

Chapter One: Introduction

„In the end, there can be only one.“

– Ramirez

Immortals seem to appear at random from the human population. One in a million perhaps, maybe less. They are born of humans, raised as human and (to most) appear quite human. They age, living a normal life, until they first are killed. Then, they miraculously recover and begin their lives as immortals. Immortals cannot have children. They do not age and do not get sick. They cannot drown, or die from any conventional injury: they will always recover, no matter how severe the damage (in the series, it was mentioned that one immortal was burned at the stake and recovered from it). The only way for them to die is to have their head removed from their body.

Down through the ages, a legend has been passed from mouth to mouth – that of the Prize. The legend says that at a time when the number of immortals in the world grows small, the remaining immortals shall feel an urge to travel to a far-away land, where they shall fight until only one remains. The final survivor shall win the Prize. No one knows exactly what this Prize is, but to win it is the goal of every immortal, as it is assumed that the person who wins it would be, in effect, a god. The term Quickening refers to the life force of an immortal. It is the sum of all his knowledge and power, all of his strength and experience. It is a life force so strong that it keeps the immortal from aging and heals his wounds at an advanced speed. Quickening is what the immortals fight for: when they fight, they fight to literally absorb their opponent's life force into themselves, thus making themselves more powerful.

Before we can discuss the creation of immortals as characters, we must decide what Quickening means and how to represent it in the Storyteller system. It shall be discussed in depth later on, but, for now, a simple explanation will suffice.

Quickening in the World of Darkness

„The sensation you're feeling, is the Quickening.“

– Ramirez

Quickening is the power of an immortal and represents their life force. In the Storyteller system, all living things have a Pattern which defines their very being. In immortals, this Pattern is more tightly woven than with other living beings. The Quickening is therefore also similar to Quintessence, the magical „raw power“ that fuels Patterns and also is used by Mages to do their magick. Only when they die is their Quickening released. Mages cannot pull Quickening from an immortal, nor can they alter an immortal's Pattern in any way. Without their Quickening, an immortal is nothing. It is what keeps them alive. The total loss of Quickening is directly related to death. When an immortal die, it is not because his head is no longer attached to his shoulders – it is because he has lost his Quickening – his life force.

Mages hold Quintessence within their bodies because of their Avatar. To the supernaturally trained eye, immortals will often be confused with Mages: they have an excess of raw energy within them. The Garou likewise store mystical energy within them, according to their Gnosis. Immortals are therefore occasionally mistaken for Garou as well. Unlike Garou or Mages, however, immortals do not „spend“ their Quickening, it is a permanent part of them.

In the Storyteller system, we keep track of the „power“ of an immortal with an attribute called (surprisingly enough) Quickening. Much like Vampiric disciplines, Garou gifts, or a Mage's spheres, Quickening allows immortals to perform superhuman feats. The higher the immortal's Quickening, the more abilities he has and the more powerful he becomes. Quickening is a „catch-all“ attribute and has many powers associated with it, not all of which are related.

Gaining Quickening

„If your head comes away from your neck, it's over.“

– Ramirez

Unlike Vampires, Garou, or Mages, there is only one way for an immortal to gain Quickening: through fighting and killing another immortal. This makes it more difficult for them to

increase in power, as time alone does not make them more powerful. As you will see in Chapters Two and Three, they receive compensation for this limitation.

When two immortals fight, their Quickening becomes „loosened“ somewhat, as the combatants focus all their energies on the duel. When one wins the battle (by removing the other's head), he absorbs the Quickening of the loser, gaining the loser's power and knowledge. However, a small part of his opponent's Quickening escapes and this, combined with the paradox caused by the transfer of Quickening, haoc on the surrounding area, causing the explosions, lightning, etc. associated with duels between immortals.

When an immortal emerges victorious, slaying another, he absorbs most, but not all of his opponent's Quickening. The excess Quickening is released into the ether, where it is, in effect, raw power. The most common manner in which power exists and is channeled on our planet is as electricity. Therefore, usually (but not always), the released Quickening will find that the easiest way for it to disperse is to transform into electricity and disperse through conducting materials in the vicinity. This results in massive overloads, which cause the explosions, lightning, etc. associated with duels between immortals.

The Rules

„Holy ground, Highlander! Remember what Ramirez taught you!“

– Kurgan

The immortals have rules of engagement: these rules are traditions, with a basis in common sense and all immortals follow them. These rules are each based around Quickening and the gain and loss thereof.

The Golden Rule for immortals is that they must never fight on Holy Ground. None will violate this rule, for they have too much to lose. Thus, Holy Ground can become a haven or sanctuary for immortals; a place where they retreat when faced with an impossible opponent. It is not known precisely why this is – it is known that it is physically possible for immortals to fight one another while on Holy Ground, but no immortal has ever beheaded another in such a duel. Some say that the earth itself will not allow the death of an immortal and that an immortal who attempted to behead another would be swallowed up by the earth, although this seems strange when one considers that mortals can be killed freely on Holy Ground. Another theory is that, were an immortal's Quickening to be released on Holy Ground, it would be absorbed into the earth itself, instead of passing to the victor.

But, what exactly is „Holy Ground“? Obviously, churches and graveyards fall under this description, but so also do Buddhist shrines, ancient sacred sites and the caerns of the Garou. It is safe to say that any site, which would be considered to be a Node by a Mage, is holy ground to an immortal. This includes many sites that would not normally be considered holy or sacred, such as haunted houses and occult libraries. Luckily, immortals automatically sense whether they are standing on holy ground or not, as they experience a sensation similar to that which they experience upon encountering another immortal.

The second of the two main rules is that the immortals always fight one on one. Why is this? A pair of immortals, with their centuries of experience, could work quite effectively together to whittle down the „surplus population“, as it were. Why do they not team up? In the first episode of the series, Connor and Duncan (who are friends and even Clansmen) refused to team up to battle the decidedly evil Slan Quince...

The answer to this riddle comes from the way the Quickening transfers itself upon it's release – if two immortals are present and there are no other factors involved (such as being on holy ground), the Quickening will transfer into the person who actually took the dead immortal's head. In one episode in the series, Duncan dueled with another immortal, but Amanda stepped in at the last moment and took the other immortal's head, thus gaining the Quickening.

Thus, if two immortals battle an enemy, only one of them will receive the Quickening from the battle. Not only will they receive their own Quickening and that of the loser, but also a fraction of their ally's. This stealing of an ally's knowledge and power is not a pleasant thing for the ally, to say the least and is therefore something that no immortal desires. Hence, the rule „always fight one on one“ has developed.

These are the only two real rules. Evil immortals will stop at nothing else to gain Quickening: friends and loved ones are often pulled in as pawns in the battles, as are helpless innocents who have nothing to do with the Gathering... No one is truly safe, although it is only a particularly evil immortal who would take the head of a new immortal, who hasn't yet learnt how to defend himself.

The Gathering

„From the dawn of time we came, moving silently down through the centuries, leading many secret lives. Struggling to reach the time of the Gathering, when the few who remain, will battle to the last.“

– Ramirez

The legend of the Gathering has been passed down from immortal to immortal, through the ages... The Gathering is the name given to the time when but a few immortals remain. They shall feel „an irresistible pull towards a far-away land... To fight for the Prize.“ In this respect, immortals are doomed to fulfill a pre-determined role. It is their destiny to battle one another until a single immortal emerges victorious. According to the series, the time of the Gathering is upon us and the Prize is waiting to be won.

The Prize

„I know! I know everything! I am everything!“

– Connor

The immortals battle for „The Prize“: either for themselves, or to keep it from falling into evil hands. Mankind would suffer an „eternity of darkness“, as the movie said, if the Prize came to an evil immortal.

What is the Prize? It's not really necessary to define it in game terms, since the immortal who gains it will become in essence a god. The film left the subject slightly vague, except to say that Connor could read people's thoughts if he concentrated and could also have children, grow old and die.

This much is for sure – the winner of the Prize would possess all the Quickening from every immortal that ever walked the earth. Millennia worth of experience and knowledge, from immortals of every race, all over the world would be his. He could well be the most powerful single being in the world.

On the other hand, it may well be that the legend of the Prize is simply a tale and that the Gathering will never take place. Perhaps, new immortals will continue to be born forever, thus ensuring that there will never be a single victor. In any case, for Immortals, the Gathering is similar in many ways to the Apocalypse for the Garou, or Gehenna for the Kindred – a fate that no one really believes in, or as some Garou might say, something that will never happen „in our lifetime“. The big difference for immortals is that a lifetime can last forever. To an immortal, it matters little whether the Prize is but a legend. He must battle on, for if he stops, he will surely lose his head.

Chapter Two: Character Creation

„I am immortal, I have inside me blood of kings...“

– Queen

It may seem appealing to run an immortal in a Storyteller Chronicle, especially as it is, in ways, an extremely powerful character type. However, in my opinion, it is more difficult to create an immortal character than any of the others created so far. When you are generating a Mage, Garou or Vampire character, there are plenty of traits such as gifts, backgrounds, disciplines, spheres and so on to play with and the mythos is already set out in the rulebook. In effect, the whole thing is presented to the player in a neat little package and all they have to do is follow the rules, write down a few figures and they can play their character.

Immortals are different. Each one is unique. There is no pre-designed background for immortal characters. Their very nature prohibits the type of society that holds so much of the role – playing potential for Garou, Mages and Kindred. Like these characters, the immortal is a normal person who discovers that he has a special destiny. However, unlike Garou and Kindred, they can see no reason why they and not someone else, have been chosen to be immortal. In some ways, they are similar to Mages in this respect, but the one major difference between immortals and other characters is time – often, immortals discovered their heritage hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Deciding how this character spent those years and working out the beliefs, knowledge and outlook that he brought with him from this time, is a task the player must carry out before he should be allowed to roleplay an immortal in a Chronicle.

One might argue that this has already been explored with Vampire and Mummy. In Vampire, however, one is encouraged to begin with a young vampire, so as not to unbalance the game: elder vampires, while a curiosity, do not often „adventure“ with their younger brethren, but instead are embroiled in the politics of the Camarilla. They also tend to be much more powerful and less human than their younger Kin. Likewise, although Mummies are in many ways human, their thoughts and desires are nothing like the mortals around them.

There are other disadvantages to playing an immortal – like vampires, they cannot enter the spirit world under their own steam, but must use a portal or be „pulled“ in by another supernatural. Their supernatural powers are often less powerful than those of vampires and other supernatural creatures. Also, every immortal must be on his guard at all times, lest another immortal come searching for him, something which few other supernaturals have to do. And, finally, immortals must labor to conceal their true nature from mortals without an organization such as the Camarilla or the Sabbat to aid them. Thus, we feel that the advantages associated with playing an immortal are balanced out by the disadvantages.

Immortals are a very unique character class, due to their humanity: despite the centuries behind them, they are still human... Along amongst mortals; hidden; but still human in mind and soul unlike most of the other supernatural creatures. This humanity makes them unique and interesting characters to explore and roleplay. As in Vampire, we recommend that players new to Storytelling or Highlander play a „new immortal“ character – ie. one who only discovered his true nature quite recently, in game terms. However, we do not want to discourage experienced roleplayers from playing older immortals and have included rules to allow players to generate immortal characters up to one and a half millennia in age. However, in order to prevent munchkinous or „twink“ characters, we recommend Storytellers should make it a condition for any immortal character, no matter what age he is, that the player fully flesh out the character by giving him a full background and documenting their entire life. This will generally deter players who wish to play an immortal simply because he is immortal, mainly because most munchkins will balk at having to document a 1,500 year long life.

Concept

To begin the creation process, settle on the concept for the immortal. When and where was he born? What was his life up until his first death like? What was their profession? How did he experience his first death and what was the reaction to his miraculous revival? Did he have an older immortal to act as his mentor like Ramirez did for Connor, or did he have to learn for himself what it means to be an immortal? Did he leave his home and family, or stay and watch them grow old and die? If so, how did it affect him? Where has he been in the intervening years? What has he been doing? Has he been involved in any historical events? How much does he know about the other supernatural creatures, like the Kindred and Garou? Does he even know that they exist? Where has he settled and live today, or is he a wandering, traveling from one place to another, never staying in one place for long? What does he do and how does he

conceal his true nature from those around him? Pick a strong nature, something that drives him and makes him cling to life, rather than just let go. Immortals do not age, but without a will to survive an immortal will almost certainly will lose his head...

Attributes

Immortals are shown to be in superhuman health, strong and fast and also intelligent and perceptive. They are almost perfect specimens of humanity – fit, attractive and charismatic... So, in the World of Darkness, they are far superior to the mortals in all their attributes. Give them 7 Primary, 6 Secondary and 5 Tertiary attribute points, instead of the „normal“ 7/5/3 split that Garou, Kindred and Mages receive.

Abilities

Immortals start with 13 Primary, 9 Secondary and 5 Tertiary abilities provided they are „young“ (less than 100 years). Older immortals will have more abilities; fighting this to achieve „play balance“ is a wasted effort in the Storyteller system. The storyteller is the ultimate judge; if he doesn't want 2000 year old immortals overpowering his game, then he shouldn't allow 2000 year old immortals at all: allowing them but restricting them to 13/9/5 is ludicrous. Also, as they age, their maximum ability score (5 for mortals) will increase, allowing scores of 6+ for various abilities. Players should be allowed to choose Abilities from any of the games, but obviously, there are restrictions. For example, it seems unlikely that an immortal would have the Primal Urge or Rituals Abilities from Werewolf.

Players should be encouraged to think up their own abilities, thus helping make their character unique. For example, the Knowledge History might be a common one among immortals (and is in fact included on the character sheet) – remember Connor relating the significant events of 1798 to Brenda?

Use the chart below for a reasonable split of abilities based on age.

Age	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Max
0 - 100	13	9	5	5
100 - 250	18	13	8	5
250 - 500	23	17	11	6
500 - 1000	28	21	14	7
1000 - 1500	33	25	17	8
and so on ...				

Advantages

„You cannot die, MacLeod... Accept it!“
– Ramirez

The Quickening characteristic is the most important to an immortal... It defines their power and is very useful in battles with other immortals. Beginning immortals begin with 1 Quickening; spending Freebie points as discussed below may increase this.

Immortals have no „virtues“ in the Vampire/Werewolf sense. Like Mages, their only characteristic is Willpower and like Mages, they start with a base Willpower of 5.

Backgrounds

Immortals begin the game with points in Backgrounds, according to the chart below. See the section on Abilities to see the arguments regarding age vs. play balance.

Age	Background
0 – 100	7
100 – 250	9
250 – 500	10
500 – 1000	11
1000 – 2500	12

The following backgrounds are possibilities for immortal characters. See Vampire for explanations of most of these backgrounds (except for Arcane, which comes from Mage).

Allies: Friends who can be counted on to help the character out. They probably know of his immortality.

Contacts: The number of information sources the character possesses.

Fame: The character's renown in the mortal world.

Influence: The character's political or social sway or power in the mortal world.

Mentor: An older immortal who advises and, to a certain extent, looks after the character:

* Mentor is less than a hundred years older than you.

** Mentor is between 100 and 300 years older than you.

*** Mentor is between 300 and 600 years older than you.

**** Mentor is between 600 and 1000 years older than you.

***** Mentor is between 1000 and 1200 years older than you.

***** Mentor is over 1500 years older than you.

Storytellers should bear in mind the possibility that an immortal character's mentor might be killed, unless they have „retired“.

Resources: Wealth, belongings and monthly income.

Arcane: (See Mage: the Ascension) Immortals tend to have a tendency to scatter headless bodies around them, yet they don't seem to draw attention to this fact: hence the Arcane. Also, isn't it strange how they manage to hide such large swords inside those trenchcoats of theirs?

Finishing Touches

Immortals get 18 freebie points to spend. Again, this gives them more points in attributes and abilities than their fellow players, but this is balanced by their inability to raise Quickening except through killing other immortals. Also, their very nature makes them hunted by the Technocracy, fellow Immortals and of course the Watchers/Hunters (these are outlined in Chapter Five).

Point Costs:

Quickening	7 points per dot
Attributes	5 points per dot
Abilities	2 points per dot
Willpower	1 point per dot
Backgrounds	1 point per dot

Spark of Life

„Ya talk funny, Nash... Where ya from?“ „Lots of different places...“

– Garfield & Nash

This is a very important part of character creation and, unfortunately, one that is skipped over far too often. This is a role-playing game and the Storyteller system is designed so that players can immerse themselves in their character. However, you cannot do this if you don't know your character.

Appearance

„Who cut your hair?“ „I am in disguise... This way, noone will recognize me.“

– Connor MacLeod and Kurgan

What does your immortal look like? How does he dress? Is he a classic member of the „trenchcoat brigade“, or has he settled on another method of carrying his weapon (like the Kurgan and his briefcase)? These sort of decisions help determine a look and also are useful for game play later.

Contacts

„Hi, Brenda. I did what you asked. I spent all night going through the old deeds to Nash's house on Hudson Street, right back to the original owner, Montague, in 1798...“

– Rick

How long has your character been in his current home? What friends has he made? Unlike Vampires, Garou, or Magi, immortals live amongst the humans and (for the most part) treat them as equals. Hence, they make connections with the human race, which will come up during game play (either for help or for hostages, depending on Storyteller mood).

Outlook

„Love is for poets.“

– Connor MacLeod

What kind of personality does your immortal have? Is he dark, moody and unfriendly, or bright and extrovert? What drives them, keeps them going? Is the ambition to win the Prize the

thing which consumes their lives, or do they revel in life generally? The things that have happened to an immortal down through the years can often affect his outlook on life – love and war are probably the most common ones, but other things can greatly influence the way a person views life.

Quirks

„I have something to say... It's better to burn out, than to fade away!“

– Kurgan

Immortals are often unusual individuals. Note from the series: Gregor's tendency to put mortals into danger to get a secondary rush from it, or Amanda's tendency to doublecross her partners. These things help define the character and yet aren't shown in the characteristics above. Perhaps your character has a phobia or a hatred of some particular thing. Perhaps your character is afraid of heights and has a hatred of Vampires... Pick interesting quirks and write them down; they will add greatly to the role-playing experience. See also the Merits and Flaws section below.

One of the most important things to remember when writing up your character's background is that, unlike the Garou and the Kindred, (and the Mages, to a certain extent), immortals are human. They may live for extraordinary lengths of time, but they are still very human, with the very same feelings and thoughts as us.

Personality Archetypes

Vampire introduced Personality Archetypes to help define characters' personalities. A character has two archetypes – his Nature and his Demeanor and the key to using Archetypes effectively is understanding the difference between the two.

A character's Nature is her true personality – that, which she is, but will not necessarily reveal to other characters in the Story. People do not bare their soul to everyone they meet and thus they develop false fronts.

A character's Demeanor is this false front. While a character's Nature would only change in exceptional circumstances, her Demeanor can be as consistent as their Nature, or it may change frequently. Also, if the player so chooses, a character's Nature and Demeanor may be the same.

Personality archetypes are also a method of (re)gaining Willpower, as the Storyteller will award Willpower when a character lives up to their Nature/Demeanor.

Merits and Flaws

Vampire also introduced the Merits and Flaws system, which is a method of really making your character seem alive and individual. Merits and Flaws are purchased just before you spend your freebie points. They cost or give between one and five freebie points – ie. purchasing a five point merit would mean you had five less freebie points to spend, while taking a five point flaw would mean that you had an extra five freebie points to spend. Merits and Flaws are also tied to Willpower, but less so than the Natures and Demeanors.

The full rules for Personality Archetypes and Merits and Flaws can be found in the Vampire, Werewolf and Mage Players Guides but here are some Merits and Flaws from Elysium, White Wolf's elder vampire sourcebook, which adapt well to ancient immortals.

Mummy Companion (5 pt Merit)

You have a Mummy as a close companion.

Paranoia (2 pt Merit)

You are slightly paranoid about concealing your true nature and avoiding such groups as the Watchers and Hunters and you are always on the lookout. –1 difficulty to spotting ambushes, etc.

Code of Honor (1 pt Merit)

Against supernatural persuasion to violate code – +3 dice/+2 diff. to opponent (ST choice).

Emotional Isolation (1 pt Flaw)

You seem cold and without feeling. You have a +1 modifier to all Social rolls involving emotions and cannot spend xp points on the Empathy Talent.

Ennui (1 pt Flaw)

You are world-weary and rarely pay attention to those people you know – +1 modifier to any Perception rolls involving people you know. Due to belief in the predictability of others, you also a +1 modifier to the difficulty level of the first action taken following a surprise (ambush, etc.)

Anachronism (2 pt Flaw)

You have been an immortal for some time and are unable (or unwilling) to keep up with the changing times. An Intelligence roll is needed whenever you have to deal with something from a later period than your own mortal days. If the roll is failed, total the net failures and use this total as a negative modifier to your attempts.

Routine (2 pt Flaw)

Settled into Routine – go to same places at the same time of day, week, month, or year. The Storyteller may lower the difficulty for anyone trying to surprise you by 1-3 points.

Curiosity (2 pt Flaw)

Mysteries irresistible. To resist temptation, make a Wits roll vs. diff. 5 for simple, undangerous things, up to diff. 9 for dangerous things.

Lifesaver (3 pt Flaw)

Human life is sacred, won't take a person's life. Never willingly endanger the lives of innocents, but will kill evil or inhuman creatures. Senseless death repulses you.

Chapter Three: The Quickening

„Hey, it's a kind of magic!“

– Connor

Quickening is the force that makes the immortals „special“: that mystical energy within them, that makes them immortal and gives them their powers. In this chapter, we will discuss what Quickening means in the rules and how immortals increase in power.

Quickening Dice

Throughout the discussion of the various powers, mention will be made of rolling Quickening to perform some feat. This behaves exactly as with Spheres of power in Mage: roll a number of dice equal to your Quickening, against a difficulty of six. Count successes to find how much benefit has been gained.

Quickening Powers

„You can't drown, you fool! You're immortal!“

– Ramirez

The powers listed below are based off of various powers shown in the Highlander movie and TV series. They are loosely based off of various powers listed in the Mage book and occasionally make mention of the power they were most similar to.

Next to each power is a mark of what level of Quickening is necessary to first exhibit this power.

* Sense Quickening:

Some immortals gain this ability even before they suffer their first death, since they still are considered to have a Quickening of 1. This ability is similar to the level 1 Prime spell Sense Quintessence (see Mage): using this ability, an immortal will sense another immortal nearby. No specific information on the immortal's identity is given, nor is the location of the immortal known, merely that the immortal is near.

Sense Quickening also allows the immortal to sense when they are standing on holy ground. Likewise, an immortal can sometimes sense other beings with free quintessence in them (such as Mages and Kindred), although a perception roll may be necessary for this. Usually, no roll is needed for sensing holy ground and sensing other immortals is usually left to Storyteller's discretion (to pick a dramatic moment).

* Breathe Water:

With this ability, immortals may survive indefinitely underwater, drawing oxygen from the water. This is not the same as not breathing: it has been shown that immortals do breathe and that poison gas will affect them (although it cannot kill them). Total absence of air will reduce the immortal to incapacitated after a certain length of time and he won't recover until he can, once more, breathe.

** Empower Weapon:

Often in both movie and series, the clash of swords during a battle between two immortals is accompanied by electrical discharge. Using their Quickening, immortals can enfeeble their weapon with raw power, causing them to do more damage and also causing the discharges shown. An immortal can empower any edged melee weapon in this way (axe, sword, knife). One additional damage success is scored per success rolled (see Quickening Dice above for details).

Note: The extra damage done by Empower Weapon is aggravated, although the normal damage done by the weapon is not.

Example: Duncan swings his trusty katana (difficulty 6, Strength + 5 damage) and hits. He rolls Str 3 + 5 = 8 dice for damage, difficulty 6 (using the Vampire 2nd edition rules), to determine damage. Since his katana is empowered, however, he rolls an additional 5 dice for his 5 Quickening, also against difficulty 6. Any successes scored on this roll count as aggravated damage. The defender gets one soak roll against both damages and soaks aggravated first.

**** Heal Self:**

In Chapter Four, the „normal“ healing chart for immortals is given. Using their Quickening, however, an immortal may choose to heal even faster from wounds received. By taking a round and rolling Quickening, an immortal may heal a number of wound levels equal to the successes rolled. Note that this is done once per wound only, the rest must heal normally. Note also that if an immortal is taken to incapacitated (or beyond) before he has a chance to heal, he must first heal to crippled, then roll his dice in Heal Self. Also, aggravated wounds may not be healed in this manner and must be healed according to the chart.

Example: Richie, the new immortal gets in a fight with an unsuspecting group of gang toughs and after finishing them off he begins to recover from his wounds. Three wounds (3/1/2 levels) for a total of six wound levels (crippled). He rolls his Quickening of 2, healing 1 from the first, healing the second and getting no successes on the third wound, over a period of three rounds. The remaining four wound levels must heal normally (which means he'll be fully healed in little over a half-hour).

***** Empower Self:**

Using his Quickening, an immortal may increase his physical attributes, by one for every success rolled. The effect lasts for an entire scene and is usually done only during challenges. After using Empower Self, an immortal will feel weak (-1 to dice pool) for an hour or more.

Example: Connor squares off with Fasil and the battle begins. Connor rolls his Quickening of 7, gaining four successes and puts two points into Stamina and two in Dexterity. Fasil is in trouble.

****** Speed of the Stag:**

Like Empower Self, an immortal may use his Quickening to increase his actions in a turn (much like the vampiric discipline of Celerity). One extra action may be gained per success rolled and the extra actions last for an entire scene. As with Empower Self, the immortal will feel weak for some time after using this power.

******* Ignore Wounds:**

At this level, the immortal's recuperative powers have become so potent that they no longer need spend time to heal. One wound level is healed each round, with no roll required (although an immortal may still take a round to heal more, using the level 2 power Heal Self). Also at this level, an immortal may heal aggravated wounds as if they were normal wounds, using Heal Self above.

Example: The Kurgan, after ending the pitiful Ramirez's life and taking his Quickening, stops to rest. Ramirez had one lucky swing that nearly took the Kurgan's head, doing four normal wounds and one aggravated. The four normal wound levels healed over the next four rounds and the Kurgan takes a round to heal the aggravated wound after the battle is

over. A scar is left on his throat, however, to remind him of how close Ramirez's blade came...

The Last

The „Sense Quickening“ power is related to another power, which has been dubbed the „Last“. The massive amount of Quickening present in an immortal means that they are able to „tune in“ to their surroundings and to the life forces around them, effectively giving them a sixth sense, similar to the „Danger Sense“ gift from Vampire. This manifests itself in many ways. In the film, the examples we saw included MacLeod and Ramirez „tuning in“ to the stag's life force on the sea shore, Kurgan's ability to guess Connor's name, even though he had never seen him before, Connor's knowledge that someone (Brenda) was following him and the way in which he knew of the gun and the tape recorder in Brenda's apartment. This power is one that should be administered at the Storyteller's discretion. At appropriate times – ie. when the Storyteller decides, not player – the ST should do a Quickening roll and, depending on the amount of successes the player gets, should reveal a certain amount of information. Also, the player can decide that his character is going to tune in to a particular animal and, in this way, he can feel what the animal feels and, at higher levels of Quickening (5+), he may be able to catch glimpses of what the animal is actually seeing and hearing. However, the animal must be nearby.

This power is an unreliable one and manifests itself irregularly and in strange ways. This power is designed to help negate the advantage that Garou and Kindred have, through possessing Gifts and Disciplines and is aimed at providing the immortal character with a useful, yet erratic source of information. The Storyteller should use her discretion in the dispensing of such information.

Gaining and Losing Quickening

Immortals can only increase Quickening by taking another immortal's head. When they have successfully finished their opponent, they gain the opponent's level in Quickening x 2 in „Quickening Experience“. Like study points in Mage, these are spent equally with experience to increase an immortal's Quickening. As outlined in the Experience Chart (Chapter Four), it costs Current Level x 6 to increase Quickening. This is the only way to increase Quickening. The victor also gains one point in an ability, for each point of Quickening the loser had. These ability points come from the knowledge of the loser and must be placed in abilities that the loser had at a higher level than the victor. If the victor has higher scores in every ability of the loser, the victor gains nothing.

Example: Frank Colt beheads Butra the assassin and takes his Quickening. Frank has a Quickening of 2 and Butra had a Quickening of 3. Frank gets 3x2 = 6 Quickening Experience, which he uses with 6 „normal“ experience to raise his Quickening to 3 (which costs 12 points). He also gains three points in abilities, one each in three areas where Butra had more skill than him.

There is one condition under which an immortal may lose Quickening. If two immortals fight a third and take his head, then one of the immortals who has emerged victorious will absorb all of the Quickening from the experience: all of the loser's and one of his partner's. Thus, he gains (loser+1)x2 in Quickening Experience and his partner loses one point in Quickening (if he only has one, he dies from the experience). The partner also loses one point in an ability, which also goes to the victor (the storyteller picks which ability, but it has to be one that the victor is inferior to his partner in). This loss of power and knowledge keeps even the friendliest of immortals from agreeing to be a partner...

The Side Effects of Quickening

Quickening is the life force of an immortal and can only be taken by removing his head. In the World of Darkness, there are many other ways to remove someone's power, none of which will easily succeed against an immortal. Some examples include:

* Vampires gain no sustenance from drinking the blood of an immortal and cannot kill him by doing so (although they can drive the immortal to incapacitated). The blood is worthless to them. Nor can an immortal be Embraced and become a Vampire.

* Mages cannot use Prime effects to remove Quintessence from an immortal, or to destroy it (a la Flames of Purification, Prime 4). An immortal's pattern is immutable. The immortal gains his Quickening in automatic countermagick successes to resist any Prime effect directed against him. The one exception is when an immortal loses his head: if a Mage with in Prime is present, he can in fact potentially become the „victor“, stealing the loser's Quickening as Quintessence (one point of Quintessence per point of Quickening) and point of the winner's as well. The Mage rolls his Prime versus the winner's Quickening in a contested roll. The Mage gains no ability from the experience, but the 'winner' still loses one point in some ability.

Example: If Frank Colt beheads Butra the Assassin in the presence of a Mage with a score of 3 in his Prime sphere, Frank and she would contest to see who actually absorbed Butra's Quickening. If Frank lost, the Mage would gain four points of Quintessence (three for Butra and one from Frank), while Frank would lose 1 Quickening (taking him to 1) and 1 point in some ability.

* Likewise, Immortals are practically immune to any effects of the Life sphere, or the healing discipline of Obeah (see Mage and the Vampire Player's Guide, respectively), whether the effect is beneficial or not. Assume their Quickening in automatic successes, to resist any effect or counter any successes rolled against them.

* An immortal's mind, spirit and body are tightly held by their Quickening. Although mind effects (the Mind sphere, Dominate, or Presence) may affect the immortal, his mind cannot be pulled from his body, nor may his spirit be removed without his head being removed first. This is not a contested roll, this is automatic.

Chapter Four: Systems

„You've the devil in you!“

– Dougal

This chapter details how immortals gain experience, how they heal and details the new combat system for sword duels.

Experience

„You've no knowledge whatsoever of your potential!“

– Ramirez

An immortals, like Elder Vampires, finds it harder to improve her skills through experience as she ages, reflecting the difficulty an immortal has in gaining new abilities as she becomes more and more set in her ways.

Age	up 250	up 500	up 1000	up 1500	1501 +
Trait	Experience cost (CR = current rating)				
New Ab.	3	4	5	6	7
Virtue	CRx2	CRx3	CRx3	CRx4	CRx4
Ability	CRx2	CRx2	CRx2	CRx3	CRx3
Attribut	CRx4	CRx4	CRx4	CRx5	CRx5

e

The experience cost for increasin an immortals Quickening is equal to her current rating x 6, half of which is normal experience and half of which is Quickening experience.

Healing

„Who wants to live forever?“

– Queen

Immortals recover from wounds much more rapidly than mortals. In Chapter Three, using Quickening to heal was discussed. Without the use of Quickening, however, immortals still recover from crippling wounds in a short period, although the pain and immediate effects suffered from the wounds are the same as would be experienced by a mortal. For example, if the wound suffered would cause a mortal to become unconscious, then it will generally cause an immortal to fall unconscious. Examples of serious wounds suffered by

immortals in the series include immolation, falling from a cliff, being shot in the head and others. Without the use of Quickening, immortals heal using the following chart.

Bruised	One round
Hurt	One minute
Injured	Two minutes
Wounded	Five minutes
Mauled	Thirty minutes
Crippled	One Hour
Incapacitated	Two Hours

Combat

„Don't lose your head!“

– Ramirez

Combat is a fact of life for an immortal. Whether he or she likes it or not, unless they learn how to use a sword and, more importantly, are prepared to use it, they will surely lose their head. You can't run forever and if you try hiding, another immortal will eventually find you. Only by killing your fellow immortals in combat can you hope to survive and have any chance of winning the Prize.

When two immortals meet, they sense each other through the Quickening. They don't have to do battle, (we have seen in both the movie and the series how two immortals may become friends), but it is the time of the Gathering and it is their destiny to battle until only one remains. They have no choice in the matter.

The normal Storyteller combat rules are basically pretty useless when it comes to staging detailed sword duels. It is desirable to be able to play out duels between immortals as detailed fights, with each combatant able to choose different tactics, moves, etc. For immortal player characters, these duels are often the climax of the story and just running a simple combat sequence can be frustrating for the player involved. Remember that, in these duels, the player is fighting to increase his power, in a battle where he has a very real chance of dying... The player is fighting for his knowledge and power, pitting it against another to the death. Thus, we recommend that the following combat system be used for duels between immortals.

Stage One: Initiative

In normal combat, the combatants will normally try to be the first to attack, in the hope of inflicting damage first. However, in sword combat, things work a little differently. Sometimes, one combatant may elect to try and surprise the other, by ambushing them and attacking them before they have a chance to draw their weapon. In such cases, use the normal rules for Initiative and Surprise, although note that an immortal can practically never be taken completely by surprise by another immortal. The Quickening sees to that.

With sword-duels, the round takes on a new meaning – Basically, a sword combat round is the length of time it takes for one person to attack the other. This system splits sword combat up into a series of bouts. A bout is a series of rounds, during which there is no pause in combat. At the start of a round, both players roll for Initiative. Then they announce what their actions are going to be. Because sword combat is reactive – ie. you don't know what you're going to do until your opponent has done something – the player with the higher Initiative must announce what they intend to do first.

Normally, the player with the higher Initiative will decide to attack and, if so, his opponent must either defend or dodge. Alternatively, the character with the higher Initiative may decide to either do some other kind of action, such as leaping onto a table, or they may decide to wait and see what their opponent is going to do. If they do both of these things, combat has basically stopped and they must begin another bout.

A bout begins with both combatants facing each other, weapons at the ready. It is up to the players themselves who actually moves first and initiates combat. Once one of the combatants announces that they are attacking, both players make a standard Initiative roll – Wits + Alertness, against a target number of

four. However, instead of deciding who acts first (as this has already been decided), the difference between the two combatants number of successes achieved is added to the dice pool of the player with the higher Initiative.

Example: Connor and the Kurgan are facing off. They circle each other for a few minutes, before Connor makes an attack. He rolls Wits (3) + Alertness (4) and gets 6 successes. The Kurgan rolls Wits (4) + Alertness (3), getting four successes. Thus, Connor gets an extra two dice to add to his Attack roll.

After this initial round, Initiative is rolled as normal, but, its role during the bout is slightly different than the one it has in normal combat. The character with the higher Initiative gets to act first, presumably attacking and the other person must defend. Both players make their respective attack and defense rolls and that combat round ends and the combatants roll their Initiative for

the next round. The following modifiers apply:

- The use of the Quickening power, Speed of the Stag confers an extra three Initiative dice upon the immortal using it.
- The person who attacked during the last combat round gains an extra die to add to their Initiative roll for this round.
- If a combatant successfully repelled an attack by his opponent in the last round (ie. by getting an equal or greater amount of successes on his defense roll than his opponent got on his attack roll), then he also gets an extra Initiative die.
- For every three successes by which a combatant's attack/defense roll exceeds his opponents roll, they gain an extra Initiative die.

These rules may seem very complicated right now, but will become clearer later on.

Stage two: Strike

You struggle for a moment, then the fight sparks anew.

Decapitation: This is an Aimed Attack at the neck, requiring a Perception + Melee versus a difficulty of your opponent's Dex + Dodge. To decapitate, you must reduce your opponent to one level past Incapacitated.

TYPE: Attack

DIFFICULTY: Opp. Dex + Dodge

IMAGE: With fluid-like agility, you swing your sword around and, before your opponent can block you, your blade slices through his neck and his head falls to the ground. (Note that, quite often in the duels fought in Highlander, the two immortals fight until one of the combatants is disarmed and driven to their knees, admitting defeat. It is rarely a lucky shot that chops off the head, but more often a defeat of the spirit.)

This is by no means meant to be an exhaustive list of all the possible maneuvers, but more a guide to help Storytellers decide the types of rolls and difficulties which should be applied to various maneuvers. Ideally, combat should take the form of a semi-live action roleplay combat scene, with the players describing what their character does and demonstrating (safely, of course) if necessary. The Storyteller then decides what rolls should be made and against what difficulties.

Dodging:

On some occasions, it may be necessary to dodge a blow rather than parry it. On these occasions, the target rolls his Dexterity + Dodge against a target number of six. The successes on this roll are subtracted from the successes of the Attacker. If the attacker's successes are eliminated, the target manages to dodge the blow.

Stage Three: Resolution

Damage is resolved as normal – The attacker rolls the Damage dice pool for that weapon, against a target number of six, each success causing the target to lose a health level. The target makes a Soak roll, rolling his Stamina (difficulty 6) and subtracting his successes from his opponent's.

Example of Combat: Connor is squaring off against the Kurgan (See the Appendix for their respective stats). They circle each other for a few moments, Kurgan makes his first

move – a normal attack. Both players roll for Initiative, Connor getting six successes and the Kurgan gets five. Kurgan makes his attack roll – Dex+Melee – getting five successes. Connor tries to parry the Kurgan's attack and makes his Defense roll – Dex+Melee plus an extra die, as he got more one more success on his Initiative roll than Kurgan. Connor also rolls five successes and manages to parry the Kurgan's blade.

Both roll Initiative for the next round and both have an extra die to add to their Initiative pool – the Kurgan because he attacked last round and Connor because he managed to successfully parry Kurgan's attack. Kurgan gets four successes and Connor gets six, winning the Initiative and getting two dice to add to his dice pool. Connor decides to try a Feint and makes his roll – Manipulation + Melee plus his two Initiative dice against a target number of nine – his weapon's normal difficulty plus three. He gets two successes. Because a feint can't be parried, Kurgan is left with no option but to try and dodge. Rolling Dexterity + Dodge against a difficulty of six, he gets five successes – Connor's blade slices through thin air.

The third round of combat starts and both players roll for Initiative. The Storyteller decides that, seeing as Kurgan's Dodge successes exceeded Connor's Attack successes by three, Connor will be slightly off-balance at the start of this round, due to having swung his sword through thin air. Thus, Connor's difficulty is five instead of four, to reflect this. Connor decides that he needs get working and thus uses his Quickening to get the Speed of the Stag, which gives him an extra three Initiative dice, in addition to the die he receives for having attacked last round. The Kurgan rolls his Wits + Alertness and gets five successes. Connor follows suit and gets seven successes, which means he has two dice to add to his dice pool. He decides to try to disarm the Kurgan and rolls Dexterity + Melee against a difficulty of six, not forgetting his extra two dice and gets a massive seven successes. Kurgan rolls Dex + Melee but gets several botches and can only manage three successes. Connor manages to flick the Kurgan's sword from his hand. Kurgan's in trouble.

This is primarily an arbitrary combat system, designed to aid the Storyteller and players in Storytelling the duels, which occur, rather than restricting them to a framework of rules. As ever, if you don't like part of these rules, don't use them. We don't come around and inspect how you play these games. Well, not too often, anyway...

Weapons

The sword is the traditional weapon of an immortal. The reasons for this are fairly simple – the sword is oldest weapon with which you could efficiently decapitate someone and the first immortals would have used them. They would have passed the tradition on to the immortals who followed them. Until relatively recently, the sword was the main personal weapon. It's only within the last few hundred years that we have begun using guns and you can't chop a man's head off with a gun. In fact, not counting the battle-axe, there still is no practical weapon, which can be used to decapitate someone in a duel and because immortals always learn their ways from other immortals, it is only natural that the sword has become the traditional weapon for immortals.

An immortal will often have a weapon that he has used for many centuries. Ramirez, for example had his katana for over two millennia by the time he met Connor. To an immortal, a sword is more than just a piece of steel. It becomes an extension of their body – they keep it with them most of the time and it becomes an old friend, in effect. There are no hard and fast rules for weapons as regards weapons difficulties and damage, etc. A rough guide is that the bigger and heavier sword is, the harder it is to use, but the more damage it inflicts. The Katanas used by Connor, Duncan and Ramirez are all Difficulty 6, Damage: Strength + 5. But the Kurgan's two-handed sword is Difficulty 7, Damage: Strength + 6, being, as it is, both heavier and more difficult to use. Kastagir's Saber is Difficulty 6 and

Damage: Strength + 4, reflecting that it is normally used with only one hand.

It's a good idea to describe your weapon in detail, as part of fleshing out your character. If possible, get hold of a weapons catalog, from a company like Noble Collection, for example, which sells a wide variety of swords and axes and pick a weapon (Noble Collection is one of many distributors for Marto USA, the suppliers for the Highlander movies and TV show). An immortal's choice of weapon helps define who they are. Connor's Katana reflects his honor and values and the way in which he uses skill, more than brute strength to win duels, while the Kurgan's two-handed sword reflects his harshness and brutality. Also, how do you carry your weapon? In a long coat, like Connor, or have some other method, perhaps? All these details help to flesh out your character and enrich the role playing experience.

Chapter Five: The World of Darkness

„Fighting to survive, in a world with the darkest powers...“

– *Queen*

Highlander-style immortals fit perfectly into the World of Darkness. The movie Highlander is listed as one of the inspirations for the World of Darkness – a world where supernatural beings walk among us without our knowledge. However, immortals are very different from other supernatural creatures in one very important way – Unlike the Kindred, Garou and Mages, immortals don't have their own society, for very obvious reasons. In a world where various groups such as the Sabbat and the Technocracy vie for power, immortals are wildcards – powerful individuals; mavericks who can be useful allies or dangerous enemies. They have no clearly defined role, unlike the Garou, for instance and instead, follow their own destiny, towards the Prize.

Immortals don't go around in groups, for very obvious reasons. Therefore, there will normally only be a single immortal player character in a Chronicle and the other PCs will presumably be one of the other character types detailed in the Storyteller games released so far – Kindred, Garou, Mage or Wraith. This brings up the interesting topic of what the other characters actually know about the immortal character. Given that immortals are probably the rarest of all the supernatural beings (excepting Mummies), it's reasonable to assume that it's not exactly common knowledge that these guys are immortal and can only be killed if their head is chopped off. If assessed using supernatural powers, an immortal's aura will look very similar to a Mage's, or perhaps a Changeling's – They store within them a large well of power, not unlike Quintessence. However, it will soon become obvious that an immortal cannot manipulate magick, nor does he possess powers like that of a Faerie. Normally, an immortal won't reveal his true nature to people, without a very good reason and it is very unlikely that he will reveal the method by which he can be killed.

Although immortals are, after all, immortal and don't necessarily need to eat, sleep and so on, failure to do so will result in them becoming weak, although they can never die of hunger or exposure. However, hunger and cold make immortals as uncomfortable as they do mortals and therefore, it is desirable to have a roof over one's head and money, in order to make your life more comfortable. Unlike other supernatural beings, immortals don't have Caerns, Nodes or Crypts. Instead, they will most probably live amongst mortals.

During their extended lifetimes, immortals are likely to amass huge amounts of wealth. However, like Vampires, immortals must maintain a masquerade – the illusion that there is nothing strange about them. This can be difficult and can involve having to leave worldly assets behind. In the film, Connor used to leave his goods to children who had died whilst very young and „die“, only to return after a suitable interval to assume the identity of the dead person and claim their inheritance. This is probably the best way of ensuring that an immortal doesn't have to give up whatever worldly possessions he has earned when he has to move on, in order to prevent his true nature being discovered. Doubtless, there are immortals who travel around quite a bit, but

it's likely that, after several centuries of travelling, an immortal may wish to stay in one place for a while.

Obviously, if an immortal has settled down in one place, they will need to have some way of paying for their lifestyle on a day to day basis. Duncan, for instance, has extensive stock holdings, but he is also an antique dealer, as Connor was. What better job for a man who was alive when many antiques were new? Other professions which require a knowledge of the past may also attract immortals, like a history professor, for instance. Who better to describe the Civil War than someone who was actually there? Immortals' supernatural abilities mean that they are practically perfect as soldiers, or something similar. What could be better than a soldier who isn't just simply unafraid of dying, but is actually unable to die? Most immortals will no doubt have been involved in some sort of conflict at some point in their lives, unless they actively avoided it.

Were an immortal's secret to become known, the results could be potentially disastrous. Imagine what would happen were a company such as Development Neogenetics Amalgamated or Pentex Inc. to discover that immortals exist – they would stop at nothing in an attempt to discover the secret of immortality. Therefore, an immortal character must be careful to guard his secret and maintain the facade of normality.

Antagonists

„How do you fight such a savage?“ „With heart, faith and steel...“

– *Connor, Ramirez*

In this section we will discuss how Immortals are likely to interact with the other supernatural beings in the World of Darkness, as well as other individuals and organizations, such as the Inquisition.

Vampires

Immortals are quite likely to run up against the Kindred of any city they visit – Kindred feed off mortals, while Immortals are more likely to try and protect the them. Kindred seek to control and they will normally try to destroy that which they are unable to control. Immortals don't often fit into their schemes, which makes them dangerous. However, as much as an immortal can be a powerful enemy, they can also be a powerful ally. It is possible that individual immortals and vampires can become friends and allies, for both have one major trait in common – both have the potential to live for an inordinate length of time. Both understand what it is like to live for much longer than mortals. Added to this is the fact that, unlike mortals, immortals have nothing to fear from Vampires – as has been stated before, immortal blood holds no sustenance for Vampires and immortals cannot be Embraced, nor made into Ghouls. However, unlike many Kindred, Immortals are still innately human and the bestial nature of many Kindred will repel them. If an immortal has a Vampire as a friend, it is likely that the Vampire will have a high Humanity.

Werewolves

Immortals are more likely to join the Garou than the Kindred. The Garou fight for a simpler time, a time the immortal may well remember. The Garou also fight against the desecration of Gaia and, as PC immortals are likely to follow in the hero mold of Connor and Duncan MacLeod, it is extremely likely that Garou and Immortals would consider each other to be brothers, fighting on the same side, against the destruction of a mother earth the Immortals have watched being desecrated over the centuries. Add to this the fact that Garou Caerns are Holy Ground and a refuge for immortals and it becomes obvious that the Garou and Immortals are very likely allies.

However, there is a possibility that some immortals may come up against the Garou, especially if they have amassed great wealth and control portions of man's world which the Garou do not appreciate. Such immortals may be considered by the Garou to be agents of the Wyrms. In general, however, Immortals are much more likely to form friendly relationships and allies the Garou than anything else.

Mages

Immortals and Mages don't mix well. This isn't because of any direct conflict, but because Mages will often wish to acquire the immortal's Quickening, in order to empower their own node. Also, Mages, like the Kindred, are often distrustful of that which they can't control, an immortal's immunity to magic of both the Prime and Life spheres makes them a danger. On the other hand, immortals make useful allies, powerful and yet not beholden to any clan or tribe. Also, the Mages' nodes are Holy Ground, like the Caerns of the Garou. However, what immortal is likely to feel comfortable in a place surrounded by people who could gain a lot of power for themselves by beheading him?

Wraiths

It's likely that Immortals and Wraiths do not normally interact very much, due to the simple fact that while Immortals inhabit the mundane world, Wraiths dwell in the Deep Umbra and rarely manifest themselves on Earth. It should be noted, however, that because of the manner in which the Quickening binds an immortal's being together, Immortals cannot be possessed.

Changelings

Like the Garou, the Sidhe are likely to form strong alliances with Immortals, as they are, in many ways, kindred spirits – human and yet wielding powers which no mortal can possess. Both Immortals and Changelings strive towards a goal which is their destiny to pursue – Immortals strive to win the Prize, while the Sidhe dream of returning to Arcadia, to join with their faerie kin. The Sidhe's relationship with the Garou (especially the Fianna), is also likely to result in Changelings and Immortals becoming friends and allies. Certain members of the Fey may also hold clues to the origins of the Immortals...

The Wyrn

Minions of the Wyrn, such as Fomori and the Black Spiral Dancers are very likely to attempt to kill any Immortals they come across, as Immortals are likely to be considered to be of neither the Wyld nor the Weaver alone, but of both – their role as wildcards and mavericks is a trait of the Wyld, yet the Weaver holds their body and spirit together. Suffice to say that the Wyrn would consider Immortals to be enemies.

Governments

It is highly unlikely that the Government knows, or even suspects that there are immortals out there, although there may be a section of the FBI or some similar organization which is carrying out an investigation into the possibility that there is a serial killer going around, chopping people's heads off. Witnesses of Immortal duels are likely to be given the same amount of credibility as the ex-Marine was in the movie – ie. none at all. On the other hand, Immortals are likely to have to tread carefully and take extra care, when trying to hide their immortality from individuals in government departments and so on. However, immortals are much more likely to run into trouble when trying to deal with the police. Particularly if they are murder suspects, like Connor was in the film. An immortal had better make sure that his cover is unshakable if he comes under investigation by the police or FBI.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition is likely to have encountered immortals during the Dark Ages, when they would have been considered to be witches, or „in league with Lucifer“, as Kate said. The punishment for such heresy was burning at the stake and at least one immortal in the series has survived such an ordeal. It's very unlikely that the Inquisition knows of the existence of Immortals. However, see the information on the Watchers below.

The Watchers

The Watchers are a group which predates the that Arcanum and, although they have links with the Arcanum, the Arcanum proper is unaware of the existence of Immortals. The Watchers are. They have spent centuries studying the immortals, chronicling their exploits, but not interfering. They keep accurate records of all new immortals, who has taken who's head and (like the immortals themselves) wonder as to who will gain the Prize and what this Prize is. Watchers are mortals and are chosen for their

„normalness“. They don't stand out in a crowd, they blend. They don't trigger the immortal's senses and are trained to observe. Their only distinguishing feature is a tattoo on their wrists, a circle with a holy symbol of their order within. This allows them to easily recognize one another and to remind them of their mission.

The Hunters

In recent years, a rogue branch of the Watchers has formed. This group has links with the Inquisition. Fueled by paranoia, it's members have decided that they cannot wait and hope that the immortal who gains the Prize is a good person. They actively hunt and kill immortals, removing their heads and allowing their knowledge and power to be lost to the Ether. In this way, they seek to stop any immortal from achieving the power of the Prize. These „Hunters“ view immortals as the greatest danger ever to face mankind... Both the Watchers and the Hunters are detailed in the series and some of the main characters in the second season are members of these groups. Although the other supernatural beings, such as Werewolves and Vampires aren't mentioned in the series, it's possible that in the World of Darkness their mission may have expanded to include Vampires, Magi and any other beings they perceive to be a danger.

Storytelling

Running a Chronicle with a group with an immortal is something of a challenge. Physically, Immortals are among the most powerful characters in the Storytelling system, but there are disadvantages to playing an immortal, when compared to a Vampire, a Werewolf, or a Mage. All three possess powers which an Immortal cannot match. Many Vampiric Disciplines and Garou Gifts bestow advantages which the Quickening is unable to match and the Magick wielded by Mages, while Immortals are immune to the effects of the Life and Prime spheres, can be very dangerous indeed. Another major difference is that Immortals are bound to the mundane world and cannot pierce the Gauntlet to travel to the Umbral Spirit World.

The Last is designed to help even out these differences and the Storyteller should actively be thinking about what an immortal may sense through the Last throughout a Story. Note that an immortal player character should not have to ask whether he senses anything through the Last – it is designed to be a random way of giving the Immortal knowledge which he couldn't normally know and isn't an ability or a Gift to be activated at will. Consider the various instances in the film where an immortal knew something he really shouldn't have – Connor finding Brenda's gun and tape recorder; Kurgan knowing that „there is one among them named Connor“; Connor sensing Rachel's presence and asking what she was looking at; and so on. It is also necessary to keep in mind the aims and desires of the various characters in a group – obviously, the aims of a Garou, for example are different from that of a Vampire. The Werewolf may wish to increase his Renown by combatting the Wyrn, while the Vampire might want to extend his power and influence. However, an immortal has but one aim – to win the Prize. The only way of doing this is to kill other immortals and take their Quickening. The Storyteller should always make sure that there is a reason for the Immortal character's presence in the group and for him aiding the other characters. The Mages and the Garou may have teamed up to thwart the Technocracy's plans, as it is in both their interests, but, a player with an Immortal character could quickly discover that he is just riding along in this situation, with no advantage to his character being readily apparent. It is important to ensure that the actions of the group as a whole don't conflict with the aims of any of it's individual members.

It can be advantageous if the Immortal character has ties to other members of the group, instead of just being an extra member of the team, whom no one really knows. He might be kin to a Garou, or an ally of a Vampire or a Mage. What is important is that he is actually part of the team and not just an add-on.

Hopefully, this supplement will bring a new dimension to your World of Darkness games and will provide even more enjoyment for both Storyteller and players.

Appendix: Immortals

"He is immortal, and he is not alone."

– Dawson

These are simply the author's interpretations of the immortals from the movie and series. If you disagree with part or all of it, change it.

Connor MacLeod

"I am Connor MacLeod of the Clan MacLeod. I was born in 1518 in the village of Glenfinnan on the shores of Loch Shiel. And I am immortal."

– Connor MacLeod, 1985

Played by: Christopher Lambert

Nature: Reluctant Immortal

Demeanor: Autist

Born: 1518

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Awareness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Intimidation 3, Intuition 3, Leadership 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4, Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Melee 6, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Bureaucracy 2, Computer 1, Finance 3, Investigation 2, Law 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 2, Occult 1, Politics 2, Science 2

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Arcane 2, Contacts 2, Resources 5

Quickening: 7

Willpower: 7

Weapon: Katana (difficulty 6, Str+5=8 dice)

Ramirez

"I am Juan Sanchez Villa Lobos Ramirez, chief metallurgist to King Charles V of Spain. And I am at your service."

– Ramirez, 1541

Played by: Sean Connery

Nature: Mentor

Demeanor: Gallant

Born: 896 BC

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Abilities: Acting 3, Alertness 4, Awareness 5, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Intuition 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4, Etiquette 4, Leadership 4, Melee 7, Music 3, Repair 2, Stealth 3, Survival 5, Finance 4, Investigation 5, Law 4, Linguistics 6, Medicine 4, Occult 3, Politics 4, Science 3

Backgrounds: Arcane 3, Resources 5

Quickening: 6

Willpower: 9

Weapon: Katana (difficulty 6, Str+5=8 dice)

The Kurgan

"The Kurgans were an ancient people from the steppes of Russia. For amusement they tossed children into pits with hungry dogs to fight for meat. Ah, the Kurgan... He is the strongest of all the immortals. He is the perfect warrior."

– Ramirez, 1541

Played by: Clancy Brown

Nature: Deviant

Demeanor: Bravo

Born: ?

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Awareness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 7, Dodge 5, Intimidation 6, Leadership 4, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 2, Drive 4, Firearms 5, Melee 8, Repair 4, Stealth 2, Survival 6, Computer 1, Finance 3, Investigation 2, Law 3, Linguistics 5, Medicine 2, Occult 4, Politics 3, Science 2.

Backgrounds: Arcane 3, Contacts 2, Fame 1, Resources 3

Quickening: 8

Willpower: 8

Weapon: Two Handed Sword (difficulty 7, Str+6=11 dice)

Duncan MacLeod

"I am Duncan MacLeod born 400 years ago in the Highlands of Scotland. I am immortal and I am not alone."

– Duncan

Played by: Adrian Paul

Nature: Judge

Demeanor: Reluctant Immortal

Born: circa 1590

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Acting 2, Alertness 1, Awareness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 6, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Intuition 2, Leadership 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3, Drive 3, Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Melee 6,

Repair 1, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Computer 2, Finance 2, Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics 4, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Science 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Arcane 2, Contacts 1, Mentor 4, Resources 4

Quickening: 5

Willpower: 8

Weapon: Katana (difficulty 6, Str+5=8 dice)

Richie Ryan

"You're one of us now."

– Duncan

Played by: Stan Kirsch

Born: circa 1973

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Abilities: Acting 2, Alertness 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1, Drive 4, Firearms 1, Melee 3, Repair 2, Security 3, Stealth 1, Computer 1, Finance 1, Investigation

1, Law 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Mentor 3, Resources 2

Quickening: 2

Willpower: 6

Weapon: Saber (difficulty 6, Str+4=7 dice)

Last Words

"Now it ends."

– Kurgan

I loved Highlander from the first time I saw it - It remains one of my favorite films to this day. Everything about it appealed to me, from the story to the music. When I discovered Hank's rules for running a Highlander character in the World of Darkness one night while browsing through the now-defunct soda.berkeley.edu Storyteller ftp site, I pounced on them immediately. The prospect of playing an immortal in the World of Darkness had never occurred to me, but I was sold from the start. Using Hank's rules, I ran an immortal in a friend's Storyteller Chronicle, in a fairly large group with Vampires, Garou and Magi player characters.

Diarmuid Mac Aonghusa, as I called the character, was an Irish immortal, and kin to the Garou Fianna tribe. The other players, exasperated with the, in their opinion, unpronounceable name I chose for the character, dubbed him "DeDannan", after the ancient Celtic race, the Tuatha De Dannan, and referred to him as "The Celt". The first time DeDannan fought another immortal, one of the major deficiencies of both the Storyteller system and Hank's rules became quickly apparent – the lack of rules for Storytelling detailed sword-duels. I designed a crude system of sword-fighting rules, and later adopted the rules for Glaive duelling from the Werewolf Players Guide.

As time went by, other small deficiencies cropped up, and various ideas occurred to me. I've never really been happy simply as a player of role-playing games; I've always preferred designing games to actually playing or GMing...

Eventually, as my ideas mounted up, I gave in to temptation, and embark on a revision of Hank's rules. Not a complete re-writing, but some additions, and a fair bit of editing. To my relief, Hank liked the ideas I had, and we made it a joint effort. Thus, Highlander: The Gathering Second Edition was born.

Unlike Hank, I'm not exactly a Highlander fanatic. I've never really been that impressed by the series, preferring the film both for it's mood and atmosphere, and because I like both Christopher Lambert and the character of Connor MacLeod more than I do Adrian Paul or Duncan. However, I am fanatical about the film, and I've seen it more times than I can count.

My credentials as far as game design go are slightly better. As well as being a manic roleplayer and a World of Darkness fanatic, I'm also a freelance game designer, and I've been involved in the development of the Storyteller series, particularly Werewolf: The Apocalypse.

Just to reiterate - while these rules are copyright of us, their authors, we do not dispute the ownership of the rights to the Highlander film and series by the writers and producers of the respective productions. This is not an official Highlander roleplaying game. We do believe that Epitaph studios are currently developing the Official Highlander roleplaying game. The Storytelling roleplaying system and the World of Darkness setting were developed by and are copyright of White Wolf Inc. By copyrighting these rules, we do not dispute the ownership of any of these trademarks. We simply wish to see that our efforts in putting together these rules aren't exploited by anyone else.

Just one last thing - Always remember that, although there are plenty of "rules" to be found in these pages, there really is only one important rule to be considered when you are using the Storyteller system, no matter whether you're playing a Werewolf, an Immortal or a Mage - there are no rules. What is contained in these pages are mine and Hank's ideas - our suggestions for playing an immortal in the World of Darkness. Admittedly, I'd like to think that I'm a good enough game designer to have put together something that will suit and appeal to most people, but I doubt if I'm that good...

At the moment, my email address of csc086@cent1.lancs.ac.uk is looking as though it might change, so, if you have any comments on these rules, Hank would be the best person to send them to.

Don't lose your head,
John

Wow. When I sat down to write the first edition Highlander rules, my hope was that someone out on the net would eventually read them, and maybe even like what they read...

I've had over 300 people personally request the Highlander rules, independent of who knows how many have gotten them off the ftp sites or mosaic pages they live on now. Like I said, Wow... thanks!

I gave my credentials in the first edition rules, so this is just a recap. I started roleplaying when my dad bought D&D the week it came out, in the mid-70's (I was 8).

I've since played and/or gamemastered in over a hundred campaigns, lasting from a few weeks to several years. I've always been a Highlander fan, and between Duncan's katana and the movie poster on the wall most people who enter my home guess that pretty quickly...

A lot has changed the past nine months, since the first edition came out. I'm finishing my PhD this summer, and in September 1994 I begin work at Digital Domain in Venice, CA, doing computer effects for Jim Cameron (y'know, the T2/aliens/Abyss guy. He owns the company) and others. My life is changing so quickly... I'd just like to thank John for having so many things to contribute that it warranted a new version, and my wife (of almost five years now... and she still likes me... another Wow!) for putting up with me staying up nights to bounce e-mail ideas and editing/layout ideas with this guy in the UK...

For awhile still, people can reach me at driskill@cs.utah.edu. This address will forward to my DD account in September... as

before, my only "payment" for these rules is that you send us mail, and tell us what you think: good or bad, ideas help. Who knows, we may make you write the third edition...{center smiley here}.

PS: To subscribe to the Highlander mailing list, send mail to listserv@psuvm.psu.edu with a message body that says simply sub highla-l yourname@yoursite.

Likewise, you can subscribe to the vampire mailing list, vampire-l, by sending mail to listserv@wizards.com, the same way. There is also a werewolf-l and mage-l, at the same address. For more info on the Highlander mailing list, contact the list admin, Debbie_Douglass@DL5000.bc.edu.

Hank