

# The Frost Papers

In the autumn of 1891 a series of strange letters appeared at an auction in London. They were purchased by a private collector for an undisclosed sum. In the winter of 1893 the collector perished in a fire that consumed his estate and many of his rare manuscripts. The letters survived. They have come to be known as The Frost Papers.

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Dear Mr. Frost,

As per our arrangement, I have detailed the Hallway Game, though I caution you, it should not be played lightly. There are other ways of entering the Grey, other Gates, other Games. While it offers a chance of knowledge gleaned, glimpses of things past or future, of dreams and other worlds, I fear the risks are far too grave. Mrs. Wells moved quickly, with much haste and little caution, and never came back. Mr. Edwards broke the Rules and came back wrong. We do not speak of Mr. Norwood.

I write this as both a Traveller and as a Guide. I have walked the Hallway and entered many Doors. I have seen the Grey. Though I am careful and always follow the Rules, I have seen such things that were not meant for the eyes of Men. I will remember them until I die, or the Shadow Man takes me.

The choice is yours, and with this you have been thrice warned; thus I liberate myself from obligation. We each must walk our own path.

One finds it is least difficult to play the Hallway Game as the Autumn Equinox approaches. Our world is closer then to the Grey. The Fog is Thinnest from the stroke of midnight through the witching hour. It is extremely difficult to gain entry outside of the narrow window of the Thinning. The Game must both begin and end within its confines.

The Game should be played in a dark chamber free of disturbance, with all gas lamps turned off. Though a parlour game, a room with no windows is preferred. If windows should prove unavoidably present, draw the curtains or cover them with tablecloths. Do the same to any mirrors present.

Those assembled are to place any cold iron they possess into a chest or box. This caveat most certainly includes any watchwork they may have on their personage. All clocks in the room must be stopped as well. Lastly, each of those assembled must write their name on a scrap of paper and place it also inside the box. The box should then be locked and the key kept on the Guide's person.

For the duration of the Game, do not speak each other's names. I repeat, do not speak each other's names. Thrice, I say, do not speak each other's names. There are only the Traveller, the Guide, and the Witnesses.

One of your company takes on the part of the Traveller. He is to sit in a chair with its back to a wall. Ring this chair in a circle, drawn in chalk or the like. The others are to ring the Traveller in a half circle of chairs. They are the Witnesses. Across from the Traveller, one with the Witnesses, must sit the Guide. Though it is possible for two to play without Witnesses — Guide and Traveller alone — it is more dangerous still. The Witnesses act as ward and tether. Once seated, none among the Witnesses should move nor speak, nor look behind themselves at any point.

The Guide hands the Traveller a pair of objects, a key and a piece of chalk. They are tokens that may help the Traveller should he lose his way. The Traveller should stow them in pockets or otherwise place them on his person. It is imperative for the Guide to note the location of each. Ensure beforehand that the key is not of iron.

The Guide is to light a candle that he may hold. The Guide then tells the party he will count slowly from ten down to one. As he counts, all eyelids will become heavier and heavier. After the count, the Guide should gently instruct all present to close their eyes. The Traveller must close his eyes. The Witnesses must close their eyes. The Guide must close his eyes.

The Hallway Game has now properly begun and there is no turning back.

It is the Guide's duty to help the Traveller navigate by way of questions. He is to ask the Traveller for clarification, or prompt him with queries. The Traveller must speak words as they come to him, saying whatever flows from the top of his mind, from his deeper self. If he is to think about his words or formulate them, if there is distance between what he speaks and what he thinks, the Fog will grow thick and little shall be gained.

The Guide is then to issue the Traveller the Rules. When first we were taught the Game by the Moor, he spoke not of Rules, and those we have learned have been at great cost. I doubt that we ourselves have yet discovered them all. It is the Guide's duty to remind the Traveller of the Rules and attempt to aid him should he stray. There are seven Rules.

- Do not disregard your instincts
- Do not speak your true name
- Do not seal a covenant
- Do not stray from the path
- Do not eat their food
- Do not accept their gifts
- Beware the Shadow Man

Speaking softly, but clearly and firmly, the Guide is to begin by asking the Traveller to imagine a series of three objects and describe them to the group. He is to make the objects as real as possible, so real he could reach out and touch them. First, ask him to picture a Clock. Then ask him to picture a Key. Finally, ask him to picture a Door.

The Guide should then instruct the Traveller to imagine himself opening his eyes, in his mind. He will see in the candlelight the faces of the Guide and of the Witnesses. He will see the room, and, should he stand, in his mind, he will see himself, eyes closed, seated in the chair. And if he should turn around, he will see that in the wall behind his chair is the Door he imagined.

If he opens this Door he will find himself looking down a long Hallway lined with Doors. He is to explore these Doors and the rooms beyond them.

When the Traveller wishes to return, he must find the proper Door. If it is locked, his key can open it. If he cannot find the door, his chalk can make one. If both of these fail, it falls to the Guide to save him, lest he become lost in the Grey beyond the Fog.

The Guide should describe to the Traveller how this Door will open back onto the room from which he left. He will see, in the candlelight, the faces of the Guide, and of the Witnesses. He will see the room, and in his mind, he will see himself, eyes closed, seated in the chair. And if he wishes, he could sit in the chair, and close his eyes and rest.

Speaking to the Traveller, and the Witnesses, and himself, the Guide should then say that he may awaken after a count from ten. The Guide then counts slowly down from ten to one. After the count, the Guide should gently instruct those present to open their eyes. The Traveller must open his eyes. The Witnesses must open their eyes. The Guide must open his eyes.

If the Guide's candle has gone out while the Traveller was gone, he must ask the Traveller to describe his Clock, his Key, and his Door. The Guide should relight the candle while he speaks. If the candle has gone out and the Traveller fails to answer, or answers falsely, continue as if nothing is amiss; the Circle will tell.

Once the Traveller returns, The Guide should ask if any of the Witnesses wish to Travel. If one signals by placing two fingers to their downcast forehead, the Traveller stands, and exchanges places with the member of the Witnesses.

If the Traveller cannot cross the Circle, leave immediately. The Guide must take the box of names and make sure his candle does not go out. Do not return to the room until dawn.

To end the Game, burn the scraps of paper with your names in turn, using the Guide's candle flame. Even with the observation of all precautions, ours is an imperfect art. I see the Shadow Man now in dark corners, at the ends of darkened halls, and the bottom of the unlit stair. He has bled into our world, through the cracks of our minds. I have no fear he will one day take me. This I know, for I have played the Hallway Game.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

I write in response to your inquiry on the Walking Game. It is a potent pursuit, but takes much time to master, though such things matter little to one as yourself. Walking is perhaps the easiest and safest way to cross the Fog and enter the Grey. Some men, even those ignorant of our Art, may perform it by mistake. To Walk through the Fog and into the Grey is something I believe all Men were born with the ability to accomplish. Even beasts seem to possess the rudimentary faculties necessary to cross the threshold. The trick lies in mastering oneself. To master one's self is to master the universe, or so the Moor said.

Begin training by staining a Circle on the back of your right hand in the seventh way. When you glimpse the sign, ask yourself if you are dreaming. Test yourself. Count your fingers. Try to pass one hand through the other. Snap your fingers and will a flame in the palm of your hand. Perform these tests many times each day, every day, whenever you think of them or glimpse the sign. Soon you will be performing them in your dreams.

When the sign is wrong or broken, when you have too many or too few fingers, when one hand slips through the next, when you can call fire, this when you shall take hold. This will allow you to become aware of your astral self, and you may marshal your senses. Should the shift happen too suddenly, and threaten to unmake the dream, rub your hands together vigorously to anchor you in that reality.

As you fall asleep each night, remain conscious as you cross. Remain aware as you no longer have the will to move your limbs. This is most easily done by falling back to sleep immediately after being woken in the early morning.

The key to strengthening these techniques lies in the improvement of one's ability to recall one's dreams. Keep pen and ink by your bedside. Each morning upon waking, write down all you can remember, each detail as it comes to you. You will find that, in short order, you will remember a dream each night, perhaps even two, or three. Once you have mastered these basic techniques, we shall speak in length on entering the Grey, for it is only after you possess these capabilities that you will be ready to find the proper Gate.

Be cautioned, however: with no Guide watching over you, nor Witnesses to bind you, denizens of the Grey may, uninvited, seek to fill your empty vessel and walk, skinned, among men. As with any journey into the Grey, watch for the Shadow Man. Woe be to he who should wake to find him standing, watching, black against the dark. It is also possible to lose one's way in the Fog, especially if one has lingered too long in the Grey. Time is strange there and does not always flow in a line.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

I understand that you have been waiting for this missive for some time. I believe you are ready. What follows are the secrets of the Calling Game. We pieced it together from fragments of the old scrolls, and patched it ourselves as need dictated. Complete it with success, and your powers in all aspects of the Art will have multiplied tenfold. Fail and you stand to lose much, if not all. I last played the Calling Game two winters ago in the south, during the Shift. The Traveller was a young boy, though one of exceptional skill, and I the Guide.

The essence of the Game is to call upon a denizen of the Grey — not a mortal spirit who lingers beyond the Fog, but a being of that other plane, a true entity; a Demon. As with all things, it is best performed at the Thinning. Only one is needed; a Traveller may proceed alone, but at great risk to himself. Two are preferred, a Guide and Traveller, though Witnesses may be called to lend strength, as is often the case with such endeavours. They are to form a ring with the Traveller in the centre, and each hold a candle.

Place a chair in the centre of the darkened room. Take the usual precautions with windows and mirrors. Around the chair, draw a Circle in the third way, cut by two squares forming a star. Light a candle on each of the eight points. The Traveller must then be bound to the chair, hand and foot, so that he cannot break free of his own strength or devices. If he seeks to bind a malign spirit of great potency, I implore you to keep a prepared vessel of brass by your side, bearing the traditional seal.

The Traveller must then close his eyes — and the Witnesses too, if present, in turn. The Guide must keep vigil and should never let his gaze fall from the Traveller's face. With great concentration, the Traveller must call a Demon by name. Strange syllables may come to him, or names seemingly of man or beast. The Traveller must call the Name high and mightily. Summon Them by Name, Call Them and Invoke Them, Conjure Them forth from beyond the Fog.

When It arrives the Traveller must see Its shape in the void of his mind. Some Demons will assume forms of Their own, other will wait to be made a mask. Once formed, the Traveller is to speak to It, and It shall reply. He must ask not Its True Name, nor give his own. As with all endeavours, he must abide by the Rules. Trust in yourself, do not treat with It, nor accept offers of food, nor drink, nor other gifts, no matter what they seem. If it is not a Demon that approaches, but the figure of the Shadow Man that Walks towards him from the Fog, he must be awakened at once by the Guide, though he may not cross the Circle. Fortunately, it is often a lesser Demon that answers one's first Call.

If a Demon is called and manifests, the Guide should maintain a link with the Traveller. He should ask what the Demon is like and what It says. The Demon and Traveller may converse at great length in the Traveller's mind and he may relay to the Guide some or all of what comes to pass. It is the Traveller's task to master the Demon, for though It may be powerful in Its own right, It shall be bound by the Circle drawn in the third way. He must entreat It to offer a gage, proof of Its submission. After the joining is sealed, they will be forever conjoined.

Should the Demon triumph over the Man, and the Traveller fall prey to Its will, It may attempt to seize his earthly flesh, and speak in voices or tongues not his own. Sometimes, you can tell at once the Man has lost, for the blood will drain from him, and he will look upon you with eyes not his own. Other times, the Game may conclude and it is only when he tries to cross the Circle that you know he has been lost.

Once he has mastered the Demon and It is beholden to his command, It shall be subservient to his will in all things, a part of him apart from him. It may venture with him into the Grey as a companion hound at the Huntsman's side. After the Traveller has mastered It, the Guide must ask him if the Traveller's battle is won. If he affirms his triumph, the Guide is to bid him and then the Witnesses to open their eyes. He is then to rise and unbind him. Do not snuff the candles until the Traveller has left the Circle drawn in the third way.

It is a delicate thing at first, to be so linked to an unknown entity. It is imperative for the Traveller to speak to Them often; before sleep or during a meditative moment is best. Do not hesitate to ask Their council for They may reveal hidden insights, or even glimpses of prophecy. One may also send Them on tasks to curse others, or work one's will in distant places. In time, such a creature may even come to be counted among friends. A master of the Demon's Art may control more than one. I myself am bound to six and Their True Names I know. It is said the greatest of practitioners commanded scores, some kings among Their kind, and many with legions of Their own.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

First and foremost, let me offer my condolences. The death of Mrs. Lyons is regrettable and I understand your need for answers. While I'm certain you did everything in your power to avoid such a tragedy, the Art is not without its risks, as well you know. She knew what she was doing when she sealed the pact, as did we all. I found your attempts to save her admirable, but ultimately foolish. However, the peril in which you have placed yourself need not be fruitless. Something may yet be gained from her sacrifice. I teach you now the Black and White Game.

I concede, this Game is one of necromancy, yet it is not so crude or base as other games of its kind. Unlike other games it does not draw an entity through the Fog to our side, but rather casts two Travellers deep into the Grey to act as conduits. The primary risk is drawing the attention of a denizen from the other side. Should they perceive the link, they may seek to enter through one of the tethered vessels. Thus you will need to make the traditional precautions, covering windows and mirrors, removing the presence of watchwork, and adhering to the seven. Two concentric Circles should also be drawn; one in the seventh way, the next around it in the third. Inside them, set chairs: two for the Travellers, facing that of the Guide, with more for the Witnesses, arrayed in the usual way.

Gather to your home two of your comrades of clear mind and unwavering conviction. Witnesses may be present to lend their strength, but much weight is borne by the power of the two. They will act as Travellers, seated in high backed chairs, eyes blindfolded with cloth. You knew Mrs. Lyons most intimately, and shall act as the Guide. Though it may be difficult for you, you constitute the greatest chance of reliable results.

Into each of the blindfolded Travellers' hands place either salt or black earth, such that both have one handful of each. It is imperative they know not which hand contains the salt, and which the black earth. If the earth can be taken from her grave, it is all the stronger. It is imperative they keep their minds blank. They must sink into the Fog. They must see in their minds that shadowy realm, and press to find the spirit they seek, whether by form, or face, or lingering presence.

Have prepared a metal basin of hot water, bronze or brass is best, and rest it upon a pedestal by your chair, mostly filled. If the water is to spill or overflow, the Game is over, and you must act quickly to sever the tethers. On a pedestal to your other side, have at hand a bowl of small stones. Smooth black river stones work best.

Once prepared you are to strike the basin. If all is done correctly, this should plunge them deep into the Fog. You must allow them time as they navigate the Fog seeking her spirit. In the Grey, she may appear to them as a spectre, or as she did in life, perhaps blue lipped and hoary rimed. They may see each other too, should they be of such a strength. Once they have each found her they are to open both hands to reveal salt and black earth both. Once they do so, strike the basin again and you may begin.

If they are unable to find the spirit they seek, after searching for a great length of time, they must return through the fog, lest they risk lingering too long on the other side.

If both find her, you may ask questions of your blind Travellers. After you ask your question, you must drop a stone into the basin of water. At this sound, they will see the spirit reveal a hand, palm up. The Travellers must mimic her actions, opening a single hand each time.

You may receive the answer as salt, earth, or salt and earth. Two handfuls of salt represents a positive, and two of earth a negative. A mixed response of earth and salt means that she either cannot answer or the question's outcome is truly uncertain. You may not ask the same question twice in one Game. You must also never ask a question you already know the answer to.

Should you receive the same answer three times in a row, the entity they have found is not the one they sought, however it may appear. Under this circumstance, it is imperative you end the Game at once in the method I shall describe.

After you have asked your fill of questions, empty the stones into the basin such that it overflows. When it runs over, guide each of the blindfolded Travellers to the basin, and wash their hands clean of the salt and earth. Only once both the Travellers have cleansed their hands may you remove their blindfolds and step from the Circles.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

I trust that you received the parcel I sent ahead. I am loath to part with the amulet, but you need it far more than I. As for the Doll Game, my simple advice is to never play. While all of our practices carry with them risks, this pursuit is one of arrogance and madness. However, as I am bound to our agreement, I have disclosed the Game in its entirety. Until now, only myself and Mrs. Wells carried knowledge of this Game, and then I alone. It was entrusted to us by Madame Charron, who claimed it to have been written in the Black Book. It is my hope that you never have need to use it.

The Doll Game is, in essence, a form of necromancy. Using a doll as a catalyst, it may be possible to speak with those who linger in the Grey beyond the Fog. Much preparation is necessary and each doll will only work on a single entity. Furthermore, you will only be able to use each doll once.

At the very least you will need two in all, a Guide who seeks answers and a Traveller who will speak. Begin the Game by finding a doll; the more lifelike, the stronger the link. Madame Charron told us she used glass-eyed China dolls.

Begin by cutting the doll open and removing its insides. In place of the stuffing, insert a piece of the person whose essence you wish to draw. Hair and nails and blood work best. If they cannot be found, a likeness such as one found in a locket or photograph will do. After this is done, insert a slab of flesh. Raw meat of any animal will do. Madame Charron spoke of her mother using grain instead of meat during her childhood with the caravan when food was scarce. She added that it was unreliable and often yielded less than desirable results. Once this is done, sew the doll shut with thread.

Between midnight and the witching hours, at the Thinning, bury the doll in a shallow grave where you will be able to find it again, not too far from your home. Place a ring of stones around the grave. Leave the doll beneath the dirt for one day. The next night return at the same time and unearth the doll.

If you return to find the grave open and the doll gone, leave at once. Do not return until the next night. At that time, refill the hole and scatter the stones.

If the grave is as undisturbed as you left it, dig up the doll. Take care that the Traveller is the only one who touches it. This is not for the faint of heart. Do not clean off the grave dirt. Though such hedge practices are beneath us, should you wish it, you may return to the grave in spring and plant mugwort seeds in the hole. The next autumn, return to harvest its leaves to dry for tea that may aid in Walking.

Return with the doll to your parlour and dim the gas lamps. Place a basin of cold water on the floor between two chairs, facing one another either side of the basin. The Guide is to sit in one chair; the Traveller, holding the doll to his chest, is to take the other. The Doll too should face the Guide. If you wish for further precautions, draw a Circle about the chairs in the seventh way. The Guide is to light and hold a candle.

The Traveller is to close his eyes. The Guide must stare into the eyes of the doll, and is to ask whom he addresses, and the Traveller must answer with the name of the desired entity. He must become a conduit, and allow his mind to be receptive to the magnetism of the spirit from beyond the Fog. With blank mind, he must not contrive his words or thoughts, but simply trust in his feelings, and speak the words as they come. The Guide is to ask his questions of the entity.

Once satisfied, or after the entity has conveyed all the information it wishes, the Guide must thank it by name. After he thanks it by name, he is to tell the Traveller he is to be himself again. He is to ask him who he is to make certain. If he answers correctly, the Guide is to bid him open his eyes and consign the doll to the basin of cold water. Should the Traveller fail to answer or awaken, the Guide must quickly wrest the doll from his grasp and plunge it into the water himself. Once the doll has been drowned, destroy it in its entirety. Fire is best, though do not burn it in your hearth. Dismemberment is an agreeable alternative, if one can ensure the pieces remain separated.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

I have done my best to dissuade you from taking shortcuts, but if you are to continue such pursuits, I feel an obligation to ensure they are at least executed in the proper manner. The type of charm you seek can be won from an entity we have dubbed Blind Jack. Our friends in the east simply call him the Gambler. It is my belief he is a denizen from the Grey, though others believe he was once a man. There are many theories. In any case, though I feel such methods are base, petty charms do seem to hold sway over the being.

Jack's Game is played with one, though I dare not say alone, as he will surely come. First you must prepare a deck of playing cards. Remove the Joker and blind him. Take up a pen and scratch out his eyes. Do this for each King and Queen and Knave, missing not a one. Return these to the deck, but set the Joker aside. He shall play a different role.

In preparation for the Game proper, at the Thinning, crack open a window in the darkened room where it is to be played. Take the usual precautions with watchwork and, as always, heed the seven rules. Draw a Circle about yourself in the first way. Set four candles about you in the ring: one in front, two to the sides, and one behind. He may try and make you leave the Circle. Under no circumstances are you to do so, no matter what you may hear or see. When you are ready to begin, light the candles and repeat the following charm.

Come Jack I call you in,  
Through the keyhole, through the crack  
For a game of cards and candle light  
I wager all the things you lack.

You should feel his presence then, a coldness on your neck, the howl of chill wind. Shuffle the deck of cards by placing them one at a time into a dozen piles, until you feel they are correct. Do not attempt to cheat him. He will know. Once the cards are as you will them, deal out the deck into thirteen piles around the Circle, a dozen as the numbers on a clock, and one at its center, by yourself. Once the cards are dealt, close your eyes, and repeat the following charm.

Jack leapt into a bramble bush  
And scratched out both his eyes,  
He did not see the stairway's stones  
And at the bottom lies,  
With the worms that writhe and crawl  
From the sockets of his guise.

You may now open your eyes and begin. Turn over the top card of any pile. When it is revealed, bury it face up beneath its corresponding hour, with Aces at one o'clock, Queens at eleven, and Kings at twelve. If a Knave is revealed, place it face up under the central pile.

Continue in this fashion until the Game is won and all the cards have returned to their rightful hours. However, if the central pile of Knaves is completed before the rest, Jack has won the Game. Should this occur, there is a remedy. Snuff one of the four candles, and repeat the following charm.

Come Jack let's play again  
I'll even make a fire black  
For a game of cards and candle light  
One step closer towards my back

Shuffle the deck as you did before, lay out the clock once more, close your eyes, and repeat the charm.

Jack leapt into a bramble bush  
And scratched out both his eyes,  
He did not see the stairway's stones  
And at the bottom lies,  
With the worms that writhe and crawl  
From the sockets of his guise.

You may do this thrice, once with each candle. You must never snuff the candle behind you, even if you have lost a fourth and final time. Instead, you must immediately turn and burn the Joker card until there is nothing left. Should you win, the Joker is yours. Keep it, and it shall prove a ward against ill fortune in your travels through the Grey.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

Despite my numerous dissuasions you seem eager to explore the lower side of our Art. If you continue to dabble in such base pursuits, I am obligated to offer you what little advice I may. The Lantern Game acts as focus, a lens by which your undertakings may be magnified. The veil will thin before you, and the wards will light your way as lanterns in the Fog. Such concentration of potency is not without its risks. Your beacons will act as a lighthouse to the Grey, and others may be drawn to your light in the darkness.

Lash together triangles or pyramids of triangles from the twigs and sticks of trees with twine. You must collect the sticks yourself. The Moor used only mountain ash, though I believe the precise type of wood matters little; the power is in the blood. Once each ward is complete you must spill a drop of your own blood upon it. Indeed, each of your companions who wishes to share in their protection must do so as well.

Once you have prepared the wards, a dozen for each you wish to protect, you must hang them. Prepare lanterns, for this must be performed at the Thinning. String them from the boughs of trees around the grounds of your estate. Do not hang them from statues nor other artifacts of men. No living soul who has not spilled their blood upon them may witness them being hung.

If in the following days you perceive that the wards are missing — or worse, in different places than where you set them — it means something has been lured by the lines. Such beings are often as moths to a flame, but on occasion, something darker may take advantage of the open door.

Over time, you may hang additional wards, each lending strength to the next. To do so you must make them in the same manner. Each ward you place must be further from the origin than its predecessor. Never place more than a dozen wards each moon after the initial warding.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr Frost,

I have received your parcel and am gladdened to find the book intact. I will begin translations as soon as possible in the hopes of finding something to lend you aid. As to your question, however, I say with regret that the only person who may have known the answer is Madame Charron herself. As she has long since passed, I shall provide you with the next best thing. I have enclosed a talking board and planchette as well as instructions on how to play the Talking Game. Madame Charron may yet provide you the answers you seek.

For this Game you shall need a Guide. You shall also need a Traveller, or several if appropriate. The Guide and Travellers must be seated at a table in a room that has been bound with the traditional precautions. A Circle in the seventh way is best; the first if done with haste, and the seventh if you aim to err. Light two candles; position each at the sides of the board. The Game works best when contacting a spirit known by each of the Travellers. I find it regrettable you never met her in life. Places of known potency where the Fog is thin are, of course, preferable. The board may also be used to communicate with those trapped in the Grey, or lost in the Fog between. But that is not the case this time.

Once you have situated yourselves, the Game may begin. Each of those present is to rest two fingers upon the planchette. The guide must call the spirit forth, by name if possible. He must Summon Them by Name, Call Them and Invoke Them, Conjure Them forth from beyond the Fog. From this point onwards, the Guide alone may speak. He is to ask questions to the entity you have contacted. It is imperative the Travellers do not speak, nor look behind themselves, but fix their gazes upon the board.

Do not resist the tug of the planchette beneath your fingers. If all has been done properly, the planchette should move seemingly of its own accord, as the called entity forms answers from the symbols on the board. Should the planchette move freely, while the fingers of the Guide are not upon it, you may have called a denizen from the Grey and not the spirit you sought. If such a thing occurs, take up the planchette, gaze through its window slowly at other chairs in the room, at your travellers, and finally, slowly, behind yourself. Should you perceive nothing amiss, you may continue the Game.

As the spirit has been torn from the Grey such answers may be obscure, seemingly riddles to your eyes. It will begin slowly at first. Ask simple questions first, that may be answered with a positive or negative response. Gradually you may ask more complex questions, as you begin to understand the channels and the planchette moves easily beneath your fingers.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

You may only play the King's Game three times. I have played it twice. It is a game of prophecy and fate. The results are far more precise than those glimpsed through the Hallway or by Walking. While it does not require entry into the Grey, do not think it a safe venture. To invite entities from the Grey to our side may prove more dangerous still. Through the words of the shadow court, through the Fog, you may learn of things that may yet come to pass. It is to be played at the Thinning, between the stroke of midnight and the witching hour.

In a darkened chamber, gather to yourself two others you can trust completely. They shall play the roles of the Crone and the Fool. You are to set a chair facing into darkness. This chair is for you, he who takes the mantle of the King. Behind it, position a phonograph with a blank cylinder. We are still unsure why the machine resonates with the Fog. Mr. Edwards once suggested something deeper in its very mechanism acted as a catalyst for the conduits; he spoke at length on the resonance of black stars. Perhaps you will experiment further with the new electrical motor fan in its place. Aside from this, all clocks and watchwork and devices fed by electricity must be removed.

On either side, facing this, your throne, place two more chairs, each supporting a large identical mirror. Facing away from you, place two more chairs, with their backs against those of the mirror chairs. These are the thrones of the Crone and the Fool. Set the phonograph or fan into motion. Your trusted companions are to be seated.

Name one the Crone and the other Fool as you blindfold them. We do not know what they are, in truth, these entities invited from the Grey, but they answer our call. Once this is done, sit in your throne and light a small candle. This begins the King's Game. Stare not at the flame, nor at the mirrors to your sides, but perceive each from the corners of your eyes. Begin by greeting them, first the Crone and then the Fool.

At either the Crone or the Fool in turn, direct questions about things to come. It is imperative that you the King, and the Crone and Fool, only speak softly, and solely in metaphor. To ask with precision is to be turned by the Fog. To discern the hour of my death, I once enquired as to where my shadow rested. The Fool did reply that he did not rest, but stood behind me even now. Sometimes you may ask a question of the Fool or Crone, and they may tell you that the other knows. You must then ask your question of the other. Never should the Fool and Crone be permitted to speak directly with one another.

Remember always the Rules. In particular, do not tell them your true name. If they ask, you must tell them you are the King. Should any of the company's names be spoken, you must ask the Crone and then the Fool to leave at once. Do not seal a covenant, no matter what is offered, even if it seems a gift.

You must play the Game until the candle has expired, even if the phonograph runs its course before the appointed time. If you stand before the candle is spent, the Crone and Fool may take offence and it would be unwise to play again, so choose your wick wisely. After the candle flame has burned out, be sure to thank them and bid them farewell, first the Crone and then the Fool, before rising from your chair. Remove the blindfolds from your companions and the Game has run its course.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.

Dear Mr. Frost,

If what you say is true and the Shadow Man does even now linger in the corners of your vision, I fear you have little time. Without looking directly at Him, take measure of how far He is from you. If He stands at the end of the hall or the bottom of the stair, we may yet have time. If you see Him behind yourself in a mirror, we may be too late. I know but one way to turn the Shadow Man when He dogs your steps. Tonight you shall play the Hiding Game.

You shall take on the part of the Traveller. With you, bring any number of Guides in whom you bear certain trust. The greater your concern, the greater the risk, for you and for them. Any with whom you share your plight suffer the risk of exposure to the Shadow Man. At the start of the Thinning, you are to enter a darkened room with a candle and a hand mirror. At the stroke of midnight proper, your Guides are to leave the house. When the door closes, light a candle immediately and face a corner where two bare walls meet.

Each of the Guides, in turn, is to knock upon the door. You must call out to each that you invite him in. Upon entering each Guide must hide himself somewhere in the house and close his eyes. The last Guide to enter must knock and, when invited in, open the door and gesture as if holding it open for another. This is when the Shadow Man will enter. He must then close the door, and knock again for himself, like each of the others before him.

For the space of three minutes, you must remain in the corner. Fix your eyes upon the hand mirror, and with it look over your shoulder, probing the darkness for the Shadow Man. Let your mind go blank and allow your eyes to conjure Him from the dark.

It is your duty to then seek out each of the hidden Guides. For the duration, you must keep constant watch over your shoulder by way of the hand mirror. You will likely see the Shadow Man standing behind you. So long as He does not appear directly behind you, you still have time to complete your work. At any time, you may call out, "where are my guests?" Each of the Guides must clap once. You may only do this three times over the course of the Game, so use them wisely and well. On finding a Guide, you must not touch him. With your face expressionless, you must whisper, "I found you". At this he is to open his eyes, and with an equally blank face, look over your shoulder into the dark and say, "you are not welcome here". He must then silently move to stand behind you, the Traveller, and follow you in silence as you find the rest. They may gesture, but it is imperative they remain expressionless and do not speak.

Once every Guide has been found, you are to lead them out of the house, through the same door by which they entered. Open the door for them, and nod at each as they walk out past you. You are to be the last to leave. After the last Guide, nod one final time to the darkness, as it too leaves. Once the door closes behind you, you are to light your candle and tell your Guides that the Game is done. Henceforth the mirror you have won will be imbued with the ability to see the Shadow Man where other eyes may not; keep it, for it is a boon.

If the clock strikes three and you have not found each of your Guides, you have lost the Game and must turn to the darkness and cry out that it is no longer welcome. Immediately shatter your hand mirror. Upon hearing this, each of your guides should silently and expressionlessly make their way to stand around you. If any of your company is missing, then He has taken them. I would also recommend that you bury the fragments of the mirror somewhere far from your home, though if it comes to this, I fear I can no longer help you.

If I do not hear from you by the next moon, I shall presume that you have failed.

Yours Truly,  
A.R.