

Trick or Treat

YOU ARE A MONSTER, AND TONIGHT IS HALLOWEEN. It's the one night of the year when you can exist in the open—by passing yourself off as a human in a costume.

Players: Create Characters

What monster are you? doppelgänger, Frankenstein's, ghost, headless rider, incubus/succubus, mummy, pumpkinhead, skeleton, vampire, werewolf, witch, zombie, other. (*Start thinking about your supernatural capabilities.*)

Choose your number from 2 to 5. A low number means you're better at TRICK (slinking, skulking, spooking, scaring, killing). A high number means you're better at TREAT (boldness, bluntness, upfrontness, playing nice, passing as human).

Write down your character's name, monster type, pronouns (if any), and number on an index card so everyone can see them.

Players: Choose a Scenario

Decide as a group: You're trying to 1) thwart an evil plot, 2) get revenge on someone, 3) escape from the human world, or 4) live it up for a night!

How'd you all end up with each other? What do you already know? What's the plan? And if it's not already obvious, why do you need to traverse the human world?

Decide for yourself: What's your personal stake in this?

- 1) What does the evil threaten that you care about?
- 2) What'd they do to get on your bad side? 3) What's waiting for you back home? 4) What's one quintessential human experience you can't wait to try?

Rolling the Dice

When you do something risky, roll **1d6**. You roll **+1d** if you're using your **supernatural gifts** (*a witch's magic, a werewolf's teeth and claws, a succubus' seduction, etc.*) and **+1d** if you're **taking the initiative** (*being proactive, not just reacting to danger*).

- ▲ If you're TRICKing (acting in the shadows), you're trying to roll *above* your number.
- ▼ If you're TREATing (acting in the light), you're trying to roll *below* your number.

Each success is a *hit*.

- **If you roll 0 hits**, something goes wrong. Brace for the worst.
- 1 **With 1 hit**, you barely manage it. The GM will give you an added complication, harm, or cost.
- 2 **With 2 hits**, you do it well. Good job!
- 3 **With 3+ hits**, not only do you do it well, but you also get some extra bonus effect of the GM's choice.

Rolling **your number exactly** is TRICK OR TREAT: you gain a special insight into what's going on. Ask the GM a question and they'll answer honestly.

Some good questions: *What do they know? Who's behind this? How could I get them to _____? What should I be on the lookout for? What's the best way to _____? What's really going on here?*

(A roll of TRICK OR TREAT counts as a success.)

When you **help someone out** or **act as a group**, each person rolls individually. The number of hits equals the number of people who rolled at least one success on their dice.

GM: Run the Game

Set scenes, roleplay as NPCs, give players challenges to overcome, and adjudicate the rules in the service of **fun**.

Start by giving the players a **lead** based on the scenario they chose: some immediate task or relevant info to help orient them at the start of play.

Call for **rolls** when it makes sense. Interpret the results as the dice dictate; don't pre-plan outcomes. Let no roll go to waste: even failures should push the narrative forward in new and interesting directions.

Before **something bad happens** to the characters, show signs that it's about to happen, then ask them what they do. (*"The Pumpkin Queen rushes you, her blade crackling with dark magic. What do you do?" "After you reattach your eyeballs, you see a shocked little boy staring at you—he looks like he's about to scream. What do you do?"*)

Ending the Game

Call it a night when you **succeed at your goal** or **reach an appropriate cliffhanger**. If you're playing more than one session, you can increase or decrease your number by 1 in between sessions (min. 2, max. 5).

If you're **discovered as monster**, you attract a mob and are defeated (*killed, exorcised, captured for government experiments, etc.*). You can also be **defeated by other monsters**. Either way, you can make a new character to keep playing—as long as your friends are still alive.

Credits

Trick or Treat (by Joy Sherwood) is a hack of *Lasers and Feelings* (by John Harper) under the CC BY 4.0 license. creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0