



# AMONG THE MORTALS

By Randy Lubin

Two Players – 30 Minutes

## PITCH

You and a friend will play ancient deities, engaging in a proxy war for the fate of humanity. The game is played in a public space and you will take turns describing the mortals and controlling their destinies.

## SETUP

### *Create the Trait Deck*

Print the Trait Cards from this document and cut them out. Shuffle them to form a deck.

### *Create the Bag of Fate*

Fill an opaque bag with tokens of two different colors which will represent each deity's influence on the world. Go stones, Checkers pieces, and Chess pawns all work well. Add at least eight pieces of each color.

### *Find a Venue*

This game is meant to be played in public, where there is significant foot traffic. Possible options: a park, train station, hotel lobby, cafe, mall. Grab a seat where you can watch people walking past and where you won't be disruptive. This location will be the in-game setting – you won't pretend you are elsewhere.

Place the Trait Deck and Bag of Fate between you, then turn to the next page to begin playing.



## STORY BACKGROUND

It is 2017. Technological change is accelerating and civilization is at a tipping point. Breakthroughs in energy, biotech, and computing could elevate humanity to a post-scarcity utopia. However, the same science can be abused, leading to a collapse of modern society and usher in a new age of anarchy and suffering.

The two of you are rival deities and you have opposed each other for eons. Though barred from directly interfering with the world, you influence the course of history through swaying the fates of a few critical mortals.

One of you will play Enki, who is shepherding humanity toward utopia and transcendence. The other will play Nergal, who is pushing for collapse and anarchy. Decide who will play each deity and assign each a color token.

Despite being rivals, you are prevented from harming each other. Over the eons, you have even become fond of each other's company, though you might not admit it.

## GREETINGS

This is your first time meeting after an extended break. Spend a minute or two in character greeting each other. Mention what you've been up to, reminisce about a previous meeting, or taunt your rival. Begin the game by each saying, "It is a good day to shape the future of humanity."

## SHAPING HISTORY

Over the course of the game, you will compete to influence the fate of humanity by picking people from the crowd, describing their background, and deciding their fate. You'll take turns selecting targets, with Enki going first. Here's the full process:

### *Select and Describe a Target*

Choose a person from the crowd and point them out. Then, draw a card from the top of the Trait Deck. Give a brief overview of that person's life so far, using the person's appearance and the Trait Card to inform your description.

Make sure you touch on four key areas: education, profession, relationships, and aspirations. The person's background should put them in a position to influence the course of humanity toward either utopia or collapse.

### *Draw from the Bag of Fate*

Draw one token from the bag to determine which deity gets to decide the person's fate. The person who won should keep the token in front of them to track their winnings.

### *Describe the Target's Fate*

The winner gets to narrate the fate of the target. Briefly describe the person's destiny and how they bring the world closer to either utopia or collapse. Do not definitively resolve the fate of humanity.

End your description by saying: "Thus humanity is one step closer to utopia / collapse"

## CONCLUSION

Keep describing people and deciding their fates until you've drawn ten tokens total. Whomever has the most tokens, wins the game.

The winner should take a minute to describe how the fates they've altered will ultimately lead toward utopia or collapse. What does the future hold?

The losing player should react to this however they see fit. How does it feel to see your vision thwarted? Is there a silver lining?



Designed by Randy Lubin, [Diegetic Games](#)  
For [Golden Cobra 2017](#)

TRAIT CARDS

Jester

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Mediator

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Brilliant

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Despondent

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Rebellious

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Ambitious

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Empathetic

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Naive

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Tenacious

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Curious

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

TRAIT CARDS

Cruel

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Wealthy

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Organizer

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Protector

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Powerful

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Zealous

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Lazy

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Entertainer

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Tinkerer

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations

Dreamer

Education – Profession – Relationships – Aspirations