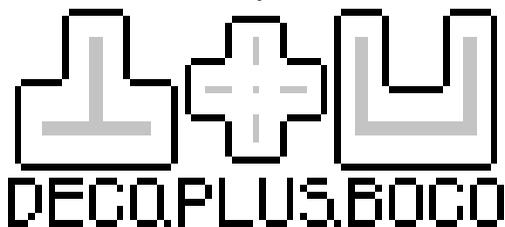


Devil Kings

in Evil World

a game of misadventure and hierarchy

by



Preface

This probably would be an awesome game except that it's not really finished or polished, but then again that's not really the point is it? Anyway I suppose I'll say here what should be said: This game *is* awesome and you should play it. Sorry about it being so incomplete.

I've been wanting to write this game for a while now and Game Fu was my opportunity. So, not preserving any text from earlier ideas, nor keeping any previous mechanics, I re-imagined the RPG I'd wanted to write – *MAKAI WARS* – and fit it into the ingredients framework. Kept is the inter-dimensional comedy setting with battling beings of immense power, but here the focus is on the little guy. Underlings are just as fun to play as their inscrutable Overlords, and from the bottom of the setting it's a whole lot easier to write and run one-shots and seasonal campaign adventures.

I tried to keep the fast-playing high-flying fun of rules light games like *Paranoia* and *Maid* while adding the hypercomplex crunch I so enjoy (albeit in small, measured doses). The result should be a rules light-or-maybe-medium fast-playing romp through the Hells that populate the multiverse.

Mechanical inspiration for this game was drawn from *Fusion*, *Maid*, *Make You Kingdom!!*, and *Open Fist*, as well as the games of Nippon Ichi Software, including *Disgaea* and *Phantom Kingdom*.

For ingredients, I chose “Changeable archetypes”, “Limited life expectancy”, “Any skill is a combat skill”, and “Caste System”. For a tagline, I chose “The Devils offer Reincarnation – evolution through suffering. Who would you serve for Immortality?”

I hope you enjoy my game!

deco plus boco

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1. Introduction

Long, long ago, before this world came to be, there lived five great Immortals. These five Immortals were always playing tricks on one another, and competing at every kind of thing. But centuries and millennia passed and eventually they grew tired.

One of the Immortals suggested they create others of their kind, to replenish novelty. But the other Immortals refused, thinking that too many Immortals would mean each of them would grow less powerful. Another Immortal suggested creating a world of mortal creatures to observe, and incarnating into it themselves for fun. But the other Immortals disagreed on how to make and populate that world. Finally, the five great Immortals decided to make five great worlds, each populated by a hundred million people and places, each interlinked; with such variety, none could grow bored again, and the struggle between the worlds would provide an excellent avenue for the Immortals to continue their game.

And so the Immortals made five universes, linked by immutable laws of fate, to house all manner of being. The five universes were the **Human World**, the **Underworld**, the **Fairy World**, **Heaven**, and **Hell**. The **Human World** was a place of social struggle, where mortal beings would live and love and hurt one another. The **Underworld** was a somber place where spirits of things that once were would gather to give them a second chance at settling their affairs. The **Fairy World** was a primal place of laughter, tears, and blood, where everything was ephemeral and lasted merely moments. **Heaven** was a perfect, orderly paradise manned by clockwork machinery and a race of immortal beings to attend them. And **Hell** was a place of power and struggle, where many beings of many races fought one another for the right to rule. The Immortals each saw that their world was perfect, so they set up gates between the worlds: In the center of all things rested the **Human**

World; alongside it, the **Fairy World** crossed over in the natural places, giving birth to the gods and spirits; beneath it sat the **Underworld** where resided the dead; and above it rested the realms of **Heaven** and **Hell**, from which beings would observe and guide humanity. This arrangement was made in those ancient days, and life flourished in the five worlds.

Eventually, beings from the five worlds who had achieved immortality themselves escaped into the **Outer Void**, where the five great Immortals were from. There, they made worlds of their own, patterned after the five great worlds. The most common kind of immortal in those times were the ambitious **Devils**, residents of **Hell**, and so many new Hells were created in the void. Because their leaders were ambitious, the Hells more often than not were at war with one another; a war that, over time, grew to encompass all but the five great worlds. Even now the great **Devil Wars** still rage.

In **Devil Kings in Evil World**, you play a more-or-less immortal **Devil** who wishes nothing more than to amass personal power and wealth. For protection, you have sworn fealty to one or more **Lords**, and to attain power, you yourself have taken **Vassals** under your wing. Death is, for you, a minor inconvenience, for so long as you prove useful to your **Lord**, he will **Reincarnate** you into a new body. For this purpose, the **Hells** are filled with all manner of mortal demon, bred into **Clans** which share certain desirable traits. The **Clans** into which you are incarnated grant you abilities and powers, and even after death, some of these abilities remain with you as **Memories**; thus, a **Devil King** will have been reborn a thousand times over, each time more powerful than the last. Eventually you will betray your **Lords** for more powerful ones, until you are powerful enough yourself to forswear all lords and declare yourself a **Devil King**.

1.a. Glossary

Setting Elements

- **Anamnesis:** The doctrine that all knowledge is memory; leaning "new" things is explained by remembering them from a past life. This is the main theory behind **Metempsychosis**.
- **Clan:** An organized race of demons bred for certain properties or skills. Two Clan members can fuse into a prepared body in which is placed a **Devil** during **Metempsychosis**.
- **Devil:** An immortal resident of a Hell, usually a former demon, who can Reincarnate into a prepared body via **Metempsychosis**.
- **Devil King:** The overlord of a Hell. Devil Kings answer to no-one and have absolute authority within their realm. Because they often have no Lord, it is difficult for them to Reincarnate, so they are very cautious and tend to do most of their ruling through underlings.
- **Demon:** A mortal resident of a Hell. Not all demons are Clan members, but all demons seek to better themselves and attain power and wealth.
- **Fairy World:** One of the **Five Worlds**, or a world modeled on it. Residents of a Fairy World are unattached, emotional, mortal beings. Unlike demons, they generally do not have the desire for personal power or wealth, but they are otherwise very similar. The original Fairy World physically overlaps the original Human World and is where things like gods, monsters, aliens etc reside.
- **Five Worlds:** The first worlds to be created, and by far the largest and most populous. The Five Worlds are the Human World, the Fairy World, the Underworld, Heaven, and Hell.
- **Heaven:** One of the Five Worlds, or a world modeled on it. Heavens operate like well-oiled machinery and do not tolerate much individuality in their residents. They may be populated by robots, angels,

or other similar beings; these beings are immortal, but will become mortal if they break the perfect law of their realm (the exact laws vary from Heaven to Heaven). The original Heaven monitors and advises the original Human World.

- **Hell:** One of the Five Worlds, or a world modeled on it. Hells are the most numerous and most varied of the worlds.
- **Human World:** One of the Five Worlds, or a world modeled on it. It is populated by humans, a weak mortal race that invented technology to cover its weaknesses. Humans are very flexible creatures and can become spirits, fairies, angels, or demons given certain conditions. The original Human World is unique in that almost all forms of magic fail to work there; only calling upon power from one of the other worlds has effect.
- **Lord:** The superior in a relationship. Lords obtain **Cash** from their Vassals (representing wealth and service), and expend **Mana** on their behalf (representing personal power, prestige, and influence). A Devil without Vassals is impossibly weak in the Devil Wars, no matter how strong he is in a one-on-one confrontation.
- **Devil Wars:** The constant warring between dimensions. Devil Kings compete against one another to promote their own Hells - or abandon them, for the right price - using their underlings as pawns. Often the warring Kings seem more like friendly competitors who nonetheless backstab and betray as often as they ally together; very rarely does a King act to actually seal off an opponent's ability to retaliate. The fun is in the struggle and not the victory.
- **Maryoku:** A measure of personal power. Maryoku can be sensed and is often a viable shorthand for determining threats.
- **Metempsychosis:** The cycle of reincarnation or transmigration of a single being in multiple forms. By the doctrine of Metempsychosis, a Devil who has lost his body can be placed in a new, prepared body, itself a composite of two demons; the Devil merges with the demons already present and absorbs their abilities. These abilities are, in turn,

carried on into successive forms via **Anamnesis**.

- **Outer Void**: The "space" between worlds. In reality, there is no such space; powerful beings of any kind can merely create temporary locations by their mere presence, and these locations draw other beings to them. With sufficient effort, a place can be set independent of the being who generated it, forming a world, which will then naturally produce beings of the kind that should populate it.
- **Underworld**: One of the Five Worlds, or a world modeled on it. Underworlds are spirit worlds where the memory of what was is stronger than the reality of what is. The original Underworld houses the dead of the Human World, but most Underworlds are actually populated by Demons of Zombie and Ghost Clans.
- **Vassal**: The inferior in a relationship. Vassals enter a pact with their Lord to provide certain duties, and in return, the Lord promises to protect the Vassal and perform various other tasks. In general, Vassals provide goods and services to their Lords (in the form of **Cash**), and Lords provide guidance, support, and powerful magic for their Vassals (in the form of **Mana**). The most common pact is one of "complete servitude" in exchange for "immortality"; the Vassal is obligated to follow every command and whim of the Lord, who is obligated to Reincarnate the Vassal when necessary.

Mechanical Terms

- **Reincarnation**: The process of coming back from the dead with new powers. To Reincarnate, you need to 1. be dead, 2. have someone spend the **Mana** to Reincarnate you. You get a new body with two **Races** and a **Job**, but you can keep some of your old abilities.
- **Rank**: A measure of how advanced you are in a Clan's hierarchy. Each Rank gives extra **Attribute** points, and Ranks also provide extra **Ability** uses. The total number of Ranks you have is also the number of dice you roll in an **Attribute Test**.

- **Race:** Current, incarnated membership in a **Clan**. Having a Race grants you a free **Rank** and unlimited use of an **Ability**.
- **Memorized Rank:** A Rank calcified in your soul by **Anamnesis**. Memorized Ranks are the most permanent of all features on a character and can only be gained by **Reincarnation**.
- **Learned Rank:** A Rank gained between scenes of normal play. Learned Ranks are earned in Clans a character is already a member of.
- **Confiscated Rank:** A Rank gained between scenes of normal play. A Confiscated Rank is taken from a Vassal (who loses the Rank) and does not need to be from a Clan the character belongs to.
- **Unallocated Rank:** For every 10 points of **Temporary Maryoku**, you gain an Unallocated Rank, which can then be spent to gain a **Learned** or **Confiscated Rank** during any scene transition.
- **Monstrous Clan:** A Clan which is so far removed from other Clans in form that one can only earn its Ranks while incarnated into it. You may not assign **Learned** or **Confiscated Ranks** in a Monstrous Clan.
- **Secret Society:** A sub-Clan group with no attached breed of demons. Membership does not confer any **Memorized Ranks** and they cannot be assigned, so **Ranks** are only achieved through **Learned** and **Confiscated Rank**.
- **Attribute:** One of the six main statistics of a character. Attributes determine how well a character does when faced with certain conflicts, and are raised by attaining Ranks. Higher values are always better.
- **Power:** An attribute governing energy control and mental toughness. Power is usually used to perform attacks with intent to kill.
- **Body:** An attribute governing physical strength and athleticism. Body is usually used to resist damage.
- **Intellect:** An attribute governing knowledge of the world. Intellect is usually used to perform magic.
- **Grace:** An attribute governing social interaction. Grace is usually used to convince others to do your bidding.
- **Skill:** An attribute governing practical know-how. Skill is usually

used to operate machinery.

- **Trickery:** An attribute governing sneakiness. Trickery is usually used to cheat.

- **Attribute Test:** A way to determine success or failure at a given task. Roll your total **Ranks** in dice, pick the best three, then add the appropriate **Attribute**. Occasionally you'll also score a **Diabolical Result**.

- **Diabolical Result:**

- **Permanent Maryoku:** The portion of Maryoku that remains with a character after Reincarnation. It grows at a rate of 1 point per hour of playtime. 10 points of Permanent Maryoku converts into a single **Memorized Rank** during Reincarnation.

- **Temporary Maryoku:** The portion of Maryoku that Devils gather by interacting with the world. It grows at a rate of 10 points per hour of playtime but can't exceed the character's **Permanent Maryoku**. 10 points of Temporary Maryoku converts into an **Unallocated Rank**.

- **Mana:** A quantity of magical energy or power that can be expended to grant wishes. It is most commonly used to Reincarnate other Devils.

- **Cash:** An abstract measure of the abilities of Vassals, the wealth of land holdings, etc. Cash can be spent to perform various tasks.

- **Job:** A task or role more-or-less forced upon a Devil after Reincarnation. Nobody really knows why they exist, but they seem to be an unavoidable side-effect of **Metempsychosis**.

- **Ability:** A unique character trait or action given to those who are members of a **Clan**, **Secret Society**, or **Job**. Abilities can be freely used by current members, or used a limited number of times by those with Ranks in the Clan.

Combat Terms

- **Quick Combat:** A conflict between only two characters and resolved with a pair of opposed Attribute Tests.

- **Extended Combat:** A conflict between two teams of characters

which should take about 30 minutes to resolve.

- **Hex:** A container for characters representing physical or ideological closeness. Battles take place on a map of 10 hexes, each of which can contain any number of characters.
- **Goal:** The ultimate desired result of a conflict. Each side in a battle defends the opposing side's Goal. Goals have Attributes like characters and must be attacked successfully three times to achieve.
- **Move:** Moving from one Hex to another. Each character can move one Hex per Turn, unless they're Pinned.
- **Pin:** You're Pinned if you're in the same hex as an enemy who isn't Neutralized. Pinned characters can't Move.
- **Neutralized:** A character who has taken damage but hasn't been able to Move yet is Neutralized and doesn't count for determining Pins. Since you have to Move to recover the ability to Pin, you can't recover if you're Pinned yourself.
- **Act:** An action, usually an attack. Each character can Act one during their turn, after Moving.
- **Turn:** A unit of time where all characters on one team Move and then Act, in any order (even simultaneously).
- **Setup turn:** A Turn that happens before one team is placed on the map.
- **Round:** A full sequence of two successive Turns.
- **Effortless action:** An action that doesn't require a roll.
- **Anytime action:** An action (usually healing or a buff) which can happen even during the opponents' Turn.
- **Move action:** An action you may do instead of Moving.
- **Full action:** An action you may do instead of Acting.
- **Extended action:** An action that takes both your Move and Action, and might even take multiple Turns.
- **Counterattack:** When attacked, characters have a 50% chance to retaliate with an attack of their own.

2. Basic Rules

This game uses paper, pencil, cards (made from paper), six-sided dice (grab a handful at least), and if you're using the full combat rules, a simple map with tokens or miniatures to represent characters. The players (generally 3-7) elect one among them to be the Dimension Master; the remaining players take on the roles of Devils in one of several Hells. It's suggested that all the characters have a common Lord, and the DM take on the role of that Lord (as well as whatever opposition ends up in front of the group - whatever opposition that isn't the other group members, at least), but feel free to play any way you like. You might also want a clock or stopwatch, as some game effects are tied to real time.

2.a. Attributes

Characters (and situations) are ranked on six Attributes which generally define their aptitude at various tasks. The higher the value, the more difficult tasks in that area one may accomplish.

Power is a measure of inner strength. It is used to

- Manipulate energy;
- Cause widespread destruction;
- Maintain focus or willpower in adversity.
- Roll **Power** for attacking, sensing the strength of others, destroying things, and holding to your principles.

Body is a measure of outer strength. It is used to

- Resist physical harm;
- Lift heavy things or perform other athletic feats;
- Roll **Body** for defending, running, swimming, jumping, resisting disease, lifting and throwing, and athleticism in general.

Intellect is a measure of secret lore and esoteric arts. It is used to

- Know facts about the world;
- Use magic and other obscure principles;
- Plan in the long-term.
- Roll **Intellect** for casting spells, physics, chemistry, mathematics, war tactics, history, politics, cosmology, analyzing magic, and academia in general.

Grace is a measure of social skill and well-being. It is used to

- Convince other characters of things;
- Seduce other characters;
- Resist certain spells.
- Roll **Grace** for resisting magic, singing, performing, cooking, public speaking, leadership, painting, poetry, detecting lies, and communication in general.

Skill is a measure of practical knowledge and dexterity. It is used to

- Operate machinery or technology of any kind;
- Notice small details;
- Plan in the short-term.
- Roll **Skill** for attacking at range, crafting equipment and goods, repairing and modifying machines, tailoring, noticing ambushes and traps, tracking, and other feats of perception or skill.

Trickery is a measure of how well you can bend the rules. It is used to

- Cheat;
- Move or react quickly;
- Dodge unwanted side-effects.
- Roll **Trickery** for dodging ranged attacks, forging documents, making disguises, lying, sneaking around, hiding, stealing, picking locks, making and breaking contracts, and other legal and illegal matters.

2.b. How to Roll

Attribute Test: You get buckets o' dice equal to the number of **Ranks** you've managed to pick up. This includes your current **Races**, so an easy way to calculate it is to look at 1/10 your **Permanent** and **Temporary Maryoku**, then add 2.

Roll all dem dice. You're looking for **the highest 3 dice only**. If those three happen to be 666, you scored a Diabolical Result! Congratulations! Choose an appropriate Diabolical Result, then remove those three dice from the result pool and take the next three biggest instead. If for some reason you end up with fewer than 3 dice left in the pool, the missing dice count as 1s.

Random tables: Occasionally you'll be asked to roll a random result on a table. There are three kinds of table, and each calls for a different roll:

- Short Tables have 6 results; roll 1d6 and choose the match.
- Medium Tables have 21 results; roll 2d6 and sort the dice from lowest to highest.
- Long Tables have 56 results; roll 3d6 and sort the dice from lowest to highest.

Diabolical Results

Ideally there'd be a random chart for Diabolical Results, but since there's a time constraint and there's a lot of different situations which would probably need separate charts anyway, there's not. Instead, make up your own! For example, dealing 2 damage instead of 1 in combat, or automatically counterattacking; or maybe convincing someone's friends to do something when you were really only after the one. It shouldn't be a super-devastating benefit, just something unexpectedly nice to have happen.

2.c. Cash and Mana

Cash and Mana are two expendable resources available to Devils. They can generally be spent at any time, and as much as you like can be spent at once.

2.c.i. Cash

Cash represents a character's dominion over other Devils, Demons, and entire realms of existence. When you need your underlings to perform a task, you spend Cash to make it happen. There's no need to plan ahead - you can spend Cash *now* to have ordered your underlings to do something *before*. Cash can be spent on intelligence gathering, services rendered, physical goods, whatever you like, but the larger the in-game effect or the harder the task is to accomplish the more Cash you need.

In general, Cash can be spent during a Conflict to make the Goal easier or harder to achieve. When Cash is spend in this way, add or subtract the highest die rolled to the Goal's difficulty for the scene. Even if multiple expenditures are made, though, it won't help much – only one positive and negative die can exist on a given Goal, so you only replace the current die if one of the new dice is higher.

Sample Expenditures

- Find out the names, personalities, and areas of influence of the major powers in the area: 2d6 Cash
- Find out what a Devil's ultimate weakness is: 1d6 Cash + 1d6 Cash per 5 Ranks
- Sabotage an opponent's vehicle: 3d6 Cash
- Get something simple, like a feast or a cheap weapon: 1d6 Cash
- Get something exotic, like Phoenix Eggs or an innocent girl's tears: 3d6 Cash

- Get the biggest laser: 6d6 Cash

For every 1 you roll when spending Cash, your underlings have screwed up. They still get the job done (generally), but something goes wrong along the way. Check the **Unintended Consequences** table once for each 1 rolled.

Cash is gained by interacting with your underlings. If you interact meaningfully with your underlings in a scene (personally ordering them to do something, torturing them, overseeing their work, having them back you up, etc), then at the end of the scene you gain Cash equal to the number of Ranks your underlings have (so 1/10 Maryoku + 2 per underling). Cash can also be gained by obtaining new holdings or pawning physical items.

Unintended Consequences

Unfortunately due to time constraints this table is only half full – so turn my error to your benefit and come up with your own consequences based on these examples to fill in the blanks!

11 **Even better than expected.** Whether it was your brilliant strategy or just some dumb luck, your minions performed the deed better than you could have imagined. Set the die to modify the Goal to a 6, or if not in combat, ask the DM for a cool bonus effect.

12 **Kind of late.** It happens just like you told your underlings to do it, but only after it's useful. Like collapsing the entrance after you'd decided to go in, or stealing the artifact after you'd found a replacement.

13 **Mistaken identity.** Oh, you meant the *western* tower? Why didn't you say so?

14 **Subcontracted.** Instead of doing it, your underlings paid someone else off to get the job done, and who knows what kind of cost-

cutting measures *they* took.

15 **Spilled the beans.** Somehow in the course of doing the deed, everybody found out it was you behind it.

16 **Dropped the MacGuffin.** Don't remember exactly how but your underlings roughed up an important item. Maybe they dropped it on the ground, gave it a few shakes, and called it good. Whatever they did, it might still work fine. Or it might explode. You won't know until you try.

22 **Right on time.** Your minions perform like clockwork, and not are the words of your order even out of your mouth than the results are before you. Like, literally, they predicted you'd want it done and already did it.

23 **Strings attached.** Sure, they got the job done, but not without accruing some.. debt.. from the Mafia. Which you now have to answer for. Good luck!

24 **Awakened something beastly.** Somewhere along the way your underlings managed to open something they really shouldn't have, and now you have a brand new friend. With big, sharp, pointy teeth. Who thinks you're a chew toy.

25 **Attracted attention.** The one person you least wanted to know about this not only knows but has a personal stake in the outcome.

26 **Blabbed a secret.** It might not have been related to the mission you sent them on, but some secret you didn't want known is now pretty much common knowledge – your ultimate plans, the combination to your safe, the fact that you still watch Saturday morning cartoons – you know, stuff you don't want other people knowing.

33 **Profitable work.** The job not only gets done but your minions made a profit doing it! Of course they pocket most of it, but you still get a kickback. Roll one die fewer than you spent, and gain that much Cash.

34 **Picked up a stowaway.** Might end up being someone important,

might just be some annoying kid you can't get rid of, but for some reason some kid shows up and won't leave you alone.

35 a negative result

36 a negative result

44 a positive result

45 a negative result

46 a negative result

55 a positive result

56 a negative result

66 a positive result

2.c.ii. Mana

Mana represents a store of personal magical energy which can be expended to alter facts about the world. Mana is usually spent on behalf of others - generally, underlings - but there are many other uses for it, too.

In general, Mana can be spent to make wishes, as long as those wishes don't directly affect other Devils without their consent. The more elaborate the wish, the higher the Mana cost, but the cost can be shared with other Devils if you can get them all to agree on the exact wording. Most Hells have some form of senate or committee that debates and grants wishes in this way, with bribery (or a sufficiently appealing wish) being the easiest way to gain approval votes (and thus Mana).

Sample Expenditures

- Reincarnating a Devil: number of Ranks the new incarnation will have (see Reincarnation)

- Pick the category (Physical, Magical, Technical, Hybrid) for the second Race of a Reincarnation: 1d6 Mana
- Pick the second Race of a Reincarnation outright: 2d6 Mana
- Formalizing an agreement (a formalized agreement cannot be broken without the consent of both parties): 1 Mana
- Creating a new Secret Society: 10d6 Mana
- Creating a new Monstrous Clan: 100d6 Mana
- Creating a new Humanoid Clan: 250d6 Mana
- Creating a new Hell: varies depending on size, number of inhabitants, resources, and level of detail of what kind of world it is; generally between 4d6 Mana for a small house with 1d6 inhabitants all the way to 10000d6 Mana for a multi-continent world with millions or billions of inhabitants

Mana can only be gained in one way: Killing a Devil. If you are directly responsible for a Devil's death, you will absorb the energy released from the bond between the Demon body and the Devil soul as Mana. If a Devil dies in your presence but no-one is directly responsible, the Mana reward is evenly divided (round down) among all present. Mana gained is the total number of Ranks the Devil possesses (so 1/10 Maryoku + 2).

3. Characters

Characters in Makai Wars consist of a small handful of statistics encompassing a brief catalog of their Anamnesis plus some insight into their current power structure. In essence, a Devil is defined most simply by which Clans she holds membership in, and at what Rank. Each Rank of membership confers certain benefits, most notably an increase in Attributes. Characters gain additional bonuses for their current Races, and can also be members of a Secret Society for a third bonus. These things all combine to give the character's final attribute ratings.

While mostly defined by their attribute ratings, Devils also have a few other things to track. The current Races and Secret Society of a Devil all confer semipermanent Abilities, and certain Ranks of most Clans provide Powers. Characters also have certain bookkeeping statistics like Permanent and Temporary Maryoku, and pools of two expendable traits representing their role in the hierarchy, Cash and Mana.

3.a. The First Reincarnation

Making characters is easy. Pick your tier, roll for two Races (one on the long table and the other on the short table of any category), and then enough Memorized Ranks to leave you without any Unallocated Ranks left over. In character creation you can pick any Clans you want to distribute these Ranks. It's recommended you have past lives in a large number of Clans, as you may only Learn Ranks in Clans in which you have Memorized Ranks.

Trash characters have a starting Maryoku of 10, giving them only a single Memorized Rank in addition to their Races. They have only one Lord and no Vassals, no Mana and no Cash.

Badass characters have a starting Maryoku of 50, giving them 5

Memorized Ranks. They are members of a Secret Society, have sworn to a number of Lords (1d3), and have a handful of Trash-tier Vassals of their own (1d6). They begin play with a small amount of spare Mana (2d6) and a small fortune of Cash (3d6).

Demon Lords have a starting Maryoku of 100, for 10 Memorized Ranks. They are either members or leaders of a Secret Society, have partnerships with many Lords (1d6), and have a number of competent lieutenants one tier below (1d6). They have accumulated a sizable reserve of Mana (4d6) and dominate a number of holdings (6d6 Cash).

Devil Kings have a starting Maryoku of 150, for 15 Memorized Ranks. They are inevitably leaders of a Secret Society, have few or no Lords (1d6-2, min 0), and have a number of competent generals one tier below (1d6). They possess vast Mana reserves (6d6) and their Hell's economy bends to their whims (4d6 x 10 Cash).

Dimension Lords have a starting Maryoku of 200, for 20 Memorized Ranks. They have outgrown Secret Societies, are beholden to none (but have ally pacts for Reincarnations), and have a few major Hells under their direction (1d6). They hoard Mana for a rainy day (10d6) and have a near limitless control of minor Hells (10d6 x 10 Cash).

For one-shots and convention games, I recommend Trash tier. For campaign play, I recommend Badass and Demon Lord tiers. More powerful characters can be very complex and unwieldy. If you're the kind of group that sticks to one game with one set of characters, you should be able to do a Trash->Dimension Lord game in about a year of weekly sessions, but this game was written for one-shots and for seasonal (10-14 sessions) play.

3.b. Advancement

For every hour of gameplay (including partial hours for sessions over 4h in length), every participant gains 1 Permanent Maryoku and 10

Temporary Maryoku (in that order). Temporary Maryoku can't exceed Permanent Maryoku though. For every 10 points of either (add them together), you gain an Unallocated Rank, which during the next scene transition can be spent on Learning or Confiscating a Rank. (Memorized Ranks are already allocated, so don't gain new Ranks until your Maryoku actually goes up from when you Reincarnated.)

Learning a Rank is advancing in a Clan by your own efforts (whatever form that may take). Pick a Clan you have Memorized Ranks in and check a box for that Clan (on the same side as your Memorized Rank, or choose either if you've Memorized both race and class), then recalculate your Attributes appropriately. If applicable, also choose a new power from those available (or take the specified power). You can't Learn more than one Rank in a race; to advance in races you need to Reincarnate. Classes don't have this restriction, so you can Learn up to two Ranks in them.

Confiscating a Rank works the same way as Learning, except you need a Vassal in the area, and that Vassal needs to have both a Learned Rank in the Clan you want a rank of and a total Rank in that Clan higher than yours. You don't need to have any Ranks in that Clan Memorized yet. Your Vassal loses 10 Temporary Maryoku and one Learned Rank in that Clan, and you gain a Confiscated Rank.

Rank in a Secret Society works like Rank in a race: You can't Learn or Confiscate more than one Rank, so you need to Memorize your way to power. Secret Societies only have 3 Ranks total, rather than 6 like a Clan.

3.c. Subsequent Reincarnations

You can convert Learned and Confiscated Ranks into Memorized Ranks when you Reincarnate; you can also drop previous Memorized Ranks if you wish. Assign Memorized Ranks with the following rules:

- You get a total number of Memorized Ranks equal to your Permanent Maryoku divided by 10, round down.
- You may only Memorize a Rank that you've Memorized, Learned, or Confiscated.
- You may not assign more than one *new* Memorized Rank per Clan; if you already had one Rank Memorized, for example, you could Memorize a second Rank but not a third.
- You may only Memorize three Ranks in a Clan, total.
- You may not assign an additional Memorized Rank in a Clan unless you have Memorized Ranks in another Clan equal to the old number of Ranks. For example, you can't Memorize 3 Ranks of Warrior unless you've Memorized 2 Ranks of something else, like Samurai. This enforces a pyramid: you need one Rank 1, one Rank 2, one Rank 3, etc, to have a high number of Memorized Ranks in a single Clan, and if you wanted to raise one of the Clans near the base you'd need to construct a new base (if you had 1 2 3 before and wanted to raise the 2 to a 3 you'd need to raise the 1 to a 2 and also get a new 1 as well). Feel free to Memorize prerequisites at the same time as your intended result, though, if you have the Maryoku to spare.
- Split Clans (Warrior/Valkyrie etc) count as a single Clan for these purposes.

In addition to your newfound Memorized Ranks, you'll be put into a new body (of course) with its own Races. As usual, you receive one Rank in each for free. You may check for these Races before assigning Memorized Ranks if you wish. Also, your Temporary Maryoku (and thus all Learned and Confiscated Ranks) disperse and must be regained through play.

Depending on how much Mana was spent on your Reincarnation, you (or your Lord) may have more or less control over the selection of a race and class. Reincarnating costs, at a minimum, Mana equal to $1/10$ Permanent Maryoku +2; this entitles your Lord to choose the category (Physical, Magical, Technical, or Hybrid) of one of your Races, with the

exact Clan being rolled on the short table; the other is determined on the long table. An extra 1d6 Mana will get one step closer: choosing the exact Clan instead of rolling on the short table, or choosing a category and rolling on the short table instead of on the long table. So to freely choose both Races requires 3d6 additional Mana.

When you Reincarnate, you also roll for a new Job. Mana can be spent to influence this roll, too: Each 1 Mana spent moves you up or down on the random table one space.

4. Clans

Clans have the following characteristics:

Rank Bonus: The Attribute points you get per Rank achieved in this Clan.

Key Features: A little about the Clan, including what physical signs of Clan membership characters of the Clan's Race display.

Ability: The Ability you get for this Clan being your Race.

Template Bonus: The Attribute points you get for this Clan being your current Race.

4.a. Humanoid Clans

The vast majority of the Demon Clans utilized by Devils for Reincarnation are superficially similar in appearance: They all are roughly humanoid, stand between 1 and 2.5 meters, have two arms and two legs, etc. Many Clans could even be mistaken for inhabitants of other Worlds - especially for Humans and Angels. But Demons can easily tell the difference and wear the trappings of their Clan as a source of pride and honor.

The major Clans can be divided into four rough categories. **Physical Clans** focus on training the body and on direct application of Power. **Technical Clans** focus on training the mind and on the use of tools, machinery, and vehicles. **Magical Clans** focus on training the esoteric arts and on the manipulation of magical energy. And **Hybrid Clans** bridge the approaches of the other categories. There are rumors of a fifth category.. **Secret Clans**, whose membership is by invitation only, and whose abilities are unfathomable.

Some of the Clans, at some point in their history, split into multiple sub-Clans that then became distinct Clans of their own. These "split Clans" count as a single Clan for purposes of tracking Ranks, but have unique Abilities.

Unfortunately, certain Clan writeups – especially the Hybrid Clans – are unfinished and marked as such. Feel free to fill in the gaps yourself!

4.a.i. Physical Clans

1. Samurai
2. Heavy Knight
3. Warrior
4. Valkyrie
5. Criminal
6. Martial Artist

Samurai

Rank Bonus: +3 Power, +1 Body, +1 Intellect, +1 Skill

Key Features: Samurai are lithe females with long, dark hair and completely black eyes. Like most demons, they have long, pointed ears. Samurai excel in destroying groups of lesser foes. Members of the Samurai Clan tend to wear wide-legged loose-fitting pants called hakama, white cloth headbands with motivational phrases written on them, and multiple close-range weapons, especially swords and axes.

Ability: *Blinding Speed*. When you make a Power-based attack, you also target everyone in the same hex as the original target (both friends and foes, excluding yourself).

Template Bonus: +6 Power

Heavy Knight

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +3 Body, +1 Grace, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Heavy Knights wear so much armor that what they actually look like under it is a mystery. It's assumed that all racial Heavy Knights are male, and they're undoubtedly tall and strong. Heavy Knights prefer to use axes, or just to hit things with their thick, heavy, and often spiky gauntlets.

Ability: *Throwing*. You can test Body vs Trickery to pick up a target in the same hex (willing targets fail the roll automatically). You can hold the victim so she may only target you with her attacks, but you can't move or act until you throw. When you do throw the victim, pick an adjacent hex and your target lands there. An unpinned ally in that hex can pick up and throw the target as well for free.

Template Bonus: +6 Body

Warrior

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +2 Body, +1 Skill, +1 Trickery

Key Features: A balanced and young Clan, warriors dress simply and lightly. The Warrior Clan doesn't have a strong racial background and does most of its recruiting from other races; nonetheless, except for rejected Valkyries, only male children are allowed to become Warriors. The Clan was founded to take in those who wished to become Valkyries but could not fulfill the requirements. They excel at all forms of close-combat weapon.

Note: Split Clan with Valkyries

Ability: *Extra Effort*. When making Power-based attacks, all 5s rolled become 6s before checking for Diabolical Results.

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Body

Valkyrie

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +2 Body, +1 Skill, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Valkyries are universally female but come in all shapes and sizes. Their balanced abilities belie their rigorous selection process. They prefer bright, color-coded armor, wear crowns of flowers, and use the spear almost exclusively.

Note: Split Clan with Warriors

Ability: *Passing Attack*. After making a Power-based attack, you **must** move 1 hex; if possible, in the same direction as your normal movement, but otherwise, in any direction but opposite of your normal movement. This movement happens even if pinned.

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Body

Criminal

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +1 Body, +1 Intellect, +2 Grace

Key Features: Criminals are medium-sized humanoids with a thin tan or brown fur coat and a long mane of white hair; they have sharp, fanged teeth, and appear exclusively male. They teach patience, endurance, and revenge. The Clan outfits itself in heavy chains and manacles, but these don't seem to restrict their movement.

Ability: *Karma*. If you win a defensive test, your assailant takes the damage or other negative effects of the attack.

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Grace

Martial Artist

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +1 Body, +1 Grace, +2 Trickery

Key Features: Martial Artists are on the short side, commonly male (but females have been known to be born to them), and universally blind – those who train under them have their eyes sewn shut. They eschew weapons other than their own fists.

Ability: *Psyche Wave*. After making a Power-based attack, you may move your target 1 hex in any direction, even if your attack failed.

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Trickery

4.a.ii. Technical Clans

1. Cowboy
2. Ninja
3. Thief
4. Ranger
5. Soldier
6. Mechanical

Cowboy

Rank Bonus: +1 Body, +1 Grace, +3 Skill, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Cowboys have ash-grey skin and have lips permanently twisted into a maniacal smile. They are considered unpredictable and dangerous, but nobody has a steadier hand. Cowboys wear wide-brimmed hats and hand-stitched clothing (often woven from the hair and skin of their victims), and are never far from some kind of gun.

Ability: *Ricochet*. When you make a Skill-based attack you also target everyone else (friend or foe, excluding yourself) in the same hex as the original target.

Template Bonus: +6 Skill

Ninja

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +1 Intellect, +1 Skill, +3 Trickery

Key Features: There are many varieties of Ninja Clans, all rivals, but one thing among them is universal: They wear masks or veils that cover their mouths, which they never remove, even to eat, and they prefer matching, tight outfits. Though they're known for being stealthy, Ninja always announce their attacks; this doesn't seem to impact their effectiveness in the least!

Ability: *Endurance*. A Ninja who has already been damaged this scene can oppose further attacks of the same type with Trickery in addition to the normal defense (make both tests and choose the higher result).

Template Bonus: +6 Trickery

Thief

Rank Bonus: +1 Body, +1 Intellect, +2 Skill, +2 Trickery

Key Features: Very short and exclusively female, these urban-dwellers wear hats and aviator goggles and carry blowtorches, wrenches, and other tools. Nobody really knows why they're called "thieves", but this influential Clan holds power in every Hell where there are cities or urban areas. They reproduce quickly, and thanks to their great technical

skill, they reshape the worlds around them as they wish, establishing a living criminal underworld even in quiet resort towns. Outsiders are rarely accepted into their ranks. They wield gun and fist with equal aplomb.

Note: Split Clan with Rangers

Ability: *“Steal”*. You can “steal” any abstract item from your target (dice, powers, Ranks, senses, knowledge, memories, etc); test Trickery vs Trickery. If successful, the target loses the item (but you don't gain it). The DM decides how long the effects last, but it's usually just a scene or three.

Template Bonus: +3 Skill, +3 Trickery

Ranger

Rank Bonus: +1 Body, +1 Intellect, +2 Skill, +2 Trickery

Key Features: The Ranger Clan doesn't really have a solid racial type, but all Clan members wear matching, well-cut, gentlemanly uniforms (even the women). In contrast to Thieves – with whom they have a rivalry – the Rangers actually *do* steal from time to time (though they usually announce their heists beforehand or run mafia-like protection rackets instead). They prefer bows and heavy machinery to handheld guns.

Note: Split Clan with Thieves

Ability: *Pickpocket*. You can steal any physical item from your target (weapon, armor, ID card, money, plans for the space station, treasure map, etc); test Trickery vs Skill. If successful, you take the item from the target. For small items, as long as it's plausible for the target to be carrying it, you can steal it even if the DM never mentioned it (don't think about it too hard).

Template Bonus: +3 Skill, +3 Trickery

Soldier

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +2 Body, +1 Intellect, +2 Skill

Key Features: A Soldier is never without helmet and rifle, sir! They wear camouflage and body armor at all times, sir! And they certainly understand the chain of command, sir!

Ability: unfinished

Template Bonus: +3 Skill, +3 Body

Mechanical

Rank Bonus: +1 Body, +1 Intellect, +2 Grace, +2 Skill

Key Features: Nobody quite remembers when the Clan known as Mechanicals arose. Mechanicals more closely resemble robots or astronauts than demons or even humans, making the less-knowledgeable mistake them for residents of Heaven rather than Hell. They modify their bodies to include secret weapons and tools, however, something no Heavenly being would try. Their heads appear to be dome-like helmets (but if the helmet is removed, there's no head inside). Those who train under them are quickly refitted into cyborgs of one variety or another.

Ability: *Super Robot*. You may be used as a weapon by another character to make Skill-based attacks. Roll your own Skill at the same time your ally does and pick the higher result.

Template Bonus: +3 Skill, +3 Grace

4.a.iii. Magical Clans

1. Mage

2. Cleric
3. Cheerleader
4. Shaman
5. Holy Knight
6. Wiseman

Mage

Rank Bonus: +1 Power +3 Intellect, +1 Grace, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Mages are universally female (and only recruit girls); they carry magical charms, staves, books, or other implements, and wear dresses color-coded with their attuned element. It is said that their large hats, ribbons, and headdresses are actually psychic antennae which decipher magic signals and give them greater magical ability.

Ability: *Distant Vision*. You may make an Intellect-based attack on an enemy 2 hexes away.

Template Bonus: +6 Intellect

Cleric

Rank Bonus: +1 Power +1 Intellect, +3 Grace, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Clerics (whose race is entirely male, though they teach anyone dedicated enough) wear thorny implements of torture that cause them to constantly bleed from self-inflicted wounds. This is because of their belief in karmic debt: They vow only to cause as much suffering as they themselves can bear (and then immediately try to get around it by causing self-suffering). The vow works, though, and gives them amazing healing abilities in return. They tend to carry books, staves, syringes, dolls, and the like.

Ability: *Healing*. When you make an attack of any kind, instead of dealing any damage, you may restore twice the amount to the target. Willing targets can of course forgo defense, but you decide whether to hurt or heal only after confirming the hit.

Template Bonus: +6 Grace

Cheerleader

Rank Bonus: +2 Intellect, +2 Grace, +1 Skill, +1 Trickery

Key Features: Cheerleaders are one of the more popular Demon Clans thanks to their motivational effect on others. Strangely (compared to most Clans), both males and females are born into the Cheerleader Clan, though the Clan itself only accepts female disciples from outside. All members wear tight-fitting uniforms which vary considerably from one demon to another, with the only common feature being a red arm-band; they tend to use gloves, batons, pom-poms, and lots of shouting to get their way.

Note: Split Clan with Shamans

Ability: *Cheer*. For a full turn, all allies in the same or an adjacent hex (excluding yourself) keep an extra die when making tests (so four dice instead of three, with a single Cheerleader). As usual, no effects allow keeping more than 6 dice (so three Cheerleaders will max you out), and if there aren't enough dice to keep in the roll itself, the missing dice count as 1s.

Template Bonus: +3 Intellect, +3 Grace

Shaman

Rank Bonus: +2 Intellect, +2 Grace, +1 Skill, +1 Trickery

History:

Key Features: Much less popular than Cheerleaders, Shamans excel at destroying their opponents' luck and motivation rather than pumping up their allies. Like Cheerleaders, they have both male and female children – but the females are exiled from the Clan when they reach maturity. Male Shamans have extensive ritual tattoos, often wear face-paint, and always wear a ceremonial cloak. They carry wands and voodoo dolls.

Note: Split Clan with Cheerleaders

Ability: *Curse*. For a full turn, all enemies in the same or an adjacent hex keep one fewer die when making tests (so two dice instead of three, with a single Shaman). As usual, no effects allow keeping fewer than 0 dice (so three Shamans will max you out), and keeping fewer than 3 dice has no effect on Diabolical Successes (which still trigger on a 666).

Template Bonus: +3 Intellect, +3 Grace

Holy Knight

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +2 Body, +2 Intellect, +1 Grace

Key Features: Nearly indistinguishable from Angels at first glance, Holy Knights have large, feathery, white wings and visible halos. Low-Rank disciples dye their wings ash-grey to represent their lower status in the Clan. Holy Knights prefer simple dress and straightforward weapons like swords.

Ability: *Repent*. Holy Knights may use the Quick Combat rules for

attacking with Grace while in an Extended Combat – forgoing damage, but forcing their target to do something of their choice if successful. This doesn't provoke a counterattack other than the normal rules for losing a Quick Combat.

Template Bonus: +3 Intellect, +3 Body

Wiseman

Rank Bonus: +2 Intellect, +1 Grace, +1 Skill, +2 Trickery

Key Features: Wisemen are bald, old monks with long beards. Like most demons, they have long, pointed ears; unlike most demons, they seem to resist gravity and float a few inches from the ground. Wisemen use books, orbs, rosaries, and other magical implements.

Ability: *Feng Shui*. Once per turn, place a marker in a hex with no enemies in it. If any enemy ends the turn there, they take a damage. You may only have 3 markers on the battlefield at once and they must be in different hexes – further activations can move them from hex to hex though. (multiple Wisemen can cover the entire battlefield if there are enough of them, but the markers still can't stack).

Template Bonus: +3 Intellect, +3 Trickery

4.a.iv. Hybrid Clans

1. Rune Knight
2. Archer
3. Professor
4. Beastmaster
5. Superhero
6. Merchant

Rune Knight

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +1 Body, +2 Intellect, +1 Grace

Key Features: unfinished

Ability: *Two for One*. You may make both a Power and an Intellect attack on the same enemy, who defends against both with a single test result (Body or Grace, their choice).

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Intellect

Archer

Rank Bonus: +2 Power, +1 Body, +1 Grace, +2 Skill

Key Features: unfinished

Ability: *Read the Wind*. You may make a Skill-based attack on an enemy 2 hexes away.

Template Bonus: +3 Power, +3 Skill

Professor

Rank Bonus: +2 Intellect, +1 Grace, +2 Skill, +1 Trickery

Key Features: unfinished

Ability: unfinished

Template Bonus: +3 Intellect, +3 Skill

Beastmaster

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +2 Body, +2 Grace, +1 Skill

Key Features: unfinished

Ability: unfinished

Template Bonus: +3 Body, +3 Grace

Superhero

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +2 Body, +1 Skill, +2 Trickery

Key Features: Little is known about the Superhero Clan; they maintain strict secrecy and even cultivate secret identities as members of other Races. While acting as Superheroes, they wear bright costumes with masks or helmets and capes; they can't resist posing dramatically.

Ability: *Acrobatics*. When moving, you can move two hexes instead of one and you ignore pins.

Template Bonus: +3 Body, +3 Trickery

Merchant

Rank Bonus: +1 Power, +1 Intellect, +2 Grace, +2 Trickery

Key Features: unfinished

Ability: unfinished

Template Bonus: +3 Grace, +3 Trickery

4.b. Random Clan Table

11 Soldier	33 Beastmaster
12 Mechanical	34 Cheerleader/Shaman
13 Rune Knight	35 Cleric
14 Samurai	36 Mage
15 Professor	44 Criminal
16 Archer	45 Heavy Knight
22 Wiseman	46 Ninja
23 Thief/Ranger	55 Superhero
24 Warrior/Valkyrie	56 Cowboy
25 Holy Knight	66 Merchant
26 Martial Artist	

4.c. Jobs

The Metempsychosis process isn't perfect; along with the Devil soul and the prepared body come some psychic resonance which slightly alters the personality of the newly Reincarnated Devil. Because these urges can be broadly classified into professions, the Devils began calling them "Jobs".

Some Jobs have beneficial game effects, in essence providing an additional Ability. But most are not so helpful. At any rate, the only way to get rid of a Job is to die and Reincarnate again.

Unfortunately due to time constraints the Job descriptions, like much of the game as intended, are still unfinished. Feel free to use the name of the Job to inspire you for your own game effects!

111 **Organ Donor:** You're the perfect sacrifice and don't give a second thought to your own safety.

112 **Sniper:** You prefer a.. distant approach. Keep an extra die when making attacks on enemies who aren't in the same hex as you.

113 **Fluffier:** You can't help but fluff things, like pillows or fur coats or saber-toothed wild animals or breasts.

114 **Professional:** You like keeping things simple. Keep an extra die when suppressing information.

115 **Coffee Maker:** You're basically an OL, so you can't resist requests for menial labor like making coffee or copies.

116 **Polisher:** You keep all your stuff nice and shiny, but you're easily distracted by dirt and grime.

122 **Hairdresser:**

123 **Detective:**

124 **Dungeoneer:** It's not really known how you do it, but you're really good at creating locations with Mana; if you contribute, all 6s in the roll to create a new Hell are rerolled until they don't show a 6.

125 **Witch Doctor:**

126 **Manager:** You organize the activities of the group and generally solve minor problems to keep everyone performing at 110% (incidentally the number you multiply your allies' test results by when you're around to help or spend Cash).

133 **Customs Agent:** For some reason nobody really complains when you confiscate their stuff. You can *Pickpocket* like a Ranger but only for minor items; the target can't resist, but you can only take from one target each scene.

134 **Astrologer:** You can tell someone's fortune, giving a *Cheer* or *Curse* to one test per scene.

135 **Debt Collector:**

136 **Dilettante**
144 **Master**
145 **Town Crier**
146 **Sun Bather**
155 **Pharmacist**
156 **Crack Filler**
166 **Digger**
222 **Glutton**
223 **Statistician**
224 **Wuss**
225 **Plumber**
226 **Mentor**
233 **Personal Trainer**
234 **Cook**
235 **Street Fighter**
236 **Mascot**
244 **Fencer**
245 **Amnesiac**
246 **Meat**
255 **Psychologist**
256 **Gangster**
266 **Trash Talker**
333 **Cat Burglar**
334 **Ghost**
335 **Gatekeeper**
336 **Grim Reaper**
344 **Monster Hunter**
345 **Alchemist**
346 **Matchmaker**
355 **Sprinter**
356 **Lumberjack**
366 **Motivational Speaker**
444 **Sentry**
445 **Dietician**
446 **Firefighter**
455 **Titlist**
456 **Comedian**
466 **Poet**
555 **Teacher**
556 **Collector**
566 **Babysitter**
666 **Nerd**

4.d. Secret Societies and Other Clans

Secret Societies are special sub-Clan organizations where a small group of members (3-10) all swear fealty to one of their number. Societies act like Clans, but Ranks in them may not be Memorized.

In addition to Humanoid Clans, there are also Monstrous Clans, which have a racial type so strange that their Ranks cannot be Learned or Confiscated; the only way to grow in Rank in a Monstrous Clan is to be incarnated as one and then Memorize it. The exact Clans vary from Hell to Hell, but a few are common: Dragons, Zombies, Werecats, Plant-people, etc.

Feel free to invent your own Societies and Monstrous Clans for your characters!

5. Conflicts

Inevitably, Devil Kings and their Vassals will get into some kind of disagreement with one another about how things should be. Even the best of friends (do demons have friends..?) will occasionally disagree about things as simple as where to bury the bodies or how to divide the loot – or who has to actually clean out the Lord's personal lavatory while the other relaxes in front of the Hell-o-vision! That's where this chapter comes in handy.

5.a. Quick Combat

Quick Combat is used for one-on-one contests – whenever two characters disagree. This doesn't need to be physical combat, or even an analogous situation like a footrace or a game of chess; convincing someone of something, stealing something, getting someone to do what you want, or springing traps on someone are all valid situations for using Quick Combat. As long as it doesn't involve more than two active participants, just roll with it! Oh, and Abilities don't apply in Quick Combat except as flavor, so don't even worry about them too much – just pick some Attributes and go!

The players of the two should negotiate the consequences of the combat before continuing. For example, if a Mage wants a Samurai to go fetch dinner, the Mage's player would offer something like “You get me dinner” and the Samurai's player would offer something like “I'll do it either way, but if I win it's poisoned”. Once they agree on the terms, each chooses an Attribute most closely related to their goal – in this case, the Mage is using Grace to manipulate the Samurai, who is using Trickery to attempt to off the witch! Once both Attributes are chosen, the test is made, and whoever has the higher roll reaps the benefit.

A character who loses a Quick Combat should mark that loss and who caused it on the Relationship Chart. Once three losses accumulate, that person can't win any more contests against the character without the character dying in the process (in other words, the only valid stake for the player of the winning character to set is “You die”). These losses don't accumulate over Reincarnations, though – the number is reset to 0 when the character dies.

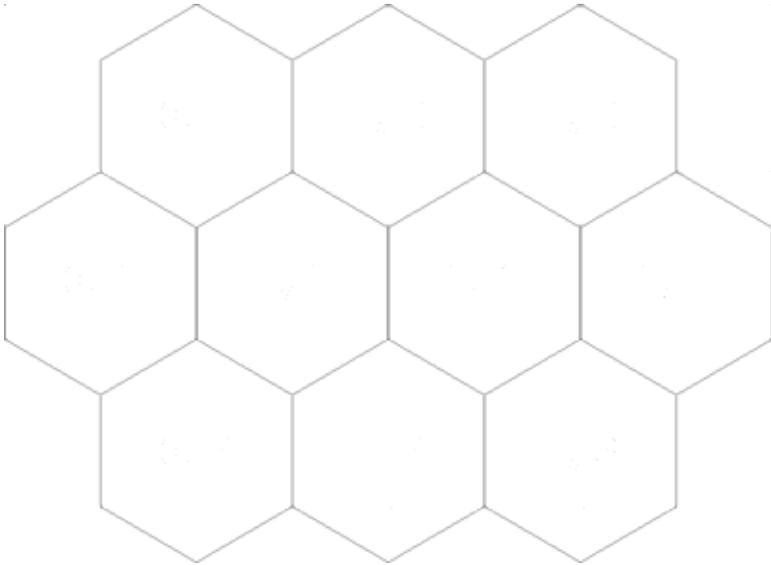
Sometimes the stakes one player wants for Quick Combat are set too high for the other player's tastes. In this case, they should agree on a compromise stake. The original stake will still happen, but only if the character who wants it would have beat the other character's test result without including the dice. For example, if a Superhero goes up to a Valkyrie and says “Gimme all your stuff”, the Valkyrie's player will probably object, and offer “Gimme your prized coin collection” as a compromise (in addition to her own stake of “You're tied up, unable to escape”). In this case, the Superhero is using Skill to drive a drill-tank through the Valkyrie's vault and the Valkyrie is using Body to physically apprehend the would-be robber. If the Superhero has a Skill of 24 before rolling dice at all, and the Valkyrie rolls poorly (raising her Body of 16 by only 5 points to 21), then the original stake stands, but if she rolled better (raising her Body of 16 by 14 points to 30) and still loses, the compromise stake happens instead. If the original stake does end up happening, the losing character should mark the loss twice on the Chart.

Even after the stakes are set, if a character loses they can always choose to die instead of giving up the stake.

5.b. Extended Combat

When there's enough riding on the line that multiple people are interested in the outcome, it's time to break out the full combat system. Like Quick Combat, the two sides need to negotiate stakes; in this case, each side needs to define a **Goal** that they want to accomplish and the

other wants to prevent. Once both sides have a **Goal**, you need a map.



The map is 10 hexes big, with the two furthest away hexes being the **Base** of the two sides in the conflict. The **Goal** of each side is placed in the **Base** of the opposite side (use a die, mini, or token to mark it) and is treated like a character which can't move or take actions on its own. Once the **Goals** have been placed, the two sides should agree on who is the **Defender** and who is the **Aggressor**, or, if neither side is defending, which side should have the first **Turn**. Then both sides are placed in their own Base.

The Setup Turn

If there is a Defender in this conflict, the Defender's team gets a Turn to themselves. During this turn, they can **Move** and **Act** as normal (see **Turn**, below), but the characters on the Aggressor's side have not yet been placed, so their actions can't affect those characters. The Aggressors are then placed and the Defenders then get the first real turn.

Turns and Rounds

The Combat is broken up into multiple Rounds of two Turns each, and goes on for as many Rounds as necessary. During each Turn, the members of one side can freely Move or Act in any order (even declaring and resolving actions simultaneously if they want); once they're all satisfied with the result, they pass the Turn to the other side. When both sides have taken a Turn, the Round ends and a new Round begins, with the first team taking a new Turn, and so on.

Moving and Acting

On their team's Turn, a character can do two things: Move and Act.

Moving is done before Acting, and is pretty simple: Pick up the piece representing your character and put it down in an adjacent hex. There's only one complication: If there are any enemy pieces in the same hex as you, you can't move until those enemies are Neutralized. The only exception is retreating towards your Base – you are never restricted from moving to decrease the distance to Base.

Once you've moved, you can Act. An action is anything that requires a test; in combat, almost every action is an attack. Pick an appropriate Attribute and choose a target in the same or an adjacent hex, then test. If you win, the opponent takes a damage; three damage and you're out (and possibly dead). If you took damage, you can't Pin enemies until you Move again (even if you stay put as your Move), which you can't do if you yourself are Pinned; mark this status as Neutralized. Unlike Quick Combat, the opponent can't hurt you when you attack, and which Attribute they use to defend depends on which you use to attack:

Power vs Body

Grace vs Power

Body vs Skill

Skill vs Trickery

Intellect vs Grace

Trickery vs Intellect

Whether or not your attack is successful, your target has a 50% shot at making a counterattack – first they roll 1d6 and hide the result, then you call 'even' or 'odd'. If you're correct, you're scot-free, but if you guess wrong, they attack you for free (again, choosing an Attribute from the list, which forces you to defend appropriately).

Remember when choosing your attack what each Attribute means! Close-combat weapons attack with Power (which is the only Attribute that can kill); attacks with Body should involve muscles; attacks with Intellect are casting magic; attacks with Grace are using words to convince or insult; attacks using Skill involve ranged weapons, vehicles, or machines; and attacks using Trickery blatantly ignore the rules.

Abilities

Character Abilities can be used whenever it seems appropriate, though the DM has the final say. They might enhance or affect attacks, or they might be their own kind of Action (see below). If the Ability is one granted by your current Secret Society or one of your Races, you may use it as often as you wish; otherwise, you may only use it once per Rank achieved – at least, until you Reincarnate again. To mark the Ability as used, draw a line through the Rank boxes on the Character Sheet.

Strange Actions

Sometimes you want to do something that isn't attacking, or you want to use an Ability. These Actions can have slightly different rules; the DM will decide exactly what each can do, but generally they're divided into a few categories:

Effortless Actions don't take your Action to perform; like talking.

Anytime Actions don't rely on having priority; things like healing or buff effects might take your Action for the Round but can be used during or even before your opponents' Turn, even if they go first.

Move Actions replace your Move for the turn.

Full Actions replace your Action for the turn.

Extended Actions replace both your Move and your Action, and might even take multiple Turns to complete!

Goals

Achieving your Goal also requires an Action, specified during negotiations (or approved by the DM); you must be in the same hex as the Goal (in other words, inside your opponents' Base) to attempt it. Like with damage on characters, three hits means the Goal is achieved, which ends the Combat. If one side achieves a Goal while the other still hasn't made any progress, it's a decisive victory, but if both sides have a hit or two off the Goal by the end, it's not a total loss on the losing end.

Surrender

If the situation seems hopeless for one side, they can always renegotiate by offering a lesser Goal to the other side. If the renegotiation is accepted, Combat is immediately over with the new Goal being the only effect (partial success by the losing side is lost). The side being offered the compromise may also choose to kill all members of the losing side and voluntarily not meet either their original Goal or the newly-offered one. Or they may decide neither is in their best interests and continue the fight.

6. Example Hells

Unfortunately I didn't have time to finish the writeups for the two example Hells, so here's a few short paragraphs – use your imagination!

6.a. Pirateland

Pirateland is a Hell created by the Overlord Leviathan. It is a bright, oceanic world where demons live in relative peace on small tropical islands, without a care in the world. Oh, and there are hundreds of rival Pirate Clans who ruthlessly compete for treasure and fame!

Pirateland is home to the unique Monstrous Races of the Nereid and Sea Serpent, and the sample playable characters are the Secret Society “Pirates Pirating Pirates Party”.

6.b. The Megacity

The Megacity is a Hell of unknown size with an unknown master. It is a technological complex of rooms built on rooms, hundreds of miles high and just as thick. The demons inside have never seen sun nor sky, and struggle for access to nutrient paste extruders and other crude necessities. It might be a bad place to live, but for a Devil, it's an alright world – rich in technology that can't really be found anywhere else, and easy to leave if you know the way out.

The Megacity houses the Monstrous Races of Cyberdemon, Drone, and Mass-Produced Soldier. The sample playable characters are the Secret Society “Abadon Mining Corp.”

7. Appendix

Character Sheet

A full character sheet is included as a separate document.

Afterward

Thanks to everyone who put up with me during the writing of this. Sorry it's not finished; three or four weeks would do better, but from my plans probably even two months wouldn't have been sufficient. I guess that's what happens when you try to make a rules-medium game in a rules-light contest.

I hope this game gave you enough ideas and inspiration to make for a few entertaining sessions at least! I know I had a lot of fun writing it and can't wait to run it myself!

deco plus boco