

Die For You

by Rose Bailey

FANTASY HEARTBREAKER



“Love will have its sacrifices. No sacrifice without blood.”

J. Sheridan Le Fanu, *Carmilla*

Contents

Introduction.....3

 About the Game.....3

Picking a Setting.....4

Creating a Character.....4

GM Preparation.....6

Playing the Game.....8

 Rolling Dice.....9

 Challenges.....9

 Conflicts.....10

 Ways to Get More Dice.....10

 Wants.....10

 Helping.....10

 Sacrifice.....10

 Using Trust.....11

 Applause.....12

 Consequences.....12

Inspiration.....13





Introduction

Growing up is weird. Every time you think you understand where you are and what you're doing, it all changes. Get used to middle school, suddenly you're in high school. Figure out your place in high school, then you get sent off to college. And college, well, college is the deep end. Until you finally push through it and have to find a job. Along the way, you have to choose what – and, more importantly, *who* – matters most to you.

Die For You is a roleplaying game about all of that, and also monsters.

About the Game

In **Die For You**, you and your friends (or frenemies) play the parts of characters and create a story. The game's designed for three to five people. Most of you are **players**, creating one character each, acting out their dialogue, and deciding what they do. One of you will be the **Game Master**, or GM, who sets





up situations and plays all of the characters not created by players.

Typical gameplay consists of the GM setting up mysterious events that the player characters are drawn into. The players decide how their characters respond to those events. As the player characters start to piece things together, they have to deal with increasingly threatening phenomena, like haunted dorms, angry werewolves, and physics tests. The players roll dice to find out how their characters fare. Between those events, characters will bond and they'll bicker and they'll generally just try to deal. And sometimes you roll dice for that, too.

Picking a Setting

The first thing your group will do together is brainstorm a setting around one of the premises listed below. If you want, you can roll a die and pick randomly.

Die	Setting
1-2	High School
3-4	College
5-6	First Job

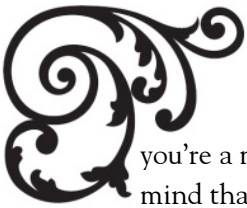
Creating a Character

After picking a setting, you create your player characters. Do this as a group, too, sharing ideas and getting input from everyone, including the GM.

(As you do this, you may come up with ideas for non-player characters the GM will play. The GM should write these down, but don't go through character creation for them.)

First, come up with a character concept, like "Nosey English Major" or "Disaffected Vampire." This is where you decide if





you're a monster, like a vampire, werewolf, or witch. Keep in mind that if most players are playing monsters, the story will come together very differently than if they're all regular people.

Then, pick your character's **Want**. This is a core desire, which can be mundane or grand, but which the character should have a realistic chance of achieving. Examples include "Get a new roommate," "Find my missing friend," or "Get Abby to notice me." Your character's Want will help you figure out their actions, and help the GM figure out what kind of trouble to create. When pursuing their Want, your character stands a better chance of succeeding... but also has a bigger chance of creating complications for themselves.

If two or more characters have conflicting Wants, that's excellent. Tension early in the story will help fuel drama as it goes on.

Don't worry too hard about this – you can change your character's Want as the story develops. To get started, you can also roll on the following chart.

Die	Want
1	I want ____ to like me back
2	I want to get chosen as ____
3	I want to be formally recognized for ____
4	I want to get ____ back for what they did to me
5	I want to free myself from the influence of ____
6	I want to be reunited with ____

Next, you'll rate your character's **Traits**. Your character's Traits are the main thing that gives them a better or worse chance of getting through trouble.





There are three Traits:

Feels is how good your character is at interpersonal stuff, like making new friends at a party, or persuading a reticent frat boy to come into the creepy basement.

Weird is how good your character is at dealing with the supernatural, like fending off a vampire or finding a secret in an occult tome.

Real Life is how good your character is at getting through mundane ordeals, like lit papers and performance reviews.

Pick numbers between 2 and 4 for Feels and Weird. Added together, they need to total 6. Then, take the *lower* of your character's Feels and Weird scores, and fill that in for Real Life.

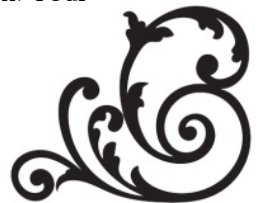
Finally, assign **Trust**. Write down the name of each of the other player characters. If your character will trust that character at the start of the story, put a check next to their name. You can't choose to trust all of the other characters. It's better if not everyone trusts everyone, and some characters may be complete strangers to each other at the beginning of the game.

You can change which characters your character trusts at the end of any scene your character was in.

GM Preparation

If you're the GM, look over everyone's characters before play.

For each of their Wants, think about some obstacles they'll encounter. Your goal as GM isn't to *prevent* a player character from getting what they want, nor is it to give it to them. Your goal is to make trying challenging and memorable.





Then, come up with a supernatural threat, like “Vampires who want to turn students into more of their own” or “Elder god trying to break through to our reality.” Figure out what kind of really dire consequences failing to stop this threat will bring. You probably want slightly lower stakes than “the end of the world,” but it’s okay to go big.

Next, create a Big Bad. This is a villain who will connect the threat to the player characters. Brainstorm a bit about their personality and abilities. The more the Big Bad can interfere with the characters’ regular lives as well as their supernatural adventures, the better.

Think of a supernatural gimmick for your Big Bad. Once again, simple is fine, like “vampire” or “ghost,” although coming up with a unique twist is even better.

After that, think of some characters of your own that the player characters can interact with. Friends, romantic partners, faculty, and so on are good candidates.

Finally, figure out where the game will start. Come up with a mundane situation, like a quad party or a shared class. You’ll start the player characters off in this situation. Then, come up with a way to bring trouble into the scene. Something fairly big is a good idea, like a friend disappearing. It should be something the player characters will have to respond to, but not something that reveals the full stakes of the threat.

You can use the following tables to help improvise.





Die	Location
1	In a class or a meeting
2	At a big party
3	Up late studying or working the night shift
4	In a diner or cafeteria
5	In a small gathering at ____'s house or dorm
6	In the car on a road trip

Die	Event
1	Someone disappears
2	A monster attacks
3	An unnatural darkness descends
4	The weather turns suddenly dangerous
5	A stranger confronts the characters
6	A frightening object is found

Playing the Game

The GM starts the game by describing where your characters are and what's going on around them. Place your character in the scene, saying what they're doing or who they're talking to. As the GM narrates events, describe how your character responds. Make sure to let other players have their turns in the spotlight.

As you play, the GM will set new scenes according to what your characters do. Feel free to suggest scenes that you think will further the story or shake things up, but the GM makes the final decision on how and where each scene begins.

When your character tries something where the outcome is in doubt, like persuading someone of something or starting a fight, it's time to roll dice.





Rolling Dice

Dice rolls come in two types: **challenges** and **conflicts**. A challenge is when your character is trying to accomplish something, and they're opposed by a non-player character, an environmental hazard, or anything else controlled by the GM. A conflict is when your character is opposed by another player character.

Challenges

You start with one die for any roll. Add another die if your character is well-prepared, and another if they have skills or supernatural powers that apply to the situation. Ways to get additional dice are listed in the next section. The GM makes the final decision on how many dice you roll.

The GM also decides which of your character's Traits is most relevant to the situation.

Roll the dice. Each one that comes up less than the chosen Trait is a **success**. Count up your successes, and look at the chart below for your result.

Successes	Result
0	Your character doesn't get what they want, and the GM describes how the situation gets worse.
1	Your character gets what they want, but the GM names a cost or complication.
2	Your character gets what they want.
3 or more	Your character gets what they want, and the GM names an extra benefit they receive.





Conflicts

Conflicts work a lot like challenges, but with a few extra wrinkles. Both you and the player whose character is in conflict with you gather dice, then roll. Whoever rolls the most successes wins, and that person's character gets what they want, as per the success chart.

If you roll 1 success, then the opposing player decides what cost or complication your character suffers.

Ways to Get More Dice

You'll naturally want to roll as many dice as you can, to give your character the best chance of success. As above, you always get one die, but there are several ways to get more.

Wants

If you're rolling in pursuit of your character's *Want*, or your character is in a situation where their *Want* is on the line, you may roll an extra die. However, *any* dice that come up 6 on the roll introduce a cost or complication. In a challenge, the GM names that complication, while in a conflict, it comes from the other player.

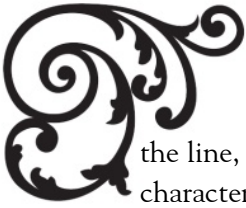
Helping

If your character is trying to help another character who *Trusts* them, you may roll an extra die.

Sacrifice

If your character risks *permanent* harm for the benefit of another character, you roll two extra dice. If your character's life is on





the line, you roll three extra dice. However, any 6s result in your character suffering the harm.

If your character dies, you may create another.

Of course, this is a game with a lot of weird magical happenings, so they might still come back. Might.

Using Trust

If your character wants help from another player's character who Trusts them, and that character doesn't want to help, your character can **use** the other character. For example, a vampire may need another character's blood to fight a demon, or a troubled student may want a peer to give them answers to pass a test.

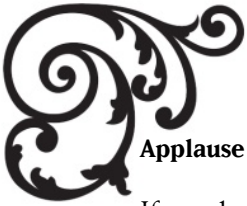
When using the trust another character, you add one die to your roll.

If you roll 0 successes, your character doesn't get either help or their goal; probably it's time to sulk. If you roll 1 success, the complication is that your character didn't get the other character's help, but succeeded anyway. With 2 or more successes, your character gets the other character's help *and* accomplishes their goal.

Your character can use the trust of another character they're in conflict with, to represent taking advantage of emotional leverage.

You may do this only once per scene. As mentioned earlier, you can change who your character trusts at the end of any scene your character was in.





Applause

If another player does something particularly dramatic, clever, or hilarious, you may give that character's player an **Applause** die, which they can add once to any roll they like.

Consequences

Dice rolls and other player actions should always have consequences, moving the story forward. If a roll fails, it's never "nothing happens," it's always "the situation gets worse." If the roll succeeds, the character achieves something meaningful which moves the story – or their personal story – forward.





Inspiration

I wrote this game because I've spent years of my life writing dysfunctional monster stories, and I love them to death. However, the stuff I've written is mostly dark and bloody. I was inspired by the web series [Carmilla](#) to write something lighter, but no less emotionally fraught.

The mechanics owe a large debt to *Smallville* and [Lasers and Feelings](#), two games that I greatly admire.

Thank you for reading, and I hope you enjoy playing.

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2015

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