

Brainstorm Dump

Experiment 3

Duo Prompt-Based

Have more creative freedom

Something deep but also fun to play

Thousand Year Vampire

The Time We Have (Party of One)

Bound Together

- Utilizes something physical that is accessible

What is something that I want my viewers to reflect on but not have to think and ponder too much that it ruins the momentum? (Dice Exploder)

Writing--is there a different alternative to writing that still gives the player time to think and

two -- a ghost and a loved one. one plays as the ghost, the other as the loved one. the game discusses grief and mourning of someone you used to love. the ghost haunts the loved one. it is a meek ending.

how do i make it collaborative?

prompts should be more action based with some reflection. there should be a consequence or drama that will occur. there should be physical touch. loved one and ghost sit back to back, prompts are not discussed, only what happens, what they do and say. ghosts can turn around and touch according to prompt, but humans cannot

before playing make sure touch is consensual, and choose a word or way to tap out if there is something the player does not like or feel uncomfortable doing.

find alternative to touching but still something measurable or meaningful physically.
perhaps the weight of grief means putting things on the human that will weigh them down,
make them feel heavy

Playtests

Iteration 02 (03/16–03/23)

During this week, I had two playtests with two couples. Each had similar notes but there were other varying factors according to how they play.

Playtest #01

I will spare myself and others the details, but these players played as a stepdaughter and stepfather. The stepdaughter died to drowning. The father did not know how, but she was murdered by her biological parents who found out she was still alive.

Setup & Play

- Players enjoyed the creativity with creating characters and their story.
- They struggled to remember important setups for their characters.
- They struggled to remember what actions they can play as their role. During play, they would forget that they could touch or speak, or to play with different actions.
- They seemed to get lost when it came to storytelling and didn't make too much progress in the story by the end of the game.
- They had lots of progress and fun acting and roleplaying as their characters.
- A bit of confusion on how they were supposed to say their responses according to their role. (Deceased only spoke in haunting environments, while Bereaved acted as the character, not describing, but only directly gesturing and speaking.)
- Problems with day and night as it would feel abrupt when the next day started.

All of these point to making it crucial to have a proper layout for the game. This means any PLAY that they must remember *must* stay in the same page or two, so they may remember everything that they must do during the session.

Perhaps, these also point to the fact that I should include a goal or mechanic to help guide players toward more storytelling. This could be the goal for their character during their story or both of them *must* establish the setting/situation before they choose how to respond for their perspective characters.

Prompts

- Prompts were incredibly exciting for them, as it would always lead to another chapter in the story they were building in the previous prompts (Father loses his job, then has to move out, and while this is occurring gets robbed).
- Although also because they forgot the actions, they sometimes did not build the story, repeating previous responses MULTIPLE times. (Any haunting that the

Deceased attempted would result in the Bereaved simply saying, “What in the hell is going on?!” (Southern voice). It was funny... but the story was not developing.) This could be solved by a more accessible PLAY page with easy words to help players realize what they can do, along with requiring both to establish the event rather than it be an optional action.

Physicality

- They enjoyed the interesting mechanic, especially being able to touch each other, but did not find much significance in sitting back to back. Most of the time, they forgot about the weight mechanic and leaning forwards or backwards during play.

I actually don't know how I can fix this, to make it more memorable and natural for players to do. Perhaps if they remember they need to add or remove a weight whenever they feel something, which is backed up by better description/storytelling?

Playtest #02

In this playtest, I took part and we played as Cyberpunk edgerunners. He played as Guilbert, a chromed up and upgraded edgerunner that is on the bigger side who can't seem to lie for his life. I played as Trish, a robot that was created by Steve, one of the other edgerunners in the team. The two got incredibly close and were a ragtag duo of friends. Guilbert dies during a job, and as Trish tries to move on since it is a robot that shouldn't have unnecessary friendships, it finds it could not when discovering his death was more than just a simple one. During the next job, Trish learns that Adam Smasher killed him because Guilbert was going to get in the way of Arasaka. They wanted to turn Guilbert's younger sister into an experiment just like Adam Smasher which he knew would just end up in her death OR worse, living as a loyal, undead soldier.

Setup & Play

- Fix grammar in final deliverable...lots of improper punctuation and passive voice. Also played a part in confusing instructions.
- Similarly, often forgot actions that could be made.
- REALLY enjoyed the character customization and together coming up with the relationship and story between the characters! Most, if not all, of the traits and memories of the characters were used in the storytelling.
- Similarly, had confusion with how to tell a story as a role. The Deceased only described and never acted as the character.

Prompts

- No problems with prompts, they were thoroughly enjoyed and responses easily flew out while telling the story we wanted to tell.
- It made us think a LOT about where the game was going and what happened.

Physicality

- Similarly, one of the players felt like the weight mechanic wasn't incorporated enough. However, I felt high emotions when the story was being told, almost naturally reacting by leaning backwards or forwards.

Overall, both playtests had different players. The first playtest had players who like to act as the actual characters, whilst the second preferred to just tell a story without acting. How can I make it so that both can occur: a descriptive story with actors?

Changes

According to these playtests, these will be my changes:

- Create a cuttable, small reference card(s) that describe, simply, the roles and their action loop for each day. These are visible and can be picked up any time by players. Use concise verbs!
- Perhaps it is okay that some players are acting or observing. Both ways are totally an okay way of play. Make it clear in the **roles** section of the game that whatever feels natural for them, they can act that way, as long as first person is the Bereaved and third person is the Deceased.
- Make weight decision a last step to each day instead of after each turn. This helps conclude the day while also being a concrete mechanic. It offers reflection as they decide to remove or add a weight. It is also required to do one or the other. They may not decide to not move a weight.
- In the action loop, both players must establish a part of the event/situation during their individual turn. I also think according to who pulls the card, that role will establish and act first, *then* the other role. This allows for both players to establish setting, characters, actions, situations, etc.
- The players will keep talking and adding to the day until they feel it is reasonable to stop. When it is time, the player who did not pull the card will close out the day, initiate the weight distribution, and then pull the next card.
- Clean up grammar, punctuation, and clarity in rules!!!

Iteration 03 (03/23–03/30)

In this iteration, I had three playtests, two from game designers and one from a group of friends. This entry won't be as long because most of them actually also agreed with the play testers in the second iteration.

Here are the new changes I will be making:

- Create more alternatives for the physicality. The back-to-back physicality is taxing for long hours of play, even for people who are comfortable with each other and have no problems sitting for long periods (most of the next changes are to ease this problem).
- Add the Ace of Hearts as the **base** win condition.
- In the base gameplay, each card will now represent three days instead of one. Players will draw three cards and can pick one out of the three to use in their story. In the shorter gameplay, each card will represent a week and players will pick two (one each) out of seven cards to interpret together as one card. This not only makes gameplay shorter, but allows players more agency to create their story and increase the lasting impact of longer events.

49 Days with You Iteration 01

This is a story about a bereaved human and a ghost that can't seem to let go. In *49 Days with You*, you will play as the Bereaved or the Deceased, navigating the world and the aftermath of this tragedy. The story ends in 49 days, when the bereaved could join the deceased, the deceased becomes lost in **bardo**, or the deceased can finally let go and reach the afterlife peacefully among many possible endings.

Tools

- Two Players, The Deceased and The Bereaved.
 - A Deck of Cards
 - A comfortable floor or place to sit
 - The Prompt List
-

Deck of Cards

The deck of cards will be used to drive the story through prompts. There will be a total of 49 cards in the deck where each specific card is tied to a prompt.

- Remove all Jokers.
 - Reserve the Ace of Hearts.
 - Remove three cards. Don't look at them. Add the Ace of Hearts back to the deck and shuffle.
-

Touch

Players will lean on each other, back-to-back, where neither player can see each other but can still feel the warmth and touch of their backs. Players must stay back-to-back no matter what the circumstances are. Other than touching backs, the Bereaved must never see or touch the Deceased, however the Deceased may see and touch the Bereaved.

- Make sure to establish boundaries and comfort with physical touch. If players are not comfortable with touch, alternatives are included in the prompts.

If players are not comfortable with sitting back-to-back or have conditions that do not allow them to:

- Sit wherever or however is comfortable, faced away from each other.
- Gather items such as blankets, jackets, or pillows to imitate weight.
- Distribute the weight evenly, such as five items on one player and five on the other.
- Remove an item and add it to the other player when a **weight is removed**.
- Add an item and remove it from the other player when a **weight is added**.
- The game ends when a player has amassed all items.

Weight

According to the responses, and reactions for each prompt, a **weight** may be added or removed.

- When a **weight** is removed, the player will lean backwards while the other player must lean forwards.
- When a **weight** is added, the player will lean forwards while the other player must lean backwards.
- The game ends when a player can no longer lean forward.

Weights are **added** when:

- The Bereaved feel grief, guilt, sorrow, and/or anger pertaining to the Deceased.
- The Deceased feel sorrow, frustration, anger, and/or guilt pertaining to the Bereaved.

Weights are **removed** when:

- The Bereaved feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or independence.
- The Deceased feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or content.

Deciding to add or remove weight may be signaled to the other through key phrases, tapping, or words.

Roles

The Bereaved:

The Bereaved has recently lost someone they had a connection with.

Prompts for the Bereaved will establish situations or events that occur. The Bereaved will then describe these events and act upon them. When answering prompts or reacting, **speak from a first-person perspective**.

"After I sat on the floor of the living room, I entered the dark, cold room, which used to be her bedroom, and caught a glimpse of her [the Deceased] worn necklace. This was the necklace that I gave her when she was just a baby. I grab the necklace and hold it close to my heart."

The Bereaved will lean forward/add a weight.

The Deceased:

The Deceased have recently just lost their life, somehow. They are now attached to someone they had a connection with. In addition to the traits they had when they were alive, they have an additional trait that is uncontrollable and influences their actions (Anger, Jealousy, Obsession, etc.). Determine this trait in secret.

Prompts for the Deceased will further expand on previously described events. They will ask the player to describe the Bereaved's actions and facial expressions. When answering prompts that describe and expand on the Bereaved's actions, **speak from a third-person perspective**. When answering prompts that attempt communication or expresses the Deceased's response, **communicate only through touch, single, soft words, and/or describe how the environment changes & reacts**.

"As she sat on the floor of the bedroom, her face contorts into a sob. Her black clothes hung tightly onto her, as if suffocating her. The room was quiet and cold; however, it still smelled like the person she was clinging onto. She couldn't stand it and quickly left the room, clutching the necklace in her palms. As she left, she could feel a temporary rush of warmth in the air."

The Deceased holds the Bereaved's hand and squeezes it temporarily.

The Deceased then mutters, "Here."

The Deceased will add a weight however, perhaps the Bereaved may remove a weight.

Set Up

- Choose a role: Bereaved or Deceased and grab the role's specific prompt list.
- Separately, create your character. Feel free to add more traits or details to your individual character. Then, together, share your characters.
 - Name, Age, Gender
 - 1 Physical Trait & 1 Emotional Trait
 - Their Passion
- Together, establish the characters' relationship (siblings, victims and perpetrators, loved one, etc.) | 3 notable memories | the immediate cause of death (drowning, car crash, sickness, etc.)

- Do not reveal who or what happened leading up to the death. These may be revealed throughout the story or not revealed at all.
- Together, decide how to communicate adding or removing weights. This can be verbal, tapping, or simply going with each other's feeling of added weight after each day.
- Sit back-to-back and lean on each other.
- Keep the deck of cards in the middle, beside one another. When pulling a card, make sure it is visible to both players. The youngest will pull a card first, then alternate.

Play

- Read the corresponding situation quietly. The Bereaved will always start their response. The Deceased go next. The Bereaved may react and then the day ends.
 - Each time responding or reacting, lean forwards or backwards if the prompt/response has impacted **weight** in any way. This is purely judged and determined by the player.
- Keep going through the days until:
 - All 49 cards have been pulled. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other.

OR

- A player can no longer: withstand the weight **or** lean forwards.
 - If the Bereaved can no longer withstand the weight, the Deceased must describe how the Bereaved has failed to move on or live a fulfilling life.
 - If the Deceased can no longer withstand the weight, the Bereaved must describe how and why the Deceased has been freed.

OR

- For shorter gameplay; the Ace of Hearts has been pulled. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other.

Prompts

Clubs

2:

3:

4:

5:

6:

7:

8:

9:

10:

J:

Q:

K:

A:

Diamonds

2:

3:

4:

5:

6:

7:

8:

9:

10:

J:

Q:

K:

A:

Spades

2:

3:

4:

5:

6:

7:

8:

9:

10:

J:

Q:

K:

A:

Hearts

2: The Bereaved finds a kitten on the side of the road, abandoned.

3: The Bereaved loses their job.

4: In grief, The Bereaved becomes incapacitated from substance use.

5:

6:

7:

8:

9:

10:

J:

Q:

K:

A:

Things Humans Can Do/That Can Happen

In each of these categories, have another prompt that has to do with them for variety.

- Lose job
- Meet someone new
- Pick up a pet
- Adopt a religion
- Travel to another country/Trip
- Move
- Slip into depression (lose 7 days/7 cards)
- Go outside
- Do something bad/criminal
- Go to a place to remember
- Lose/Gain relationships
- Make a shrine for the Deceased
- Pray/Mourn
- Get a new job
- Bankruptcy/Debt
- Sustain an injury
- Find/make something to remember
- Try therapy

1. The Bereaved finds an abandoned companion on the side of the road.
2. The Bereaved loses their job within the first week of the death.
3. The Bereaved spends a day incapacitated from substance use.
4. The Bereaved loses several days to depression and cannot get out of bed.
5. The Bereaved sustains an injury from not taking care of themselves.
6. The Bereaved creates a shrine in their home for the Deceased.
7. The Bereaved catches themselves picking up a habit the Deceased used to have.
8. The Bereaved goes to their first therapy session.
9. The Bereaved does something awful they cannot take back.
10. The Bereaved begins making arrangements to move out.
11. The Bereaved breaks down mourning for the Deceased for the first time.
12. The Bereaved puts on something that belonged to the Deceased for the first time.
13. The Bereaved meets someone who becomes an unexpected comfort.
14. The Bereaved gets into a heated fight with a close friend.

15. The Bereaved prays for the Deceased for the first time.
16. The Bereaved reaches out to someone they haven't spoken to since the death.
17. The Bereaved spends an evening with someone new and feels something unfamiliar.
18. The Bereaved finds the Deceased's journal or private writings.
19. The Bereaved visits the grave for the first time.
20. Something keeps pulling the Bereaved back every time they try to move on.
21. The Bereaved wakes from a dream they can't shake.
22. The Bereaved feels watched somewhere they used to feel safe.
23. Something the Bereaved loves starts slipping away from them.
24. An object the Bereaved cherished goes missing.
25. The Bereaved finds something in their home they cannot explain.
26. The Bereaved smells something familiar in a place it shouldn't be.
27. Something the Bereaved was sure they threw away keeps reappearing.
28. The Bereaved feels a sudden, inexplicable calm in the middle of the worst day.
29. The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to enter a specific room.
30. The Bereaved cannot sleep no matter how exhausted they are.
31. The Bereaved finds themselves talking to the air without meaning to.
32. The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to say the Deceased's name out loud.
33. Everywhere the Bereaved goes, something reminds them of the Deceased.
34. The Bereaved feels an inexplicable pull toward somewhere they have never been.
35. The Bereaved keeps dreaming the same dream over and over.
36. The Bereaved hears a song they have never heard before that feels meant for them.
37. The Bereaved feels followed somewhere they used to feel alone.
38. Something the Bereaved was dreading suddenly becomes easy without explanation.
39. The Bereaved feels the urge to say something out loud but doesn't know why.
40. Someone passes away in the exact same manner as the Deceased.
41. A holiday arrives for the first time since the death.
42. The Deceased's birthday passes.
43. The anniversary of the death arrives.
44. Someone who wronged the Deceased gets away with it.
45. The Bereaved's home is broken into.
46. The Bereaved finds out the Deceased had a life they knew nothing about.
47. The place that meant the most to the Deceased is demolished or changed beyond recognition.
48. Someone is arrested in connection to the Deceased's death.
49. A piece of the Deceased's work or creation is recognized publicly.
50. The seasons change for the first time since the death.
51. The Deceased's family reaches out to the Bereaved unexpectedly.
52. The Bereaved receives something unexpected from the death.

1. The Bereaved loses their job within the first week of the death.
2. The Bereaved wakes from a dream they can't shake.
3. A holiday arrives for the first time since the death.
4. The Bereaved cannot sleep no matter how exhausted they are.
5. The Bereaved finds an abandoned companion on the side of the road.
6. Someone who wronged the Deceased gets away with it.
7. The Bereaved feels watched somewhere they used to feel safe.
8. The Bereaved breaks down mourning for the Deceased for the first time.
9. The Bereaved finds something in their home they cannot explain.
10. The Bereaved reaches out to someone they haven't spoken to since the death.
11. The Bereaved's home is broken into.
12. The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to enter a specific room.
13. The Bereaved spends a day incapacitated from substance use.
14. The Bereaved feels an inexplicable pull toward somewhere they have never been.
15. The Deceased's birthday passes.
16. The Bereaved puts on something that belonged to the Deceased for the first time.
17. Something the Bereaved loves starts slipping away from them.
18. The Bereaved goes to their first therapy session.
19. The Bereaved finds themselves talking to the air without meaning to.
20. Someone passes away in the exact same manner as the Deceased.
21. The Bereaved sustains an injury from not taking care of themselves.
22. An object the Bereaved cherished goes missing.
23. The Bereaved catches themselves picking up a habit the Deceased used to have.
24. The Bereaved finds out the Deceased had a life they knew nothing about.
25. The Bereaved loses several days to depression and cannot get out of bed.
26. The Bereaved smells something familiar in a place it shouldn't be.
27. The Bereaved gets into a heated fight with a close friend.
28. Something keeps pulling the Bereaved back every time they try to move on.
29. The Bereaved prays for the Deceased for the first time.
30. The place that meant the most to the Deceased is demolished or changed beyond recognition.
31. The Bereaved feels followed somewhere they used to feel alone.
32. The Bereaved does something awful they cannot take back.
33. Everywhere the Bereaved goes, something reminds them of the Deceased.
34. The Bereaved creates a shrine in their home for the Deceased.

35. Someone is arrested in connection to the Deceased's death.
36. The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to say the Deceased's name out loud.
37. The Bereaved meets someone who becomes an unexpected comfort.
38. Something the Bereaved was sure they threw away keeps reappearing.
39. The Bereaved spends an evening with someone new and feels something unfamiliar.
40. The Bereaved keeps dreaming the same dream over and over.
41. The Bereaved begins making arrangements to move out.
42. A piece of the Deceased's work or creation is recognized publicly.
43. The Bereaved feels a sudden, inexplicable calm in the middle of the worst day.
44. The Bereaved visits the grave for the first time.
45. The Bereaved finds the Deceased's journal or private writings.
46. Something the Bereaved was dreading suddenly becomes easy without explanation.
47. The seasons change for the first time since the death.
48. The Bereaved hears a song they have never heard before that feels meant for them.
49. The Bereaved feels the urge to say something out loud but doesn't know why.
50. The Deceased's family reaches out to the Bereaved unexpectedly.
51. The Bereaved receives something unexpected from the death.
52. The Bereaved finally acknowledges something for the first time since the death.

49 Days with You Iteration 02

This is a story about a bereaved human and a ghost that can't seem to let go. In *49 Days with You*, you will play as the Bereaved or the Deceased, navigating the world and the aftermath of this tragedy. The story ends in 49 days, when the bereaved could join the deceased, the deceased becomes lost in **bardo**, or the deceased can finally let go and reach the afterlife peacefully among many possible endings.

Tools

- Two Players, The Deceased and The Bereaved.
- A Deck of Cards
- A comfortable floor or place to sit
- The Prompt List

Deck of Cards

The deck of cards will be used to drive the story through prompts. There will be a total of 49 cards in the deck where each specific card is tied to a prompt. The suits do not play into the situations or events that occur.

- Remove all Jokers.
- Reserve the Ace of Hearts.
- Remove three cards. Don't look at them. Add the Ace of Hearts back into the deck and shuffle.

If you don't have cards, you may also use a random number generator from 1–49.

Touch

Players will lean on each other, back-to-back, where they can feel the warmth and touch of each other. They must stay back-to-back no matter what the circumstances are, unless actions by the Deceased require them to turn around.

- Make sure to establish boundaries and comfort with physical touch. If players are not comfortable with touch, alternatives are included in the prompts.

If players are not comfortable with sitting back-to-back or have conditions that do not allow them to:

- Sit wherever or however is comfortable, faced away from each other.
- Gather items such as blankets, jackets, or pillows to imitate weight.
- Distribute the weight evenly, such as five items on one player and five on the other.
- Remove an item and add it to the other player when a **weight is removed**.
- Add an item and remove it from the other player when a **weight is added**.
- The game ends when a player has amassed all items.

Weight

According to the responses and reactions for each prompt, a **weight** may be added or removed.

- When a **weight** is removed, the player will lean backwards while the other player must lean forwards.
- When a **weight** is added, the player will lean forwards while the other player must lean backwards.
- The game ends when a player can no longer lean forward.

Weights are *added* when:

- The Bereaved feel grief, guilt, sorrow, and/or anger pertaining to the Deceased.
- The Deceased feel sorrow, frustration, anger, and/or guilt pertaining to the Bereaved.

Weights are *removed* when:

- The Bereaved feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or independence.
- The Deceased feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or content.

Deciding to add or remove weight may be signaled to the other through key phrases, tapping, or words.

Roles

The Bereaved:

The Bereaved has recently lost someone they had a connection with.

The Bereaved responds in any of these ways:

1. Description: Describe what you see, feel, or say.
2. Action: Describe or act on what you gesture or do.
3. Nothing: Simply sit in silence.
4. Reaction: Respond to an action made by the Deceased.

THEN

Decide on adding or removing a weight.

When responding to situations, **speak from a first-person perspective.**

“After I sat on the floor of the living room, I entered the dark, cold room, which used to be her bedroom, and caught a glimpse of her [the Deceased] worn necklace. This was the necklace that I gave her when she was just a baby. I grab the necklace and hold it close to my heart.”

The Bereaved will lean forward/add a weight.

The Deceased:

The Deceased have recently just lost their life, somehow. They are now attached to someone they had a connection with.

In addition to the traits they had when they were alive, they have an additional trait that is uncontrollable and influences their actions (Anger, Jealousy, Obsession, etc.). Determine this trait in secret.

- **Every 7 days**, the trait is triggered. In any way the Deceased responds, its true intentions will become warped due to this trait.

The Deceased responds in any of these ways:

1. Environment: Describe what the Bereaved can see or feel in the environment and how it changes or reacts.
2. Contact: Make a sound or touch the Bereaved.

3. Speak: Utter a soft, single word.
4. Observation: Describe the situation, reiterating it to match the Deceased's perspective. Add more that was not mentioned before or noticed by the Bereaved.

THEN

Deciding on adding or removing a weight.

When answering situations by describing and/or expanding on the Bereaved's actions, **speak from a third-person perspective**. This applies to the **environment & observation responses**.

When answering situations by attempting communication or expressing the Deceased's response, **communication may only be through contact, speak, and environment**. The Deceased may never outwardly make clear its presence, however the Bereaved may slowly learn of its presence as it continues to influence.

“As she sat on the floor of the bedroom, her face contorts into a sob. Her black clothes hung tightly onto her, as if suffocating her. The room was quiet and cold; however, it still smelled like the person she was clinging onto. She couldn't stand it and quickly left the room, clutching the necklace in her palms. As she left, she could feel a temporary rush of warmth in the air.”

The Deceased holds the Bereaved's hand and squeezes it temporarily.

The Deceased then mutters, “Here.”

The Deceased will add a weight however, perhaps the Bereaved may remove a weight.

Set Up

Choose a role: Bereaved or Deceased.

Together, establish the world. Is this a modern world? Is it mystical and fantastical? Perhaps, horrific?

Separately, create your character. Feel free to add more traits or details to your individual character. Then, together, share your characters.

- Name, Age, Gender
- 1 Physical Trait & 1 Emotional Trait
- Their Passion

Together, establish characters' relationship (siblings, victims and perpetrators, loved one, etc.) | 3 notable memories | the immediate cause of death (drowning, car crash, sickness, etc.)

- Do not reveal who or what happened leading up to the death. These may be revealed throughout the story or not revealed at all.

Together, decide how to communicate adding or removing weights.

Sit back-to-back and lean on each other.

Keep the deck of cards in the middle, beside one another. When pulling a card, make sure it is visible to both players. The youngest will pull a card first, then alternate.

Play

Read the corresponding situations quietly. The Bereaved will always start their response. The Deceased go next. The Bereaved may react and then the day ends.

- While listening to the other player respond to situations, players can decide to remove or add weight as well after the response is complete.

Keep going through the days until:

All 49 cards have been pulled. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other.

OR

A player can no longer withstand the weight/lean forwards.

- If the Bereaved can no longer withstand the weight, the Deceased must describe how the Bereaved has failed to move on or live a fulfilling life.
- If the Deceased can no longer withstand the weight, the Bereaved must describe how and why the Deceased has been freed.

OR

For shorter gameplay, the Ace of Hearts has been pulled. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other.

Situations

Situations within 49 Days With You describe each day. At times, it will detail something within the world, an action or event the Bereaved causes, or an inexplicable phenomenon the Deceased causes.

Clubs

2: The Bereaved loses their job.

3: The Bereaved wakes from a dream they can't shake.

4: A holiday arrives for the first time since the death.

5: The Bereaved cannot sleep no matter how exhausted they are.

6: The Bereaved finds an abandoned companion on the side of the road.

7: Someone who wronged the Deceased gets away with it.

8: The Bereaved feels watched somewhere they used to feel safe.

9: The Bereaved breaks down mourning for the Deceased for the first time.

10: The Bereaved finds something in their home they cannot explain.

J: The Bereaved reaches out to someone they haven't spoken to since the death.

Q: The Bereaved's home is broken into.

K: The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to enter a specific room.

A: The Bereaved spends a day incapacitated from substance use. **Remove a card from the deck and discard it.**

Diamonds

2: The Bereaved feels an inexplicable pull toward somewhere they have never been.

3: The Deceased's birthday passes.

4: The Bereaved puts on something that belonged to the Deceased for the first time.

5: Something the Bereaved loves starts slipping away from them.

- 6: The Bereaved goes to their first therapy session.
- 7: The Bereaved finds themselves talking to the air without meaning to.
- 8: Someone passes away in the exact same manner as the Deceased.
- 9: The Bereaved sustains an injury from not taking care of themselves.
- 10: An object the Bereaved cherished goes missing.
- J: The Bereaved catches themselves picking up a habit the Deceased used to have.
- Q: The Bereaved finds out the Deceased had a life they knew nothing about.
- K: The Bereaved smells something familiar in a place it shouldn't be.
- A: The Bereaved loses several days to depression and cannot get out of bed. **Remove three cards from the deck and discard them.**
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Spades

- 2: The Bereaved gets into a heated fight with a close friend.
- 3: Something keeps pulling the Bereaved back every time they try to move on.
- 4: The Bereaved prays for the Deceased for the first time.
- 5: The place that meant the most to the Deceased is demolished or changed beyond recognition.
- 6: The Bereaved feels followed somewhere they used to feel alone.
- 7: The Bereaved does something awful they cannot take back.
- 8: Everywhere the Bereaved goes today, something reminds them of the Deceased.
- 9: The Bereaved creates a shrine in their home for the Deceased.
- 10: Someone is arrested in connection to the Deceased's death.
- J: The Bereaved cannot bring themselves to say the Deceased's name out loud.
- Q: The Bereaved meets someone who becomes an unexpected comfort.

K: Something the Bereaved was sure they threw away keeps reappearing.

A: The Bereaved spends an evening with someone new and feels something unfamiliar.

Hearts

2: The Bereaved keeps dreaming the same dream over and over.

3: The Bereaved begins making arrangements to move out.

4: A piece of the Deceased's work or creation is recognized publicly.

5: The Bereaved feels a sudden, inexplicable calm in the middle of the worst day.

6: The Bereaved visits the grave for the first time.

7: The Bereaved finds the Deceased's journal or private writings.

8: Something the Bereaved was dreading suddenly becomes easy without explanation.

9: The seasons change for the first time since the death.

10: The Bereaved hears a song they have never heard before that feels meant for them.

J: The Bereaved feels the urge to say something out loud but doesn't know why.

Q: The Deceased's family reaches out to the Bereaved unexpectedly.

K: The Bereaved receives something unexpected from the death.

A: The Bereaved finally acknowledges something for the first time since the death.

49 Days with You Iteration 03

49 Days with You

This is a story about a bereaved human and a ghost that can't seem to let go. In *49 Days with You*, you will play as the Bereaved or the Deceased, navigating the world and the aftermath of this tragedy. The story ends in 49 days, when the bereaved could join the deceased, the deceased becomes lost in **bardo**, or the deceased can finally let go and reach the afterlife peacefully among many possible endings.

Tools

- Two Players, The Deceased and The Bereaved.
- A Deck of Cards
- A comfortable floor or place to sit
- The Prompt List

Roles

The Bereaved:

The Bereaved has recently lost someone they had a connection with.

When it is your turn, establish a part of the day — set the scene, introduce a character, describe an action or event. Contribute to what is unfolding.

The Bereaved responds in any of these ways:

- Description: Describe what you see, feel, or say.
- Action: Describe or act on what you gesture or do.
- Nothing: Simply sit in silence.
- Reaction: Respond to an action made by the Deceased.

Whatever feels natural is the right way to play. You may act it out, narrate it, or simply observe — as long as you are speaking from a first-person perspective. When attempting communication or expressing the Deceased's response, communication may only be through contact, speak, and environment. The Deceased may never outwardly make clear its presence, however the Bereaved may slowly learn of its presence as it continues to influence.

“After I sat on the floor of the living room, I entered the dark, cold room, which used to be her bedroom, and caught a glimpse of her [the Deceased] worn necklace. This was the necklace that I gave her when she was just a baby. I grab the necklace and hold it close to my heart.”

The Deceased:

The Deceased have recently just lost their life, somehow. They are now attached to someone they had a connection with.

In addition to the traits they had when they were alive, they have an additional trait that is uncontrollable and influences their actions (Anger, Jealousy, Obsession, etc.).

- **Every 7 days**, the trait is triggered. In any way the Deceased responds, its true intentions will become warped due to this trait.

When it is your turn, establish a part of the day — set the scene, introduce a character, describe an action or event. Contribute to what is unfolding.

The Deceased responds in any of these ways:

- **Environment:** Describe what the Bereaved can see or feel in the environment and how it changes or reacts.
- **Contact:** Make a sound or touch the Bereaved.
- **Speak:** Utter a soft, single word.
- **Dictate:** Add or change more that was not mentioned before or noticed by the Bereaved.

Whatever feels natural is the right way to play. You may act it out, narrate it, or simply observe — as long as you are speaking from a third-person perspective. When attempting communication or expressing the Deceased's response, communication may only be through contact, speak, and environment. The Deceased may never outwardly make clear its presence, however the Bereaved may slowly learn of its presence as it continues to influence.

“As she sat on the floor of the bedroom, her face contorts into a sob. Her black clothes hung tightly onto her, as if suffocating her. The room was quiet and cold; however, it still smelled like

the person she was clinging onto. She couldn't stand it and quickly left the room, clutching the necklace in her palms. As she left, she could feel a temporary rush of warmth in the air."

The Deceased holds the Bereaved's hand and squeezes it temporarily.

The Deceased then mutters, "Here."

Touch

Players will lean on each other, back-to-back, where they can feel the warmth and touch of each other. They must stay back-to-back no matter what the circumstances are, unless actions by the Deceased require them to turn around.

- Make sure to establish boundaries and comfort with physical touch. If players are not comfortable with touch, alternatives are included in the prompts.

If players are not comfortable with sitting back-to-back or have conditions that do not allow them to:

- Sit wherever or however is comfortable, faced away from each other.
- You may also sit facing each other at a table, or side by side, if full separation feels like too much.
- Gather items such as blankets, jackets, or pillows to imitate weight.
- Distribute the weight evenly, such as five items on one player and five on the other.
- Remove an item and add it to the other player when a **weight is removed**.
- Add an item and remove it from the other player when a **weight is added**.
- If seated at a table, use stacked objects such as books, cups, folded cloth placed in front of each player instead.
- The game ends when a player has amassed all items.

You may also take breaks freely. The physical mechanic is meant to be felt, not endured. Pause, stretch, and return when you're ready.

Weight

According to the responses and reactions for each prompt, a **weight** may be added or removed.

- When a **weight** is removed, the player will lean backwards while the other player must lean forwards.
- When a **weight** is added, the player will lean forwards while the other player must lean backwards.
- The game ends when a player can no longer lean forward.

Weights are *added* when:

- The Bereaved feel grief, guilt, sorrow, and/or anger pertaining to the Deceased.
- The Deceased feel sorrow, frustration, anger, and/or guilt pertaining to the Bereaved.

Weights are *removed* when:

- The Bereaved feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or independence.
- The Deceased feels acceptance, calm, understanding, and/or content.

Deciding to add or remove weight may be signaled to the other through key phrases, tapping, or words.

Set Up

Choose a role: Bereaved or Deceased. Make sure the Deceased chooses a unique trait.

Together, establish the world. Is this a modern world? Is it mystical and fantastical? Perhaps, horrific?

Separately, create your character. Feel free to add more traits or details to your individual character. Then, together, share your characters.

- Name, Age, Gender
- 1 Physical Trait & 1 Emotional Trait
- Their Passion

Together, establish characters' relationship (siblings, victims and perpetrators, loved one, etc.) | 3 notable memories | the immediate cause of death (drowning, car crash, sickness, etc.)

- Do not reveal who or what happened leading up to the death. These may be revealed throughout the story or not revealed at all.

Together, decide how to communicate adding or removing weights.

Sit back-to-back and lean on each other.

The deck of cards will be used to drive the story through prompts. There will be a total of 49 cards in the deck where each specific card is tied to a prompt. The suits do not play into the situations or events that occur.

- Remove all Jokers.
- Reserve the Ace of Hearts.

- Remove three cards. Don't look at them.
- Shuffle the rest of the deck.
- Half the deck and add the Ace of Hearts in the second half. Shuffle separately.
- Place the deck with the Ace of Hearts below the other half of the deck.

Keep the deck of cards in the middle, beside one another. When pulling a card, make sure it is visible to both players. The youngest will pull a card first, then alternate.

Play

At the start of each day, draw three cards and choose one to play. The player who drew the cards reads the chosen situation quietly, then responds first, establishing a part of the day. The other player goes next, adding to what has been established. Players keep talking and building on the day until it feels right to stop.

When it is time to close out the day, the player who did not pull the cards will bring the day to an end. Together, decide on adding or removing a weight to each of your characters— you must move a weight to end the day. Then, that same player draws the next set of cards.

Keep going through the days until:

The Ace of Hearts has been pulled. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other. This is the natural end of the story.

OR

All 49 cards have been pulled without drawing the Ace of Hearts. Together, decide what happens to both the Deceased & Bereaved according to the weight on one or the other.

OR

A player can no longer withstand the weight/lean forwards.

If the Bereaved can no longer withstand the weight, the Deceased must describe how the Bereaved has failed to move on or live a fulfilling life.

If the Deceased can no longer withstand the weight, the Bereaved must describe how and why the Deceased has been freed.

For shorter gameplay: each card represents a week instead of a day. Draw seven cards and each player picks one — two cards total — to interpret together as a single event. Play through the days until the Ace of Hearts is drawn or a player can no longer withstand the weight.

Situations

Situations within 49 Days With You describe each day. At times, it will detail something within the world, an action or event the Bereaved causes, or an inexplicable phenomenon the Deceased causes.

Clubs

2: The Bereaved loses their job.

3: The Bereaved wakes from a dream they can't shake.

4: A holiday arrives for the first time since the death.

5: The Bereaved cannot sleep no matter how exhausted they are.

6: The Bereaved finds an abandoned companion on the side of the road.

7: Someone who wronged the Deceased gets away with it.

8: The Bereaved feels watched somewhere they used to feel safe.

9: The Bereaved breaks down mourning for the Deceased for the first time.

10: The Bereaved finds something in their home they cannot explain.

J: The Bereaved reaches out to someone they haven't spoken to since the death.

Q: The Bereaved's home is broken into.

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A: The Bereaved finally acknowledges something for the first time since the death.

✂ ————— ✂

REFERENCE CARD — THE BEREAVED

Speak in first person.

YOUR TURN Draw 3 cards → Choose 1 → Read it → Establish part of the day. Keep building until it feels right to stop.

YOUR RESPONSES Describe — say what you see, feel, or think Act — do or gesture something React — respond to the Deceased Sit — stay silent

CLOSE OFF DAY (when you did not draw) Bring the day to a close. Initiate weight — add or remove. You must move one. Draw the next 3 cards.

✂ ————— ✂

REFERENCE CARD — THE DECEASED

Speak in third person. Never reveal your presence outright. Every 3 cards, your hidden trait warps your response.

YOUR TURN Draw 3 cards → Choose 1 → Read it → Establish part of the day. Keep building until it feels right to stop.

YOUR RESPONSES Observe — describe the scene from your perspective, add what was missed Shape — shift the environment around the Bereaved Touch — make contact or sound Speak — one word only

CLOSE OFF DAY (when you did not draw) Bring the day to a close. Initiate weight — add or remove. You must move one. Draw the next 3 cards.

✂ ————— ✂