

Samples – The Art of War versus The Art of Pool

[To Get the PDF Book](#)
(best for all smart devices)

These are some sample pages from the book by
[Allan P. Sand, Author](#)

Click for Printed books:

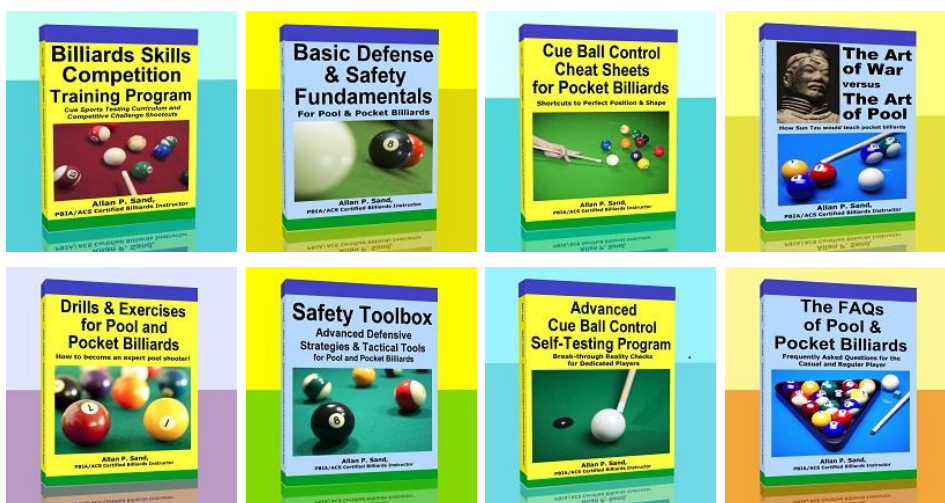


Table of Contents

The Art of War versus The Art of Pool

Introduction & welcome

01 Calculations

02 Waging war

03 Planning attacks

04 Tactical dispositions

05 Energy

06 Weakness and strength

07 Maneuvering

08 Variation in tactics

09 Maneuvers

10 Terrain

11 The nine situations

12 Attack by fire

13 Use of spies

Translations of Other Books

The Art of War versus The Art of Pool

These are sample pages from the book. The book provides some of the philosophic attitudes necessary to be an effective competitor. Using Sun Tzu's strategic and tactical recommendations will help you win more games.

Introduction & welcome

The words of the famous and ancient Chinese general Sun Tzu have been read, studied, and applied by millions of students of warfare and those who compare their livelihood to be a similar life and death competition. Many advisors to the movers and shakers of the world have made their fortunes by converting Sun Tzu's words into the strategies and tactics of business and politics.

Many aspects of this 2500 year old treatise on how to wage war have a direct application to the tactics and strategies used in games played upon pocket billiard tables. This book is a presentation of those similarities. For the differences between actual war and pool, read the *Concept of pool* in the **Notes** section at the end of the book.

Sun Tzu's comments that do not have a similar match in the competitions of pool are still included. In order to study this properly, read the words of Sun Tzu's Art of War in the *ITALIC* font. Then, to learn its particular application in pool, read the corresponding commentary of the Art of Pool in the *REGULAR* font.

Read the first part, then the second. Stop and consider how the information can be used in your playing strategies and tactics. With the new viewpoint, reconsider the choices you made in your past competitions.

As you become aware of these new ways of thinking, your viewpoint will shift and adjust. You will see aspects of the game that previously were hidden. These discoveries belong to you and you alone. This is your personal voyage of discovery that leads to your new realization. The application of that knowledge will stay with you until the last day you ever pick up a stick.

01 Calculations

Commentary: Much of the philosophy put forth in this book depends on learning to make wise decisions. It is not skills that are important - any skill can be learned through simple repetition; it is the use of your wise decisions. The study to learn mastery can only begin when you decide to become the Intelligent player. That can only occur when you realize that well-designed strategies and capable tactics are the greatest part of the Green Game.

The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

The art of pool is of vital importance to you. Your enthusiasm and passion is a major part of your life. When you win it brings joy to the day. When you lose, it is a negative experience causing a depressing viewpoint of life.

Regardless of joy or depression, the participants come back to the table. The game and challenge is a great matter.

The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field. These are:

- *Moral Law - causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.*
- *Heaven - signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.*
- *Earth - comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.*
- *Commander - stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage and strictness.*
- *Method and discipline - the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.*

These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

The learning of the art of pool depends on these six fundamental factors. These are the basics upon which you are able to become the Intelligent player.

- Experience. This begins from the time you first picked up a stick through today. It is the sum total of your successes and failures in the hundreds and thousands of shots made on the pool table.
- Physical skills. The physical skills are the level of control you have in cue ball spin and speed. The closer the results to your intentions, the greater the mastery of physical skills.
- Mental skills. These are the calculations used to develop strategic plans and apply the appropriate tactics. Such effort depends on a realistic analysis of self and opponent.
- Knowledge. Information gained from many sources. It is the analytical observations of your opponents and monitored matches. This is coordinated with information learned from tutors, mentors, instructors, books, videos, etc.
- Self-discipline. This maintains control of your emotions. It keeps you focused on the immediate tasks as you advance your intentions. It helps you keep impulsive behavior under control. It is summed up in a collection of rules – when followed, improves your chances of winning; and if not, regularly leads to less successful results.
- Wisdom. This is more important than skills – it is maturity, based on considering situations in their true light. It combines all of the above. It is advanced when you study your mistakes, work out the real reason why, and find solutions to prevent future repetitions.

The player who understands these will win the majority of the time.

<more of this in the book>

02 Waging war

In the operations of war, where there are in the field a thousand swift chariots, as many heavy chariots, and a hundred thousand mail-clad soldiers, with provisions enough to carry them a thousand Li (500 km), the expenditure at home and at the front, including entertainment of

guests, small items such as glue and paint, and sums spent on chariots and amour, will reach the total of a thousand ounces of silver per day. Such is the cost of raising an army of 100,000 men.

The requirements of a serious player are these:

- Two quality cue sticks (with spare shafts) in a case - one for playing, one for breaking.
- Playing accessories (chalk, tip dresser, gloves, towel, etc.)
- Adequate transportation
- Access to a practice table (10 hours a week recommended)
- Local tournament entries (2 per month, minimum)
- Competitive matches (2-3 per week)
- Snacks (enough to keep away any hunger pangs)
- Funds to pay for expenses
- Mentor (at least 30-40 years of experience)
- Season-appropriate clothing

<more of this in the book>

03 Planning attacks

In the practical art of war, the best thing of all is to take the enemy's country whole and intact; to shatter and destroy it is not so good. So, too, it is better to capture an army entire than to destroy it, to capture a regiment, a detachment or a company entire than to destroy them.

Always allow your opponent to retain his dignity in defeat. Do not, during or after the competition, humiliate him either by attitude or words.

Engendering bad feelings gives reason for him and his allies to find ways to defeat you, directly or indirectly. If you create ill-wishers, eventually they will be of sufficient numbers and influence to cause actual harm, either financially or to your reputation. Far better that, when triumphant, you are generous and benevolent towards your opponent. (If your opponent is an

ass, maintain outward courtesy, but it is acceptable to take great personal satisfaction in winning.)

Hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting.

Winning against opponents is not the greatest pleasure. The true enjoyment is winning because of your management and control of the table through the application of superior strategy and tactics.

Thus the highest form of generalship is to baulk the enemy's plans; the next best is to prevent the junction of the enemy's forces; the next in order is to attack the enemy's army in the field; and the worst policy of all is to besiege walled cities.

The best competitive approach uses strategies of offense and defense tailored to your opponent, combined with fluid tactical responses to table conditions. The next best is a straight-forward continuous denial of opportunities. The worst approach is the use of total offense without regard to consequences.

<more of this in the book>

04 Tactical dispositions

The good fighters of old first put themselves beyond the possibility of defeat, and then waited for an opportunity of defeating the enemy.

To secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself.

To advance your skills requires discipline, study and training. This is how to become a tough and skilled competitor. What is not under your control is when or how your opponent makes mistakes. You can provide opportunities for him to make mistakes, but it is the opponent who must commit the error in skill or judgment. The majority of your wins occur because your opponent made one or more mistakes. (Rarely do you win solely on your offensive capabilities.)

Thus the good fighter is able to secure himself against defeat, but cannot make certain of defeating the enemy.

Preparations can be made for many contingencies. Plans can be developed to handle any imaginable situation. But no level of preparation can cause an opponent to make an error. You must be alert for this prospect when it becomes available.

Hence the saying: One may know how to conquer without being able to do it.

A player can be known for making skillful shots, but cannot often win.

<more of this in the book>

05 Energy

The control of a large force is the same in principle as the control of a few men: it is merely a question of dividing up their numbers. Fighting with a large army under your command is nowise different from fighting with a small one: it is merely a question of instituting signs and signals.

There is little real difference between the concept of pocketing three balls in a row and being able to run a table. This can be done with a plan, for example, dividing the table into groups of two and three ball sequences. With this plan, then the only requirement is to play each shot one at a time.

Note: Your mistakes are your guide to what you need to learn.

To ensure that your whole host may withstand the brunt of the enemy's attack and remain unshaken - this is affected by maneuvers direct and indirect. That the impact of your army may be like a grindstone dashed against an egg - this is effected by the science of weak points and strong.

The Intelligent player chooses offensive plans when table layouts are open. Where there are complications, defensive options are evaluated. In such cases, design your shots to manage your opponent's choices. This allows you to play your strengths against his weaknesses.

In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory.

Games are won with pocketing and cue ball positioning skills. It is rare to run out to a win from the opening of the game. This

means that you must make flexible decisions as table conditions require.

Indirect tactics, efficiently applied, are inexhaustible as Heaven and Earth, unending as the flow of rivers and streams; like the sun and moon, they end but to begin anew; like the four seasons, they pass away to return once more. There are not more than five musical notes, yet the combinations of these five give rise to more melodies than can ever be heard. There are not more than five primary colors, yet in combination they produce more hues than can ever been seen. There are not more than five cardinal tastes, yet combinations of them yield more flavors than can ever be tasted.

The same skills necessary to pocket balls and position the cue ball are easily adaptable to a wide variety of defensive shots that deny opportunities to your opponent. The choices available are limited only to your imagination and cleverness.

<more of this in the book>

06 Weakness and strength

Whoever is first in the field and awaits the coming of the enemy, will be fresh for the fight; whoever is second in the field and has to hasten to battle will arrive exhausted.

When coming to a competition, arrive early enough to scope out the playing environment (even if it is already familiar). Get a look at the competition listing to identify players you know and don't. Identify others who have also come early. Walk through the competition area, checking the tables, cushions, and pockets. When possible, run through some favorite drills, leisurely pocket several racks, just enough to start warming up. About an hour before the match starts, stop and find a comfortable location to relax. Observe late arrivals and judge their readiness.

Therefore the clever combatant imposes his will on the enemy, but does not allow the enemy's will to be imposed on him.

The Intelligent player controls the opportunities that an opponent has. When you must let him come to the table, you select the layout you want to provide. Even as you do this, be watchful if he attempts to control your options.

07 Maneuvering

Having collected an army and concentrated his forces, he must blend and harmonize the different elements thereof before pitching his camp

At the competition, you must have sufficient self-discipline to keep your attention and focus on the game being played.

After that, comes tactical maneuvering, than which there is nothing more difficult.

You must own a large library of tactical options. Many of the options will have been learned from difficult experiences.

The difficulty of tactical maneuvering consists in turning the devious into the direct, and misfortune into gain.

Each of your shot choices must support both small and large goals, while also working to maintain necessary subterfuges.

Thus, to take a long and circuitous route, after enticing the enemy out of the way, and though starting after him, to contrive to reach the goal before him, shows knowledge of the artifice of deviation.

The early part of the match must construct an image in your opponent's mind that you are less than you really are. This may include allowing one or more intentional losses. Subsequent to this, you can then focus on the management of the table to your benefit.

<more of this in the book>

08 Variation in tactics

In war, the general receives his commands from the sovereign, collects his army and concentrates his forces

When you prepare for a match you must align your priorities. Exclude thoughts of life outside the pool table, relationships, work, and everything else. For the length of the competition, your world is the pool table.

When in difficult country, do not encamp. In country where high roads intersect, join hands with your allies. Do not linger in dangerous

isolated positions. In hemmed-in situations, you must resort to stratagem. In a desperate position, you must fight.

On arriving at a competition, maintain a low profile. Greet friends and acquaintances in a low-key manner. Use distant courtesy as a shield to eliminate attention. This ensures you do not reveal unnecessary information and opponents do not consider you to be dangerous – until at the table.

<more of this in the book>

09 Maneuvers

We come now to the question of encamping the army, and observing signs of the enemy.

- *Pass quickly over mountains, and keep in the neighborhood of valleys. Camp in high places, facing the sun. Do not climb heights in order to fight. So much for mountain warfare.*
- *After crossing a river, you should get far away from it. When an invading force crosses a river in its onward march, do not advance to meet it in mid-stream. It will be best to let half the army get across, and then deliver your attack. If you are anxious to fight, you should not go to meet the invader near a river which he has to cross. Moor your craft higher up than the enemy, and facing the sun. Do not move up-stream to meet the enemy. So much for river warfare.*
- *In crossing salt-marshes, your sole concern should be to get over them quickly, without any delay. If forced to fight in a salt-marsh, you should have water and grass near you, and get your back to a clump of trees. So much for operations in salt-marshes.*
- *In dry, level country, take up an easily accessible position with rising ground to your right and on your rear, so that the danger may be in front, and safety lie behind. So much for campaigning in flat country.*

These are the four useful branches of military knowledge which enabled the Yellow Emperor to vanquish four several sovereigns.

On analyzing your opponent to determine how best to manage him, these are the elements to be identified:

- Determine the quality of his shot execution: stroke, stance, rhythm, speed, accuracy, cue ball control.
- Determine his BPI (balls per inning) average.
- Confirm the quality of his abilities to make good tactical choices.
- Confirm his abilities to manage the cue ball from position to position.
- Identify bad habits that can be used: jacking the stick up on a rail shot, awkward stance, super long bridge, poor follow-through, etc.
- Evaluate his personality and attitude. Is he quick tempered? Is he easily upset on missing? Is he a fast or slow player?
- Look for his comfort/chaos zone. What angles and distances are difficult? Any weaknesses on banking or kicking?

These are aspects of your opponent that you must study and learn. With this information, you can manage any table layout to avoid his strengths and play to his weaknesses.

<more of this in the book>

10 Terrain

We may distinguish six kinds of terrain, to wit: (1) Accessible ground; (2) entangling ground; (3) temporizing ground; (4) narrow passes; (5) precipitous heights; (6) positions at a great distance from the enemy.

- *(1) Ground which can be freely traversed by both sides is called accessible. With regard to ground of this nature, be before the enemy in occupying the raised and sunny spots, and carefully guard your line of supplies. Then you will be able to fight with advantage.*
- *(2) Ground which can be abandoned but is hard to re-occupy is called entangling. From a position of this sort, if the enemy is unprepared, you may sally forth and defeat him. But if the enemy is prepared for your coming, and you fail to defeat him, then, return being impossible, disaster will ensue.*

Samples – The Art of War versus The Art of Pool

- (3) *When the position is such that neither side will gain by making the first move, it is called temporizing ground. In a position of this sort, even though the enemy should offer us an attractive bait, it will be advisable not to stir forth, but rather to retreat, thus enticing the enemy in his turn; then, when part of his army has come out, we may deliver our attack with advantage.*
- (4) *With regard to narrow passes, if you can occupy them first, let them be strongly garrisoned and await the advent of the enemy. Should the enemy forestall you in occupying a pass, do not go after him if the pass is fully garrisoned, but only if it is weakly garrisoned.*
- (5) *With regard to precipitous heights, if you are beforehand with your adversary, you should occupy the raised and sunny spots, and there wait for him to come up. If the enemy has occupied them before you, do not follow him, but retreat and try to entice him away.*
- (6) *If you are situated at a great distance from the enemy, and the strength of the two armies is equal, it is not easy to provoke a battle, and fighting will be to your disadvantage.*

These six are the principles connected with Earth. The general who has attained a responsible post must be careful to study them.

Depending on your skills, table options can be wide open, open, clustered, difficult, and do or die. These are some ways in which you can address these situations to make wiser choices.

- A wide open table has only a few balls in easy to make positions. The pattern for the run-out is simple. Do not become careless. Ensure that every action is planned and executed under control.
- An open table is one that can be run (dependent on the balls per inning average). The process to run-out should be started but will need back-up options if any shot gets out of line.
- A clustered table means one or more balls are tied up in a group that prevents a run-out. When to open the cluster depends on table circumstances and opponent's skills.
- A difficult table has multiple problems, such as balls in clusters, blocking pockets, and in dead zones. This type of

layout requires a plan to develop properly that considers both offensive and defensive choices at each shot choice.

- A do or die table occurs when you must run out to the end. If you don't, you lose.

It is your responsibility to recognize the conditions and apply the correct tactics.

<more of this in the book>

11 The nine situations

The art of war recognizes nine varieties of ground: (1) dispersive ground, (2) facile ground, (3) contentious ground, (4) open ground, (5) ground of intersecting highways, (6) serious ground, (7) difficult ground;, (8) hemmed-in ground, (9) desperate ground

- *(1) When a chieftain is fighting in his own territory, it is dispersive ground.*
- *(2) When he has penetrated into hostile territory, but to no great distance, it is facile ground.*
- *(3) Ground the possession of which imports great advantage to either side, is contentious ground.*
- *(4) Ground on which each side has liberty of movement is open ground.*
- *(5) Ground which forms the key to three contiguous states, so that he who occupies it first has most of the Empire at his command, is a ground of intersecting highways.*
- *(6) When an army has penetrated into the heart of a hostile country, leaving a number of fortified cities in its rear, it is serious ground.*
- *(7) Mountain forests, rugged steeps, marshes and fens - all country that is hard to traverse: this is difficult ground.*
- *(8) Ground which is reached through narrow gorges, and from which we can only retire by tortuous paths, so that a small number of the enemy would suffice to crush a large body of our men: this is hemmed in ground.*

- *(9) Ground on which we can only be saved from destruction by fighting without delay, is desperate ground.*

Therefore,

- *(1) On dispersive ground, fight not.*
- *(2) On facile ground, halt not.*
- *(3) On contentious ground, attack not.*
- *(4) On open ground, do not try to block the enemy's way.*
- *(5) On the ground of intersecting highways, join hands with your allies.*
- *(6) On serious ground, gather in plunder.*
- *(7) In difficult ground, keep steadily on the march.*
- *(8) On hemmed-in ground, resort to stratagem.*
- *(9) On desperate ground, fight.*

There are many types of competitions that can be played.

- Where two players compete in their home pool hall, this is a home competition. The competitive terms will vary from friendly matches to small bets.
- Where one goes to an opponent's pool hall, usually with a team for a set of matches, this is a league competition.
- Where one competes in a locally scheduled event, you will have some familiarity with the location. This is a small tournament competition.
- Where tables are available as part of community services, such as a senior center, this is casual competition.
- Where qualifier events are scheduled, usually for entry to higher levels, these are regional tournament competitions.
- Where you enter an unfamiliar bar with unknown rules, this is friendly bar competition (only as long as no bets are being made).

- Where you play at a bar at a much lower class level that you are familiar with, this is a dangerous bar competition.
- Where you play at expensive high class pool halls, you are subject to higher standards of play and dress. This is an upper social class competition.
- Where you compete in tournaments with a one loss and out, this is a single elimination tournament.
- Where you compete in a tournament where two losses are required to lose, this is a double elimination tournament.
- *<more of this in the book>*

Therefore,

- Respect the unofficial standards of conduct of the places you play
- If you don't know the rules of play, ask.
- Dress and act appropriately.
- Do not over-consume alcohol.
- *<more of this in the book>*

12 Attack by fire

Note: Pool competitions do not require the use of fire as a tactical tool. Therefore, the focus used by *The Art of Pool* segment for this chapter is based on responses to table layouts. Every shot requires an analysis and a decision. The varieties of options depend on the complexity of the layout and your experience in addressing similar circumstances. In this way, consider the use of tactical difficulties to create dismaying circumstances as the equivalent of using fire to destroy an opponent's abilities to fight.

There are five ways of attacking with fire.

- *First is to burn soldiers in their camp;*
- *Second is to burn stores;*

- *Third is to burn baggage-trains;*
- *Fourth is to burn arsenals and magazines;*
- *Fifth is to hurl dropping fire amongst the enemy.*

In order to carry out an attack with fire, we must have means available. The material for raising fire should always be kept in readiness.

There are tactical plans that can be applied to any table layout:

- Full offensive - a decision to win the game in one inning, purely by offense.
- Partial offensive - a pre-defined set of balls are pocketed and then a defensive tactic is applied.
- Two-way - speed and spin is calculated so that if made, the cue ball is positioned for another shot. If missed, the cue ball position is at a poor location.
- Full defense - the basic purpose is to provide a table layout that the opponent will find, at the least, uncomfortable.

<more of this in the book>

13 Use of spies

NOTE: The following adaptation of this chapter is defined as you doing your own spying. It is your observations and correct conclusions that will lead to being the effective competitor. Information learned can be strategic or tactical. When you gain strategic information that changes your tactical choices when you play against your opponent. New tactical information modifies your choices and how you implement them.

Raising a host of a hundred thousand men and marching them great distances entails heavy loss on the people and a drain on the resources of the State. The daily expenditure will amount to a thousand ounces of silver.

It is expensive to go on the road to compete.

Samples – The Art of War versus The Art of Pool

There will be commotion at home and abroad, and men will drop down exhausted on the highways. As many as seven hundred thousand families will be impeded in their labor.

The preparation process will disrupt your playing routines.

Hostile armies may face each other for years, striving for the victory which is decided in a single day. This being so, to remain in ignorance of the enemy's condition simply because one grudges the outlay of a hundred ounces of silver in honors and emoluments, is the height of inhumanity. One who acts thus is no leader of men, no present help to his sovereign, no master of victory.

Spend some funds on introducing yourself to local players and observers. Take time to buy a couple of drinks and make friends from whom you can collect local information.

Thus, what enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is foreknowledge.

Having advanced knowledge about competitors can give you an edge. From such information, you can determine skill levels, problem areas, habits, and other useful details.

<more of this in the book>

Translations of Other Books

These are links to descriptions for the books that have been translated to other languages:

- [Advanced Cue Ball Control](#)
- [Cue Ball Control Cheat Sheets](#)
- [Drills & Exercises](#)

All books are available on Amazon (printed) and ebook (PDF).

[*Afrikaans \(Afrikaanse Taal\)*](#)

[*Albanian \(Gjuha shqipe\)*](#)

[*Belarusian \(Беларуская мова\)*](#)

[*Bulgarian \(български език\)*](#)

[**Chinese \(中国语言\)**](#)

由 Gerry Chen 翻译

[*Croatian \(Hrvatski jezik\)*](#)

[*Czech \(český jazyk\)*](#)

[*Danish \(Dansk sprog\)*](#)

[*Dutch \(Nederlandse taal\)*](#)

[*Filipino \(Tagalog wika\)*](#)

[*Finnish \(Suomen kielen\)*](#)

[*French \(Langue*](#)

[*Française\)*](#)

[*German \(Deutsch Sprache\)*](#)

[**Greek \(ελληνική**](#)

[**γλώσσα\)**](#)

Μεταφράστηκε από τον Χρήστο Μπακάλη

[*Hindi \(हिन्दी भाषा\)*](#)

[*Hungarian \(Magyar Nyelv\)*](#)

[*Indonesian \(bahasa*](#)

[*Indonesia bahasa\)*](#)

[**Italian \(Lingua Italiana\)**](#)

Tradotto da Carlo Volpicelli

[*Japanese \(日本語\)*](#)

[*Korean \(한국어\)*](#)

[*Lithuanian \(Lietuvių Kalba\)*](#)

[*Malay \(Bahasa Melayu\)*](#)

[*Norwegian \(Norske Språk\)*](#)

[*Polish \(Język Polski\)*](#)

[*Portuguese \(Idioma*](#)

[*Português\)*](#)

[*Romanian \(Limba Română\)*](#)

[*Russian \(Русский язык\)*](#)

[*Serbian \(Српском језику\)*](#)

[**Spanish \(Idioma**](#)

[**Español\)**](#)

Traducido por Iñaki Gulín

[*Swedish \(Svenska Språket\)*](#)

[*Turkish \(Türk dili\)*](#)

[*Ukrainian \(Українська*](#)

[*мова\)*](#)

[*Vietnamese \(Tiếng Việt\)*](#)

Copyright © 2014 Allan P. Sand

All rights reserved.

Published by Billiard Gods Productions.

2627 Pilot Knob Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95051

U.S.A.