

DEATH IN

VENICE

Thanks to Cédric Ferrand, Guillaume Jentey, Jean, Eugénie and Guylène!

A few Italian names: Lorenzo Mattotti, Isabella Barattero, Bonifacio Giaccione, Valentina Monciatti, Raffaello Seghezzi, Magdalena Rocci, Alessandro Orsini, Faustina Galardi, Ignazio de Marzio, Speranza Cavaleri, Sebastiano Borghese...

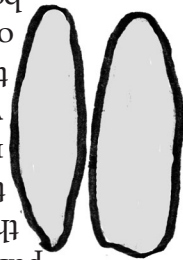
A few masks: plague mask, fox mask, wolf mask, skeleton mask, Grim Reaper mask, harlequin mask, mask with a long nose, a curved beak, feathers, no features...

A few causes of death: trampled by a drunk crowd, murdered by a rival, crushed by a stone falling from a wall, drowned in the lagoon, poisoned by bad wine, devoured by a stray animal, brought down by a night of love...

A nightlifer enjoys life in Venice's alleyways. When Death comes to take them, they refuse to die. It offers them a deal: a life for a life...

When Death announces who shall die instead of them, the nightlifer can change their mind and die as they should or accept the deal. In the latter case, Death briefly describes how the victim struck instead of the nightlifer dies; the nightlifer briefly describes their reaction to this encounter with Death, then the scene ends.

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other words, the name of the person who will die instead of the nightlifer. Death should choose victims who are closer and closer to the nightlifer as play unfolds: an unlucky passerby in the first scene, then a distant friend, until the closest loved ones of the nightlifer are designated. Moreover, Death is encouraged to be cruel and to detail the consequences of such a toll on the nightlifer's life and those of their beloved. Note that, however, the toll to be paid can never be in relation with the nightlifer's desires and projects.

Between two scenes: The two players swap their roles. The player is going to play the nightlifer decides how many years go by until the next scene; the player who just played the nightlifer decides if their desires and projects have been fulfilled in the interval. They also describe what changes in the life of the nightlifer and their loved ones.

Ending the game: The game always ends with the nightlifer's death, either because they willingly choose the demise Death announces them, or because the cause of this demise is old age (it's the only cause of death which is impossible to avoid). In both cases, the game ends with a brief epilogue during which the nightlifer can ask Death one question (and only one) about the future of those they care about; Death tells them the truth.

Before the party: Both players choose the era in which their nightlifer will live and die (the place is always Venice). In turns or together, they also define a detail about the nightlifer: their names, their age when play begins, their appearance, their fears and superstitions, their family, their friends and/or enemies, their love interests.

Players also decide who will play the nightlifer and Death in the first scene: both roles will be swapped between two scenes.

During the party: The nightlifer's play-er describes the scene, which always takes place during a party: where in Venice is the nightlifer, with whom, what they are doing, and what mask they wear on the occasion of this party.

Death, for its part, describes how it appears to the nightlifer and what is supposed to cause their imminent death during this scene. A dialogue begins: time is not frozen and the nightlifer can try and run away, fight Death or protect themselves with some ritual, but these precautions always fail and the nightlifer ends up begging Death to spare them.

To soften Death's attitude, the nightlifer can talk about their projects and desires for the future; Death, in return, can describe the nightlifer's regrets or dark moments from their past. They can be previously described elements or details imposed on the spot. The characters never talk about the present time.

If the nightlifer accepts their fate, they take off their mask and suffer the demise Death had predicted them: the game is over.

If they refuse their fate, Death announces a toll to be paid for a little more life: in