

IT WANTS SOULS

A GAME OF HORRIFIC POSSESSION

BY QUINN MURPHY

NUMBER OF PLAYERS 3-5

PLAYING TIME 1.5-2 hours

COMPLEXITY ★★☆☆

YOU'LL NEED A few six-sided dice and index cards to play.

GOAL The Family wants to escape the terrors of the Outsider; the Outsider wants souls.

CONTENT TAGS Genre: Horror
Format: Traditional
Tone: Disturbing
Content: Demonic possession

It Wants Souls is inspired by movies such as *Insidious*, *The Conjuring*, and *Sinister*. One character is the Outsider, looking to terrorize the other players in the Family, leading to a final confrontation over the soul it wishes to claim.

Your Family has moved into a new home and is soon terrorized by a being from beyond. You have few clues to its origins or nature. Whatever it is, it wants souls.

SETUP

At the outset, designate one character as the Outsider. This should be done secretly, so only she or he is initially aware of it.

Create a Family

For each player in the Family, including the Outsider, write the following on index cards:

- Role: Are you a parent? A child? An aunt or uncle?
- What's your age?
- Strengths: What are two things that describe your character in a positive way? Use one-word descriptions for each strength.
Examples: Resilient, resourceful, brave, clean, witty, strong, quick.
- Weakness: What is one thing that describes your character in a negative way? Use a one-word description of the weakness.
Examples: Cowardly, small, stubborn, messy, scatterbrained, weak.

- Fear: What is the one thing your character is most afraid of?

Examples: Spiders, darkness, isolation, snakes, knives.

Throughout Family creation, the Outsider should stay quiet. Your time is coming.

GAMEPLAY

The first scene of the game is the Family's first night in the new home. Use this scene to:

- Describe the house (write info on a card)
- Portray an average night for the Family
- Explore what each character loves about the other members of the Family
- Determine any problems the Family faces

During this scene, the Outsider remains quiet, watching the interactions and answering the following questions on a set of cards the Outsider keeps hidden (each question on a separate card):

- How long has my soul been trapped here?
- What part of the house is my soul most bound to? (can be an item)
- Do I want a soul to keep here and torment, or do I want a soul so I can inhabit the body?
- Whose soul do I most desire?

After the Outsider has finished their questions and put them facedown, the Outsider can interrupt the Family by making Terror (described as follows).

Making Terror

The Family starts scenes, and the Outsider interrupts the Family member creating the scene by making Terror. The Outsider describes how things go bad. To make Terror, the Outsider chooses one of the following or rolls a d6 to:

- Supernaturally exploit a character's fear or weakness
- Describe Outsider-controlled spirits trapped in the house
- Reveal part of the Outsider's true nature
- Start with small unnatural acts then crescendo
- Possess a family member
- Turn the house against the Family

After you describe this and the Family interacts, roll 1d6 (2d6 if exploiting a weakness or fear). A member of the Family (the particular one if targeted) rolls 1d6, adding 1 if they are able to apply a strength. The player with the higher result wins. If the Outsider wins, they successfully terrorize the Family member. If the Family member wins, they make a stand against the demon.

If the scene is Arrival, the Family member always makes the stand—there is no need to roll.

Living in the Home

After Arrival, each character gets a scene in which they are doing something to make life normal.

First roll 1d6 to see how long the scene takes place after the previous scene:

- to • : a few days
- to • : a few weeks
- to • : a few months

Does the scene build the Family or do you discover more about the Outsider?

If you build, determine what it is that you want the scene to be about:

- Trying to pretend things are normal for a time
- Trying to get religious help
- Trying to get scientific help to prove or disprove

Write the scene on a card as a statement: "We pretended things were normal." "We got help from an exorcist."

Then play the scene out with other members of the Family until the Outsider makes Terror. If the demon successfully terrorizes your Family, the Outsider puts an X over the Family member's card.

If you want to discover more about the Outsider, determine where in the house you search for information, and the Outsider will make Terror on you. If they succeed, you get no information. If you succeed, you can flip over a card and learn more about the demon.

During these scenes, the Outsider should only speak to other players when making Terror.

ENDING THE GAME

After everyone in the Family has had a scene, the final scene occurs in which the Family confronts the Outsider. The Family gets a number of d6 based on:

- Number of Family members
- Number of scene cards without Xs
- Number of revealed Outsider cards

The Outsider gets a 3d6 plus a number of d6 based on:

- Number of scene cards with Xs
- Number of unrevealed Outsider cards

Each side rolls and adds the dice. If the Family has a higher total, they find some way to escape or repel the demon. The Family describes the results. If the Outsider has a higher total, the Outsider can claim a soul. The Outsider describes the results.