Halloweenia

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Introduction

This is a roleplaying-game. In such a game, the players take on a specific persona, who they will then use as their character. One player usually has the role of game master. He or she controls the scenery around the characters and all the other beings that the others meet in this adventure.

Think of it as a theatre group deciding to play Shakespeare, but not agreeing on which play, so you might end up with a Juliette who runs away after Romeo gets arrested for murder, and she meets Hamlet who is a brave warrior, and they accompany Beatrice who has studied magic under the tutelage of Prospero. Together they travel through England in search of Titania and fight against the evil Macbeth who has taken the throne from King Lear, all in a free-form setting.

Rules provide a framework of how reality works in this improvised play, so magic might work or there are spaceships capable of travelling faster than the speed of light, and so on. Rules also ensures fairness when playing.

This game started as a challenge on a Swedish forum for roleplaying games, to write a complete game in 1000 words or less, with the theme Autumn in one month. It has since been expanded a bit.

Setting

This game is about kids and teens who are doing Halloween-related things in a small sea-side town. The magic of Halloween has however opened portals to other worlds, so there really are monsters living under beds, and some of those that go trick-or-treating might actually be vampires, witches, or ghosts etc.

For some reason, the town is stuck in perpetual Autumn, with no connection to the outside world. You can not leave, as it is surrounded by an impenetrable fog where nothing requiring electricity works, and compasses spin madly. Sometimes unlucky travellers will make their way into the town, without knowing how they got there. Outside the town is a large forest, where strange things can roam. The fog starts a few kilometres further out

In the town it is always dark, with a full moon. The leaves on the trees, are turning red, orange, and yellow, and starting to fall, even though it is still rather pleasant temperatures.

On the bright side, food and other necessities do not seem to run out, and no one seems to age.

Rules

Character creation

Each player chooses 2 skills that their character is proficient in. Choose skills that are relatively broad, like Acting, Climbing, Martial arts, Sports, Singing, and so on. The skills should be reasonable, so it is unlikely that a 10-year old knows much about performing complex medical procedures, or knows how to operate heavy machinery.

Each character starts with 4 vitality points.

General rules

To check if a player succeeds on a given task, roll two 6-sided dice. If either one shows a 5 or 6, it is a success. If they have a skill that is suitable, then a roll of 4 is also a success. If the result is 6 and 6, it is a critical success, and something good happens as a bonus. If it is 1 and 1, then the character has fumbled, and something bad happens.

At the start of each adventure, each character starts with 3 story points (more if they are witches) that they can use to alter the world slightly:

- Spend 1 point to establish that they did have that small object with them all along. For example; a flashlight, or they find an object that they need, like a rope or a ladder.
- They can establish something in the scene, such as a hidden door or similar.
- Fumbles can be bought off for a cost of 1 point. It will still be a failure, but not so severe.

Combat

Any attacks remove 1 vitality point per net success. A critical success deals 1 extra damage. If a character is reduced to 0, they are taken out. To regain vitality, a successful application of first aid must be made, or the character needs to take a trip to the hospital. First aid will only give back 1 point of vitality, but it will stop any bleeding. A trip to the hospital gives back all vitality, but it takes time. The more injured, the longer the time.

If a character is reduced to negative vitality, they are dying, and need prompt medical attention.

To defend against an attack roll to dodge, or use Martial arts or similar skill if the defender tries to parry. Parrying a weapon with your bare hands hurt, so the character automatically takes 1 damage, if this is the case. Ranged weapons can only be dodged. If the defender is wearing something that can be used as armour, they take 1 less damage when they are hit.

Critters

Demons

Demons come in all shapes and always demand a hefty price for their service. They are evil, and will try to influence people to do bad things. Demons can be summoned by rituals found in old books of magic.

Fae

Fae are similar to demons but more benign, and will often play tricks on unwary humans just for fun. They do not understand modern technology. If they make a deal with someone they will stick to the exact letter of the deal, but will twist it as much as they can.

Ghosts

Ghosts have a harder time affecting the real world than others. So they only succeed on a roll of a 6, 5 if they have an appropriate skill. On the other hand, the same goes if someone wants to affect the ghost. Ghosts can pass through solid objects at will. A character can become a ghost if they are reduced to below 0 vitality points and the game master allows it. They will then come back with full vitality.

Mummies

Mummies store their vital organs in special urns. If you get hold of their heart, you can gain temporary control of the mummy. Though it will do anything to break free, and is surprisingly strong, so they do an extra point of damage. They also often have lots of interesting grave-goods.

Skeletons

Even if a skeleton is broken to pieces it will not stop moving, unless you can sever the head from the body. The head will still be able to talk, and can bite anyone who tries to pick it up. To stop it forever, the head must be destroyed. Bits that are lost while the head is still attached will not move.

Vampires

If a vampire's bite reduces a character to below 0 vitality points, the character dies and is reborn as a vampire with full vitality. Vampires crave blood to live, but have a vitality score of 6. Each point of vitality loss a vampire causes with its bite, will heal it for one point.

Werewolves

Werewolves are hard to to injure, and they take one less point of vitality loss per attack that damages them, unless it is a silver weapon, in which case they take an extra point of vitality loss instead. They are part human and part wolf. If they bite another person, who survives the attack, that person can become a werewolf if the game master allows it.

Witches

Witches gain 2 extra story points per session, but the drawback is that whenever they use them, something bad can happen in addition to what they wanted to happen. A character can become a witch by reading old forbidden books, or making a pact with some supernatural being such as a demon or fae.

Zombies

Zombies are slow, but they do not get tired, and do not need to sleep. They might get a craving to eat brains though. A person can be turned into a zombie by a witch, if the witches attack reduces the person to below 0 vitality points, and the witch spend 1 story point for her ritual. The zombie comes back with full vitality.

Other nasties

Assign a vitality-value from 1 to 10 depending on the size of the critter. Things that are not dangerous such as a small cat or dog, will only succeed on a roll of 6, and they cannot succeed critically. More dangerous things might succeed on rolls of 4. Give them some ability that is suitable.

Adventures

Here are a number of small adventures that are 1 to 2 pages long, and intended as inspiration and example. Each adventure is intended, to be able to be played within a single session. They are all stand-alone, and can be played in any order.

Introductionary adventure

Investigate that creepy house up on the hill. The house is rumoured to be haunted by a vengeful ghost that guards a map to an immense treasure that was hidden a long time ago, in the forest outside the town. Beware of the creeping crawlies out there.

Halloweenia

Player

Character name

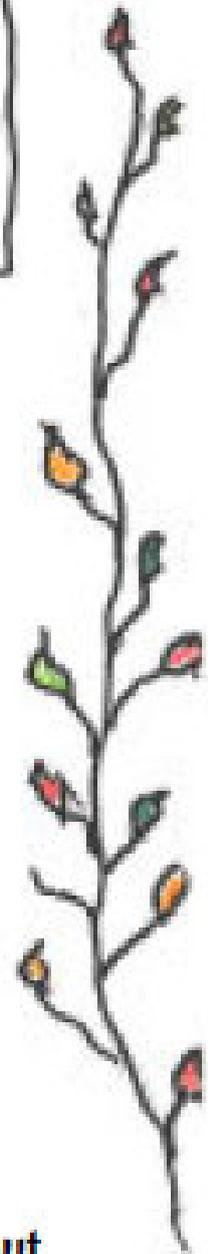Description and portrait

Skills

Stuff

Vitality

Dying   Taken out

O O   O

O O   O   O

Vampire O O