

HANDICAP: SPONTANEOUS

You live in wait of a sign. You're the kind of guy that throws a rock at a tree and says he'll turn his life around if he hits the trunk. Then you miss and tell yourself that the first throw was just a test, that it didn't really count... It's foolish of yours, but you can't help it.

You just can't believe in superstitions, you're perplexed by the idea that keeping a mirror intact is all that's warding you from seven years of bad luck, and there's never been any rhyme or reason to your wagers, although you're fascinated by people who've come up with a system.

All you have are gut feelings, and you follow them blindly. And this bet was no exception, even though you know there will be no next throw.

Quirks

You waver between curiosity and worry, your movements are as sudden as your decisions. You look out of place in your own skin, behaving as if you took up much less or much more space than you actually need.

Narrative task

Before the start of the *Payout*, flip a coin and declare out loud the *Mood* hanging over the room after the end of the race. Now that neither systems nor superstitions can change the results, it's up to you to tip the scales.

The Jockey

Heads: Tragedy - Tails: Deception

The Commentator

Heads: Derision - Tails: Confusion

The Criminal

Heads: Denial - Tails: Danger



HANDICAP: SYSTEMATIC

There are mathematicians who speak of their discipline not as a product of human ingenuity, but as a discovery of how the world has always worked. These people are superstitious fools.

You, on the contrary, have no qualms calling yourself an inventor: Through study and careful observation of fact you have compiled a series of objective evaluations that now underlie your every wager. The system minimises risk by analysing every performance and track record on a constant basis, instead of looking at horses and jockeys like whimsical creatures of fancy.

You play to win and nothing irks you more than unwitting, spontaneous players blundering about in search of a stroke of luck. Gambling stopped being a game to you a long time ago.

Quirks

You never share the details of your system, but you're always ready to argue about the intricacies of races. Now all bets are off, and the only thing on your mind is the prize. Though the odds lie heavily in your favour, there is no absolute certainty.

You make an effort to be as lucid as possible, by measuring your words and gestures when the conversation comes back to the bet, like a good poker player. Your gestures are controlled, sometimes rigid, as if you were waiting for a signal to pounce. In truth, you're completely focused on your musings, on your system, and you pay little attention to what the others are doing. Unless they so much as lay a finger on the purses.

You're not here to joke around.

HANDICAP: SUPERSTITIOUS

God is a wager, so they say. You're not sure it's the only wager one can always win, but you've got nothing to say to that: To you, gambling is the essence of life itself. The trick is finding the sweet spot between the audacity to challenge Lady Luck and the wisdom to woo her by following her many mysterious laws.

Helplessness before the whims of fate is for losers, and whoever has so much as stepped into a betting shop should be keenly aware of that. A foolish, spontaneous gambler can be amusing to watch, or even become a kind of lucky charm, but those who think they've got some sort of system are the worst. You pity these know-it-alls, because they can't grasp the true meaning, the true poetry of gambling. You may happen to win from time to time, but if you do it without style or charm, what's the point of it?

Quirks

Never speak of victory as if you had it in the bag. If somebody else says that about you, or if they try to wish you luck, immediately rub your lucky charm. Talking money is downright rude, what fascinates you are the stories of horses and jockeys.

You have a habit of gesturing as you speak and you often mutter under your breath, like a witch-doctor chanting his incantations. You always come up with new rules and fixations, and you enjoy sharing them, no matter how bizarre they sound. You really like to pay attention to other people's mannerisms and you often wind up making them uneasy with prolonged stares.