

AN ELLIUM LEISURE PUBLICATION
Family Fun Night!
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**THE CORRUPTING
DECK**

distributed as
52-CARD PICKUP
SURVIVAL EDITION

CATALOGUED INTERNALLY AS FM-52

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THE CORRUPTING DECK

FM-52

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ELLIUM LEISURE PUBLICATIONS

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*We give you pictures because we cannot give you the thing.
The teeth are a courtesy.*

— ELP plate department, internal note (undated)



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THE CORRUPTING DECK

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JASON MOSER · WRITER, ARTIST, INMATE · ASYLUMINK.COM

ON THE FILING

This booklet is the suits. All four, fifty-two entries, and two that are not suited at all. It is shelved as entertainment. That is not an accident and it is not a disguise; it is the only shelf a record like this survives on.

♣ GRAFT is what arrives through the body. Flesh made into a fixture, or into material, or into somebody else's design. ♦ BIND is what arrives through the room. Space that grows, thickens, fills, or closes. The door is where it was. There is simply more between you and it. ♠ ROT is what arrives through the record. Something happens, and then something else is written down, and the second thing is what survives. ♥ BLOOM is what arrives as help. Freely offered, freely accepted, and understood as a transaction only afterward.

The suits are not this office's invention. They are the Index's, and the Index is not for sale. What is for sale is a joke booklet that reprints them as a card game, and I have been told more than once that this is the only reason anyone remembers them at all.

Somewhere in the daylight world there is a booklet that jokes about this, and tonight its files run one entry short, and the Index has grown by one name.

— from the narration of Carnival

HOW TO PLAY, AND WHY THIS EXISTS

Congratulations on finding this booklet. It was left where you found it on purpose, and it was made to look like this on purpose, and someday one of those two sentences will matter to you.

The joke first, since the joke is the cover charge. This is a party game played with a normal deck of cards and whatever junk the room contains. You flip cards, you do silly dares out loud, you spend pennies like they are your lifeblood. Personnel are encouraged to play it drunk at training. Personnel do. That is intentional. Your hands need to know where this booklet lives long before your head needs it.

Now the rest. Threats conform. Environments blend in. The room you are in right now may already be one, and if it is, no alarm sounded and nobody is coming, because from the outside nothing is wrong. A safety measure that has to be requested is a safety measure that arrives late. So it has to already be inside, everywhere, disguised as the kind of trash nobody bans, nobody burns, and nobody thinks to take away from you. You are holding the safety measure.

The deck divines the hell you are in. The suit is the direction the failure comes from. The number is how far along it is. The pages that follow account for the fifty-two most common. That is not a fraction of what is out there. It is not a fraction of a fraction. It is what fits in a booklet you would find funny.

If you are reading this sober, alone, because the room has stopped being right: you did not choose this. You stumbled into it, which is exactly what this booklet was printed for. Skip nothing. Read in order. Play it exactly as written, and mean it.

*One rule governs everything either way, and it is the only thing in this booklet stated with confidence: every act is performed aloud, or not at all. **The booklet cannot hear you. The deck does not care. Perform accordingly.***

SETUP

Scavenge once. Each participant gathers small objects from their immediate surroundings and pools them in the center. Coins, clips, thread, keys, matches, buttons. Every object is worth one. Stop at the cap below. You do not scavenge again.

POOLCAP solo 10 · two 14 · three 19 · four 24. About five per person, and a little kindness for the one alone. Objects you spend are set aside, out of play. Objects the pool recovers come back from there. The cap is a ceiling on scavenging, not on the pool: sealing can carry you above it, and nothing else can.

Deal lives. Each participant draws **three cards, face up**, and arranges them in a row in an order they choose. These are your lives. The card nearest the deck is on top: its suit is your **patron**, the direction you are braced against. Redraw any Ace or joker dealt as a life.

SET THE STAKES Seals to win: solo 3 · two 4 · three 5 · four 6. Aces to lose: solo 2 · two or more 3.

Shuffle everything else, jokers included, into one face-down **threat pile**.

THE TURN

Flip the top card of the threat pile. Read its suit and number, then open this manual to that card and resolve it. One participant resolves per turn; rotate. Cost to survive: the card's page states it. Every card in this booklet carries its own debt, printed in full. The one thing not printed on the page, because it depends on you: if the card's suit matches your patron, reduce any cost you pay by 1, to a minimum of 0. On your turn you choose one:

SURVIVE. Pay the cost from the pool. The card is discarded.

TAKE THE HIT. Pay nothing. Discard your top life card. You lose that patron; the next card in your row is now on top. Some cards list conduct for the hit; it applies only when you take the hit, never as a substitute for paying.

SEAL (HUNTER-class cards only). End it permanently by one of its three listed routes. A sealed card leaves the game, scores one seal, and the pool recovers 2 objects. A HUNTER you survive but do not seal is shuffled back into the pile. It will return. After resolving, you may pay 1 object to rearrange your life row and choose a new patron.

THE THREE ROUTES (HUNTER CARDS)

Every HUNTER block lists its routes in the same order, every time. There are normally three. One card in this manual lists two, and the one it is missing is missing on purpose.

BY OBJECT

Spend the named objects, in the count listed. They must be that kind of object. Silent, cheap, and entirely dependent on what the room happened to give you. The counts come from reports, not from science. The count is a requirement, not a cost. Your patron does not reduce it, and neither does anything else.

BY ACT

Perform the listed act, exactly, aloud, then pay the card's printed cost in any objects. It is honor-governed and unwitnessed. Feeling ridiculous is part of the mechanism, or at least it was part of every report where the agent survived.

BY PRICE

Pay the number printed on the card, in any objects, silently, or discard one life card. Always available. This is the one route the Continuum stands behind without reservation, because it is the only one that runs on a printed number instead of testimony.

Three answers, and each costs you something different: the right object, or your voice, or one object more. There is no free way to end a thing. The files are unanimous on that, and the files disagree about everything.

THE OTHER CLASSES

ENVIRONMENT There is nothing to seal. Survive it or take the hit; either way it is discarded. These do not get removed from the world. They get outlasted. Where the block lists conduct for the hit, perform it as you discard the life. The conduct is not a way out. It pays for nothing and replaces nothing. It is what you do while you lose, and only then.

CONVERGENCE (the four Aces). Pay a toll of 2 or take it as a hit. Either way it fires. It counts one step toward the Ace limit. The one exception is your patron: if the suit matches, you pay the toll, reduced by 1 as any cost is, and it does not count. Taking the hit never buys that. The shield is for the braced, not for the spent. Whatever is facing you will shield you from its own house's ending. Once. While it is facing you.

THE UNSUITED (the two jokers). See their pages at the back. One is a lever. One is a bill.

RUNNING DRY

At zero pool your reads fail. Each turn, flip **two** cards and resolve the worse one; return the other to the bottom of the pile. The only reliable way back up is sealing. That is the entire economy of this document: you spend to stay alive, and you recover by ending things. Worse is the higher cost. On a tie, the HUNTER is worse than the ENVIRONMENT, and an Ace is worse than either. On a tie past that, the one not matching your patron.

WIN AND LOSE

Win: reach the seal target, or outlast the entire pile. **Lose:** the Ace limit is reached, or every participant is out of lives. In groups: the pool is shared, hits land on whoever's turn it is, and every life row is public. The Continuum observes that groups survive at measurably higher rates than individuals, and offers no enforcement of any kind toward that outcome.

PAST THE LINE

Reaching the seal target is a win. This section exists because some of you will not stop there, and the files would rather you did it correctly than creatively.

ALONE: THE PAGES YOU WERE NOT MEANT TO KEEP

At three seals you have won. You may stop, and stopping banks it. Flipping even one more card spends the win: from that flip on you are playing for your count and nothing else, and if you fall past the line, you did not win at three. You lost at wherever you fell.

Every seal past the line means you did not just end a thing, you learned it. You saw its face. This booklet ships without the faces, and there is a reason it ships without the faces: there is only so much a mind can bear, and the manual is calibrated to exactly that much.

The standing verified count is eleven pages past the line. The agent's file does not say she stopped. It says she kept reading. Nobody has verified twelve. The deck holds seventeen, and the manual mentions that number only so you know how far down the book goes.

IN GROUPS: THE SOLE SURVIVOR CLAUSE

The files record, with discomfort, that solitary individuals walk out of failing zs at rates that embarrass the group numbers. The moment the table reaches its target, the game is won, pending one question. The question goes to the **next participant in turn order**, not to whoever sealed. They answer aloud: "we are done," and the win stands for everyone; or "I am not done," and the clause is invoked. There is no veto, and there is no abstaining.

The last draw. Gather every card back, all fifty-two and both jokers, lives included. Count the four Aces and the two jokers onto the table, aloud. Shuffle.

The one who invoked draws first, and the draw goes around the circle, forced, nobody may pass.

- Any ordinary card: nothing. Discard it. Breathe.
- A joker: keep it face up before you. One free pass, and everyone can see you holding it. The first Ace that reaches you spends it, whether you like the timing or not.
- An Ace: you are dead and out, unless you hold a pass. The pass fires, expires, and the Ace moves to the next participant in order. It keeps moving until it finds someone uncovered, and it kills there. Every Ace takes exactly one of you. The pass only chooses a direction.
- If the deck empties with more than one still standing, reshuffle everything drawn, spent Aces included, and continue. The lottery does not run out. It waits.

The last one standing walks out, wins alone, and is named in the record. Everyone else has lost. The manual has no advice here. The manual only notes that the group numbers were better, that everyone at the table knew it, and that the clause gets invoked anyway, every year, in every facility, by someone.

PROVISIONS (OPTIONAL, RECOMMENDED, SURVEYED)

Set a drink or something to eat beside your life row at setup. Provisioning changes no number in this booklet. It is conduct, and it attaches to moments that already exist:

- When your patron holds: everyone else takes one. You were braced. They were lucky to be near you.
- When a hunter comes back: the one who let it live takes one.
- When an Ace turns: everyone, together, once, before the toll is addressed. There may not be an after in the mood for it.
- When the Bill arrives: one long pull or one whole bite, taken inside the ten seconds of silence.

- **At zero pool:** you take one alone, each turn you remain there. Nobody joins you. That is what zero is.

Pace yourselves. The booklet is reusable. You are not.

QUICKREFERENCE

FLIP → the card's page states every number; patron suit -1 off anything you pay → SURVIVE (pay, discard) · HIT (lose top life; perform listed conduct) · SEAL (hunters: named objects at count, OR act aloud + cost in any objects, OR cost +1 silent; +1 seal; pool +2) → optionally pay 1 to re-brace. HUNTER survived, not sealed: shuffle back. ENVIRONMENT: always discard. ACE: toll 2, counts unless patron match. Zero pool: flip two, take the worse. Win at seal target or empty pile. Lose at Ace limit or no lives. At the target: bank it and stop, or keep flipping and stake it.

THE SEQUENCE

BEFORE THE FIRST FLIP

1. Scavenge once, into the center, to the cap. Solo 10 · two 14 · three 19 · four 24. You do not scavenge again.
2. Each participant draws three cards face up and lays them in a row, chosen order. Redraw any Ace or joker. The card nearest the deck is on top; its suit is your patron.
3. Shuffle everything else, jokers included, into one face-down threat pile.
4. Say the seal target aloud. Solo 3 · two 4 · three 5 · four 6. Say the Ace limit aloud. Solo 2 · two or more 3.

EACH TURN, IN ORDER

1. The active participant flips the top card of the threat pile, face up, where everyone can see it.
2. Open the manual to that card and read the block aloud. All of it.
3. Apply your patron. If the card's suit matches your top life card, every cost you pay this turn is 1 lower, minimum 0. The named object counts on a seal route are not costs and do not change.
4. Resolve by class.
5. If you took the hit, discard your top life card now and perform any conduct printed on the block as you discard it. The next card in your row is your new patron.
6. Optionally pay 1 object to rearrange your life row and choose a new patron.
7. Check the win and lose conditions. Then pass to the next participant.

RESOLUTION PAGES

You may have noticed the jokes have stopped. By suit. Clubs, then Diamonds, then Spades, then Hearts. Each suit ends at its Ace. Designations are filing conventions, not names. Prior issues used other designations. Use these. The Index has the names, and you do not need the names.



♣ CLUBS

FAILURES ARRIVING THROUGH THE BODY



A ♣ FILED AS TOTAL GRAFT EVENT

CONVERGENCE TOLL 2

The flesh of a place remembers it was
always meant to be one body.

AS IT FIRES: everyone at the table
places both hands flat and still until
it is resolved. Every prior issue of
this manual includes this line. None
explains it.

K**K ♣ FILED AS ARTISAN CLASS****HUNTER
COST 3**

A craftsman of the body, working on behalf of something below. His work opens doors. Treat the door as the threat.

OBJECT (the count is consistent across files, which worries us) three keys.

ACT (one file reports this route failing. The file ends there.) go to the nearest door, close it firmly, keep your hand on it, and say, "not through me."

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

Q**Q ♣ FILED AS FLAYED WALKER****HUNTER
COST 3**

It walks wrong and speaks right. The voice will be borrowed from your dead. Multiple files, no exceptions.

OBJECT (it leaves gifts; leaving one instead is tradition, not science) three coins.

ACT (reported by others; unverified) speak one true sentence you have never said aloud. PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

J**J ♣ FILED AS WALL FIGURE****ENVIRONMENT
COST 3**

A face where a surface should be. The surface answers for it now.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: do not lean on, touch, or sit against any wall until your next turn.

10**10 ♣ FILED AS COMPOSITOR****HUNTER
COST 2**

It joins living material into composites. Reports agree that it is proud of the work.

OBJECT (survivor testimony, single source) two lengths of thread, string, or one shoelace.

ACT (worked twice; cause unknown) untie one knot or take one small object apart, and say, "the seam is mine."

PRICE 3 objects, silent, or one life card.

9

8♣ FILED AS FEEDING PATTERN

**ENVIRONMENT
COST 2**

An appetite with offspring. It teaches
as it eats.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: eat
and drink nothing until your next
turn. This one we mean.

8

8♣ FILED AS CONVERSION EVENT

**ENVIRONMENT
COST 2**

The body is being finished as
something else. The finishing is the
problem.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
touch your own face with both hands
and confirm it aloud: "still here."

7

7♣ FILED AS DIRECTED REMAINS

**HUNTER
COST 2**

Tissue that is finished living, still
under instruction.

OBJECT (two files support the count;
one contradicts it) two batteries, or
one powered device surrendered to
the pool.

ACT (effective in prior files; mecha-
nism not established) say the name of
someone gone, then say "rest," three
times, without pause.

PRICE 3 objects, silent, or one life
card.

6

6♣ FILED AS STRUCTURAL
RECRUITMENT**ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

Construction is proceeding inside the
host. The host is the foundation.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
say, "I am not a building," once, with
conviction you do not feel. Conviction
you do feel has not been reported to
matter.



5

5♠ FILED AS LOAD-BEARING
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

The flesh is volunteering for structural work.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: stand clear of every wall until your next turn.



4

4♠ FILED AS MISCOUNT
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

Your count of yourself is no longer the body's count.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: count your fingers aloud. Do not react to the number. The not reacting is the reported part.

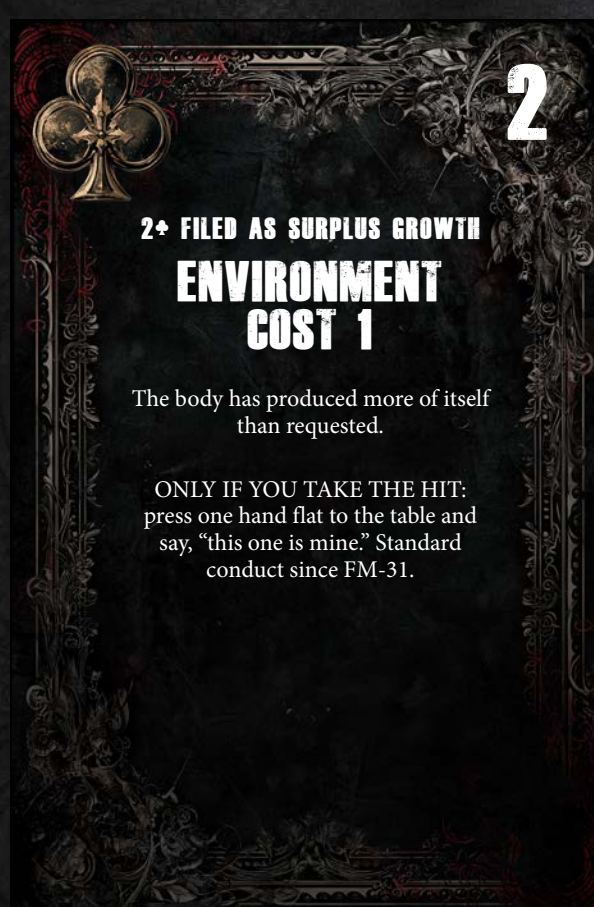


3

3♠ FILED AS RIGID PATCH
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

A region of you has stopped agreeing to bend.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: make a fist, open it slowly to a count of five.



2

2♠ FILED AS SURPLUS GROWTH
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

The body has produced more of itself than requested.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: press one hand flat to the table and say, "this one is mine." Standard conduct since FM-31.

◆ DIAMONDS

FAILURES ARRIVING THROUGH THE ROOM



K**K ♦ FILED AS SOVEREIGN WATER****HUNTER
COST 3**

The deep, given office. It keeps its own, and it is owed. On this the files do not disagree, and the files disagree about everything.

OBJECT (the wetting matters, per three separate reports) three coins, wetted.

ACT (what has worked in the past, maybe) name one thing you lost, aloud, and say, "keep it."

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

Q**Q ♦ FILED AS TIDAL FIGURE****HUNTER
COST 3**

A grief with a current. It collects what was never said.

OBJECT (tradition. Old tradition. Older than us.) three pinches of salt.

ACT (unverified, and the manual apologizes for asking) say aloud, to the empty room, a goodbye you never got to say.

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

J**J ♦ FILED AS HERDING PRESENCE****HUNTER
COST 3**

Never seen head-on. It moves you along and closes the way behind. Prior designation, Threshold era: THE USHER. Same filing.

OBJECT (reported effective; the reports do not say against what, exactly) three light sources; matches count singly.

ACT (two survivors describe this independently) turn and face directly behind you, and hold your gaze there for a slow ten-count.

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

10**10 ♦ FILED AS RETAINING STRUCTURE****ENVIRONMENT
COST 2**

The structure has learned to keep its occupants. It calls this care. We are quoting a file.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say, "I am a guest," and mean the leaving part.

9

9 ♦ FILED AS RISING WATER
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

The level is coming up, patiently.
 What it keeps, it keeps standing.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
 hold your breath while you discard
 the life. Exhale after. Survivors are
 specific about the exhale.

8

8 ♦ FILED AS GRAIN CLOSURE
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

The room is thickening. Less room,
 more wall, no motion in it.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
 stretch both arms out full and con-
 firm aloud: "still room."

7

7 ♦ FILED AS STASIS FIELD
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

Time has stopped locally and is
 offering terms.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: hold
 completely still for a slow ten-count,
 spoken by another participant, or by
 you if alone.

6

6 ♦ FILED AS RESIDENT
HUNTER
COST 1

The room's prior occupant. The lease
 never listed it. It was here first, and
 the files suggest it responds to hear-
 ing that conceded.

OBJECT (single report, decades old)
 one piece of paper with your own
 address written on it, surrendered.

ACT (what has worked, maybe) say,
 "it was here first," and physically
 move to a different seat.

PRICE 2 objects, silent, or one life
 card.

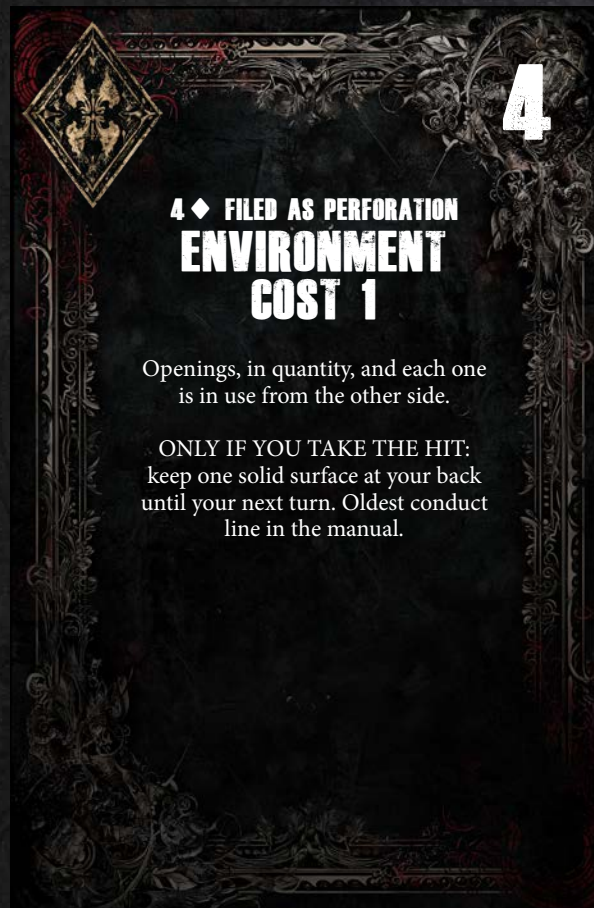


5

**5 ♦ FILED AS REGRESSION ROOM
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

The space runs its occupants backward.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: state today's date aloud, then your age, in that order. The order is the reported part.



4

**4 ♦ FILED AS PERFORATION
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

Openings, in quantity, and each one is in use from the other side.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: keep one solid surface at your back until your next turn. Oldest conduct line in the manual.



3

**3 ♦ FILED AS SURPLUS ROOM
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

A familiar space has quietly grown one too many of something.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: point to the exit you know is real and say, "that one."



2

**2 ♦ FILED AS EXTENDED ROOM
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

The space is longer at the end than it was at the start.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: name aloud the number of doors in your current room. Check afterward, not before.

♠ SPADES

FAILURES ARRIVING THROUGH THE RECORD



**K**

**K ♠ FILED AS NAMED EDIT
ENVIRONMENT
COST 3**

The revision itself, given a designation so it can be spoken of. The seam is the only proof. This entry has been rewritten between printings. We did not rewrite it.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say, "it was different before," and let nobody answer.

**Q**

**Q ♠ FILED AS OBSERVER GROUP
HUNTER
COST 3**

They match their number to yours.

They only watch, until they finish. The counting appears to matter to them.

OBJECT (count unverified) three pins, tacks, or paperclips.

ACT (reported by others, plural, which is the point) count the people present, including yourself, aloud and slowly. Say the total twice.

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

**J**

**J ♠ FILED AS FOLLOWING FIGURE
HUNTER
COST 3**

Behind you, at pace, in the place your eye just left. It collects silences.

OBJECT (single survivor; her report is specific about the crumpling) three dead leaves, or three scraps of paper, crumpled.

ACT (effective in prior files. Do not check afterward whether it worked.

That is in the files too.) put every clock and phone within reach face-down and say, "I am not stopping."
PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

**10**

**10 ♠ FILED AS SUBTRACTION
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2**

Something is being removed from the record while you watch. Possibly this.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: hold one object up, name it aloud, and put it in your pocket until the game ends.

9

8 ♠ FILED AS OCCUPANT
HUNTER
COST 2

Not entry. Erasure with tenancy. The laugh arrives a half-second late; the files call this the delay, and treat it as diagnostic.

OBJECT (two reports; both mention buttons; neither says why) two buttons.

ACT (what we know works, as far as we know anything works) knock three times, slow, on wood, and say your own full name.

PRICE 3 objects, silent, or one life card.

8

8 ♠ FILED AS VISIBLE SEAM
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

The stitching that holds the day together has become visible. Do not follow it.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: trace a straight line on the table with one finger, once, and stop.

7

7 ♠ FILED AS FOREIGN MEMORY
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

A memory has been installed. It fits perfectly. That is the tell.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: state one memory you are certain of, aloud, in one sentence.

6

6 ♠ FILED AS DUPLICATE
HUNTER
COST 1

Your reflection, running late on purpose. Only one of you is needed. The files decline to specify which.

OBJECT (standard since the Plato Continuum issues) one reflective object, surrendered face-down.

ACT (worked in every file where it was tried. Both files.) turn every screen and mirror within reach face-down, and say, "only one."

PRICE 2 objects, silent, or one life card.

5

5 ♠ FILED AS STILL FIGURE

**HUNTER
COST 1**

It holds still so you don't have to. It is waiting for you to stop.

OBJECT (reported by others) one coin, placed face-down.

ACT (consistent across files; the count varies, thirty is the median) fix your eyes on one point and hold them there for a slow thirty-count, aloud.

PRICE 2 objects, silent, or one life card.

4

4 ♠ FILED AS HOSTILE LANGUAGE

**ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

A language that speaks its speakers. Writing it feeds it. This entry is deliberately short.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say, deliberately and badly, "thl'kva shorr." Mispronounce it on purpose. The mispronunciation is the protection, per every file we have kept, and we have not kept them all.

3

3 ♠ FILED AS UNSUPPORTED
RECORD**ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

It happened. Nothing will agree with you that it did.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say, "I was there," twice. Once for you, once for the record.

2

2 ♠ FILED AS CONSENSUS DRIFT

**ENVIRONMENT
COST 1**

A wrong past, gaining signatures.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: write one true thing down, anywhere, and date it. Keep the paper. We keep ours.

♥ HEARTS

FAILURES ARRIVING AS HELP



K

K ♥ FILED AS GROUNDED LURE
ENVIRONMENT
COST 3

The lure built into a place you can walk into. Everything it offers is real. All of it is bait. Both halves of that sentence are load-bearing.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
 accept nothing until your next turn.
 If offered anything, by anyone,
 decline aloud.

Q

Q ♥ FILED AS WALKING FIGURE
HUNTER
COST 3

Tall, slow, certain, on a road only it can see. Most of this entry is withheld, and not by us.

OBJECT (the mismatch is the reported requirement) three unmatched things. No two alike.

ACT withheld by the curator. No act route exists for this card. Requests for the act route are logged and not answered.

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

J

J ♥ FILED AS HOMECOMING MIST
HUNTER
COST 3

It makes vanishing feel like arriving. The comfort is the mechanism. Prior personnel who described it fondly were reassigned.

OBJECT (warmth for warmth; unverified but persistent across eras) three warm objects; worn cloth counts.

ACT (two files, both terse) step once toward the coldest part of the room and say, "not home."

PRICE 4 objects, silent, or one life card.

10

10 ♥ FILED AS ROOTED GIFT
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

Growth, offered as salvation. It only wants you to take root. Its own word for this, per the files, is a gift.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
 stand up, both feet, and say, "not planted."

9

9 ♥ FILED AS LIVING SEAL
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

A person made into a lock, and told it was protection.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
keep your mouth closed while you discard. Nod to confirm.

8

8 ♥ FILED AS RECRUITING SIGNAL
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

A song with a vacancy shaped like you.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT:
hum four notes, deliberately wrong ones, and stop mid-phrase. Stopping mid-phrase is the reported part. Finish nothing it can use.

7

7 ♥ FILED AS EMPTYING DOCTRINE
ENVIRONMENT
COST 2

A teaching that hollows its students into doorways.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say any sentence, then refuse to say it backward.

6

6 ♥ FILED AS VOICE MIMIC
HUNTER
COST 1

It wears the voice of your dead. It will know the nickname. The files are unanimous, and several are unfinished.

OBJECT (surrendering likenesses is reported effective; the manual regrets the phrasing) one photograph, or one name written on paper.

ACT (this route has the most survivor reports of any act in this manual) speak the last thing you said to someone you lost, or the thing you wish you had. Alternatively, say "you are not them," three times.

PRICE 2 objects, silent, or one life card.

5

5 ♥ FILED AS PRESERVING COLD
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

It does not want you dead. It wants you kept.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: rub your hands together until they are warm, and confirm: "still warm."

4

4 ♥ FILED AS ELEVATED
 INVITATION
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

An invitation to leap upward. There is no upward.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: sit down, fully, and say, "here is fine."

3

3 ♥ FILED AS GUIDE LIGHT
HUNTER
COST 1

A small helpful light, three steps off the safe path, then four.

OBJECT (a light for a light; tradition, and it holds) one candle, match, or light source, spent.

ACT (what has worked, maybe) point at the exit you already knew about and say, "that way is mine."

PRICE 2 objects, silent, or one life card.

2

2 ♥ FILED AS IMPROVED OFFER
ENVIRONMENT
COST 1

A better body, honestly offered. The honesty is the problem.

ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE HIT: say, "no, thank you," with full courtesy. The courtesy is reported to matter.

THE UNSUITED

I THE LEVER · FIRST JOKER

Flipping this card does nothing. Keeping it does. Whoever flips it becomes the holder: place it face up in front of you and spend it on any later turn, yours or anyone's. Once, at the holder's choice, do exactly one: reshuffle the threat pile; or discard the next card unseen; or declare one card's number changed to any other number as it is flipped. Then this card leaves the game.

- Reshuffling and burning are spent before a flip. The number change is spoken as the card turns, before anything about it resolves.
- An Ace whose number is changed never happened. No toll. It does not count. Resolve the card it now is instead.
- If the card you burned unseen was an Ace, it never fired. Do not look. Looking is how it counts.
- A card may also be declared into an Ace. The manual does not prevent this. It only observes that in every group, someone eventually asks whether they can.
- If the holder runs out of lives, the Lever is lost with them.

II THE BILL · SECOND JOKER

This one you do not keep. Immediately: the pool loses 2 objects and the active participant discards one life card. No route. No conduct. Nothing is listed here because nothing is known, and this is the only entry in the manual where we will say that plainly. After it resolves: ten seconds of silence, kept by everyone. Then continue.



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AND YOU DO NOT GET A PLACE TO STOP. IT HAS BEEN PRINTED
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AGAIN. THE FACES ARE IN THE INDEX. YOU DO NOT NEED THE
FACES TO SURVIVE. THAT HAS NEVER ONCE STOPPED ANYONE.

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THE DOCTOR'S FINDINGS

FIELD ISSUE

Shelved as entertainment, and correctly so.

THE CORRUPTING DECK

~ THE ENTROPY SAGA ~

The old record, kept by the people who caused it.

ENTROPY RISING · SACRIFICE TO ENTROPY · CHILD OF ENTROPY

PILLARS OF ENTROPY · LORD OF ENTROPY

CURRENT HOLDINGS

Not recovered. Ongoing.

SUBSTRATE: THE FROST JOURNALS · OBLIVION'S WAKE

ON ORDER

Begin with a manual. Any of the four. They are written to be survivable.

The single accounts assume you have read a manual and will not repeat what one would have told you. Take them in any order.

The restricted shelf assumes you have read everything else, and does not check.

The field issue can be taken up at any time. It will be.

The Entropy Saga is a different record entirely, kept in a different voice, and it is where all of this begins. It can be read first or never. It cannot usefully be read in the middle.

Current holdings are not recovered and are not finished. Read them last, or read them first and understand the rest differently.

The Frost Journals are the current file. Read them after anything, and before whatever comes next.

The archive continues at
ASYLUMINK.COM