



# A Game About Dying

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# Raison d'Être

Humans live in **fear** of death. It is the ultimate unknown, and the great equalizer. No tyrant lasts forever. They eventually die, turn to dust, and are forgotten. So does everybody else. It is my intent with this game to explore what happens when you emotionally place yourself in the shoes of someone who is dying. To touch death with one finger and come back. To explore one's own mortality on one's own terms, thanks to the inherent nature of play as a simulation under your control, or of someone else who you trust.

## Requirements

In order to play this game you only need a d20 and a minimum of 2 players: **Death** and **The Dying One**. (Additional players can also play as Death, as described below).

## Rules

**Play** starts with the players loosely defining what kind of death they want to see. This could be a handmaid too curious for her own good being poisoned, a rough old man somberly lying down and awaiting in ultimate loneliness, or even the very public and loud hanging of the man who shot a tyrant. This organically leads to picking the general location where it will happen, and the number of Final Steps taken by the Dying. We advise 3 the first time you play this game.

If you're short on inspiration, you can find a list of prompts on the following [page](#)..

**Table: Prompts to begin play**

Number which shows on the d20	Prompt to begin play
1-2	A <b>handmaid</b> too curious for her own good is poisoned
3-4	A <b>rough old man</b> somberly lies down and awaits in ultimate loneliness
5-6	The very public and loud hanging of the <b>man who shot a tyrant</b>
7-8	The <b>introvert librarian</b> who could talk with ghosts slips from the stairs
9-10	A <b>sailor who exchanged letters</b> with his wife and who is finally about to get home after a long voyage is shipwrecked just before arriving
11-12	Religious zealots <b>sacrifice you</b> so that you can protect their crops as a guardian spirit
13-14	Your loved one <b>backstabs you</b> with a dagger
15-16	You have failed a maneuver and are <b>drifting</b> in outer space
17-18	You are a <b>noble who has bitten off more than they can chew</b> when they tried to traverse a mountain range in the middle of winter
19-20	An insane amount of gasoline and a <b>match</b>

Each **Final Step** only takes a small amount of time in the story, but is an entire phase of play. It consists of the Dying narrating a single memory which flashes before their eyes. This can be as abstract or concrete as they want, and can seemingly be about a meaningless moment. We advise to focus on details about the feelings of touch, cold or warmth, a pleasant smell, and so on.

During the narration of a memory each player controlling Death (1 or more) can **Whisper** to The Dying a previously unknown truth about this scene. This can be as sweet or harsh as they want. This whole affair is generally deemed supernatural in nature, although the players can and are welcome to come up with their own explanation.

Each memory ends with the Dying stating the **Lesson** they've learned from it, and rolling a d20. If the die shows a 20 they miraculously stop dying and black out. They can loosely narrate what happened that prevented them from dying and the game ends.

If The Dying One goes through all of their Final Steps, they **Die**. If the players want, they can look upon their corpse from the outside and talk with the incarnation or incarnations of Death, or other meaningful dead characters from their memories, before proceeding to whatever comes next.