




Greetings, Dark-Hunter,

I know that you have many questions about your new life and what will be expected of you. Birth is hard, especially the second time around. With luck, this new life won't suck nearly as much as the old one did. And at least in this one you have one brother who will fight to the death for you.

That would be me-

Acheron Parthenopaeus. Call me Ash for short. The other is just too damned long to bother with, and while we have immortality, let's not get bogged down with unnecessary syllables. Just be aware that I will do my damndest to be there whenever and wherever you need me. Because of my own duties, there may be a slight delay in my ability to




reach you. But you are my priority and I will do my best to never fail where you are concerned.

As you know by now, I'll be the one training you to fight and to survive in this world that is best off not knowing we are here or what we do. Individuals are smart, but as a group, humans are very dangerous. You wouldn't be here now if you hadn't learned the first rule of survival:

Trust no one at your back.

No matter who you are, or where you come from, all Dark-Hunters become immortal because we trusted someone we shouldn't have. That one person we thought would never hurt us. People who had no right to betray us.

Yeah, it sucks. I know. Been there. Done that. Here we all are, united in our




mutual hatred, disdain and bitterness. We are the Brotherhood of the Damned. But don't dwell there. It'll eat you alive, from the inside out, if you do.

They took your human life. Don't give them your immortality. They're not worth another second of your time. You died because of them. Now live and live well to spite them.

While I will be there to train you as best I can, I know there are things we won't get to or things we cover that you might forget. So I've written this manual to answer the most common questions, and as a later refresher should you need it. Anything else can always be directed to me.

One of the most important things to never forget is that all DH's are




answerable to me. You will find I am a patient, mostly hands-off boss, and will tolerate most attitudes most of the time. However, don't push your luck. I do have a temper and when it breaks, you don't want to be there to witness it. Not to mention that I cut my baby teeth on bad attitude and sarcasm, so don't try to outdo me. You'll just piss me off.

Contained within this book are the rules and codes we abide by. Anyone who can't follow them will quickly find himself or herself classified as Rogue and you will be hunted down.

What does that mean? Picture this:
You + Eternity + No Body + Constant Hunger + Burning Thirst = Hell.

It's called being a Shade. Shadedom is not fun and there's no way back from it.




You never want to die as a DH because when you do, you are trapped forever in a painful, horrific place that makes hell look like paradise.

By now you're probably thinking: "Wait, I'm immortal, I can't die." Guess again. Your body is gifted with regenerative powers. But there are certain things not even the gods can fix. Severe head trauma that results in a completely crushed skull and/or squashed brains = Shadedom.

Beheading = Shadedom.

For that matter, anything that can cut you up in to little pieces can kill you. Wood chippers are our bane. Those of you from the Middle Ages will remember the punishment of being hanged, drawn and quartered~ contrary to popular opinion,




the quartering part comes from us. If quartered and buried separately, you are dead for all time.

The last thing that can take you out is sunlight. Yes, little campers, it's true. Even though it was his twin sister who brought us back to life to serve her, Apollo hates us with a passion, and won't hesitate to rid the world of your hide if he catches you in his domain. Never let a ray of sunlight come into contact with your body. If you do so, you will burst into flames and it will hurt. A lot.

Should you die without your soul, you cannot cross over into a happily hereafter. You become trapped between worlds with no body, but full cognition. Forever. See the above description of Shadedom.

Now that we have that out of the way,



we can move on to the really important stuff like survival and rules.

Welcome to the madness, Hunter. Remember, at the end of the day, you are what others have to deal with. We are the scariest of the things that go bump in the night.

Acheron