

Witching Hour

An online freeform LARP for 3-4 players

By Jessica Barthelt

About the game:

It is said that strange occurrences happen after midnight. You and your friends recently stumbled across an old journal detailing a ghost sighting that occurred in town centuries ago. You all know that there have been similar recent reports of ghost sightings in the same area described in the journal, so you have decided to check the place out yourselves. However, you may be in over your heads.

What each player will need:

- A device with Zoom (or equivalent video conference software)
- A D6 die or online D6 dice roller
- A timer
- A document-sharing service (OneDrive, Google Docs, etc.)

How to Play

1. Character selection (15 minutes)

Players will read through the character descriptions and decide who they want to play. Each character has their own usefulness during the witching hour. It is important that one player chooses to play as Beth as she is the facilitator of the meeting and has essential information.

2. Mission preparation (20 minutes)

First, players must decide how serious or whimsical they want the game to be. Once a decision has been reached, set the timer for 20 minutes. Midnight is approaching and you all must work fast to prepare.

As the organizer of the meeting, Beth will lead the discussion. It is up to her to decide where the search for the ghost will take place. Inform the other players of the location and what they can expect there. Tell them that it is a very large location, so it is important to use the selected video conference software to stay in contact with each other.

Agree as to who will arrive at the location first. This player will be the first to announce their findings once midnight arrives.

Talk with each other as midnight gets closer. Is there anyone in the group you want to encourage? Who are you concerned about?

When midnight approaches, all players will turn off their video cameras, mute their microphones, and set their timer for 60 minutes.

3. Witching Hour (30-60 minutes)

Players will wait a few minutes, as their characters are heading off to the site of the ghost sighting. Once that time has passed, the person everyone agreed would start the observations goes first. They can choose whether or not to use their specific item. If they decide to use it, they will roll a die to determine how effective their item was.

Regardless of whether or not the player uses their item, they will turn on their camera and microphone and explain what is going on.

- a. Where are they currently?
- b. Have they seen or heard anything unusual?
- c. Is there anything the others should look out for?
- d. What happened when they used their item (if they did)

After the first player has gone, the other players can make their own observations whenever they wish during the duration of the witching hour.

After each player has gone once, things should start to get more intense.

Players should continue until they are done, or until the full hour has passed. The witching hour is over and you all must reconvene.

4. Aftermath

All players turn their cameras and microphones back on to discuss what happened. Was the ghost caught? Will you need to go back to try again later?

Characters:

Sam

- Personality: Shy, scares easily
- Item: Bag of salt
- Relationships:
 - Rosa - You are a bit scared of Rosa and don't want to disappoint her.
 - Beth - You aren't that close to Beth but admire how smart she is. You want to find a way to impress her.
 - Tiffanie: You are the closest to Tiffanie. She's supported you no matter what and you consider her a friend.

Rosa

- Personality: Determined, strict
- Item: Ouija Board
- Relationships:
 - Sam - You know Sam is easily frightened and you are concerned about them being a hindrance. You wish Sam had not been brought along on the mission.
 - Beth - You trust Beth the most in the group and are happy to work alongside her. She is the smartest and you rely on her to solve problems.
 - Tiffanie: You think Tiffanie is careless and a troublemaker. The two of you have had disagreements in the past.

Tiffanie

- Personality: Curious, excitable, charismatic
- Item: Extra cellphone
- Relationships:
 - Sam - You are the closest to Sam and want to help them raise their confidence
 - Rosa - The two of you have had disagreements in the past. You think Rosa should lighten up and not be so cruel to Sam.
 - Beth - You think Beth spends too much time having her nose buried in her books. She should look at things with a more open mind.

Beth

- Personality: Intellectual, uptight, cool-headed
- Item: Old Journal
- Relationships:
 - Sam and Tiffanie - You tend to get impatient with these two as they are known for wasting time and focusing on unimportant things
 - Rosa - You prefer spending time with Rosa as she is the most experienced one in the group.

Items:

Sam's bag of salt

You can use this to create a barrier between yourself and the ghost, or trap a ghost in a specific area. Be careful not to use too much! When you use it, be sure to not only tell the group where you've placed the salt but also record its location in the chat.

Total number of uses: 6

1	Used too much salt. You have two fewer uses than before
2	Used a bit more salt than intended. One less use than before
3	Used the right amount of salt. Your barrier is effective
4	Your barrier is effective
5	Almost used too little salt. The player can decide if their barrier was effective or not
6	Used too little salt. Your barrier isn't effective

Rosa's ouija board

You may ask the spirits one question, and they will (hopefully) provide you with a helpful answer. When you use it, put the ghost's response in the chat.

Total number of uses: 6

1	The spirit you've contacted is hostile and won't cooperate with you.
2	The spirit doesn't talk much. The player can decide how vague their answer is.
3	The spirit cooperates but is vague with its answer.
4	The spirit gives you an answer that is only somewhat helpful.
5	The spirit gives you a helpful answer.
6	The spirit is very friendly and gives you an incredibly helpful answer

Tiffany's extra cellphone

You can use this to take photos or record audio/video. It has a limited amount of battery left, however, so be sure to use it wisely. When you use it, put a photo, audio file, or a description of what you captured into the zoom chat.

Total number of uses: 6

1	You managed to capture nothing. You have two fewer uses than before.
2	You barely managed to capture a photo/video/audio of your target, but it's cut off.
3	You managed to capture a photo/video/audio of your target.
4	You've captured a couple of seconds of footage/audio of the target.
5	Almost used too little salt. The player can decide if their barrier was effective or not.
6	Captured a lengthy video/audio recording, or a very clear photo.

The group who previously attempted to search for this spirit left some important information behind. Be careful, as this journal might fall apart if opened too many times. When you use it, put the journal entry in the zoom chat so everyone can access it. Be sure to make it more detailed if you rolled a higher number.

Total number of uses: 6

1	The entire page is illegible or missing
2	Most of the page is damaged
3	You have the entire page but the entry is incomplete
4	You have the entire entry but the ending is rather vague
5	You have the full entry. The player decides how helpful it is.
6	The entire message is present and contains very helpful information.

Possible prompts

- What were the tell-tale signs that the ghost was nearby?
- What does the ghost look like?
- What had the previous hunters done against the ghost that was or was not effective?
- Is there a particular spot the ghost preferred to hang out at?
- Had the ghost ever mentioned something that sounded particularly interesting?
- Was anyone cursed, possessed, or killed during the mission?