AGE 9+

3-5 PLAYERS

30-45 MIN.

A GAME BY CATHERINE STIPPELL

NYCTOPHOBIA

THE HUNTED

GOAL OF THE GAME

The night is cold and dark. It's hard to see where you are or where you've been. "A road trip gone awry" is a charitable description of the world you and your friends find yourself trapped in.

No one will ever believe you. This kind of stuff only happens in movies, Right?

Well, tell that to the man with the axe whose been stalking you. Tell that to your friend who had to dodge his blade, or maybe that was just a mage messing with your mind.

In Nyctophobia, you will attempt to outrun and outsmart an axe murderer or mage who is hunting you. Player's must blindly navigate it, all while trying to find their car and get out of the forest alive.

A team of up to 4 players will wear blackout glasses and try and take on the single player taking ont he role of the hunter. The Twist? Only the Hunter can see what's going on around them. The Hunted players will have the navigate the board through touch and memory only!

COMPONENTS

- 1 board (8x8 holes)
- 4 black-out glasses
- 4 player pieces
- 1 Hunter piece
- ~40 removable trees
- 7 rock tokens
- 1 Hunter Wound token
- 9 health tokens
- 1 noise token
- 1 car token
- 6 character cards
- 4 character piece reference cards
- 12 Mage action cards
- 12 Axe Murderer action cards

(there may be more than the listed number of components)

ROLE TERMINOLOGY

Hunted: The group of 2-4 players who wear the blackout glasses and are attempting to find their lost car and escape.

Hunter: The one player who can see the board and is working against the Hunted to prevent them from escaping the forest.

SET UP

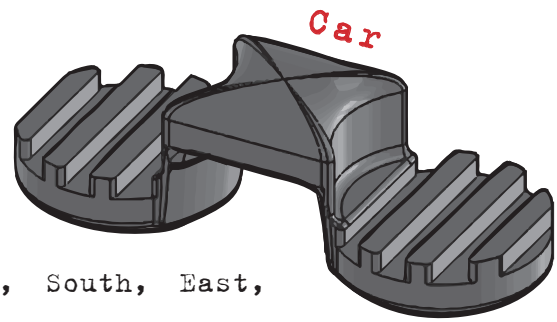
Hunter

Select one person to be the Hunter. That player will chose one of the two decks of cards (Axe Murderer or Mage) and play that role throughout the game. If this is your first game, the Axe Murderer is the suggested Hunter role. After being chosen, the Hunter secretly sets up the game board using either of the premade scenarios at the end of this book (pages 10 and 11) or their own imagination. Place the directional cards around the board in the correct order (N, E, S, W) and make sure all players are familiar with the 4 directions.

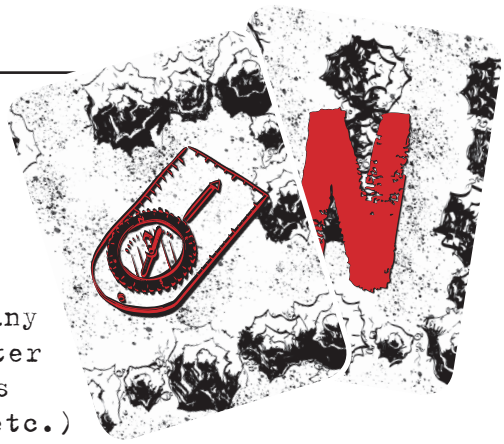
Each Hunted player is given one (1) rock, two (2) health tokens, one (1)character piece and its matching reference card, character card, and a pair of blackout glasses. The first player is the person seated to the left of the Hunter and gameplay will begin with that player.

Hunted players must not watch the creation of the board. At this point the Hunted should place their blackout glasses on. At no point during the game may a Hunted player **ever** look at the board without their blackout glasses on. If you need to get up from the table, please alert the Hunter player so that they can ensure the board remains unseen. Seeing the board will harm the gameplay experience of all players. Hunted players should not try and peer around the glasses or attempt to see the board with their eyes at any point during the game.

The Hunter will place all hunted pieces and car on the indicated spots on the chosen map per the set-up instructions for the maps at the back of the manual. The Hunter takes the Hunter Action deck and shuffles it, and draws two (2) cards. The Hunter needs to add Number of Players - 1 (minus one) rocks randomly around the board. The Hunter gives a one directional clue to the Hunted for the location of the car (North, South, East, or West).



DIRECTIONS



During the game, directional information is given. To ensure a constant stream of information, the board is described using the cardinal directions - North, South, East, and West. The players should reference these directions throughout gameplay when describing movement. Cards will be placed around the board as a reminder to the Hunter player which direction is which. If players have any questions or forget the orientation of the board, the Hunter should remind them by using clues about their surroundings (North is towards the kitchen, East is towards the door, etc.)

HUNTED COMMUNICATION

Communication is extremely important for a successful win. The Hunted are all scattered, lost in the dark forest. No one knows where they are or the path to the car. Communicate to devise a plan of action: who will search what portion of the board, or who will make noise to distract the Hunter away from your wounded teammate. Be sure to say which way you are moving, what you feel around you, why you are moving the way you are, the location of adjacent trees, the discovery of an edge of the board, any dead ends, or rocks on the board. Giving this information will benefit all the Hunted as they slowly put together an image of the board. Try and remember where you have been and work together to try and piece the map together.

If you are not communicating, you risk being lost to the forest and the Hunter forever.

HUNTER GAMEPLAY

The Hunter has a very special role to play in the game. You are working against the players, but you are also in charge of running the game and trying to make sure everyone is having a good time. So, getting into the character of the Hunter, taunting players and acting spooky is encouraged. It's not every day you get to play a Hunter, so have fun with it. You can move around the table, make noises and try and scare the other players, but remember to respect other player's personal space.

Also make sure to help any players who may be confused about the rules or directions. They can't see the board, and are relying on you to help them. You may be hunting them in the game, but you want them to have a fair shot at playing.

Depending on how well the Hunted players are doing you may wish to give them a break (or taunt them) by making choices that allow the game to go on longer than normal, or put them out of their misery by finishing them off quickly. This is a different gameplay experience than normal, and choosing to play sub-optimally may lead to more fun for you and your group.

OBJECTIVE

The Hunted are trying to work together to find the car which has been hidden in the forest maze. Once a player has found the car they will radio for help and all players will be rescued. Players will need to work together to help remember where they have been and where they have already searched for the car.

Game End

The game is played over a series of rounds until the end condition is met.

Hunted Win - The car is found and the call for help action is taken and all players survive through the end of the current round and one additional round of play (the game ending when the player who found the car finishes their next turn).

Hunter Wins - A player loses their last health token.

Turn Order

Starting with the first player seated to the Hunter's left, each Hunted will take a turn, and play will rotate around the table clockwise. The Hunter will take turns between hunted players based on the following:

- In a 3 and 4 player game, the Hunter will take a turn only after ALL hunted player's have had a turn.
- In a 5-player game, the Hunter will take a turn after TWO hunted players have taken a turn. Turn order will be Hunted 1, Hunted 2, Hunter, Hunted 3, Hunted 4, Hunter.

THE HUNTED'S TURN

To begin a turn, the hunted should hold out their hand so the Hunter may guide their finger to their player piece (if the Hunter is ever confused about which piece belongs to which player, the pieces shape is printed on the character piece reference card of the player).

Searching

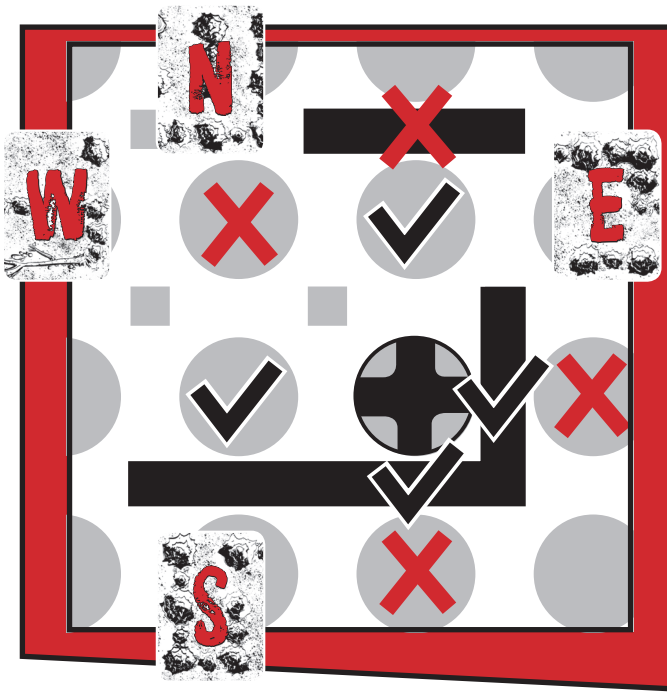
The hunted **must** use their fingers to feel the board around their player piece one space in each direction. They may not feel diagonally, and any trees they run into block the player's ability to feel beyond them. If they feel an item (rock, trees, another Hunted Player Piece, the Car, etc.) the Hunter player should announce what they have felt.

Movement

The active player **must** move two (2) spaces during the Hunted's turn. Movement is only into directly adjacent, but not diagonal, spaces. Hunted players may not move through trees or through other Hunted player pieces. Rocks are automatically picked up upon entering the space containing the Rock.

After the first (1) space of movement the Hunted player **may** feel free to search again before making the second movement and **may** feel free to search at the end of their movement.

If at any point during movement the Hunted player is directly adjacent to the Hunter piece, movement stops immediately and combat begins (see combat).



EXAMPLE - SEARCHING

You are able to feel that there is an open space to the north and west of you. To the east and south you may feel that there are trees.

You can NOT feel diagonally nor the trees/open spaces beyond the adjacent spaces. Nor can you the player feel the spaces beyond the trees to the East and South.

Actions

The active Hunted player **may optionally** take **one** action before or after, but not during, movement.

Sprint: Move one (1) additional space. The Hunted player may *not* search after a Sprint action.

Hide: Flip the active player piece face down. They cannot be affected by nor affect gameplay or enter combat. The hidden player is not allowed to speak to the other players. If the hidden player speaks while hiding, the Hunter announces that they are no longer hidden and the corresponding piece is flipped face up. The noise token is placed on the space of the player who spoke.

At the start of a hidden player's next turn, they immediately leave hiding, turning their player piece right side up. If they are adjacent to the Hunter when this happens, combat begins immediately (see combat).

Note: You may not hide AFTER the "Call for help" action has been taken by any player.

Note: Hiding may only be done AFTER movement.

Throw a Rock (must possess a rock token): The active player announces which direction they wish to throw the rock. Rocks travel in a straight line in one direction until something is hit (trees, the car, another player piece, the Hunter, or the edge of the board). The Hunter announces how many spaces the rock traveled and what it hit.

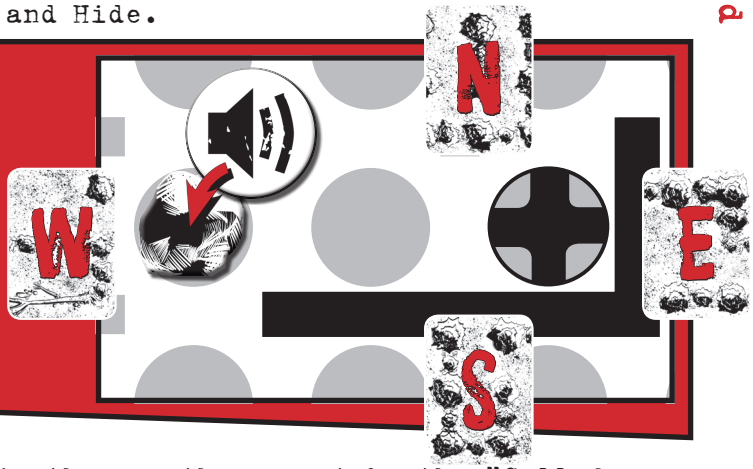
Place the rock and the noise token in that space.

If the rock hits the Hunter, they retreat two (2) spaces away from the direction the rock was thrown. On their next turn, the Hunter may only move 1 space when instructed to move. Place the wound token on the Hunter piece to remind the player that they may move only one space. *Special* abilities listed on the Hunter card are still available to the Hunter player. Only the *movement* of the Hunter Piece is restricted to one (1) space.

If the rock hits another Hunted player, the hit player loses one (1) health. They may retreat (see combat rules) and Hide.

EXAMPLE - THROWING A ROCK

Molly announces she is throwing a rock to the West. The Hunter takes the active player's rock piece and says, "The rock travels two spaces West then hits the end of the board." The rock and the noise token are placed in that spot.



Call for Help: A special action to begin the end of the game. When a player is in the car they may take the "Call for Help" action to begin the end of the game. All players must survive through the end of the following turn for the player who initiated the "call for help". (i.e. all players must take one additional turn)

Note: You may not hide after "Call for Help" has been taken by any player.

THE HUNTER'S TURN

The Hunter player chooses one of the two cards in hand to resolve. After resolving, discard the used card and draw back up to two. If there are no cards to draw, shuffle the discard pile to form a new draw pile.

Many cards in the game have a "Noise" and "No Noise" action listed on them. The presence of a noise token on the board will dictate which you will use.

Note: Some cards only have a single action which is used regardless if there is a noise token on the board (movement rules relating to noise still apply)

Some cards have a "verbal" section, which is a way to encourage the Hunted Player to role-play and interact with the players.

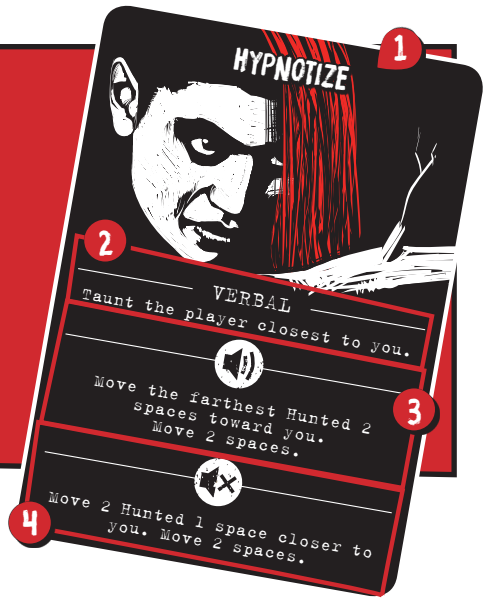
Hunter Movement

If there is a noise token on the board, The Hunter must move towards the noise token on the shortest path possible towards the noise. If there are multiple equidistant paths towards a noise token the Hunter may choose between them. If the Hunter player moves into the space containing the noise token, remove it from the board and continue movement following the movement rules as though there is no noise token.

Note: Some cards allow the Hunter to take special movement actions which may supersede this rule. Text on cards, always supersedes the rulebook.

ANATOMY OF A HUNTER CARD

1. Name of card.
2. Something that the Hunter says to the Hunted to encourage intereation and role-play.
3. Resolve the top portion of the card if there is no noise token on the board.
4. Resolve the bottom action if there is a noise token on the board.



If the Hunter plays a card that tasks them with moving more spaces than needed to reach the closest player, the Hunter should move only as many spaces required to stop adjacent to the player piece.

If there is no noise token on the board, The Hunter piece must move towards the nearest Hunted player piece. If there are multiple Hunted player pieces equidistant from the Hunter player piece, the Hunter player may choose between them.

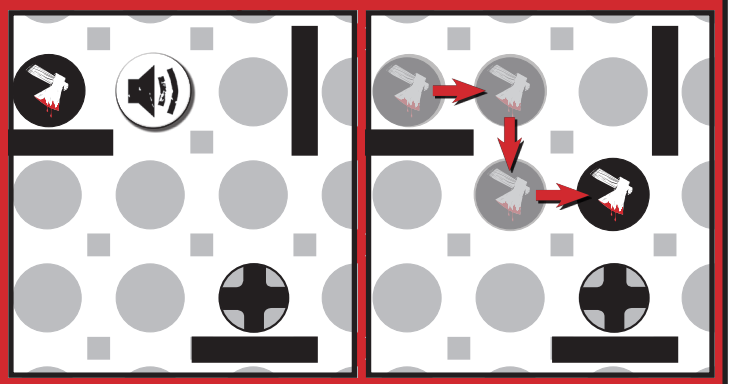
Note: If there is ever a situation where movement rules are ambiguous or have multiple interpretations, the Hunter player should interpret the card to the advantage of the Hunted.

EXAMPLE - HUNTER MOVEMENT

You play "Bloodlust" and there is a noise token on the board.

You move 1 space toward the noise. You reach the noise token, so it is removed from the board.

You spend the remaining two movement moving toward the closest player. Combat then occurs.



COMBAT

Combat occurs at **any time** that the Hunter player is orthogonally adjacent (non-diagonal) to a Hunted piece.

Note: If an obstacle (tree, etc) is between the Hunter and Hunted piece combat does not occur.

1. The Injury: The Hunted loses 1 health and the direction of the Hunter relative to the Hunted player's piece is announced.

2. The Counter Attack: The Hunted player **may** throw a rock as a counter-attack, if they have a rock available. When the player choses to counter-attack the Hunter player must move the Hunter piece two spaces away from the player piece. The Hunter takes the wound token. Hunter Movement will be reduced to 1 space next turn. The Hunter player still has access to the special abilities on the Hunter cards.

3. The Retreat: The Hunted player retreats 1 or 2 spaces and may hide. The retreating player may search before and after each movement step in a retreat following the same rules as the normal "movement" action on page 4. As a free action, the Hunted player may choose to hide. **Note:** Hunted Players may hide as the result of combat, even after the car has been located by a Hunted player.

4. Reset: Remove the noise token from the board. The active player's turn ends.

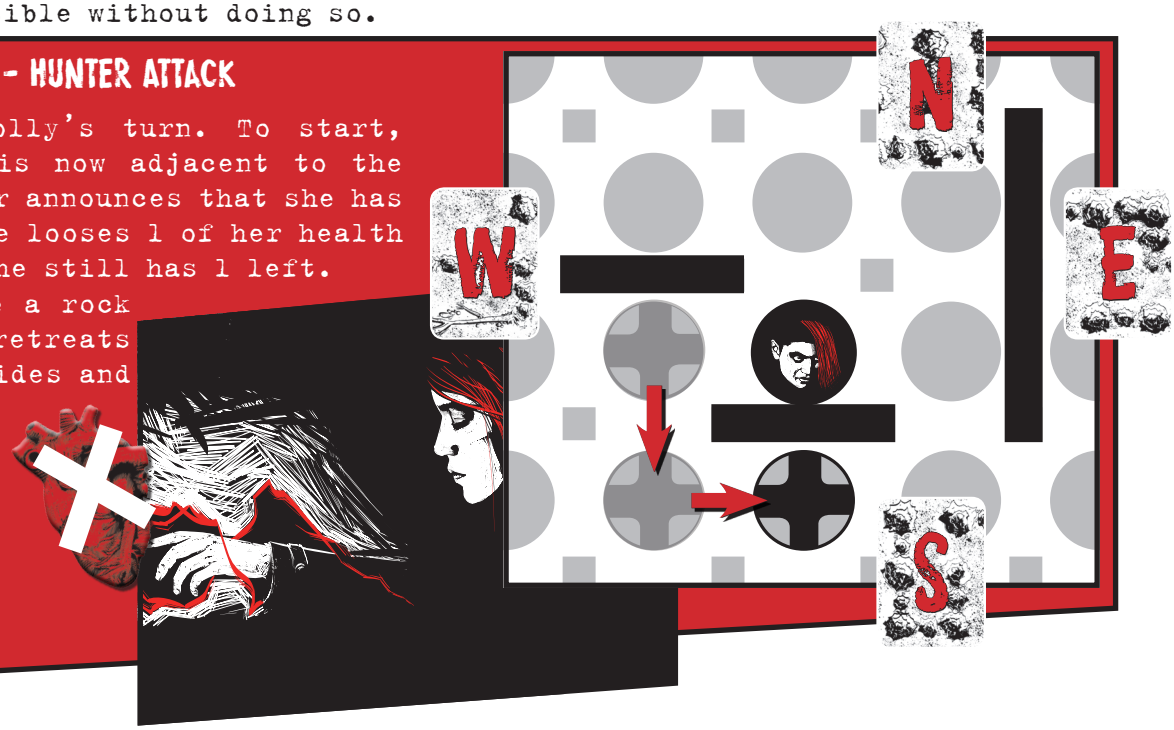
Special Combat Situation

Note: If you have played Nyctophobia: Vampire Encounter you will note that the rules for triggering combat are different between these versions.

a) Retreat into a second Hunted player: If normal retreat rules would cause the Hunter to retreat into a space adjacent to another Hunted player piece, retreat as many spaces as possible without doing so.

EXAMPLE - HUNTER ATTACK

COMBAT: It is Molly's turn. To start, she unhides and is now adjacent to the Hunter. The Hunter announces that she has been attacked. She looses 1 of her health tokens. Luckily she still has 1 left. She does not have a rock to throw, so she retreats two spaces. She hides and ends her turn.



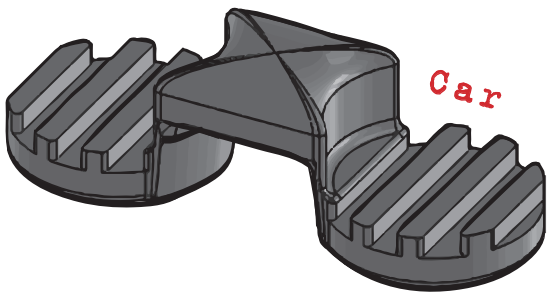
DEATH

Once any Hunted has lost all their health tokens the game ends immediately.

THE CAR

The car is a special piece that consists of two adjacent spaces hidden on the board.

The Hunter may not enter the car, but may attack those inside. Rocks can be thrown out of the car, but cannot be thrown into it. If a rock is thrown at the car, the rock token and the noise token are placed on the space adjacent to the car. Players inside the car will not be harmed by the thrown rock.



GAME END

The game ends when either:

a) A player takes the call for help action in the car and all players survive one additional round (until the player who discovered the car completes their next turn). *The Hunted were able to escape the Hunter and win the game.*

OR

b) One Hunted player loses all their life. *The Hunter gains enthusiasm. The Hunted lose hope and the game.*

GAME VARIANTS

Simple Hunter

The Hunter Action cards are not used. The Hunter simply moves two (2) spaces. If there is a noise token, the Hunter moves toward it. If there is no sound, The Hunter moves toward the closest person. This makes the game easier to play for new players who may be less familiar with the game.

CHARACTER ROLES

Forest Guide

Whenever searching, you can feel an extra space in each (non-diagonal) direction.

Boxer

You do not need a rock to counter-attack.

When you hit the Hunter with a rock, they will retreat an extra space.

Cheerleader

Instead of taking your action, another Hunted player may take an action on your turn. You **must** still take your mandatory movement.

Klutz

After leaving a space, you may place the noise token in the space you left.

Track Star

When taking the sprint action or retreating, you **may** move an extra space.

Climber

Instead of mandatory movement action or a standard combat retreat action, you **may** hop over an adjacent tree. Noise is placed in the space you left. If the Climber attempts to do so, the Hunter should note that the space they are trying to move into is occupied, but should not tell them by whom (Hunter or Hunted).

Note: The Climber cannot jump over a tree onto another player.

STOP!
HUNTERS ONLY BEYOND THIS POINT

KEY

Hunter Start Position

Hunted Start Position

Add rocks equal to number of Hunted -1

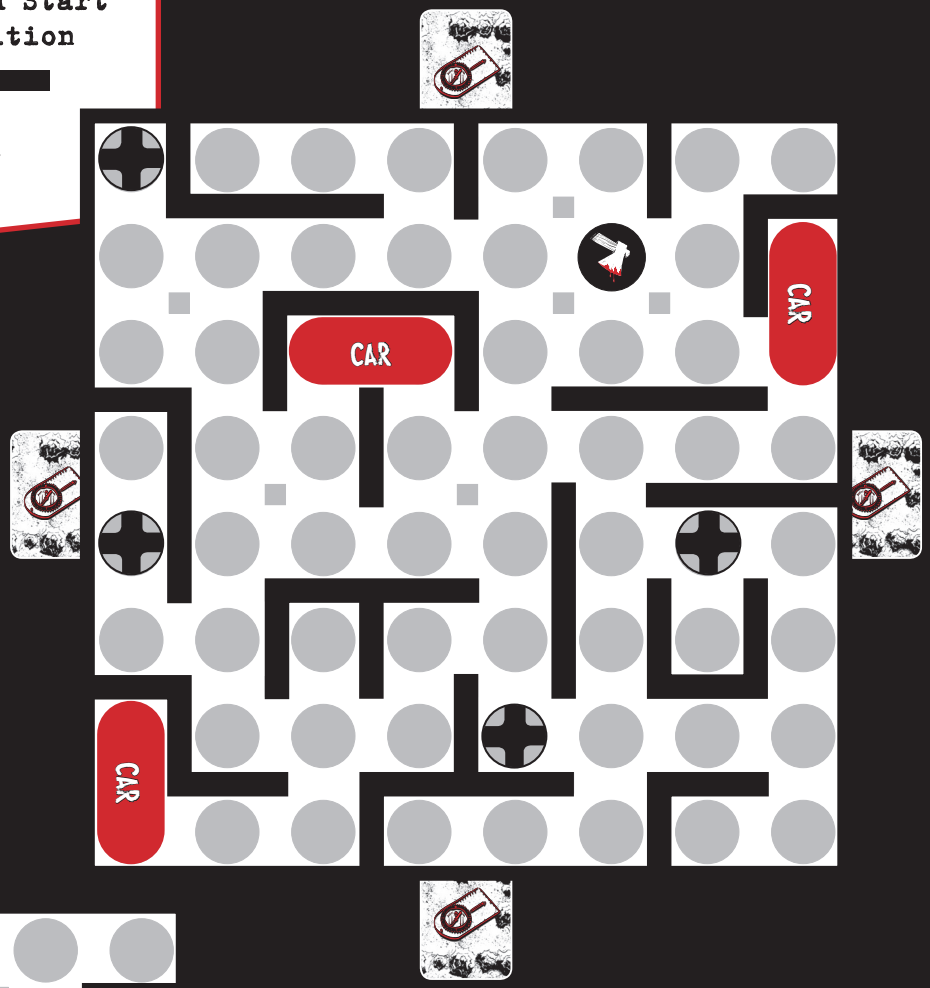
CAR

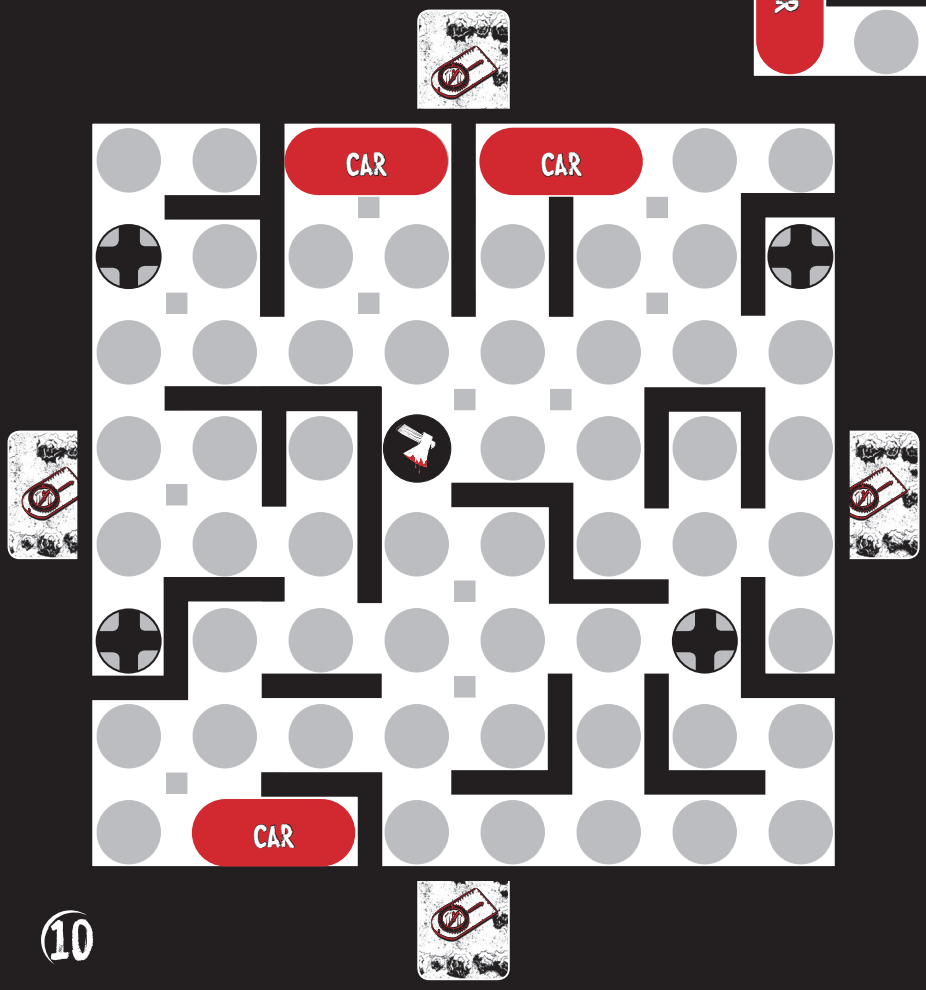
Car

Tree

SCENARIO ONE

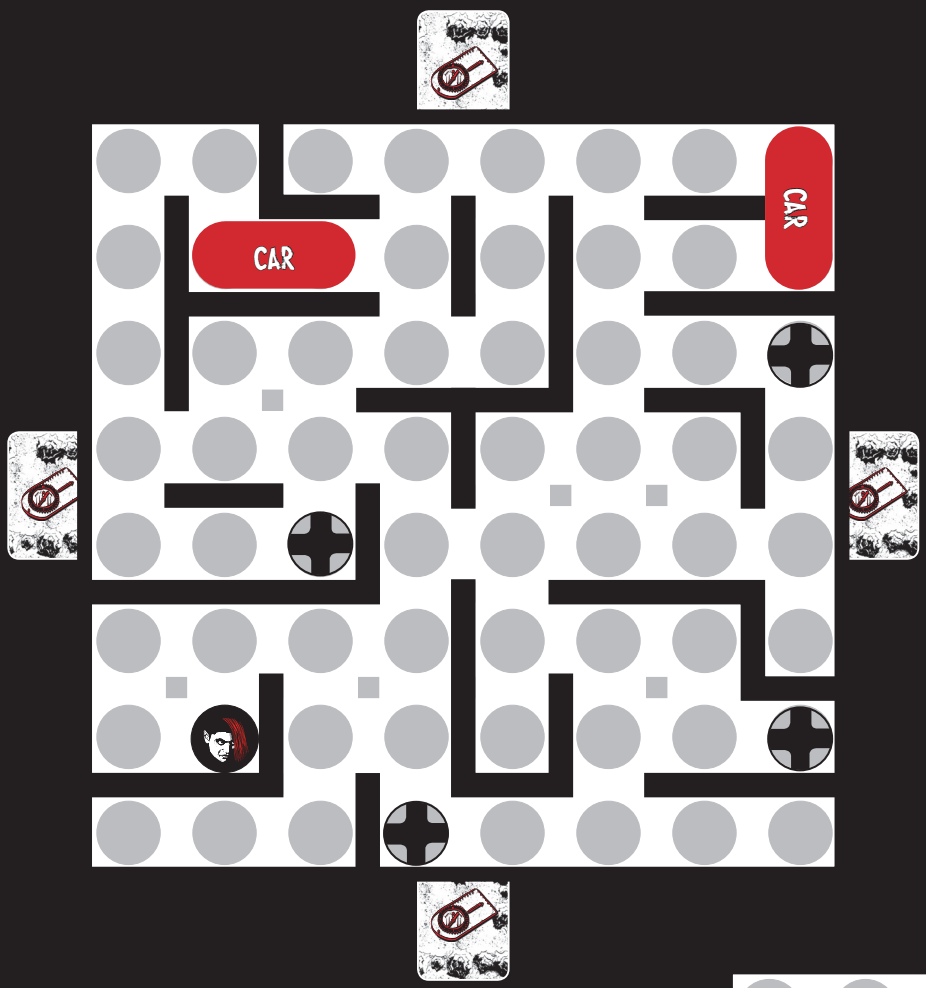
It was just supposed to be a fun camping trip until this psycho showed up....





SCENARIO TWO

I swear I left the car over here. Where are my friends? Why did we split up in the first place? And who is this psychopath anyways?

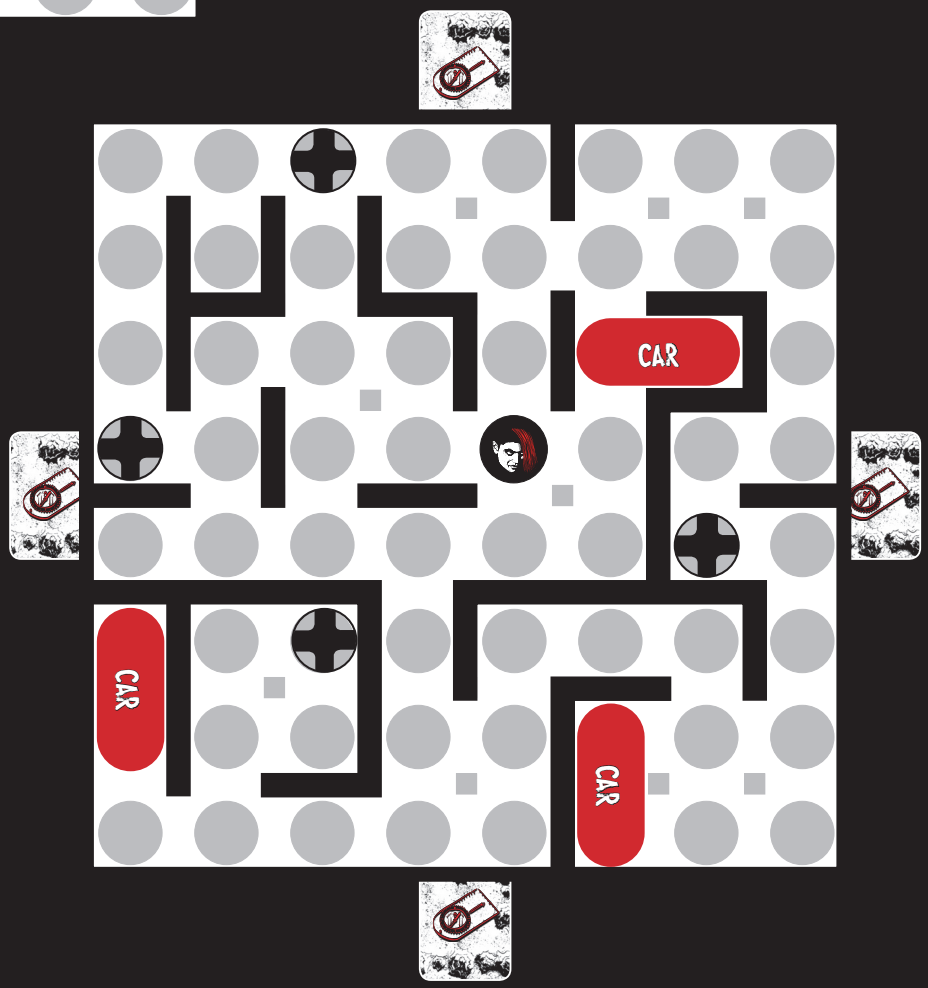


SCENARIO THREE

She walked up to our campsite and seemed normal enough. Then we all started seeing things. Trees aren't just supposed to move like that... and all I can hear is her laugh.

SCENARIO THREE

This doesn't make sense. There wasn't any fog a minute ago. The car was right in front of me. Where am I? Who am I?



WANT MORE SCENARIOS?

Please visit: www.PandasaurusGames.com/nyctophobia-maps/ OR scan the QR code. Happy hunting.

TURN ORDER

Player Turn

1) Search

2) 2 Movement (+ optional search)

3) May take one action before or after movement

   a) Sprint

   b) Hide

   c) Throw a rock

Hunter Turn

1) Play 1 card from hand

2) Resolve card

   a) Use the appropriate action on the card as indicated by the "Noise" or "No Noise" icons.

   b) If moving the Hunter

   - Must move towards the noise token on the shortest path possible
   - Must move towards the nearest Hunted player piece
   - May never move into same space as The Familiar

3) Draw back up

CREDITS

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