

DELETE

A ROLE-PLAYING GAME
BY BRANDON PARIGO

This is how it is

Here is how it starts. One normal day. Maybe you were at work, or school, or maybe still in bed. The next thing you know you cut yourself, or your nose starts to bleed, but there is no blood like blood that you have seen in the past. There is mud. Rather a reddish brown mud.

You freak out, and go to the doctor. The doctor isn't very helpful. Not because he thinks its normal or he doesn't know what is wrong with you, but because he doesn't even see you. You sit there waiting, holding your mud in, but the nurse keeps forgetting about you. Eventually you can't take it anymore and you leave, possibly even telling them what you think of their 'service'. They look at you like they were seeing you for the first time. Maybe they even call the police on you.

Defeated you end up at home, or jail or where ever. Maybe you cry yourself to sleep, holding a rag over that muddy nose. Maybe just maybe you sit staring at the T.V. Or making calls to your friends and family wondering what has happened to you. They don't seem to answer the phone, and when they do they quickly hang up to deal with other things in their lives.

Then late at night. Past midnight at least. There is a darkness on your floor where it meets the wall. A darkness like a snake, that moves toward the corners where the walls come together in a crooked angle. From that angle, that off corner, is born the Devil, wearing a shit eating grin, and looking hungry. He tells you all the things you don't understand, and laughs when you ask him his name. He tells you that God has deleted you, and that soon you will be no more, unless you fight. That he is leaving something for you. Under the bed, or maybe in the closet. A gift, "to help", he says. He says that there are others like you, that they too are looking for a way out of their fate, that maybe you could find them.

After he is gone, you don't remember when he left. You denied it for awhile. Told yourself that he never was real. That you just had a bad day. So you go to bed again. Then you get curious. What if it wasn't a bad day? What if the Devil is real? Slowly you get out of bed, and lift

the covers to reveal underneath it. There it is. Something you know was not there before tonight. Something that only the Devil would of left for you. A gun.

Introduction

Delete is a role-playing game, made in 24 hours for the November Ronnies. It uses the words Mud, and Gun.

In this game you and a few friends get together in order to role-play out the experiences of someone who has been deleted by God, and is damned to turn into the base components of a human body in a few days time, if they don't find God and ask him or force him to undo it. This can be harder than it seems.

One player will play the Devil, and God, and Everything in between (aka the rest of the world), while the rest of the players will take on these characters who are having their lives shattered.

You will need paper, pencils, and dice. The side of the dice you use doesn't matter, as long as all the dice are of the same size.

The rest of this text is dedicated to playing the game. Starting with the creation of the characters. Then the rules, and finally what the hell that last player does (the one without a character, we'll call him the Game Master because all the cool guys are doing it), or at least some notes for him to pay attention to.

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Average Joe

Now, those of you who are going to play the characters in this story game, need to think of who that character is. As the title of this little section suggest, it should be an average Joe, or Jane. Someone that is like the people you encounter every day on the street, or at work, or even in the mirror. God doesn't delete people that entertain him, so this person has to be truly average. So freaking average it hurts to even consider watching them for a second. Don't worry about them being too average, or boring. That is all about to change. That is what this game is all about.

Now form the idea into a sentence that really nails down what you think of that person in your head. This sentence should include what makes them average and what they do with their life, including major hobby or job. Once you have that write it down on a piece of paper. The act of doing that makes that piece of paper your character sheet, and I will be calling it that for the rest of my days, so remember that.

Rules: It is assumed that your character is pretty good at being how average they are. So anytime that this sentence comes up in play you gain One to your Conflict pool.

Examples: "David is a corporate wage slave that can't get a date to save his life, so he spends his time playing Dungeons and Dragons". "Jackie was born white trash, and continued the tradition so bad that she can't even bring herself to get knocked up by some beer drinking loser."

What Ya Got?

So you know just what type of average Joe you are playing, but you probably don't know

what that average Joe has. This is a pretty material world. Specially in the world of your characters. They can identify with things more than people. Which seems strange until you think of all the times you mentioned someone as "the guy with the truck", or "that girl with the daisy dukes".

So what does your character have that defines them? Now you don't have to go on writing down everything they own, because most of those things are implied in the Average Joe sentence. Just write down one thing that could be said to define them.

Rules: When these items are used in the game they give the character double the normal

Conflict points for what they are.

Examples: "David always wears the same sports coat, even though its a bit faded from use". "Jackie loves her mini-skirt, the one with the red slash across the ass, some people wonder if she ever takes it off".

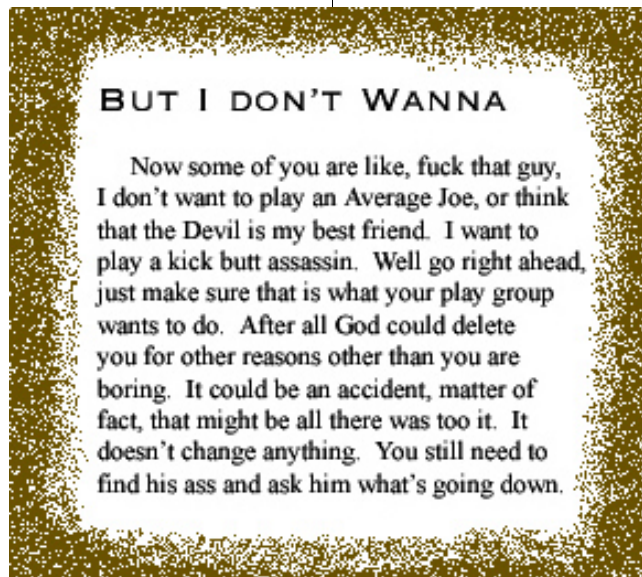
Family?

Now this is very important. Family is something that the character might not

really think much about on a day to day type of thing, but when the doctors don't call them back, and their dog forgets who they are, well they typically fall back on the family. Your character has someone in their family that they trust, someone that they can turn to in times of crisis. Who is this person? A brother, father, sister, mother?

Maybe family doesn't mean, blood relation, maybe it means your closest friend. If that is the case, then who is this person? Your first girlfriend who ended up your best friend? Your pal you met last week but you seem to know everything about each other?

Write down a sentence describing this person on your character sheet.



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Rules: This person has the hardest time forgetting you. Rather they find it easier to remember you. You gain one extra Conflict point when trying to make them remember you and they remember you for twice as long as other people do.

Example: “Davids mom is a nice lady who lives down on the east side, spending her days making pot roast”. “Jackie has no one but her co worker Barb, who shares the flask on their meal breaks”.

Thelema

Thelema is the sum of your character. You could call it your characters willpower, but to be more correct you would have to call it your characters will to continue to exist. Everything that your character is, adds to their Thelema. Thelema isn't a thing your character recognizes, its something that they just are.

So write down Thelema on your character sheet.

Rules: Thelema is a rating. A number rating generated by adding all the numbers from everything else about your character together. This number is usually 3 for characters just learning about their fate (one for who they are, one for what they are, and one for who they know). Thelema is used to resist being forgotten, or to make others remember you. There are more occult uses of Thelema but most characters don't know dick about that, and might have to bargain with the Devil to learn.

Mud

Write the word Mud on your character sheet. This section will keep track just how far the character has fallen. You see God deleted you, and now you are breaking into your base components, water and dirt. Which in most realities forms mud. The thing about God is however that he takes his time with everything. So you got a few days to work on it.

Currently your character is Stage One: Still Solid. So you can write that down on your character sheet also. As you go about in the frantic chase to stop your decline you will

progress through the stages until you find a way for them to stop, or you disappear completely.

The Fall

Now you need to define what exactly your character did in order for God to decide they were not worth his time. Don't go thinking anything high and mighty. God gets kicks out of watching people do things to fall from grace. Remember your character is just and average Joe. What your character did was more along the lines of inaction. It is something your character has done most of their life. Turned their head. Not respond. Just ignored the chances that God gave them. Ignored his 'plan'.

So what the hell was Gods plan for your character, and what happened the final time when God hit the DEL key.

Rules: Write down what the character did on the character sheet. Every time you do something in the game that acknowledges Gods plan for your character, then they gain a point of Thelema. Every time your character does something to deny Gods plan they gain Props with the Devil, which can be a good or bad thing.

Example: “David denied God by choosing to ruin every date he ever went on by talking about his latest character. He didn't know he was ruining it, it just happened”. “Jackie has the potential to be a great artist, but she doesn't truck with 'dat shit”.

The Devil

Now the Devil loves a good story. So he comes along to help the characters create one of their own. He also has a score to settle, but he doesn't hide that. He comes along the night that the character realizes that something is wrong. Like a muddy nose, or a muddy cut. There are a few things that always happen, to everyone that he comes to. Everything else is up to the player to decide. The Devil is a vary personal thing, he is different for each person.

Rules: The Devil is here to help the characters. Why is up to the Game Master. It however can't be for their souls because well, God deleted that also. This first meeting should be

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role-played out for each character. The player of the character describes the devil, and then the GM runs a short encounter with the devil and the character. This gives the character the chance to know someone that is going to be around for the remainder of their life. Advice on running this, and the rest of the game will come later.

The Gift is always a Gun.

The Gun

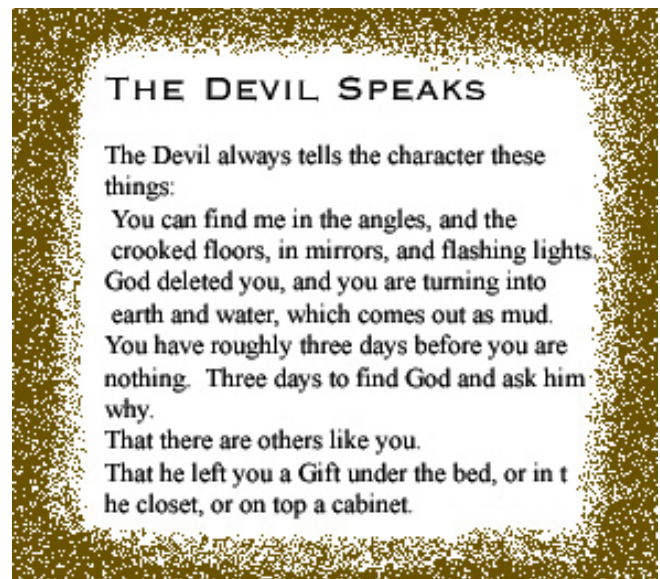
The Devils gift is always a gun. It is a symbol of the Devils wish. That God be killed. It is there to be a temptation. It is easy to use, and hard to loose.

That's right, the Devils guns are not your average guns, but they sometimes look like it. They look just about anyway that the player of the character wants them to look, but once a look is chosen they stay that way. The characters idea of a typical gun is the best way to picture the gun looking. Some will think of a snub nose revolver, and others will think of a rifle. Some will be standard issue, while others will have strange runes carved in their barrels.

Rules: The Devils gun always kills. It might not kill what it was being fired at but it kills something every time it is fired. It kills anything it hits, no questions asked, no counteracting it in anyway apart from divine help. Sometimes it will do strange things just to kill something, including circling around to hit who thought they had been missed.

The Devils gun doesn't need to be loaded either. It never runs out of bullets.

Every time the gun is fired the character gains Props with the Devil.



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HOW TO PLAY

Basics of Conflict

Conflict is when the character does or tries to do something that something else doesn't want to happen. This is resolved with a simple resolution mechanic.

Each side in the conflict adds up all of their Conflict Points that matter in relation to what is going on in the situation. Each one of those points gives them a say in the conflict. All sides then take turns telling each other how it is, gaining more conflict points or counteracting each other until the conflict is settled with the last person with Conflict Points gaining the dominance in the narrative of the conflict.

Dancing Steps

When a conflict breaks out you'll know. Either a character or one of the GM characters will step on someones toes and one of the sides will decide to fight either with words or actions. Once this happens there are a few steps that in order to gain 'fair' play must be done.

Initiative

Who goes first. This isn't as important as it is in other games, but it could come in handy with some players and characters. In order to go first during a conflict you must sacrifice a conflict point. If you are not the only one to sacrifice a point then you must sacrifice two. Up and on until someone has sacrificed the most.

Play then goes in order of who sacrificed the most, down to those who didn't sacrificed at all. If no one sacrifices any points to go first then initiative goes to the GM controlled characters. Then around the table in any order the GM decides is good, or the situation dictates would be correct. So it is worth it to try to gain the initiative every so often.

The one exception to this is anytime a side

is surprised by another. In that case the one doing the surprising goes first without bidding.

Turns

Each player then receives a turn in which they can do one action that would take no longer than two or three seconds to do. These actions must be said in a way that describes what the character is doing so that everyone at the table has a clear idea. These turns are taken in order of initiative. Each action takes away one of the characters conflict points.

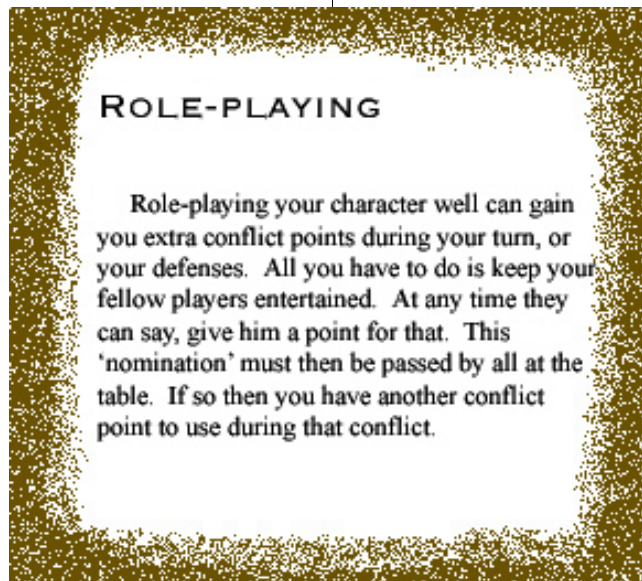
There are no dice rolled to see if your action is successful, it just automatically is unless someone else involved in the conflict spends conflict point to cancel out your action. In that case there are still no dice rolled, it just cancels out. These are

called Defenses. Defenses must be described in a way that makes sense that they would cancel the action of someone.

Anyone can spend a conflict point to defend against or counteract any action by anyone at anytime, as many times as they like until their conflict points are gone. These defenses are separate from their action, and do not count against the one action per turn limit.

The Last One Standing

Play continues with actions and defenses until only one person is left with Conflict points. That character is the last one standing, the persons whose goals ultimately forge the scene. It should be obvious by the description of the conflict what those goals are, but if they are not then the Game Master describes the outcome based on who won the conflict.



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Permutations

Damage

Things take damage in conflicts. This damage can be physical, psychological, or even spiritual. Although the rules here seem to be only referring to the physical, they can be used for any type of damage.

There are three steps of damage. Beaten, Bloody, and Killed. What type of damage is done to the character at the end of the conflict is based on how many times an action was done to them that they didn't defend against, and what the intent of their attacker was.

Intent is key. I shoot him in the leg to wound him will only Beat the character, but shooting him so he remembers you will Blood him.

If the character is hit more than once at the end of the scene the damage could be worse because of it adding up. For every three times hit by one type of damage, it upgrades to the next. So if the character was hit three times with Beaten, then they are actually Bloody at the end of the scene.

Damage takes away Conflict points in every conflict until it is healed. Beaten takes away 1, Bloody takes away two, and Killed takes away all of them, because your character is dead. Now dead doesn't mean you are out of the game, specially with the Devil as your friend.

How long it takes to heal is pretty simple. One day for Beaten, a week for Bloody, and never for Killed. This time can be shortened if you have someone who knows about such things willing to help you out. That will divide the time it takes to heal in half with a successful conflict.

The above healing rules are for standard people, those who God has decided to delete are exceptions, and their rules are in the Mud section.

Environment

Using things in the location of the character will grant more conflict points. They have to have a reason for being used. They only give their conflict points once per conflict, and most things only give one point. Environment gained conflict points are the most often used in order to not loose any conflict points in a defense

(you use one but gain it right back by using the door as a shield).

Hard Things

Some things are just hard. There isn't someone actively opposing you but yet it is still important that you overcome without just saying sure, you over come them. This is done the same way as if it was a conflict with another character, but instead the GM must put a Hardship to the tasks and give it reasons for being hard. Each reason gives the GM a conflict point to spend in a conflict.

Example: So the character is Bloody wounded and someone decides to try to patch him up. The GM says well the wound is deep, blood everywhere, and your bone is shattered. That would give the GM two conflict points to use in a conflict in to resist your friend helping you heal.

Items

Items used in play give conflict points to the person using them. They give conflict points only once during a conflict no matter how many times they are used during the narrative of it. Items only give one conflict point. Some rare items may give more.

Thelema

So the character can do things, and interact with the world based on who they are, but how do they resist the eventual decay into the mud that God feels they need to be? Thelema. That's right, they just resist with all that they are.

Anytime the character is trying to be remembered, or even paid a bit more attention to they must roll their Thelema against the Thelema of those involved. If your character beats anyones total (add all the dice together), then they are remembered for few minutes before the person starts to forget them again.

Thelema can be used to do almost magical effects, but only if the character learns each thing from someone else. Usually in game this someone else is the Devil. What these workings ultimately are is up to the GM and the other players to decided. No matter what they are the rules for them are just like the rules of a standard

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Thelema contest.

Mud

There are a few stages that your character will go through before they completely degenerate into mud. Three to be exact, well four, but the last one doesn't really count. Each stage taking around 24 hours to complete.

Stage One: Solid

The character at this stage is pretty much still the person they were the day before. They look and act just like everyone else in the world, except they bleed mud. Their spit starts to get a brownish color, and their eyes itch, looking a bit like muddy water if you look close.

Stage Two: Going

The next day the character is starting to realize how bad it is. Their eyes are completely muddy, and depending on their current Thelema level they may not be able to see (2 or lower Thelema). Pain and pleasure do not feel as distinct as they used to, and every so often they have to force a limb back into place. It is fortunate because penalties from wounds are reduced down by 1, and it takes an extra wound to raise a wound type. This applies to all types of wounds, as the character gets more frantic.

Stage Three: Almost Gone

This is really the last stage for the character to function enough to continue their quest. They begin to look abnormal as all their internal soft tissue becomes useless. Their eyes are useless unless they have a Thelema of 3 or more, and their tongue has dripped out of their mouth causing them to no longer be able to speak. Their limbs are mostly limp and slouching a bit too much. It takes all of their will in order to get them to even work. They experience no pain at all, and weapons are no longer a threat unless they can splatter their body parts far away from each other (aka unless they Kill). It is a nightmare to be trapped in that shape.

Stage Four: Mud

The character is useless, they have failed,

and are now nothing more than mud, waiting to dry out and blow away back into the earth.

Characters can make Thelema rolls in order to resist some of the effects of degeneration for a few moments. This is opposed by conflict points equal to twice the Stage number.

Now you might be asking yourself, how the hell do I find God and convince him to undo this in three days. Good question, and that will be up to your character. However the rules do have a saving grace to help you out, Props.

Props

You see the Devil really likes to have his ego stroked, and for things to go his way. In this game there are two ways for your character to give him the props he thinks he deserves. Which is to say, to acknowledge that he was right in what he told your character. One is to fire the gun, and the other is to deny God's plan for the character. Every time your character does one of these things, the Devil will use his cool ass powers to extend your time a little bit. A little bit meaning one day, unless the Devil is also getting bored, then you might find yourself facing shorter extensions.

This can lead the characters down pathways they don't want to go.

Character Growth

Although this game was originally conceived to be a short one shot game, it has the potential to continue on as a campaign. In order to do so the characters must grow. This is done by the characters accepting the path that God had originally laid out for them, and by surviving a day. Every time one of these things happens, the character gains a point of Thelema and a reason for gaining it is written on the character sheet. If a reason for it can not be created then they do not gain that point.

Reasons are things like, "she remembered me for a moment, and I must know why!" or "The Devil promised me a rose garden". They are reasons to continue on. They can also be things that further define the character, like "I haven't

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even painted a picture yet”, or “I climbed a mountain for the first time!”.

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THE DEVIL, GOD & EVERYTHING INBETWEEN

The Game Master

The game master has the job of playing everything in the world that is not the characters of the other players. He also has to make a story out of the characters, and make them all fit. Its a freaking hard job. So to help you out on a few things here are some random notes.

God

It is pretty easy to play God in this game, because you don't. Each character has an idea of what God is, and so does each player. Don't spoil that. It is up to them to decide how they are going to find God, and what to do with them if they ever do. There is only one thing that you need to concern yourself with is: God does not want to be found.

All other information about God should come from the Devil, or other characters in the game world. God will go to great lengths without even realizing it to get away from those he has deleted.

Finding God

In most games the characters will not find God. They won't ever get the chance to kill him. That isn't to say that they are all doomed or that you can't play a game where that happens, but you don't have to. Specially if you have a group who each differ in ideas on what God is, and can't devolve reality from the game.

If they don't end up finding God that doesn't mean they are left for deletion either. God really will pay attention specially if they had a good hard time of trying to get it. They may just end up on the receiving end of some saving yet, provided they entertained God, and each other.

If the group does want the characters to find God, then thats fine also. Pay attention to what each player thinks they will find, and to what the characters think they will find. Add in a dash of your own thoughts and poof you have yourself an ending. My favorite is the one where the characters end up eating God.

The Devil

The Devil isn't in this for their souls. God got rid of that when he delete them. The Devil is in this for two things, other peoples souls, and a good laugh. You see the Devil hopes that the characters will end up killing people with that gun, which will give him souls to feast on, which will make him grow more powerful. How this affects your game is really up to you.

He is also into a good story. Maybe that is what made him and God pals for so many years before they had their break up. He is into the characters story so far that he is willing to do just about anything they want of him, for a price. Oh and if they know how to call him, which he tells them when he first talks to him.

The price he will ask depends on what the character thinks he will ask for. He is willing to accommodate just about any misguided idea of himself if it will make for a better story. Keep that in mind.

One of the most sought after things is Magic, and other occult lores. He likes to share these things since they are easy to share.

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