

Apocalypse
Scissorhands

The Beginning – Religious History in 186 words

In the beginning, the Cosmos functioned well. A looming presence known only as Management kept things running smoothly and coolly. This was partially because The Management was a dedicated worker at the beginning of time, partially because there was nothing to manage besides a couple rocks and space.

The Management decided to create a force of beings to assist it in running the universe. Thus, the management created Gods.

The Gods created the worlds, and brought forth life to fill these worlds with. They sculpted, with great care, landscapes and life forms.

The first Gods, The Prefects, realized that managing these burgeoning life forms was outside their own means, and birthed a new order of Gods: The Marshals.

The Prefects controlled the elements of the universe that were more abstract. In order of importance, these were:

- Life
- Peace
- War
- Love
- Sacrifice

The Marshals were prescribed to the more finite aspects of the universe. In alphabetical order, these elements were:

- Birth
- Command
- Cooking
- Death
- Fertility
- Forging
- Friendship
- Lust
- Marriage
- Secrets
- Torture
- Violence

The Great Metanoia – Cosmological Upheaval in 248 words

In the beginning, the Cosmos functioned well. A looming presence known only as Management kept things running smoothly and coolly – monitoring the Gods and their progress.

However, when Signor, the God of Sacrifice, turned in his fourth progress report, Management frowned (in the way that gigantic looming cosmic presence would.) It became obvious that Signor was unable to meet his Godly mandate.

The Management then organized what would forever be known as The Great Metanoia – an internal reorganization of the Cosmos and the Gods.

Fierro, the God of Cooking, was fired completely. Fierro was a full 10% behind on his project of creating the Apple of Immortality. Unfortunately, after he was fired, no other God was found to have the credentials to fill his spot.

Margery, the God of Fertility, went on maternity leave from her position. Management appointed Clive in charge of this position. Clive decided to redesign the birth process, so that instead of babies being delivered by storks, they were shed from the mother in a trial of blood and agony. Management declared Clive God of the Millenia, for cutting down on stork demands.

Cupid, the God of Love, was also deemed incapable of filling his job title. Thus, God decided to award a promotion to one of The Marshals, in order that it could demote the underskilled Cupid.

Apocalypse, the God of Torture, had excelled at his job from the moment of his birthing. He had an uncanny knack for destroying the lives of others, and for making others miserable. The Management felt it only fair to award such a sensational worker with the promotion.

Thus, Apocalypse became the God of Love, and Cupid the God of torture. Management felt this switch was even more of a good idea, because Cupid was an archer – and thus well adjusted to a role of inflicting pain on others.

The Gods and You

The game you hold in your hands is a Role-playing game. Players assume fictional identities and narrate the lives of these characters.

The players of this game take up the roles of future lovers, struggling to connect with their soulmates. They guide these lovers through a variety of challenges, in order to connect with the one they love.

However, these characters are not alone, because they have an ally up above to help them on their way: Apocalypse, the God of Love.

One player, who is often called a Game Master, takes on the role of Apocalypse. Their job is twofold: narrate the world going on around the players, and play out Apocalypse's valiant efforts to unite these lovers.

However, life isn't all sunshine and rainbows. Apocalypse is new at his role as God of Love, and is finding it hard to adjust. This is coupled with the fact that he is resented by his former colleagues, The Marshals, and ignored by his new coworkers, The Prefects.

Apocalypse is the master of torture, torment, agony and destruction of the soul. You'll need to utilize all four of these skills to bring the true love to be – simply because those are the only real skills you have.

Good luck with that.

Mechanically Speaking

Game Mechanics

Lovers have four basic attributes: friendship, romance, sexual desire, and logistics. These attributes are reflections of their relationship with their soulmate (one of the other players). Each attribute starts at 1.

Lovers are brought together when they bring **all four** elements to their maximum of 10.

There are two mechanics players use in the game:

Between Lovers

This mechanic is used when one or both lovers are trying to strengthen their relationship, and bring themselves closer in the world.

The total combination of all four attributes is referred to as the character's Soulmate Meter. A Between Lovers test can be tested by one of the lovers, or collaboratively by both.

First, decide between Apocalypse and the lovers which of the four attributes the test is dependant on. Whichever lover or lovers are involved roll a d6 for each point they have in that attribute.

Add together dice rolled by all involved players, as well as adding together the Soulmate Meters of all involved players. If the total score is higher than the total Soulmate Meter, the action is considered a success.

Add 1 to the attribute that was tested with – this is to demonstrate a strengthening of the bond.

However, if the test is failed, the lovers are considered torn apart. They must return to their lives, fight, or become confused – They are forced to separate themselves, whether physically, emotionally, or with their relationship.

Before they can make another Between Lovers test, they must make at least one test Against the World. This is to represent the volatility of love, and how they must inevitably be sucked back into the real world at times.

Against The World

The world pushes lovers away in cruel and unfair ways. If it weren't for Apocalypse, they'd be all alone in the world.

When a lover tests to see if they succeed some external problem – catching a plane on time, getting a job in their lover's hometown, making a delicious home-cooked meal – they test by rolling an amount of d6 equal to how many Against the World tests they've made since the last time they made a Between Lovers test.

If you have any ones, the test is considered failed. You may remove a point in any one attribute to have the test succeed.

This mechanic represents the need for lovers to be together, lest the flame die down.

Apocalypse

Apocalypse, God of Love is the GM. He is the only player who doesn't have the four core attributes.

However, he has his own set of traits and mechanics.

Respect Levels

Apocalypse is the only God to have been boosted from The Marshals to The Prefects. As such, tensions are high amongst the Gods.

As such, the Marshals hate that he was ever better than them. They chastise him for gaining promotion on the grounds of making people suffer. Overall, they are jealous of Apocalypse.

The Prefects hate the idea that some young upstart could enter their ranks. They find Apocalypse to be poorly suited for the infinitely hard job of being a Prefect. Furthermore, they don't want him to be around – they will be glad if he fails.

Apocalypse must gain the support of his fellow Gods. To represent this, there are two Respect Meters. These are scales of one to five: 1 2 3 4 5.

Both respect levels start on 1.

Gods are fickle creatures: they are vain, and they are easily influenced by peer pressure. Impressing one of the Prefects means gaining respect with all of them.

If you impress a God by doing something that they would do in your shoes, you gain a respect.

For example, if a lover is returning back to his city after a lusty visit to Seattle, one way to keep the lovers together might be to cancel his flight. One way to do this would be have a plane blow up on the runway. Doing this would satisfy the God of Violence, and he'd vouch for you – increasing that respect by one.

If you disgust a God, you lose a respect level.

The only Gods that can't influence respect for you are yourself (God of Love) and Cupid (God of Torture). Nobody will take you boasting to mean anything, and no one will listen to Cupid when he's whiney about the man who stole his job.

Trying to Help

Apocalypse will inevitably try to bring the lovers together. However, he lacks a lot of the strengths that Cupid did. As such, he will often end up causing more harm than help, in his misguided attempts.

When Apocalypse aides an action, the following happens: Roll a d6, against the target difficulty.

If the test is Between the Lovers, then the amount Apocalypse succeeds by is the amount of extra dice the Between Lovers test in question, or the amount he fails by is the amount of dice removed from the Lovers before rolling.

If the test is Against the World, then the amount Apocalypse succeeds by is the amount of dice that are removed from the player before rolling. Likewise, the amount he fails by is the amount of extra dice added to the roll.

Using your Own Strengths

If Apocalypse is testing one of his own strengths, then he needs to get equal to or under 5.

Apocalypse is a limited being. He knows how to do four things:

- Cut Things – Sever hopes, connections, thought patterns
- Wreck Things – Destroy, mutilate, and devolve things
- Haunt Things – Torment a being with visions, thoughts, and memories
- Instil Nightmares – Control a being with disturbing visages and forecasts

In these four arenas, Apocalypse is untouchable. He can reign despair down like you wouldn't believe. These are considered his four strengths.

Altering Strengths

Apocalypse is slowly adapting to his role as a matchmaker. He has learned to stretch the boundaries of his strengths, to help cover love more effectively.

He is slowly gaining the ability to cut doubts instead of hopes;

He is slowly learning to wreck inhibitions, rather than souls;

He is slowly learning to haunt people with remembrance of a lover, rather than despair;

He is slowly learning to use dreams to send message, rather than fears.

If Apocalypse attempts to use one of his 4 strengths in unconventional ways, then the Trying to Help action is tested at 1.

However, the next time Apocalypse attempts to use the same strength unconventionally, it is tested at 2, and then the next time at 3. Unconventional attribute use is always tested at one level higher than the previous attempt with the same attribute.

Powers of the Other Gods

If Apocalypse is testing an action that doesn't play off one of his skills, then determine which God does have the strengths for this action. The total you need to roll equal to or under is that God's Respect Level. This represents the God in question lending support, and you having access to that God's files and resources.

A quick summary of each God's powers:

- Bolero, God of Life: Instilling energy into beings, Uplifting another's sadness.
- Diego, God of Peace: Halting aggression, Instilling understanding.
- Molen, God of War: Making beings angry and aggressive. Cause aggression.
- Hermel, God of Sacrifice: Put beings into positions of necessitated sacrifice.

- Clive, God of Birth: Assisting childbirth, or any other bloody and painful ritual.
- Sarge, God of Command: Controlling and ordering beings lower in rank than you.
- Grim, God of Death: Making people die. duh.
- Simen, God of Fertility: Creating pregnancies.
- Thor, God of Forging: Aiding metalworking and branding.
- Hugo Bustavia, God of Friendship: Creating warmth and happiness.
- Portia, God of Lust: Stimulating feelings of sexual arousal.
- Bethany, God of Marriage: Consecrating true love, so long as its heterosexual.
- Dubellya, God of Secrets: Preventing the spread of certain knowledge.
- Horroy, God of Violence: Inflicting physical pain on others.

Starting The Game

Setting

The game remains ambiguous as to the actual location and time it takes place in. Although it was written with modern day scenarios in mind, it would work equally well in other settings:

- A flighty and quixotic affair in Victorian form
- A deep and passion love amidst the Renaissance
- A sinful but enrapturing engagement in the middle ages
- Dirty animalistic sex as prehistoric cave-people.

Situation

The destined lovers are advised not to start the game already in a relationship – the game works most effectively if there are significant barriers to overcome external to the relationship.

Living in different towns, having conflicting jobs, having controlling families – these things add to the trial of the lover.

Playing Apocalypse

Apocalypse, the God of Love, has two distinct duties: Fill the role of a traditional GM, and fill the role of Apocalypse.

As a GM, you must create the scenes, characters and colour that exist around the lovers. You must present them with barriers to overcome, in order to reach their true love, and you must help them measure their successes and losses.

As Apocalypse, your job is to intervene on as many tests as you want to. The more tests you intervene on, the more fun and interesting the game becomes for people.

Gauging Respect Levels

It is the joint responsibility of players and Apocalypse to decide what constitutes a gain or loss in Godly respect.