

# ...and good riddance

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*A scenario for Apocalypse*

## Synopsis

Sandra, Peter and Lars are left behind in a depopulated Denmark. It is a situation they have all toyed with in different forms when their populated lives were taking place, but this is nothing like idle thought.

The stories of the three protagonists are similar in theme, but are following different story arcs. Whereas Sandra and Peter are young discontents who revel in the vanquishing of their tormentors and have to realize the terror of real solitude during the run of the story, Lars is grief struck at the onset and has to search for meaning and possibly find it.

Essentially the game is a long discussion of values. It is a search for the meaning of life. But like the quest for the Holy Grail, it is not a search intended to reach its objective. The three protagonists (and consequentially their players) will probe the question of the human condition, and if the GM is successful, they will gravitate towards meaning coming from the inside and not from physical objects, other people or even relationships. But it is not important that we end the story, it is important that we tell it.

## Survivors

**Sandra** – 18 – female – Århus (tower blocks / slum)  
Troubled Youth, Wild, Angry  
Ethnically and socially challenged  
School dropout – no knowledge of anything, has to rely on common sense  
<Endurance>

**Peter** – 25 – male – Klerup (village near a coast)  
Victim of a very strict upbringing, Quiet, Religious  
Such a nice young man, awfully quiet though  
A typical pleaser on the outside, hater on the inside  
Not too bright, but well trained  
<Safety>

**Lars** – 43 – male – Allerød (suburbia)  
Bereaved family man, Stunned, Self mutilated  
Mr. Right, the good father  
Holder of experience but in doubt  
<Pleasure>

## Survival

The story is divided into parts. These are not played in a strictly chronological manner – some variations are applied for dramatic reasons. The director also has leverage for some ad hoc shuffling. But the division into ordered parts makes the intended progress of play easier to grasp and helps in the use of the scene cards.

### 1<sup>st</sup> part – establishing

In this part, the player takes possession of his character role. The player has the initiative in defining the role whereas the director and the other players should see themselves as helping the process along (which is not the same as being nice, though).

The general feeling is set with easy questions like: You open your eyes, and how do you feel? What made you open your eyes/wake up? Do you have any plans for the day?

The two other players are asked to comment directly into the active character's stream of conscience through their aspects – later they will be expected to volunteer remarks by themselves.

Later, the character settles in the role, pretending it to be a stable situation either psychologically or practically or both.

When all characters have been established and the players commence some kind of action (sitting motionless on a sofa is also an action) the director should find some excuse to play a flash back scene and give that player the scene card. After playing the flash back, tone back into present time solitude and then cut to another player.

The following flash back scenes would fit each character well:

Sandra:	Rain, Computer or Ice
Peter:	Ice, Fight or Kiss
Lars:	Kiss or Fight

The establishing should be fulfilled, after each player has had one or two flash back scenes. Often the characters will only get to perform few and seemingly unimportant actions in the present during the establishing.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> part – confronting

In this part, the players are confronted with the ambiguities and latent problems connected to the role they have set up. The flash backs also tend to be more challenging and demand a more complex character description.

Some players may want to set up tasks for their characters to achieve, possibly playing through years during the confronting. Other players may just play the confronting trying to muster up enough energy to leave the room they are in. It does not really matter which, as long as the player sets up a frame that the flash back scenes can be run in and the director makes sure these scenes lead to a soul search.

If the players need input for the scenes in the present, you can refer to the text Solitary Challenges for inspiration.

When a player is in focus, the other players and the director should concentrate their effort and their choice of flash backs on helping the active player have his role take his or her world view up to revision.

The director can use scenes that fit the mood the player has set up or strives for, whereas the players will generally have to speak through their voices or their interpretation of the flash back cast.

Probably the focus should change between the characters several times. Players should expect to have their character active in two to three situations during this part.

During the confronting, the players may feel tempted to check out the scene cards on each other. The director should not intervene unless a specific scene seems detrimental to the flow of some character's story.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> part – ending

If the player is not ready to conclude his character, the director should set up one more flash back scene to help him or her on the way. Otherwise the player may define his own finishing scene while the two other players use their voices. If the player wishes he/she can also define a flash back to fit the parting feeling.

The very end should consist of the players prophesying about the fate of their characters or just keeping quiet about it if it is better imagined internally.

## System

**...and good riddance** is not a long story. The play test lasted 3 hours and 20 minutes including a break. If you spend too long playing the scenario, you are probably not playing it intensely enough and concentrating on details that are not psychologically relevant for the characters

A relevant time frame could be: establishing (30 minutes), confronting (2 hours 30 minutes), ending (15 minutes).

Do not play through all scene cards for all characters. Each character should play 5 scenes at the most. There should always be something left for the imagination.

It is tempting to cut between characters in a shifting manner instead of using the same rotation all the time. Be aware of how long you make a character wait for his or her next scene however; the longer the wait, the greater the expectation for the next scene.

Play with the players not against them. Apart from the obvious constriction that the players will continue to be alone all through the story, do not restrict their creative freedom. The object of the story is to make the players work with the characters, not to make realistic survival scenarios.