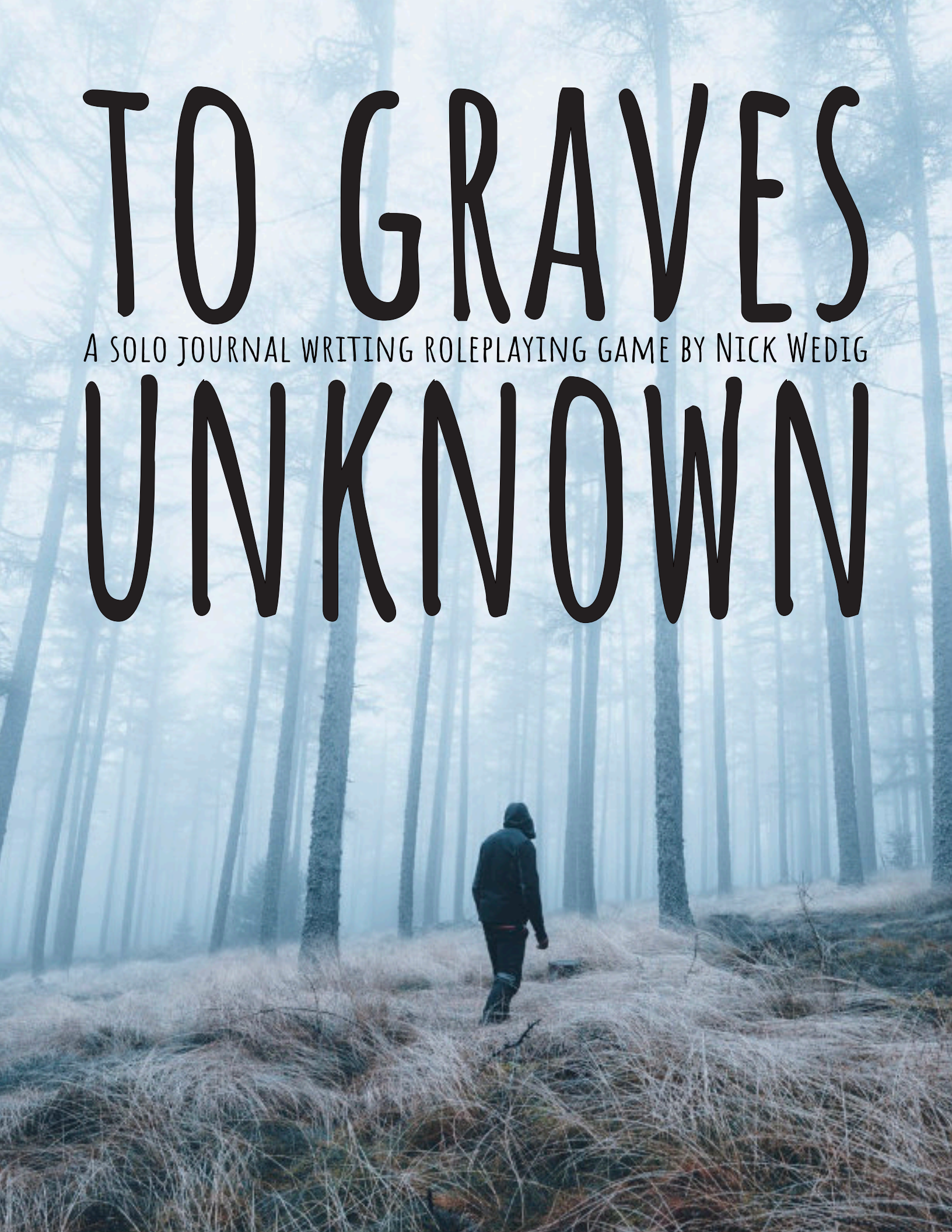


TO GRAVES

A SOLO JOURNAL WRITING ROLEPLAYING GAME BY NICK WEDIG

UNKNOWN



Something strange and ominous has happened. You are the lone investigator trying to find answers.

This is a journal-writing game for a single player. It recreates the narrative format of a supernatural mystery podcast like *Limetown*, *TANIS*, or *Video Palace*. (If you like the results of play, you could record your journal entries as a podcast. That would be pretty cool. Let me know if you do that.)

To play this game, you will need a notebook or other method of recording your journaling. You will also need three visually distinct sets of dice, with d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20. Each set of dice represents a narrative thread that connects the events of your story. Each time you create a new entry, you will roll one die from each set. You will answer the question about the narrative thread whose die rolled highest. You begin with a d20 for the Unknown, and d12s in the other threads. Over the course of the game, this will change.

As you play, you write entries in the voice of a fictional investigator. Who is your investigator? Do they often investigate strange mysteries, or are they an ordinary person drawn into a web of mystery?

The story of the game consists of three interconnected mysteries, which you will learn about through play.

One set of dice will represent **The Unknown**. This is the central mystery that draws your investigator into this story. On the surface, it might appear entirely mundane, like a missing person, murder, or burglary. The best mysteries have a personal connection to your investigator.

DECIDE NOW: *What mystery must you find the answer to?*

The second set of dice represents **The Uncanny**. This is a mystery that is seemingly supernatural, impossible or inexplicable. As you investigate this thread, you might discover the true nature of this supernatural phenomenon.

DECIDE NOW: *What preternatural experience did you have that you cannot explain?*

The third set represents **The Ominous**. As you investigate this plot thread, your investigator's life will be put in jeopardy by some strange entity, group or force. Over time, you might be able to discover the cause of these harrowing experiences.

DECIDE NOW: *How has your life been threatened in a bizarre way? What do you seek to understand about these dangers?*

For all three of these mysteries, you want to make sure that you, the player, don't know the truth about them when you start play. You may have ideas or theories, but you must leave them vague. Let the mystery grow in your mind as you play. Create clues and connections as you play, and weave the story together as you discover it. Let yourself be surprised with where the story goes.

The the game will consist of writing entries in your journal, recording your investigator's experience as they uncover the mysteries.

For each entry in the journal, roll three dice, one for each thread. (Initially, this will be one d20 and two d12s.) Take the die that rolled highest. Answer the question that corresponds to the number that you rolled, and answer it about the mystery thread of the die that rolled that number. Write as much or as little as you need to feel that you have answered the question. When you finish writing, decrease that thread's die size by one level (from d20 to d12, d12 to d10, d10 to d8, etc). In future rolls, use the new die for that thread, until the thread decreases in size once again. If a thread at d4 decreases, then treat all future rolls as if that thread had rolled a 1.

If there is a tie for the highest die, then your answer is a link between the two narrative threads.

Don't decrease the thread dice. Instead, cross out the question you rolled. If you roll a crossed out question later on, treat it like you had rolled the next lower number instead.

THE QUESTIONS:

13+ *Why are you the only person who will seek the truth about this mystery?*

12 *What makes you so curious that you'll risk bizarre dangers to find the truth about this thread?*

11 *What unusual or disturbing clue do you discover related to this thread?*

10 *What shadowy, remote, dangerous or forbidden places does your investigation take you to?*

9 *Who knows something about this plot thread? Why won't they tell you what they know?*

8 *How does investigating this thread put you or someone you care about in danger?*

7 *What major secret do you uncover investigating this thread?*

6 *How are you harmed or betrayed by someone involved in this investigation?*

5 *What surprising new information makes you doubt what you knew about this thread?*

4 *What desperate move or painful sacrifice do you make to find answers concerning this thread?*

3 **HOW IS THIS THREAD'S MYSTERY ANSWERED IN THE WORST POSSIBLE WAY FOR YOU? ***

2 **WHY WILL YOU NEVER FIND THE ANSWER TO THIS THREAD'S MYSTERY? ***

1 **HOW DOES THIS THREAD RESOLVE IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY FOR YOU? ***

*** DON'T ROLL THIS THREAD'S DIE ANY MORE.**

*This game originally appeared in the December 2020 In*Die RPG Zine. You should check that out as well.*

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INSPIRATIONS: *TANIS, Limetown, Video Palace, Mirrors, The Left/Right Game, The Lovecraft Investigations, Alice Isn't Dead, the videogame Oxenfree*