

# Testament

The Late Gaming Company

# Testament

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## **This Game**

This game is Testament, a game from The Late Gaming Company. You can take yourself and a group of friends into the world of Testament and there bear witness to the last days.

## **What is Roleplaying**

Roleplaying is a form of interactive theatre. There is a plotline and there are characters in this theatre but there is no script. The actors or players in this theatre have to make up their mind for themselves how their character would act and react to forces within the plot. The decisions are made easier though the descriptions of the GameMaster (GM). His words, much like a narrator in a story, describe the world in which the characters live and he plays all of the supporting characters, both friends and foes, that the characters may meet in the story. If the descriptions and acting are not sufficient then the game will suffer as the players may react inappropriately to a situation. The GM has the most challenging role and is often the least rewarded. We see it therefore as the responsibility of the other players, through their characters actions, to make the story as entertaining and rewarding to all present.

The GM sets the initial scene and gives the players the necessary plot-hooks to enable the game to begin. It is expected that through good acting and also responsible playing the players should be able to guide their characters along the plot-hooks that the GM has provided. It is possible that the players may pursue a plotline unconnected to the story planned by the GM. In this case a good GM has the flexibility to permit this exploratory and improvisational storytelling and can enhance and embellish the story without his copious notes and with only the power of his imagination.

## **What is Testament?**

Testament is a description of the last days of Earth. The game begins with the world ending. It doesn't end in a day but rather over a period of time. Devils and angels walk the Earth picking out the last of the virtuous and the damned and helping or hindering where they can. People will not see winged beings plucking people from the street but they will notice people going missing and the world being seemingly populated by strangers.

The Players commonly take the roles of normal people who are still on Earth during this tumultuous period. The actions of the player characters will decide whether or not they are to be saved or damned and they may also perform a role in the judgement of those they meet. Common themes within the game are isolation, alienation, self-gratification, exploitation, retribution, redemption and damnation. These can be explored within the confines of the game using fictional characters.

## **Of Angels, Devils and Men**

There is some capacity within the game for other roles but they are not discussed here. A great war is in progress and the world of Testament is but one battleground.

## **How do I play?**

The following paragraphs and examples provide a more detailed description of how to roleplay a character and how to improvise his thoughts, feelings and reactions.

## **Your Character**

The rules can be used to construct a character for a player to use in the game. Characters are commonly normal people much like the protagonists in a feature film. They should have enough depth to make them individual but they should not be regarded as heroes on account of their superior powers or status. Some games feature exploration of dungeons or battles with dragons and gift characters with prodigious skills, mystical powers and powerful magical artifacts. In roleplaying games such as "23rd Letter" or SNCCXDO, the characters are gifted with psychic powers or advanced alien technology that makes them capable of amazing feats. In Testament, the characters are heroes or villains as a result of their actions.

## **Your World**

The GM will describe any differences between our world and the world of Testament before the game starts. There may be other differences that only become apparent as the game progresses and some may not even be noticed by the characters until the End.

The GM is the source of all information as he is the eyes and ears of your character. When your character smells something it is the GM that will inform you. If he feels a vibration or a breath of air upon him then the GM will describe the relevant sensations. It is up to the player to decide how his character reacts. The GM can tell you that something is menacing and powerful but it is truly up to the player whether or not his character is scared of it.

## **Immersion**

Ideally the players and GM should reach a compromise about the level of immersion during a game. Immersion is how far the players must go into character when the game is in session. Some GMs demand that the complete game session is in character and all non-game-related conversation should take place in the form of notes or with a pre-ordained signal. Other GMs are comfortable with a more relaxed atmosphere. There should be an easy distinction between what a player says and does and what a character says and does. Often a player can make a joke and the result can be taken in context as an action his character takes. With most groups the level of immersion is decided through playing together.

## Character Creation

The most important part of creating a character is realising what part they will play in the world. As you probably will have to share the world with other players then it is advised that you consult with your GM and the other players to find a way that you may better share the world.

**Example:** Jez, Derek and Rachel are starting to play Testament under the guidance of Issac who will be GM. Issac has decreed that the players must design characters who all know each other and who all live in the same small area of the city. They all work, directly or indirectly, for a small-time hoodlum, Hatchet Hauser, who is in control of that district.

### The Character Concept

Your character must now be further realised. It is not enough to describe your character in terms of single words but rather he should be as detailed as a major character in a book or feature film. Putting these details, description of body and mind, on paper is highly advised as is passing them to your GM for his approval.

Example: Jez has finished his character concept while Derek and Rachel are still working on the details. Jez has decided that he'll be playing a crooked boxer, the sort that takes a fall for cash. He's basing it loosely on a character from a film and based on this has worked out some details including acquaintances, friends and family. Derek is playing a bookie called Larry Cowley who also runs a protection racket in the region for Hauser. Rachel is still undecided. She wants to play a femme fatale-type character but doesn't want to be as bad as that entails. After some discussion with Issac, she decides to play a hostess in one of Hausers many illegal casinos. The connection between the characters is obviously gambling and Issac starts to craft his story in order to draw them in.

### Making the Numbers

Creating the character is easy enough and adding in the numbers that will be used in the game is as easy as making a few simple decisions and writing a few details onto the character sheet.

The details on the character sheet enable the GM to make impartial decisions about the outcome of the story. He can resolve problems by referring to the character sheets and, depending on the numbers found there, decided whether or not a character may succeed or fail at a certain activity.

The most relevant numbers and words on the character sheet in this section are Attributes, Areas and Aspects. These describe how the character interacts with the world, his education and also how tormented his spirit is considering that the world is about to end. The other information on the character sheet gives these numbers and words some depth and turns the character from something resembling a shopping list into something resembling a person.

## Character Generation checklist

### 1. Initial Character Concept

The player discusses with the other players and the GM on what might be an interesting character to play.

### 2. Detailed Character Concept

The player begins to note details on his character and form ideas about what sort of character he really wishes to play.

### 3. Attributes

The player puts the skeleton of the character together by selecting and rolling the five attributes required by the game system.

### 4. Areas

The player selects the various areas of knowledge that will make up the character background as well as define his position in society.

### 5. Aspects

The player selects the aspects that make up the nature of the character and those that have nurtured him over the year and made him who and what he is today.

### 6. Contacts

From your areas, decide on your contacts in those areas.

### 7. Finishing up.

Time to decide where your character lives and what he wears and what he keeps in his pockets. What car does he drive? What does he eat? What music does he listen to?

**Attributes**

These represent different areas of the characters skills and talents and their numeric levels indicate how skilled or talented the character is in that area. Each attribute must be rated between 2 and 5 with a rating of 2 being poor and 5 being excellent. The player has to set one attribute at 2, another at three, a third at 4 and the final rating at 5. But this only adds to four values! The last attribute is a result of a single six-sided dice roll. The player has to assign the other four before rolling the fifth. The attributes are:

**Battle** - how the character can act in a conflict whether physical or mental. The character description should set the scene when deciding when a character with a high Battle attribute is a muscled thug or a seasoned assassin.

**Insight** - the ability of the character to work out problems, reason through riddles and make an intelligent decision on a course of action based on logic, intuition and experience. Characters with high Insight are often scientists, lawyers or professional gamblers.

**Presence** - the ability of the character to attract, intimidate or cajole others without resorting to physical or verbal assault. Also an indication of how people react when he walks into a room and therefore can be a measure of attractiveness, displayed wealth or even how ghastly the character appears.

**Vitality** - the spark of life and perhaps what might keep the character going in trying times or perhaps even give him a second wind when the going gets extremely tough. High vitality might mean the character is very healthy or perhaps that he is just darned hard to kill.

**Fortune** - simply how lucky the character is. This is both a measure of some cosmic karma as well as a certain degree of skill. Some people can, by their daily routine, create their own luck. Characters with high fortune often have a pretty comfortable life.

**Example:**

Jez is playing a boxer who is a physical type of guy. He sets Battle at 5, Vitality at 4, Presence at 3 and Fortune at 2. He reasons that his boxer has a low Fortune which is why he “could have been a contender” but instead is throwing fights for peanuts. He rolls a d6 and the result, 1, (Doh!) is applied to Insight.

Derek’s bookie is meant to be quite smart and good at his job. He sets Insight at 5, Fortune at 4, Presence at 3, Vitality at 2 and rolls a d6, 2, for Battle. Not too shabby but then not likely to last long in a fight.

Rachel’s hostess needs to be good-looking and also able to command attention. Rachel thinks she might like to be group leader though she hasn’t told anyone about it. She sets Presence at 5 logically, Insight at 4, Fortune at 3 and Battle at 2. Her d6 roll, 4, gets assigned to Vitality. A lot tougher than she looks.

**Areas**

The character must choose areas based on his character conception. The player can negotiate with the GM for as many areas as are rational based on the character background. The character can have one primary Area and several secondary Areas. The difference is mainly based on the content. A character with a primary Area is assumed to know that Area better than another with only a secondary Area. Older characters may be permitted to take two primary Areas while younger characters may be limited only to secondary Areas.

**Example:**

Jez wants to play a boxer who is deep in debt to the local boss, some hoodlum called Hauser. He also does some enforcer-type work which gives him the cash he needs to live on. He’s not happy about his situation but his life ain’t bad. He decides that his Areas are: Pro Boxing and Local Criminal.

Derek has decided that his bookie is also involved with the Local Criminal area. He wants another Area but can’t think of the right definition. The GM suggests he adds both Gambling Clientele and Local Business as secondary Areas.

Rachel selects Gambling Clientele as her primary Area after listening to Derek and the GM talk about his problem. She also wants a secondary Area and after some talking with the GM selects Local Politics.

Issac, the GM, is quite pleased with these Area selections. There is a degree of overlap which is good and also everyone has their own specialities. He notes down the Areas and adds them to his plan for the game.

**Sample Areas**

- Local areas have a great deal of detail but only cover a relatively small geographical area.
- Local Criminal (fences, muggers, burglars)
- Local Business (shops, suppliers, services)
- Local Politics (mayor, district attorney, police chief)
- Local Academic (school, college, university)
- Local Paramilitary (police, scouts)

- National areas provide a wider breadth of knowledge but at much less detail than the corresponding local areas.
- National Criminal (the mob, smuggling, drugs)
- National Corporate (big business, stocks, warehousing)
- National Politics (congress, senate)
- National Academic (universities, ivy league, research)
- National Paramilitary (FBI, CIA, Army, Air Force)

- Specialist areas represent knowledge of specific situations and contain very detailed knowledge of that limited area.
- Pro Sport (Boxing, Racing, Football)
- Gambling Clientele (games, people, casinos)
- Ufology (people, internet, sites, military)
- Ecumenical (religions, libraries, signs and portents)
- Obscure hobby (roleplaying, SCA, National Guard)

**Aspects**

Every human being has several aspects. These indicate the various virtues and flaws that make up the human soul. For a quick game it might be best if the players choose only one aspect but for any type of sustained play, characters should have the full complement of aspects in order to equip them for the world out there.

Aspects, by their very nature, are wide open to interpretation as they are based upon perceptions and memories. At the same time they can have differing effects on a character depending on circumstance. A player might create character who was bullied during childhood. If taunted by a bully while in a vacant lot, he might cower reflexively due to the similarity between the vacant lot and the playground. Consider the same character if he was hiding a lead pipe in his jacket. Would he lash out?

Aspects are not excuses for behaviour but they can be reasons. Players should choose their aspects and present them to the GM for vetting. They are usually associated with an experience that the character has endured. A character may have some memories of his childhood that have haunted him for years or someone during college inspired him and his legacy has remained. There are also aspects to a character that are borne more out of the type of person that the character is. These aspects are known as Nature and Nurture.

**Nature**

This describes a single aspect of your character which is defining and is also possibly unchanging. It should add a degree of detail and may be related to a disability or quirk that the character has always possessed. A character will ususally have a single Nature aspect.

**Examples:**

- Looks - could be good looking or ugly, scarred or spotty?
- Clothing - are we talking nylon or Armani?
- Speech impediment - stammer, accent or dialect?
- Vision impediment - glasses, contacts, white stick?
- Hearing impediment - slight, total, sign language?
- Missing or crippled limb - from birth or accident?
- Persecuted Minority - real or perceived?
- Quirk - eats peas with custard, chews coffee grinds?
- Phobia - fear of heights, snakes, outdoors?
- Obsession - sexual fetish, belief in UFOs?
- Empathy - cry baby or bottle-it-up?

The Nature of the character should be related to something that you would like the character to be remembered for. It might also be secret but is commonly used as a handle for other characters to identify him. It possibly isn't a great idea for a player to choose serious impediments or anything that would become an object of ridicule within the group. People in the game world might be so unkind but players in the game should be more sensible.

**Nurture**

This describes the aspects that have defined your character since he was able to communicate with the world. These aspects are a result of the upbringing and environment the character experienced. They may be unchanging but it is much more likely that these aspects can be resolved through counselling or perhaps even gameplay. The player should select one Nurture aspect for each full ten years that the character has been alive.

**Aspects list**

The list of Aspects below is by no means comprehensive but meant to provide a guideline. Obviously the aspects that might be used to make up a hard-boiled police detective might not be the same for a priest. On the other hand, they just could be the same. These are just words, concepts and phrases. The more that a player puts into the explanation, the more he will get out of the character during play.

- Happy upbringing
- Family loss
- Bullied at school
- School of hard knocks
- Raised as white trash
- New occupation
- Personal attack or violation*
- No true friends
- Psychiatric history*
- Inspiring mentor
- Eminent rival
- Creepy stalker
- Athletic promise
- Sheltered life
- Terrible debt
- Superstitious
- Philanthropist
- Occult obsession*
- Phobia development*
- Religious upbringing*
- Always unemployed
- Convicted of crime*
- Nightmares
- Blackmailer or victim
- Scapegoat
- Won a lottery*
- Rare vocation
- Love gained or lost
- Desire for revenge
- On a mission*
- Haunted by the past
- Drug addict*
- Alcoholic*

Some of the aspects in *italics* listed above may require some outrageous explanations or may upset the flow of play that the GM intends. They may cause too much upset in the game flow due to heavy-going emotional issues.

**Example:**

Jez is almost finished with his boxer. He thinks of his Nature aspect. He chooses an ugly mug framed by a shaved head. Nothing is going to make this guy good-looking and even if he had the cash for the surgery, he wouldn't be the type to use it. His boxer is thirty eight years old and therefore has to choose three Nurture aspects. The first he chooses is from childhood. He remembers being bullied at school which made him take up boxing. The next is from his early adulthood when he remembers being locked up for beating another guy to death in a bar brawl. He spent four years in the can for that. The third memory is from his more recent years. He met a girl about six years ago and they fell in love. Then he got drunk, they had a fight and he hit her. She left him and he hasn't seen her since.

Derek still has to work out some details but he starts to make notes about his Aspects. The Nature he chooses for his character is that he has no sense of style. The bookie is always dressed in a fur coat when denim is in and affects platforms when sports shoes are the rage. As a result he always seems out of place. He owns tartan trousers. For Nurture aspects at the tender age of 26 he only needs to choose two. The first is that his father used to beat him and his siblings up until they took all of the kids away and put them in a home. The second is his learning that money, apart from love of it being the root of all evil, is possibly the only thing that can truly bring happiness. Lack of it makes you miserable and you become happy when you have vast quantities of it.

Rachel is pretty much stumped when it comes to her characters Aspects. She doesn't want to immediately jump on the abuse bandwagon as it would be unfair to both herself and the character as well as being pretty heavy-duty roleplaying. To make things easier the GM permits her to be aged 19 without taking a cut in Areas or Attributes. This means she has to choose her Nature and a single Nurture aspect which makes things a lot easier. For Nature she chooses an aspect she named Belladonna. She is a pretty lady but all of her life she has been poison to those she meets. Rachel describes her character as selfish but not mean-spirited. She just takes a fancy to things and manipulates those around her to get what she wants: men, jewelry, money. For Nurture, she has realised that her girlish good looks can only get her so far. She knows that the world out there is a cruel and harsh place and she'll need her wits about her if she is going to last. She has already started to plan a couple of blackmail scams as insurance.

Technically, for a short game, the character is almost complete. There are only some Contacts and the characters accoutrements and home life.

**Contacts**

A character may have contacts from within his Area that can be decided before the game begins or after the game has started. Contacts decided before play starts may be defined by the player while contacts invented after play begins are under the control of the GM. Normally a character has two contacts for each primary Area and one contact for each secondary Area.

Contacts are not just people you know but people who will do favours for you. There may be a cost incurred afterwards but they are meant to be benign. The character may know lots of other people from within his Area but they are not necessarily going to help him. Contacts almost always put themselves out within reason if asked.

**Example:**

Jez selects his primary contacts as being his coach, Jerry "Smokes" Shuster and a sports writer for a local rag called Ernest Howard. He expects that his trainer will know other trainers and fight promoters and mentions that old Smokes would do just about anything for his golden boy. He also fills in some details about Howard in that he mentions that Howard is often very critical of him but completely deservedly. Howard is also in touch with a lot of other areas of the press. Jez wants to leave his secondary contact for later so that he can fit in better with Issac's game.

Derek chooses his secondary contacts. His Gambling contact will be a downtown lawyer who has recently got into a lot of debt with the local bookies and who therefore will do just about anything they say. His Local Business contact will be a friendly car mechanic. He adds that the mechanic is also a racing driver on the weekend which causes Isaac to hum and haa for a while.

Rachel selects one primary contact and her secondary contact leaving one primary free for later use. for her gambling contact she chooses the manager of the casino where she works. She describes him as a ladies man but very good with money and obviously involved with the mob. For her political contact she decides to go the whole hog and choose the mayor of the city. Issac makes a crack that she could have just chosen two criminal contacts but otherwise approves the selections.

Contacts can be used by both player and GM as a way of enhancing and extending the story. They can introduce danger as much as they bring new opportunities. They can provide extra clues if a trail becomes cold or mislead the characters in an attempt to protect them from a particularly nasty situation.

**Killing contacts**

The GM should make notes of all contacts as well as generate a few more. These "extras" can be used if the storyline demands that a Contact would be killed. It isn't good to steal away a characters contacts without having another pop up a little later in the story.

## Finishing touches

So far we have decided how tough, smart and lucky the character is and what he learned in his growing up as well as who he knows and what he does for a living. We don't have much detail on where he lives and who with and other important aspects of his lifestyle.

### Where does he live?

Picture your character at home. Does he live in a modern suburban house with a wife and 2.3 kids or does he live alone in a bedsit apartment with only noisy neighbours and the lights that shine in through his window to keep him company?

### Who does he see every day?

Does he live in an apartment building? Are there people on the street outside his home? Does he see them? Does he speak to them? If not, why not?

### What does he do every day?

Does he wake early or late? Does he eat breakfast? Does he arrive for work on time? Does he get on with his colleagues? Does he work late or just watch the clock?

### How much does he earn in a day?

How much goes on his food and lodgings? Does he have spare cash? What does he spend it on? If he doesn't earn anything then how does he survive?

### What does he wear?

Does he prefer jeans and a T-shirt or a smart suit? Does the rubbing of his nylon trousers generate sparks or does he only wear designer labels? Would he stand out in a crowd?

### What does he keep in his pocket?

Car keys? Wallet? Loose change? Crumpled Bills? Money clip? Used handkerchief? Mobile phone? Does he carry a knapsack? Personal organiser?

### What car does he drive?

Is it a compact or a luxury model? What does he keep in the trunk? What does he keep under the seat? Does he use a car or rely on public transport?

### What does he eat?

Does he eat any fast food? Does he eat meat or other animal products? Does he drink beer or other alcohol? Does he eat chocolate? What about foreign food?

### Where does he buy his food?

Does he go to a big supermarket or keep to grocery shops and delicatessens? Does he notice the other people in the shops or at the checkout? Does he buy a lot of food or just milk and bread?

### What music does he listen to?

Classical music? Modern popular music? Or does he cling to a now-dead-but-once-popular music style? Does he dance or does he think that nightclubs are places to go and pick fights?

## Task Resolution System

This is a fancy name for "the Way things work". The rules that follow will allow a fair resolution of any conflicts between characters.

### How it works

If a character wishes to perform an action that the GM decides would not be a trial of his abilities, then the GM will permit the action to go ahead without a further test.

If a character wishes to perform an action that the GM believes would be a trial of their abilities, then a test must be used. This test combines a relevant Attribute with modifiers due to situation and Areas plus any special additions or subtractions due to relevant Aspects and then compares this total to a result of random chance provided by one or two six-sided dice.

### For Success: Dice roll $\leq$ Attribute + Modifiers

For most tests, only a single six-sided dice is rolled. Two dice are used only for tremendous conflicts (and other situations that are described later).

### Example:

Jez has named his boxer Drake. Drake is a sorry thug. In Issacs game, Drake managed to get himself into a fight (which is no great surprise) against a bar-fly in one of Hausers casinos. The bar-fly has Battle: 2 which already puts him at a considerable disadvantage. Jez rolls 1d6 with a result of 3. Issac rolls 1d6 with a result of 3. Jez succeeded in his test by two points while the bar-fly failed by one. How damage is worked is covered later.

Larry is the bookie that Derek took great pains to create. Larry is trying to hoodwink a mark that he's latched onto while at the tables. Issac calls for an Insight test. Derek rolls 1d6 and gets 5. This is equal to his Insight so he succeeds. The mark gets a Fortune test to spot the cheat and Issac gets a 2 on his 1d6. The mark has a fortune of 3. Also a success. So who wins? The mark succeeded by a better margin so he wins but Larry didn't fail his roll so he has a lesser success. Perhaps his cheat was noticed but he explained it away or perhaps he didn't get exactly what he wanted.

Rachel has named her character Bethany. She has been out on the town with some of the other girls and at one of their stopovers they meet a couple of overconfident frat-boys. The boys immediately start to hit on her. Issac mentions that she has had a lot to drink. Rachel knows she can succeed with her Presence roll but is a little dismayed when Issac calls for a Vitality roll. Bethanys Vitality isn't too shabby either and Rachel rolls a 4. It is a success but not by much. The frat-boys fail their Presence roll and Bethany gives enough of a hard stare to dissuade them from even starting with their tacky one-liners. (This example was a little contrived and more than a little sexist. Don't try it at home.)

## Combat

Combat is the exceedingly tedious title for the chapter where you learn how to make your character beat the stuffing out of other characters. It includes pummelling each other with fists, repeatedly stabbing with flick-knives, capping some sonofabitch in his dome or even using a common-or-garden utensil to flay.....

### Who goes first

All combat is simultaneous. People declare their actions in descending order of Battle scores. Everyone gets to act once. they can move or hit or dodge or open a door or whatever. They do one thing. A GM can make allowances here and there like permitting someone to jump through the air while firing a gun but should apply appropriate penalties.

### How to hit

Battle tests feature heavily in all conflicts.

It is up to the GM to decide if there are mitigating circumstances that might merit different results. If a character attacks from behind he might get a small temporary bonus to his Battle attribute. Likewise if a player goes into some detail on his attack then he might get what he wants. If he tries to do too much in a single turn then he may get a penalty instead.

There is another step however and that is in the application of hurt on the loser of the fight. So how is this handled?

### How to hurt

The winner of the Battle test must subtract his roll from his actual Battle attribute. This is the hurt number. However a character has certain limits on how much he can hurt others. The hurt number must be lower than the maximum hurt listed beside the weapon type. If it is higher then it is reduced to being equal to the maximum hurt.

**Unarmed** (head, fist, kick) - maximum hurt **2**

**Small weapon** (knife, cosh) - maximum hurt **3**

**Large weapon** (sword, club) - maximum hurt **4**

Guns can strike at much greater ranges and use dice to decide what hurt is applied to the victim. Calculate the hurt number normally then roll the dice for the weapon (from the table below). Whichever is higher is applied to the victim.

**Light pistol** (.22, .32) - damage **1d6**

**Heavy pistol** (.45, .44 Magnum) - damage **2d6**

**Shotgun** (10 gauge, 12 gauge) - damage **(3d6) -1**

**Submachinegun** (MP5K) - damage **3d6**

**Assault Rifle** (M16) - damage **3d6**

Example: Larry has just shot someone with a heavy pistol he won in a fair game of chance. He rolls 2d6 and gets a "3" and a "5". His hurt number was "2". He uses the "5" as his actual hurt number - causing serious harm to his foe. Isaac decides a "sucking chest wound" sounds right.

The rules above would therefore seem to suggest that only gunshots can kill. Not so. Any wound or combination of wounds can lead to incapacitation or death. When the cumulative hurt numbers equal the characters Vitality attribute then the character is incapacitated. When the hurt level reaches 6 or higher then the character has been mortally wounded. Not dead...not yet...but mortally wounded.

If the roll is 6 on one of the dice then the victim is automatically incapacitated. If two dice result in 6 then the victim has received a mortal wound.

### How does a character get better?

Healing takes time and care. If hospitalised a character will lose one point from his hurting total every week. If he isn't hospitalised but has good care then he loses a point every month. If he doesn't have care...then he adds a point to his hurt total every week.

### How else do people get hurt?

People get hurt doing all kinds of things and it means that the world is a pretty hazardous place to be. It may be the only place you have though.

### Falling off things

A character will probably take one hurt point for every ten feet he falls. Being incapacitated at the bottom of the cliff after a fall can lead to complications.

### Being hit by things

A character takes one hurt point for every ten miles per hour that the object is moving. Cars with big spikes or bull bars probably do a whole heap more.

### Being poisoned

This depends on the poison used but in truth it depends on the GM. If the GM thinks that the poison should kill then it does. If otherwise then the victim gets a better chance.

### So I'm badly hurt, now what?

A character who has some hurt does look as though they have been hurt. This may influence how others react to them. Compare their hurt levels to these guidelines.

1 point - bruised, cut lip, grazed forehead, slight limp

2 points - nasty cut, broken arm, cracked ribs

3 points - open break, blinded, gut bleeding

4 points - compound break, severed limb

5 points - head shot, sucking chest wound, cracked spine

6 points - dead dead dead

### So I'm really badly hurt, now what?

Characters who are incapacitated are in big trouble. Anyone with five minutes to spare can top them. They can be moved, dropped, bundled into carpets and whatever else but after a number of hours equal to their Vitality, they are going to snuff it anyway. The GM may have other plans and may allow the incapacitated to just lie there unconscious until help arrives.

**Quick example of combat and roleplay:**

Issac Tuesday night and Larry is running late as usual. Drake and Bethany are waiting outside on the street as Drake want to smoke. The wind is picking up and there's a chill coming off the river.

Jez I'm leaning against the wall looking out for trouble. Using my coat to shield my match from the wind.

Rachel I just pull my coat tight. I haven't had time to change. I'm probably freezing.

Issac Out of the shadows three shapes move down the street. You can hear them laughing and one of them is holding a bottle. All three are wearing jeans and muscle shirts.

Jez I fix them with a steely gaze.

Issac One of them pauses and the other two also stop. The first one look at Drake and says "Got a light" What do you do?

Jez I reach into my pocket and give him my matches.

Issac He takes one and lights his cigarette and gives back the box. He looks up the street and starts to walk. His friends dawdle along.

Jez I watch him carefully.

Issac Rachel, what is Bethany doing?

Rachel Nothing. Looking inside the doorway of the apartment block and wishing Larry would hurry the hell up. I say that to Drake.

Jez Yeah Beth, nothing changes.

Issac Drake notices that the three men have turned around and are now coming back.

Rachel Oh shit.

Issac The first one pulls out a shiv and the other two fan out towards Drake. Shiv sidles up to Bethany and starts to speak..

Rachel I kick him. I'm wearing high heels but I'll hit him in the nads with my shin.

Issac Drake is faster as his Battle score is 5 while Bethany only has Battle 2.

Jez I beat the living snot out of the other two. Bethany should be able to handle the other and there might be enough left for Larry if Derek ever arrives with the pizza.

Issac One of the other two has a big gun and the third has a bike chain. You move first but these guys were expecting you. Battle test.

Jez I get 3. Beat my Battle by 2. Score!

Issac The guy with the gun gets off a shot but the chain guy is just bowled over by your attack. He beat his score by the same but he's a street punk while you are a pro-boxer. The shot rings out and deafens you and you feel a nasty burning sensation in your leg.

Jez Fuck!

Issac Watch your language. You gain two hurt points and are hurting pretty bad. You've knocked Chain out but Gun is still ready to go.

Rachel What about me?

Issac I'm getting to you.

Rachel I rolled 2. Equal to my Battle.

Issac I'll give you an extra point because you don't look like the vicious type and also because Drake moved so fast on the guys friends. You nail him and he goes down. Doesn't look too bad though.

Rachel I knee him in the face.

Issac Right. Roll again. I'll give you another point bonus to Battle as he's a little preoccupied.

Rachel I rolled 2 again.

Issac Good. He's not out but the fight seems to be out of him.

Jez Em. What about the guy with the gun.

Issac He's backing off.

Jez Good. How bad am I hurt?

Issac Well you can't move without a Battle roll and you're bleeding heavily. Gun-guy is waving his gun at everything that moves.

Derek Hi guys. Sorry I'm late. I brought Chinese.

Issac Just in time Derek. Larry is about to get shot.

Derek What????

Issac Larry comes to the door just as the guy with the gun is aiming. He points his gun in Larry's direction.

What happens next.....

**I don't like this neighbourhood. It reeks of shit and death and a hundred needle-wounds but I still come here; drawn by the drama of short lives, excited by the hard looks of men who can't yet be fifteen, disgusted by the fecundity of this inhospitable place. I'm amazed people live here and shocked that anyone would bring more life into this hell-hole.**

**Why do I come here? It is my home.**

**- Bethany**

### **The Beginning of the End**

This game is based upon an aeons-old apocalyptic struggle between two powerful forces; one of light and one of darkness. Nothing is infinite in this world and as scientists plot the course of the universe and trace out its lifespan so does existence do the very same for man. No-one can know how long ago the struggle began but it is now that the conflict is coming to a close.

Though the primary sources for this would seem to be Christian lore it is present in the lore of many traditions much as the Garden of Eden and the Deluge have crossed the centuries. This battle passed cosmology, theology and ideology when it became real.

### **Judgement Day**

At some point in the future, time will be up. No-one knows exactly when though a helping of millennialist panic every thousand years serves to remind humanity not only of their mortality as individuals but of the possibility that it all can end. In Testament, we set a date. At the beginning of the game the GM should look at his watch or calendar and decree, "Now it begins."

So what does that mean? It means that the wheels have been set in motion for the end of the world in the game. Much as apocalyptic stories set heroes to do battle to save the world from killer meteors or deadly plagues, so the players in this game shall set their characters on the road to saving some small part of the world they live in.

### **Signs and Portents**

The world of Testament is different to our own. It is darker. The shadows seem deeper and the stars only dully gleam in the firmament. The sun still hangs high in the sky but even at noon it glares like a great yellow eye and few could ever say that it has been "too bright". Pollution has taken a great toll on the environment. The air has a coppery taste and a biting chill accompanies the wind. Clouds roll overhead and often bring a dirt-laden acrid rain.

There are other signs besides those that have been created by man. Right now, at the beginning, the signs are slight but as time passes then they will become much more evident. Things are not right with the world. Not at all.

The evidence of the end of the world is not compelling and few will pay heed to any nutcases who would claim that the world is actually ending.



**I went to Miami a couple of years ago with my friend...Jim. I think.**

**We met a few girls had a few laughs. I haven't seen him for a while. I remember we went...somewhere.**

**At least I think it was Jim.**

### **Where are all the people?**

Although the world population has not noticeably decreased, characters will find that they seem to know fewer and fewer people. As if the world were being populated with strangers. Some people will seem to have simply disappeared with no forwarding address. This is evidence of the judgement.

It is important to realise that people are not vanishing from sight. A character may discover that members of his family seem to have moved house or that the old man who used to sell papers on the street corner has just packed up and moved away. These people cannot be contacted or tracked down.

### **The End**

No-one can know exactly when the End is. But it is coming. Testament assumes that a story arc will be just over three years of in-game time. During that time the characters will be given more and more clues to what is happening. Some may take action and attempt to save themselves while others may dedicate themselves to saving others.

What happens at the End? One game might end with the GM taking everyone's character and saying "Game over". Another might end with an epic of biblical proportions including seven-headed beasts and Babylonian scarlet tarts. A third option might be a "Hell on Earth" scenario that might keep the action going and tell the tale of a resistance movement on Earth.

### Foreshadowing

Everything that happens in a Testament game must be foreshadowed. There is no point in starting a game that involves apocalyptic prophecy and then not build atmosphere with appropriate mood and plot devices.

For any given scenario, introduce the main characters several sessions ahead of when you plan to tell their story. This, of course, makes the first couple of sessions rather more difficult as you can't foreshadow for a first night.

To help, we provide an example of prologue and foreshadowing.

#### Prologue #1

After the players have created their characters and told the initial stories of their aspects and background this prologue begins. The players are told to leave their characters to the side and are handed new ones which they have not seen before. The players discover that they are playing a small group of pregenerated hoods who are just coming down from the effects of the latest drug. They have no money, no jobs and the hard edge of their craving is beginning to build again. After the initial settling down the players should be presented with an immediate conflict in the form of the strongarm duo doing the dirty work of a local gangster. This duo threatens them and the players should realise that if they don't do what is asked of them they will suffer severe consequences. After this the characters should be initially introduced to one or two characters that will become fixtures. These could be a street-walker plying her trade or perhaps even a victim of their own criminal intent. The characters that the players are now playing will become villains in our story.

#### Prologue #2

Give the players back their characters. They should be somewhat relieved to be back with their own characters. Introduce a second supporting character to the players during this session. Perhaps a pretty girl bumps into them outside an art gallery. She's a sculptress and she's being escorted by a very dangerous man. His appearance is significant while hers can be foreshadowing. Also take the opportunity to introduce the hoods from the previous prologue on an individual basis. For example, don't just set up an encounter which pits one group against the other. Arrange some time with one of the players and have a single head-to-head with the player. In this personal prologue you can introduce the character to two or three of the hoods and help him understand just how nasty they are. Tailor two or three encounters for the group with the characters alone or in very small groups. Short violent encounters should be sufficient.

After these initial prologues your characters should be ready for playing in the game. They should know one or two people from the streets near where they haunt. It is then important to maintain the pattern or foreshadow, hint and then introduce.

### Sample scenarios

These are some sample characters and scenarios that can be played in Testament. With some tailoring to suit your group each one could be used in this order and provide a story for each session.

**Destroyer** One of the characters meets an old friend from an earlier part of their life. He looks healthy and invites the character and guests up to his place in a couple of weeks as he is having a housewarming party.

**Maker** One of the characters spots a sculpture that seems to capture his nightmares or dreams in cold stone. Tracking down the creator leads to the sculptress they met in Prologue #2.

**Player** While at a casino the characters meet a gambler who seems to be having a rather good streak of winning. This is sufficiently uncommon to draw interest.

**Redeemer** In downtown, while enjoying the lurid nightlife the characters are approached by a young woman whose lewd suggestions would curl the toes of a Green Beret. She's just a child though and the tracks of needlemarks up her arms indicate she doesn't need anyone else to ruin her life.

**Destroyer** The characters go to the party they were invited to. The house is very grand and filled with the beautiful people. Their friend introduces them to his girlfriend who is a lawyer in the town. The characters can kick back and enjoy themselves.

**Player** The gambler is back. He's still on a winning streak but he's beginning to get worried. He's never been this lucky before. No-one is ever this lucky. Perhaps he has a guardian angel looking out for him.

**Maker** Pick one of the characters. One night two really big guys break into his house and shoot his mattress and pillow to bits. Seems that the sculptress mentioned the character one too many times. Luckily the character was out.

**Avenger** There is blood on the streets. Someone is killing people. Killing bad people.

**Redeemer** An older woman is seen beating the young woman the characters encountered before. She is the girl's mother and also her pimp. How many kids does she have?

**Destroyer** A girl is found dead in the river. One of the characters recognises her from the party. The police want to know her whereabouts on that night.

**Priest** A local priest is suspected of abusing the altarboys because one of the boys told his Pa. Some of the guys down the bar want to go over and break his legs.

**Player** The gambler has resurfaced. He's got a bullet-hole in him. A clean, bloodless hole in the centre of his chest and he's worried sick. He knows he should be dead. He was shot and dumped into a river. But he's still around.

**Avenger** One character is piss-drunk and bumps into a man who is running down the street. He babbles something about someone trying to kill him and then he runs off as the character slopes to the ground giggling. Next morning the running man is found face down in a gutter with his throat cut and eyes removed.

**Siren** One of the casinos in town has a new singer. She's a leggy brunette with almond eyes and a penchant for getting men killed. Howcome? Because she is married to the local gangster who owns all of the casinos in the city.

**Maker** The sculptures that picture dreams and nightmares have begun to disappear. The characters see them being taken down all over the place. Apparently she died. Apparently she moved away.

**Destroyer** The trail of murder has led to the party and the police are banging on doors. Do any of the characters have a history of violence or abuse?

**Priest** The priest mentioned before was found dead. His hands had been cut off and he bled to death in the church. No-one even knows if the allegations were true. No-one is talking about it down at the bar.

**Player** The gambler has disappeared. No-one seems to know where he's gone. If any of the characters were nice to him an envelope arrives a couple of days later addresses to them. Inside is a left luggage key. Inside the left luggage locker is ten thousand dollars and a note. The note reads "Eat the lie and pray."

**Messenger** One of the sandwich-board bible-thumping nutcases on the street rushes one of the characters and presses a note into his hand. The note reads "We see a mortal sin on every street corner and we think it is normal." He'll then deny it if questioned.

More?

You'll have to do some work yourself on how this develops...

**She came up quickly like a big cat on the prowl. She pounced and grabbed my case before I could react. Then, as quickly as she arrived, she disappeared into the crowd heading for the street.**

**I shouted but no-one stopped to look, no-one stopped to help me.**

**Stupid bitch ran right in front of a truck which trundled straight over here cracking her ribcage like an egg and cutting her scream short. It stopped the traffic so I got my briefcase back and waited for the paramedics to arrive. I didn't care for the bitch, I just wanted to make sure that if they saved her sorry ass the pigs would know she was a thief. As it happens she died right there in the street and no-one cared. Not me.**

- Marc Douglas, Welfare officer

### The City

Everyone lives in the City. The City is a large metropolis filled to the brim with hate and grime. It could be London or Paris or New York but most of my references will be most relevant to US cities. In this city there are few innocents save the lost souls who wander the streets trying to share a small amount of hope and love with whoever they meet.

The City has different districts which mirror the strata in society. Some areas are shrines to Mammon, commercial havens for credit and debt. There are also warehouses, businesses, residential parks, suburbs and country clubs. Other areas are slums, the dark heart of the city.

The City has a river and a motorway. It was founded about two hundred years ago by John Gladstone. His house still stands in his own district, Gladstone, and is used as the city museum. Gladstone was a marketeer in the beginning and his descendents followed the family business with speculating and shipping. During the Depression the family moved into organised crime and never looked back.

World War Two and Vietnam cut the heart out of the city as they watched their young come back in bags and boxes. The seventies brought hundreds of drifters with extensive knowledge of home-made narcotics and many made their homes here. The eighties brought business in and built most of the country clubs and golf courses that litter the countryside outside the city. The nineties brought a renewed interest in recreational narcotics and brought the recluses from the seventies out of retirement. Organised crime also hit the streets in a big way and it is common knowledge that the Mayor winters in Aspen with the Gladstones.

However in the "noughties", the years after the year 2000, someone new has appeared on the scene. Someone who has made even the mighty Gladstones concede to his authority and he rules the city with an iron grip. No-one seems to know where he came from but he and his enforcers took over in less than a month.

## Districts

The city is made up of several districts that identify the suburbs from the shopping centres. A single page cannot do justice to an entire city and these descriptions should be used as a jumping point for your own elaborations.

### North Bank

Characterised by cheap housing and overshadowed by the noisy interstate. The City Hospital is also up here as it has the best connections to the other parts of the city.

### Nash

Famous for its riverside market but populated mostly by low priced business and retail outlets.

### Westside

Westernmost part of the city with cheap housing occupied by students and slackers. It is also characterised by the thriving alternative culture that has made its home on the Westside.

### Madison

An open and airy district with parks, schools, museums and the House of Sport - a huge sports stadium and home to the local football and baseball teams.

### Downtown

Neon and noise all day and all night in the busiest shopping district in the city. Downtown isn't a place for children during the dark hours however as it crawls with hookers and dealers. During the day isn't the safest place either.

### Gladstone

The heart of the city and home to the Gladstone Memorial Museum. Lots of older derelict buildings occupied by squatters and crackheads.

### Harmony Heights

The most expensive place to live. This is the sort of place where you can get visits from the police for having daisies on your lawn. As you can expect the houses have insane security systems and most are owned by members of the Gladstone family.

### Bridges

Despised as a haven for car dealerships and warehousing and named for the three old bridges that cross the river. These bridges connect the north side of the city with the south side.

### Billings

Boring middle-class housing. Either the American Dream or the Suburban Nightmare depending on your point of view.



### Forbes

The eastern side of the city is dominated by large mansions, country clubs, golf courses and hotels. This area of town is positively swarming with gangsters and Gladstones.

### Central

Due to the mirror and steel skyscraper buildings this district has become known as the centre of the city, City Hall, the Police Precinct and the Courthouse are located here.

### Using the City

The city can change and indeed you can even use your own city or another that you might know better if it suits your purposes or the style of game. Some people enjoy ripping up their home turf while others prefer to trash remote and possibly more exotic locations.

The players should be provided a map so that they may be able to describe their characters actions better. A character may have an ambition to own (or perhaps burgle) a house in Harmony Heights. Another might want to buy a Maserati and would drag the others down to Bridges for that. Chances are that they will spend more of their time in Downtown rather than in Madison but this all adds colour to the character and depth and atmosphere to the game. The more depth you add, the better the game.

Put it this way, which is more fitting for a character to say?:

“Tonight I want to head over to Billings to boost a Chevy and then bring it over to Bridges where my mate Sanchez will be waiting. Then with the cash I’m going Downtown and I guess I’ll surface after my hangover goes away”

or

“I steal a car and sell it to a fence and then spend the money in a bar somewhere”

**City People**

The GM can people his version of the City with anyone he wants. They can be caricatures of real people, others might prefer completely original individuals and still others will populate their creation with characters from real life and popular fiction.

This section serves to illuminate personalities in the City and populate the adventure seeds that were provided on pages 11 and 12. Obviously we can't cover everything but it should provide you with enough information to get started. If you put at least this amount of detail into every character in your game then you'll have a solid foundation.

We include some basic attributes for each of these personalities in the unlikely event that someone would want to fight them. It should be remembered that the average person on the street has Battle, Insight, Presence and Vitality scores of 2. Their Fortune score is seldom higher than 1. People who are skilled may have values as high as 5 or as low as 1. A 6 in any attribute is regarded as extraordinary. Some player characters can get attributes like this but they are pretty rare.

**Mayor deVries**

Vaughan deVries is a crooked politician because he ignores things. He doesn't receive payoffs and he doesn't cheat on his wife. His unwillingness to confront the corruption in the city marks him. The general public believe he is on the take anyway. Vaughan himself rationalises that if he weren't Mayor then someone more corrupt would get the job. Vaughan is a tall slender man who recently had a hair weave to help protect his vanity. He looks about ten years older than he should considering his thirty-four years.  
 Battle: 2 Insight: 4 Presence: 4 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 1



**Christine deVries**

The mayor's wife is certainly no angel. She personifies the epithet of the Power behind the Throne. She is secretly addicted to heroin and is having a passionate affair with her dealer (who happens to be the chief of police). Christine was a looker in her teens growing up in North Bank but her lifestyle, habit and disregard for others have hardened her features. She remains a striking woman and owes her figure wholly to her addiction.  
 Battle: 2 Insight: 3 Presence: 4 Vitality: 1 Fortune: 1



**Captain Roy Cooper**

Cooper was a bent cop from the day and hour he accepted the badge. As a flatfoot he would shake down pimps and dealers for his take and these days encourages his men to do the same. Those who objected were usually involved in tragic stakeouts out somewhere in Bridges in the middle of the night. He is involved with the mayor's wife, Christine deVries, and supplies her habit. Don't mistake this for romantic attachment - he's bedding her because of her husband. Cooper is a tall, powerfully built man who shaves his head for effect. He seldom smiles and has a habit of grinding his teeth.



Battle: 4 Insight: 3 Presence: 2 Vitality: 3 Fortune: 2

**Carlo Maguire**

Carlo is the top man in the drug trafficking business in the City. Being in charge of the drug supply (both manufacture and import) gives him an interesting view of the world. He hires undergraduates from Madison College to work in the drug factory making drugs for export. Carlo has no remorse. He's a swarthy, stocky man with a very poor beard. His hair is black and wiry.



Battle: 2 Insight: 4 Presence: 3 Vitality: 3 Fortune: 1

**Hatchet Hauser**

Hauser runs most of the casinos, gambling houses, slot machines, numbers rackets and race meets in the city. He also has a surprising investment in bars, clubs and hotels. He owns the golf course as well. Hauser is respected as a businessman rather than a crook and has a good relationship with everyone who knows him. Hauser is a gruff-voiced, overweight man with a penchant for cigars and classical music. He is always well-dressed and seems to live in his limousine. He is married to some brainless fashion plate with breast implants.



Battle: 2 Insight: 2 Presence: 4 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 1

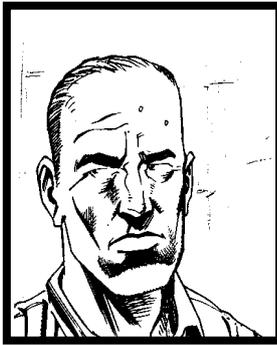
**David Maynard**

The District Attorney is up to his neck in gambling debts and is permanently sweating about them. Worse still - Hauser has pictures of him with a couple of girls at one of Hauser's clubs. Maynard's wife, Jennifer, is suing him for

divorce anyway and he hasn't seen his two kids in over a month. He lives in Harmony Heights in a big house with a swimming pool, tennis court and a bowling alley.

Maynard is medium build, slightly balding and carries a worried look everywhere. His secretary, Jocelyn Lloyd, deals with any contact with him.

Battle: 3 Insight: 5 Presence: 2 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 1



Westside. Christian has a leather fetish that makes him look a little fearsome but he's harmless really. Graham is much more sedate and tends towards polo necks and hawaiian shorts.

Christian is a blue-eyed, blond-haired Adonis while Graham would remind one of a rather craggy and irritable rodent. Both relatively pleasant people.

Battle: 2 Insight: 2 Presence: 4 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 1



**Paul Chaventre**

Chaventre is a respected surgeon who also moonlights as a crime clinic. In return for a large amount of cash he will work on anyone - no questions asked. In the past he has applied his medical training and resources to gunshot victims, torture wounds and has even been called on to make a cadaver or two disappear. Chaventre is a black

French-Canadian and married to Angela. She is short and her figure is beginning to fill out. They have two children in their late teens.

Battle: 2 Insight: 4 Presence: 2 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 3



**Charlie Franks**

Charlie is the man that people go to if they need a car. He's got the best dealerships, has the lowest prices, the most flashy cars and if you need a motor with no history, no registration and probably no future then step his way. Charlie supplies all of the big names in the city with their sports cars and limosines and fancies himself to be one of the elite. Charlie is a broad shouldered man with a fashionable couture and a penchant for grooming his moustache with his fingers. Charlie doesn't carry heat but he does have protection about in the form of thugs supplied by The Butcher.

Battle: 2 Insight: 3 Presence: 4 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 3



**Stephanie Clerval**

Clerval is the Dean of Madison University. She has an active role in many city functions and can always be found at the Gala fundraisers held down in Gladstone. She avoids all contact with Christine deVries and hates the ritual of being left to chat with her when the "men" talk. She does have a vice however which mars this picture of the perfect academic. The first is that she selectively seduces and murders young male and female students. She doesn't do this out of any sexual need but purely out of a malice that is as vicious as anything the crime lords could fathom.

Stephanie is matronly woman with soft features and greying hair. She commonly wears smart suits and skirts and never wears jeans or slacks.

Battle: 4 Insight: 3 Presence: 3 Vitality: 4 Fortune: 3



**Mai Derren**

Mai is the spokesperson for the small community of Asian peoples that live in the Billings area and have their shops and businesses somewhere in Nash. She is the co-owner of a restaurant which is reputed to be the best restaurant in the City and famed as much for its Southern Fried Chicken as their special house Tam Yun Guk hot soup.

Mai is in her late thirties and is feeling her age creeping upon her as she loses her once good looks to ever-encroaching crow's feet. She's not interested in finding a father for her fourteen-year old son so much as finding a role model for him.

Battle: 3 Insight: 2 Presence: 4 Vitality: 4 Fortune: 1



**Christian Hope**

Christian might be called the "Messiah of the alternative culture" in the City. He works indirectly for Hauser and runs the underground clubs, the rave mausoleums and the others areas that Hauser doesn't like to deal directly with. Christian is married to an accountant called Graham and they live in a tidy and well-appointed apartment on the

**Samuel Butcher**

Samuel grew up in Downtown and spent a lot of time in the care of the local authorities. When he became an adult he got a lot smarter and hasn't been inside since. His hobbies have become a lot more unwholesome and he earned the nickname "The Butcher" despite the fact that he doesn't use a knife. He has used chains, boxes, cars,

clubs, guns, a television, red hot pokers and a length of power cable. He now works for the number one man in the city and has been seen dating a sculptress. He's sufficiently keen on her that he bought a gallery just to show her stuff. The Butcher isn't just a glorified killer. He holds a Masters in Criminology and is currently working for a Business degree. Crime may not pay long term for life, but it paid for college.



Samuel is a quiet-looking man with an expensive haircut. He really looks like some renditions of a mild-mannered reporter - a big guy fitting into a modest suit.

Battle: 7 Insight: 4 Presence: 4 Vitality: 6 Fortune: 3

### Matthew Harkness

Harkness is a senior crime boss in the City. He appeared on the scene a little while back and was already independently rich and had a cadre of trained killers to do his whims. He recruited all of the hard cases and then spent a few weeks taking on the resident crime lords. Those that didn't cave were killed.



Harkness looks like a Devil wearing a Gucci suit. Good skin, goatee beard and intense eyes. He always wears a suit except when he's swimming or playing squash.

Battle: 6 Insight: 6 Presence: 6 Vitality: 6 Fortune: 6

### Other NPCs

The rest of the world is out there. What's left of it anyway. The average person will have scores between 2 and 4. I'd assume that the average person has a score of 3 except for one area where they excel (maybe 4 or 5) and one area where they are found lacking (a single 2). Might even be better to just divide 15 points between the five attributes. NPCs will also only have one Area generally - in their chosen occupation.

Here are some examples:

#### Bouncer at a Club

Battle: 4 Insight: 2 Presence: 3 Vitality: 4 Fortune: 2  
Area: Nightclub Security

#### Police Officer

Battle: 3 Insight: 3 Presence: 4 Vitality: 3 Fortune: 2  
Area: Police Procedure

#### Shifty Lawyer

Battle: 3 Insight: 4 Presence: 3 Vitality: 2 Fortune: 3  
Area: Legal loopholes

### Plots and Metaplots and Testament and whatnot...

The Judgement Day has come and your players will bear witness. Every game you play has a plot. You, the GM, devise such plots and the players work through them every time you get together.

Now...Testament is actually book 1 of 3. The second book is "Creed" which deals with the occultists and magicians in the world. The third book which currently has the working title of "Rapture" deals with the angels and devils. There's a metaplot which spans across all three books. Metaplots have some really good points. They often form a story arc reaching across an entire series of books or even in film and television. Government conspiracies, interstellar wars and alien invasions have been done to great effect in television. Metaplots are the glue that ties the individual episodes into one story making it seem that everything was part of a single plan from the very start. In this way they are a good thing. It's possible to foreshadow epic storylines and give the players little bits of information and watch them piece together a bigger picture. The revelation of the "Big Picture" can be very rewarding. However not all is rosy.

Metaplots have their sinister side too. Too often they are used as a stick to get roleplayers to buy books. Part of the information is given in book one and you need to get book two to get the rest of the story and book four to get the bits that your players need to make their characters really cool. That's not cool. I know it's not cool and god knows I've done it myself - not told the whole story in the main book because I wanted to save some for the supplements.

Anyway...Testament is book one. It stands alone and if people pay the shareware fee it covers all of the Testament books. I haven't finished writing Creed or Rapture but they won't cost anything extra to those people who've paid the shareware fee for Testament. Of course anyone can download it and not pay...sheesh...it's not expensive is it?

So what does that boil down to? I mean - will Creed ever be finished? Will Rapture be written? I don't know. Depends on my other work (you know...real life, work, changing jobs, changing moods, family, other books I'm writing, other commitments). So I guess...register this if it rings your bell.

Anyway, I'm rambling. As PDF is a nice eco-friendly medium I'm charging \$15 for the PDF. A third of every shareware fee I receive will go to the artist, young Mister Holden and the rest will go to establishing the Late Gaming Company. I bet Paul will be surprised. I figure it'll buy us lunch and maybe if I beg he'll do the art for the next book - you all do know he does art for the Warhammer comic and also 2000AD. He's da best.

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(and not laughing at me...to my face)**

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(I couldn't have done it without you.)**

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**Useful web sites:**

<http://www.lategaming.com/>

<http://www.pauljholden.com/>

**From the Book of Revelation:**

**12:6 The woman fled to the desert where she was taken care of for 1260 days**

**13:5 The beast was permitted to have authority for 42 months.**

**20:7 After the thousand years are over, Satan will be let loose from his prison.**

## Task Resolution System

If a character wishes to perform an action that the GM believes would be a trial of their abilities, then a test must be used. This test combines a relevant Attribute with modifiers due to situation and Areas plus any special additions or subtractions due to relevant Aspects and then compares this total to a result of random chance provided by one or two six-sided dice.

**For Success:** Dice roll  $\leq$  Attribute + Modifiers

For most tests, only a single six-sided dice is rolled. Two dice are used only for tremendous conflicts (and other situations that are described later).

## Combat

### Who goes first

All combat is simultaneous. People declare their actions in descending order of Battle scores. Everyone gets to act once. they can move or hit or dodge or open a door or whatever. They do one thing. A GM can make allowances here and there like permitting someone to jump through the air while firing a gun but should apply appropriate penalties.

### How to hit

All combat is virtually simultaneous and Battle tests feature heavily in all conflicts.

### How to hurt

The winner of the Battle test must subtract his roll from his actual Battle attribute. This is the hurt number. However a character has certain limits on how much he can hurt others. The hurt number must be lower than the maximum hurt listed beside the weapon type. If it is higher then it is reduced to being equal to the maximum hurt.

**Unarmed** (head, fist, kick) - maximum hurt 2

**Small weapon** (knife, cosh) - maximum hurt 3

**Large weapon** (sword, club) - maximum hurt 4

Guns can strike at much greater ranges and use dice to decide what hurt is applied to the victim. Calculate the hurt number normally then roll the dice for the weapon (from the table below). Whichever is higher is applied to the victim.

If the roll is 6 on one of the dice then the victim is automatically incapacitated. If two dice result in 6 then the victim has received a mortal wound.

**Light pistol** (.22, .32) - damage 1d6

**Heavy pistol** (.45, .44 Magnum) - damage 2x d6

**Shotgun** (10 gauge, 12 gauge) - damage 3x d6-1

**Submachinegun** (MP5K) - damage 3x 1d6

**Assault Rifle** (M16) - damage 3x 1d6

The rules above would therefore seem to suggest that only gunshots can kill. Not so. Any wound or combination of wounds can lead to incapacitation or death. When the cumulative hurt numbers equal the characters Vitality attribute then the character is incapacitated. When the hurt level reaches 6 or higher then the character has been mortally wounded. Not dead...not yet...but mortally wounded.

It is pretty important to keep a record of the hurting as it is necessary for the healing.

### How does a character get better?

Healing takes time and care. If hospitalised a character will lose one point from his hurting total every week. If he isn't hospitalised but has good care then he loses a point every month. If he doesn't have care...then he adds a point to his hurt total every week.

### How else do people get hurt

People get hurt doing all kinds of things and it means that the world is a pretty hazardous place to be. It may be the only place you have though.

### Falling off things

A character will probably take one hurt point for every ten feet he falls. Being incapacitated at the bottom of the cliff after a fall can lead to complications.

### Being hit by things

A character takes one hurt point for every ten miles per hour that the object is moving. Cars with big spikes or bull bars probably do a whole heap more.

### Being poisoned

This depends on the poison used but in truth it depends on the GM. If the GM thinks that the poison should kill then it does. If otherwise then the victim gets a better chance.

### So I'm badly hurt, now what?

A character who has some hurt does look as though they have been hurt. This may influence how others react to them. Compare their hurt levels to these guidelines.

1 point - bruised, cut lip, grazed forehead, slight limp

2 points - nasty cut, broken arm, cracked ribs

3 points - open break, blinded, gut bleeding

4 points - compound break, severed limb

5 points - head shot, sucking chest wound, cracked spine

6 points - dead dead dead

### So I'm really badly hurt, now what?

Characters who are incapacitated are in big trouble. Anyone with five minutes to spare can top them. They can be moved, dropped, bundled into carpets and whatever else but after a number of hours equal to their Vitality, they are going to snuff it anyway. The GM may have other plans and may allow the incapacitated to just lie there unconscious until help arrives.

TESTAMENT

NAME  
DESCRIPTION

BATTLE  
INSIGHT  
PRESENCE  
VITALITY  
FORTUNE

HURT DESCRIPTIONS

AREAS

ASPECTS

CONTACTS

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NAME  
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*There are two kinds of people in this world*

*Those who do evil*

*And those who do nothing*

*Back in the eighties they told me we had between forty and fifty years of fossil fuels left in the world. To this kid it meant that 2025 would be a bitch of a year. I remember thinking "I'll be fifty by then" and that age seemed so far away.*

*By the end of the nineties when I had become a man, a husband and a father I realised that no-one was talking about fossil fuels any more. We had other problems by then with global warming, ozone holds and killer epidemics. We no longer believed that solar cells and electric cars would save our lifestyle. We just didn't have any answers. and we were ignoring the truth.*

*Things were not going to get better. In fact, they were getting worse than we knew.*

*Who could have known that the world was ending.*

*You  
Will  
Bear  
Witness*

*The Late Gaming Company*

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