



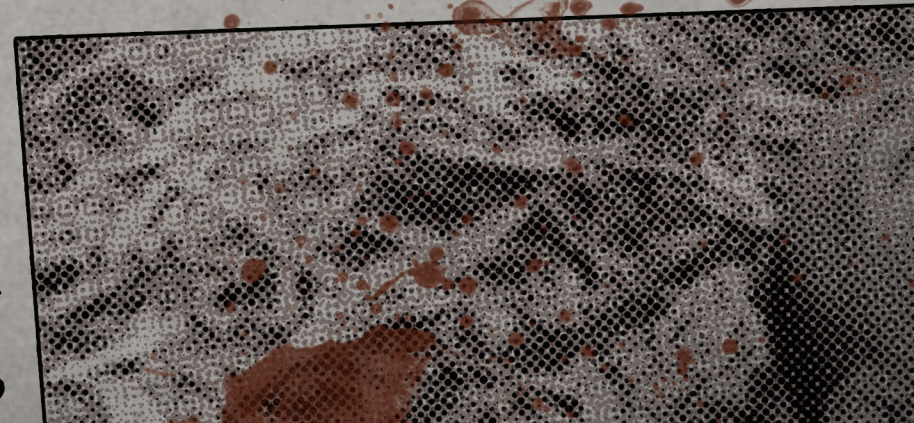
# The Raven's Report

East Texas University • Friday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 201

## A BODY WAS FOUND

A body was found yesterday on the campus of East Texas University. "It was awful," says one witness. "I couldn't believe that one of my classmates was dead." This death is the fourth such incident in the last eight weeks on

said Golan County Sheriff Butch Anderson. "The best thing to do now is to stay inside your homes and dorm rooms after dark and leave the investigation to the police." The family has chosen not to





CREDITS

Written by  
Sara Quinn & Brendan Quinn  
Graphics and Layout by  
Sara Quinn  
Art by  
Aaron Acevedo & Brendan Quinn  
Brand Manager  
Preston DuBose & Ed Wetterman  
Additional Edits and Advice  
jim pinto & Darren Miller  
Protocol System Created by  
Post World Games & jim pinto  
Special Thanks to  
Joseph Taylor & the ETU Kickstarter backers



The Pinnacle logo is © 2014 Great White Games, LLC; DBA Pinnacle Entertainment Group. 12 to Midnight, East Texas University, Pinebox, and all associated characters, logos, and artwork are Copyrights of 12 to Midnight. The Protocol Game series is © Post World Games and jim pinto. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ..... 3

GETTING STARTED ..... 4

ROLES ..... 5

RELATIONSHIPS ..... 5

MOTIVATIONS ..... 6

THE HAPPENING ..... 6

GROUP BUILDING ..... 7

TYPES OF SCENES ..... 7

NPCs..... 8

RESOLVING CONFLICTS ..... 9

FATE POINTS ..... 9

SCENES..... 10

LOCATIONS ..... 10

INTERMISSION..... 11

DOOM DRAW ..... 11

FINALE ..... 12

CHARACTERSHEET ..... 13

CHEATSHEET ..... 14

## INTRODUCTION

*A Body Was Found* uses the Protocol framework. This zero-preparation game features enough structure to move the action along, with plenty of room for creative and cooperative storytellers to spin rich and horrific adventures.

Players take on the roles of directors outside the action and characters inside the action, using the ebb and flow of four different scene-framing styles — Vignettes, Interrogations, Interludes, and Ensembles — to tell meaningful stories about characters in crisis. Each story explores unique player characters dealing with the adversity of the particular situation, and their own personal issues, in the best dramatic fashion.

Protocol games are GMless, which means that everyone has a voice and shares responsibility for the narrative. Players build on what everyone else is doing, constantly shifting and changing the story to accommodate the plot twists.

For more information about GMless gaming, check out the Protocol Game Series and GMZero by Post World Games. It's all available for download at [RPGNow.com](http://RPGNow.com).



## PINEBOX, TEXAS

No one is surprised that something mysterious and terrible has happened in the town of Pinebox, Texas. The residents of Pinebox and students of East Texas University have come to call this incident “The Happening”. Your group is setting out to uncover the mysteries of “The Happening”... hopefully without making things worse.

All you know for sure at this point is that by the end of the adventure, one of you will die.  
You have one week to solve the mystery.

## A NOTE TO GMs:

*A Body Was Found* is a narrative roleplaying game set in Pinebox Texas. It can be played as a supplement to an existing ETU campaign or as a stand-alone game for three or more players.

If you are a Dean running an ETU campaign, we suggest that you use this game after Exams, or in situations where you are short players. *A Body Was Found* was meant as a way for your players to take on the roles of non-player characters not necessarily included in your ETU campaign.



## GAME SETUP

Each player should have a pen and some notecards. It works well for players to write the name and role of their characters on notecards and fold them into table tents that everyone can see throughout the game.

Optionally, you may print a Character Sheet for each player (found on page 13).

Each player needs a die (six-sided dice are adequate) or counters to keep track of Fate Points. Everyone starts with one Fate Point. These are used during gameplay and in the Finale.

You need a card deck with Jokers for Initiative Draws, Roles, Relationships, Scenes, Locations, and just about everything else.

One of the players can pull cards from the deck and read results to the group, or each player can draw his or her own cards and read to the group in turn.

When Initiative Draws are called for, each player draws a card. Initiative Draws are “won” by the losers. Whoever draws the lowest card suffers the consequences. Suits are counted lowest to highest alphabetically. The lowest suit is ♣Club, then ♦Diamond, ♥Heart, and ♠Spade.

The deck is shuffled only when cards run out (even if you draw a Joker).

## SUMMARY OF GAME PLAY

*A Body Was Found* has 8 parts:

1. Roles, Relationships and Motivations
2. Prologue – Opening and Initiative Draw
3. Determine “The Happening”
4. Group Building
5. Two Scenes Each
6. Intermission – Ensemble and Doom Draw
7. Two Scenes Each
8. Finale

## GETTING STARTED

Each character in *A Body Was Found* is currently in Pinebox, Texas. Something terrible has happened, and it's up to you and your fellow players to figure out what's going on, and stop it if you can.

Characters need roles, names, relationships, and motivations as described below:

- Each player draws a card to determine the role of his/her character (see Roles).
- Everyone should choose a name for his/her character.
- Players take turns creating relationships between group members. This is done by each player choosing any two characters and drawing a card to determine their relationship to each other. (see Relationships). Make sure every character has at least one relationship.
- Each player draws one card to determine his/her character's personal motivation (see Motivations). Take a few moments to discuss your characters with each other.



## ROLES

- 2** Investigative Journalist – This town has a buried secret, and you're going to dig it up.
- 3** Professor at ETU – Sure, you know about the ghosts and ghouls, but you've got tenure to worry about.
- 4** Campus Security – You do your best to protect University students from danger... from above or below.
- 5** Janitor – You tend to see things that no one else notices, and you have the keys to all kinds of doors.
- 6** Activist/Hippie – Someone has to protect the world for the next generation; it might as well be you.
- 7** Geek – You're the kind of person that would rather play an RPG (or read comics, or play video games) than have adventures "IRL".
- 8** Jock – You're a sports star at East Texas University (and you know it). Go Ravens!
- 9** Local Shop Owner – You've got what it takes to run a business in Pinebox – business acumen, a shotgun, and a strong stomach.
- 10** Transient – You live in the shadows, and you're careful not to let them live in you.
- J** Grifter/Confidence Man – The people of Pinebox already fool themselves into believing they're safe. Your job is halfway done.
- Q** Parent of ETU Student – You're happy that your child is in a great University, and you check up on them every single day.
- K** Campus Benefactor (e.g. alumnus, sponsor, philanthropist) – ETU has done great things for you. Now it's time to return the favor.
- A** Fraternity Brother/Sorority Sister – College is just one big party, interrupted by classes (and sometimes demons).
- Joker** Occultist – You're fascinated by the supernatural world, and Pinebox is the perfect place to gain access to it.

While roles provide no specific game mechanics, they help provide perspective and purpose for one's place in the story. When choosing a role, you should also determine how and why you're involved in solving The Happening.

## RELATIONSHIPS

- ♣: Family
  - ♦: Friendship
  - ♥: Romance
  - ♠: Community
- 2: Education
  - 3: Loss
  - 4: Manipulation
  - 5: Shared Secret
  - 6: Generosity
  - 7: Shared History
  - 8: Money
  - 9: Obsession
  - 10: Trust
  - J: Rivalry
  - Q: Desperation
  - K: Outsiders
  - A: Survival

Joker: Cult Members



Relationships in this chart are kept purposely vague. Specificity is the job of the players. For instance, the Ace ♥ is a relationship of Romance and Survival. The players sharing this Relationship may define it as two lovers that are trying to keep their love alive. Another example could be that one of the lovers would do anything to ensure the survival of the other (even sacrifice him/herself). Let your relationships with others focus your gameplay and storytelling styles, but don't let them derail the story.



## MOTIVATIONS

♣: Relentless

♦: Fearful

♥: Emotional

♠: Spontaneous

2: Curiosity/Academics

3: Duty/Loyalty

4: Envy/Greed

5: Desperation

6: Proof

7: Glory/Fame

8: Obsession

9: Hate

10: Family

J: Revenge

Q: Love

K: Reward/Riches

A: Redemption

Joker: Chaos/Destruction

Motivations are not to be confused with needs or goals. The goal is to tell the story of strangers solving the mystery of The Happening. What motivates a character is why they are driven to figure out what's going on in Pinebox.

A motivation can be a hindrance as well as a benefit. Being fearfully driven by love might mean you are terrified of losing someone or something you love, or alternatively, that you are so afraid to love that you push others away. It could also mean that you love someone who does not love you back, and seeing them hurt may drive you to do things that aren't safe or well-thought out.

## PROLOGUE

Every player draws one card. Whoever has the lowest card "wins" and must face the consequences. The character is now marked for death and will die at the end of this game, though it is unclear at this point how.

The player then draws an additional card to determine The Happening and reads the following (in character):

**So it's come to this: another death, and this time it's one of our own. It all started a week ago...**

(read the result of your drawn card)

## THE HAPPENING

2: ...when a body was found floating in The Old Swimming Hole.

3: ...when the words "You will all die in 7 days" were found scrawled in blood on the wall outside City Hall.

4: ...with the explosion at the post-Finals kegger.

5: ...when all the pets in Pinebox disappeared.

6: ...when we noticed the freshly turned dirt in every plot at Pinebox cemetery.

7: ...when 50 ETU students disappeared without a trace.

8: ...with the strange symbols painted on the doors of the Rio Apartments.

9: ...when the night sky went completely black.

10: ...when movies started playing at the abandoned drive-in theater (without a projector).

J: ...when a deathly silence fell over Crenshaw's Woods.

Q: ...with the monster attacks at Windy Creek trailer park.

K: ...when Professor Moore's TA was found dead.

A: ...when Roy Stillwater showed up at his own memorial.

Joker: ...when we found the mass grave.

The player narrates a short vignette about The Happening (see Vignettes). From here on out, the rest of your game focuses on figuring out why The Happening occurred and what it could mean.





## GROUP BUILDING

The Group Building questions set the tone of the game, the group dynamics, and the relationship between the group and The Happening.

**Make an Initiative Draw.** Players answer questions in order of initiative. All questions should be answered; you may have to draw more than once.

- 1: Why are all of you working together to solve this mystery? (this may necessitate some group discussion)
- 2: Describe one piece of evidence that has been reported publicly about The Happening.
- 3: Describe one piece of evidence you are aware of that hasn't been reported.
- 4: Who has done something that made the rest of the group angry? What was it?
- 5: How are local police or other authorities responding to The Happening?
- 6: How are the locals (in general) responding to The Happening?

At this point, players take turns (in any order) directing scenes, but no one directs two scenes in a row. Each player will direct two scenes before the Intermission.

### Being the Director

As a director, you:

- Draw one card for the type and theme of the scene
- Draw one card for the location of the scene
- Establish the scene: where does it take place specifically (for example, if you draw a 3♦, “Isolated Eatery”, you can say “The Pizza Barn” and describe how it is isolated. You can also describe the time in which the scene takes place, who is in it, etc. (see NPCs)
- Decide when each scene ends
- Resolve conflicts if they occur (see Resolving Conflict)

## SCENES

The active player of a scene is the director. Each turn, the director draws two cards: one for scene theme and type — Vignette, Interrogation, Interlude, or Ensemble — and one for location. The director uses these elements to focus and frame the scene. The scene's type (suit) and theme (value) are determined by the first card, while the location is determined by the second card.

Following are descriptions of the four types of scenes in *A Body Was Found*.

### VIGNETTES: CLUBS ♣

Vignettes involve no actual dialogue; instead, they set the atmosphere for the story.

The director determines the location from the card drawn and narrates a brief scene.

Keep your Vignettes short and simple. Narrate enough information to set the tone, but don't overdo it by dragging the action on too long.

At the end of the Vignette, the director gains one Fate Point.

*The director draws the 10♣ for scene — Vignette about Police/Officials — and the 7♥ for location — Haunted/Cursed Dog Park.*

*“Breaking into the library was a bad idea. The group hears sirens pursuing them through the streets of Pinebox as they race to escape the scene. Thinking that they would be safe hiding in the dog park, they all duck into the shadows as a police car passes with lights flashing. As the sound of the police car fades into the distance, they hear low growls coming from all around them.”*

*On the other hand, the director might frame a scene in which Pinebox officials are helping the group solve the mystery on the down-low, and are requesting to meet you secretly at the dog park. When you arrive, you find that it is filled with translucent figures, silently floating over the paths.*



## INTERROGATIONS: DIAMONDS ♦

Interrogations involve the director asking questions of one character.

The director selects a player and steals one Fate Point from him or her. Then, the director asks one to five questions, in character, which must be answered by that player in character.

*The director draws the 4♦ for scene — Interrogation about Evidence — and the 10♣ for location — Empty Hospital.*

*The director decides that the Investigative Journalist (one of the players) will be interrogated by a hospital administrator (an NPC played by the director). To begin the scene, the director describes the hospital administrator dragging the Investigative Journalist into the morgue and ordering the staff to leave. He then proceeds to ask questions regarding evidence that the Journalist has discovered.*

Ask leading questions. Avoid yes/no questions, or questions that can be reduced to short answers.

The director may ask the questions from the point of view of an NPC or his own character. This process should feel organic. The questions can be anything fitting the theme.

### NPCs

The director may add one NPC to an Interlude or Interrogation, but the characters remain the focus of the scene. Vignettes do not have dialogue, but any number of NPCs may color the story background.

Ensembles may have NPCs, but they are controlled/run by the director. Other players may introduce (existing or new) NPCs by spending one Fate Point.

Once an NPC is introduced, he or she is owned by the story; any player can use the NPC. Just make sure that the NPCs don't take up too much focus. The characters of the players must be the most important characters in the story.

## INTERLUDES: HEARTS ♥

Interludes involve two (and only two) characters with a pre-existing Relationship. Neither of these characters need to be the director's character.

The director determines the location and sets the scene based on the cards drawn. The director decides when to call "scene" and end the Interlude.

If the characters leave the location of the Interlude, the scene ends.

All players not involved in the scene gain one Fate Point at the end of the Interlude.

*The director has drawn the 5♥ for scene — Interlude about Secrets — and the 8♠ for location — Isolated Motel.*

*The director decides that the Jock and Sorority Sister are in a motel isolated from the rest of the town, discussing a secret known only to the two of them. Their Relationship is a Friendship based on Money.*

*So while the others are outside looking for clues, the two have a discussion about how much the Campus Benefactor knows about The Happening, and how they can use this knowledge to blackmail him.*

Interludes are mostly about the drama between two characters. While the interlude should be used to advance the plot, this is secondary to the interpersonal actions and reactions of the characters.

An alternate example of the scene above could be the pair (let's say in this example that they are both rich kids, and are friends because they run in the same circles) is trying to figure out what has caused the The Happening. Perhaps one of them feels responsible for some reason and confides in the other.



## ENSEMBLES: SPADES ♠

Ensembles involve all of the characters. The director draws cards to determine the plot of the scene, as well as the location. The director may preempt the scene as much as he/she likes, but once the Ensemble starts, the director and the rest of the players converse in character. They should let things develop organically.

The director may call “scene” at any moment.

*The director has drawn the 3♠ for scene — Ensemble about Theories — and the 6♥ for location — Haunted/Cursed Used Car Lot.*

*The director decides the group is searching the Used Car Lot for the owner, who you think may be involved in The Happening. Your current theory is that the cursed cars have been coming to life and are responsible for the crushed bodies you found in the mass grave.*

Ensembles involve everyone and should be allowed to run their course... but not too long. Dialogue that devolves into a discussion of every kind of theory and idea slows play and distracts from the story.

Let everyone get a say, but once you resolve the scene’s primary focus, it’s time to move on.

### RESOLVING CONFLICT

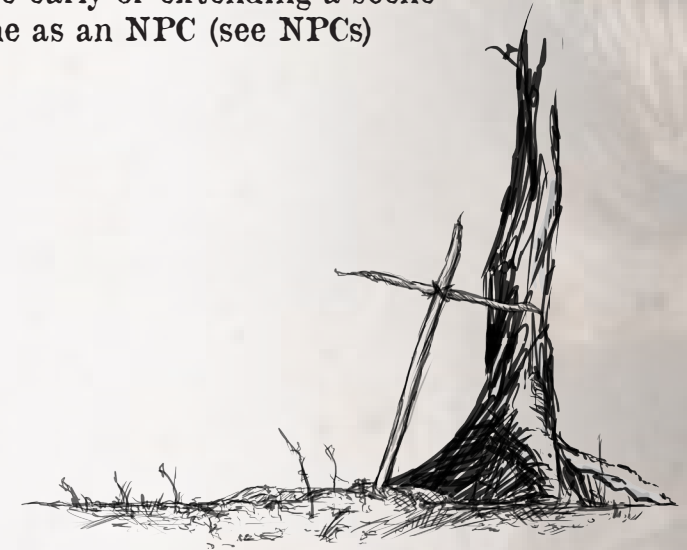
In *A Body Was Found*, whenever two or more characters reach a moment of unresolvable conflict, the following rules apply:

- In an Interlude, the director decides who wins the conflict. The director then narrates the conclusion, and ends the scene.
- Should the players wish to override the director, they must spend one Fate Point, or in the case of a tie, more Fate Points than anyone else. The winner narrates the conclusion.
- Should a scene end unresolved, this creates a cliffhanger effect. Players may wish to resolve this in the following scene, but this isn’t always necessary. Use your best judgment.

## FATE POINTS

Fate Points are used to control the narration and finale. In addition, players may use Fate Points to break a rule. There are no specific limits on what can be done, but some examples include:

- Discarding a Scene or Location card to draw a new one
- During an Interrogation, spending a Fate Point to avoid answering one question
- Ending a scene early or extending a scene
- Playing a scene as an NPC (see NPCs)



## CONTINUED GAMEPLAY

Players take turns directing scenes. The order is not important. You may decide to take turns in a random order, clockwise order, or even bid to be the next director. Just make sure everyone is involved and no one directs two times in a row. Once everyone has directed two scenes, turn to page 11 for the Intermission.

## SCENES

### Type:

- ♣: Vignette
- ♦: Interrogation
- ♥: Interlude
- ♠: Ensemble

### Theme:

- 2: Red Herring
- 3: Theories
- 4: Evidence
- 5: Secrets
- 6: Paranoia
- 7: A Body is Found
- 8: Research
- 9: Danger
- 10: Police/Officials
- J: Mistake
- Q: Internal Conflict
- K: What Do We Do Now?
- A: Desperation

**Joker: Monologue** – speak briefly in character, in a manner which evolves the narrative

The scene values are purposely vague. They are the seeds. You provide the crop. The results can mean a lot of different things, allowing this game to be played again and again.  
Be creative with it.

## LOCATIONS

### Suit:

- ♣: Empty
- ♦: Busy
- ♥: Haunted/Cursed
- ♠: Isolated

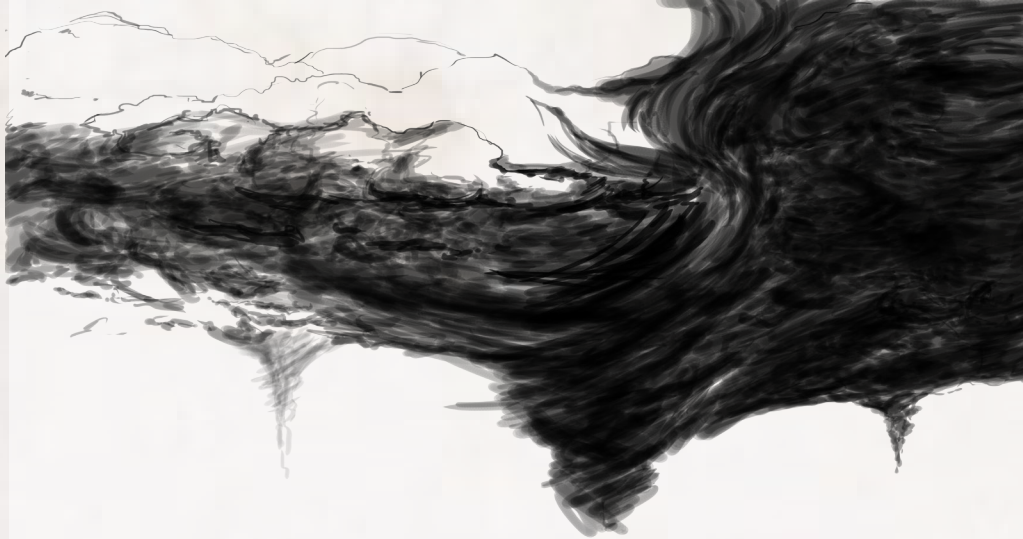
### Value:

- 2: Government Building (Post Office, City Hall, etc.)
- 3: Eatery
- 4: Church
- 5: Fraternity/Sorority House
- 6: Used Car Lot
- 7: Dog Park
- 8: Motel
- 9: Woods
- 10: Hospital
- J: Gas Station/Garage
- Q: Landfill/Junkyard
- K: Pinebox Cemetery
- A: Funeral Home

**Joker: Sacrificial Altar**

Sometimes the suit of a location can be hard to match up with the value. A busy cemetery, for instance, sounds weird, but maybe the cemetery is filled with zombies, vampires, or cult members. Maybe there's just an ordinary burial happening right in the middle of where the characters are meeting. Don't let the results confine you. Let them guide you to better stories.





## INTERMISSION

After all players have directed two scenes, the player whose character is doomed to die draws one card for the location and frames an Ensemble about the progress of your investigation into The Happening.

During this Ensemble, at a moment of the director's choosing, make a Doom Draw and read the results to the group. For example, if the Director draws an Ace, he/she calls for the Initiative Draw and describes the wound (and how it was obtained).

Whatever happens in the Doom Draw, it's going to make things more interesting (and probably a lot harder) for your characters. Whether or not the Doom Draw is related to The Happening is up to you and how you choose to tell the story.

After the Doom Draw, players should continue the Ensemble. Then continue play with each player directing two more scenes.

## DOOM DRAW

- 2: The group notices bloody footprints leading up to and stopping just behind them.
- 3: Blackout: All electrical equipment is non-functional, including cars and cell phones.
- 4: One of the your homes (Initiative Draw) is ransacked. Nothing appears to be missing, but a bucket of teeth is found inside.
- 5: You discover that you are all experiencing the same horrible nightmare, night after night, from which you awake screaming.
- 6: A sudden blizzard covers everything in snow, and the freezing winds are deadly.
- 7: The group stumbles upon a wanted poster for one of you (Initiative Draw). It reads: **Wanted DEAD or ALIVE.**
- 8: The location of the Intermission Ensemble bursts into flames.
- 9: It begins to rain frogs.
- 10: One of you (Initiative Draw) goes completely insane.
- J: A chaos demon is sabotaging your investigation.
- Q: A person one of you (Initiative Draw) loves is destroyed in a death too horrible for words... but try to find some anyway.
- K: One of you (Initiative Draw) gets an anonymous text message that reads: "A traitor walks among you."
- A: One of you (Initiative Draw) is severely wounded.
- Joker: Initiative Draw: the lowest card dies instead of the player who was originally marked for death. If the player already doomed to die pulls the lowest card, they must choose another player to die in their place.

After the Doom Draw, players direct two more scenes each.

When every player has directed four scenes in total, it is time for the Finale.

## FINALE

For the final scenes of the game, players take turns spending Fate Points to narrate Vignettes.

Based on earlier draws, one of the characters is doomed to die. The player with a doomed character gets a free Vignette to describe the character's death.

Think about the following questions as you end your game:

- Did you solve the mystery of The Happening? You may have utterly failed, or even made the situation worse. Alternately, you may have been brilliantly successful (but probably not). It might turn out that one of the characters is responsible for The Happening.
- Are there any lasting effects on Pinebox because of what has transpired?
- Who among you is not what they seem?
- What will the characters (if any are still alive) do now?

Feel free to discuss any unanswered questions you may have with your fellow players after the Finale.



## OPTIONAL RULES

- If the same suit is drawn three times in a row for a scene or location, discard the card and draw a new one until a new suit appears.
- The director may give one of his/her Fate Points to any player that has run out, regardless of the scene type.
- Once per game, the players may decide to award one Fate Point to a director who has framed a particularly good scene.
- Select a permanent director who does not play a character, but instead runs the game like a traditional RPG. Cards are still drawn for scenes. The game lasts for a number of scenes equal to four times the number of players, or as long as the director chooses.
- When developing characters at the beginning of the game, players determine Motivations after The Happening.
- If the director draws a scene that would work better for another player to direct, the director may give that player a Fate Point and ask him/her to direct it instead. This exchange should not happen if the second player has already directed all of his/her scenes, or if the player has just finished directing a scene.



**Name and Role**

**The Happening**

**Motivation**

**Notes**

**Relationships**

**Scenes**

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ **Doomed to Die?** ☐

## FATE POINTS

Fate Points are used to control the narration and finale. In addition, players may use Fate Points to break a rule. There are no specific limits on what can be done, but some examples include:

- Discarding a Scene or Location card to draw a new one
- During an Interrogation, spending a Fate Point to avoid answering one question
- Ending a scene early or extending a scene
- Playing a scene as an NPC (see NPCs)

Background layer can be turned off for easy printing.

## RELATIONSHIPS

- ♣: Family
- ♦: Friendship
- ♥: Romance
- ♠: Community

- 2: Education
- 3: Loss
- 4: Manipulation
- 5: Shared Secret
- 6: Generosity
- 7: Shared History
- 8: Money
- 9: Obsession
- 10: Trust
- J: Rivalry
- Q: Desperation
- K: Outsiders
- A: Survival

Joker: Cult Members

## MOTIVATIONS

- ♣: Relentless
- ♦: Fearful
- ♥: Emotional
- ♠: Spontaneous

- 2: Curiosity/Academics
- 3: Duty/Loyalty
- 4: Envy/Greed
- 5: Desperation
- 6: Proof
- 7: Glory/Fame
- 8: Obsession
- 9: Hate
- 10: Family
- J: Revenge
- Q: Love
- K: Reward/Riches
- A: Redemption

Joker: Chaos/Destruction

## SCENES

### Type:

- ♣: Vignette
- ♦: Interrogation
- ♥: Interlude
- ♠: Ensemble

### Theme:

- 2: Red Herring
- 3: Theories
- 4: Evidence
- 5: Secrets
- 6: Paranoia
- 7: A Body is Found
- 8: Research
- 9: Danger
- 10: Police/Officials
- J: Mistake
- Q: Internal Conflict
- K: What do we do now?
- A: Desperation

Joker: Monologue – speak briefly in character, in a manner which evolves the narrative

## LOCATIONS

### Suit:

- ♣: Empty
- ♦: Busy
- ♥: Haunted/Cursed
- ♠: Isolated

### Value:

- 2: Government Building (post office, city hall, etc.)
- 3: Eatery
- 4: Church
- 5: Fraternity/Sorority House
- 6: Used Car Lot
- 7: Dog Park
- 8: Motel
- 9: Woods
- 10: Hospital
- J: Gas Station/Garage
- Q: Landfill/Junkyard
- K: Pinebox Cemetery
- A: Funeral Home

Joker: Sacrificial Altar

## SUMMARY OF GAME PLAY

1. Roles, Relationships and Motivations
2. Prologue – Opening and Initiative Draw
3. Determine “The Happening”
4. Group Building
5. Two Scenes Each
6. Intermission – Ensemble and Doom Draw
7. Two Scenes Each
8. Finale



OVER 30 GAMES  
AVAILABLE



POSTWORLDGAMES.COM  
AND DRIVETHRURPG.COM > POST WORLD GAMES