The following are the rules for *Thebes*, a real-time, real-space roleplaying game sponsored by the MIT Assassins’ Guild. You are responsible for knowing these rules. Many of them are nigh-impossible to enforce and rely upon the honor system. Do not cheat. Do not abuse loopholes. Play fair. Be your own harshest critic.

The **gamemasters (GMs)** run the game. If you have any problems or questions concerning the game, contact a GM. Rulings they make are final. They may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. The GMs promise to be as fair and reasonable as possible. Neither they nor these rules are perfect.

This game is intended to be fun. Getting into character, roleplaying, being dramatic, and playing competitively can all increase the fun of the game. Do not take the game too seriously. Even if you are losing, keep a good attitude. When the game is over, the real winners are the players with the best stories.

This is only a game. Everyone involved should act with courtesy, sportsmanship, patience, and taste. The GMs may expel anyone they believe to be violating the spirit of the rules or the game. Emotions may run high. If you think things are crossing the line from game to reality too much, or if you are just getting too stressed, calm down and maybe take a break. Stay in control. Use common sense. Always, play safely, then play to have fun.

This game is a work of fiction. Although it may refer to things in the real world, it does so only for the sake of the scenario. It does not represent the opinions of the GMs or the MIT Assassins’ Guild. These rules are modifications of those used in previous games. This game and all materials thereof are copyright 2011 by Erik Chen, Kathleen Clark-Adams, Ken Clary, Greg Echelberger, Peter Litwack, Christian Ternus, and the MIT Assassins’ Guild.

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1 Scenario

Time and Place: Thebes is set in 1334 BCE, two months after the death of the Pharaoh Akhenaten. The game action takes place in the newly restored Egyptian capital of Thebes, on the bank of the River Nile.

History and Game History: The historical background of Thebes is intended to closely parallel the actual history of ancient Egypt. Due to the purge of historical records that took place after the reign of Akhenaten, little concrete information is known about this time period. For purposes of character background and such, feel free to consider Egyptian history prior to the Amarna period as canon. However, this game is not intended to be a historical re-enactment; when something you read conflicts with information within the game’s canon, game history always takes precedence over actual history.

History up until “now” is the same as it really was on a large scale, though we may have made up or changed a few details. Inaccuracies are just as likely to have come from GM error as from GM design. Do not assume that the future of the game universe will turn out the same as the real world. ¹

1.1 Ancient Egypt

Geography: Life in Egypt flows from the Nile; the habitable locations in Egypt follow the flow of the Nile. The Egyptian empire extends along the Mediterranean coast up through Judea, where it abuts the Hittite Empire (see the world map below). Outside the fertile region of the Nile lies the Sahara Desert, which is harsh and unforgiving. Only the bravest or foolhardiest try to cross it.

Society: Egyptian society is primarily agricultural; most Egyptians are farmers who grow their own food and live in mud-brick houses. Despite this, they place a high premium on cleanliness, including daily baths in the Nile.

Infant mortality is very high; one-third die in childbirth. The life expectancy of an average Egyptian is around 30 years. Despite this, the Egyptians have a well-developed system of medicine, including an excellent understanding of the concoction of herbal remedies.

The Pharaoh: The Pharaoh is the temporal and spiritual ruler of ancient Egypt. It is said that all divine power on Earth flowed from the Pharaoh. He or she is the king and archpriest of Egypt, responsible for the good of all of Egypt.

Pharaohs are typically elevated to demigod status upon death. Their funerals are massive, elaborate, carefully planned affairs that involved the whole of Egypt. While the use of pyramids has gone out of style, the Pharaoh’s underground tomb is still lavishly furnished with everything the new demigod will need in the afterlife.

The Pharaoh’s administrative assistant is the Vizier. Appointed by the Pharaoh, he is responsible for executing the Pharaoh’s policies while the Pharaoh is occupied with other matters.

The Pharaoh has one chief wife, known as the Royal Wife, but also maintains a number of lesser wives, consorts, and concubines.

Nome and Nomarchs: Egypt is divided up into forty-two administrative districts known as nomes. These are ruled by a hereditary line of nobles known as nomarchs, who are responsible for the direct administration of their nome. Trade, marriage, and strife between nomes are all frequent. Each nome possesses its own military forces, which all band together to defend Egypt should the Pharaoh decree it necessary.

The nomarch may name whoever they choose as their heir. Control of the nome passes to the heir upon the nomarch’s death.

Diplomacy: The Egyptians have long had extensive relations with the countries of the region. These include the Hittite Empire to the north, the Assyrians to the northeast, the Babylonians to the east, and the Athenians and the Minoans of Crete to the north. These include trading missions, diplomatic exchanges, and the occasional war.

¹ Also, do not automatically trust everything you read on Wikipedia.
Religion: Religion is an integral part of the lives of everyday Egyptians. It has been a major societal influence for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. Religious figures, especially higher-level priests, possess a great deal of political influence and power. The priesthood is considered to be a respectable career for both young men and women. The Egyptian religion is polytheistic, with many gods possessing (sometimes overlapping) portfolios. The primary gods (the **Major Arcana**) of the Egyptian pantheon currently are:

- Aten: the sun disk, life giver, god of all creation.
- Amun-Ra: god of the sun, virility, and combat.
- Osiris: the god of death, regeneration, and rebirth.
- Isis: wife of Osiris, god of healing. Shares temples with Osiris.
- Anubis: the canine god of embalming and the underworld. His priests hold the traditional duty of sending departed souls on to the afterlife.

In addition, Set, god of the desert, storms, and chaos, used to be a member of the Major Arcana.

A god’s name, portfolio, and status as a member of the Major Arcana is generally a matter of longstanding history and culture. However, all of these can be changed with sufficiently powerful rituals. During Amenhotep III’s reign, a series of sandstorms and other destruction struck Egypt, and it was decided that many new temples to Set should be built to ward off further damage. However, shortly after the beginning of his own reign, Akhenaten (see below) performed a ritual to cast Set from the Major Arcana. Either way, there has not been a repeat of the storms and destruction.

**The Divine Hierarchy:** The Pharaoh, and only the Pharaoh, can also perform a ritual to change the Divine Hierarchy, which defines the relationships of power between the gods. It is only concerned with the Major Arcana; it cannot change the names, portfolios, or Major Arcana membership of any gods.

Akhenaten changed the Divine Hierarchy into a monotheism, with Aten as the one true god, and all other major gods as reflections and projections of the Giver of Life.

**Magic and Superstition:** Egyptians believe in a form of sorcery or witchcraft known as **heka**, which is used to make talismans. Similarly, the **priesthoods** of the numerous gods can channel divine power to perform minor miracles and major rituals, which some heathens could misconstrue as magic. Some, calling themselves **seers**, claim to be able to call forth visions of past, future, and the true nature of items. Finally, **herbalists**, known around the world, practice the ancient art of mixing elixers.

### 1.2 Recent History

Recent events have profoundly disturbed the status quo in Egypt.

**Timeline:**

- 1388 B.C.E.: Amenhotep III’s reign begins.
- 1351: Amenhotep III dies; his son becomes Pharaoh.
- 1350: First temples to Aten constructed.
- 1347: Cecrops II becomes ruler of Athens.
- 1346: Construction of Akhetaten begun. Amenhotep IV changes name to Akhenaten. Declares sublime monotheism under Aten.
- 1343: Capital moved to Akhetaten.
- 1341: Akhetaten completed.
- 1340: Cecrops II declares Zeus king of the gods.
- 1339: Tiye, Akhenaten’s mother, dies.
- 1337: Cecrops II rediscovers Poseidon’s saltwater spring, re-dedicates it to Poseidon.
- 1337–1334: Athenian navy becomes the world’s supreme naval force.
- 1334: Akhenaten dies.
- +1 month: The capital is relocated to Thebes, helped by Greek ships.
- +2 month: Game start.
Akhenaten and Atenism: Worship of Aten, the sun disk, had become popular under Amenhotep III’s reign. Aten was considered a member of the Major Arcana by the time his son, Amenhotep IV, became Pharaoh. Soon after he ascended the throne, Amenhotep IV instituted Atenism as the new state religion. The Divine Hierarchy was changed for the first time in an age, to something the world had never seen. The worship of the traditional gods was suppressed in favor of monotheistic worship of Aten. Some priests became Aten-worshippers, others turned to different pursuits, but the people of Egypt were discouraged from praying to the gods they had always known.

As part of these changes, Amenhotep renamed himself to Akhenaten and began constructing a new capital, Akhetaten, at a virgin site along the Nile. At the same time, worship of the old gods was officially banned, though it continued unabated in some of the outlying regions of Egypt.

Akhenaten was never a strong or hearty man, and his health was constantly a matter of concern to the royal court. However, his love of his family, and of the sun, and of worship in the open air, all of which he encouraged in the name of Aten, were generally seen as healthy behavior. Many Egyptians showed preference for the open-air worship of Aten, and the affirmation of life.

Arrival of the Greeks: Since the ascent of Cecrops II, the Athenian city-state has been developing its navy to the point where no power could contest it. Rumor has it that the discovery and re-dedication of Poseidon’s original gift to the city, the saltwater spring, has played a major role in Athens’ emergence as the dominant sea power. After several clashes with the island nation of Crete, the Athenians sailed their navy down the Nile under the command of Cecrops II and demanded tribute from the Egyptians. Since Egypt’s military strength lies primarily in its army, it was left helpless before the Greeks, as far as control of the Nile was concerned. Akhenaten’s ill health meant that negotiation with the Greeks was put off indefinitely. Luckily, Cecrops was sympathetic to the Egyptian cause and allowed the ailing Pharaoh time to recover his health.

Death of the Pharaoh: Two months before the start of game, the Pharaoh Akhenaten passed away. He had been in ill health for the past year or so, and had had problems with his vision for longer. These illnesses had left him unable to govern effectively, which brought many problems to Egypt. The priests of the traditional gods, sensing an opportunity, began to reassert control over aspects of religious life.

Soon after Akhenaten died, without an obvious heir, five people declared themselves Pharaoh: Manu (Daniel Whalen), the Nomarch of Ament; Amenemhet (Geoffrey Thomas), the Nomarch of Ati; Meti (Sophie Monahan), the Nomarch of Khent-Abt; Mshai (William Steadman), the Nomarch of Ta-Seti; and General Buikhu (Paul Kominers), Akhenaten’s General. Buikhu began marching in Upper Egypt, while the forces of Khent-Abt in Lower Egypt marched west towards Ament. Apparently seeing opportunity, Hittite forces attacked the disputed territory of Canaan, leading the Khent-Abt armies to retreat back for defense. Buikhu then led his forces to Lower Egypt to attack Khent-Abt. Soon, a deal was struck, Buikhu proclaimed he would marry Nafrit (Lee Fuchs), daughter of Meti, and Buikhu would support Meti’s bid to become Pharaoh.

Meanwhile, Nefertiti (Laura47), Royal Wife of Akhenaten, while proclaiming herself the successor, called for a cessation of war in Egypt. Itafe (Sarah “Meldicore” Dee), the Nomarch of Wadkhet, declared intentions to become Pharaoh. Finally, Nefertiti struck the deal that ultimately held: The collected nomes of Egypt would hold an unprecedented election to determine who would rule the country.

As part of this agreement, the capital of Egypt would return to Thebes for the election. The Greeks, wishing to expedite the process, provided fast transport up and down the Nile for any who wished it, and were indispensible in helping the capital move.

Convocation of the Temples: Once a new Pharaoh is chosen, he or she will have the opportunity to change the Divine Hierarchy once more. The priesthoods of the major gods have convened, for it is ritual season: time to ensure the flooding of the Nile, and, this year, time to potentially restore some of the power the temples enjoyed before Akhenaten. Cecrops suggested that Egypt choose yet another new kind of Divine Hierarchy, a “patriarchy,” as the Greeks have done with Zeus. With Nefertiti’s help, the knowledge of how to do this was passed to all the priesthoods. However, the nature of the Divine Hierarchy will ultimately be decided by the new Pharaoh.

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2 “Effective spirit of Aten”
3 This is a major divergence from out-of-game history.
Map of the Ancient Near East: This only labels the nomes that are vying for control of Egypt.

1.3 Game Times and Areas

Game runs from 8pm on Friday to noon on the second Sunday. Game break starts at 6am Tuesday and goes until 6pm Wednesday; no game action is allowed during game break, and only one game night (one in-game 6am) passes. Game may end early. Cleanup will immediately follow the end of game. Wrapup will be at 2pm on Sunday.

In-Game Events:
- Friday night: feast held by Nefertiti.
- Saturday night: feast held by the priesthood of Amun-Ra.
- Sunday night: feast held by the priesthood of Anubis.
- Monday night: feast held by the priesthoods of Osiris and Isis.

Most publicly-accessible areas on campus are considered in-game (your character can move about freely in them). As usual, avoid places it is illegal for you to go to, areas under construction, etc. Don’t take game actions in bathrooms, private offices, activity offices, and other places not all players would be allowed to enter. When in living areas, such as dorms, remember the Player Rooms section. Many living areas on campus are not technically accessible to all players. Whether or not to take game action in your living area is left to player judgment. Unless a sign or rule directs you to, you may not enter basements in-game. The infinite corridor (all floors) is the Nile River. It takes one minute to cross; you can walk up and down it during this time.

Public Locations (don’t leave food, trash, or personal items in game locations overnight):
- GM Room (26-302), Box Room (26-310)
- Common Room (34-302), Throne Room (34-303), Coat Room (34-304)
- Altar of Aten (34-4), Altar of Amun-Ra (36-4), Altar of Anubis (38-4), Altar of Osiris (26-4), Altar of Isis (26-4)
- Arena of Amun-Ra (36-2 lobby), Hospital of Isis (26-4)

You may use athena clusters in-game, though be very mindful of NP rules when doing so, and do not trash them. You may use email, phones, and other electronic communication in-game, but only for quick, single exchanges. They represent servants running messages, so you cannot have more than one exchange every ten minutes with someone.
2 Getting Started

2.1 Character Packets

Your character packet is a big manila envelope. It contains your role: who you are, what you’re up to; everything about your part as a **player-character (PC)** in the game. Read all the contents and generally keep them with you during the game. If you are missing something or find something which doesn’t seem to belong to you, tell one of the GMs. Character packets are confidential. Game materials which cannot be given to other players are marked “Not Transferable,” whereas things which can be given to others are marked “Freely Transferable” or “Game Item.”

**Name-Badge:** A name-badge with your player name, character description, and **badge number** on it shows that you are in the game; wear it visibly while you are playing. It represents your character’s body in-game. Badge numbers are not in-game information. See the *Character Bodies* and *Badge Numbers* sections for more details.

**Character Sheet:** Your character sheet describes who you are and what you are up to. It contains a list of everything else that should be in your character packet. Do not show or read your character sheet to other players.

**Bluesheets:** A bluesheet describes information common to members of a group. When in conflict, character sheet information overrides bluesheet information. Do not show or read a bluesheet to other players.

**Greensheets:** A greensheet describes and expands abilities, mechanics, or in-game knowledge. Do not show or read a greensheet to other players.

**Stat Card:** Your stat card lists your statistics. You might not know what all of your stats mean. Do not show your stats to others. The reverse side is a **death report**; fill it out and give it to the GMs when your character dies.

**Ability Cards:** An ability card explains a special ability your character has. The front side describes the effects; show it to players when you use the ability. The reverse is the rules of use and must not be shown to other players.

**Memory/Event Packets:** A memory packet is an envelope or stapled piece of paper with a **trigger** which describes when to open and read it. If the trigger is a number, open the packet when you see something with that number. If it’s a quoted phrase, open when instructed. Do not take game action based on an unopened trigger. Do not show or read a memory packet to other players.

**Items:** In-game items may be transferred from character to character, and should be marked as such. See the *Items Etc.* section for more details.
2.2 Reality and Game Reality

There is a big difference between reality and game reality. Players must treat each other with courtesy and explain to each other what their characters perceive in confusing situations; e.g. “My character’s hands are covered in blood,” an out-of-game statement. Characters are under no such restrictions, and may do what it takes to further their goals; e.g. “Uh, hi Bob. Just got back from the butcher shop,” an in-game statement.

Metagaming is inferring in-game knowledge that is inappropriate for your character from out-of-game information. Do your best to not metagame and especially to prevent the risk of metagaming. Be your own harshest critic.

Halts: A halt pauses game action. To call one, say “game halt” in a clear and audible voice; other players around a corner should hear you, but you shouldn’t scare some poor grad student. End a halt by saying “three, two, one, resume.” Call a halt for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, for safety and similar out-of-game issues, or to pause game and fetch a GM (which you should avoid).

Not-Here: You may go not-here by turning your name-badge around so the “I’m Not Here” side is showing (or by removing your badge entirely, if you are leaving game). Putting a hand on your head, visible from a distance, helps if you’re near other players. Go not-here for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, to leave game, or to fetch a GM while in a halt (which you should avoid).

When you are not-here, your character is not there. Your character cannot see, hear, or remember any game actions or information you (the player) happen to encounter. Avoid other characters, common game areas, game signs, or any sort of game interaction. To leave or enter game for the night/day/whatever, walk to somewhere public. Don’t go not-here in front of other characters; give them a fair chance to interact with (ambush) you.

Non-Players: Use tact and common sense when dealing with non-players (NPs). You are encouraged to spread the gospel of real-time, real-space roleplaying; however, many NPs prefer to sleep, study, or work undisturbed.

NPs may not knowingly affect the game. They and their rooms may not be used to hold items or information. They may not help you kill. Do not use the presence of NPs to hide from rampaging mobs that want your blood.

Avoid conspicuous or threatening game actions in front of NPs. Shooting your friend outside of a classroom one minute before class lets out is a bad idea, as is screaming bloody murder down a hallway. If, despite your most valiant efforts, some NPs do get upset, call the GMs who will help calm them down.

Player Rooms: Players may retreat to their rooms to study, sleep, or whatever in safety. Your character may not enter a player’s room unless invited in-game. This has traditionally been called the “jhereg rule.” Do not use your room as an impenetrable meeting place or stash site. If your character is in-game in your room, other characters may interact with (kill, torture) you. Roommates and similar are considered to have separate rooms for this rule.

Observers: An observer is someone not playing the game who has agreed to watch. They generally wear an observer headband or an observer name-badge. Observers have traditionally been called “ghosts.” They should stay out of the way; you can always ask an observer to leave. If a friend who is not playing wants to observe game, send them to the GMs.

Non-Player-Characters: Non-player-characters (NPCs) are characters in the game’s universe not played by a full-time player. They are minor characters, bit parts, or random people. Some may have name-badges; sometimes called “GM plants;” these are often not readily distinguishable from PCs.
**Mechanics:** Many actions your character can take, such as walking, talking, and general interaction with other characters, are represented by you doing them. Others, like combat, are performed via abstract mechanics, which are described in ability cards, greensheets, and rules. The abstract information for mechanics (like badge numbers) may not be discussed in-game. If you want to do something special for which there is no mechanic, ask a GM.

Become familiar with your mechanics before game starts, especially those which occur under time-pressure (like combat). Game action will not stop for memory packets, greensheets, or such.

A **kludge** (and derivative forms like “kludge-ite”) is something impervious to logic and cleverness, usually for game-balance. You can’t affect a kludge without a specified mechanic.

**Zone of Control (ZoC)** is a rough distance measurement. You are within ZoC of someone if your outstretched fingers can touch their outstretched fingers. Double-ZoC is twice this distance, triple-ZoC is three times, etc.

**Headbands** represent obvious visual effects; wear them visibly on your head. If you see a headband and don’t know what it represents, ask. If you are wearing a headband, tell people what their characters see.

**Safety:** This is a game. Real violence is unacceptable. Game action should cause no real-world damage, either to people or property. If something dangerous is happening, call a halt. Stay in control, use common sense, and do not endanger yourself or others. You should not run or otherwise force your way into or through someone else’s ZoC, and you should not make physical contact with another player without permission.

### 2.3 Basic Strategy

Make sure you understand the rules. If you are completely confused, get a GM who will try to help you out. Make sure you know enough about your character to role-play him or her when you start talking to other people. Read through your entire packet a couple of times, and skim through it again right before game starts. If you don’t know something about your character, ask a GM.

As a character, your first priority should be to open lines of communication. Contact people, show up at meetings, and chat. Try to be easy to get in touch with. Ask people questions on relevant subjects. They’ll probably lie, but you may find something out.

There are no guarantees that you can trust anyone, but since cooperation is the key to accomplishing things, you will be forced to trust people anyway. The most trustworthy people are probably those who need you.
3 Items Etc.

Many in-game items are represented by little white cards with a number and description. Item cards may be shown to others, passed around, stolen, etc. The **item number** on the card is not in-game information and may not be discussed. Not all in-game items have cards or numbers; whatever they are represented by should be clearly marked “in-game item” or “freely transferable.”

Use common sense. You can’t carry a hundred rocks in your pocket, fold a sword in half, or hide a life-sized statue in a fire hose. You can’t stop a bullet with a set of blueprints or rip apart a metal safe with your bare hands. Even if your bag can carry a shovel in it, the shovel noticeably sticks out (“you see a shovel sticking out of my bag”).

**Written Information:** If you write in-game information down on a piece of paper, that paper is now an in-game item and must be clearly marked as such. Don’t write in-game information on out-of-game documents (character sheet, etc.). Don’t write out-of-game information (like memory packet triggers) on in-game documents.

**Envelopes:** Some items and locations may have an attached envelope (or just be a labeled packet or folded paper). The envelope may include directions for when to open these (“open packet if you press the big red button” or “open packet if you eat this”); otherwise you may only open them if instructed. Close them when you are done. Open and close packets gently.

**Signs:** Some locations and other game materials are represented by signs or packets posted throughout game area. You may read any signs and must follow any rules printed on them. If a sign or packet doesn’t have some sort of in-game description (it only has out-of-game mechanics information, like a number or just a colored dot), then your character doesn’t even see it or know that anything unusual is there.

**Bulkiness:** A bulky item is too big or heavy to be carried or concealed freely. Bulkiness is measured in **hands** or **dots** (how many hands it takes to carry it). If you are carrying a bulky item, make it clear to onlookers (hold the card). A hand carrying a bulky object may do nothing else. With one hand less than required, you may drag a bulky item at a slow pace.

**Props:** Some items may have props (physical representations or **physreps**) associated with them. The card and physrep should be kept together. If they are separated, the card is the real item. Prop items are as bulky as the physrep. They can be carried in bags that can hold them, on straps that are attached to them, etc.

**Containers:** Some items, like crates or personal bags, have a **capacity**. Capacity is measured in dots or hands; this is how many dots of items can be stored within. You can put as many non-bulky items inside as is within reason. A container may have a capacity bigger than its bulkiness; use common sense when nesting containers. Put contained item cards inside the envelope attached to the container card.

**Character Bodies:** A body is two hands bulky and usually represented by a name-badge. It must be willing or unable to resist for you to carry it. Carry the badge conspicuously. Onlookers can’t tell if it’s dead without close examination, unless it would be obvious (like headless).
3.1 Searching, Stashing, and Stealing

Places: To search a place, search it. Normal items can be stashed in any reasonable, legal place. Don’t put items behind locked doors, inside ceilings, in construction sites, or in hacking locations; consequently, don’t go rummaging through such places for game items. Don’t stash or search in places that are not in-game; see the Game Areas section for more information.

People: All searches of characters or their belongings are conducted via player dialogue. Someone must be willing or unable to resist for you to search them. You need at least one free hand to search someone. Anyone within ZoC of either you or your victim can prevent the search by saying “I stop you” or an equivalent phrase.

You can perform a pat-down search, which will only reveal the presence of weapons. This takes as much time as it takes your victim to tell you what you find. If you’re the victim, do this at a reasonable pace.

A total search is an invasive, complete search of a character’s clothing. This reveals all in-game items, and takes as long as your victim spends handing over possessions. If you’re the victim, hand over items at a reasonable pace.

Bags: To search a bag in someone’s possession, say “I search your bag.” This proceeds just as a total search.

To search a bag that is obviously in-game (has an attached, displayed item card), search the physrep. Item cards in the bag must be in reasonable places. If the item card has a capacity and an envelope, the bag is just a prop and all in-game items should be in the packet.

To search a bag that is not obviously in-game (no visible item card attached), spend thirty seconds by the bag, put a “searched (see a GM)” note on the bag, and come tell a GM. Tell any onlookers that they see you searching through the bag. Search an attended bag via player dialog with the owner; they must be willing or unable to resist. If someone searches a bag you are holding, hand over all game items inside at a reasonable pace.

If you find a “searched” note on your bag, come see a GM. To declare a bag out-of-game, label it “no game items.”
4 Money and the Market

The Market Interface is an online system that is used to purchase items and manage your character’s wealth. The Market can be accessed from anywhere in Thebes. Once you have read and understood this section in its entirety, login to the Market interface at http://thebes.mit.edu with the password on your stat card. Your username is your (case-sensitive!) character name.

The GM responsible for the online interface is Ternus. Please make sure to let him know as soon as possible if anything goes wrong. Moreover, please don’t attempt to deliberately break the interface!

If you have a nonzero Market stat, your role in the Market is much more extensive; see the public Market greensheet.

**Income and Wealth:** Your wealth is measured in deben, the coin of ancient Egypt. Your Income stat represents your withdrawal limit per day in deben. Since the Pharaoh’s death, the flow of assets has been tightly controlled by the banks – therefore, you are only able to withdraw so much money per day. This is done for you automatically at 6AM.

Your money is managed by NPC servants; it is not stealable. The only way to manage it is to use the online interface. If you wish to carry money on your person, you should purchase valuable items or write IOUs (see below).

**Transferring Money:** The online interface allows you to transfer money to other characters. You may do this by clicking “Transfer Money”, then entering the amount and selecting the character to receive the transfer. This is not revocable, so make sure you know what you’re doing!

You can transfer money offline by writing an IOU to another character, and transferring the money online as soon as possible.

**Purchasing Items:** The Bazaar (and the merchants located around it, if you have Market points) has items for sale that may be bought by clicking the “[Buy]” link next to the item you wish to buy. This will automatically deduct money from your current wealth. If you do not have sufficient wealth, the link will not appear.

With the government in chaos, many merchants are taking advantage of the opportunity to raise prices on popular items. You may find that prices on items, especially rare items, may fluctuate based on demand.

**Valuable Items:** Some items have a Value written on them. These items can be sold on the market for their Value in deben. To do so, place the item in the “BARTER” folder in the Box Room, then add the item’s value to your current wealth using the interface (see below).

There is a barter folder in the box room for items bartered on the market; place any items bartered away in this folder.

**Adding and Removing Points:** Click Modify Points in the right-hand sidebar to add or remove Market points or Wealth. You must enter a reason each time you do so (e.g. “used Legendary Market Amulet”, “turned in item #555”). If you know you can, this is also the place to grant yourself the Disguise ability. If your Market stat is zero and you add points, please read the Market greensheet before doing anything!
5 Public Works

Public works projects are efforts undertaken by government officials to construct new buildings or other infrastructure within a Nome. Though such projects cannot be completed within the course of game, the announcement of a project can bring status to the Nome in question and can increase the popularity of gods (especially if the project is religious in nature). Public works projects require the substantial expenditure of economic resources to complete.

Starting a Project: To commission a public works project, follow these steps:
1. Find a plan. Plans are whitesheets whose name starts with “Project Plan.” They typically have blanks that must be filled in. These plans may come from various locations, including the Archives, research, and your fellow PCs.
2. Pick a location. All public works projects must take place in a specific Nome. The GMs expect that most public works projects will be carried out in the 5 PC governed Nomes, but it is possible to construct one in any Nome.
3. Get the Nomarch to sign off on that location. If a project is taking place in a PC governed Nome, you must get the Nomarch to initial the location choice. If it is an NPC Nome, the NPC Nomarch always approves. The Pharaoh must approve any public works project that takes place in Thebes, which is not an option unless otherwise noted.
4. Collect enough resource pledges to complete the project. These will most likely be pledged by your fellow PCs. Get each entity who pledges resources to write a line on the plan containing their name, title, and how many resources they are pledging. For example:
   Bar-al-Baz — Nomarch of Quux — 5 Marble
5. Sign and initial your plan.
6. Post your completed plan in the common room and inform the GMs.

Revoking a Project: Anyone whose name or title is on the sheet may revoke their support from the plan at any time. Do this by crossing out their entries and informing the GMs. This renders the plan incomplete: all resources committed are returned to their respective owners. The plan is returned to the hands of its original creator, who may recollect and repost the plan with sufficient resources. Revoking a contract may have unforeseen effects on the popularity of anyone involved in it originally, but it is likely to have significant negative effects on the revoker.

6 Tombs

Egypt, Thebes in particular, has many tombs. There are centuries and centuries of long dead people, some important, some less so, some forgotten. The Valley of Kings and Valley of Queens are devoted entirely to entombing generations of rulers. And of course there are the pyramids.

Most tombs have long since been robbed of any valuables. Some were robbed by criminals, some by priests, some by family, some by foreigners. Tomb robbing is considered a heinous crime, though it has been forgiven in certain circumstances.

Most tombs, especially old ones, are very dangerous. There may be traps, unstable areas, and other dangers, that can cause various negative effects, up to and including death. Tombs may also trap you for long periods of time. You might be able to prepare for, prevent, or mitigate some hazards with equipment, beneficial status effects, and healers, but it is impossible to have a guarantee that you will make it in and back out unscathed. Tomb robbing is always a risk.

Tomb Packets: Many old tombs are partially or completely buried under the sand (mostly due to age). To enter a tomb, you must get the Tomb Packet from the GMs, which requires first knowing where the tomb is (do not spam the GMs with random guesses). The Tomb Packet will have rules for how to get into the tomb.

You may find a sign for a tomb entrance. It may be blocked by workers digging it out (or filling it in). The sign will have directions for what you can do, even if you don’t have the Tomb Packet.
7 Violence, Damage, and Death

Health States: Characters have five possible states, concerning health and damage. When you are fine, you may act freely. When you are restrained, you are helpless and may do nothing but talk. When you are knocked out, you will wake up in five minutes. When you are wounded, you are unconscious, bleeding, and will die in five minutes. When dead, you are dead.

When knocked out or wounded, fall down and drop anything you are holding. Just lie there. You won’t be doing much of anything until you wake up. Do not listen to conversations going on.

Dead men tell no tales. If dead, do not give out any information about your character or death to any players. You may remain on the scene to play the part of your corpse; describe obvious information to onlookers (“I have a gunshot wound in my back”). When you leave, place the front of your name-badge with a description of the body’s obvious state. Take the “I’m Not Here” side to wear. Stack your items with your body. Fill out your Death Report. Make sure the GMs know about your death. If your death becomes generally known to the other characters, you may be able to become an observer. Until the game is over, you may not convey game information to any player.

Weapons: All weapons have both a physrep and an item card; keep these together. Weapon effects are on the card. To use a weapon, you must have it in your hand and unobstructed. Display it in an obvious manner. You cannot hold more than one weapon in a hand. You may only use one melee weapon at a time.

Killing Blow: A killing blow will kill a helpless victim. Your victim must be within ZoC and either unconscious or restrained. You must use a weapon (melee or ranged). Clearly incant “killing blow one, killing blow two, killing blow three” at a reasonable pace. During the incant, if you are attacked or if someone within ZoC says “I stop you” or an equivalent phrase, you are stopped. To stop a killing blow, either attack the person doing it or say “I stop you” within ZoC.

Ranged Combat: Ranged combat is real-time and mostly based upon player skill at firing and dodging physreps. Keep it safe. Hits to anywhere on the body count the same; don’t aim for the head. If a projectile hits clothing or long hair such that it would not hit the body when passing through, it doesn’t count. Hits to an item you hold count as a hits on you, not the item. If there is a conflict over whether or not a projectile hit, the shooter calls the shot.

The only ranged projectile is arrows: if and when you are hit by one, you become wounded. Arrows are physrep’ed by foam arrows. Ammo is limited. Shooting an arrow requires a bow and the ability to use a bow.

Everyone has a dart gun that may not be stolen or confiscated. Darts have no direct effect; someone using a dart gun is in a combat stance and maneuvering in melee combat.

Martial Combat: All characters have an ability card with a table of combat ratings. This specifies ratings for defense and every attack you can do, based on what weapon you are using. You may always pull your punches by using a lower number. A rating of “-” means you cannot perform that attack. Defense is the rating for defending yourself. Assist requires both the target and ally be within ZoC. Knockout knocks the target out. Wound wounds the target. Scratch has no direct effect, but can deliver poison or similar. Restrain restrains the target until you incant “release” or your health state changes; you can freely drag, attack, or killing blow them (if you fullfill any weapon/ability requirements); you must release to do anything else or if your health state changes. Disarm makes the target drop one item that you point to.

To martial-attack someone, clearly state your attack and rating (“knockout 2”, “wound 2”, etc.) from within ZoC. Your attack must resolve before you make another; otherwise, you may act freely. If an ally directs assist at you after you attack, you may, within 2 seconds, restate your attack with the assist’s rating added (“wound 3”, “assist 2”, “wound 5”). Assist does not change your rating for defense. You may ignore an assist.

When martial-attacked, resolve by comparing the attack’s rating against your defense rating. If your defense is lower, take the effects; else, say “resist” and the attack has no effect. If you neither say “resist” nor state your own counterattack within two seconds of the incant’s end, you are surprised and the attack just works. The attack begins when the incant begins; until you resolve your defense, all of your actions other than martial attacks are interrupted; serial attacks don’t prevent simple actions (talking, weapon-drawing, ranged attacks) in-between. Resolve all attacks alone, in the order they occur; choose the order if it is unclear. If you are attacked with “waylay” instead of a rating (“knockout waylay”), the attack just works.
Sample Combat Ratings: Below is an example table of combat ratings. Note that some attack ratings are higher than the associated defense. If two people attack each other within 2 seconds, it is possible for both attacks to succeed. At any given time, you should reflexively know your current defense rating. All other ratings are only needed for their attacks.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>weapon</th>
<th>defense</th>
<th>knockout</th>
<th>wound</th>
<th>scratch</th>
<th>disarm</th>
<th>restrain</th>
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</table>

Dart Guns: If you shoot someone with a dart gun, your combat ratings (defense and all attacks) have a +1 bonus against that person for the next **10 seconds**. Each new hit, the 10 seconds reset and you gain an additional +1. If 10 seconds pass without you hitting your target, the chain ends and all dart gun bonuses against that person go away.

Waylay: To waylay someone, you must be within ZoC of your victim. Form the sign of the devil (index and pinky fingers extended, thumb holding other two fingers down) and extend it along the direct, unobstructed line from your shoulder to the victim’s head. Hold this position for **five seconds**. Before this time is up, the waylay is thwarted if anyone attacks you or if the victim notices the symbol. If they react in any way to the symbol, they have noticed; you (the attacker) make the call.

If you succeed, you may replace your attack rating with “waylay” for a single immediate attack on your victim (e.g. “Wound waylay” if you have a wounding weapon).

If you notice someone trying to waylay you, make it obvious. “I notice you” is unambiguous; use it if you can. Once a waylay is finished, you may not retroactively have noticed.

Status Effects: Some things may cause complex status effects. The cause will state the duration. The more complex effects are listed here; others may be fully described by abilities, etc. No status effects (other than the health states listed at the beginning of this section) can affect an ongoing combat by force. If something gives you a status effect in the middle of a combat, you may ignore it until there is a reasonable lull in the fight.


Fear: You must avoid the source, cringing and fleeing when possible. Refrain from combat with the source unless cornered.

Daze: You must stumble and be “slow,” moving at a maximum speed of a walk. All of your combat ratings are at -1.

Maim: One of your limbs may become maimed. This is often permanent, only curable by rare and expensive treatment. For each maimed limb, reduce all of your combat ratings by -1. One maimed leg means you must hobble with a cane instead of running or walking. Two maimed legs means you must crawl or be carried to move. One maimed arm reduces your ability to carry by half. Two maimed arms means you can’t carry anything or perform mechanics that require your hands.

Strength: You can carry 5 hands of bulkiness (this is reduced to 3 if one arm is maimed). If you already have the endurance or breath status effect, it ends and is replaced by strength.

Endurance: You ignore all temporary combat rating penalties (including the -1 from being dazed). If you already have the strength or breath status effect, it ends and is replaced by endurance.

Breath: You can stay underwater or in other hard-to-breathe areas for longer than usual. If you already have the strength or endurance status effect, it ends and is replaced by breath.

Maiming: You can maim someone who is helpless or unconscious. You must be within ZoC and have a weapon. Specify the limb while doing a three-count at a reasonable pace, e.g. “I maim your right arm one, I maim your right arm two, I maim your right arm three.” During the incant, if you are attacked or if someone within ZoC says “I stop you” or similar, you are stopped.
8 Miscellaneous

Headband Colors: A white or yellow headband represents an observer.

Rope: Rope is freely available. Make an item card for it. To tie someone up, they must be either willing or helpless. If you get tied up with rope, you become restrained. If you are conscious and left alone, you can wriggle free in five minutes.

Poison: You might get poisoned in game. It will always take the form of a small packet you open, handed to you by either a player or GM. There are multiple ways to get poisoned, but out-of-game food is always safe to eat in-game.

9 Closing Notes

These rules are imperfect. The GMs may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. We hope these rules are reasonably clear, but if you have any doubts about your interpretation, talk it over with us in advance. We should also add, as much as we hate to admit it, we GMs are human: when all of our carefully laid plans are going haywire, we may lose our cool. The best way to deal with people is remaining calm and friendly, especially when everyone is tired and hungry.

We hope you have lots of fun. Good luck.