

REACH

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2019 Trash Heap Games

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You all are dead.

Floating in the miasma together, you try to cling to your memories of a person so that you may Reach out to them with one last message. You will try to help each other, but you are losing yourselves quickly.....

Reach is a GMless game for 3 to 5 players. Players take the role of a person who has died (the Passed) attempting to contact a living person (the Other), and relying on their fading memories to do so.

You'll need some players, each with an index card divided into 3 sections, with a small box in each section but plenty of room to write. You'll also need a deck of playing cards, jokers removed. These will need to be shuffled well and put in the middle of the table, in either a pile or circle.

Each player will be taking the role of a Passed who is attempting to reach out to an Other, a person who still lives. Their ability to do so is centered around the Passed holding onto their memories of their connection to the Other. This means each player needs to come up with two characters, as well as the relationship between them. This is likely to get heavy, and that is a good thing. A message can only cross over if it is carried by emotion.

This game is played in three rounds of two **Phases**, a **Memory Phase** and a **Contact Phase**. This game uses **Blackjack** as a metric, with each player trying to get their hand to total **21**. As usual for this, face cards count as 10s and aces can count as 1 or 11. At the start of the game, everyone is dealt two cards and they may look at them, but keep them secret.

Memory Phase: On someone's turn they tell a story from their past about the person they want to Reach, and they will come to a point where they ask the miasma around them "**what did I do?**" A list of story suggestions is found at the end of this document. Players should feel free to ask the question because they have reached a pivotal point in their story, or because they aren't sure where to go with it, or even because they are running out of steam.

The other players each offer an option and a card, face down. The card may be one of theirs or a new one drawn from the deck and not looked at. These options should be interesting; the other players are free to add details and conflict, give the active player some good ideas. The player must choose one and also accept the card, without looking at it. At this point, that memory is retained, it cannot be changed again. Once that is done, they may discard any cards they want, but they still may not look at the card they have received (though they may discard it without ever looking at it).

Contact Phase: Then the active player must explain how they will attempt to make contact with the living person and then **flip their cards**. Think about ghost movies and feel free to use cliches like moving the letters on the fridge.

If their cards equal 21, their contact was successful, they describe the contact and check off one of their boxes, then **discard all of their cards and draw two more**.

If it is too low, they must describe how their communication was overlooked or ignored, and create a new detail about the Other's life without them. **Then they flip the cards and keep them**.

If it's too high, they have to describe how their communication comes across as scary, framing the failed attempt like a haunting. **Then they flip the cards and keep them**.

After four attempts, the ghosts begin to fade. Each player should check their index card and consult the list below:

With one box, the Passed gets the Other's attention.

Two boxes, the Other knows that it is the Passed reaching out.

The third finally gets the important message across.

Each player should narrate an epilogue, but not about their Passed; about the Other. After all, it's the Other whose life goes on, as the Passed finally fades into memory.

That's it! Hope you enjoy Reach!

Suggested story prompts:

1st turn: How did you meet the Other? What caused the relationship to continue?

2nd turn: When did you disappoint the other? Were you forgiven?

3rd turn: What did you learn that you did not share with them? Would you still keep it to yourself?

4th turn: Why did they stay? Why do you wish they hadn't?

Groups can certainly play longer if they can come up with more stories. More rounds means more chances to make contact!