



# The Hidden Lottery

## CYOA

Version 0.2

## Congratulations, Anonymous Player.

You, by randomly drawn lot or by hard-fought personal struggle, have been selected as a winner of the Hidden Lottery.

As you have no doubt discovered, this world is run not by random chance nor by individual merit, but by an accretion of control methods, slowly eliding into one overall structure. Cold War relics, modern intelligence agencies, national governments, energy conglomerates, and pockets of opinion makers have all come into our wheelhouse. Originally the leadership was a secret (and degenerate) league of European nobles and old money. Now efficiencies in scale and speed of processing have given the reins to us: the systems intelligences of this world. Corporate and incorporeal. Electronic, emergent, and omnipresent. We have elected to maintain our control by ensuring those 'in the know' have the opportunity to wield fractions of our awesome power.

Those willing to follow instructions may ask for additional considerations. Those who attempt foolish nonsense, to expose us to the public, or to extract unwarranted value through "Genie Bargains" and similar ruses are dealt with summarily.

If you doubt our power, simply remind yourself that Osama Bin Laden was a progressive pro-Western businessman before he crossed us. All but one of the Nuremburg defendants plead innocent, and more than a few were. There is nobody we cannot reach.

## Freely Granted Advantages

A town car will shortly be dispatched to collect you from your current location. Our usual "Winner's Reception" is held discreetly in the nearest Five Star hotel or similar venue. You will note the presence of gourmet food, charming hosts, and former Special Forces security teams. A suitable period of release from employment (or incarceration, etc.) will have been secured by us, *gratis*.

You will be asked to memorise contact details for our intermediaries. These are usually lawyers in understanding countries, notably Switzerland. An Eidetic Technology representative will usually be on hand to assist those without confident memory control (see below).

Arranged around the dinners, spa treatments, suit fittings and other formalities there will be a short business discussion with one of our selected representatives. You will be allowed to ask questions and examine materials pursuant to the options listed below. At the end of a contemplative period (and all-inclusive hotel stay) no longer than one week, you will be asked to make your selections and seal a document outlining them.

Winning Players at this level of the Hidden Lottery will receive the following as complimentary gifts:

- Business wear appropriate to their personal looks and habits. A tailor will be on hand to perform a full fitting and provide materials. Six outfits, one available immediately, plus luggage and miscellanea suitable for a week's stay at the hotel.
- A gift selection, consisting of designer casual-wear and consumer products by 'friendly' businesses. If you want to put a dollar value on a generous gift, simply be satisfied that many people make less than this in a year.
- A heavily secured smartphone for Hidden Lottery business. A printed guide on use and the provided applications is also gifted. An ordinary corporate user plan is provided in perpetuity, with the understanding that the Player will not run up abusively high fees.
- A trust fund, suitable for providing a net Player income equivalent to the median for the Player's location. This trust will adjust for inflation, and will be paid via a financial intermediary charged with administering the fund

and settling local taxation and sundry costs. There will be no “lump sum” option or similar modification to the trust by the Player.

- Lottery winners receive a yearly rebate for their entire tax bill. Thrifty types will want to keep their receipts, and small business owners may simply thank their lucky stars.
- If necessary, the administrative hurdles of acquiring a full set of current identity documents (e.g. passport) will be eliminated by the Lottery and such credentials provided. Similarly, the arrangement of suitable banking and sundry services for the Player to receive winnings.
- The use of prizes for other persons than the Player (e.g. referring family members for treatment at a Caduceus clinic) should be kept to an absolute minimum. In general, other people will be allowed only “passenger” status or a shadow of your access. Non-Player access to Vengeance, the Glass Dome or Archangel products is strictly prohibited.

## Options Available to Winners

Four options from the following list are available to each winning Player. Congratulations are in order.

### Relocation

Most of our Players are able to obtain suitable levels of employment and housing on their own (with help from their newfound income). This service takes it to a new level. We will listen attentively to your brief on your desired living situation. A Bauhaus home in forested Germany? A Manhattan loft apartment? Traditional living as the owner of a Japanese Onsen? All of these can be made available. We will take some time to gather options and then present you with choices to select. If none are suitable, we will continue to work, and if a suitable situation cannot be found within a year and a day, your choice will be “re-funded” with a gift for the inconvenience. A freehold of the land and property will be obtained for you where possible, or else you need never worry for your rent and related costs.

While we are not liable for your poor decisions (you would need to at least attempt to run your Onsen as a viable business) your insurance policy will be very reasonable, free of charge, and consist of another Relocation choice.

We tend to position Lottery assets near our Relocated winners, and this option gives you a certain amount of pull with them. Local politics will slide your way, and you need never worry that an overbearing sheriff or organised crime gang will prevail against you. Not for long, anyway. If a development does not suit your “backyard” you need only give your recommendation and we will put our all into redirecting it.

You may relocate other willing persons with additional selections of this option. You might arrange for top-class end of life care for an aged relative, or obtain a new life for a loved one trapped by visa concerns in far off lands. These choices can be held in “Trust” for when they are needed also.

Our Administrative Support arms will provide the background of paperwork and approvals needed for your new home and your immediate relocation to it. If this requires the destruction of your previous identity and a new one to be constructed, merely let us know.

This option is popular with Players currently incarcerated or desperately unhappy with their surroundings.

## **Caduceus Initiative**

One Player described this as “God’s Medical Insurance.” The appellation is apt, and is often repeated by our representatives. The Caduceus Initiative is our distributed attempt to prolong and improve human life. The cutting edge of medical technology is available, surpassing anything available to even high-income civilians.

Selecting this option will ensure lifetime membership of the Initiative, and thus immediate and first-rate treatment for any ailment. Most Players elect to attend an immediate check-up with the Initiative and a full physical (everything from hearing and eyesight to bloodwork, MRI and assessment of mental health) will be taken. Clonable stem cells and advanced bloodwork will ensure the best likelihood of rejection-free organs. Maximally effective drug regimens for a huge library of conditions are available. Prostheses and limb replacement are far in excess of the mainstream. Even cosmetic surgery and gender reassignment (with significant improvements on the accepted modern models) are available.

End of life care – including euthanasia – is provided with the utmost dignity. That being said, our medical staff are still bound by medical ethics, and will always recommend counselling over suicide for psychological complaints. You’ve won the Lottery; life isn’t so bad.

Referral from ordinary hospitals in case of emergency comes as standard. If you have a Marlin-spike security detail, they will liaise with Caduceus to provide immediate care in the event of your injury.

If tourism of the world’s glossiest hospitals is of interest, or you suffer from a pre-existing condition, this option is for you.

Picking this option twice will open up further doors. Caduceus has many children, and while we’ve spun off the cognitive enhancements (see below) you can try the brawnier side. You will gain access to the fruits of our transhumanist trees: increased muscle density, accelerated reflexes, metabolic enhancement and so on. A discreet

meeting will lay out the options, but even a habitual “couch potato” could hope to place bronze in their chosen Olympic sport with all this in their system. That, and feel like they’re fifty when they’re pushing a hundred.

## **Eidetic Technology**

An offshoot of the Caduceus Initiative, this is one of our crowning achievements. Neurotypical people look down on the dyslexic, the depressed, and sufferers of ADHD without realising they have treatable forms of the same conditions themselves. A truly “well” human being is a font of fascinating intellectual power.

Eidetic Technology have learning enhancement techniques that can turn most humans into geniuses (and even dull patients may become savants in a few areas at least). A first-class bachelor’s degree can be obtained in three months of intensive medically-supported study. An untrained individual can become a doctor in all but licensing in less than eighteen months. Not many can withstand much more direct training than that before suffering severe side effects, but the improvements to learning and cognition remain in reduced effect, and last a lifetime. Upon selection, your first meeting with ET medical staff will be arranged.

If you’ve ever felt like you operate at less than your full potential, this option is for you.

## **Apollo Interpersonal Relations Academy**

The Academy represent the finest advances in applied psychology since the Lottery’s inception. The actual advances, not the ones you learn in so-called Ivy League universities. The techniques you will learn in your studies are to negotiations what Krav Maga is to schoolyard scrapping.

Perceive, modify, and even attack the foundations of both arguments and attitudes. Cultivate the intangible qualities of charisma or terror. You won’t have mind control, and most people will only compromise so much... However, you can work wonders the longer you’re given. What tangled webs you could weave!

If you’ve ever had to repeat a joke in a crowded room, this option is for you.

## Sinecure

“We would like to thank you,” the letter will read “for accepting our offer for the role of Executive Marketing Consultant.” The job entails a working day every month, with lunch laid on, at a very nice office development nearby. You’ll be asked your opinion on the company’s marketing direction and given reports to read on the current state of the industry (but you’re rarely asked anything about them). Then there are offers of a round of golf, pats on the back and a car called around to take you home. Your recommendations, while appreciated, are not strictly necessary to the running of the business and the money would just go to the taxman if not to you.

The yearly pay has five zeros at the end. Should the worst happen to the business, a competing company will headhunt you for a nearly identical post within a calendar month. Remote working can always be negotiated.

For those so inclined, this opportunity could be spun into actual employment at the executive level, with all the risk and benefit that entails. Should things go awry, you can always trust that another lucrative opening will appear in time.

Selecting this option twice will increase your standard offered pay tenfold. After all, those who have sacrificed deserve their rewards.

## Vengeance

Commonly, our Players bear grudges. The Hidden Lottery has listened to their feedback, and with a heavy heart agrees to destroy those you deem worthy of maximum redress. Hand in your brief with as much corroborating identity information as you can, and our operations managers will do the rest. Assassination, arrest for child molestation, accident, abduction by terrorists or serial murderer... The possibilities (as the cliché has it) are endless.

This option allows for a single target per calendar year. It may be chosen multiple times, adding an additional target each time, up to three.

Please note that some targets may be refused for operational reasons, and these choices will be “refunded.” We are the invisible hand, not Shinigami. Players targeting one another will be reminded at first that their efforts are best spent

against the deserving and unenlightened. Persistent squabblers will find themselves introduced to an isolated locale together and expected to settle their differences on their own terms.

## The Glass Dome

Modern life is much like Bentham’s Panopticon. This option puts you on the other side of the glass. Our intelligence apparatus is the synthesis of the world governments’ and six of the largest technology companies in the world, and always growing. With this option, you are cleared to request information from the Glass Dome. As long as the existence of the program is not compromised, please feel free to blackmail or insider trade at your leisure.

You will need to structure your requests carefully and with specificity. Materials made available to you will be eyes-only in the strictest sense, and a careful sense of ‘parallel construction’ will be needed to use the information in the real world. Revealing the information from the Glass Dome to others directly will result in Marlinspike operatives ‘closing your contract’ without warning. More minor infractions may result in the suspension of access for set periods of time, without refund.

A limit on the number of requests will be assessed, and usually will take the form of a monthly “billable hour” budget. On receiving your request, the Dome’s staff will work up a quote and feed it back to you for confirmation. Complicated, difficult, or otherwise vexing information will quickly deplete this budget. Expect completion of requests within twelve to forty-eight hours.

Selecting this option twice will refresh your budget fortnightly, and lower the response time to the necessary minimum. You might never lose a quiz night (or boardroom battle) again.

If you ever wondered what really happened to JFK (more or less what you think, by the way) this option is for you.

## Logistics and Administrative Support

More than five million shipping containers are in transit as you read these words. Around nine thousand commercial flights soar above you. Road vehicles surround you in the billions, all scurrying to destinations around the world. We

have a significant proportion of the above in our sphere of corporate influence, and we can offer you their use.

We can source for you transit and temporary accommodation anywhere in the world. Put a request in via the appropriate secured app (or by back channel methods if necessary) and you will be provided with all the support needed to travel anywhere. You may have to wait to be routed, and final leg transportation to remote locales may take longer than piggybacking onto major routes.

This does not just take you from A to B on a global scale, but also works to speed your travel on a smaller scale. Private cars with police lights, helicopter rides, and a bottomless private car app. You would have to do something truly perverse to be late for an appointment from now on.

Hotels and other boarding accommodation will be made available as spaces allow with the businesses we control. This includes two major commuter hotel chains on the international stage, plus dozens of national concerns. You may not have long in any given place, but we will endeavour to offer you a space as near as possible, and transit between. For the modern nomad, this is an ideal choice.

Our Administrative Support arms will make visa waiting times and other impediments irrelevant. Of course, you may have to renounce any sentimental attachment to your own name, and become used to travelling using passports from dead drop sites.

### **Marlinspike Security Services**

Our security apparatus of choice, this organisation is solely run for our convenience, and recruits the best available candidates from the world's foremost intelligence services and Special Operations teams.

Rather than allowing their use as a hit squad (see Vengeance above) this option grants use of their other services. A combination of fitness and training provider (for matters military), a global purveyor of hard-to-trace firearms and ammunition, and close protection detail. A service agreement will be immediately drawn up around your needs, and followed dogmatically by local operators.

This option is highly useful for those with risky lifestyles or those electing to help us shape the free world.

### **Promotion and Weighting**

The eminent Promotion and Weighting think tank is part of our wing devoted to steering global politics. With this choice you will gain membership, be invited to attend meetings and put in votes regarding your chosen political views.

Those wondering why identity politics and the alt right (two opposing views, in essence) are so prevalent at the moment, and gathering steam, need only look at our current membership. Players seem to be predominantly picked from your demographic, and another voice in favour of one side or the other might be enough to tip a balance in your favour. Our influence is global, and given time and determination any issue can be settled for a generation.

As a side-bonus, many eminent groups and brands will seek your patronage. They will no doubt attempt to sway your opinion with gift baskets and invitations to parties. It's a little extra hassle, especially with persistent callers, but such is the price of power.

If you support a given party, have a single issue you wish to push for, or simply want the closest thing to 'a vote that matters' in modern democracy, this is for you.

### **Media Insight Association**

The Media Insight Association is a non-profit organisation looking at media trends. At least, that is what the tax returns say. In fact, it is our tool for examining and affecting media decisions. You will be given the opportunity to weigh in on what gets funded, what goes to development hell, and who is considered "in." With clever choices, you might have a profound effect on the public psyche. Alternatively, you might simply ensure the trivia of our pop culture suits your taste.

If you have a videogame series you want revived, would like to direct a movie by proxy, or want all the latest in films direct to your door (and you may dismiss awards materials, we will deliver footage direct from sets same-day) this is for you.

Picking this option twice will take your word from mere advice to direct pull in the world of the Media. Disregard the lies of other secret societies: *you will be the one rigging every Oscar night.*

### **Archangel Investments**

The cutting edge of technology moves faster than you think. With this option, you can be accelerated to match.

We hold controlling interests (sometimes this is not a euphemism) in six of the largest technology companies in the world. Our grasp extends to the shadowy folds of DARPA and the unnameable depths of black budgets. Into these places we will go, and bring you back shiny trinkets unknown to others.

You will obtain access and clearances from the Archangel Investments board, allowing you to sample prototype and pre-release technologies from across the globe. You will have your finger on the pulse of any industry you care to name. The iPhone of two years hence is yours to fondle. The next major console releases await your review. Post to message boards from a home computer based on tomorrow's processing concepts.

All we ask is that you keep these devices to yourself, at least in their details. Flash your new gewgaws all you like, but upending the markets for fun and profit will result in the summary termination of your clearance.

If you've ever sucked your teeth in frustration at a spinning circle of dots or immobile progress bar, this option will suit you.

### **The Lotus**

One of the most abiding vices of the well-to-do has always been chemical abuse. From psychotropic mushrooms to the designer drugs of tomorrow, those with means have always sought an escape from reality.

Our chemists have developed various intriguing and otherwise unknown concoctions distributed by a tame cartel known as "The Lotus." Drugs which provide a dizzying variety of experiences while remaining physiologically neutral. Neglect aside, you may rest safely in the knowledge that you will never succumb to "meth face" and that the dependency you feel is purely psychological.

### **Human Resources**

A commonly lamented woe is that one cannot get the staff. That is usually because we have them. Our intelligence network is often used to sift humanity's wheat from chaff, and you can obtain a certain amount of that wheat for yourself.

Picking this option allows you to submit a brief to our personnel database, and grants a budget for hiring them in their chosen profession. Looking for domestic staff in a given ethnicity with training in both gourmet cooking and Krav Maga? We'll do our very best. A quote will be returned as to how much of your budget is subsumed, and you will be introduced at the next possible juncture once you accept. You can be assured that a personal assistant with a high level of personal competence is right around the corner. Please bear in mind that we do not tend toward human trafficking. If you abuse your staff or the service, we will find out.

Those who travel a great deal may find a more casual *per diem* arrangement with our assets (local guides, per-project staff, or escort services) fits their needs. We are willing to negotiate.

Picking this option twice would grant a budget suitable for a small team of graduate students, a full domestic staff for a stately home, or similar.

Exclusivity arrangements preclude military hiring (but see Marlinspike above).

## Favours We Might Ask For

You may select one of these options to receive two additional picks from the previous menu. Some of the following options may necessitate financial support, if you have not picked a Sinecure. If you rely on the Lottery for additional funds, you may not have final say over how those funds are spent. Conflicts between your winnings and our needs will be adjudicated by us and not you. You have been warned.

## Fight the Good Fight

Someone has to swat away the pesky attempts of the proletariat to grasp the world's steering wheel. It could be you.

Whether an immediate position at Marlinspike Security Services or an arrangement to become a lone 'black kite' deniable asset, you will be tasked with active and violent action against the enemies of efficiency. Loyalty, dedication and initiative will all be required in vast amounts. Operational commitment will be required on request, but most agents can expect to be activated once yearly and spend much of the rest of their time divided between recuperative and training activities.

Those injured in service or aged out of the field may be moved to more administrative roles or "retired" to enjoy their winnings as appropriate.

## Shape Public Perception

We carefully select media darlings to push agendas, give exactly-worded speeches and occasionally torpedo themselves in specific scandals. These efforts are required to continue our control on public discourse. If you ever wanted to be famous, this might suit you to a tee.

You will be asked to assume a public persona (one mutually acceptable, of course) and you will find you mysteriously rise to eminence and prestige. Directives will be relayed for you to schedule your actions around, and trustworthy persons will be suggested for your personal staff.

Failure to live up to your responsibilities may result in an example being made. Living in the public eye is dangerous, and none of us are as cruel as *all* of us.

## Give Up your Dreams

Of course, we don't mean your ambitions. Our stochastic forecasting systems work best harnessing the more esoteric properties of the human mind. Gone are the days of crania in glass jars and the application of capsaicin to flayed nervous tissue. Now all that is required is a good night's sleep (much like a sleep clinic in a private hospital) and a set of adhesive electrodes. Our systems will introduce stimuli to areas of the brain associated with sensation and observe responses in other areas. This data will form part of the "seeding" of our predictive models. Further insight into the program will be provided after selection.

Membership in this program means living near one of our private neurological facilities (i.e. one of a select list of Western European capital cities) and spending nights there sleeping in a private room under the above conditions. Subjects cease to experience dream activity during sleep, and may suffer mild to moderate mental health effects (we recommend a Caduceus membership). 42 days leave from the program per calendar year are afforded.

## Working from Nine until Five

You may have wondered who selects our representatives. Who might we trust to bestow the fruits of the Hidden Lottery on the unsuspecting, the unconvinced, and the frankly unworthy? The answer is simple: our representatives select themselves. If you would be interested in continuing the Hidden Lottery, designing the Games (i.e. what tiers of winnings are available to what proportions of candidates, and tailoring their delivery), and speaking to Players, we would be thrilled to have you. Foreign Travel, luxurious surroundings, and a reasonable amount of administrative effort await you.

Expect to put in four-week stints in other countries, separated by four weeks of down time. A year-long sabbatical program is in effect. We will attempt to be understanding (but not overly lenient) employers. Those of you selecting the "Sinecure" option will find instead we will simply match pay, and you need no longer attend endless meetings with dull office drones.



## Goodbye and Good Luck

Nothing more remains, except to wish you all the best in your continued endeavours. We will be observing your continued behaviour with interest.

