

Dark Places - a Sorcerer one sheet.

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Inspiration

The setting is USA after 1945, primarily inspired by the novels by James Ellroy, Jim Thompson, James M. Cain, but also Chandler, DeLillo and even Hunter S. Thompson. Player characters are people from all walks of life who at some point has been kicked thoroughly in the balls by real life. Policemen, detectives, writers, lawyers, dancers, sports stars, politicians. And crime, petty or serious, is just a fact of everyday life.

The Deal

The first summoning and binding of a demon. The player character got through a major crisis in life or got rid of a major problem by taking a deal from a demon: feed my needs and I will help you. The first Contact is automatic, and happens after a character has called for help, is trying to commit suicide or crime to get out of a tight situation. A demon responds to the "calling" and offers itself to be summoned.

The Deal is part of character generation like in normal Sorcerer. The demon's powers, Need and Desire have to be in line with the character's Lore descriptor.

Example

Joe, a street cop, has been taking small bribes from his beat to look away from minor crimes and petty drug deals. One day he is invited into his chief's office, where two Internal Affairs agents confront him. He spills the beans on the criminals he has been helping, but still loses his job and is sentenced to a short time in prison. Waiting the first night in prison, scared shitless, he prays for help while smashing his hands to pulp against the wall. An inner voice offers him a way out. He accepts and Summons and Binds a demon, who manifests itself as a thick ring on his finger.

What is a sorcerer and sorcery in Dark Places?

A sorcerer is a person who has taken the Deal at some point in his life. He or she is now more or less dependent on demonic power and may even summon and bind other demons to become more powerful.

What is Humanity and what does it mean to have zero?

Humanity is free will. Humanity 0 equals the character no longer has any free will, and becomes an NPC.

Taking the easy way out = check for humanity loss.

Taking the hard way out = check for humanity gain.

Humanity Gain Situations:

Make the hard choice - take the road less traveled, own up to a mistake, choose to face consequences rather than flee from them. Accept the responsibility which comes from free will. If a cop finally goes to Internal Affairs and admits to being in on the corruption going on in the department, he gets a humanity gain roll. If he then helps IA investigate and bust other dirty cops, then he might get another.

Refusing to use a Demon's abilities when they provide an easy out in a situation might also warrant a Humanity gain check. While investigating a fellow corrupt cop for IA, a cop puts his Brass Badge demon in a drawer and goes at it with only his native wits and tenacity, then it might be worth a humanity gain check.

Humanity Loss Situations:

React to escape consequences or Responsibility - when the cop shoots an unarmed suspect who turns out to be a hood trying hard to turn his life around, he has the choice to own up to his mistake and face the consequences, or to frame this guy to cover his own ass. If he goes with the frame job, it's a humanity loss roll.

Descriptors

Stamina

Addicted. Your body needs a certain drug, alcohol, or both. But then it's fine. As Chemically heightened.

Ex military. As Military training.

Survivor. As Natural Vigor.

Health junkie. As Clean living.

Fatso. You are huge and strong and heavy.

(Ex) police. Martial arts training, self-defence. As Specialized combat training.

Will

Manipulative. As User.

Rageful and Vengeful.

Arrogant. You consider everybody else as scum, lowlife or not as good as yourself.

Happy go lucky. As Zest for life.

Belief system.

Likeable. People like you. They want to be with you. As Social Competence.

Lore 1-2

Petty - you bargained your soul for something pathetically minor.

Lucky Break - you cut the Deal at the right time, at the

right place.

Greedy - You have everything. You want more.

Suicidal - Cutting a Deal is just another way to die.

Slowly.

Lore 3-4

Payback - You used the Deal to get your revenge at somebody.

Success - The Deal is the only reason for your success.

Death Fear - The Deal is your shield against dying.

Wacko - As Mad.

Lore 5+

The Big Man. You're on top of the world. It's a long way down.

Higher Purpose. There is a good reason for everything.

Even demons.

The Premise

You made a deal to make your life easier. Life's hard. It sucks. It hurts. How much of your free will are you willing to gamble to get through it?

Rituals and demons

Demons can be summoned via pain or suffering, either your own or somebody else's. They are representations of sins and vices, and may manifest themselves as objects, parasites, possessors or inconspicuous demons. Possessors mainly for NPCs. Their desires and needs are always sins or vices, like hate, lust, addiction to substance, or negative or frightful things.

Demons prefer to communicate via their powers rather than speech, but a sorcerer may of course mumble away to calm his demons if that is his fancy.

Many demons have the desire to rob a human completely of his free will and control his body.