

The BURIED

WRETCHED
& ALONE



Who?

“Why’ve yall stopped digging?” bellowed McManus from down the tunnel. He was bigger than most, but most of that bulk was fat. It had been years since he’d had to pull a full days work in the mines, and he made sure it showed.

Siema pointed over to the...thing. “That’s why.” Siema was almost as big as McManus, and his bulk came from muscle. He was the only one who dared bow up at the tyrannical shift leader, and everyone knew there was a reckoning coming one day soon.

McManus sauntered over to the end of the tunnel and for a moment even he was stuck silent. They were a good half mile below the surface, a place where their digging had made it clear no man had even set foot before. So how there could be a half revealed stone doorway, one with swooping spiral sigil that drew the eye, yet made your brain want to scream in pain, no one had been able to say.

After a moment McManus spat, and a hint of greed began to show in his eye. “Keep digging. Lets see what’s behind that door.”

Seima shrugged, and swung his pick.

That’s the last thing you remember.

Time has passed, you can feel it. But it's dark, with only the pale glow of your headlamp to provide any illumination. There was a cave in, that much is clear. Dust fills the air, and you can see a few bodies lying about. Some of your shift, but not all, not by a stretch. And from the way your head hurts you can tell you took a pretty nasty knock.

You are in a tunnel though. But clearly not one carved by you or your coworkers. This must be what was beyond that door...though where is the door? Is it under the cave in? And where is everyone? Under the rubble...or have they followed the tunnel looking for a way out?

You do know one thing: your bosses are probably not going to waste the energy trying to dig out a team of miners in a mostly played out shaft, when there are a thousand more waiting to take your place. They’ll just try another shaft, and hope to strike more gold that way. If you want to get out, you’re going to have to do it yourself you think.

These tunnels though...you’ve never seen anything like them. They look carved, but not by tools. They look as though they have been clawed into existence, though what could claw through granite like that, you haven’t a clue. And scattered throughout are small piles of bones...and some look to be human. What is this place?

How?

To play you will need a standard deck of playing cards with the jokers removed to represent the Tunnels. You will also need 10 tokens to represent your progress exploring the Tunnels. Thematically, some pebbles or rocks would work well, but you can use whatever you have handy from loose change to strips of paper. Lastly you'll need at least one six sided die, and a tumbling block tower. You can play without the tower, but ideally the game is designed for one.

This is a solo-journaling game so you will need a way to, you know, journal. For ease you can use a notebook, or your favorite word processor. To be a bit more thematic, it is imagined that our lonely survivor is penning these in a small notebook that he used to quickly jot down song ideas that came to him while mining. These notes will be the record of how you escaped, or more likely, how you came to die. You could even make voice recordings, though you'll need to think up a reason why our hero has one. Perhaps he uses it to sing melodies into, for remembrance later?

There are two ways you can get out of the tunnels alive, each of them are very unlikely.

First, you find an opening that takes you back to the surface. One has to exist, right? Where is all this air coming from if not?

Second, maybe capitalism doesn't kill you, and the mine actually mounts a rescue mission that finds you.

There are endless ways to die, and few to live. Pray you're lucky, as the deck is stacked against you. But then that's life.

Begin

Setup the tumbling tower like you normally would. Once it is set up, roll the die and complete that many pulls from the tower. The tower represents your physical and mental health, and these pulls represent the amount of damage, exhaustion, and mental stress you are under in the moments after you wake up. If the tower falls, that's it. You've wasted away from lack of supplies, or your mind has shattered from the insanity you have faced. Why not both? Regardless, once the tower falls the game has ended, and you have lost.

If you don't have a tumbling tower, then just ignore that aspect of the game.* If you are told to pull a block, well, you clearly don't have a block to pull so how could you? In this case, it is assumed that the game resolves itself in a matter of a couple days, so the need for supplies is removed.

Now, shuffle the deck thoroughly, in whatever style you want, and set it within arms reach. You are going to be pulling from it a lot, make it comfy. If you are more pressed for time, and want an easier game, simply find the Ace of Hearts and place it on the top of the deck.

Now, however you are planning to keep up this journal, it's time for your first entry. Here it is, just use this script:

My name is [Pick a name]. I survived a cave-in in Tunnel No.7. I think I may be the only survivor. As I am unsure of rescue, I have decided to follow this tunnel I have found myself in, and try to find a way to the surface. If you find this, I didn't make it, but you will at least know why. Tell my [Insert Person You Are Most Attached To] that I love them, and that I'm sorry I wasn't strong enough.

How you write each post after that is up to you. Be as realistic as possible. Remember that you are underground, and have no watch. There is no way for you to know how much time has passed, how many days, so just note that some time has passed, and then write what has happened.

You are now ready to seek the way out. Good luck.

You'll need it.

*If you don't have a tumbling tower, and you really want that effect, instead try this: each time you are told to pull a block, you roll 6d6. If you roll over the total number of blocks you have pulled, then the 'tower' holds. If you roll under...it 'falls.'

The Passing of Time

The game is divided into segments. In other Wretched and Alone games, they are called days, so we will use that nomenclature. How long a day is though can be as little as a few hours, or maybe a full day. It's impossible to know down there in the dark. Just know that each day has two phases: the tasks, and the diary.

Phase One: Tasks

Roll your six-sided die and draw that number of cards from the deck, keeping them face down.

Turn over the first card you drew and see what you have discovered in the Tunnels, by consulting the provided charts. There may be added instructions (usually to pull a block from the tower), complete each instruction as soon as it is received.

Continue turning over all the cards you have drawn for the day, and consulting the Tunnels until all your tasks are complete. Once done, discard all the cards, unless told otherwise.

Phase Two: The Diary

Now that you have learned what you have found that 'day,' take some time to write it up. Talk about how you are feeling, what certain events prompted you to do, what you think the future may hold.

The Darkness

It is dark in the Tunnels, very, very, very dark. Your only source of light is your headlamp, and you know you will need to conserve it as much as possible. A fully charged battery pack, of which you start the game with two (one plugged in and one you looted from a nearby corpse), will last for six charges.

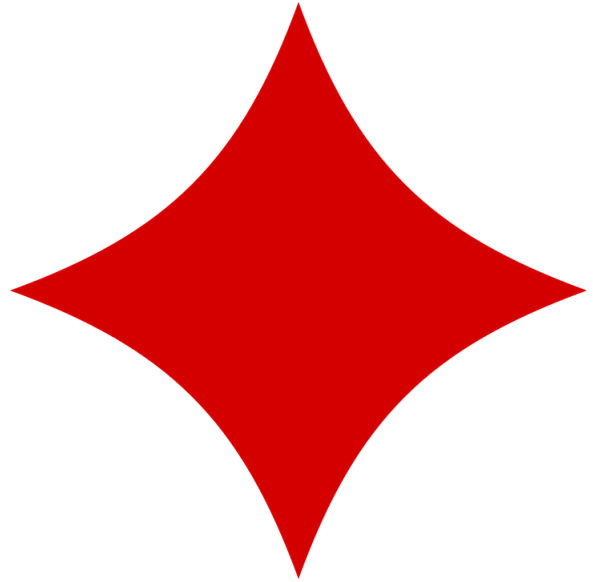
Each time you go to flip a card for one of your daily tasks, decide if you will have the light on for it or not. Each card is equal to one charge of your battery pack. We recommend using a six-sided die for each battery pack, and using them to countdown your charges.

Certain cards will have a **darkness** tag. If your light is shining, you can ignore that effect. If not, you will have to pull double the amount of blocks from the tower.

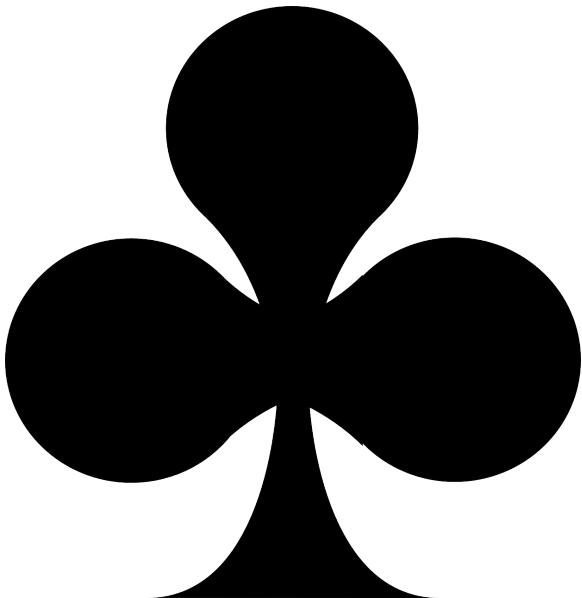
The Tunnels



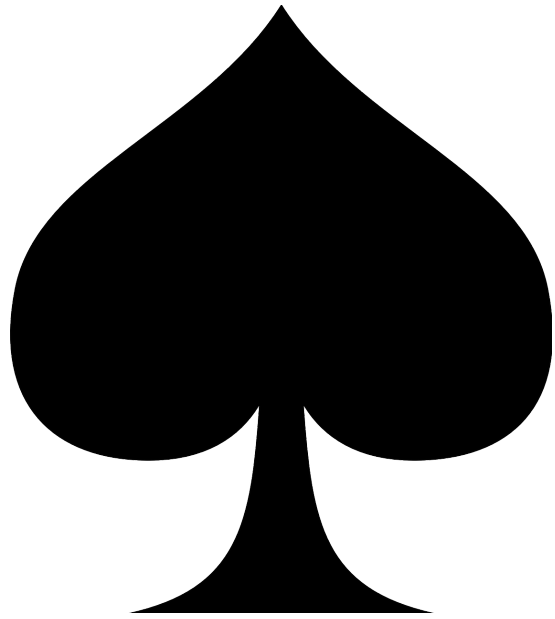
Hearts: Hearts represent your supplies, or lack thereof. Whenever you pull a Heart, you are finding food or drink, or consuming what little bit you have.



Diamonds: Were you the only person to survive? Maybe others made it. Diamonds will show you that maybe you aren't as alone as you thought.



Clubs: What was that strange door all about? Clubs reveal the mysteries of the Tunnels, and what made them.



Spades: Spades represent the choices you have to make, mostly on which path you will take. Choose wisely, or you will wander until your death.

Hearts: Supplies

Ace: You are on the right path, you know it. The air seems just a little bit more fresh, and the tunnels seem to be trending upwards. **Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and place 10 tokens on it. Each day after writing in your diary roll a six-sided dice. On a roll of six, remove a token. If you remove all tokens, you have found the way out.**

2: Who would have thought that lichen could survive down here...or that it would be so tasty?

3: You wouldn't eat human flesh, would you? It hasn't gotten that bad yet, has it? The fact you are even considering it plays hell with your stress. **Pull from the tower.**

4: You have found a small stash of food. A couple of granola bars, a bottle of water, a battery pack with 1 charge. Why were they left here? Who left them?

5: You hear a trickle of water. You follow the sound, eventually coming to a crack in the wall, where the water is falling. You manage to get a few sips, but hurt yourself. **Pull from the tower.**

6: Someone dropped a granola bar! Just ignore that little smear of blood on the end, it doesn't mean anything, surely.

7: You find a rat, limping along. It's been hurt somehow. Its food...but at what cost? **Pull from the tower.**

8: You find a small pool of water, enough to refill your bottle even. Water has never tasted so clean and cool.

9: You are so thirsty...so...so thirsty. Do you suffer the hurt to your sanity by drinking your own urine, or do you suffer the pain of dehydration? **Pull from the tower.**

10: Those bones there look fresher than most. And blessedly not human. You've heard of eating the marrow before...time to give it a try. That rock there should do to crack them.

J: You find an abandoned headlamp glowing in the dark. But when you grab it, you find a severed head is still attached. Checking the battery, it has 1d6 charges. **Pull from the tower.**

Q: You've taken to licking the moisture from the walls wherever you can find a wet patch.

K: You have found a small cluster of pale green glowing mushrooms. Your hunger is so great that you can't help but try them. Within minutes you are sick and throwing up. **Darkness. Pull from the tower. Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and if all four Kings have been drawn, then the poison of the mushrooms has killed you.**

Clubs: Weirdness

Ace: You have found an altar in the heart of a cavern. The walls are glowing with a pale luminescence, revealing a structure made of human bones. It seems to represent a creature with far too many legs, and a slavering maw big enough to swallow you whole. **Pull from the tower. Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and if the King of Clubs has been pulled, you can shuffle it back into the deck.**

2: You find a set of bloody footprints. As you follow them, they grow wider and wider apart, first as though they are leaping...then impossibly far apart...until they just vanish.

3: There is something in the dark. It will hover around the edge of your light, but in darkness it comes close. Sniffing. Following. Muttering. Cackling. Touching **Darkness. Pull from the tower.**

4: Someone has scrawled, in blood: *VOIDLIGHT! The SHAMBLER comes! Rejoice! DIE!*

5: Something has been visiting you as you sleep. It leaves you little presents. A severed rat head. A gnawed finger bone. An inky purple stone. **Darkness. Pull from the tower.**

6: You hear drums in the darkness. They draw closer, then fade. Maybe it's just your heartbeat.

7: You find a door, and your heart soars! But when you open it, there is only void beyond it. Not even your light can penetrate it. **Darkness. Pull from the tower.**

8: You find a strange purple rock. You put it in your pocket. Later, you find an identical one, and pick it up too. Only when you reach into your pocket, there are now 4 stones. Later, they vanish.

9: You see yourself standing before you. They look as surprised as you are, then horrified, and then they turn and run. You feel compelled to do the same. **Darkness. Pull from the tower.**

10: You see the spirit of all the dead members of your mining team. They watch you with dead, hollow eyes. Even though they are the dead ones, you feel that they look more sorry for you.

J: It chitters, and skitters, and titters as it races towards you in the dark. It dances around the light, and when it's dark its claws touch you...sensuously. **Darkness. Pull from the tower.**

Q: How is there an image of you carved into the stone? One clearly very, very old.

K: Some...creature...is following you. You have seen a glimpse of it, but the horror of that quick glance almost drove you mad. All those legs...all those sightless eyes. **Pull from the tower. Do**

not discard this card. Set it to the side, and if all four Kings have been drawn, then the creature has caught you. You won't want to be alive for what it's about to do to you.

Diamonds: Survivors

Ace: You find the body of McManus. The prick survived the cave-in, but someone got him. There is a pick sized hole in his head. And whoever did it, didn't even search the body! You find his pockets full of snacks, and an almost full battery pack with 5 charges. **Do not discard this card. Set it to the side to remind you of the 5 charges. Once expended, you can discard.**

2: Julius comes out of the darkness, catching you by surprise. Before you can react he has run past you, racing off in the direction you just came from. You can't catch him, but do you follow?

3: In your sleep, someone robs you of a granola bar. How on earth could they manage that? You see their footprints in the dust, but you soon lose the trail. **Pull from the tower.**

4: You have found Alexei, the poor soul seems to have been badly injured in the cave-in, and only made it this far to then die. You manage to find a battery pack with 3 charges.

5: You can't tell who this is...because it looks like something has eaten their face. A foul stench, like burning tar fills the air. What happened to them? **Pull from the tower.**

6: You catch sight of Julius running around a corner. You chase after, but you quickly lose sight of him. Why was he running? Where did he go?

7: There are footprints in the dust, so you follow. They vanish though, and try as you might you can not find them. Not even the ones you followed here. Are you losing it? **Pull from the tower.**

8: You hear laughing in the distance. It's impossible to tell from which direction it came from, but after hearing how unhinged that laugh sounds, you are just glad it's not there with you.

9: You find Rolly. Your best friend, the guy who's always had your back in the mines. He's dying, nothing you can do, but he asks for a sip of water. You can't refuse him. **Pull from the tower.**

10: You find a note, you think in Julius's handwriting. All it says is '*Watching You. Never Run.*'

J: You find Pelzer when you round a corner. Bastard survived the collapse, but it looks like they aren't long for this world. They beg you to put them out of their misery. **Pull from the tower.**

Q: Rounding a corner you find Robin. You never liked them anyway, they were always sucking up to McManus. Still...it would have been nice to find someone alive.

K: Seima comes looming out of the darkness, a bloody pick in his hand, and madness in his eyes. **Pull from the tower. Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and if all four Kings have been drawn, then your struggle with Seima has failed, and you have died.**

Spades: Choices

Ace: You are getting a better feel for these tunnels, almost making sense of them. **Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and from now on rolls of 4 or higher will remove a token from the Ace of Hearts, if you have located it.**

2: The path forks. One way heads down, but you think you can hear water. The other though goes up, the direction you need to go. **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

3: You stumble upon a crevice. Do you try to jump across, or find a way to go around? **Darkness. Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

4: You are so hungry, and you are feeling weak. Do you keep cutting rations so they last longer? Or try to rebuild some energy? **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

5: The path forks...both ways look identical though. Which way do you go? Why? Did you choose right? **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

6: You hear crying, but it sounds wrong. Like something just pretending to be human. Could it just be the acoustics? Do you look? **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

7: You find some water, but it looks oily. Do you drink it? Did it hurt? If you make a darkness pull, you missed the rat carcass in it. **Darkness. Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

8: You stumble upon some odd carvings. They make your eyes hurt to look at them, and they seem to glow. Do you try to read them? **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

9: The tunnel narrows badly. Do you try to squeeze through? You can't see how far it's like this, it could slow you. But it could be the way. **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

10: The tunnel splits again. One way is as good as another, right? Probably not, but what choice do you have. Besides this one of course. **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

J: You're having a breakdown. You just need some light damn it. But you know you should save charge. **Darkness. Pull from the tower. Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

Q: One granola bar does little good. But if you could use it to catch rats...is it even worth trying though? **Roll a D6, and on a 4, 5, or 6 pull from the tower.**

K: You round a corner, lost in thought, and are now teetering on the edge of a crevasse. **Pull from the tower. Do not discard this card. Set it to the side, and if all four Kings have been drawn, then you have fallen into the crevasse, breaking both legs. Death soon follows.**

Writing, layout, and design: Bob McGough

talesbybob.itch.io

www.talesbybob.com

@talesbybob

THE WRETCHED™ is a trademark of Chris Bissette.
The Wretched and Alone logo is © Chris Bissette, and
is used with permission.

This work is based on The Wretched (found at <http://loottheroom.itch.io/wretched>), product of Chris Bissette and Loot The Room, and licensed for our use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).