

# Haunted Destinies

A game of mystery, possession, past lives, and murder on the Scottish moors for 3 to 6 investigators

by Jonathan Leistiko & Sharon Cichelli

## Story

All your life, you've felt like you're walking 'round in someone else's shoes – living someone else's life. Until the dreams started, that is. Half-remembered fragments and glimpses of a life much more real than your own.

Your friends and family called it creepy. Your spouse said it was disturbing. You found comfort in them – the only thing that had ever seemed real to you. That's why you *had* to listen to them. Your dream self guided you to this isolated village on the the Scottish moors. It's gloomy as a gravedigger, comfortable as a warm bath, and familiar as the smell of grandmother's kitchen. And not just the natives, but the other strangers like you, stir these same feelings in your heart.

You're here for a reason. You can *feel* it. The weight of Destiny hangs heavy over the land. The walls between past and present – life and death – they're *thin* here, and the right actions at the right times could change everything. It's time for you to fulfill your purpose.

## Goal

Figure out who the Opener is and prevent him or her from destroying reality as we know it.

...Unless you realize that you're the Opener. If you're the Opener, your goal is to ritually consume the other players and open the barriers between all times and worlds before the Ghosts complete one of their goals.

## You Need:

A *Haunted* board tile stack.

A Search deck. This deck contains Boons, Clues, Events, and Items. These cards can heal you, make it easier for you to do what you need to win, and remove bad effects from play.

A lantern card. Keep this on bottom of the Search deck with the "Search Deck" edge sticking out.

A Haunting deck. This deck contains cards that hurt non-ghost players and help players who are ghosts.

A ghost card. Keep this on bottom of the Haunting deck with the "Haunting Deck" edge sticking out.

A 30-card Psyche deck. This deck contains the Opener card, some Psyche cards that give you helpful powers, and some cards that describe scenes from your dreaming life.

*NOTE: All cards (Search, Psyche, and Haunting) have the same backs. The fronts are very different.*

A pawn, 12 health tokens, and a Haunted check sheet for each player.

A bunch of double-sided health/wound tokens.

Lots of gloom tokens.

A dark die and a light die.

Scrap paper and pencil(s).

## Setup

If you have 4 players, remove the orange-bordered “E” cards from the Psyche deck. If you have 3 players, remove the maroon-bordered “D” cards from the Psyche deck. Shuffle each deck. Set the Search and Haunting decks where everyone can reach them. Put the lantern card on the bottom of Search deck and the skull card on the bottom of the Haunting deck.

Distribute the Psyche deck evenly among the players. **Do not look at your cards.** Put your cards in a pile. This is your Destiny pile.

Claim a pawn, 5 health/wound tokens (healthy face up), a Haunted check sheet, and a pencil.

Tiles with highlighted names are searchable locations. Separate the searchable locations from the other tiles. Set the Cemetery apart from all tiles. Shuffle the searchable locations face-down. Shuffle the other tiles face-down. Deal 2 searchable locations and 4 other tiles to each player.

High roll gets the Cemetery tile. Remove all un-dealt board tiles from play.

You may look at the tiles you’ve been dealt. The player with the Cemetery starts laying out the board. Lay out the board as follows:

- Take turns placing tiles adjacent to each other in an implicit grid.
- Put your pawn on the 4th tile you play.

Give each player 4 gloom tokens. Tiles with highlighted names are searchable locations. Take turns placing up to 2 gloom tokens in searchable locations on the board. When you place gloom tokens, you may put both in one location, or one in two different searchable locations.

The player who laid the Cemetery takes the first turn of the game.

## Play:

### General rules for play:

#### The Rule of Uncertainty:

**Do not look at your cards unless a game effect permits you to.** If you accidentally look at one or more of your cards, draw one Haunting card and add it to your Destiny pile for each card you saw.

#### The Rule of Consistent Destiny:

Keep all of your face down cards in your Destiny pile. **Do not rearrange your Destiny pile unless a game effect permits you to.** When one of your cards is viewed and returned face down, put it back where it was. When you get a new face down card, secretly put it anywhere you want to in your Destiny pile.

#### The Knowledge & Secrecy Rules:

When a player asks you how many cards are in your Destiny pile, you must answer truthfully. You may make notes about any cards you see (or anything else you want to) at any time on your clue sheet. There is one exception: Do not take notes on cards you saw while violating the Rule of Uncertainty. You may hide or share your notes as you wish to; you never have to show another player your clue sheet.

Except when otherwise specified, you may mislead, fib, or outright lie about what you know.

#### The Evil Twins:

If you roll doubles, immediately draw a Haunting card and put it in your Destiny pile or take a wound.

#### Ouch & Ahhhhh:

When you take a wound, flip a health token from its health face to its wound face. Now it's a wound token. Healing a wound reverses this process and turns it back into a health token.

### On your turn:

- Roll for movement.
- Move.
- Act.

When your turn ends, play passes to the left.

### Roll for movement.

Roll one or both dice for movement.

You get movement points equal to the sum of all dice you rolled.

### Move.

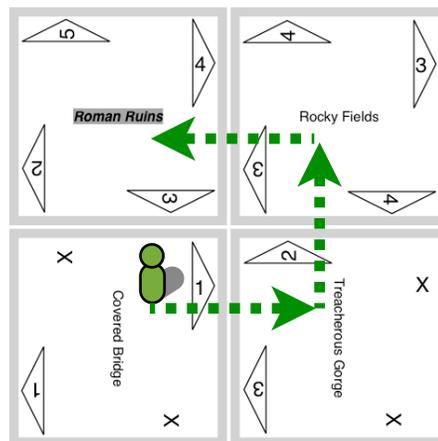
You may move your pawn orthogonally to an adjacent tile. Diagonals are not adjacent.

To move out of your tile, you must spend a number of movement points equal to the number on the edge of the tile you're in. The number or symbol on the edge of the tile you're moving to does not matter.

If an edge of your tile has an "X", you can not move in that direction. If the edge of the tile you're entering has an "X", you can enter it.

If you have movement points left over at the end of your turn, they disappear.

### Example:



I'm on the covered bridge. I have 7 movement points. I want to move to the Roman Ruins. Can I get there? I can't get there by moving

one step north because there's an "X" on the north edge of the Covered Bridge. I'll have to go the long way. It'll cost 1 movement point to get to the Treacherous Gorge, 2 movement points to move from the Gorge to the Rocky Fields, and 3 Movement points to move from the Fields to the Roman Ruins.  $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ . I can get to the Roman Ruins with 1 movement point left over. I won't be able to use my last movement point. It'll disappear at the end of my turn.

If you're in the same tile as another player and you each have at least one card in your Destiny piles, you may let the other player look at a card of your choosing from your Destiny pile. In return, that player must let you look at a card of his or her choosing from his or her Destiny pile. You may do this once per player per turn. Follow the rules for obeying Probed cards (See pg. 5, column 2).

You can also trade with other non-ghost players in your tile if you are not in the middle of an action. Items and knowledge are the only things you can trade to other players. You can not trade face-up Psyche cards, Haunting cards, or cards from your Destiny pile.

### **Act.**

You may take one action before, while, or after you move. The actions you can take are:

- Search
- Query / Probe
- Attack

At the end of your turn, play passes to the left.

### Searching:

If the name of the tile you're in is highlighted, you're in a searchable location.

Roll both dice. Add your health tokens and the light die. Subtract the location's gloom tokens and the dark die.

If the result is less than zero, draw a Haunting card. **Refrain from looking at it.** Place it face down in your Destiny pile. If you reach the skull card, obey it.

If the result is zero, your turn ends.

If the result is greater than zero, add a gloom token to that location and pick one of the following options:

- If the result is 1 or greater, draw a Search card, and obey it.

### Obeying Search Cards:

If the Search deck runs out of cards, obey the lantern card at the bottom of the deck.

If a search card says "Draw:", take the effect listed afterwards, then discard the card.

If a search card says "Probe:" add it to your Destiny pile. You will take that effect when another player sees it.

If a card has both options (Draw and Probe) on it, you can choose to take the Draw effect as soon as you draw it and then discard the card, or you can add it to your Destiny pile and wait for someone to trigger the Probe effect.

If it is an item, put it face up in front of you. You gain the benefits stated on the item.

- If the result is 3 or greater, you may look at a card from another players' Destiny pile.

Follow the rules for obeying Probed cards (See pg. 5, column 2).

- If the result is 5 or greater, you may look at a card from your Destiny pile.

*These rules apply any time you get to look at one of your own cards:*

Cover the text of the card and show the border of the card's face to at least one other player. If someone is showing you a card, recall that Psyche cards have colored borders while Haunting and Probe cards have grey borders.

If it is a Psyche card, you may put it in play face up and use its effect (if any) or you can put it back.

If it is a Haunting card, you may trigger it if you wish to, but you do not have to. If you trigger it, pick another player and obey it as if that player had probed you and triggered it. Otherwise, put it back.

If it is a Probe card, just put it back. It does not trigger.

### Querying / Probing:

If you're sharing a tile with another player, you can try to get information from him or her.

Roll both dice. Add your health and the light die. Subtract your opponent's health and the dark die.

If the result is negative, you lose. Your opponent gets to choose whether you must let him or her choose a card from your Destiny pile and look at it or if you must draw a Haunting card and add it to your Destiny pile.

If the result is zero, your turn ends.

If the result is positive, you win. You may pick a card from your opponent's Destiny pile and look at it or you may make your opponent draw a Haunting card and add it to his or her Destiny pile.

### Obeying Probed Cards:

If the card says "Probe:", reveal the card. Obey its instructions, then discard the card.

If the card is a Psyche card, you may choose to return it face up. Its owner gets to put it in play and may use its effect if it has one. If you do this, gain 1 health or pick a player to draw a Haunting card and add it to his or her Destiny pile.

Otherwise, cover the text of the card and show the border of the face of the card to at least one other player (a Ghost, if one is available) and return the card face down.

If someone shows you the border of a card that is not theirs, check the color: If it has a colored border, it is a Psyche card and does not have to be turned face up. If it has a gray border, it must be turned face up. If it also has a Probe effect, the card's effects occur. Otherwise, the card is discarded with no effect.

## Attack:

If you are in the same location as another player, you can attack him or her.

1. Roll both dice. Add your health and the light die. Subtract their health and the dark die.

If the result is negative, you lose. Your opponent gets to choose whether you take a wound or give your opponent a face up or face down card of his or her choosing.

If the result is zero, your turn ends.

If the result is positive, you win. You may pick and take one of your opponent's face up or face down cards or make your opponent take a wound.

2. If your opponent runs out of health tokens, the attack ends. You must declare whether you're:

### Binding the Opener.

Your opponent must reveal all cards in his or her Destiny pile. If your opponent is the Opener, you win the game. Otherwise, your opponent becomes a ghost (See pg. 6) and you take half your health in wounds, rounded up.

### Initiating the Opening Ritual.

Reveal all cards in your Destiny pile. If you are the Opener, there are new win conditions: You win when all of the other players are ghosts. The non-ghost players win when you have no health tokens. If you are not the Opener, you're a ghost now (See pg. 6). Your opponent finds his or her second wind and may heal up to 5 wounds.

3. If the attack has not ended, check the dice. If the light one is greater, you may choose to continue the attack or end it. If the dark one is greater, your opponent gets to decide. If they are equal, your turn ends. If the attack continues, go back to Step 1.

## If You Are A Ghost...

When you become a ghost, move your pawn to the **Dilapidated Cemetery** and put a ghost cover on it.

Get rid of all of your wound tokens. Instead of health, you use gloom. When you take a wound, you lose a gloom token. You start with one gloom token for every Haunting card that was in your Destiny pile when you died. Once you have your starting gloom, discard all of your cards. You can't hold cards. If anyone passes a card to you, pass it to the next player.

If something modifies your health, modify your gloom instead. If you run out of gloom, just continue playing.

There are special cards in the Haunting deck that can let the ghosts win. If none are in play, try to get some in play by haunting non-ghost players. Force them to draw more Haunting cards and haunt them to trigger the Haunting cards they have. If more than one ghost win condition is in play, you'll win if any win condition is met.

If you ever have to draw a Haunting card (by rolling doubles, for example), pick a non-ghost player. That player must draw a Haunting card and put it in his or her Destiny pile.

When it's your turn, take it as you normally would. You may take one action before, while, or after you move. The actions you can take are:

- Haunt
- Syphon Gloom

### Haunting:

Haunting is to ghosts as searching is to players. This means that when you haunt, what you get to do depends on how well you haunt. Roll both dice. Add your gloom and the dark die. Subtract your opponent's health and the light

die.

If the result is less than zero, you lose 1 gloom.

If the result is zero, your turn ends.

If the result is greater than zero, pick one of the following options:

- If the result is 1 or greater, your opponent must draw a Haunting card and add it to his or her Destiny pile.
- If the result is 3 or greater, you may pick a card from your opponent's Destiny pile and look at it or you may take the first option twice.
- If the result is 5 or greater, you may spend 3 gloom to make your opponent turn a health token into a wound token, or you may take the second option twice, or you may take the third option three times.

### Syphoning Gloom:

If you're in a location with gloom, roll both dice. If the dark die is greater than the light die, you may take up to the dark die's value in gloom tokens from the location and add them to your gloom. If you roll doubles, you must take all of the gloom from the location and add it to your gloom. Otherwise, add 1 gloom to the location.

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Note that even though you can't attack non-ghost players, they can attack you. When they do this, they're voluntarily bridging the worlds of the living and the dead. This means that if you win, you can make them take 1 wound or draw a Haunting card.

When you lose a conflict (Haunting, Probing or an Attack), the only option your opponent can choose to have happen to you is for you to lose a gloom token.

## If You Are The Opener...

When you reveal your cards, discard any Search or Haunting cards. Keep all of your Psyche cards face up; you can use them now.

When you're the Opener, your goal is to kill all of the other players. This can be awfully hard to do, especially if they keep running away from the special role you have planned for them. Fortunately, you can use your knowledge of *Secrets Man Was Not Meant To Know* to bend and warp the fabric of reality...

After you roll to move, you can choose to not move at all. If you do, you can remove one non-searchable location tile from the board.

- \* The sum of the numbers on the tile you remove must be less than the sum of your health and your movement roll.
- \* The tile you remove must not have any pieces or tokens on it.
- \* All tiles on the board must be contiguous after you remove the tile.

You may take an action after you remove a tile.

## Origin & Credits:

There's a popular "hidden killer" game that's been around for ages. I like it well enough, but I have some qualms with it. Consider this: If you're the murderer (and if you're playing a full game, one player is certain to be the murderer), and figure out that you're the murderer before everyone else does, you "win" the game by exposing yourself and how you committed the crime.

This is totally bizarre for several reasons:

- 1) You committed the murder. Doesn't this mean that you knew all along that you committed the crime? Having to ferret it out like anyone else would is a little... odd, isn't it?
- 2) You're a murderer. This implies that you're willing to kill for personal gain (Unless it's a crime of passion, but that's another story.). If you realize you're the murderer before anyone else does, wouldn't you try to kill them to keep your secret safe?

*Haunted* attempts to resolve the first problem by using the premise that each character has an undiscovered destiny that gradually manifests over the course of the game's story arc. This way, the Opener doesn't know if he or she is the Opener at the start of the game. It's a cheesy plot device, but I've learned to accept it. *Haunted* addresses the second problem directly. If you think you're the villain, you declare it by attempting to fulfill your destiny (In this case, attacking and killing the other players.).

Once I knew what kind of a game I wanted to make, I needed a setting. I didn't want to set it in a sprawling mansion with a Study and Kitchen, not only for the obvious reasons, but because I wanted a tile-based layout. Tile-based boards create houses with very illogical layouts. I tried to think of a location full of gloom and

despair – a place where you could believe that malevolent ghosts of the dead linger. Ultimately, this led me to the Scottish moors. I knew I wanted the tile layout to evoke maze-like behavior, with one-way paths and game-enforced flow patterns. I also knew that I wanted to prevent players from searching the same spots over and over again. The use of numbered edges to enforce movement point expenditures, coupled with accumulation of gloom in opposition to searching, came shortly afterward. I'm particularly happy with how the numbered edges represent terrain features, such as a path with steep bluffs on either side.

Touching back on the first problem for a moment... I wanted one player to be the “betrayor” from the very start, but I was totally baffled as how to do this without using a secret envelope of cards or other similar method. I'd decided to deal a hand of cards to each player at the start, but couldn't get any further. I was toying with having the Opener be a card that players drew from the Search deck, but that violated my belief that the Opener should be set from the start. Sharon came up with the idea that players could not look at their cards. Once that mechanic was in place, everything else made sense. Being dealt a hand of cards that you can't look at and have nominal control over represents the nature of fate rather nicely. I made up the cards for the Haunting and Search decks shortly thereafter.

Haunted started with a thread on the Board Game Designers Forum. The original notes for Haunted date back to March '07.

First draft Oct. 4, '07. Revised April/May '08. First “dry run” with Sharon on May 12, 2008. Second run with Ben Gibbs on May 17, 2008. Third run with Ben & Natosha Gibbs & Sharon on May 25, 2008, followed by significant revisions. Fourth run on May 30, 2008 at Battleforge Games with James & John

(The Evil Twins), Ben & Natosha Gibbs, and Eric Johnson. This play test revealed that (despite previous alterations) health scores were still way too high. Implemented the double-sided health tokens and changed the reward for returning a Psyche card face up to healing a wound instead of gaining health, thereby fixing the runaway health problem. Revised many, many cards to reflect this change. Fifth run with Dan Manfredini & Ian Cooper of Flywheel (a game designers' group I bumped into about a year ago). Added rules to scale the game for 3 to 6 players. Modified how the Psyche cards work to enable and reward more deductive play. Created roles other than the Opener and added rules accordingly.

Mondo-huge thanks to Sharon for inspiration, encouragement, miscellaneous design tips, the use of face-down card piles, and using the combat roll to determine who decides to continue combat.

Similar thanks to Ben Gibbs for being outrageously generous with his play testing time and for being a relentless cheese monkey when it comes to card and rule interpretation. I appreciate your diligence and input.

If'n you ever get to play with Natosha Gibbs, I recommend it. She makes it creepy. Also, big thanks to her for deliberately play testing the ghost rules and for some excellent mechanical suggestions – specifically for the “cemetery gets placed first” idea and input on the mechanics for ghost probing.

Thanks to Eric Johnson for the idea for the Search Lantern and Haunting Skull cards.

Use health as movement.  
Bring ghost back to life?  
Rotate board spaces.  
More definitions (such as