

Moral Dawn

# *Moral Dawn*

A Roleplaying Game of Moral Realization  
By Eigil Rischel

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## *Chapter Zero: Introduction*

*You are an Angel. At least, that's what you've been told, by others of your kind. You don't really know. You just know you can do things that shouldn't be possible. smash through a brick wall, conjure a burning sword from nothing, grow wings made from pure light. But you don't know why. You don't know what you're supposed to do with the powers. You've been told to uphold good, but what is 'good'? You've been told to protect people, but from what?*

*As you walk the streets of the city, you must answer these questions. You have been granted the power to do Good, so you must know what 'Good' is. You have been granted the power to defeat Evil, so you must know what 'Evil' is. You must decide, you must find out for yourself. You must make your own answers.*

*Your answers are the only ones you'll get.*

**The Moral Dawn is a Roleplaying Game about Angels, or at least people who have angelic powers. Whether they are angels, and whether they believe themselves to be angels, is up to the GM and the players. While the setting is up to the players, too, the central idea is that Angels, are, in fact, normal people who just happens to have supernatural powers. They don't know why they have them, they don't know what they're supposed to do with them. But they know what is good and what is bad. Or do they?**

**The Moral Dawn is about this question. What is Good? And what is Evil?**

**To play The Moral Dawn, you need this document, a character sheet per player(see chapter 4: appendix). You also need some six-sided die, around ten per player(though players can, of course, share their dice, it's easier if everyone has their own set).**

**You'll also need 2-5 people to play, one of which will be the game master.**

### **The Role of the GM**

**The GM, or Gamemaster, must tell the story in which the player's characters find themselves enveloped. See the chapter on gamemastering, chapter 3. His role is similar to that which he plays in more traditional RPGs**

### **The Role of the Players**

**The players take on the role of Angels. They must create their characters as people, not as a collection of numbers. It is key to the game that the characters created are deep people, with conflicts, a history, and, most importantly, philosophical self-doubt. The game is about the uncertainty of morality, and the characters should reflect that.**

## *Chapter One: Character Creation*

Creating a character in *The Moral Dawn* is comprised of two steps. First, you must choose your character's Wings. These are special angelic abilities. Wings represent facets of your character's moral values.

For each wing, the following things must be picked:

**Power&Versatility:** Each wing can be used for specific things. The more different things it can do, the more Versatile it is, but the less power it has. Each Wing should be reviewed by the GM, but use the following guideline when designing them: A Wing that could be used for anything would have power 0. Every time you halve versatility(say, to include only mental actions), you increase power by two.(yes, that is a very, **very**, rough guideline)

**Philosophy:** This is very important. Each wing is defined by a certain view of what is 'good' and 'bad'. For example, a Wing could be a conjurable flaming sword(usable only in direct melee combat situations), and it's philosophy could be that punishing evildoers is always right.

**Description:** This should match the philosophy, and of course, the Versatility. In fact, the description of a Wing is often what defines it on the Power/Versatility axis. For example, a Wing that is usable only to enhance mobility could be a pair of actual wings. The philosophy could be 'freedom is the highest moral objective'

Philosophy is important mainly because of Wing Corruption(see Chapter 2: System)

Each character has seven wings.

In addition, the Angel is capable of performing a Dawn. A Dawn is a discharge of all his powers at once. You must describe what it looks like when your dawn goes off(examples: Extremely bright flash of light, everything flooded in fire for a moment, freezing cold for a few seconds, etc).

## *Chapter Two: System*

The system of Moral Dawn is very simple: whenever an angel wishes to take a difficult action, he must draw on his wings. Here, a difficult action is an action which would be difficult or impossible for normal people to do. He simply chooses any wings that can be used for that action, and rolls a number of D6's equal to their combined power. Every 5 and 6 is a success. Usually one success is all that is needed, however some especially difficult actions may require more, at the GM's discretion.

Wings may never be drawn upon in actions that are against their philosophy.

Wings may be used seven times a day. They are readied again at dawn.

### **Combat:**

Combat is done in a series of round. Each round is approximately one minute.

Every round, each character in the combat rolls for all the wings they wish to draw on, as usual. Every success is counted up. After each round, successes may be spent, each success decreases or increases the number of successes of one other character by one. At -7 successes, a character is incapacitated, and is out of the combat. The winners may kill him if they wish.

Each round, in combat, each participant should narrate what they do, and how they use the Wings they drew on to fight. If they added successes to another character's tally, they should narrate how they used their Wings to help him.

### **Doubt of the Wings**

Whenever a character takes any action that goes against the Philosophy of one of his wings, that wing enters Doubt. The character's powers are troubled as he struggles with his conflicting inner views of right and wrong, and he starts to doubt whether what he was doing before was actually the right thing. He must roll the wing's power: each success adds one point of doubt. Also, record the action that caused the Wing to enter Doubt. Doubt is subtracted from any rolls he makes using that wing.

If a wing is already in Doubt, and he takes another action that is against it's philosophy, he roll's its full power again, and adds the successes to the corruption tally.

However, when a wing is in Doubt, it can be used for any actions. If these actions are against the philosophy, you must still roll and add successes to corruption.

If a Doubted wing is used for an action that lies within its philosophy, roll power and subtract is from Doubt.

If Doubt ever reaches  $7 +$  The wing's power, the Angel has decided that he was wrong before, but his doubts were right. Roll the wing's power. For each success, its power increases by one. Also, look at the action that originally caused the Doubt. The Wing assumes a new philosophy, one that would justify that action as 'good'.

If Doubt ever reaches  $-(7 +$  the wing's power), the wing is no longer Doubted. The Angel has decided that he was right all along, and that his doubts were false. Roll its power. For each

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success, its power increases by one. It also goes back to normal, philosophy-wise.

**Dawn**

**An Angel's dawn is a discharge of all their power. A dawn is activated as part of an attempt to perform any action that would be appropriate for any one of the Angel's wings. For that action the character adds the power of all their wings, and rolls that amount. This action may not be against any of the wing's philosophies, however.**

**The dawn may be used once. Every time an Angel's wing's Dubt reaches a conclusion, whether he thinks himself right in his doubts or not, The Dawn can be used once more.**

### *Chapter Three: Gamemastering*

**As the Gamemaster, your job is to create a compelling story for the Players to immerse themselves in. The game was made with the intent of being played in a modern setting, but other settings are very possible. Use your imagination.**

**When running NPCs, NPC Angels can be designed as Player Angels, adding or subtracting a bit of power from their Wings if it suits the character. You could also use Angels with extremely loose Philosophies on their wings, Angels who have almost completely given up any sense of morals. These make ideal enemies.**

**NPC humans should only be able to perform difficult actions on a roll of six with a single die. Some might have areas of expertise, which lets them succeed on a roll of five too. Some actions, are, of course, impossible without a fitting Wing.**

**In combat, humans should roll one dice per round, counting one success on every roll of five or six.**

**Depending on the world you're using, and the type of game you want to play, other supernatural beings could exist. These should be designed by giving them any number of innate Wings, some of which may be usable at will. Modify the Power of these Wings based on your vision and idea of the being.**

**When your players attempt something that would be very difficult for most people, or even impossible, they must use their Wings. You must decide the difficulty, the number of successes required to succeed. Usually, this is one. However, for actions which would be completely impossible without an appropriate Wing, this may be raised to two. For actions that are both impossible without an appropriate Wing, and extremely difficult even with it, it can be raised to three. Actions with a difficulty of four are herculean efforts, even for angels with appropriate Wings.**

**Adventures in The Moral Dawn should be about self-discovery. They should force the players to face moral dilemmas, make difficult decisions, and set them face-to-face with their Philosophies.**

**Adventures should not reach a conclusion. When the group stops playing with the characters, it should be an open ending. The Angels will never know if any of what they did meant anything, in the end. They will never know if they did the right thing, if what they upheld was actually Good**

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### *Chapter Four: Appendix*

The Moral Dawn was written in 24 hours. While some sleep was obtained, I am still only partly lucid. Any bad design, writing or otherwise stupidity, may be blamed on that.

The Moral Dawn was written for the Ronnies 2011 Indie RPG endeavor. The keywords used were Wings, and Morning

Created by Eigil Rischel.

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*“A man's moral conscience is the curse he had to accept from the gods in order to gain from them the right to dream”  
-William Faulkner*



*He ran down the street, breathing quickly. They were right behind him. He jumped onto a dumpster, and leaped from it to the edge of the building's roof. He looked back, to see both his pursuers, clad in black t-shirts, concentrating. He could already see the black-feathered wings growing out of their backs, so he quickly climbed onto the roof. Shit. He wasn't gonna be able to outrun them with their wings. So he waved his hand, and his hand became a long spike of fire. As his first pursuer flew above the roof, he leaped, slashing him with the fire of his hand, causing the wings to ignite. He grabbed the burning body, and they both screamed as they fell to the ground. He hit the ground with a loud thud, and suddenly his other pursuer was standing over him, darkness growing from his hands. Then, everything was a fiery melee of darkness and fire, but in the end, he stood, his two enemies lying unconscious at his feet. He caused the spike of fire to grow from his hand again, bowing towards his enemies. Wrongdoers always deserve punishment, he thought to himself. Always...*

What is good and evil?  
good is about X Day

Dawn  
Dawn  
Spiritual  
discovery

Cycle of  
morality

-X is bad  
Evil  
Dusk

Character is  
forced to use  
X by events

Night

Morality is the theory  
that every human act must  
be either right or wrong, and that  
99% of them are wrong  
H. L. Mencken

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**Character Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**

**Combat Success Pool:**

**Dawn Used:**

### Wings

	<b>Versatility/Description</b>	<b>Power</b>	<b>Philosophy/Doubt</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			