CEMETERY PLOTZ ~ A SPOOKY RPG

Vast, beautiful and mysterious– Hydrangea Hills Cemetery is bustling 24/7. During the day, it's filled with groundskeepers, gravediggers, grievers, and goths. At night, supernatural creatures from across the centuries arise for spectral adventures.

Object
You play as a ghost, a spirit of the dead. Your goal is to use your abilities, persona, and imagination to overcome obstacles and complete missions set by the Game Master (GM). As the GM leads you through these eldritch scenarios, one rule remains: *haunt, just don't get caught.*

About Ghosts
- Ghosts vary greatly in appearance, from realistic Bruce Willises to cartoonish Caspers.
- All ghosts give off a faint, eerie glow detectable by the living, especially in the dark. The less corporeal you are, the more you glow. (See **Step Two**)
- Keeping the general populace unaware of your presence is crucial (see **The Stanz**). A small number of people (e.g. mediums) know that ghosts are real.
- Ghosts can communicate with each other but are unable to speak clearly with humans unless one of the parties has the ability to do so. Ghosts typically suggest their existence to the living in the form of haunting (spooky noises, fleeting glimpses, rattling china, helpful whispers, and so on
- Ghosts prefer the nighttime, rarely venturing out in the day.
- Even the afterlife isn't forever. Ghosts can vanish, be it violently through magic or science, or peacefully by resolving whatever it is that kept them from their eternal rest.

Step One: Create a character
It's time to create your ghostly alter ego! Start by choosing a name, appearance, cause of death, and so on. (See the next page for time period suggestions.) No backstory is too strange; maybe you're a suffragette Drag Queen from the 1880's who was killed in a rigged seance by anti-voting conspirators.

Step Two: Choose your corporeality
- <u>Incorporea</u>l: Airy wisps who can float and pass through walls. Their interactions with the material world are typically limited to fluttering candles, swishing papers, and so on. Common.
- <u>Semi-Corporeal</u>: Exist between the two states, giving them greater flexibility, but are hindered by an inability to maintain the extremes of the other states for very long. Uncommon
- <u>Corporeal</u>: Appear solid, and may pass for alive. Can pick up objects, and even throw a punch. Rare.

Step Three: Choose your supernatural abilities
- Supernatural abilities give you Special Actions. (See **Actions**)
- Select one ability from Set A and one from Set B. Each list has six options; use a die if you want to randomise your choice, or create your own "homebrew" ability.
- <u>Set A - Typical</u>: The kind of thing you might read about in ghost stories, like creating a chill in the air. They can only be used once per situation but multiple times per mission/night.
- <u>Set B - Atypical</u>: Rarer abilities that can only be used once per mission/night.

<u>SET A - Typical</u>
1. Fog: you can dissipate into a mist
2. Griffin: you can become invisible
3. Frightener: you can instill terror in the living
4. Static: you can psychically control radio and television transmissions
5. Seance: you speak easily with the living
6. Chill: you can lower the temperature

<u>SET B - Atypical</u>
1. Banana boat: you can make the living burst into song and dance
2. Fire and Brimstone: you produce a noxious cloud that causes adverse effects to the living
3. Spirit writing: you take momentary control of a living person and write a message
4. Noble spirit: you are able to influence others via your commanding presence
5. Kick the bucket: you are able to take the form of water
6. Exquisite corpse: you've got charisma and sex appeal

Step Four: Flesh out your (fleshless) character (OPTIONAL)

These serve to give your character some flavour. While completely optional, they allow you to accentuate your character's personality, which may in turn earn you Ectoplasm. (See **Ectoplasm**)

FLAW	ERA	MOTIVATION
1. Ghoul: you terrify the living	1. 1300s or 1900-1920	1. Death before dishonour: you're still on duty
2. Wraith: you can't speak	2. 1400s or 1920-1940	2. Phantom menace: you seek revenge
3. Spectre: you have amnesia	3. 1500s or 1940-1960	3. Godfather of soul: you are helpful
4. Poltergeist: you are violent	4. 1600s or 1960-1980	4. Free spirit: you're dead and loving it
5. Shade: you are insulting	5. 1700's or 1980-2000	5. Soul searcher: you ask the big questions
6. Spook: you are crazy	6. 1800's or 2000+	6. The Wanderer: you walk the earth forever

Actions

- Standard Actions: Used when attempting something challenging, like sweet talking a spectre into giving up an arcane secret, or trying to hide from a nosy neighbour. For Standard Actions, roll two six-sided dice (2d6). Two odd numbers is a failure, one odd and one even is a mixed result, and two even numbers is a success. Ectoplasm can allow you to roll more than two, but you still only keep the best two. After a success, you get to describe how your success manifests. Go nuts. Unless you intentionally stop, all actions remain active until you take your next action.
- Special Actions: Similar to Standard, but used when taking advantage of a supernatural ability. For Special Actions you roll three dice and only keep the best two. For instance, to sway that spectre, you could employ "Exquisite Corpse" and roll a 6,1, and 4, keeping only 6 and 4.
- 1s and 6s: Rolling a 1 worsens a result and a 6 improves it. In the spectre example above, a 1 might have you fail to get the secret <u>and</u> then attract the attention of the living. A 6 might have you get the secret <u>and</u> an additional clue to boot. Double 1s and 6s multiply the effect and always add or subtract two from The Stanz (see below). A mixed result that includes 1 or a 6 can be treated as a failure or a success, respectively.

The Stanz

- The Stanz: A scale that measures how aware the living are of your presence. It starts at zero (completely unaware) and goes to five for short missions and ten for longer ones. When it reaches the top, the ghosts have been caught, one way or another, and the mission is over.
- Failures: A failure (i.e. rolling two odd numbers) increases the Stanz by one. The bigger the failure, the greater the effect. If you failed in an empty room, it would go up by one. If you failed in front of a crowd, the Stanz may go up by two or even more. Double 1s add two to the Stanz.
- Successes: A success doesn't affect The Stanz unless it's double 6s, in which case it drops by two.
- Getting Caught: If you are recognizable as a ghost in pictures or video, or are caught in a ghost trap, then the Stanz hits the max. Game over.

Ectoplasm

- Ectoplasm is the physical residue left by ghosts. You start each mission with one blob of Ectoplasm. The GM will dispense additional Ectoplasm when players do well (such as completing a crucial task) or when they conduct themselves in a way that exemplifies their character traits. For example, a ghost with the "Godfather of soul" motivation might earn an Ectoplasm blob by successfully reuniting a lost child with their parents. Ectoplasm is traded in for the bonus of rolling an extra die when taking an action.
- Ectoplasm also functions as the currency of the afterlife, and many ghosts are willing to trade a blob or two if faced with a tempting offer.

Animals

Some animals enjoy the presence of ghosts, but some (especially pets) will hiss and growl when they sense one is nearby.

Cemetery Plotz created by Douglas Davey, January 2022

Message for sample scenarios, characters, and adventures.
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CEMETERY PLOTZ CHARACTER SHEET

NAME	
AGE (at time of death)	
BACKSTORY	
CORPOREALITY	Incorporeal Semicorporeal Corporeal
SUPERNATURAL ABILITY A	
SUPERNATURAL ABILITY B	
MOTIVATION	
FLAW	
ECTOPLASM	1 2 3 4 5