

DON'T LOSE YOUR EDGE

In a future where magic has returned, everything woke up, and technology is changing what it means to be human, the world has broken and new ways of life are crawling from the wreckage of the old. In a whirlwind world of kung fu, exotic weaponry, lethal cyberware, friendship, betrayal, chrome eyes, ambushes, and Ten Million Enemies, there's one thing you have to remember: DON'T LOSE YOUR EDGE.

CREATING CHARACTERS

You live on the edge and run the shadows, doing things other people can't and won't, but it's not about the money. Softlife isn't for you, and Risk is something to be embraced and enjoyed and laughed at, not "managed." Money is not your motivation, maybe just a way of keeping score, but the real score is what people think about you, your reputation, the respect from those who are worth respecting.

WHY ARE YOU LIVING ON THE EDGE?

This is why you're living fully, ignoring safety, and sets up what your immediate history has been like.

Think about: What troubles you? What pressures turned you into a runner? Are you running from something? Do you stay on the edge due to people after you, or substance abuse? Have you lost someone dear to you and you're out to do something about it regardless of cost?

Why it matters: This answer connects you to what all the protagonists in the game have in common - Life on the Edge. It can drive further development through flashbacks. If it suggests something you're avoiding confronting, the GM can use that as a source of ideas for what you should face.

WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO YOU?

This is what happens to you in the very first scene of the game - it's not in the GM's hands, it's in the player's! It should always be a moment of high stress for you, but may be different from what's been keeping you on the edge.

Think about: What would make an exciting, stressful scene? Is the source of the stress mundane or supernatural? It should be something that requires you to DO something, and that sets things in motion.

Why it matters: Players get to set the tone for the entire game by determining their opening scene. The best opening scenes are ones that say something about your ongoing story - they imply a trajectory as much as an event.

WHAT'S ON THE SURFACE?

This is the first impression you give off, and tells what is obvious about you to others.

Think about: What do you appear to be at first sighting (as opposed to what you actually are)? How do others see you? What's the first thing people notice about you when you enter a room? What's your physical appearance? What sort of personality do you project? Do you put your best foot forward - or your worst?

Why it matters: This answer will be a strong guide to how the world interacts with you. It will offer ways in which the face you turn to the world can help or hinder you.

WHAT LIES BENEATH?

This speaks to your secrets, the part of yourself you don't show to the world if you can help it.

Think about: What's your real deal? What would be a surprising twist that plays counterpoint to what you've said about yourself so far? What secrets would you give your life to protect? How do you see yourself? What lies do you tell yourself?

Why it matters: This answer can complicate your portrayal and give you three-dimensionality. It plays strongly to your motive. In the absence of anything else, this informs what sorts of things might over time be brought to light, or kept in the dark.

WHAT'S YOUR PATH?

This question addresses your goals, and points to how -- in a vacuum -- a story about you could reach its conclusion.

Think about: Where are you headed? If a story were told about his life, what would its theme be? What are your goals? What do you want or need? Money is boring. What do you NEED?

Why it matters: This is the ultimate question in a game where the personal journey of the protagonist is just as important as anything else. When you're not dodging bullets or running through the streets, this is what your mind is set on achieving.

SET DISCIPLINE

Discipline is a reflection of how skilled you are at anything you do, and a measure of your self-control. All protagonists start with a Discipline score of three. By comparison, "normal" people (softlife) have a Discipline of one or two; three is exceptional.

CHOOSE RESPONSES

You start with three Response boxes available; X out the ones you're not using. You may divide responses up between fight and flight (3-0, 2-1, 1-2, 0-3). Your choice is also a general indication of your attitude towards life. In moments of extreme stress, when the psychological strain of the situation overwhelms you, you'll select a response to indicate how you'll behave.

DETERMINE TALENTS

An Edge Talent allows you to be thoroughly exceptional at something you can already do, far beyond normal human limits. Such a talent may allow you to climb seemingly impossible surfaces, run far and fast, notice details, talk people into things, or simply shoot things very, very well. This definition must be reasonably narrow in the GM's judgment, and on par in terms of breadth with the other protagonists' talent picks. Using an Edge Talent can push you closer to going over the edge; if you crash and burn it could mean the end of you.

A Magic/Cyber Talent allows you to do something outside the realm of human possibility. It can be defined in terms of Magic, or Cyberware, or something else that extends or ignores the boundaries of humanity. For instance, talking to spirits, or compelling others to tell the truth, or commanding fire. It may imply several levels of power at which it operates, or may simply lock in at a certain level. Using a Magic or Cyber Talent pushes you closer to the brink of humanity; if you go over you're swallowed by the Shadows and your story is over.

RULES SUMMARY

- Once per roll, you may increase your Edge by one.
- Any time you roll, you may add one to six dice of temporary Magic/Cyber to your roll.
- To determine the degree of success, count the dice that show 1, 2, or 3.
- If you meet or beat the GM's degree, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail.
- To determine what dominates, pick the pool with the highest strength.
- If Discipline dominates, things stay under control. You may remove a Response mark or decrease your Edge by one.
- If Edge dominates, your resources are taxed and you must push yourself harder. Increase Edge by one.
- If Magic or Cyber dominates, things get stranger. Mark off a Response and behave accordingly.
- If Pain dominates, you pay a greater price. Pay a coin into Despair.
- If you fail, the GM may add one Edge to you or mark off one of your Responses.
- If Edge is increased above 6, you crash and are helpless, possibly dead.
- If you must mark off a response, but can't, you snap, going mad for a time. Clear out your Responses, lose one Discipline, and gain one Permanent Magic/Cyber.
- If you lose all Discipline, you're swallowed by the Shadows. You're an NPC now.
- To make minor use of an Edge Talent, your Edge must be at least one. Your minimum number of successes will be equal to your current Edge.
- To make major use of an Edge Talent, increase your Edge by one, and add your current Edge to the roll as successes.
- To make use of a Magic/Cyber Talent, you must add one to six magic dice to the roll, as determined by the GM.
- The GM may spend one coin of Despair to add or remove a 6 from any pool in play; the coin pays into Hope. If this causes pain to dominate, no coin is paid into Despair.
- Any player may spend one coin of Hope to remove one Edge or to unmark a Response or to add a 1 to their Discipline pool.
- Any player may spend five minus Discipline in coins of Hope to recover one point of Discipline and remove one point of Permanent Magic/Cyber.