

Immortals



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Introduction

In a tiny mountain town, at the furthest street corner, there is an incredibly old house. The house is inhabited by four mysterious people, who have lived there for as long as all the townspeople can remember. These four people are immortal, and that can seem wonderful from the outside. It opens a realm of amazing possibilities, as you are no longer bound by the human lack of time. You can write the longest poetic epic in the world, study thousands of subjects at universities, or maybe even save the world. But immortality doesn't come without consequences.

Immortals is a low-fantasy story-telling game, in which you follow four immortal characters through a range of scenes through several years. Together you shape their lives, background and the world around them, while they slowly work towards performing a ritual, which can make them mortal again.

Immortals is a story about relationships, the passage of time and the meaning of life. The players are four immortals: A *Tired Poet*, a *Self-Destructive Hero*, a *Chaotic Academic*, and an *Optimistic Philosopher*. They've lived together for as long as they can remember, in a lonely mountain town. None of them remember how or why they became immortal, or what their life was before. Throughout the game, fragmented memories slowly return to the characters, while the world changes around them. Can they finally end their eternal immortality? And what does it mean to be mortal?

Together they plant a magical tree to initiate a ritual, which may grant them a new mortal life. Throughout three eras they must confront their immortality, grief, and the fear of the unknown, as they try to prepare for a new life. The story is told collaboratively by the Players and the Gamemaster. It follows the characters through 300 years.



Gamemaster

On the following pages, you'll find a range of information about the structure and the game. Some of this is relevant to summarize to the Players, which will be mentioned under **The Game**.

What kind of game is this?

Immortals is a tabletop role-playing game. All the scenes will play out through collaborative storytelling, where the Players can step into character during *Scenes*. The Players will be the four Immortals the story centers around. You are the one who sets up the scenes, structures the game, and plays relevant NPCs as they show up. However, everyone at the table will influence the world around the four characters.

the table, as well as pencils for writing. Optionally you can keep a notebook or some paper on hand, as there may be aspects of the Players' choices that are worth remembering for the *Scenes*. This isn't a requirement though, and the game runs fine without it.

Atmosphere

The game's atmosphere is quiet and melancholic. While intense events may happen, it will always be affected by the knowledge that the characters cannot die. There will always be a certain distance between the Immortals and the world around them. The characters can attempt to make connections with NPCs, but the distance will always remain. At the end of the day it should always seem as if the Immortals are the only people who can ever truly understand each other. The characters are a bit like lonely gods, no one truly worships.

Materials

In addition to what you'll find in the game itself, it's important to have slips (about 2x2cm) of paper on



The Structure

The game is split into three acts, referred to as *eras*. An *era* lasts 100 years in-universe, and about an hour each outside of it. An *era* consists of four parts:

1. The Beginning

Here the players get the opportunity to establish what the world looks like for the following era. What has happened during the past 100 years? What do the characters miss? Specific questions can be found under each *era*, which the players can reflect on to linger in the melancholy. It's worth mentioning that **Era 1** functions slightly differently, as you establish the world the Players start with, rather than the development since the former *era*.

2. The Ritual

Each *era* will include a part of the grand ritual the characters will need to complete to regain their mortality. The ritual depends on a tree they'll plant at the beginning of the game. This tree will be fully grown after 300 years. The *rituals* will set the stage for the following *era*, and is also where the characters will regain *memories*. The purpose is thus to give the characters a quiet moment, where they can recall a life they no longer remember, and feel each other's presence. In addition, it also serves as a thematic anchor, which highlights the themes of each *era*.

3. Transition Scene

The *Transition Scene* is a major event, which marks the *era* and sets up the *Scenes* that follow. Here, the characters must confront the world around them in a contained event and reflect upon their connection to it. These scenes consist of a town gathering, a funeral, and a fire. The *Transition Scenes* have

different themes each era, but will generally speaking give the chance to reflect upon immortality and the characters' connection to it.

4. Scenes

The regular *Scenes* follow the *Transition Scenes*. These *Scenes* can be found at the end of the game text under their respective eras. The *Scenes* are selected brief moments that happen throughout the 100 years between each era.

At the top of the *Scene* it's written which characters appear in it. Underneath is an explanation of the beginning of the *Scene*, and often also where it should end. At the bottom is a short summary of each character's intention and general behavior.

The sheet with *Scenes* for the current *era* must be placed in front of everyone at the table when the time comes. Ideally, the Players should go through all the *Scenes* before proceeding. If time is an issue, focus on shining a light on characters that have received the least attention thus far. It'll be written clearly in the game text if a *Scene* can't be excluded.

In addition you can decide to replace a *Scene*. This can occur if the game is going in a direction where something else would be more interesting. In this case, simply state which characters you want to see interact, and about what. This should be based on the vibe at the table. Did anything special happen in the *Transition Scene* in this specific game which could be relevant to delve into? Is there a *Scene* which no longer fits particularly well? The most important thing is that both you and the Players would find it interesting.



When the *Scenes* in this *era* are completed, you proceed to the next *era* and the structure repeats.

The four Immortals

The characters in the game are a *Self-Destructive Hero*, a *Chaotic Academic*, an *Optimistic Philosopher*, and a *Tired Poet*. They'll often simply be referred to as the *Hero*, the *Academic*, the *Philosopher*, and the *Poet*. These characters don't have any pre-established names or pronouns. The players are free to decide on that themselves. They're also welcome to use their title as their primary nickname.

Self-Destructive Hero feels alive when they sacrifice themselves for others and do other such heroic deeds. On the outside they appear confident, but in reality they do not view themselves as having much value. They don't want to be immortal anymore, as they would like to feel what it's like, when one's life is valuable.

Chaotic Academic feels alive when learning new things. They want to read all educational books in existence, and is constantly looking for new hobbies and things to study. They don't want to be immortal anymore, as they're terrified of what will happen, when there's nothing left to distract themselves with.

Optimistic Philosopher feels alive when they surround themselves with mortals, writing down their stories and lives. In addition, the *Philosopher* is also the primary person who tries hard to keep the four Immortals together, solving problems when they're able to. This is a bit of a distraction from the *Philosopher's* own loneliness and insecurity about

the value of their story. They don't want to be immortal anymore because they want to find meaning in their own life. They only feel they can achieve this if their story has an ending.

Tired Poet feels alive when they're inspired to write poems. Through the past few decades they've been plagued by writer's block, which has made them rather depressed and uncertain if there's any point to anything. They don't want to be immortal anymore, partially because they want to find beauty in a finite existence, but also because they would like to get their life over with soon.

In addition to this description, each character has an *object* on their character sheet, which was the first thing they awoke with when they became immortal. This is the only thing they have left from their past life, and has thus played a part in shaping their immortal life. The *object* will function as an anchor, and symbolizes the lost mortality and memories.



Principles

Immortals follows a few principles which shape the foundation of the world the game takes place in.

Magic and world

The game begins in a low-fantasy version of the middle ages. There's no specific year which needs to be researched beforehand, but the aesthetic is loosely derived from the 1400-1500s. The Players largely control how grounded it needs to be, especially once we move away from **Era 1**. The entire game takes place within the same isolated mountain town, which will develop overtime.

As it is low-fantasy, magic isn't a regular, well-known thing. Most people cannot perform magic in any way, and most of it only shows in rare plants and perhaps a single expert or wizard for hundreds of miles. For this reason magic most likely isn't something the players will meet in the game. It is present, of course, through the ritual the characters will perform, and the fact that the characters are immortal to begin with.

As magic is fairly uncommon and difficult to understand, most regular people won't question it too deeply. It's considered a bit odd to talk about, and most people avoid thinking about it at all. In other words, it's not a topic most people are comfortable with.

Immortality

The characters cannot remember anything from before they turned immortal. They have no background, aside from the object they awoke with, and the knowledge that they most likely knew each other before.

Immortality is not a well-known phenomenon. As magic isn't something most people understand, immortality isn't something most enjoy thinking about either. It's a bit of a taboo to talk about anybody being immortal, and people are often hesitant to talk to immortals. People awkwardly avoid mentioning it, as if it is an illness they do not understand. They believe it would be incredibly impolite.

As far as the characters know, there are no other immortals than them in the world. The mountain town is more or less isolated, and the Immortals have throughout their immortal lives concluded that they may as well just stay there. The world outside is thus not relevant to this story.

In this portrayal of immortality, the characters can die, but only temporarily. They will feel the pain that comes with death, only to wake up after an hour or so wherever they died. The only consequence is thus the pain death brings. They will never disappear permanently.

Change

Change is a central theme in this game. Between each *era*, changes will happen. The Players can control these changes but the characters cannot. Between each *era* you will ask a range of questions that let the players reflect on what has happened to the town within the past 100 years. Each can control what happens to their respective *favorite places*.



In **Era 1** they each decide what place in town their character prefers. Between each *era* they'll each be responsible for deciding what has happened to this place within the past 100 years. In addition, there will be questions for everyone to discuss together.

You can point out these changes during the game. What's "missing" that used to be there? How do the characters feel about it? It is important to let the character dwell on the passage of time and the world they no longer feel connected to. Perhaps the inn no longer sells the beer they wanted to order? Or perhaps you can still spot the painted wooden boards from what their favorite place used to be?



Mechanics

Rules in *Immortals* aren't too strict. There are a few mechanics as an extension to the principles that are built to further the game's atmosphere and intention.

The Map

Throughout the game there will be a *map* placed in the middle of the table. The *map* is one A4 page, which represents the mountain town. The only thing on the *map* at the beginning of the game is the surrounding mountains and a little lake in the middle. At the start of the game, as the players describe their *favorite places*, they each draw a representation of that place on a slip of paper. After this, the slip is placed on the map. Between each *era* they'll replace the slips with a new drawing of what the place has become.

Aside from the drawings the Players make themselves, there are four illustrations of the *tree* in various stages in the game, which should be cut out before it starts. The first stage, the *tree sprout*, will be placed on the *map* after the ritual in **Era 1**, and will then be replaced by the next stage between each *era* as specified. In this way, the Players can watch as the tree grows, and get the sensation that the final ritual is approaching.

Memories

During the *ritual* of each *era*, each character will regain a *memory*. These *memories* are from before the characters became immortal. This happens at given times during the *ritual*, which will be specified in its description. You'll give a broad frame for what the memories will entail beforehand, which is written under each *ritual*. A

framing is just a sentence, such as "You remember something from your childhood".

Aside from the framing, the Players will get an emotion the memory is filtered through. These are given through *emotion cards* found at the end of the game. You place the four cards for the current *era* on the table facing down. Each Player draws a card out of the four from that *era*, which shows the emotion the memory is associated with. The Player takes the card so it cannot be drawn again.

For instance they could draw the card "envy" and be told by you that they remember something from their childhood. If this happens they must describe a memory from their character's childhood, which filled them with envy. Aside from those restrictions, the players are free to describe any memory and shape who they were before their immortality through vague images.

There can be Players who need a clearer structure for this. It can also change overtime how comfortable the Players are with the mechanic. For this reason, you can ask a variety of leading questions to help them shape the memory:

"What do you see?"

"Is anyone with you?"

"What are they doing?"

"What are you doing?"

"What makes you feel [given emotion]?"



The *memories* help the players make the characters their own. Some Players might want to build a common thread between each memory. Some may lean into disoriented images, crafting a more unclear background. Neither of these methods are wrong.

The chance to actually regain memories is new to the characters, and won't happen before the magical tree for the ritual is planted at the beginning of the game.

NPCs

The Players will meet different NPCs during the game. They'll meet at least one special NPC every *Transition Scene*. Aside from the general population, there is the Castillo family. The Castillo family are the descendants of a woman named *Mariana Castillo*, who was the first person the characters remember from after they turned immortal. She was the one who cared for them following that event. Because of this, the players can usually recognize her eyes and behaviors in the descendants, even hundreds of years after the fact. They'll meet at least one member of the Castillo family each *era*.

All relevant NPCs are played by you and will usually show up in *Transition Scenes*. *Scenes* on the other hand, primarily focus on the four Immortals and their relationship to each other.



Overview

An overview of what happens in each *era*.

ERA 1	ERA 2	ERA 3	Final Ritual
<p>The Beginning: The mountain town is established.</p>	<p>The Beginning: The mountain town develops. How did Janus Castillo die?</p>	<p>The Beginning: The mountain town develops. What does Maria's grave look like?</p>	<p>The Beginning: The mountain town develops for the last time. What still stands after the fire? What do you hope for the town?</p>
<p>Ritual: The tree is planted. Characters get a memory about their <i>object</i>.</p>	<p>Ritual: One of the Immortals must be killed at the top of a mountain by another. The characters get a memory from their childhood.</p>	<p>Ritual: The Immortals dry a flower each in the sun. The characters get a memory from their youth.</p>	<p>Ritual: The Immortals stand around the tree. The immortal blood is poured onto it, the flowers are hung on the branches, and the <i>objects</i> are sacrificed.</p>
<p>Transition Scene: There's a youth gathering in town, where the children who become adults this year are celebrated. The Immortals are invited by Janus Castillo, but end up feeling unwelcome.</p>	<p>Transition Scene: Janus' daughter Maria Castillo is to be buried. She died at 70. The Immortals are invited and reflect upon life and death.</p>	<p>Transition Scene: A fire has spread in town. The Immortals talk to the mortals and find out that Luna Castillo's son is trapped within the flames. They try to save him. The characters reflect upon death and rebirth.</p>	<p>Epilogue How do the characters live their mortal lives? How do they die?</p>
<p>Scenes: The Immortals find comfort in each other, and relief in the initiation of the ritual. They meet little Maria Castillo.</p>	<p>Scenes: The Immortals struggle with doubt and grief.</p>	<p>Scenes: The Immortals try to say goodbye to their immortal lives, and are full of doubt.</p>	<p>The game ends</p>



The Game

The following part describes the game step by step.

Preparation - ca. 30 minutes

A few things need to be prepared before the game officially starts with **Era 1**.

Intro and icebreakers

After a quick welcome and a brief description of the game, ask the two following icebreaker questions.

"Is there anything you miss, which doesn't exist anymore?"

"What do you believe the worst part of being immortal would be?"

These questions should add to the atmosphere of melancholy and grief, and will set up the reflections the characters go through during the game.

Before the game begins, describe the overall setting of it. You should tell them about the world, and the practical details about immortality. Tell them its limitations and how it's treated by others.

Character selection

Place the characters on the table. (each character sheet has a main page and a relationship page) The Players decide who they each want to play based on the telling title and a sentence or two you share about each character. The Players get a couple of minutes to read their sheet and pick a name and pronouns for the character they've chosen.

Under each relationship there's a *summary*. As soon as they've read and understood their character, let each Player read these of what their character thinks of the others out loud. The Immortals have lived together for several years, and will thus have a decent idea of what the others think of them. In addition to the summary, each Player is free to make up the first death their character can remember. Note that this is not a memory, but something from their immortal life.



ERA 1 - ca. 1 hour

Era 1 introduces the four characters, the world around them, and various game mechanics. The atmosphere is more hopeful than in the *eras* that follow. They are still immortal and their repetitive life is all too familiar to them. However, they have discovered new hope by planting the tree during the *ritual*.

Era 1 - The Beginning

The *map* is put to use for the first time. You must ask a few questions about the little mountain time the characters have lived in for as long as they remember.

What is your favorite place in town?

The first question should be answered by each individual player. Here the players can, after some reflection, establish a place in town that means something to their character. Is it an inn? A field? A theater? When the Players have made a choice they'll receive a slip of paper, where they draw a representation of the place they've described. They can draw the place itself, but they're also free to draw a mug or a mask to symbolize it. It doesn't need to look good, but should help grant them a sense of ownership of that place. After this, they place the location somewhere on the map.

What's a part of your home you've impacted in some way?

The four Immortals live together in one home somewhere in town. This question lets them co-create this home. During this discussion, give them a slip of paper where they draw a representation of the home. Exactly who draws it and how isn't too important. The Players can figure it out amongst themselves. If all else fails you can step in to do it. The Players place the home on the map.

Era 1 - The Ritual

The framing of the memories in **Era 1** will be "You remember something about your object." Each character will thus get a memory, which somehow relates to the *object* described on their character sheet.

⌘ The four possible emotions for **Era 1** are Hope, Frustration, Anxiety, and Pride. These emotions are written on the *emotion cards* at the end of the game.

Read or paraphrase the text in italics below:



You're standing around a patch near your home. You've acquired the seed that will sprout into the tree, which will initiate the ritual. This ritual will, if all goes according to plan, grant you a mortal life. Most believed this tree was a myth, but you've managed to find a single remaining seed. 300 years will pass before it's fully grown, but time is not something you lack.

After this, ask the Players which character is holding the seed for the Tree. When you have an answer, ask who's digging the hole for planting the seed. Now it's time for the first memory.

The character holding the seed places it in the hole.

The moment they do, they feel something crawling out their subconscious. An old memory from before they turned immortal is reaching the surface.

Tell the player "You remember something about your object". Place the four *emotion cards* for **Era 1** in front of the player facing down. Let the player pick a card and read the emotion the memory is affected by.

After the first character's memory has been described, proceed to the character who dug the hole. They cover it with dirt and regain a memory as well. Repeat the process.

The next to regain a memory is the person who waters the seed.

Once the dirt has absorbed the water, the little sprout magically shoots up from the ground. The character who sees this unfold is the last person to regain a memory.

Once the *ritual* is complete, place the paper slip with the illustration of the *tree sprout* and place it near the home on the map.

Era 1 - Transition Scene

The next morning the Immortals are in the home. What is each of them doing?

After a moment to establish themselves they hear a knock on the door. On the other side there is a young man. As they look at his eyes, hair, and his general demeanor they recognize him. Back when they turned immortal and awoke without a past, many years ago, a woman by the name of Mariana Castillo took care of them. Since then, her family has resided in the same town as them, showing up every once in a while. This must be Janus Castillo. A young boy they vaguely remember from when he was a toddler.

Janus Castillo is a confident young man with a sense for the dramatic. He wants to be everybody's friend.

"Hello, hello! I was wondering if the four of you would like to attend this year's gathering of youth? I'm one of the young people who's going to be considered an adult tonight and I would like as many people in town to be there as possible!"



There is a gathering in town each year to celebrate the young teens who will be regarded as adults this year. For some it's a grand celebration of the passage of time and the stages of life.

At the end of the interaction, Janus will somehow convince the four immortals to attend the gathering. This could be by explaining that there will be art, tournaments, music, jesters, food, and plenty to drink. The gathering itself will take place in town. The exact location can depend on the players' choices of favorite places.

There are three stages of the gathering, the Players will go through.

- 1) The Immortals prepare for the gathering. Some may choose their attire or do similar rituals to get ready. The atmosphere is uncertain, but maybe hopeful as well. Ask the Players what the characters hope will happen at the gathering. Do all of them truly want to go? What made them choose to attend?
- 2) The Immortals arrive at the gathering. There are various booths with different kinds of entertainment all around. Shortly after arrival the young people in town line up, as one person in town does a speech. The characters spot Janus in the middle with light in his eyes. Soon he will be considered an adult and can celebrate that with his friends. The mood is bittersweet. What do the Immortals think about as they watch the scene before them? The Immortals can't age, and as opposed to most people around them, they cannot remember what it was like to grow up.
- 3) Later at night the young people are drinking together. Many are getting quite drunk. Perhaps the Immortals are too. Some of the drunk youths pass, not accompanied by Janus Castillo, who is busy with something else. The young people point at the Immortals, laughing amongst themselves as they approach, "Hey, aren't you those immortals?". The young people are clearly enjoying themselves as they ask about the details of this, and end up asking if they can try to "kill" the Immortals for their entertainment. The mood turns quite uncomfortable. The Immortals no longer feel welcome.

The scene ends once the Immortals have ended the confrontation. Preferably, this confrontation should not end in violence from the players. If any of them accept the offer of getting killed for entertainment or if all of them end up leaving is up to the players. As soon as the decision has been made, the scene ends.

Era 1 - Scenes

The last part of **Era 1** is the *Scenes*. *Scenes* for **Era 1** can be found in the catalog of scenes at the end. Place this on the table.

The Players choose which order they do the *Scenes* in, but ideally they should get through all of them.

The scenes consist of:



"The Academic and The Poet" in which the Academic is working on their garden and the Poet steps in to help.

"The Hero and The Academic" in which the Academic asks about the times the Hero has died, and the Hero tries to avoid this topic.

"The Philosopher, The Academic, The Poet, and The Hero" in which the four Immortals prepare for a local costume party together.

And "The Philosopher and The Hero" in which the Philosopher and the Hero are introduced to Janus Castillo's young daughter, Maria.

ε The most important Scene to set up the next era is "The Philosopher and The Hero"



ERA 2 - ca. 1 hour

Era 2 lets the characters dwell on grief and thoughts of death. We see more obvious changes. Uncertainty gradually slips into their minds.

Era 2 - The Beginning

The *map* is put to use again. Now it's time to decide what has changed in the mountain town during the past 100 years.

What has happened to your favorite place in town?

Each player decides what has happened to the favorite place they chose at the beginning of **Era 1**. Has it changed a lot? Is it completely gone? This should give the sense that a place the characters have cared about, has gone through changes beyond their control. If the place has changed completely, the Players must create a new favorite place. The drawings on the map should be replaced with new ones that represent what has happened since the previous *era*.

What's something you miss that no longer exists?

Is there something specific your character misses which has faded into obscurity or been removed in the past 100 years?

How did Janus Castillo die?

This should give the Players a sense of ownership of Janus' fate, and allow them to dwell in the fact that he has died. This also sets up the theme for this *era*.

Era 2 - The Ritual

The framing for the memories in the **Era 2 ritual** is going to be "You remember something from your childhood." Each character will thus get a memory, which is somehow related to the childhood they had before they turned immortal.

∞The four possible emotions for **Era 2** are Despair, Grief, Bitterness, and Peace.

Read or paraphrase the text in italics below:

You're standing at the very top of the tallest mountain in the area. The cold air surrounds you and nips at your ears. You have the sword of the Hero with you. To complete the final ritual, you will need a flask of immortal blood, spilled at the highest point. One of you must be killed by another.



Ask the players who is to be killed by the sword, and who is going to kill them. Next, who is holding the flask and who is going to watch.

The character who stabs the other with the sword is the first to gain a memory. "You remember something from your childhood". As with the last *ritual*, the Player draws an emotion and then describes their memory.

The character who gets stabbed gets the next memory. It comes to them the moment before they die. Same process.

Next up is the character who harvests the blood with the flask.

Then the character who watches the scene unfold before them.

Once the *ritual* is complete, place the paper slip with the illustration of *the growing tree* and place it upon the *tree sprout*.

Era 2 - Transition Scene

Janus Castillo's youngest child is to be buried. She died at 70. Her name was Maria Castillo, partially named after the Mariana Castillo you once knew.

You are invited. It would be inappropriate not to show up, at least for a short while.

Like the last era, the scene consists of three parts.

- 1) Arrival. The Immortals arrive at the funeral. It takes place outside, beneath a grey sky. They can't recognize most of the faces they see. Some shake their hand. Some appear to be avoiding them. The atmosphere is awkward and slightly uncomfortable.
- 2) Speeches. Maria Castillo's sister, Kassandra, holding her grandchild Petra's hand, asks if the immortals wish to do a speech. They can say no, but it's clear that she wants them to say something, since the four of them must have quite a bit of wisdom from their long life. Let the players give a few keywords about what a speech could be about if you wish. Regardless, the players will hear other people's speeches about how Maria was a good mother, grandmother, and was always ready to give a helping hand. If something special happened in the **scene** with the Philosopher, the Hero, and Maria, this could be incorporated. The atmosphere is somber, and the Immortals feel misplaced.



3) Dinner. Food is served shortly after the funeral. No one approaches the Immortals aside from Cassandra, who may greet them once. The burial site is completed nearby. Ask how the characters are feeling. What is each of them thinking as they're sitting there? Do they miss Maria, or is it just another death like all the others? How does it feel to know that they too will die if the ritual ends well?

The Immortals can decide to leave or stay, but the scene ends regardless when there's nothing more to say.

Era 2 - Scenes

The final part of **Era 2** is the *Scenes*. *Scenes* for **Era 2** can be found in the catalog of scenes. This works the same way as in **Era 1**. These *Scenes* highlight the characters' connection to the lives they had before they turned immortal.

The scenes consist of:

"The Hero and The Poet" in which the Hero and the Poet discuss what use the Hero believes their sword had in their mortal life.

"The Academic and The Hero" in which the Academic is looking through their book and admits that they wish they were familiar with the person who scribbled the notes within.

"The Philosopher and The Academic" in which the Philosopher grieves Maria Castillo and wonders who the person on the illustration in their necklace was.

"The Poet and The Philosopher " in which the Poet struggles with writer's block, and admits to being scared of disappointing the previous owner of their pen.



ERA 3 - ca. 1 hour

Era 3 is both a death and a rebirth. The characters lose something, and will soon stand face-to-face with their newly won mortal lives. The atmosphere is a chaotic mix of big feelings, doubt, and acceptance.

Era 3 - The beginning

The *map* is put to use again. Now it's time to decide what has changed in the mountain town during the past 100 years.

What has happened to your favorite place in town?

Once more the Players can establish what has happened to their favorite place in town. Follow the same process as in **Era 2**.

How does Maria's grave look?

Give the Players an opportunity to describe Maria's grave.

Have the Immortals had an effect on it? Is it still visited?

Is there something you are scared of losing in the next century?

This should be something other than their favorite place. It can be a building in town, something in their home, or a wider concept in the world that they don't want to be replaced. Give each player the opportunity to answer the question. Take special note of anything you can take away from them during the *Transition Scene*.

Era 3 - The Ritual

The framing for the memories in the **Era 3** *ritual* is going to be "You remember something from your youth." Each character will thus get a memory, which is somehow related to their youth before they turned immortal.

☞The four possible emotions for **Era 3** are Anger, Fear, Jealousy, and Anguish.

Read or paraphrase the text in italics below:

Today is dry and the grass is less green than usual. You have each picked a flower, which will be dried in the sun on a hot summer's day. The sun is warming your bodies, and each of you has a flower in your hand.

The flowers are placed on the ground one at a time, after which the characters simply have to sit and observe, while they dry in the heat of the sun.



The memories are given in the same order as the characters place the flowers. The first player places their flower in the middle, and the first memory is given. Same method as in the two previous *rituals*.

When everyone has received their memory, let them sit with those memories for a moment, while the characters are observing the flowers.

Once the *ritual* is complete, place the paper slip with the illustration of the *small tree* and place it upon the *growing tree*.

Era 3 - Transition scene.

It's early in the morning when the characters wake to screams and shouting from outside. "Fire!" someone yells, and the light is strangely bright considering the time of day.

- 1) The characters are one by one awoken by the chaos outside. Let each character wake individually before you move on to the next. Do they bring something with them? The atmosphere is unnerving and a bit hectic.
- 2) The Immortals step outside and see a wide array of people. They spot the fire in the middle of town, the flames towering above the buildings in a terrifying silhouette. A group of people are frozen, staring at the fire slowly devouring the town. Nobody knows exactly where it started and most people seem to be evacuated. Most people, until Luna Castillo, daughter of Petra Castillo, announces that her son is trapped on the upper floor of a nearby house. She pleads with the Immortals to save him. The atmosphere is chaotic, but there's also a feeling of community in the middle of this shared disaster.
- 3) One or more of the Immortals can see the house where Luna's son is trapped. It's clear that anyone caught too long in the house will succumb to the flames, or risk collapse of the building. The characters can choose to go inside to save the child, but the roof will cave in and kill the rescuer, immediately after Lunas has thanked them. The Immortals watch as the fire consumes the town they've called their home for as long as they can remember. It feels simultaneously like a death and a rebirth.

The scene ends as the Immortals stop and watch the town burn.

Era 3 - Scenes

The final part of **Era 3** is the *Scenes*. *Scenes* for **Era 3** can be found in the catalog of scenes. This works the same way as in **Era 1**. These *Scenes* highlight the characters' doubts and concerns about the future.



The scenes consist of:

“The Philosopher and The Poet” in which the Philosopher is scared about not fitting in with the mortals when they finally become one.

“The Academic and The Philosopher” in which the Academic opens a puzzle box to discover that it’s empty. This mirrors the Academics fears that life too is going to be empty.

“The Hero and The Poet” in which the Hero shares their thoughts on whether or not to use the sword in their mortal life.

“The Poet, The Philosopher, The Hero, and The Academic” in which the Poet is finally inspired to write another poem.



The Final Ritual - ca. 30 minutes

The final changes, the final ritual, and the mortal life.

Era 3 - The beginning

The *map* is put to use again. Now it's time to decide what has changed in the mountain town during the past 100 years once and for all.

Is your favorite place still standing?

Let each player reflect on which consequence fire had for their favorite place. Did it burn? Has it been rebuilt? Replaced by something new? How does the character feel about this? For the first time, drawings can be entirely removed from the map if necessary, but they can also be replaced.

What do you miss from before the fire?

Something has been taken by the fire, which the characters wish was still there. What? Can you ever get it back, or is it lost forever?

What do you hope happens to the town in the next century?

The first reflection which has no effect on the town. The characters won't live to see the next 100 years if the ritual succeeds. Do they hope for something? Are they sad not to see it through, or are they ready to say their goodbyes?

At the end of this era, place the paper slip with the illustration of the *grown tree* and place it upon the *small tree*. This is the last stage of the tree.

The Final Ritual

The framing for the memories in **The Final Ritual** is going to be “You remember something about your fellow Immortals” Each character will thus get a memory about one or more of the other characters from before they turned immortal. It can be a story, a meeting, or maybe the moment they became immortal.

⌘ The four possible emotions for **The Final Ritual** are Bittersweet, Freedom, Joy, and Homesickness



Read or paraphrase the text in italics below:

The big day is here. You're all standing around the fully grown tree. As soon as the ritual is finished, you have finally obtained mortal life.

The first to receive a memory is the character who pours the immortal blood on the leaves of the tree.

The next is the character who hangs the flowers on the branches of the tree.

The third is the character who places the four *objects* in front of the tree.

The last receives their memory when the Immortals take each other's hands.

Once the final memory has been told, the four *objects* burn up in front of the Immortals. A sharp circle of light spreads along the tree. They're all overcome by a deep understanding that as soon as they touch the light, the ritual will be complete. They will be mortal again.

Once they touch the light, everything around them turns bright, blinding their eyes. They fall to the ground. While they still remember everything that happened in their immortal lives, they now know that their lives have an expiration date.

Epilogue

The game ends with two final questions, which each of the Players gets to answer.

How do you live the rest of your life?

How do the characters live out the rest of their days? Do they find something to dedicate their lives to? Does everything still feel meaningless, or have they found hope? Are the four characters still together in any capacity?

How do you die?

Each player gets time to describe how their character dies. In this way, everyone gets to say goodbye. Some Players may have automatically answered this question in the previous one. This is fine too.



Materials for the game

On the following pages, you will find materials for the game attached. These pages will either be loose by themselves or include something that must be cut out before the game.

You will find:

- Character sheets
- The Map
- Illustrations of the tree in four stages
- Emotion cards
- Scenes for each era



Self-destructive Hero

Name: _____

Pronouns: _____

- Will always prioritize the lives of others above their own.

Description:

The first time you sacrificed your life for others was grand enough to reach the history books. In fact, you've checked. You saved a family from a storm and felt each lightning strike spread through your body. Stormy winds and falls that would've wounded or permanently killed you, had you been a regular human. Because of your condition you lived, defeated the storm and was celebrated in the streets. You reached an emotional high. Since then, nothing else has made you feel alive. It wasn't the last time you sacrificed your life, and at this point the days where you don't feel empty.

And why shouldn't you sacrifice your life for others? It doesn't have any consequences. And maybe the pain feels good, as long as it reminds you that you're alive.

You awoke as an immortal with a robust sword. It's sharp and can cut through anything from plants to bones. There are no engravings that indicate who it once belonged to.

Why don't you want to be immortal anymore?

You want to feel what it's like to be alive too. *Actually* being alive. And maybe it would give you a reason to like yourself. You're not certain who you really are. Your life doesn't mean anything right now, and even if the idea of meaning something scares you, the thought also keeps you awake at night.



Relationships

Chaotic Academic

Summary: Inattentive and daring, but interesting to be around

You've never enjoyed books much (unless they have something to do with you) and you don't quite understand the Academic's love for knowledge and dusty old documents. When your heroic deeds put yourself in danger, it often harms the Academic's things which they don't appear to appreciate. On the other hand, the Academic is the one who most often follows you into danger. It's nice to have someone with you, but it frustrates you as well. It isn't *their* life that should be sacrificed, but *yours*, and you easily turn protective when everything inevitably goes south.

Tired Poet

Summary: Self-pitying and sad, but a good friend.

You used to be quite close, in the sense that the Poet at times found inspiration in your heroic deeds. It has however become clear that the Poet has become quite depressed these past few years. It isn't something you talk about. Sometimes you even find it nice to have someone, who's willing to sit next to you while you stare at nothing. Someone who will go to a bar with you every once in a while until the next morning. You do however wish that the Poet would spend less time wallowing in sadness, and a bit more time finding ways to distract themselves. But that's up to them.

Optimistic Philosopher

Summary: Overly attentive and judgmental idealist

The Philosopher loves deep conversations. You personally despise those. You prefer *doing* something. The two of you are the ones who spend the most time around the mortals but for two very different reasons. You're there due to the positive attention you receive for your deeds. The Philosopher is there because they clearly wish they were one of them. You don't think the stories of mortals hold *that* much value. They'll all die soon, and maybe the Philosopher thinks that's beautiful, but you're not certain you buy that. The Philosopher constantly wants all of you out of the house, and doesn't like your drinking tendencies. Why do they have to read into absolutely everything? Can't they just let you do what you want?

Chaotic Academic

Name: _____

Pronouns: _____

- You will always rush into unknown situations if there's something new to learn.

Description:

You may be immortal, but that's not an excuse for wasting your time. Ever since you awoke with a book in your hand, you've made it your personal mission to know everything you possibly can about the world around you. You've studied at universities in several time periods, have learned about science, history, and personally researched areas around you. Unfortunately times change all the time. Every time you learn something new, it turns out to be false a few decades later. But then you just study it all over again. Every once in a while you get lost in which subject and what time your knowledge came from. There's no time for breaks. There's always more to know.

You have your old book on plants with notes in a handwriting that *may* be yours. You've recently started a project where you attempt to recreate the plants in the book to learn more about them. You're not very far yet, but you have to have something to do. It's been a while since you last thought about yourself. It's been a while since you've let yourself feel anything other than your insatiable thirst for knowledge. That's how you like it.

You awoke as an immortal with a book on plants from an area that doesn't exist anymore. There are notes on a few of the pages. You don't know if they were made by you or someone else.

Why don't you want to be immortal anymore?

Although you'd never admit it, you're terrified of what will happen when you run out of things to occupy yourself with. If you turned mortal, at least you'd be able to research what it feels like when the world develops with you, rather than without you.



Relationships

Self-Destructive Hero

Summary: Self-absorbed and idiotic, but that isn't your problem.

There's no one who forces you away from your work like this self-absorbed idiot. You wish they'd at least *attempt* to understand how important and exclusive the notes you've taken throughout the years are. You have knowledge that no one else could even dream of having! The Hero can't just throw it out recklessly as if it means nothing. Despite your frustration, you don't think the Hero is a bad person, and you find it exciting when they want to go adventuring with you. You just wish they wouldn't unnecessarily throw themselves into danger all the time. Unless, of course, it's for the sake of science.

Tired Poet

Summary: Sad and unmotivated, and you want to help them.

You never quite understood what's so interesting about poetry. You prefer to discuss and place it in a historical context. You do however see yourself in the Poet's newfound writer's block. You want to help them out of it, because it's clear they don't know what to do without their poems. You don't know what you'd do if there was nothing left to do to keep the boredom at bay either. Because of this you've been a lot more friendly and helpful to the Poet lately. You've started to wonder why it took you so long to try to befriend them.

Optimistic Philosopher

Summary: Functional and motivated, but with pointless priorities.

It's nice that there's at least one other person in this house who has a bit of energy. You have a lot in common and have your moments of laughter and fun together. You're not fascinated by the mortals in the same way the Philosopher is, but you can respect a thirst for knowledge regardless. You do however think they're wasting their time a bit, attempting to get the others to join the meaningless mortal parties. You have no issue saying this out loud.

Tired Poet

Name: _____

Pronouns: _____

- Will always question it before they agree to do something.

Description:

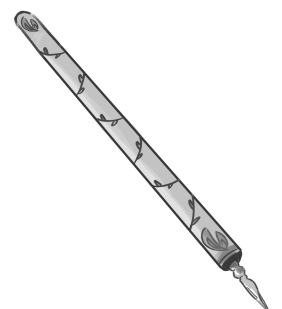
You awoke with a pen in your hand, and since then it's been your only key to meaning. From the moment you realized you'd live forever, you decided to write poems like your life depended on it. You wrote about nature, beauty, and darkness too. You wrote with any inspiration you could find.

It is unfortunately limited for how long you can remain inspired. You haven't been able to write a poem you liked for multiple years, and your eternal existence has started feeling empty. You've begun to doubt if there's any beauty to write about in the first place. You've started to doubt if you're even worth anything yourself. Maybe you should just sit down and disappear? Maybe you were never a good poet to begin with? You hold on to the hope that the inspiration will return to you one day. There must be a reason you turned immortal. There must be something beautiful you can find, that no one else understands.

You awoke as an immortal with a pretty gilded pen with beautiful symbols on the side. It looks handmade, as if it was made for someone specific. You've searched, but hasn't found any other pens like it.

Why don't you want to be immortal anymore?

You're so perpetually sick of eternity. You wish it would all end soon. You're starting to think there's no inspiration left in this life, and you hope a mortal life would provide a more meaningful existence. Or at least an ending to it all.



Relationships

Self-Destructive Hero

Summary: A bit self-absorbed, but at least not overly attentive to your needs.

You used to be close enough. You found it fun and interesting to find inspiration in the Hero's heroic deeds. It appeared to be fun to the both of you. You're still close now, but mostly because the Hero is the only one who doesn't try to talk about feelings around you. You can exist and have fun together, without the Hero giving you looks of pity like the others. You appreciate that. Your new connection has however, created a certain kind of distance, you've decided not to analyze.

Chaotic Academic

Summary: Intelligent and inspiring, but a little too friendly towards you.

You used to look up to the Academic. Their constant work ethic and thirst for knowledge was inspiring to you. You often tried to engage in deep conversations with them, but they were often too distracted to give you a lot of attention. Ever since you stopped seeing the good in life and the world around you, they've suddenly started to look at you more. The Academic is suddenly very friendly towards you and tries to help you whenever they can. On one hand you find it quite annoying. It feels too late to be friends now. On the other hand, there's a part of you who wants to get to know them better.

Optimistic Philosopher

Summary: A good person, but a little too insistently so.

You and the Philosopher used to be close. The Philosopher had all sorts of interesting stories about the mortals around you that inspired you. Ever since you started distancing yourself, you've become scared that the Philosopher no longer likes you, even if they still behave friendly. Unfortunately, this makes you distance yourself even more. It also feels much as if the Philosopher is impossible to hurt. Do they never feel the deafening grip of this meaningless existence?

Optimistic Philosopher

Name: _____

Pronouns: _____

- Will always do whatever it takes to comprehend mortals and the meaning of life.

Description:

Alright. You may be immortal. Maybe there's death wherever you look, and perhaps you'll never live a life like everyone else. That doesn't mean it isn't worth it.

There are people everywhere. Amazing people with thoughts and lives that can be placed within new perspectives. And although you have a difficult time seeing the point of an eternal life, you see a lot of meaning in the lives of mortals. You spend your days talking to them, reading their writings, to understand their lives and world. You think it's beautiful that mortals can hold so many thoughts during their short lives, and you see it as your personal task to collect it to gain a higher understanding. Maybe you can help the ones who consider giving up. Maybe you can write interesting works. As long as you participate in the rituals and parties of mortals, you may discover new joys. Even if you don't have a traditional life.

You awoke as an immortal with a beautiful necklace with a gemstone on the front. It can be opened, revealing a faded but immaculately detailed illustration of a person you cannot recognize.

Why don't you want to be immortal anymore?

You've spent several years writing down the stories of mortals. You try to keep the immortals together and solve their problems. There is however a deep loneliness buried in you. You don't remember the last time you felt like a whole person. Someone with a story to tell. You hope this loneliness will disappear if your story has an ending.



Relationships

Self-Destructive Hero

Summary: Self-destructive, and that scares you a bit.

The Hero's behavior sometimes scares you. You wish they didn't constantly attempt to sacrifice themselves. You try your best to stop them, and you sometimes suggest following them. You think the Hero feels alone, much like you, but it isn't something they wish to talk about. Maybe you can make them share their feelings with you just once? Or perhaps help them see that their life is worth living in spite of the immortality? Or at least after the ritual. You try your best. You know the hero finds you judgmental, so you try to keep a healthy distance. But you do have a difficult time not getting in their business.

Chaotic Academic

Summary: Freely optimistic, but a bit of a know-it-all.

The Academic is probably the most optimistic in your little group aside from yourself. They're the first to leave the house with you, as long as you promise there's something exciting to study. You wish they found the mortals more interesting, and you try to relate the lives of the mortals to the world the Academic is so fascinated by. The Academic also clearly thinks it's a waste of time when you try to get the others to go outside with you. You try anyway, and since the Academic is clearly just afraid of boredom, it'd probably be good of them to look past the tip of their nose.

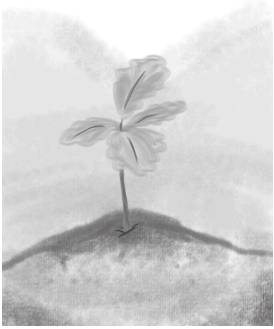
Tired Poet

Summary: Depressed and difficult to help.

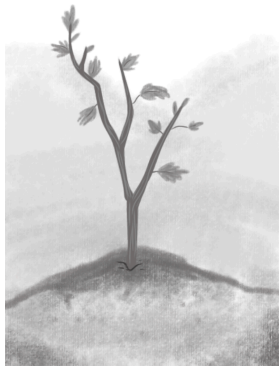
You and the Poet used to be quite close, but now you fear you've been a bit too intrusive. For the past few decades, the Poet has been trapped in writer's block and a lack of inspiration. Your stories about the mortals you've met no longer provoke anything other than a sigh from the Poet. You really want to help but you're not sure how.



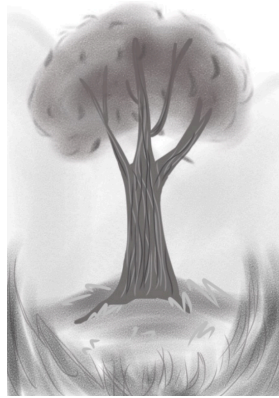
The tree in various stages



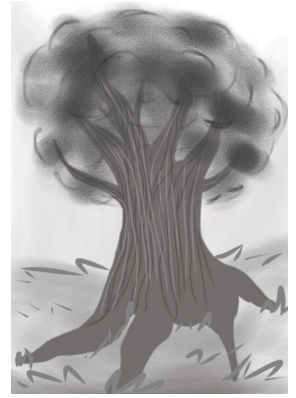
The tree sprout



The growing tree



The small tree



The grown tree

Era 1 - Emotion Cards



Hope

Frustration



Anxiety

Pride



Era 2 - Emotion Cards



Despair

Grief



Bitterness

Peace



Era 3 - Emotion Cards



Anger

Fear



Jealousy

Anguish



Final Ritual - Emotion Cards



Bittersweet

Freedom



Joy

Homesickness



Era 1 - Scenes

<p>Characters: The Academic and The Poet</p> <p>The Academic is caring for their garden, struggling to recreate a plant from their book. The Academic is clearly frustrated about it. The Poet is watching and ends up stepping in to help.</p> <p>The Academic is frustrated about being unable to recreate a plant from their mortal life.</p> <p>The Poet wants to dwell in the depressing sight at first, but does actually want to help create something beautiful.</p>	<p>Characters: The Hero and The Academic</p> <p>The Academic asks the hero about the times the Hero has died. They want to write down information about how it feels to die in various ways. The Hero isn't fond of talking about the details, but tries to hide it. The Academic doesn't notice this discomfort at first.</p> <p>The Academic craves knowledge, but will end up noticing that the Hero is uncomfortable.</p> <p>The Hero tries to avoid the subject by talking about the heroic deeds that led to the deaths instead.</p>
<p>Characters: The Philosopher, The Academic, The Poet, and The Hero</p> <p>There's a costume party in town, and the Philosopher has talked the others into going. The Philosopher helps the others figure out what to dress up as.</p> <p>The Academic thinks the party is a waste of time, and doesn't care much about the costume.</p> <p>The Poet doesn't want to admit it, but thinks it sounds nice to dress up as something beautiful.</p> <p>The Hero wants to go, but can't decide what to dress up as.</p>	<p>Characters: The Philosopher and The Hero</p> <p>Janus Castillo introduces the Philosopher and the Hero to his youngest daughter, Maria, and asks if they can watch her for a few minutes.</p> <p>The Philosopher tries to teach her how to be a good person and keeps commenting on how beautiful her life is going to be.</p> <p>The Hero tries to play pretend with heroes and wooden swords.</p> <p>Maria (Gamemaster) behaves like a curious child, who gets easily distracted by new things.</p>

Era 2 - Scenes

<p>Characters: The Hero and The Poet</p> <p>The Hero is sitting alone by their favorite place, polishing their sword. The Poet passes by and sits next to them. It's clear that the Hero isn't feeling well. The Poet asks what the Hero thinks they used the sword for in their mortal life.</p> <p>The Hero tries not to show too many emotions, but has clearly thought about this topic a lot.</p> <p>The Poet tries to get closer to the Hero, and be a bit vulnerable themselves too.</p>	<p>Characters: The Academic and The Hero</p> <p>The Academic is looking through their book on plants. The Hero coincidentally stops by and disturbs this, while the Hero is deep in uncharacteristically emotional thoughts. The Academic ends up admitting that they wish they knew the person who wrote the notes in the book, whether its the Academic themselves or not. They wish they knew what they missed.</p> <p>The Academic is more quiet than usual and has a difficult time behaving like themselves.</p> <p>The Hero displays more sympathy than normal, and is unsure whether to let the Academic have some privacy, or if they should talk about this.</p>
<p>Characters: The Philosopher and The Academic</p> <p>The Philosopher is sitting at Maria Castillo's overgrown grave, looking at the picture in their necklace. They wish they knew who the person on the drawing was, and if they ever existed at all. The Academic tries to comfort the Philosopher.</p> <p>The Philosopher tries to distance themselves from their own grief by speaking very generally about life and death.</p> <p>The Academic tries to get the Philosopher to talk about feelings, but is quite bad at it, due to their own tendency to speak logically and generally.</p>	<p>Characters: The Poet and The Philosopher</p> <p>The Poet is sitting at their favorite place, trying to write something with their pen. They can't get any words out. The Philosopher passes by, and the Poet ends up frustratedly talking about their uncertainty of who the pen belonged to before they turned immortal. They admit they're afraid to disappoint whoever owned it before.</p> <p>The Poet is frustrated and wishes they were a poet who deserved such a beautiful handmade pen.</p> <p>The Philosopher listens and says that it isn't that important who the pen used to belong to.</p>

Era 3 - Scenes

<p>Characters: The Philosopher and The Poet</p> <p>The Philosopher is sitting somewhere, looking at the mortals. It's starting to dawn upon them that they will soon join them. They're suddenly afraid they'll never truly fit in among them. The Poet passes by and tries to cheer them up.</p> <p>The Philosopher is worried that the loneliness will never disappear.</p> <p>The Poet thanks the Philosopher for their attempt to keep the Immortals together over all these years, and is certain they'll make a good mortal.</p>	<p>Characters: The Academic and The Philosopher</p> <p>The Academic succeeds in opening a puzzle box, which took them a couple of years to solve. They find out that it's empty. The Academic suddenly feels empty too, and uncertain of the future. Will there be anything left to study in a mortal life?</p> <p>The Philosopher passes by and tries to help.</p> <p>The Academic has a hard time letting go and finding a new purpose.</p> <p>The Philosopher tries to give advice as to how the Academic can find purpose and meaning in a mortal life.</p>
<p>Characters: The Hero and The Poet</p> <p>The Hero is sitting somewhere peaceful, and considers if they want to use the sword in their mortal life. When the Poet stops by, the Hero asks if the Poet can write something on the sword with their pen.</p> <p>The Hero considers what their mortal life will be like.</p> <p>The Poet gets excited about those considerations too.</p>	<p>Characters: The Poet, The Philosopher, The Hero, and The Academic</p> <p>The Poet has finally found inspiration and is sitting in their room with their pen. They're trying to figure out what to do with this sudden burst of energy, and the other immortals try to help. It succeeds at the end.</p> <p>The Poet sees the beauty in everyone's ideas.</p> <p>The Academic is excited to read a new poem but doesn't quite understand the metaphors.</p> <p>The Hero wants the Poet to write about heroics.</p> <p>The Philosopher is happy that the Poet believes in themselves, and tries to keep up the motivation.</p>