



PLAYER BOOK

TRAUMA GAMES PRESENTS:

D. VINCENT BAKER

MURDEROUS GHOSTS

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Night Sky Games

PLAYER BOOK

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This is the Happy Halloween '11 edition.



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MURDEROUS GHOSTS

PLAYER BOOK

To play, you'll need:

Another player, called "the MC" (for "master of ceremonies").

This book for you, and the MC book for the MC.
30–60 minutes of uninterrupted time.

A deck of playing cards, jokers removed,
shuffled.

Murderous Ghosts is the story of an urban explorer trying to escape the haunted basements of an abandoned factory. You take the part of the explorer. The MC takes the part of the ghosts and their environment.

You play your book and your wits against the MC's book and her imagination. You both draw cards as you go, to determine what happens next.

To win:

You win if you survive the murderous ghosts and escape, or if you help them to resolve their unfinished business and go on to their eternal rest.

The MC and the rules are against you. I give you maybe one in three odds, but if you play sharp you can improve them. Good luck!

The basics:

Take turns with the MC. On your turn, read an entry in your book and do what it tells you to do. It might have you describe something from your imagination, make judgments about what the other player's describing, make decisions about things you've described or sometimes things you haven't described. It might have you ask the MC questions or answer the MC's questions. It might have you draw a card.

Each entry will have you turn to a new entry, or it'll tell you to have the MC turn to a new entry.

Eventually you'll come to an entry that says "the end." That's the end of the game.

To start:

Read **The Draws** and **The Entries**. Wait patiently while the MC reads **Before Play** in her book.

If you haven't played before, you can start without reading through the books. Just take the time to read each section fully when you come to it.

YOUR DRAW

Draw cards at turning points in the story of the game, to determine whether the best possible thing happens, a middling thing happens, or the worst possible thing happens.

Your hand is always face up and public.

Start play with an empty hand.

Before any draw, you may discard your entire hand, if you choose.

Draw the card from the top of the deck, face up, and add it to your hand:

Aces add 1.

Number cards 2-10 add their value.

All **face cards** add 11.

It's the sum of your hand that matters:

The **best possible thing** is a sum 13-20.

The **middling thing** is a sum 6-12.

The **worst possible thing** is a bust: a sum 1-5 or a sum 21 or higher.

When you bust, discard your entire hand.

When the deck's exhausted, reshuffle.

Count cards if you want, but it's bad form to look through the discards while you're playing.

THE MC'S DRAW

The MC draws cards as you move toward escape, to track your progress.

To start play, she draws one card face down into her hand, without looking at it.

Her hand starts face down. She turns it face up when she draws her 4th card.

Whenever you move closer to your eventual escape, the MC draws another card into her hand, face down.

The number of cards in her hand keeps track of your progress toward escape. 1 card in her hand means that you're far from escape. 4-7 cards in her hand means that you can escape soon or now.

The number of suits in her hand determines whether you can escape:

4 suits: you can escape now.

3 suits: you can escape soon.

2 suits: you might be able to escape soon, but might be lost.

1 suit: you are lost.

For complete details, see **45** and **47** in the MC book.

THE ENTRIES

6

EXAMPLE ENTRY

Tell the MC something you wanted the chance to do before you died.

What do you most hope you don't do now?
Choose:

Scream.

Break and run.

Beg.

Lash out.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: You do none of them. Tell the MC what you do instead.

6–12: At least you don't do *that*. Instead, choose and tell the MC:

You edge away.

You babble or whimper.

You pray.

Choose a different one from the list above.

Bust: You do the one you hoped you wouldn't. Tell the MC. Tell the MC to turn to **17**.

- In this book, all the entries have even numbers. All the entries in the MC book have odd numbers.
- Some entries tell you to say something about yourself. Speak from your character's point of view, but draw on your own real experiences if you like.
- Some entries call for you to choose from a list. Some call for you to choose the thing you want. Others, the thing you don't want.
- Almost all the entries let you ask the MC questions. Ask from your character's point of view. You can say that you do something, like picking an object up to examine it, as part of asking.
- Sometimes the MC will ask you questions too. Answer them, following your best judgment and your gut.
- Almost all the entries call for you to draw.
- What happens next depends on what you draw and what you choose.
- Many entries tell you to turn to another entry, or to have the MC turn to an entry.

START

Tell the MC your name. If you can't think of one quickly, make it the same as your real first name.

Tell the MC that you're 23, brave, athletic, and smart. Tell the MC that you're an urban spelunker, and you've been sewerage, and as best you can tell you've come up in the abandoned factory out where Platt St curves beside the river.

Tell the MC that you're exploring in a subbasement. You've been exploring for a while — you're pretty far from both the sewer hatch you came through and any kind of stairway or access up and out. But you know generally which way to go, you've been careful, and you probably won't get lost.

Tell the MC to turn to 1.

If the MC is new to the game, tell her not to sweat it, you're happy to wait while she reads and thinks. Her job is harder than yours anyway.

2

What's the worst thing this suggests to you? Choose, and tell the MC which:

Betrayal. Turn to **18**.

Cruelty. Turn to **20**.

Madness. Turn to **22**.

Revenge. Turn to **24**.

Sorrow. Turn to **26**.

A **threat** to me, here and now. Turn to **28**.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Remember your choice. Next time, choose something different.

4

What do you most hope it doesn't do? Choose:

Look at me.

Reach out to me.

Speak.

Stop still.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: It does none of them. Tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: it does one of the others. Choose and tell the MC which. Tell the MC to turn to **15** and choose option **(b)**.

Bust: It does the one you hoped it wouldn't. Tell the MC which. Tell the MC to turn to **15** and choose option **(b)**.

6

Tell the MC something you wanted the chance to do before you died.

What do you most hope you don't do now?

Choose:

Scream.

Break and run.

Beg.

Lash out.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: You do none of them. Tell the MC what you do instead.

6–12: At least you don't do *that*. Instead, choose and tell the MC:

You edge away.

You babble or whimper.

You pray.

Choose a different one from the list above.

Bust: You do the one you hoped you wouldn't. Tell the MC.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

8

What's the worst part? Choose, and tell the MC:

Its body. **Its eyes.**
Its face. **Its hands.**
Its smell. **Its voice.**

Another of your own choice.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC that you're staying pretty calm anyway.

6–12: Tell the MC that it's getting worse but you're keeping it together.

Bust: You panic. Choose 1...

You lash out.

You beg.

You scramble back the way you came.

You throw up.

...and tell the MC which.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

10

Ask the MC what the ghost is capable of doing to you.

Draw.

13–20: Choose 1...

6–12: Choose 2...

Your hands won't stop shaking.

You cover your face.

You're whimpering.

Your knees are weak.

You're frozen in place.

You're backing slowly away.

...and tell the MC which.

Bust: Choose 1...

You scream.

You fall down.

You scramble back the way you came.

...and tell the MC which.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

12

Ask the MC which is most important for you to do right now:

Keep my hands steady.

Keep my breathing quiet.

Keep my eyes on it.

Keep my eyes closed.

Keep perfectly still.

Keep moving.

Another of the MC's choice.

Draw.

13–20: You can do it. Tell the MC.

6–12: You can do it, but you can't do all of them. Choose two that you can't do and tell the MC.

Bust: You can't do it. Tell the MC.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

14

What do you most hope it doesn't do? Choose:

Touch me.

Corner me.

Call me by name.

Show me what it's hiding.

Follow me.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: It does none of them. Tell the MC.

6–12: it does one of the others. Choose and tell the MC which.

Bust: It does the one you hoped it wouldn't. Tell the MC which.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

16

What about it still seems most human to you?
Choose, and tell the MC:

Its eyes. Its fear.

Its sorrow. Its movements.

Its anger. Its voice.

Another of your own choice.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC that you don't reach out to it in any way.

6–12: Choose 1...

You speak to it. (What do you say?)

You take a step toward it.

You reach out your hand to it.

...and tell the MC which.

Bust: You do all 3. Tell the MC.

Tell the MC to continue from her place.

18

Betrayal.

Tell the MC who'll miss you if you don't come home.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13–20.

13–20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

20

Cruelty.

Tell the MC the closest you've ever been to death.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13–20.

13–20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

22

Madness.

Tell the MC who is your most important role model.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13–20.

13–20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

24

Revenge.

Tell the MC the newest friend you've made.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13–20.

13–20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

26

Sorrow.

Tell the MC if and when you're planning to have children.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13–20.

13–20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

28

A threat to me, here and now.

Tell the MC the best thing you've done in your life so far.

Draw.

On your first draw of the game, this is a free draw: no matter what card it is, count it as a 13-20.

13-20: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **3**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6-12: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

Bust: If you haven't seen a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **9**. If there is a ghost here, tell the MC to turn to **19**.

30

Draw.

13-20: Tell the MC that the ghost takes no notice of you. Tell the MC to continue from her place.

6-12: Choose, and tell the MC which:

You stop what you were doing and stand still.
Turn to **4**.

You press on anyway. Tell the MC that the ghost reacts to you. Tell the MC to turn to **17**.

You can ask the MC questions before you choose.

Bust: Tell the MC that the ghost takes direct notice of you. Tell the MC to turn to **17**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

32

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC that you've found a safe place to hide. Ask the MC where it is. Tell the MC to continue from her place.

6–12: Tell the MC that you've found a place to hide — ask the MC where it is — but that the ghost might have noticed you anyway. Turn to **4**.

Bust: Tell the MC that the ghost takes direct notice of you. Tell the MC to turn to **17**.

34

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC to turn to **21**.

6–12: Tell the MC that the ghost assaults you. Tell the MC to turn to **29**.

Bust: Tell the MC that the ghost murders you. Tell the MC to turn to **37**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

36

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC that the ghost investigates you. Tell the MC to turn to **27**.

6–12: Tell the MC to turn to **23**.

Bust: Tell the MC that the ghost assaults you. Tell the MC to turn to **29**.

38

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC that the ghost lets you go. Tell the MC to turn to **13**.

6–12: Tell the MC to turn to **25**.

Bust: Tell the MC that the ghost assaults you. Tell the MC to turn to **29**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

40

Draw.

13–20: Tell the MC what you try to do to flee and escape the ghost's assault. Tell the MC to continue from her place.

6–12: You can't escape the ghost's assault, but tell the MC what you try to do to survive it. Tell the MC to continue from her place.

Bust: Tell the MC to turn to **37**.

42

You've escaped the ghost's attack, but...

Draw.

13–20: Choose 1...

6–12: Ask the MC to choose 1...

You're torn and bleeding.

You're dragging a hurt leg.

You've run back the way you came.

You've abandoned your light.

...and tell the MC to turn to **31**.

Bust: It's because the ghost is toying with you. Tell the MC to turn to **29**.

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

44

You've survived the ghost's attack. Eventually it goes, leaving you for dead, but...

Draw.

13–20: Choose 1...

6–12: Ask the MC to choose 1...

You're badly hurt, most likely dying.

You can't stand, let alone walk.

You're disoriented, lost.

You're cornered with no way out.

...and tell the MC to turn to **33**.

Bust: It's because you are dead, you just don't realize it yet. Tell the MC to turn to **37**.

46

You've been murdered by ghosts.

The end.

Thanks for playing!

If you've had enough and you're ready to **stop playing**, turn to 48 instead.

48

You wake up safe in your own bed. There are no ghosts, just a nightmare. By morning you've forgotten the details.

Tell the MC to turn to **39**.

The end.

Thanks for playing!

50

You've escaped!

You're in the lower level of a big loading garage. Light from streetlights is coming in through broken windows. A quick scramble and you're on the bike path by the river and Platt St. The ghosts won't follow you out and you make it home safe before the birds start to sing.

Congratulations. You've won the game.

The end.

Thanks for playing!

52

You're hopelessly lost.

No one ever finds your body.

The end.

Thanks for playing!



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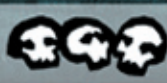
2
PLAYERS



20-60
MINUTES



AGES
12+



INTENSE
HORROR