

This Place is Haunted

A haunting freeform LARP for 4+ campers

by Jay Treat in 2016

Bring these rules, some ketchup or similar red coloring, and flashlights for at least half your players. Wait until dusk or later and form a circle around the campfire. Take turns reading the remaining text. After you read a block of text, put your thumb in the ketchup and stain the block with your thumb print. Then pass the rules clockwise.



Once, in these very woods, at this very campsite, a group of revelers decided to play a game about evil spirits. They peered into the darkness and allowed their minds to penetrate the veil between worlds. Worse yet, they invited the horrors they found here within themselves, letting that evil soak in. Those that survive, will never be the same again.

Before we go any further, anyone who chooses may leave without judgment. Those who stay, you must take active steps toward your own safety. If things start to get too intense, call 'brake.' If things go too far, call 'cut.' In any case, you may explain your choice, but you don't need to. You may also walk away at any time. Respect others needs. Remember consent.

One more thing: We're in a dark, secluded area. Injury is promised to all who take insufficient care. Watch your step. Don't get lost. Don't go alone into the dark. Never run in the dark... You can't outrun anything that wants to hurt you anyhow.



The world is old, and our many ancestors are guilty of so much. Countless evils have been done, innumerable victims lost to history. This place is old. Desperate criminals have hidden in these woods. Fools have proved their metal in boom towns nearby. Frontier parties have done the unthinkable while claiming this land. Tribes have warred for ages here. Death is as common as life, and life is abundant here. This place is **haunted**.

Go alone to the edge of the camp, but don't leave the site. Stare out into the night. Take in the darkness. Consider the wild things that may roam nearby. Consider past tragedies and violence that could have happened here. Focus on one awful creature, person, action, or event. Visualize it in the darkness before you, eyes open. How did it start? How did it end? How did that affect this place afterward? When you're ready, return to the campfire.



In order from most eager to least, share your story of this wood's horror. After everyone

has shared, pair off. One group might have three. **After** the next reader finishes, go to the edge of the camp. Maybe just beyond, if you're brave. Each group needs a flashlight.

In your group, identify which stories affect you most deeply. If you feel like sharing why, that's great, but you don't have to. Spend a minute silently staring into the woods. See those characters and events moving out there. If you see something new, tell your group. When everyone's ready, head back to the campfire.



We've come too far now. Many of us are corrupted already. The cold that we feel is from the shadows of these woods crawling up our limbs. The only way to leave the evil of this place behind is to allow it to work its course through us. We're going to pair off again, but this time one member of each group will allow the evil to speak through them.

After the next reader finishes, take your group beyond the campsite, if you're willing, but not more than 100 feet out. Never lose sight of the camp. Once secluded, a spirit will speak through one of you. That spirit did something **terrible** as it lived, but it does not believe it is evil. You must learn why the spirit did what it did. How it justified that atrocity. The only way to release the spirit's hold, is to understand it.

Beware. This spirit might try to kill you. The flesh is weak and murder is shockingly easy, especially for the practiced. If a medium tries to kill you, they **will** succeed... unless you flee or kill its host. Remember, we're your friends, try not to hurt each other. Come back after your encounter, alive or not.



Everyone who's allowed an evil to flow through them is now freed. Feel the strain of evil evaporate off your body. Reclaim your mind. You're going to need it. Pair off again, this time with someone who hasn't worked through the corruption, ideally someone you didn't just pair with. Go into the woods—not too far—and repeat the séance we just completed, this time from the opposite perspective. Return afterward.



The evil you harbored has moved on now, back into the dark. We have all made a choice tonight: To be monsters or victims. Some of us survived, some did not. Is there anyone who didn't stain this document with their thumb print? If so, be grateful, for your soul shall be untarnished by the events here tonight. The rest of you—us—have not been so blessed. Let's go in a circle now and take half a minute to say what we most want to say right now. After that, you may disperse, or you may stay to talk through your experience.