

Nameless Horror

VERSION# 0.1

a story game by Nick Wedig

WHAT IS THIS GAME?

This is a horror roleplaying game (storytelling game?) that I'm working on writing. It doesn't have a title yet, as you may have noticed above. It will work for three or more players. It should be done in one or two sessions of play. There's no Game Master, no character sheets and no math.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Players each control a player character (PC) who are entangled in a terrifying situation. The players work together to narrate the world's setting and introduce terrors and such.

You have a deck of Tarot like cards. (You could use actual Tarot cards if you liked.) When important decisions need to be made in the game, you draw a card. Then you ask another player to interpret how the card applies to the scene. Then you ask another player for a different interpretation. Then you choose which of these player's interpretations is true. Give that player the authority marker that you just invoked.

INTERPRET THE CARD?

It isn't hard. Each card has a title, a phrase giving some sort of meaning and a (hopefully evocative) image. You think about the card as symbolic of what is happening in the game. Look for connections and meanings. Relate the images on the card to the characters and things in the scene. Explain how the story might go according to that card's meaning. If you need a moment to think, tell the asker that and come up with an idea. Don't be afraid to suggest the obvious answer. Don't be afraid to steal the other interpreter's answer and make it better, too.

SO WHEN DO I INTERPRET CARDS?

During character creation, you'll ask several questions and provide several answers. While playing, there are three 'authorities'. The person holding the **Beginnings** authority decides how scenes start. The holder of **Endings** decides how scenes resolve for our characters. The player with **Horrors** can decide at any point in a scene to introduce bizarre, terrifying supernatural events.

SO HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

First everyone should pick a scenario. Each scenario is made to focus the game toward a specific manifestation of the horror or thriller genres. The scenario will give you a little bit of background and starting information. It will also give you a set of questions used in character creation.

LET'S MAKE SOME CHARACTERS!

Great. First, come up with a simple one-sentence character concept. Are you a rich old widow or a brash young teenage quarterback? Once you have a basic character concept, go around the table asking questions. There are six standard questions that should be asked every time. Your scenario will give you several more. When it is your turn, pick a question to ask, draw a card and ask two players for answers. Pick the answer that you like better. Keep taking turns asking questions until all the questions have been asked at least once.

ALL DONE. NOW WHAT?

Now you're ready to start playing the actual game. distribute the Beginnings, Endings and Horror markers to some players and have the Beginnings player draw a card to start the first scene.

WHO GETS THE AUTHORITIES TO START?

I don't know. Hell, do I have to decide everything? This is still a pretty rough idea here, man.

Credit where credit is due

Some of the scenarios are taken wholesale from *Unknown Armies*, 2nd edition, by Greg Stolze and John Tynes. Some of the questions come from Brainer moves in *Apocalypse World* by D. Vincent Baker. This game's basic system is a mashup of *A Penny for My Thoughts* by Paul Tevis and *Ganagagok* by Bill White. Images for the cards were gathered online, but I don't have any data on where they came from any more (sorry!).

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