



Love In The Time of Heresy

Inquisitor article dealing with an hithero unexplored emotion

By Ben Dell

In this 'Valentine's Day Special' Inquisitor article, Ben Dell explores the use of love; the most powerful human emotion and the least used in Inquisitor games. Any such rules are optional and should be taken within the context of the article – this isn't an official Inquisitor supplement!

THE LOVE OF VIOLENCE

“So, you want to write an article about using love in Inquisitor games? You sissy! What's wrong with big guns and bigger mutants, same as everyone else!”

The answer to this of course is that love and violence are not mutually exclusive; in fact they are often linked. I understand that Inquisitor is not the game of 41st Century courtly romance; we're here for a barney! What always surprises me though is how little love shows up in role-playing and gaming in general. Its like we're afraid to tackle the issue, perhaps the idea of acting like you're in love is difficult for us. This is why Inquisitor has a couple of good advantages in this field:

1. Inquisitor is about peril, it's hard to be smoochie under gunfire.
2. Inquisitor already demands players be mature-minded. So grow up 'n' give us a kiss!

Love and peril have a long-standing relationship when it comes to telling stories. It has been used in literature and movie scripts as the motivation or backdrop to all kinds of violence (see the example in the text box below) and in real life has been used as the justification for some of the most hideous crimes imaginable.

Ok, let's get loved up...

THE MECHANICS OF LOVE.

This section includes the set-up and Abilities to make love work in your game.

Relationships

Love is all about relationships, so the first thing to decide is 'who loves who'. Remember there are numerous types of love: romantic love, lust, true love, familial love, sibling love, parental love etc.

Lovers and Family

You can use the tables below as a very quick guide to sorting out a character's love situation, the easiest way to do this is split love into its familial and romantic aspects.

Love Life	Pick or roll a D10
1.	Found true love
2.	Lost true love
3.	Temporarily lost true love (kidnapped, separated etc)
4.	Waiting for true love
5.	'No-one special at the moment'
6.	'Love is only lust with lies'
7.	A doomed relationship (star crossed lovers, one has a terrible secret, fight constantly)
8.	'Lovers are just playthings'
9.	'Love is fine for others, but not me'
10.	Vow of celibacy / Incapable of love

Example Relationships: Lovers, Soul Mates, Adulterous Lovers, Spouses (Concubines), Ex-Lovers/Spouses, Siblings, Parents, Children, Grandchildren, Grandparents, Foster-Parents, Companions etc.

Family

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| 1. | Happy family life |
| 2. | Family lost for good |
| 3. | Temporarily lost family (kidnapped, separated etc) |
| 4. | 'My duty to my family is everything' (often the attitude of Nobility, Rogue Traders etc) |
| 5. | 'My family always cause me trouble' |
| 6. | One family member prized over all others |
| 7. | Family feud |
| 8. | 'My family means nothing to me' |
| 9. | Watch over family from afar (why?) |
| 10. | Outcast from family |

Pick or roll a D10

Backdrop and Motivation

Let me give you a very simple Hollywood example of the way love and violence are linked in storytelling: In Die Hard, Bruce was in the big building to kick terrorist butt, it was all about guns and heroics. However the only reason he was in the building in the first place was to patch up his marriage (that's the backdrop). His love for his estranged wife also meant he wouldn't walk away from the situation no matter how hurt or outgunned he was (that's motivation).

It's the same in Inquisitor; love is a great excuse to have a fight! Identify your Scenarios Backdrop, link it to your Character's Motivations and your games will feel much more themed and cinematic.

ABILITIES

The following Abilities are available for Characters to help simulate different aspects of love in the game.

Love OR Hate

There is a very fine line between love and hate, and the game effects of one are quite similar to another so they are listed together. The Player must nominate the person they Love/Hate.

The Character gains the Abilities: True Grit, Heroic and Force of Will in any situation involving the object of Love/Hate (GM may need to judge when this is appropriate).

Once the Character has used Love/Hate in that game they must roll against Leadership to perform any action unrelated to their Love/Hate (e.g. loading a weapon to be fired at a hated enemy is fine, ignoring a loved one dangling from a cliff to fight a Daemonhost is not). This represents the Character's thoughts being fixated on their Love/Hate and not what is the best tactical decision.

* NB - Love Ability is not a prerequisite of any other Ability listed here.

Star-Crossed Lovers OR Cursed Family

The fates do not smile kindly on your attempts to be happy with your loved ones. Any actions taken by the character involving his loved ones are considered Risky Actions (GM's judgement as to what is applicable, e.g. shooting at an enemy within 6 yards of a loved one). Additionally, the GM can force a -40 penalty on any one roll the Character makes, per game, as long as the game has something to do with the Character's loved ones.

Soul Mate

The character has found someone with whom they connect completely, whether this is their twin or their spouse they are so totally in tune they get an advantage. Both characters must take the Soul Mate Ability for it to work.

Either Character can spend an Action making a Willpower test to find out one of the following things (GM's can also require a roll).

- Is my Soul Mate in the vicinity? (Yes/No answers only, 20 Yards max range. Even if the Soul Mate is hidden they will be detected, though not seen). Willpower roll -10.
- Which direction is my Soul Mate? (Any distance, including off the gaming board). Willpower roll -20.
- What state of health is my Soul Mate in? (General description from the GM). Willpower roll -30 (or Willpower -60 if you want injury total and specific wounds).
- Is my Soul Mate in danger? (brief description, it's the GM's decision whether this is imminent or longer term danger). Willpower roll -40.
- What is my Soul Mate thinking? (Surface thoughts or a general description, GM discretion). Willpower roll -50 (or Willpower -25 if the Soul Mate is in Line of Sight).

Though they have a mystic quality, none of these Soul Mate powers are classed as psychic Abilities. GMs may decide that the Soul Mates have additional powers specific to their relationship.

Innocence

The character is truly innocent in a way that profoundly affects others; making them bolder, and unafraid to face the darkness, they also find they are very protective of the Innocent. An Innocent's warp aura glows brightly and they are often sought by Chaos cults as sacrifice to their dark masters.

The GM should determine why a Character is Innocent how they got that way; many are children born that way, and others gain the Ability for unknown reasons later in life, the 'faithful' and 'selfless' being most common.

The GM should also consider under what conditions will the Innocent Ability be lost (will it fade after a specific objective is completed? Will it fail if the Innocent attacks someone? Or if they fall in love?).

Any Character within 6 Yards must roll against Leadership; if they pass they may act as they wish. If they fail they become the Innocent's Guardian and must protect the Innocent at all costs, they gain the Bodyguard Ability and get +10 Nerve for the rest of the game.

The Innocent may only have one Guardian at a time.

Leadership Roll Modifiers:

- Totally Ruthless: +10 to the Leadership roll. The Character is judged to be without compassion.
- Another Species: +20 to the Leadership roll. The Character is of another species.
- Evil: +30 to the Leadership roll. The Character is judged to be of evil intent.
- Soulless: Immune to the Innocent Ability. The Character has no soul to be affected - these are the Daemonhosts, Champions of Chaos, Servitors, Purestrain Genestealers etc.

Innocents often have other powers associated with their state (Wyrd: Regenerate, Sanctuary etc). Many Innocents also have the Does Not Fight Ability, but it is not compulsory.

Enchanting Pheromone Gland

This mutation, often a mark of Slaanesh, allows the Character to exude a pheromonal scent that enchants anyone nearby.

Those within 6 Yards must pass a Willpower test or be at half Willpower/Leadership to any Persuasion Ability attempts by the mutant and as long as the mutant does not initiate combat anyone affected must also pass a Leadership test if they wish to attack the mutant (and each turn thereafter).

Opponents with breathing apparatus (Flugs, Rebreather etc) may add the Resistance test modifier as a bonus to their initial Willpower test to resist the pheromone.

This ability can also be gained through use of a perfume spray, sold on the Black Market for huge amounts. The only way to get this perfume is to harvest the glands of someone that has the mutation which means the bottle is a Legendary item that comes with only D3 applications, each one lasting a game.

As the perfume wearer has not produced the pheromones themselves, they are not necessarily immune. They must pass a Willpower Test each turn or take no actions that turn, as they stand enraptured in their own scent.

LOVE STORIES

Below are some possible seeds to help you bring love to your games.

They are divided into:

- Subplots – that affect one or more characters through the course of a normal game or campaign.
- Games Plots – that affect all characters involved in a single game.
- Small Campaigns – that affect all characters involved in a short group of games
- Large Campaigns – that affect all characters involved in a long series of games.

SUBPLOTS

Death of a Friend

After the death of an old friend (preferably someone who has already appeared in the campaign, or better yet a beloved henchman who recently died) the Inquisitor discovers that their last wishes were that the Inquisitor should look after their spouse or child.

Unfortunately the orphan/widow is headstrong, fairly capable and looking for revenge (or looking to join the Inquisitor's team). This should raise all sorts of issues around duty, love, grief, revenge and guardianship.

What if the killer of the old friend turned out to be someone important (like another Inquisitor or a Commissar)? Or someone important to an investigation? Would the Inquisitor let the widow/orphan get revenge? How far would they go to stop them?

Love Affair/A Lover Scorned

This subplot begins with the Character being aided by a capable NPC. Someone interested in the same goals, but for a different reason (perhaps a bounty hunter, a Rogue Trader, or rival Inquisitor). It becomes obvious from their banter that they are romantically interested in the character.

If the character responds, they gain a lover, someone to look out for them and that they must look out for (cue, all sorts of situations where the loved one is in jeopardy). If the character doesn't respond or rejects the NPC's advances they become increasingly psychotic (read: a bunny boiler). If this has been set up right, it might take the character a game or two to notice that the NPC is taking subtle opportunities to hurt the character.

At this point the NPC disappears with words of vengeance on their lips to return at the most inopportune moments in games to hinder and hurt the character and their companions. Perhaps they even begin to mastermind attacks on the character, or set the character up as a heretic etc.

GAME PLOTS

Guardian Angel

This can be played as a game for one player Warband and one NPC force. If so, the Warband must protect two lovers from a daemonic curse and the cult intent on fulfilling it. Is the curse because one of the lovers is special in some way? Or is it because of their love?

As a game for 2 player Warbands, the game would be set up slightly different. One Warband is intent on saving the two lovers from the daemonic curse and preventing the daemonic summoning. The other Warband, having studied the Imperial Tarot realise that if the lovers live they will cause untold disaster to the Imperium even if the daemon isn't summoned.

Kidnap

The loved one of one of the characters has been kidnapped in an attempt to get the character to co-operate by handing over evidence, an artefact or just for money. Perhaps the best reason might be as a trade for another captive. Obviously, the las-beams will start flying soon enough. This works both as a single player and two-player game (as long as the hostages are both too important just to kill).

SMALL CAMPAIGNS

Romeo (& Juliet) Must Die

This is a good short campaign to throw in for 2 Warbands who have become intractable foes over the course of previous campaigns. Over the course of a couple of games two of the characters (one from each Warband) fall in love. This might be the result of a Psychic power, shared peril during one of the games, an ancient Eldar curse repeating itself on new victims or perhaps whilst off gathering information between games they met up by accident and fell in love.

Obviously with such violently opposed teammates their love will not be condoned (you could introduce a 3rd player to control the 2 lovers). Will one defect to the other side? Will they both run away and start new lives (or a new Warband)? Whatever happens you can guarantee the 2 rival Warbands will blame each other and the traitorous lovers as well.

Meet the Family

An aged Inquisitor, in semi retirement is drawn into the field once more, picking up old allies along the way when an old enemy threatens his family.

This would work best with a retired Warband brought out for one last campaign, battling to reach the family. If they've been inactive for a while reduce some stats. Maybe the Inquisitor's family is also linked to his allies, a former guardsman in love with the Inquisitor's granddaughter etc. Who is the old enemy? Why have they decided to goad the Inquisitor back into the field? As Inquisitors never really retire, what research, information gathering or court prosecutions has he been up to? Could this be the real reason behind the attack?

LARGE CAMPAIGNS

Sins of the Father

From a few isolated incidents suddenly everywhere on the agri-world of Ithlan, children are rising up against their parents and authority figures in bloody acts of violence and murder. When captured they are feral and glaze eyed, claiming only that 'the Father' told them to do it, that only he loves them and that he is coming for them...

Warbands can be just investigating but the campaign takes a much darker turn if all the Warbands involved include at least one parent, sibling, or aunt/uncle of the afflicted children. What daemon or cult or alien influence has corrupted these children? Who is the Father? Will the Warbands fight with lethal weapons or just try to stun? Will a show of love and reason break the spell? What if the affliction needs quarantining or is fatal? How hard will the Warbands fight to get a miracle cure if there's not enough to go around?

The Book of Love

A rumour surfaces in the Sector of an ancient text, from the time when the Emperor still walked among us. This text would be a priceless holy relic in itself but it is said that one chapter in the text reveals the Emperor had a concubine lover for a short time. The mere rumour of such a thing would be enough to rip the Imperium to pieces in bloody schisms if it got out.

As always the Inquisition is at the forefront of the secret war that follows as Inquisitors, collectors, Ecclesiarchs, and Imperial Cults scour the local worlds for any clues of the text.

Is the text real? Is it a hoax? Who has it? Will it ever be allowed to surface? How far will someone go to ensure that it doesn't? What happened to the concubine? Did she have a child? Is there a secret Imperial lineage...Probably not, but what the hell is your campaign.

Love Conquers All

Finally, don't forget you can plagiarise any TV show, movie or book for ideas on how love and peril are linked, it's not that hard.

There's not a lot more I can say about love in Inquisitor. The fact that it still exists among the cold unforgiving stars is probably enough in itself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ben Dell has now written quite a few articles for Inquisitor. When not tinkering and playing with Inquisitors Ben also likes to play with his gangs in Necromunda.