will find many signs of queer, POC experience embedded within its mechanics, its themes, and its stories.

A huge part of this game also sits upon the foundations of **Urban Shadows** (Magpie Games), a TTRPG about cities, communities and the horror genre. It's pointed out that despite all its supposedly subversive elements, mainstream horror content has become 'shockingly normative'. To quote from the book:

"Almost all these stories - plastered on billboards and sold in bulk - are about white people."

Due to this bond, this game shares these same emotional footprints from Urban Shadow. Particularly, the superhero mythos has been steeped in white personas for a majority of its modern lifetime, especially white, male ones, and especially in cinema. It is a strange feeling to watch movies about a band of mismatched superpowered role models coming together to save the world - only to see that most of them barely look like you. Often in worse times, queer, POC characters get sidelined and pushed into the background; we are tokenised, ridiculed, played as setpieces, and manipulated for headlines or queerbaiting.

Superheroes and myths should be diverse and beautiful, saturated with the full spectrum of human culture. These stories belong to more than just the *norms*; it originates and continues to be told by queer teens on the Internet, people of colour passing on legends into the next generation, zinemakers, poets and artists, the breakers and protestors, feminists of every race and creed, immigrants all around the globe (quoting Urban Shadows once again!) - it belongs to **us**.

The story of superheroics and mythology in HEART & LIGHTNING play to this same yearning to belong, to be seen, and have your identities acknowledged. This same story is also **very South East Asian**, with tons of themes and perspectives lifted from 20 years living in a Malaysian Chinese household influenced by Taoist folklore, Christianity, and a multicultural background. While playing the Daughters, your characters will encounter narrative beats which touch on this intersection of yearning to be heard, to understand yourself, and to break free. The intersections between your mythology and personality, your obligations and desires, your ancestry and found sense of family at forefront.

Here are some ideas for making this kind of content a priority in your story:

- Play as a character of a different race, gender, or sexual orientation for your own Daughter. A Daughter is a title - and your nature is to not just rebel, but *to be yourself*. A god can take on any form or shape they desire, so what made them appear this way? We trust you do this with respect, nuance and learning.
- Establish the cultural premises of your Daughter. What myths do they come from? How are they interpreted? Are they an amalgamation of intersecting myths? Do myths even affect you? How does that carry into behaviour?
- Remember the Daughters are not inherently or explicitly from Norse mythology. In fact, HEART & LIGHTNING's mythos is heavily influenced by the myths of Leigong, God of Thunder from Chinese folk religions. Ask yourself what similar counterparts you may find in your own identities - hell, make your own!

Don't worry if you feel like you don't have the ability or creativity to do your character justice. The game will guide you through creating your very own Daughter, but also aid you in growing them through its mechanics, plot hooks, interconnected characters, and interesting places. That is the nature of rebellion - it's an act of going against the flow of things, to thrust yourself into the unknown and make discoveries.

PLAYING TO FIND OUT

As you play HEART & LIGHTNING, you might be tempted to plot out how you want the story to go, and what you want your characters to do in advance; to do things ten steps ahead. But the truth is your stories will rarely go your way, the same goes for rebellion.

The truth is that rebellions often don't go the way you plan it.

In HEART & LIGHTNING, your characters are thrust out of their comfort zone when Father Lightning exiles them from their heavenly homeland. In some cases, your characters may not even know *why* this happened. That is the nature of their story; wild and out of control, like a sudden lightning strike. Similarly, the Daughters are unpredictable by nature. They are gods and warriors who value adventure and glory first, and predictability rarely goes hand-in-hand with an exciting tale of heroics. There's also the matter of their immortality, which makes them distant and detached from the conventions of most places they visit. This means your stories will often be placed in unfamiliar, messy situations which value your immediate reaction over long narrative arcs.

To let go of controlling the narrative. To **play to find what happens next**. Means you will embrace all the chaotic, exciting parts of your character's stories - and isn't that more fun?

SHOCK HAZARDS AND CONTENT WARNINGS

HEART & LIGHTNING is a tabletop roleplaying game whose premises primarily involve underage characters - specifically teens - being placed in perilous situations. These situations may also involve explicit romance, sex, violence, intense emotional scenes and themes, gender and sexual identity, substances, family issues, etc.

This is an essential core element of HEART & LIGHTNING. The experiences of being a teen, its struggles of self-discovery, angst, doubts, emotions, labels, obligations and pressures serve as the backdrop to your rebellion. It's an inseparable element from how this game was conceived and developed.

But equally core also to this game is your **fun and enjoyment**. So to ensure a healthy session, players are highly encouraged to set aside time and space to discuss what themes should/should not be put into play before you begin. For example, playing an older band of Daughters can provide a unique perspective on rebellion - you may be older, more sure of yourself or even more reckless, and have more nuanced relationships with Father Lightning and each other.

Regardless, it is highly recommended you check out the *Safety Tools* section in **Chapter Six: The Storm Keeper** for a list of resources useful to keep your table happy and safe to play. If you want a quicker preview right now, go check out *Kienna Shaw and Lauren-Bryant Monk's Safety TTRPG Safety Toolkit* at bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

To play HEART & LIGHTNING, you will need to prepare the following:

- **2-5 players.** The game works best when there are enough players together to form interconnections with each other's Daughters. Any more than 5 makes highlighting someone's contributions to the story difficult, but it's not impossible!
- **A Storm Keeper.** A player who dedicates themselves to portraying the world outside of the player characters (PC).
- **At least 2 Six-sided Dice (2d6)** . You will need at least 2d6s to roll and determine outcomes in HEART & LIGHTNING during points of the story. Although two are more than enough to run a game, it's recommended everyone has their own set for more convenience. Also, dice are pretty.
- **Character Sheets.** HEART & LIGHTNING comes with a character sheet for players to customise and keep track of their Daughter, their stats and the info they find to be important.
- **Pencils and Paper.** To keep track of everything in-game! Pens are allowed as well, but pencils make it easier to erase and re-write things without opening up a mess of papers.
- **Love, Foolhardiness, and a Taste for Adventure.** Don't worry, it will come.

INSPIRATIONS

The following is a list of materials used during the development of HEART & LIGHTNING, and is great for getting players into the mood of the game before playing:

Music

- No Party For Caodong
- Scott Pilgrim vs The World, the motion picture soundtrack
- Sunflower Bean
- Base Ball Bear
- Hujan
- Bikini Kill's Rebel Girl
- Brie Larson's rendition of Black Sheep, originally by Metric
- Shh...Diam!, a Malaysian musical group
- Led Zeppelin
- Pale Waves
- Tricot

- Sunset Rollercoaster
- My Little Airport
- City Girl
- RubberBand
- Bob Dylan
- Yvette Young
- Namewee
- ElephantGym
- Metallica
- N.W.A
- BABYMETAL
- Se So Neon

Movies and TV

- Thor: Ragnarok
- Along with the Gods

More Movies and TV

- Mean Girls
- Jeon Woo-Chi: The Taoist Wizard
- Steven Universe
- Scott Pilgrim vs . The World
- What We Do in the Shadows
- Universal Horror Films, f*ck yeah
- The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya
- xxxHolic
- Just watch like one WWE match

Books (and mostly comics)

- The entire Mighty Thor series
- Spider-Gwen
- Unbelievable Gwenpool

Games

- River City Girls
- Phantom Breaker: Battle Grounds
- No Straight Roads

THE BIG BAD STORM

What you are reading here is a living, breathing artifact - a symbol that will transform over time with new ideas. The Big Bad Storm Edition was Heart & Lightning's very **first** print release - now also its first **digital** release. Only five copies were made for Big Bad Con 2019; three were sold, one was given as a gift, and the last one was lost by Ben in California. In here, you will feel the heat of a weapon - freshly forged.

Witness its splendor, but also its flaws.

As a first release, Heart & Lightning will carry many mistakes. You will see typos, misformatting, and small errors. Some sections may even be incomplete! As said before, this book will change in its next iteration, and you will receive them too! Any updated versions of Heart & Lightning will be freely provided to all of its preceding purchasers - guaranteed.

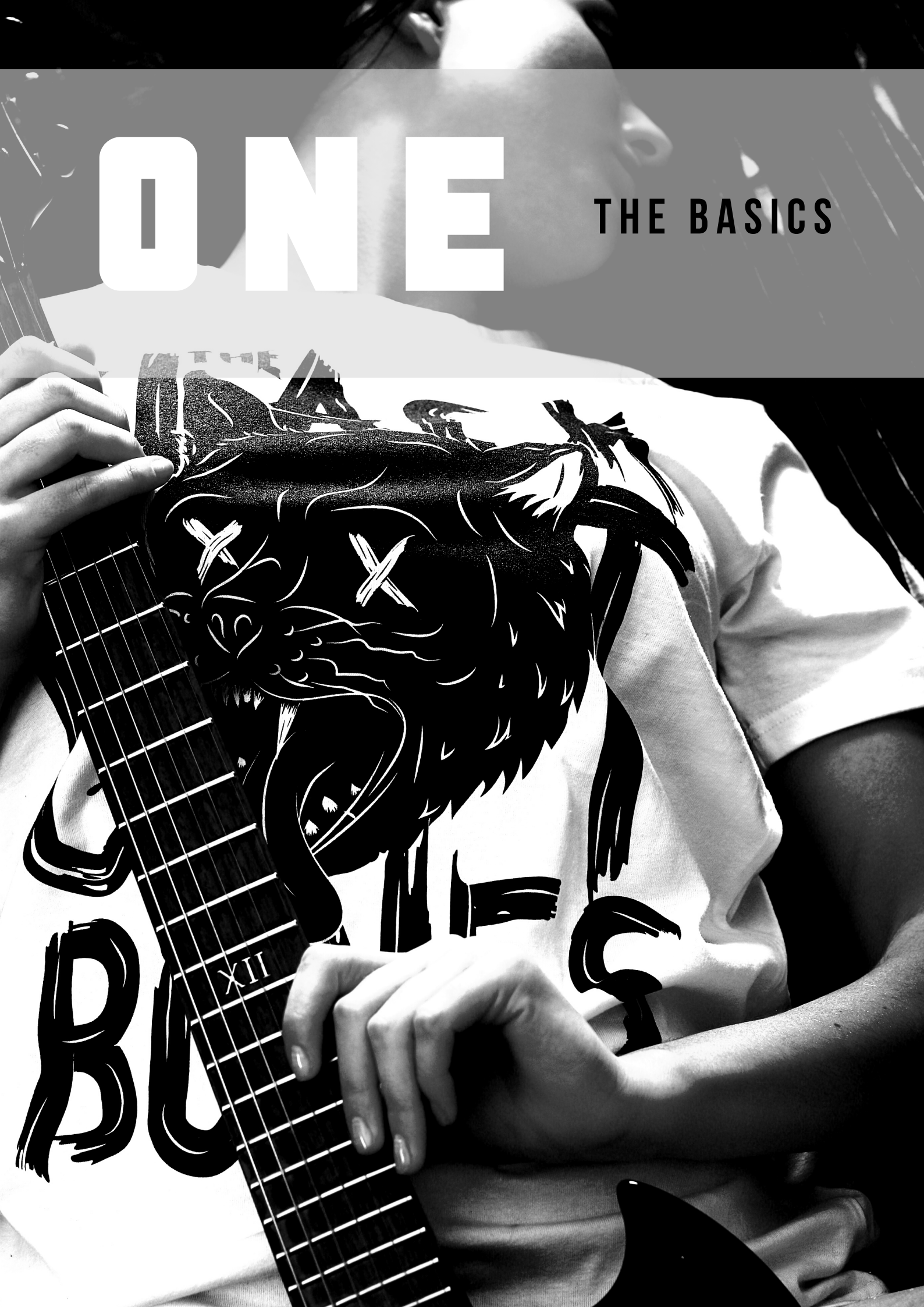
Thank you so, so much for the love and faith you have decided for buying this game.

NO FASCISTS ALLOWED

If you're a fascist, you're not allowed to play this game. It's against the rules. If you're reading this and thinking: "You just call everyone you disagree with a fascist." then you're probably a fascist, or incapable of understanding context and acknowledging a dangerous political climate that constantly puts lives of the oppressed at risk. Don't play the game. Get out of here. Heal yourself. Grow. Learn. Watch some Power Rangers or something.

ONE

THE BASICS



THE STORY AND THE CONVERSATION

Like we said in **The Preface**, your story together in HEART & LIGHTNING happens in conversation, or a series of conversations. You sit down at a table with people, sheets of paper, dice and pencils and start talking. Most of the time, your conversations will be focused on your own Daughters. You will say what they say, what they do, how they react, what they care about, etc. You broadcast these ideas and scenes from your head and to the other players and Storm Keeper.

These conversations can sometimes be coming from you, but also sometimes from the shoes of your character. You will slip into their perspectives, no longer narrating but living their situations - if for a brief moment of embodiment. Most people will do this naturally over time, it is normal and fun to even *become* your character while playing, to want what they want, to feel what they feel, to fear for them at their most crucial and dramatic moments.

Your conversations will evolve over time as you play together - but it's your responsibility as a group to keep this conversation interesting. You will bring your own ideas, experiences, and imagination to the table and use it to bring your conversations into interesting places - along with rules and techniques. Whether it's kicking vampire ass in dark alleyways, dealing with angels on an alien planet, or falling in love with mortals tragically - wherever the conversation brings you.

>> FRAMING SCENES

A key part of your conversations is **framing scenes**. To keep the story moving, you will put your characters, their actions and thoughts into concrete locations with concrete objectives. The Storm Keeper will negotiate with players and has final call on scene structure and flow, but the responsibility is shared among everyone to make sure the scenes are framed as meaningfully, impactful and fun as possible.

Everyone should be familiar with this technique - it's a key part of storytelling and communication. *To skip the boring stuff and get right into the meat of what's happening or about to happen.* It may sound like a challenge at first, but it'll come naturally to you and everyone learns at their own pace! For example:

Sam is **Storm Keeper** of the session. They have a full table of players with their own PCs: Kai, Sophie and Rebecca. He decides to frame a scene to start everyone in the same spot, and involved with each other right away,

"How about we have you all go the train station?" they propose. *"Your characters need new gear, and you could try some contacts there."*

Kai and Sophie nod. They're okay with this.

Rebecca says, "Hmm, what about the bar we went to last time? Chen could talk with that demon dealer she met and bring the group."

Everyone nods in favour. It does sound like a good idea as well.

"The bar it is! Why don't you tell us where you all meet Wang Ge in the bar - since you're bringing us there," says Sam.

And so on. This helps us cut to the chase and keep our conversations flowing, and so the story as well. Like any other conversation, everyone can and are encouraged to contribute, adding their own details and ideas, even when it pushes against where it seems like the story is headed. The core of your conversations should be to explore and go where it's most interesting - without just one person taking the spotlight.

Similarly, scenes end when they aren't interesting anymore. The Storm Keeper can call to close a scene, or the players might realise they've exhausted the scene for its full extent. It's better to keep moving on rather than linger on a scene for too long - keep the story moving into the fun and interesting.

>> **HARD FRAMING**

At some points of conversation, the Storm Keeper might want to move things faster or jump right into the thick of it. This might come from consequences turning situations on their head, hard and fast, or a need for an aggressive tone in the scene. There's no turning back now, only forwards with quick reactions. We call this **hard scene framing**, where negotiations are unlikely and the story is focused on dealing with what's *already happening*.

Kai's character, Wise, needs to kill the notorious demon, Dead Legs, second lieutenant to D-Man. She decides to pay a visit to Yong Sun, a hunter who 'recently settled in Kowloon.

"Okay, Kai. I'm assuming Wise is going to walk to the usual apartment unit where she meets Yong Sun right?" Sam says.

"Sure, that works."

"Great," Sam says. "You're stepping out of the elevator as usual when you hear a sudden BANG! A loud explosive pop thunders down the hallway. You turn your head down the hallway to see Yong Sun on the floor, a pool for blood gathering next to him."

"What??"

"Yeah, it looks like someone tore him up a new one. Some kind of attack, probably. You also hear more noise coming from inside his unit - sounds like the attacker is still here. What do you do?"

There's more to framing scenes in **Chapter Six: The Storm Keeper** about keeping scenes interesting, and helping conversations move forward for everyone in a fun, healthy way. It's everyone's responsibility to push for the cool and dramatic in scenes, but it's ultimately the Storm Keeper who needs to keep things moving along.

>> "WHAT DO YOU DO?"

The question "*What do you do?*" will come up on players again and again over the course of your stories in HEART & LIGHTNING. The Daughters are in a place of uncertainty, danger and drama outside their control. Their story demands they make difficult decisions and take important actions. You must respond to new discoveries, new opportunities, and kick ass with only a moment; what matters isn't what you can plan ahead, but the *now*. Scene framing is all about answering "*What do you do?*" moment to moment in every scene, and answering it with instinct and enthusiasm in hard framed scenes.

You might have moments where the conversation will slow itself down, where the Daughters get to have deep, long, emotional conversations with each other, or even scenes of describing the food and music in a space down its every detail. For the most part though, HEART & LIGHTNING is all about the Daughters being reckless, powerful and *acting* out what they want to do - you can deal with the consequences later. You are a *god*.

ACTIONS & DICE

If framing scenes is what helps set the pace, place and stakes of your characters, it's the **actions** you take that connects them into the scene, and the story overall. On some occasions when your characters want to make something happen or do something, you will be asked to **roll dice** in order to determine its outcomes.

Rolling dice only happens when something you want to do *might post a challenge*. Keep note that although the Daughters of Lightning may be gods, they are young ones who have been kicked out of their homeland - they may be immortal, but they aren't perfect beings capable of accomplishing every thing in existence. How this might occur is entirely up to the Storm Keeper and player to discuss, but here's a few general comparisons between situations where you likely don't need a roll, and *situations where you likely might need a roll*:

- Jumping a 5-foot gap between buildings vs. *Jumping a 100-foot gap between buildings.*
- Solving a simple game of hangman vs. *Solving a math equation.*
- Determining a wound with a bullet in it must have been a gunshot vs. *Determining what caused a mysterious magical injury.*
- Humming along to a tune vs. *Getting an entire concert hall of people to dance to your music.*
- Punching a mortal unconscious vs. *Punching a demon unconscious.*

>> ROLLING DICE, HITS & MISSES

When you want to do something that might pose a challenge, pick up two six-sided dice (2d6) and roll them. The Storm Keeper will ask you to **roll with a relevant Main Stat and a relevant Side Stat**. These stats indicate together the *modifiers* for your roll: when the dice come up, you will add the modifiers into the final score.

For example: Rolling two dice yields you a 6 (4 + 2 on two dice), with your Heart (1) and Pain (0) giving it a modifier of 1. This gives you a final score of 7 (6 + 1).

The outcomes are straightforward:

- Rolling a score of 1 to 6 is a **miss**: You fail the action and have likely made things worse in some way.
- Rolling a score of 7 to 10 is a **partial hit**. You succeed your action with *some small consequences*.
- Rolling a score of 11 to 12 is a **full hit**. You succeed the action flawlessly with no concerns - sometimes even too well.

>> LIGHTNING STRIKES & SNAKE EYES

Luck and fate are core to a god's tales and mythos. On some occasions, you may get either very lucky or very *unlucky* with your rolls and get the following:

- Rolling two perfect 6s on both dice is a **Lightning Strike**: Destiny and fate are in your favour. You ignore all modifiers that may affect this score, and succeed as if a **full hit**.
- Rolling two perfect 1s on both dice is a **Snake Eyes**: The portents have rung true - you were not meant to succeed in this. You ignore all modifiers that may affect this score and fail as if a **miss**.

See **Chapter Five: The Surge** for more.

>> RISKS

All tasks always carry a **risk**: something bad that might happen if and when you attempt the action. When this happens, you are **taking risks** - the bad things happen to you; bones break, hearts are broken, secrets revealed. Here's how it can happen:

- On a **miss**: You fucked up. **Take all risks involved in the action.**
- On a **partial hit**. You made it, but at a cost. **You must take one risk, or downgrade your own success to downgrade the risk.** For example: Chen uses a **partial hit** to open the door at the cost of tripping alarms. Chen downgrades opening the door to opening it only halfway, and downgrades attracting attention to only attracting one nearby guard.
- On a **full hit**: You succeed the action flawlessly. **You take no risks.**

>> EXAMPLE RISKS

- You take Harm.
- You take Serious Harm.
- You're caught by a difficult choice
- You're caught in a difficult position.
- You're caught in the act.
- You give into an impulse.
- You put someone else in danger.
- Someone turns against you.
- You attract supernatural attention.
- You mess up a chord.
- You pick up something bad.
- You anger someone powerful.
- *You piss off Father Lightning.*

>> HELPING SOMEONE ELSE

To help another PC, describe how you try to help and make a roll as if taking a regular action. **When you help, you give the PC a bonus of +1d6 based for each relevant Domain and Talents.** Depending on your final scores, your outcomes may aid or hinder them:

- On a **miss**: You made things worse. **They suffer an additional risk, and you take one risk.**
- On a **partial hit**. You helped! But at a cost. **You take a risk as well.**
- On a **full hit**: Teamwork makes the dream work! **You take no risks.**

STARTING A GAME

Before we get to playing HEART & LIGHTNING, there are a few things you are recommended to do before you start the session:

>> PREPARING TO PLAY

You can play HEART & LIGHTNING anywhere, anytime, anyhow - if you believe - but the game works best when you take the time and effort to prepare a space to play. Get a table large enough for everyone to spread out their paper, dice, pencils and other necessities. Make sure it's large enough for everyone to have their own space, but not so large that you'll have to shout to be heard. If there are observers, make sure to set some boundaries between audience and table; it's fun to sit in and watch someone's story, but not so fun if they keep interrupting and messing with everyone's focus. Always keep yourselves hydrated and fed, before, during and after the game! Take care of yourselves, take breaks, and don't rush it.

You might want to refer to **Inspirations in Chapter Zero: The Preface** for music to accompany your play. A lot of them are a mix between instrumentals and vocals; use whatever suits you best. A lot of the game is inspired by rock genres, especially punk, indie and math, and protest music. Play it as background noise, like a soundtrack for the story as it unfolds.

And play it especially when it *storms outside*. When the rain is knocking pitter-patter on your windows, the air is cold and freezing, wet and warm, smooth and comforting. When you can hear the thunder rumbling outside, shaking your walls gently. When lightning lights your skies up brightly.

>> SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Before you play, it's best to give your group some time to talk about what kind of stories HEART & LIGHTNING is built to play - and what stories *they* want to play. Some players might come in here expecting *Thor: Ragnarok* on a distant planet with sexy Jeff Goldblum dictators and feel disappointed when they end up with a *Scott Pilgrim* in quiet Toronto instead. Hell, the entire *Thor* franchise is wildly different each film.

>> SESSION ZERO

The best way to understanding these expectations and how to meet them: is to talk. Meet up with your players and learn the game together, give it a brief read through the beginning few chapters. Watch movies, read comics, and listen to music that resembles what you have in mind for the game together. Discuss and talk about what can be and not be inside the game. We call these the **Session Zero**.



TWO THE CHARACTERS

THE DAUGHTERS OF LIGHTNING

In **HEART & LIGHTNING**, you play a Daughter of Lightning. A few things are common between you and your sisters: your immortality, your position as a Daughter, and your relationship under Father Lightning. But everything else is unique, *yours only*.

To create your Daughter of Lightning, answer the following:

>> WHAT'S YOUR DEAL?

Nobody really knows why Father Lightning booted you out of home - He's always been less than generous with his ways. So *why* are you here? What is your Daughter's deal in this whole mess? Give them a **name** bestowed by Father Lightning, and a **badass nickname** you took up immediately after. You should also give them a **look**, and **attitude**.

Choose three questions from below and answer them, then write them down:

- *How are you adjusting to life in exile and why is it just the worst?*
- *What is it about rebellion and being stubborn that makes it worth it?*
- *What do you wish you could dump all your godly responsibilities to pursue in your free time?*
- *What's a deed or story your worshippers or fans know you for? What is it that your sisters know was omitted from the tale?*
- *What's the thing that separates you from your sisters?*

TRAITS

Traits help you understand your odds in tackling unfamiliar situations, completing tasks, and braving perils. Assign the numbers **1** and **0** between **Heart** and **Lightning**, and the numbers **-1**, **1**, **0** between **Pain**, **Glory**, and **Hype**.

>> MAIN TRAITS: HEART & LIGHTNING

- **HEART** represents your *teenage warrior spirit*. It tells us how dangerous you are in a fight, how hard you can flex, your passion and charm. Form bonds and vows, rally, cheer, love and cry.
- **LIGHTNING** measures your *immortal connections*. It shows your links with the supernatural and your birthright, and your force of will. Conjure storms, summon sprites, tear shit up, and use *magick*.

>> SIDE TRAITS: PAIN, GLORY & HYPE

- **PAIN** is what it means to be a Daughter of Lightning. As the children of Father Lightning, you are only recognised by the scars you carry; proof that you belong with your warrior sisters. **Pain** represents your indomitable will, your ability to bear it all and push beyond yourself, and also the connection you have with your own vulnerabilities.
 - If **PAIN** is your highest trait, answer:
 - *"What is your greatest weakness? How can you fix it?"*
- **GLORY** is what every Daughter is after; recognition and power for your many deeds. All gods are measured by it. **Glory** shows a Daughter's honour, fame and righteousness, her reputation with other immortals and higher beings, knowledge of rules and consequences, and her ability to carry out vows and promises.
 - If **GLORY** is your highest trait, answer:
 - *"What is your greatest burden? How are you hiding it?"*
- **HYPE** is how you *make some noise*. If you need a party or a scene to get riled up, a Daughter has all the tricks to do it. **Hype** is how you throw your parties, how you get your Party Favours, how you know who to call up for it, and how you get them to listen to you - whether its dregs or A-listers. It's your recklessness, your foolhardiness, and your *loud*.
 - If **HYPE** is your highest trait, answer:
 - *"What are you trying desperately to forget? How are you distracting yourself?"*

GEAR

In your exile, you were stripped of most of your heavenly affordances. Without any **Gear**, even an immortal is going to have a pretty hard time making it out of banishment. For some, these are tools for violent means - shotguns, knives, and ancient weaponry to keep dark things at bay. Other times, you'll find a demand for the magical, mystical, and weird.

As luck would have it, or maybe it was Father Lightning's benevolence, you managed to scrounge up a few things to start off. Your starting **Gear** is determined by the **Domain** you pick (*Chapter Three*).

>> BUYING MORE GEAR: PARTY FAVOURS

More often than not, you're going to find yourself in need of more **Gear** to accomplish your goals. Equally frequent is your complete lack of dependence (and understanding) of mortal currencies. So instead, you rely on **Party Favours** to get what you need.

Party Favours are treated like a subtype of **Gear**, to be exchanged for real, tangible items or to call in help. These can be physical or metaphysical - that one time you helped someone with a little trouble, and now they owe you. **If you're out of Party Favours**, roll a **Main Trait + Hype** to find someone who needs something done. Don't worry, there's always someone looking for your talents.

>> WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY?

Gods love symbols, and so do you. They define the elements of your immortality, your powers, your worship, and your powers. Numbers however, are troublesome in this context. See, numbers help mortals and dark beings apply precision into symbolism - one is less than two, two is less than three, and so on. This ensures fairness in their lowly negotiations. These practices are appalling to a god because symbols should be *free to exist*. A metaphor shouldn't be constrained - its beauty comes from imagining its many forms and interpretations.

So it's canonically well-known that gods don't understand cash.

Whenever you pick up more **Party Favours**, they may stack into multiple uses or different items separate from each other. However, **Cash** operates differently; whenever you pick up more of any form of cold, hard cash, they simply stack into the same **Party Favour**, **only bigger**. For example, picking up two instances of **Cash** simply results in **More Cash**. This includes paper money, credit cards, wallets etc. Any form of cash.

This is important to note because when a Daughter spends any cash-related forms of **Party Favour**, *she must spend it all at once*. It should only make sense to do so. After all, why would you ever want just a portion of cash when the whole pile only ever has one value?

Take note however, this mentality only applies to the Daughters - and a select few immortals in the game. Demons, mortals, wizards, and their lot have no qualms with asking back for their spare change.

Cash can also be excluded from stacking into each other if it symbolises something *other* than just money - for example: a child's first dollar, or a lucky coin. Gods can detect the inherent symbolism and values of most things, so the Storm Keeper must give a heads up if some form of cash picked up is different or special in some way.

THREE

THE DOMAINS, GIFTS, & TALENTS



WHAT MAKES A GOD?

Gods are products of belief, you are no different. Father Lightning always insisted you were already here *before* there were mortals but not even he can deny the power you derive from your myths and stories. Like all gods, the Daughters of Lightning are defined by those mythic archetypes: a **Domain**, your **Gifts** and **Talents**.

- **Domains** define a god's most prominent properties. It is who they are, their identity, the bread and butter of their immortal trade. **Choose one.**
- **Gifts** are special abilities unique to a specific god. Every Daughter must choose a different Gift between each other. **Choose one.**
- **Talents** are the little things you're good at. They are split into two types:
 - Your **Immortal Talent**, bestowed upon you by Father Lightning or through some mystical, mythical means. It's what you've always known how to do. Most times, it works in tandem with your Domain to determine your purpose as a god. **Choose one under your Domain.**
 - Your **Personal Talent**, something you're good at by practice or interest. Even gods must have hobbies. **Choose a Personal Talent for your character.**

DOMAINS

THE RIDER

You're a speed demon through and through - whether on chariot, motorcycle, or anything with wheels. In combat, you've taken a liking to breaking skateboards on deserving faces.

- **Roll +1d6** when pulling off sick vehicular stunts.
- **Roll +1d6** when you are going to break a board on something.
- **Immortal Talent:** Navigation OR Mechanics.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A decent car, A motorcycle, A cell phone

THE REEDEEMED

Once upon a time, you were the worst among your sisters. Already exiled once for something equally stupid and cryptic, Father Lightning decided to bring you back after making amends. Or did He send your sisters to join you? Either way, you'll trust your signature weapon to get you all through this.

- **Roll +1d6** when you call up old connections.
- **Roll +1d6** when using your signature weapon.
- **Immortal Talent:** None. Choose a second Personal Talent instead.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Signature weapon

THE WITCH

There is power all around you, and you know plenty about them. You help your sisters with summoning sprites, calling the dead, warding away the dark, and reading their immortal horoscopes.

- **Roll +1d6** when using rituals to summon or ward.
- **Roll +1d6** when binding and wielding spirits.
- **Immortal Talent:** Occult OR Astrology
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Cursed weapon, Tarot cards, Chalks and markers

THE FIST

Your fists are legend. Whether you soaked them in the cradle of creation, inscribed runes into every vein, or Father Lightning Himself cried upon it during your birth, they let you hit things nothing else can.

- **Roll +1d6** when fighting with your fists.
- **Roll +1d6** when tracking down non-mortal threats.
- **Immortal Talent:** Occult OR Intimidation
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A sport bike, A wallet of cash you found, A disguise

THE CHILD

There must have been a mistake. You're way too young to be exiled - you *barely* even know your sisters! It's obvious you were dragged into this whole ordeal by accident. Now you're stuck with your sisters until you find a way back.

- **Roll +1d6** when being a total brat.
- **Roll +1d6** when you act cute to get your way.
- **Immortal Talent:** None. Choose a second Persona Talent instead.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A cute outfit, A smart phone, A taser

THE QUIET BEFORE THE STORM

You are the gasp in the dark, the drumbeats before the riff, and the hairs rising on someone's skin. You are the *Quiet Before The Storm*. Born into an ancient and powerful domain, you are a master of uncertainty and anticipation. You have gone to great lengths to harness your abilities; a vow of silence, mastering the blade, dressing in all black like a *badass*, etc.

- **Roll +1d6** when you raise tensions.
- **Roll +1d6** when being silent or sneaky.
- **Immortal Talent:** Hiding OR Parkour.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Throwing knives, A sword, A pair of drumsticks

THE NEW

You know everything about technology and progress - you live it. Information is your sustenance, you constantly trawl message boards, social media, and Internet backrooms for the latest dirt. Being polite about it is the last thing on your mind though.

- **Roll +1d6** when using computers or the Internet.
- **Roll +1d6** when being annoying.
- **Immortal Talent:** Hacking OR Video Games.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A smart phone, A social media account, A hideout

THE GUARDIAN

When the realms are in danger, Father Lightning calls on you to sort things out. You've stopped demon uprisings, saved mortal lives, and held back monsters plenty of times. You've as taken a liking to fighting with a sharpened mortal stop sign, but any polearm will do in a pinch.

- **Roll +1d6** when wielding street signs and poles.
- **Roll +1d6** when defending your allies.
- **Immortal Talent:** Leadership OR Occult.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A sharpened stop sign, A cell phone, A pick-up

THE STAR

You might have lost your home, but you'll always have *sound*. You embody the wild, loud, thundering hearts of a million icons. You are the sweetest melody, and the most epic ballads. You spend your time rocking out on your signature instrument, but you can also swing it like an axe or scythe!

- **Roll +1d6** when wielding your signature instrument.
- **Roll +1d6** when making music or sonic attacks.
- **Immortal Talent:** Rocking Out OR Looking Cool AF
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Signature instrument

THE FORGOTTEN

You are fading from existence. You had your own domain once, full of its own incredible myths and devoted followers, but that's all in the past now. You barely cling on to immortality by being associated with your sisters. You've started to forget what you used to do yourself. You wield two weapons from your past - it's close enough.

- **Roll +1d6** when blending into the background.
- **Roll +1d6** when using your two weapons.
- **Immortal Talent:** Hiding OR Street Smarts
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Two weapons of your choice

THE SPELLEATER

Father Lightning's thirst for knowledge and power flows just as potently in you. You spend every waking moment laying hands on occult tomes, forbidden scrolls, mortal smut and reading really ill-advised prophecies.

- **Roll +1d6** when recklessly slinging spells.
- **Roll +1d6** when consuming ancient occult knowledge.
- **Immortal Talent:** Occult OR Street Smarts
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A haunted spellbook, A smart phone, A wizard staff

THE STREET

In every city, every town, every realm, there will always be the Street. You are the cobblestone they walk on, the rats they avoid, the shadow that keeps them safe. Your punches are blood and concrete, and your mind knows all about the streets' secrets.

- **Roll +1d6** when fighting dirty.
- **Roll +1d6** when you hit the streets for info.
- **Immortal Talent:** Intimidation OR Street Smarts
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** A gun, A hideout, A sport bike

THE SLAYER

You like making a sport out of killing things in the dark - ghosts, demons, and the unspeakable. You're especially fond of the blade Father Lightning made for you - its edge filled with almighty judgement.

- **Roll +1d6** when wielding almighty weaponry.
- **Roll +1d6** when surrounded by enemies.
- **Immortal Talent:** Leadership OR Intimidation.
- **Starting Gear (Choose One):** Lightning Blade

GIFTS

ANGRY

Your anger strikes like hot thunder. **Once per fight, you may fly into a rage and ignore all risks for one attack.** You can do this after rolling. **When activated, declare what's pissed you off so bad.**

ICON

You have a following, whether an online persona, TV personality, or local street legend. You have people loyal to you, and you do to them as you wish.

Once per day, you can call up a lackey out of a crowd or via contact. Name them, and choose a *Talent* you have. You can have them use that *Talent* in your place without taking an action yourself. The lackey lasts until they are exhausted, or have other commitments.

Lackeys have a risk of going missing or getting into trouble when you're not around.

HUNTER

You've studied them extensively and made it your purpose to take them down. **Once per session, select an enemy category and declare them to be your 'prey' ('gangsters', 'vampires', 'my sisters').** For the rest of the session, you roll +1d6 for any tasks or attack involving them directly.

YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD

You've been recognised as formidable and a worthy rival by someone else. Name them, and give them two *Personal Talents*.

Once a day, you can have your rival interrupt a scene in any way, shape or form you want - especially if it means saving your ass so they can finish you later themselves. Your rival also runs the risk of interrupting you randomly to pick a fight in every other moment.

CARING

You care deeply for your friends. **When you take a significant rest and dedicate time to it, you may help someone heal 1 extra Harm.** Things might feel a bit awkward the first time.

FLEX EM'

Once per fight, you can spend a success and flex your muscles to heal 1 Harm. You must flex and strike a pose in real life.

LOADED

Against all odds, you've come to obtain a LOT of money and hardly have to earn anymore. **You gain the 'Loaded' Party Favour to represent a huge sum of money on you.** 'Loaded' can only be used once per every session.

Be careful, you run the risk of being robbed or having your cash stolen.



I MUST GET STRONGER!

When you are defeated (based on your own judgement) by someone, you may **punch the ground and declare loudly: "I must get stronger!"**

From then onward, you gain +1d6 when you do anything related to dedicating yourself into defeating said foe. This includes training, challenging yourself, or thinking about them when you fight someone else.

You cannot use this Gift again until you have finally managed to defeat said foe.

WILDSKINNED

Shapeshifting comes to you more easily than the rest of your sisters. You may shapeshift partial animal features and into smaller animals with ease. **Partial hits do not carry any risk for those actions.**

You gain +1d6 whenever you shapeshift into a larger, or more difficult animal form such as bears, horses, and dinosaurs.

HARD-BOILED

When you are trying to track people down through old-fashioned, solid detective work, **you gain +1d6.**

You also have a **cool hat.**

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

You understand math and - ugh - you might even LIKE it.

You do not need to roll to solve simple, regular math equations.

You can also separate and spend cash in different quantities instead of as just one Party Favour.

I HAVE FRIENDS!

You have something more valuable than just brute strength and magical power - it's *friendship*. When you are caught in a tough situation, **you may grip your fists tightly, close your eyes, and think about your friends to gain +1d6 on the next action.**

There is no limit to this Gift. But you must maintain your friendships to make it work.

SO WHO'S NEXT?

Once a session when you get into a fight, **you can activate this Gift and force opponents to come at you one-by-one instead of as a group.**

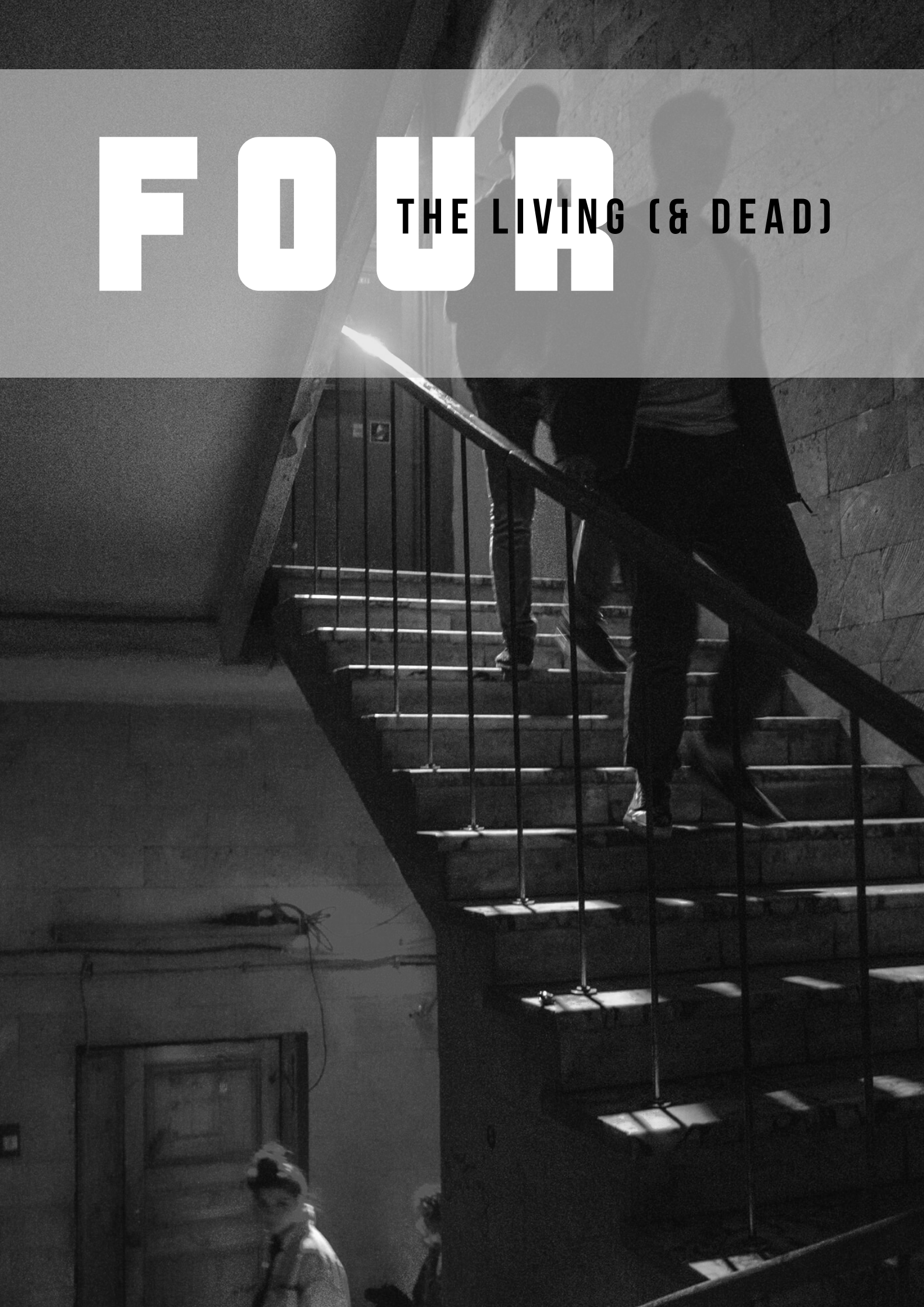
EXPLOSIVE ENTRY

Once per session, you may enter a fight via **LIGHTNING STRIKE.**

You immediately attract attention.

FOUR

THE LIVING (& DEAD)



GETTING INTO FIGHTS

>> ROLLING DICE

For the most part, rolling dice in combat is the same as rolling dice for any action throughout the rest of HEART & LIGHTNING. However, **you cannot roll the same combination of stats twice in a row**. Refer to **Chapter One: The Basics**.

>> RISKS, RESPONSES

In addition to **risks** in combat, enemies also have **responses**: a list of things enemies can do to you when you score a **miss** or **partial hit**. Responses add to risks *separately*, so when you mess up an action in combat, it will look like this:

- On a **miss**: You fucked up. **Take all risks involved in the action + two enemy responses**.
- On a **partial hit**. You made it, but at a cost. **You must take one risk + one enemy response**. You may still **downgrade your own success to downgrade the risk or the response**.
- On a **full hit**: You succeed the action flawlessly. **You take no risks + give no responses**.

>> LIST OF RESPONSES

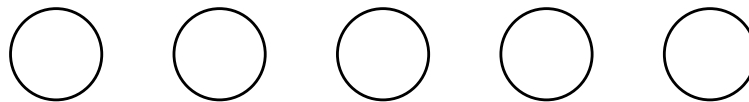
Opponents and characters who are not the players (NPCs) don't roll their attacks in combat. Instead, each one selects from the list of **responses below** when a PC scores a **miss** or a **partial hit**. Sometimes, an NPC will have **Specials - responses only they can use**. If the PCs are showing inaction during a fight, it is counted as a **miss**.

- **ATTACK**: PC takes Harm.
- **AREA**: Two PCs take Harm. Only available for certain opponents.
- **GRAB**: The PC is held and cannot move until freed. If the enemy uses **Grab** again, the PC takes Harm as determine by the Storm Keeper **AND maintains the Grab**. Attacking the opponent and releasing their Grab, whether on yourself or on another PC, *are separate actions*.
- **BLOCK**: Gain +1 Armor to reduce 1 Damage from next hit.
- **PUMP**: Upgrade ATTACK into AREA, OR **upgrade past Harm dealt into Serious Harm**.

HEALTH & HARM

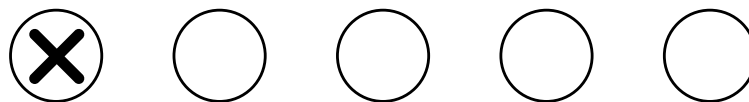
When your character suffers injury or trauma (enough to actually wound them), you take harm. If you take too much harm, you die (sometimes).

Every Daughter has a **Harm Track** consisting of five circles. When your character suffers harm, check off a number of boxes on your harm track equal to the harm suffered.



Harm Track

The higher the harm reflects the more badly injured your character is, moving from minor beatings and scratches to having your immortal life genuinely in danger - needing immediate intervention. You always begin marking harm from left to right.



Harm Track

>> HARM RATINGS

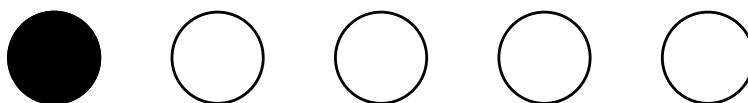
Harm is a simple metric for measuring how much physical (and sometimes metaphysical) damage an attack does to you, roughly distinguishing between mortal punches, demonic claws, and shooting a gun. Here are some general examples for representing harm in HEART & LIGHTNING:

- **1 Harm:** Rough but blunt trauma. Fists, baseball bats, accidental punches. This stuff barely even fazes you and will quickly heal.
- **2 Harm:** Car crashes, getting twacked with a lamp post, a gun shot. You are bleeding from your mouth and somewhat bruised, and *definitely pissed off*.
- **3 Harm:** Serious damage. Beaten to a pulp by a giant, thrown off a skyscraper, or a grenade blast in your face. You are obviously wounded and scarred, and in a lot of pain.
- **4-5 Harm:** Legendary godkillers, a missile, or a blastwave of concentrated energy unleashed at you. This is enough to *kill a god*. Stay away.

>> SERIOUS HARM

Sometimes, your opponent might want to deal more lasting damage against your immortal form. In these cases, they might deal **Serious Harm** to you. These are major injuries for you - most opponents want to knock you out in a fight and get it over with, but others will twist the knife, stomp on you while you're unconscious, or break something.

When this happens, you don't mark any progress on your Harm Track, but instead **black out a Harm Circle you already crossed out for each instance of Serious Harm**.



Harm Track

Unlike Harm, **Serious Harm** cannot be healed naturally over time with rest by your character. Instead, it must be treated with intensive care and medical attention. Sometimes, this may mean several days of rest in a hospital, or a day or two in the hands of a Wizard (*ugh*).

>> IMMORTALITY, DEATH & HEALING

When Father Lightning kicked you out of home, He kept you immortal. After all, what use is punishment in exile if you could *just die* and get it over with by reincarnating back there? Instead, you are being punished by having to *live* through it.

When healing Harm, all a Daughter needs to do is *indulge their Domain for a few hours*, or *rest for a full day*. They could go to a concert and live it up, or get into a fight with zero risks (drunk mortals are an easy example) to get their energy back up.

When a Daughter dies (either by taking 5 Harm or 3 Serious Harm), they do so like any other human or supernatural being. The exception is that they get to come back from it. Given a day or so in a quiet place (preferably somewhere with rain or nature), the Daughter will come back to life. But a god dying is no trifling matter. When the Daughter reawakens, they are changed by their death - either reemerging as something entirely new or different. They keep their memories intact, but they are also no longer who they were. For rules on resurrection, refer to **Chapter Five: The Surge**.

In addition, a Daughter who dies **immediately attracts unwanted attention**.

OPPONENTS

There are four types of enemies. **Type** indicates their respective average HP. Unlike PCs, NPC opponents have Health Points and take Damage, the number being how much it takes to kill or defeat them. "**X**" means they get that much HP per **PC** in this fight.

- **Mook:** 1-2HP. Your basic mortal, low-blood vampire and demonic minion. Not much of a fight.
- **Light:** 5-1X HP. A decent fight that gets your attention.
- **Mid:** 1X HP. An actual challenge that takes effort and leaves a mark.
- **Miniboss:** 2XHP. A strong opponent who has made a name for themselves.
- **Boss.** 3X HP. Someone who can hold their ground against an actual god. Watch out!

>> DEALING DAMAGE & USING GEAR

Scoring *partial hits* or *full hits* lets you deal Damage or succeed an action in combat. Your damage can be further modified by using **Gear** Although the **Harm Ratings** section earlier should also ready give you a rough idea of a Gear's capabilities, here are some quick examples:

- **Fists (against mortals):** 3 Damage
- **Fists (against supernaturals):** 2 Damage
- **Fists (against immortals):** 1 Damage
- **9mm Pistol:** 1 Damage
- **Assault Rifle:** 2 Damage
- **Katana:** 3 Damage
- **Grenades:** 3 Damage
- **Spear:** 2 Damage
- **Your Guitar:** 3 Damage
- **Signature Weapon:** 3-4 Damage (up to player and Storm Keeper)

>> GODLY RESTRAINT & SPARING OPPONENTS

Being a god sometimes also means you are *ridiculously strong*. As a rule, whenever you score successes and **do more damage than the opponent has HP left - they will immediately die**. This is out of your control for the most part unless you **show restraint**. Your best bet is to just stop punching that annoying vampire in the face when they look like they've had enough.

In other cases, you can also **make a roll** to avoid turning the next unlucky opponent into a red mist.



introducing mortals

MORTALS

Mortals are your bread and butter in every setting, every galaxy, and every instance of Earth. They are living and dying beings, slowly having their clocks run out just as they run about to accomplish as much as possible before it does. They are flesh and blood, decay and energy, needs and wants. Sometimes, a mortal or two might stand out from the rest; more aware of the world, more stronger than the rest, more hubris. Some of them, the more annoying ones, decide to dabble in dangerous magical arts in exchange for power - or even worse, *they decide to hunt gods.*

REGULAR JOE

Literally a regular person. Most likely to have been caught in something over their heads to have met you in a fight.

Type: Mook (1HP)

Special:

*Just a Regular Joe - can only use **ATTACK**.*

Help! - Always tries to call for help from cops or more people.

STREET PSYCHIC

They make their trade in markets and street corners reading futures and star signs. Half of them actually have the power to do so.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

*Psychic Juggle - If the Street Psychic manages to **GRAB** you with their telekinesis, they can immediately fling you like a ragdoll and deal Serious Harm.*

*I Know The Stars - The Street Psychic can use **PUMP** to read your future moves and warn someone. -1 on your next combat roll.*

BRUTE

Your average bouncer or tough alleyway criminal. Has a lot more muscle - but it's not enough to take you on.

Type: Mook (2HP)

GANG MEMBER

Rides a bike. Probably out and about to cause some trouble. Most likely pawn for the next supernatural on the block.

Type: Mook (2HP)

Special:

Do You Know Who I Am?? - Calls for more Gang Members or a Gang Captain.

GANG CAPTAIN

Toughest asshole on the block. Rides in with a spiked bat and a loud outfit - probably a spiky bike jacket or white painted coat. Sometimes has a gun.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Who the Hell Do You Think I Am - Starts the fight with 1d6 Gang Members.

*Batter Up - Gang Captain swings their spiked bat to hit an **AREA**.*

MASCOT MUSCLE

Don't be fooled by the goofy dances and charming design. Beneath these furry bastards is a retired martial artist. The economy has been ruff for Roland the Dog.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Speed is Everything - Mascot Muscle can use +1 response on **partial hits** OR **miss**.

LITTLE BIRD

They turned this city upside down by tearing apart every dojo they went to. Their martial arts is revolutionary, superhuman even. Now, they've come to kick your ass.

Type: Boss (3XHP)

Special:

Way of the Bird - On a **GRAB**, Little Bird kicks you upwards into the air dramatically up to 20 feet. You spend the next turn falling down and must roll to land. Little Bird can continue *Way of the Bird* against you, or end the air juggle to turn their attention on someone else.

One Way Punch - The people LOVE Little Bird and will do what they can to help him fight. Once per fight when they **ATTACK**, you are shoved into a nearby resident witnessing the fight who does you Serious Harm in a brutal but comedic manner.

COP

Ew.

Type: Mook (2HP)

Special:

I Need Backup! - When you defeat an office, you must make a roll to silence their radio or risk having more cops running to the area.

CORRUPT COP

Cops in the pocket of some local menace, supernatural or not - doesn't matter.

Type: Mook (1XHP)

Special:

Safekeeping - On a **GRAB**, Corrupt Cop steals a **Party Favour** from you. You cannot get it back until you defeat them.

SPECIAL ASSAULT TEAM

A squad of cops with tactics, teamwork, and a lot of gun. They get called in on some weird stuff around the city and are one breath away from going rogue as hunters themselves.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

Flashbang! - Throws out a stun grenade. Everyone except the Squad who look at it is treated with a **GRAB**. The Squad can still act however they want.

Light Em' Up! - Once per fight, the Squad can lay down a firing line to exhaust all their ammo against a singular foe. Does 2 Serious Harm. Cannot use ranged weapons for rest of fight.

Shields! - The Squad bring up riot shields and start fighting you with riot-fu. They take -1 Damage for the rest of the fight unless the shields are broken.

SENIOR JOE

Oh my god. *Definitely* got caught in something over their heads to have met you in a fight.

Type: Mook (1HP)

Special:

Why Would You Even Think Of That??? - On **full hits**, you score **partial hits** against Senior Joe instead, and will feel very bad.

HUNTER

Sometimes, all it takes is witnessing the supernatural and a mid-life crisis to have a person go completely off the rails and fight vampires at night.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Divided I Stand - Hunters are solitary beings on their job. When fighting alone, Hunters will always activate a response regardless of your rolls.

SENIOR HUNTER

They've met your kind before, and they don't take you kindly.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

Hunter Hunter - Once per fight, unveils a secret weapon they developed that rivals supernatural effects. Immediately deals **Serious Harm** with **ATTACK**.

HUNTER SQUAD

An odd sight. A congregation can only mean there's trouble big enough to make all this social awkwardness worth it.

Type: Boss (3XHP)

Special:

Hunter Hunter Hunter - On every instance, the Hunters always deal Harm to an AREA.

Stake Together - If defeated, Hunter Squad splits into 1d6 Hunters to continue the fight.

MAD SCIENTIST

Supernatural activities are bound to attract all sorts of attention. This one is trying to complete their thesis.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

The Working Dead - Always accompanied by 1d6 Regular Joes from the same coworking space.

THE SNOOP

They've been following you for *days* trying to get dirt on your immortal life and finally to prove to everyone the world of supernaturals. Too bad their letters to the press keep getting stolen by vampires at the post office.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Paparazzi - Takes a picture of what's happening. If they get away with it, it's going to be trouble down the line.



introducing wizards

WIZARDS

Wizards are defined entirely by their ambition and hubris. Dissatisfied with a mortal life, most of them turned to magic in order to escape their prisons. A lot of them seek out forbidden libraries of dusty tomes to read dead languages. Other dig up alien technology to fuel their undying thirst for galactic mystical brain juice. The worst ones of all become hired talent for the corps, creating undead armies of workers.

CULTIST

Your average cultist. Thinks their next promotion is totally not going to involve them being sacrificed, and will grant them the power they've been looking for.

Type: Mook (1HP)

Special:

Sacrifice - If the Cultist protects something or someone important to them, -1 on all combat rolls against them.

DARK HUSTLER

A cult leader who has entranced their audience with street magic, busking or just tourist YouTube videos. They've attained the power of persuasion over mortal minds.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Fanbase - Always accompanied by 1d6 Cultists.

Pick A Card - Once per fight, stops you from dealing damage by distracting you with a magic trick.

NECROMANER

Supernatural activities are bound to attract all sorts of attention. This one is trying to complete their next project.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

The Walking Dead - Always accompanied by 1d6 Zombies from the same corporate laboratory.

CLAIRE

Their voice is literally magic. A lounge singer, street talent, or studio one-hit wonder. They've racked up a lot of money and attention with those mystical vocals.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

Fanbase - Always accompanied by 1d6 Cultists.

Softly - You are entranced by a soothing song and cannot use Gifts for the rest of the fight.

Sofia - A tragic love song. Roll **HEART + PAIN** to resist or sit out the rest of the fight and cry until someone slaps some sense into you.

North Awaits - A chilling song filled with metaphors. Arctic energy blasts out to damage an **AREA**.

BLADE MYSTIC

The most pretentious kind of Wizard you can meet. Wields a sword possessed by a spirit or something else. You didn't listen to their monologue.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Monologue - When Blade Mystic **PUMPS**, they can choose to heal 1 Harm by providing exposition about their past out loud.

LEON THE PIRATE

Leon is a summoner of demons and imps who has practiced and honed their craft for decades. They remain young and youthful by sustaining off the life energy of their victims. They also dress like a weird punk pirate.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

Mystical Entourage - Once per fight, summons 1d6 Succubus.

Pirates Are In Season Now - Leon calls forth a wave of drowning aqua (water) from the nearest source to hit an **AREA**.

Fire Up! - When Leon **PUMPS**, they summon two razor rings of fire nearby. On their next **ATTACK**, the razor rings can be sent out to deal 3 Harm on one target. The razor rings disappear after.

FASHION MAGICIAN

A magician with some serious fashion cred. Made dark deals to get the latest e-shopping discounts.

Type: Mook (2HP)

Special:

Fashion Passion - On their first **ATTACK**, Fashion Magician immediately **PUMPS** for free.

FASHION MAGICIAN MASTER

The grand mage of every bundle shop in town. Has control over all fabrics and linens. Also sports a hella outfit.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Fashion Mission - Enter a fight with 1d6 Fashion Magicians.

This Is Fleece!!! - When Fashion Magician Master takes damage the first time, they can immediately **GRAB** their attacker by sending out a wave of snake-like scarves.

JHELISA STARCHILD

Hailed as the prophetic child of a generations-old Wizard family, Jhelisa Starchild wields literal, astronomical power.

Type: Boss (3XHP)

Special:

Starfox - Summons a companion from the stars to fight with them (Blade Mystic stats).

Falling Down - If Jhelisa **GRABS** someone, their next **ATTACK** is laced with solar energy and does Serious Harm immediately.

Horrorscope - Jhelisa steps into a pocket dimension to teleport on the battlefield.



introducing demons 

DEMONS

Fallen, disgraced, and exiled, Demons are no different from you - if it wasn't for their tendency to try and screw all of existence-kind. These supernaturals are fond of sin, pleasure, violence, and watching folks walk into their own imminent doom. You'll find them operating in all levels of the underground trade: information brokers, smugglers and hustlers, bar owners, lawyers. But more often than not, the smarter ones will hang back and let their pawns do the work to keep themselves a safe distance.

IMP

A worthless demon who runs errands for Wizards and stronger Demons. Every single one of them is constantly looking for a chance to overthrow the boss. Slip them a bone and they'll immediately yap to you about their masters.

Type: Mook (1HP)

Special:

Hell Pest - Imps are tiny bastards. You can only damage them on **full hits**.

DEMONHEAD

A DJ Demon that spends their time on the turntables at every other club. They're a dime a dozen. Constantly jamming it out and encouraging the populace into the sin of dance music.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Night Crowd - Accompanied by 1d6 Demon Clubbers.

One More Set - Demonhead spins out wave of vinyl records in an **AREA**.

Midnight Mosh - If fighting in a club. Once per fight, Demonhead can summon 2 Brutes.

SUCCUBUS

Popular in mainstream media, these red-skinned, flying demons use their stereotypes to trick mortals so they can literally devour them whole. Don't believe what you see on TV.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Come Closer - At beginning of fight, -1 to deal damage to Succubus until hit.

LIAR

Liars are demons of deception. They excel at omitting truths, tricking people into contracts, and currently host every single shopping channel in existence.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Let's Shake On It - If you try to downgrade an **ATTACK** from a Liar, you must also give them one Party Favour.

VAMPIRE GOON

Vampires are technically Demons by some weird bloodline incident, but they don't like to acknowledge it.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Suck On It - If Vampire Goon gets to a mortal nearby, suck on them to gain 1HP.

VAMPIRE JOE

Ah, yes. The typical Joe who got tricked into a contract of servitude. Often spends their time grumbling about the work hours they got stuck with.

Type: Mook (2HP)

Special:

Hell Has Union - Accompanied by 2 Imps at all times.

THE BLOODY SPEAR

A rising lieutenant in D-Man's ranks, this ancient warrior has lived for hundreds of years and now spends their days swaggering around in fine-tailored suits with their cane-like giant golden spear.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

I Am The Spear - Declares their identity in battle.

Spear Throw - Hurls a spear at a target they can spot. It will reach regardless of distance and obstacles.

The Golden Wind - Does sick acrobatic move with their golden spear to hit an **AREA** around them.

The Point - Once per fight on an **ATTACK**, can spear someone through their body and **GRAB** them simultaneously.

I Accept - Declares a challenge against an opponent. They must fight one-on-one to the death unless intervened by a stronger force or foe.

SINFUL ACCOUNTANT

Once in a million of accountants running D-Man's empire of sin and violence. Their handle on math is *horrifying*.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Statistics! - Once per fight. Blurts out a series of confusing jargon and numbers to escape damage.

VAMPIRE HUNTER

Not a Hunter for Vampires, but a Hunter who became a Vampire.

Type: Mid (1XHP)

Special:

Old Dog - The Vampire Hunter declares they've fought something like you once. Starts the fight with a free **PUMP**.

DEMON CLUBBER

A nightlife fanatic who went off the deep end, and came back to the mortal realm. Now spends their days lining up for every club possible. When agitated, they pull out an unbreakable bottle of liquor to fight.

Type: Light (5-1XHP)

Special:

Smashed - When Demon Clubber lands an **ATTACK**, they can choose to knock a Gear out of your hands instead.

Drink Up! - When Demon Clubber **PUMPS**, one other Demon nearby pumps for free.

THE KING

Visiting vampire lord. They've clad their ashen pale skin in colourful floral shirt and tasteful beach shorts. The King has been having trouble with a band of delinquents back at home lately, and is here to let out some steam. But make no mistake, they *will* kick your ass. Pretty sure this is a crossover of some kind.

Type: Miniboss (2XHP)

Special:

Vacation Snack - When The King **GRABS** someone, they can **GRAB** again to heal 2 HP.

Kingmaker - If the King **GRABS** someone, they can **GRAB** again to deal **AREA** damage (also deals damage to the person **GRABBED** separately).

Classic Vampire Weakness - The King cannot be killed unless via something sharp in the heart.

Palpatations - When the King **PUMPS**, they can choose to strike ancient horror into your soul and stop you from fighting. Roll **HEART + HYPE** to resist or break out of the trance.

I Don't Have Time For This - The King immediately stops combat by paying **A LOT OF CASH**. They even invite you to dinner.

D-MAN

THE biggest asshole. Award-winning record producer. King of the underground music scene. The Imitator. The Miracle Maker. The Devil. It's D-Man, baby.

Type: More Than Just A Boss (4XHP)

Special:

It's In Your Contract - When D-Man **PUMPS** twice in a row, they can summon a hellfire clone of any opponent except The King to fight with them. The imitation shares all abilities but only has 1X HP. Only available twice per fight.

My Kingdom Of Remorse - If fighting on their own turf (which is almost everywhere outside of nature), D-Man may spend a response to reshape the environment however they wish. Walls rise, floors open up, the ceiling lets down a disco ball.

I Know - D-Man threatens to reveal something you do not want your sisters to know unless you follow their bargain.

Prince of Darkness - If fighting in the dark, D-Man gains +1 response on every **miss** and **partial hit**.

The Boss - At half HP, immediately summons 1d6 Demons of any kind - excluding The King.

FIVE

THE SURGE



GROWING YOUR POWERS

In HEART & LIGHTNING, you do not level up similarly to most tabletop roleplaying games. However, your characters can still experience *change* - albeit in a different way. These changes occur most of the time as plot hooks and character development, specifically to your own answers in ***What's Your Deal?*** and ***Side Stats*** when you created your Daughters in ***Chapter Two: The Characters***. When these moments happen, your characters will have experienced something they never expected from being apart from their heavenly homeland: feelings, intimacy, betrayal, hurt, etc.

We call these moments The Surge.

>> GAINING POWER IN THE SURGE

When a session has ended, the Storm Keeper will set aside time with the players to debrief and go over the session's details. In this time, the characters will ask:

- Has my character done anything this session that reinforces their ***Deals?***
- Has my character made any progress on their ***Pain/Glory/Hype?***
- Has my character experienced something they never felt before?

For each time a player says yes, the character will gain a ***Surge***, to a maximum of three per session. Each answer requires the player to frame a short scene to show how the Daughter addresses this new self-discovery, and its results. No rolling is required.

Each question can be answered yes more than once. There is no limit to how much ***Surge*** you can hold throughout every session, but it's highly encouraged for players to spend them on their character and their actions to avoid nasty consequences.

>> SPENDING & USING SURGE

Surge is a measure of a god's strength and growth, it is a deep welling of power gathering within them in moments of heroism, vulnerability, and great wisdom. As such, ***Surge*** can not only empower a Daughter in their long runs as gods, but also temporarily in their exploits - but doing so has its costs. Wasting self-discovery on short-term goals is detrimental to a god's mythos. In game, ***spending surge*** can be used for the following:

- ***Spend 1 Surge*** to force a scene completely into your favour. Crowds turn their heads, magic works flawlessly, you wipe the floor against your enemies. This still has its limits, but provides you the impact of ***multiple full hits in a scene***.
- ***Spend 3 Surge*** after a long time off to raise your ***PAIN, GLORY or HYPE***.
- ***Spend 5 Surge*** after a long time off to raise your ***HEART or LIGHTNING***.

>> RAISING SURGE & PLOT HOOKS

Raising your **Surge** isn't just a simple matter of spending points. It also represents a great narrative change in your story and conversations. When you spend **Surge** to raise your **Main or Side Stats**, answer the following:

- If you have a new highest **Side Stat**: answer its associated question in **Side Stats: Pain, Glory & Hype** in **Chapter Two: The Characters**. Replace it over your original **Side Stat**. Frame a scene on how this new question emerges in your Daughter.
- If you raise your **Main Stat**: *How are you inexplicably changed and how can people obviously notice it?*

>> HUBRIS: STACKING AND WASTING SURGE

Surge can also be detrimental to a god if it is stacked or wasted. The destiny and fates of the world moves along at a steady pace; including your growth. For a god to not progress and grow is to go against the laws of the universe itself. Whenever a Daughter either **uses Surge to temporarily force a scene**, or **has more than 3 Surges** at the end of a session, they will activate the risk '**You attract supernatural attention**' at the next possible moment.

DEATH AND RESSURECTION

Death is not easy for gods - well, it's actually pretty simple, but it comes with some rather nasty and tiresome problems. The issue lies in a god's mythos. When gods die, their tales are suppose to end unless they don't. In moments of rebellion, stubbornness, and sheer determination, plenty of gods have risen back from the grave to claim their immortality once again. But when they do so and continue their stories, those stories need a new chapter to follow. Gods love their symbolism, and so do the destiny and fates surround their mythos. So the fates bend things around to make it work, to help this returned god into a place where they fit. The same goes for you.

When a Daughter dies, they are allowed to resurrect on the following conditions:

- The Daughter must be buried or laid to rest for a full day - either in a thundering storm with rain touching them, or in a place of pure, untouched nature.
- The Daughter must ressurect - this is identical to **creating a new character**. Except they will keep their name, their **Deals**, and their memories.
- The Daughter cannot choose the same **starting Stats, Domains and Gifts** as last time.

When the Daughter resurrects, they will also carry one additional **Deal**:

- *In experiencing death, I am left with a great question I must do everything to explain and learn about. What is it?*

When all is done, return to playing the game and telling their stories.

SIK THE STORM KEEPER



WHAT IS A STORM KEEPER?

The Storm Keeper is HEART & LIGHTNING's version of a facilitator for the game. In essence, the Storm Keeper is just another player. Just as players have PCs and play the Daughters of Lightning, the Storm Keeper inhabits the voice, thoughts, and actions of every other character around them. If there is anything that needs to be said the most, the Storm Keeper is not a boss, a scriptwriter or a director. The Storm Keeper does not plan for everyone where they will go and what they must do. Instead, they are here to help everyone get their stories told, and ensure we all have a good time.

This may seem like a daunting role for a player to have at first but we believe in some very simple tools to keep a table fun and safe, and also easy for a new Storm Keeper to get their footing and play together! In here, they've been compiled for easy use and reference!

THE FIVE RULES

The Five Rules are simple establishing tools to help a group of players in HEART & LIGHTNING get comfortable with opening up to each other, and is key to building a happy, healthy session together. It's recommended a Storm Keeper repeats these five rules at the beginning of their game sessions to remind each other of them. Lastly, these five rules are not permanent but instead are intended to be flexible and able to grow as you play with your players, to be amended over time as you grow to know each other. They are:

>> EVERYONE CAN SPEAK UP ANY TIME

Players can interrupt the game at any moment if they wish to be heard. They may use hand signals to get attention such as placing a palm against the table, a fist in the air, or a gente 'excuse me'. This allows players to speak their thoughts if they feel bothered or uncomfortable at any time, but is also great for toilet breaks! Plenty of us grow up in spaces where it's natural to keep quite when someone else is speaking. This rule helps ease those tension and presumptions for a more open atmosphere.

>> EVERYONE CAN LEAVE ANY TIME

Similar to the last rule, players may leave the table at any time they wish - even if they don't provide a reason or excuse. This rule allows players to eject themselves from an uncomfortable situation any time they need it. Like in all cultures, leaving a table or event suddenly can seem impolite or disrespectful to the host. When the Storm Keeper opens the way and declares that doing so is not an offence, it can help people leave situations where they feel uncomfortable speaking out. This allows debriefings to happen alter as well when they feel comfortable themselves.

>> EVERYONE IS LEARNING HERE

Declaring this is important as it not only allows a new Storm Keeper to state that they are new to the role, and will be learning as they play - but it also allow everyone to make mistakes without any terrible repercussions or feelings on the matter. Lots of players can enter tabletop roleplaying games, including HEART & LIGHTNING with expectations of a grand adventure run by expert storytellers. This expectation also leads to a lot of pressure on both Storm Keepers and players alike. Every scene becomes suddenly a test of how good a player or Storm Keeper you are, and every moment is filled with judgement and self-doubt as a result. This rule then is to avoid those feelings, to say it's okay for everyone to mess up, take their time, and play how they want to play without having any presumed standards sitting on their shoulders.

>> EVERYONE WORKS TOGETHER

Tabletop roleplaying games are an exhausting exercise of slipping into intense narratives, inhabiting your own favourite characters, and plotting the most dramatic of scenes. It's more natural and easy than you think for all of us to slip into it *too hard* and not realise our limits. In these cases, we start to hog scenes more, narrate for too long, and focus on ourselves too hard. So, declaring we all work together serves two purpose: 1) to make it clear that this is not a game for just the self, it is a game with players together; and 2) that we should all contribute to each other's storytelling and scenes. This refocuses the sessions into its original expectations: playing *together*. Ask players to give the spotlight to someone else whenever possible, to help contribute ideas into someone else's scene when it's not their character, and most of all: *ask for consent when they want to do these things for others and themselves.*

>> EVERYONE IS HERE TO HAVE FUN

the most important rule of all and the most often forgotten one. We are all here to have *fun*. As your group plays through HEART & LIGHTNING, you will enter serious narratives, gain investment in your own characters, and become attached to all of its inhabitants. Although this relationship may seem healthy at first, it can also put a strain on a game that is all about exploring every interesting things, and pushing for the most dramatic conflicts possible - even if it wasn't in your plans in the beginning. This relationship of attachment can lead to arguments and denial when a bad roll or less favourable situation comes up - this ruining what HEART & LIGHTNING stands for. It's in these instances that reminding each other about the goal of having fun in the game matters. Help each other understand that fun can be found even in character death and follies, that the goal of the game isn't to just be invested in the good times of a character, but also in their drama, tragedy, and resulting growth.

That is the essence of HEART & LIGHTNING, its rebellion and recklessness leads to self-discovery.

**FIRE AND FLOWERS,
RAIN AND STORMS,
HEART AND LIGHTNING,**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!





EXILED, POWERLESS, BUT TOGETHER.

You are *Daughters of Lightning*, a rider of storms, and breaker of mountains. You are warriors, lovers, and legend.

You are also *teenagers*.

Barely of age for the throne, you have been kicked out of your immortal homeland and stripped of your powers for another one of your stupid (brave!) antics (deeds!!!).

As outcasts, you must work together and do what you do best: *raise as much hell as you can and go home. Powerless and unsure, you will* embark on a mythic quest together as sisters and almighty adventurers in a strange, new world.



KICK ASS, MAKE LOVE, RIDE THE LIGHTNING.