AGAINST the DARKNESS™

Credits

In This Book

Why in the world do we need another game system? Well, perhaps need isn't the right word, but "Against the Darkness" was conceived as a rules-light system that would allow people to buy the game, learn the rules, generate characters, and begin playing all in the same day. It works just as well for a quick game to provide a night's diversion or to create a campaign of terror and intrigue in the endless war between good and evil. The rules themselves are not complex because nothing can kill a well-crafted atmosphere of horror and suspense quite as thoroughly as stopping to hunt for something in the rulebook. "Against the Darkness" provides a coherent structure around which to play while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility for roleplaying and story development.

In this rulebook, whether you are a player or a game master, you will find everything you need to understand the rules, create characters, and begin playing. In addition there is a short section on some of the differences between running a horror adventure and running the type of action adventure with which we may be more familiar, and also thoughts on running a campaign of terror and intrigue using the "Against the Darkness" rules system.

Please note – we said that you would have everything in here that you needed to begin playing. This is very different from saying that we have covered every situation that may arise, or have covered all of the abilities, character types, powers, or game experiences that can be played in this genre. In play testing we were able to play action-oriented adventures, light-hearted/humorous adventures, and also horrifying adventures. This variety is supported by the general framework of the rules. Whatever the game master or players want to do, this game framework can be modified to allow you to do it. All you need is to be familiar with the general difficulty levels and the players' desires. If a player wants to do something that fits within the Game Master's and players' conceptions of what should be possible in the game, then the GM can assign a difficulty level to the task, identify what skills are appropriate and let the players roll. "Against the Darkness" is meant to be your game and is here for your enjoyment. Feel free to modify it with house rules and new archetypes to your heart's content.

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Header and Footer text includes excerpts of english translations of the rite of exorcism from the "The Rituale Romanum" originally written in 1614 under the authority of Pope Paul V.

Scripture Texts:
- Ephesians, chapter six, verse 12, King James Version
- Romans, chapter 12, verse 2, New American Standard
- Psalms, chapter 55, verses 5 and 8, New International Version
- Isaiah, chapter 40, verse 31, King James Version
- Second Timothy, chapter 1, verse 7 King James Version
- Matthew chapter 10, verse 16, New International Version
- Psalms, chapter 144, verses 5-6a, New International Version
- Psalms 144, verses 1, New International Version
- Psalms chapter 55, verses 5 and 8, New International Version
- Lamentations chapter 3 verse 6, King James Version
- Psalms chapter 55, verse 11, New International Version

Welcome to the Darkness

If you gaze for too long into the abyss, know that the abyss also gazes into you.
– Friedrich Nietzsche

"Against the Darkness" is a game that allows you to dance upon the edge of the abyss and attempt to drive the darkness back into its depths. To do this, however, you must first enter into the shadows where evil dwells and once there you may come to realize that the illusions by which we tend to live are but a fragile façade that only survives because of the heroes who face the dread terrors and stand against the darkness.

Here is an exciting game of modern Vatican horror, conspiracy and investigation in which the creatures of myth and nightmare prey upon an unsuspecting humanity. In "Against the Darkness" the characters live in our world of business, football, amusement parks, and sitcoms. However, they come to realize that this world of enlightenment, reason, and political correctness is just a Pollyanna fiction that conceals an ageless war being waged between the servants of God and the powers of this present darkness. Only a small and steadily shrinking cadre of holy defenders knows the truth and stands at the gates of hell to drive back the evil forces. In "Against the Darkness" the heroes can be Modern Templars, Treasure Seekers, Dispassionate Experts, Sacred Hunters, Blessed Non-believers or others, who face this unspeakable evil with only faith, knowledge, and miraculous powers to keep them alive.

The player characters are members of an elite group of priests and other personnel who hunt evil and battle the forces of darkness, bringing light and strength to a threatened world. Adventures can take the characters anywhere in the world, from a desert mission among forgotten ruins to a split-level in suburbia, but no mission is ever accomplished without cost. Despite the miraculous powers and knowledge that the heroes wield, the soul-searing combat endured when battling a true demon is a terrifying proposition. Death, crippling injury and insanity are all more-than-likely outcomes and all too often the victories are but fleeting moments in the timeless war between good and evil.

Once you have entered the world of "Against the Darkness" you may become aware that there is as much substance to the world of shadow as most people believe there to be in the material world of science. With this revelation you can never again go back to pretending that the world of the five senses is the only one that matters. Time will tell whether you are consumed by the abyss or whether you are able to stand against the darkness.

Welcome to my world.
The Evil Overlord

AGAINST the DARKNESS

CHARACTER SHEET

Character Name: _____

Position: _____

Archetype: _____

Narrative/Background: _____

_____

_____

_____

Attributes (Skills and **Miracles.** ‡ indicates those tasks which could be opposed.)

Corpus d	Mentus d	Spiritus d	Fidelis d
Combat ‡	**Animation**	Cunning ‡	**Discernment ‡**
Endurance ‡	**Genius**	**Divination**	**Divine Intervention**
Mechanics ‡	Hard Science	**Ghostliness ‡**	**Ecological Dominance**
Pyrokinesis ‡	Investigation ‡	Medicine ‡	**Exorcism ‡**
Raw Physicality ‡	Knowledge	Psychology ‡	**Holy Aura**
Speed ‡	**Occultism ‡**	**Telekinesis ‡**	**Sacrificial Healing**
Transformation ‡	Technical ‡	Wealth ‡	**Stewardship ‡**
	Telepathy ‡		**Wrath ‡**
	Translation		

SPECIALIZATIONS:

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NOTES / CAMPAIGN INFORMATION:

Character Creation Basics:

1. There are four Attributes; values for these range from 1 to 7:

   Corpus – **Physical abilities and "hit points"**

   Mentus – **Intelligence and brain power**

   Spiritus – **Force of will and personality**

   Fidelis – **Faith and divine power.**

2. Each Attribute has a Resolution Die assigned to it. The Resolution Dice are 1-d4, 2-d6 and 1-d8. The character excels in the Attribute to which the d8 is assigned, and is weakest in the Attribute to which the d4 is assigned. Miracles can only be performed with the Attribute to which the d8 Resolution Die is assigned. *(This limitation does not apply to monsters or nonhumans.)*

3. Each character has Skills and Miracles. Like Attributes, they can rank 1 through 7. A Skill or Miracle with a rank of 7 can be further improved by taking Specializations.

Primary Game Mechanic:

Difficulty Checks:
Attribute + Skill/Miracle Rank + Specialization/Bonus + Resolution Die *vs.* Target Number (for Unopposed checks) or opponent's total (for Opposed checks).

Healing:
Use Medicine for *Corpus* damage (First Aid, Paramedic Care or Surgery); Psychology for *Fidelis* damage

Working Together:
Use Corporate Prayer (based on Fidelis) or Aid (based on any Skill or Miracle).

Task Resolution:

Tasks are rated by their difficulty. The target range for each difficulty is:

Easy Tasks: 8-11
Moderate Tasks: 12-14
Hard Tasks: 15-17
Wondrous Tasks: 18+

Summary of Skills and Miracles by Attribute: (Miracles listed in bold)

Corpus

- Combat - fighting ability
- **Endurance – resistance to pain and injury**
- Mechanics – operate, build and repair machines
- **Pyrokinesis – mentally start or control fires**
- **Raw Physicality – feats of strength**
- Speed – perform tasks and move quickly
- **Transformation – limited shapeshifting**

Mentus

- **Animation – create artificial servants**
- **Genius – supernatural intelligence and memory**
- Hard Science – understanding of a specialized scientific subject
- Investigation – detective work and forensics
- Knowledge – understanding of a specialized social or religious topic
- **Occultism – understanding of magic**
- Technical – mastery of complex electronics
- **Telepathy – reading and influencing minds**
- Translation – understand languages

Spiritus

- Cunning – negotiation, influence or manipulation
- **Divination – see or affect the future**
- **Ghostliness – turn invisible or intangible**
- Medicine – heal physical (Corpus) injuries
- Psychology – heal non-physical (Fidelis) injuries
- **Telekinesis – move objects mentally**
- Wealth – business skill and/or disposable income

Fidelis

- **Discernment - see through lies and illusions**
- **Divine Intervention – incredible luck**
- **Ecological Dominance – control plants and weather**
- **Exorcism – cast out possessing demons**
- **Holy Aura – a divine protective field**
- **Sacrificial Healing – risk injury to heal others**
- **Stewardship – command animals**
- **Wrath – destroy enemies through faith**

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