



# THE HOUSE CHANTS ON

a game by a.c.d

We wake up. We live. We die.  
We afterlive. We return. This is  
the cycle of humanity. You are  
no exception. This is not a story  
about exceptions.

This is a story about a haunting.

**THE HOUSE CHANTS ON** is a GMless game  
for 1+ players where you play out a ghost  
haunting from start to finish using tarot cards  
and your imagination. You create a Soul  
and explore their life leading up to their  
eventual death, the circumstances  
that cause them to become a  
ghost, and the reason they  
pass on to whatever is  
next in the end.

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# CREDITS

**THE HOUSE CHANTS ON** was inspired by the album *Weathervanes* by Freelance Whales, specifically the songs *Generator^First Floor* and *Generator ^Second Floor*.

It was made by a.c.d for the Record Collection 2k22 Jam.

Thank you to Leeco, Noelle S, Teu M.S, Juno C, Raymond B, Leo, and Levi for playtesting

# GETTING STARTED

To play this game, you will need:

- ◆ A standard tarot deck (either physical or online)
- ◆ Paper and writing utensils or a digital equivalent to take notes

THE HOUSE CHANTS ON is played over the course of 1-2 hours. It can be played in one or multiple sessions. All players will create one Soul together, then move from stage to stage and build their life and afterlife by pulling tarot cards and adding details. Eventually, you will pull one final card to determine the event that results in your Soul passing on to whatever awaits them next.

To begin, separate the Major Arcana and Minor Arcana into two decks. Shuffle each deck. Once the decks are shuffled, go around the table and discuss if there is anything your group would not like to include in your Soul's life. These can range from themes your group doesn't wish to explore to events that could be potentially upsetting to roleplay or discuss. Make a list of these topics and display it somewhere where all members of the table (whether it's a physical table or a voice call) can see.

Sometimes there are many things on this list and sometimes the list is empty. The important thing is to make sure that everyone at the table is free to add to it and discuss those additions with the group.

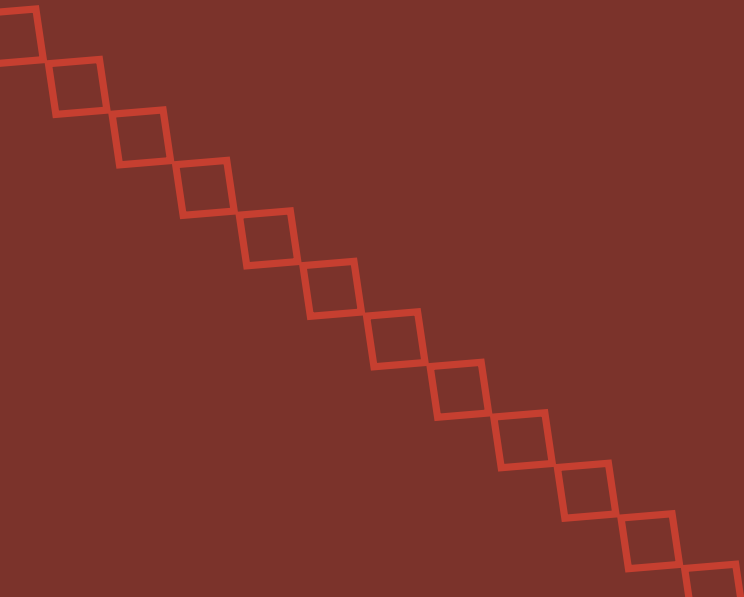
If you are playing by yourself, feel free to take a moment to check in with yourself and figure out what places you'd like your Soul's story to go. You might not need to write out a list of things you don't want to delve into, but it can be beneficial to know what you want out of your experience.

# NAMING YOUR SOUL

After your discussion has concluded and your list is displayed, it's time to name your Soul. The name can have incredible thematic significance or just be something that sounds cool. If you're stumped, try pulling a tarot card and taking inspiration from that.

Your Soul doesn't necessarily need to have the same name throughout the game. People change as they go through life and afterlife and you might represent that by having your Soul choose or be granted a new name.

Once your Soul's name is chosen, it's time to begin **THE SOUL CYCLE.**



# THE SOUL CYCLE

Now, you will play out four stages. Each stage represents a different point in your Soul's cycle. The gameplay for each stage works the same way.

First, a player will draw a card from your Major Arcana deck. A different player will draw from the Major Arcana deck each stage. This card will determine the general atmosphere of this stage of your Soul's cycle by using the prompts in **TABLE 1**. Keep this card in mind as you add details to the stage you're playing.

Then, going clockwise around the table, each player will draw a card from the Minor Arcana deck and use it to add a detail to the stage by using the prompts corresponding to the suite and card number in the **SUIT TABLES**. The player that drew the Major Arcana card this stage will draw a card last.

If you are playing by yourself, draw two Minor Arcana cards.

These details can involve anything from a one-sentence explanation to playing out a scene. You might choose to introduce recurring people in your Soul's cycle. Although the person drawing the card comes up with the initial detail, anyone at the table is free to add more specifics or explore the detail more in-depth.

While playing **THE SOUL CYCLE**, it's important to keep in mind the list of topics not to explore that you made while preparing. Tabletop

roleplaying games are a collaborative space and the best way to make sure that everyone at the table is comfortable enough to collaborate is to check in and be mindful of what could make people uncomfortable.

Once you've finished stage four, continue to the **ENDING THE GAME** section.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

*KARA: I'll pull the Major Arcana card for our Soul's childhood. I got Death. Looks like her childhood is esoteric.*

*STEVE: Then I'll pull the first detail card. I got the Ace of Wands. That's "a fateful act". I think that means that when she was a kid, she was in a really intensive theater program growing up that put a lot of pressure on her.*

*KARA: Maybe the founder of the program is some super mysterious figure and that could be where the esoteric vibes come in.*

*STEVE: Oh, I like that a lot. Here now you pull the next card.*

*KARA: Okay, I got the Six of Pentacles. That's "a dangerous patron". Let's build on this mysterious founder. Maybe they take a special interest in our Soul and she ends up apprenticing under them.*

*STEVE: I like the idea that all the other kids in the program are jealous of her and maybe she becomes a bit of an outcast.*

*KARA: Oh man that's so sad! Let's do it.*




# STAGES



## STAGE ONE:

### WE GET UP EARLY

In this stage, you will craft the childhood of your Soul. What were they like as a kid? Were their parents involved in their life? Did something significant happen to them?



## STAGE TWO:

### CRANKING THE GENERATOR

In this stage, you will craft your Soul's adulthood. Did they have a job? A passion? Were they content to go about their life going through the motions or did they want something different?

## ◆◆◆◆◆ STAGE THREE: ◆◆◆◆◆ LOWER ME DOWN SLOW

In this stage, you will craft the death of your Soul. What were their last living moments like? How did it happen? Was anyone with them? Was it sudden? Agonizingly long? Who are they leaving behind?

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## ◆◆◆◆◆ STAGE FOUR: ◆◆◆◆◆ STUNNING AND CADAVEROUS

In this stage, you will craft your Soul's haunting. Why are they still here? Do all Souls become ghosts or does your Soul have unfinished business to take care of? What are they haunting? Is it a house? An object? A person?

# ENDING THE GAME

When you've finished creating the circumstances of your Soul's haunting, you will play out the fifth and final stage in your Soul's cycle.

To begin, the oldest player will draw one last card from the Major Arcana deck. Using **TABLE 2**, you will determine the inciting event that caused your Soul to pass on to whatever happens beyond life and death.

From there, without pulling any more cards, each player will go counterclockwise and add a detail regarding the end of your Soul's cycle. Feel free to use the remaining Major Arcana cards as inspiration if you so choose.

If you are playing by yourself, add two details.

Once the inciting event has been decided and the details added, it is time to send your Soul off to whatever lies ahead of them in the next cycle. You may say goodbye however you see fit.

Take a moment to breathe and reflect on the cycle you just created.

It was beautiful, wasn't it?

# MAJOR TABLES



# TABLE 1

THE FOOL	whimsical
THE MAGICIAN	ostentatious
THE HIGH PRIESTESS	sanctimonious
THE EMPRESS	ethereal
THE EMPEROR	authoritative
THE HIEROPHANT	luminous
THE LOVERS	romantic
THE CHARIOT	determined
STRENGTH	courageous
THE HERMIT	solitary
WHEEL OF FORTUNE	shifting
JUSTICE	steady
THE HANGED MAN	daunting
DEATH	esoteric
TEMPERANCE	moderate
THE DEVIL	restricting
THE TOWER	bleak
THE STAR	irreverant
THE MOON	unwitting
THE SUN	joyful
JUDGEMENT	malleable
THE WORLD	accomplished

## TABLE 2

THE FOOL	a meaningful encounter
THE MAGICIAN	a delicate test
THE HIGH PRIESTESS	an unshakeable feeling
THE EMPRESS	a necessary deed
THE EMPEROR	a pointless order
THE HIEROPHANT	an unexplained request
THE LOVERS	a chance connection
THE CHARIOT	a hearty challenge
STRENGTH	a direct summons
THE HERMIT	a well-earned rest
WHEEL OF FORTUNE	an unlucky draw
JUSTICE	a sacred wish
THE HANGED MAN	a heavy sacrifice
DEATH	a fatal mistake
TEMPERANCE	a difficult temptation
THE DEVIL	a final indulgence
THE TOWER	an abrupt change
THE STAR	a faint hope
THE MOON	an emotional flashback
THE SUN	an earned vision
JUDGEMENT	a surprise awakening
THE WORLD	a closing window



SUIT TABLES





# WANDS



“A FATEFUL . . .”

ACE	act
TWO	decision
THREE	balance
FOUR	companion
FIVE	struggle
SIX	respect
SEVEN	success
EIGHT	change
NINE	rest
TEN	commitment
PAGE	freedom
KNIGHT	surprise
QUEEN	encouragement
KING	meeting

# ◇◇◇◇◇◇ CUPS ◇◇◇◇◇◇

“A PASSIONATE . . .”

ACE	ceremony
TWO	union
THREE	celebration
FOUR	upheaval
FIVE	mess
SIX	possibility
SEVEN	gift
EIGHT	disappointment
NINE	wish
TEN	reflection
PAGE	opening
KNIGHT	knowledge
QUEEN	feeling
KING	strength

# ◇◇◇◇◇ SWORDS ◇◇◇◇◇

“A CHALLENGING . . .”

ACE	goal
TWO	conflict
THREE	ache
FOUR	path
FIVE	loss
SIX	exit
SEVEN	deception
EIGHT	obligation
NINE	fear
TEN	end
PAGE	journey
KNIGHT	fall
QUEEN	isolation
KING	guide

# ◆◆◆◆ PENTACLES ◆◆◆◆

“A DANGEROUS . . .”

ACE	beginning
TWO	wait
THREE	craft
FOUR	responsibility
FIVE	desire
SIX	patron
SEVEN	excuse
EIGHT	energy
NINE	priority
TEN	wealth
PAGE	bounty
KNIGHT	peace
QUEEN	problem
KING	success