

# NIGHT TERROR



a blackbox larp by  
Jesper Heebøll Arbjørn

written for Blackbox Cph VIII, January 2019

# Content

This is the combined version of Night Terror.

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A set of pictures to be used during the larp and workshop

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Handouts to be used during the larp

## **Black pictures**

Pictures to be used as part of the scenography during the larp

# Night Terror - Introduction

Welcome to Night Terror. This larp was originally made for Blackbox Cph VIII in January 2019 but was redesigned and completed when it was run at Stockholm Scenario Festival in November 2019.

The larp is originally inspired by the song Night Terror by Laura Marling. This is a song about a person that suffers from night terrors, and another person tries to help by fighting against the demons in the dream, or at least that is how I understand it.

Additionally, the larp is based on a short study of what night terrors are and what researchers know about the phenomena, and a small text can be found about that in the workshop of this larp.

## **Short explanation of the larp**

The larp, Night terror, is an ensemble story about persons suffering from nightmares or night terror attacks and other persons that try to help by entering the nightmares. Together they struggle against the night terror, paying steeper and steeper prices to overcome it, but in the end, they will lose themselves to the dream.

It is an ensemble story in the sense that players will get to play several instances of the same core story, but with different characters and different backgrounds. They play in groups of three; one person will be the dreamer, which is the person suffering from night terrors, another person will be the caretaker that tries to help the dreamer, and the third person will be the night terror, which is the physical embodiment of all that is horrible within the dream.

The larp will mostly be played as an exploration of a dreamscape where the players get to set a multitude of scenes of what happens in the dream. They will be short dreamlike sequences that may or may not have any relation to each other. It is a collaborative exercise where you the players will improvise and conjure up moments, sometimes based on images, sometimes just based on imagination.

Other parts of the larp will be played non-verbally, specifically the scenes that takes place outside the dream, and then there will be some scenes where the players are supposed to scream in horror. That is, screaming is used as a metatechnique in the larp.

The larp is a blackbox larp in the sense that it will be played in a dark room, but instead of theatre lights it will use remote controlled LED candles. The players playing the night terrors will get to handle the remote controls to signify their total control of the dreamscape.

## Internet presentation of the larp



*I woke up and he was screaming, I'd left him dreaming.  
I'll roll over and shake him tightly, and whisper;  
'If they want you, oh, they're gonna have to fight me.'*  
– Night Terror by Laura Marling –

Night Terror is a larp about sacrificing yourself and your sanity for your loved one. It's an emotional horror story about entering the nightmares of another person to fight their inner demons. Finding out who they really are. And getting lost in the process.

by Jesper Heebøll Arbjørn

*Players:* 9 or 12

*Playtime:* 4 hours (including workshop)

*Genre:* Psychological horror, most likely with a tragic end

*Techniques:* Exploration, scene setting, picture association, ingame gamemasters, handouts, screaming

*Language:* English

*Audience:* None

*Photo:* JustCallMe Bethy



### **Preparing the larp**

The preparations for the larp is twofold. There are some papers that need to be printed out and prepared, and then there are some physical props that must be acquired - the larp is designed to be run with remote controlled LED candles, which can be bought at most hardware stores, or you can borrow those I have, or alternatively that part of the design can be taken out and replaced with normal theatrical lighting as is typical for blackbox larps.

After both print outs and props are made ready there are naturally some setting up before the workshop. All of this will be explained below.

### **Print outs for the larp**

For the larp there is a range of print outs; character descriptions, handouts, and images that need to be printed and cut out, folded and glued. These things will be included in the end of this text, be sure to print the pages single-sided.

Characters are organized into four groups containing three characters each. The four groups are labelled with colours - red, blue, green, and yellow, which will be important as it correlates with colours of the light at certain stages in the larp. Within each group are three characters, which are represented with three different symbols - the caretaker ✱, the dreamer ☾, and the night terror ✱\*. The character descriptions should be printed out and glued to coloured carton in the respective colours.

For each character group there are three images that are used to build the relation between dreamer and caregiver during the workshop, and later they will be used in the larp. These images should also be printed and glued to carton in the respective colours like the character descriptions.

The handouts for the character groups are double sided. On one side should be an image relating to the general feeling in that part of the story, and on the other side should be some instructions to be read by the dreamer or caretaker. These should be cut out and glued to coloured carton, the sets for the first two acts should be on coloured carton appropriate to the group, the set for the final act should be on black carton. They should each be put in separate envelopes with the name of the act, colour group, and who gets to read it written on the outside.

Finally, there is a long list of black and white pictures that should be printed and glued to black carton. These will be used in the larp as inspiration for stories.

### **Props for the larp**

The larp is designed to use LED candles as both lighting in the blackbox and as a prop during play. When I designed the larp I bought a lot of cheap remote-controlled LED candles, and by experimenting I found it to be a cool interactive dimension to the larp to let the players of the night terror characters control the candles using the remotes. This technique is explained and rehearsed during the workshop.

It is however not an essential part of the larp design, so if your budget does not allow for remote-controlled LED candles, or even no LED candles at all, these can be removed from the design without loss of functionality in the larp – but with some loss of the visual and aesthetic design, which in my opinion is an important part of the blackbox larp experience.

The setup of lighting for the larp is described below, with or without LED candles, and even if my personal favourite is to include the LED candles in the larp, I am completely fine with other people running it without.

In addition to the candles the larp also require something to represent beds, one for each character group. When I run the larp, I use blankets on the floor, one blanket for each group can easily represent a bed for the dreamer to lie on.

### **Setup for the larp**

Before players arrive to the set some things need to be prepared in the room. The room should preferably be empty of any furniture, but you will need someplace special for the game materials.

Have the characters and relation images piled ready accessible for the workshop. Likewise keep a pile of envelopes with handouts ready and sorted for the larp – when the play is underway, you should be able to place them at their appropriate places – and sometimes you will have to move fast in order to not disrupt play. Arrange the beds of the character groups. If you use just a blanket for each group then lay them out in the appropriate position – I like to use the corners of the room for this, as they will feel more secluded and intimate during play.

Additionally, each sleeping area will need a special light that you can turn on and off during the larp when the players should go to their sleeping areas. I have used coloured LED candles that match the character groups, but other solutions can be used as well, so long that the players recognize the signal.

Arrange LED candles and the black images to be able to distribute them all over the floor, when the workshop is over, and the play is about to begin.

If you will be using regular blackbox lights instead of LED candles, I recommend having a general lighting all over the floor, but keeping the light level way low – to the point almost darkness, and then having some narrow spots directed towards the bed areas (in the corners of the room, or where you like them). These spots you should be able to turn up and down, in relation to the play in those areas.

### **Running the workshop**

When the room is ready, and it is time to begin the workshop, invite the players in and have them sit in a circle in the middle of the room.

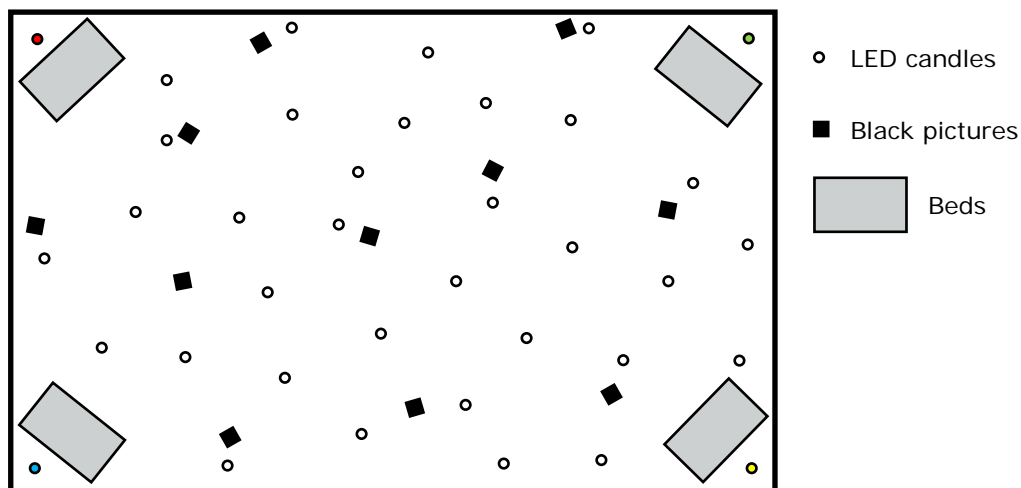
The workshop program is written separately as a series of exercises, rehearsals, and briefings that you should all go through. It is written as specific lines of what to tell the players, be sure to have read it through before hosting the larp, so you have an idea of what to do.

The workshop takes around two hours and should be straight forward. It assumes that the larp will be played with LED candles, so some of the exercises will be about that. They can probably be taken away if LED candles are not used.

### **Running the larp**

Once the workshop is over, and everybody has had time to take a break, go to the toilet, or whatever they need to make themselves ready, the play can begin. To get the players warmed up and ready to begin it can be a good idea with a short warm-up exercise. Repeating the screaming exercise, or making a shorter version of it, works good for this purpose.

After that have the players help you distribute the LED candles (if used) and black pictures all over the floor of the play area. The final play area should look something like this:



Then tell the players to go to their respective sleeping areas and make themselves ready. Give them a moment to get ready, and then tell them to look at the landscape of lights in the room. Turn the ordinary ceiling lights off so that only the play lights (LED candles or theatrical light) are on. Have them stand for a moment and taking in the view, then tell them to close their eyes while you turn off the lights in the room so that only the lights at the sleeping areas remain. When they open their eyes again, they can start playing.

The workshop should have prepared the players for the flow of scenes, so they know what to do, but remember that you have jobs to do as well during the larp. When the players are busy with scenes in their sleeping areas you can put out their coloured pictures on the floor mixing in with the scattered black pictures – Although you may want to hold on to a picture or two of each colour that you can put down while the players are exploring the play area.

Some player groups will be much faster than others, so to keep the pace of the groups somewhat aligned you can stall the faster groups by denying them the possibility of finding all their pictures for some time, while the slower groups can be given the option of all their pictures.

While they players are playing around their sleeping areas, lights on the floor should be turned off, but in the moment they start to turn their attention to the dream scape, you can turn them on. But at the same time, you should turn off the lights at their sleeping areas.

While the players explore the dream scape you should also find opportunity to go to their sleeping areas and placing the envelopes with handouts for them to find. Make sure it's the envelopes marked with "first night". Keep the lights at the sleeping areas turned off until they have all the coloured pictures they need.

When the players have all their coloured pictures, they will go back to their sleeping areas and perform the scene where they trade one picture for the envelope. Then they will read the envelope and react to that. Once that is over, and the players go into the next loop of scenes you should reach out to the night terrors and get the envelopes, handouts, and coloured pictures back. Be sure to know, which of the coloured pictures they traded away. That picture, as well as the envelope and handout, is taken away, not to be used again during the larp.

Then the routine repeats itself, with laying out the remaining coloured pictures, and the next set of envelopes. This routine will loop three times, until the players have traded their last coloured picture away. After that the larp goes into the end game.

When the end game is about to begin make sure that all the LED candles are lit. The night terrors will command the dreamers and caretakers to collect the candles and one-by-one they will turn them off. If you are not using LED candles, I suggest the night terrors should instead command the others to go and collect the black pictures, and then for each black picture retrieved they should say a sentence about how that picture reminds them of their love for the night terror.

When at the end all LED candles or black pictures are collected, have the players remain still, maybe close their eyes if they feel like it. Then play the song Night Terror by Laura Marling. When it is over, the larp is too.

**Lyrics to the song Night Terror**

I woke up and he was screaming,  
I'd left him dreaming.  
I'll roll over and shake him tightly  
And whisper, 'If they want you, oh, they're gonna have to fight me.  
Oh fight me.'

I woke up on a bench on Shepherd's Bush Green,  
A candle at my chest, and a head on his knee.  
I got up it was dark there is no one in the park at this hour.  
How do I keep finding myself here?  
'Oh fight me.'

I looked back and he was screaming,  
I'd left him dreaming  
A dangerous feat.  
And I'll run back and shake him tightly  
And scream, 'If they want you, oh, they're gonna have to fight me.  
Oh fight me.'

But if I wake up on a bench on Shepherd's Bush Green,  
A candle at my chest, and a head on his knee  
I'll roll over and hold on tightly  
And scream, 'If they want you, oh, they're gonna have to fight me.  
Oh fight me.

Oh fight me

*from lauramarling.com*

# Night Terror - Workshop

## **Welcome to Night Terror**

Welcome to the larp Night Terror. This larp was designed by me, Jesper Heebøll Arbjørn, for Blackbox Cph VIII in January 2019.

The larp was originally inspired by the song Night Terror by Laura Marling. I got the idea for the larp while traveling home alone from a larp in Sweden during summer 2018. Back then I said to myself, this is an awesome idea for a larp, I should write this down. But then I told myself: "Ha! this idea is so good there is no chance I will ever forget it".

But when time came for actually making the larp some months later, of course I had forgotten most of it, and I had to piece together the things I could remember. To fill out the gaps I made a study of what night terrors actually are and based the larp on that. So that is my second source of inspiration.

So, this is the story behind Night Terror, welcome, I hope you will like it.

## **What is the larp (2 min)**

Night terror is a story about a person suffering from nightmares or night terror attacks and another person that tries to help by entering the nightmares. Together they will struggle against the night terror, paying steeper and steeper prices to overcome it, but in the end, they will lose themselves to the dream. This is the overall story arc, which is set in stone. How it plays out, is what you will decide.

The larp will mostly be played as an exploration of a dreamscape where you will collaboratively get to set a multitude of scenes of what happens in the dream. They will be short dreamlike sequences that may or may not have any relation to each other. It is very much a collaborative exercise where you get to improvise and conjure up moments, sometimes based on images sometimes just based on your imagination.

Other parts of the larp will be played non-verbally, specifically the scenes that takes place outside the dream, and then there will be some scenes where you will get to scream your heart out.

The larp is a blackbox larp in the sense that it will be played in a dark room, but instead of theatre lights we will use remote controlled LED candles (demonstrate). Some of you will even get to handle the remote controls.

### **About Night Terror (3 min)**

Night terror is a so-called sleep disorder that causes feelings of terror or dread, and typically occurs during the first hours of sleep in the non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep stage also known as deep sleep. This is different from nightmares, which are actually dreams that happen during REM sleep.

Night terrors is described almost like a panic attack while sleeping. During episodes of night terror people are usually described as "bolting upright" with their eyes wide open and a look of fear and panic on their faces. They will often scream. Furthermore, they will usually sweat, exhibit rapid breathing, and have a rapid heart rate. In some cases, people will express more violent motor activity, such as a thrashing of limbs—which may include punching, swinging, or fleeing motions.

Night terror typically occur with children of age 3 to 12. In an American survey it was concluded that about 40% of children have at some point experienced night terror in some kind of variance, while only 1-6% of children are estimated to actually suffer from recurrent night terrors. Night terror can also happen with adults, but it is much more rare. Less than 1% of adults suffer from recurrent night terrors and they are typically in the age from 20 to 30.

There is no proved relation to any psychiatric diagnoses, for children night terror attacks are believed to be associated with an underdeveloped nervous system and attacks are more common during episodes of fever. With adults night terror is more common in people with mental disorders such as PTSD or anxiety disorder, and it is also speculated that night terror may spark some personality disorders such as schizoid or borderline personality disorder. Also, low blood sugar is associated with night terror in both children and adults.

While night terrors can be bad for the one going through it, it usually experienced as really scary to the ones observing the attack. It can be quite dangerous to try to interact with someone experiencing a night terror as they can turn violent when approached, and when trying to comfort someone during a night terror they will typically try to push you away. Also, when trying to speak to someone during a night terror attack your voice may risk becoming part of their dream. And that is exactly what we are going to do.

### **Round of names (5 min)**

Take a round of names where each person gets to answer these questions: What is your name? What kind of roleplay do you like? How do you feel about being a game master? What are you most afraid of in your nightmares?

### **Casting of characters (5 min)**

Players should be cast in three groups as caretakers, dreamers and night terrors. The dreamers are the ones having the night terror attacks, the caretakers are the ones that try to help and comfort the dreamers and as a result enters their dreams, and the night terrors are some sort of meta-characters representing the demons and evils of the dreams. The night terrors will have some variance of game master responsibility during the larp.

In the song that this larp is inspired by the caretaker is a woman and the dreamer is a man, and thus the characters in the larp are the same, even if it does not have to be so. It is important though that there is a bond of love between the two characters. So, what do you think? Would you rather be casted according to gender? Or should we throw that stuff away?

People are of course welcome to ask for specific roles, but otherwise distribute the characters as you see fit, based on the information in the round of names.

### **Reading of characters (10 min)**

Take a moment to read the character and think about how the character is. There is a lot of stuff that is not described about the character, and that is intentional. That is some of the stuff we will build together during the workshop.

### **Explanation of the rounds in the larp (5 min)**

In a moment we will continue with building the characters and their relations. But first I will shortly introduce how the larp will be played.

The larp is built in sets of three types of scenes that will be repeated. First there is a "going to bed" scene where the caretaker is tugging in the dreamer, both are preparing to go to bed or whatever makes sense in your relation. This scene is played non-verbally between the caretaker and dreamer as your actions should be sufficient to show what is going on in your relation.

Then there is a scene with the night terror attack where the dreamer will scream, and the caretaker will attempt to comfort. The night terror may enter the scene as an invisible force that helps the dreamer enact the attack.

Thirdly there is a scene inside the dream where the dreamer and caretaker explore the dreamscape around them. The night terror is there, physically. This scene ends when the dreamer and caretaker have found what they were searching for, and then they must make a sacrifice to the night terror.

This is the routine of three scenes. We will practice more of the scenes later. But be aware that at some point in the larp this routine will be broken.



### **Talk about the three pictures, building relation (20 min)**

Caretakers and dreamers should sit down together in their relation, represented by their colour. They will then get three coloured pictures as representations of their relation.

Before talking about the pictures take 5 minutes just discussing your characters and what relation you believe they have.

Then take the pictures one by one. Look at the pictures, they are meant to be some kind of shared memory between your two characters. Then before you start discussing the picture each person should say one sentence of what association you get from the picture.

Then discuss the picture, what shared memory do your characters have from this picture - preferably a happy memory of being together, or how the characters see each other.

When you are done, give the pictures back. They are used in the larp.

### **Briefing of night terrors (20 min, simultaneous)**

While the other people talk about their relations the night terrors should talk about what they are, and what their common goal is. The night terrors should be seen as different aspects of one combined evil. Your goal is ultimately the same, and during the larp you can help each other all you like.

You will soon get some time to discuss what you are and how you can work together, but first I will give you some information about how the larp is going to play. As night terrors you will have a lot of meta-responsibility during the larp, and you will have some information that the other players don't.

Also, you will carry remote controls to turn lights on or off. Later we will rehearse how the dreamers and caretakers should ever only move towards the light, and thus you will have the power to lead them and mislead them.

- The night terrors are in control of the dreamscape. When the dreamer and caretaker explore the dream, the night terror can choose to initiate any kind of scene they feel like. They do this by opening a scene with a sentence that shortly introduces the scene, their character, and their relation to the dreamer. For instance, a sentence like this: "Hello son, explain to me why you are once again late for dinner." Then the scene plays for a little while, until you decide to end it or start a new scene. The scenes can be as absurd, abstract or completely ordinary as you choose.
- When not making scenes, you can let the dreamer and caretaker explore the dreamscape, you can talk to them, guide them, mislead them, confuse them, scare them, yell at them. Whatever you choose. Just do not let them get the upper hand.

- They will be searching for memories in the dreamscape, and when they have found them all, you will go to a place, where they get to confront you. Only then will you let them confront you. In this confrontation they must reach a deal with you, where they trade one of their memories to you. In return they get an envelope. You can frame this in any way that seems appropriate; are they sacrificing their memories, are they making deals with the devil, or whatever you can think of.
- Making the deal with you and getting the envelope marks the end of one round in the larp. The larp will carry on for three rounds. The end of the third round will mark the point when the caretaker is lost to the dream. There will be a scene where the caretaker loses herself, and both you and the dreamer get to react to that.
- After that scene, we go into the endgame of the larp, which will be run entirely by the night terrors. You must tell the dreamer and caretaker to gather the LED candles. They have now lost themselves to you, and you will use this power to let them extinguish the last pieces of hope in the dreamscape. When they bring you an LED candle, turn it off. Also, when you see that other players have started collecting lights that is your cue to wrap up your scenes and tell your players to start collecting lights too. When finally there are no more lights, tell them to sit in the darkness and be still. There you will wait for all the others to be done, and at the end of the larp, I will play a song.

### **Screaming exercise (10 min)**

One tool we are going to use in this larp, associated to night terrors, is screaming in horror with all our might. This can be quite an unsettling thing to do, I know that I personally react very strongly to screaming - I tense up and get all sorts of weird impulses. And I am probably not the only one. So therefore, we will practice it before the larp. First, we will do it as a group a few times, on one-two-three go.

After the first try we will add some movements to the screaming. What motions can enhance the screaming? What motions work in relation to the screaming? What motions do you get an urge to do when screaming? One-two-three go.

Finally, we will go into the groups and practice the screaming. All people shall have a go, especially the dreamer and caretaker. Maybe the screaming works better, if the night terror assists in the screaming? One-two-three go.

### **Talk in the groups (10 min)**

The dreamer, caretaker, and night terror of each group sit together and talk. They should discuss what the core in the relation between dreamer and caretaker is, what is their main conflict, and what is at stake in the dream. The night terror may have some idea about this too, as it is essentially their character.

This should only be a short talk. Afterwards take the caretakers aside and let the dreamers and night terrors continue the talk.

### **Dreamers and night terrors talk (15 min)**

Even if the night terrors represent something horrible, they are also somehow safe for the dreamers. They are the kind of evil they know, and there may be some bond of trust between the dreamer and night terror.

They should discuss the nature of their relation, and together they must find out what is inside the dream. How is the main conflict between dreamer and caretaker represented in the dream? How does the dream start? What are the scenes inside the dream that happens over and over?

### **Briefing of caretakers about their part in the story (15 min, simultaneous)**

The caretakers are wonderful people that lovingly try to help the dreamers get through their night terror attacks. They do this out of a good heart. Sincerely, without any secret agenda or expectations to get anything in return. The dreamers and night terrors will probably try to accuse the caretaker of having ulterior motives, but it is important to know that truly they just want to help the dreamers.

They are supposed to adversaries to the night terrors, be mistrustful towards the night terrors, sometimes confrontational, and always try to shield the dreamer.

But at the same time, they are completely new to the dream universe (that is why they sit here, while the dreamer and night terror conjures the dream). Be insecure, frightful, at least until you have learnt your ways.

They are the wildcard in the dreams. While the dreamer and night terror know the dream and possibly have experienced this many times before, the caretaker is a new force that will change the dream.

Gradually you will learn more and more about the dream, but it will also destroy you. That is the core of the larp, and at some point, you will be completely lost to the dream. You will know when this happens, so just let it happen.

Now you have some minutes to discuss and exchange ideas how you can help the dreamers, especially when interacting in different scenes inside the dream.

### **Rehearsing the scenes (30 min)**

We will now rehearse the three different types of scenes, one after the other. Before each scene, I will give some instructions.

- The first scene, the “going to bed” scene, is fairly simple. Each group will have a blanket representing their sleeping area, you will go there and play a scene where the caretaker tugs the dreamer in. The night terrors are not part of this scene. The scene is non-verbal, so you will have to emote your way through it. The scene is supposed to be quite short. Let’s try it.
- The second scene is the “screaming” scene. The dreamer suffers from a night terror attack and starts screaming, the caretaker will step in and try to comfort. The night terror can step in and help with the screaming or otherwise add to the discomfort but is not physically present in the scene. It should take some effort before the screamer is comforted, so that the scene drags out a little bit, but it can be very hard to keep the screaming going for a long time. Therefore, it is okay to go into a moment of sobbing, hyperventilation or restlessness while gearing up for another round of screaming, and thus switch back and forth between screaming and general discomfort until you feel you are sufficiently comforted. Let’s try it.
- The third scene is “inside the dream”. Here the dreamer and caretaker are together inside the dream universe where they are confronted by the night terror. They must explore the dreamscape in search of memories that can bring them back. The dreamscape is the play room, and it is represented by LED candles and cardboard pieces with images on them. The memories you search for are the cardboard pieces in your own colour, but there will be others as well - specifically black ones (as a rule don’t take the other players’ colours). There are three rules to follow as you explore the dreamscape:

1. *Hold hands.* Dreamer and caretaker are always together.
2. *Go towards the light.* The LED candles will turn on and off controlled by the night terrors, you should go towards the light, and if it suddenly turns off, you should stop. We will try this now without talking. When we play you can talk, but right now we want to focus on the part about following the light.
3. *Set scenes.* When picking up a cardboard with an image on it, both coloured and black ones, all players should see the image and discuss what it means in their story and to their characters.

You will get to try how you do this best in your group, my suggestion is that the dreamer and caretaker each start the discussion with one sentence of what association they get from the picture, and the night terror can ask questions to explore what

the picture means to them, and then the night terror set a scene together with the dreamer and caretaker based on that.

The night terrors can freely start scenes whenever they feel like it, while you are inside the dream, but when images are chosen, they have to. The scenes shouldn't be too long. If a scene suddenly falters, and nobody knows what to do next, consider just stopping the scene and move on. Alternatively, the night terror can also ask questions to investigate details in the scene: "How old are you?", "Why are you at your old grandma's house?", "Why are you holding a crowbar?"

Coloured images are their shared memories, black images are false memories, subconscious memories, fears, traumas or anything of that type. Let's try doing one of those, so you can try it and figure out a way that works for you. Afterwards you can talk, and then do one more.

- When finally the dreamer and caretaker have found all the coloured images, they must go towards a candle of their own colour where they must bargain with the night terror. They will trade one of their images to the night terror to get out of the dream. The night terror will in return give the dreamer and caretaker an envelope. The envelope says on the outside who gets to open it. Inside is a new image that both dreamer and caretaker should see, and they should discuss it the same way as the other pictures, but don't set a scene from it.

When you have discussed the image the opener of the envelope reads the instructions on the back of the image. These are meant as an add-on to your character, how your character personality evolves from the experiences in the dream. And then finally there will be some specific instructions, in bold type, for what to do exactly when you are done reading. We will not rehearse this.

This is the flow of scenes, and how they are played, but be aware that this routine will be broken at some point during the larp. As you might have guessed it is the instructions inside the envelope that will break it, and I am sure you will know what to do, when it happens.

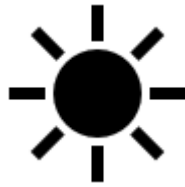
#### **Pause before we begin (10 min)**

Take 10 minutes pause before the larp starts. Let people get some water and go pee. When the larp starts, it will be played in one go.

#### **Questions and warm up before the larp (5 min)**

If there are any questions take them now. Otherwise the larp will start.

To warm up after the break and bring back some energy in the room, do a round or two of screaming. One-two-three go. Then the larp can start.



You're just a decent woman and he is the love of your life. You know you are meant for each other, and sometimes it feels as if it was fate that brought you together. To be given such fortune is rare, you love each other dearly, and you would go to the end of the world for him.

But he is troubled. He is plagued by recurrent nightmares that are getting worse and worse. You don't understand how or why, you only know that if there's anything you can do to help you would gladly do it. But he is not letting you, he insists that it's probably just a passing phase and he is going through a rough patch at the moment. It will be better soon. But you know that he is lying, you can see the fear in his face, and you hear his screams at night. You long to be able to help him, whether he wants you to or not.



You're a man in your prime. You should be out there making a name for yourself, or making the world a better place, or just making a simple living like everybody else. But you can't. Because you're broken.

Your dreams are vivid and horrifying. You see things in your dreams that defies description, often it feels so real that you're not sure if you're dreaming or awake. The difference, you've learned, is that when you're dreaming you can't look away or say 'no'. Often you can't remember the details after, you just have that intense feeling of dread. And it's draining all the energy from your body.



You are the hunger for power, the urge to take control. It is your purpose in this world to give people desire to seize power over each other. You like nothing better than to see love between two people turn into a power struggle or a race for dominance. You like to see submission with the powerless, and you like to goad leaders to wield their power more and more excessively. But most of all you like to see people lust for even more power.

In dreams you take the shape of The Beast, a magnificent creature that boasts of strength and makes promises of power, but the only things it will deliver are death and misery. It's hunger is insatiable and it prowls the dreams in search for ever more victims to gnaw on.



Your child is everything to you. He has been since the day that he was born, and now your whole life revolves around him. You know that he is the reason for your existence.

But to your grief he is tormented by something that you cannot explain, and neither can any of the doctors you've been visiting. At least not to your satisfaction. He is haunted by nightmares and things that are worse. Sometimes he will sit in his bed and just scream, eyes wide open as if he's awake. Only he is not, and he doesn't respond to anything you do. And he just won't stop screaming.

It's scaring you to bits, and you are prepared to do anything to make it stop.



You're just a normal kid. You can be sweet and you can be naughty, sad and happy. But most of the time you are really more scared.

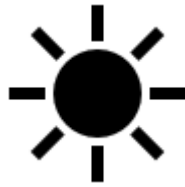
You're afraid of falling asleep and that the nightmares return. Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't. When they do it's the worst thing you've ever known. When the dreams come, they take complete control over you. You want to run away, but you can't. You want to call your mum, but you can't. You can't even look away or close your eyes. The dream forces you see all the horrors, and there is nothing you can do to stop it.



You are the dread of loss, the fear of being abandoned. It is your purpose to spread desolation in the world, to make sure people feel the hopelessness of being alone. You like nothing better than to steal away the love between people and replace it with nothingness, replace it with yourself.

In dreams you are The Stranger that nobody knows but everybody fears. You are the demon with no face. You haunt people's dreams by replacing the shape of their loved ones with your own, and making sure that can't remember what was there before. Slowly you eat more and more of their memories of other people, until there is only you.





All the time you are trying to do your best, be professional and effective. You usually keep a personal distance, those that get involved with the misery of the patients rarely last long in this place. But one person has penetrated your defenses. You don't know how or even why, it's not like he has been pushing for it. He is just special, you can feel your blood pulsing when thinking about him, and you try to schedule as many visits with him as possible.

His trauma manifests in a particular horrible fashion, even if many of the other patients suffer from nightmares it hurts you much deeper when you hear him screaming in the night. You feel an urge to rush to his side to help him. But it is as if there nothing you can do to help him. Sometimes he will sit upright in bed with his eyes wide open and just scream, but still sleeping, and when you take his hand, he doesn't even notice. He just keeps screaming.



Had you only a little bit wiser when you were younger, you probably wouldn't have ended here. You would probably be happily married with a nice little house, three kids, and a dog. But you were a wild one, reckless, and instead you lie here with two legs that won't move. And that's not even the worst. You would take paralysis any day to get rid of the nightmares. For they are the real source of your torment.

Just about every night you are haunted by visions that are just as real as your own experiences, but many times as horrible. But the worst thing is that you can't seem to wake up from your nightmares. They just keep on going, and you can't shut it out or close your eyes. It's like paralysis takes over, and even if your try, your body just won't listen.



You are the embodiment of chained wrath, the flaring temper that never lets loose, the burning pyre that threatens to explode at a moment's notice. It is your purpose to add kindle to that pyre, starting with minor things, then bigger and bigger, until it can no longer be contained. You love those moments when it is finally too much for a person and their wrath is unleashed, but even more you love the tension just before it happens, and you aim to prolong that moment for as long as possible, constantly denying the release of the outburst. Wrath can be a delicious poison of the soul when it is never allowed to turn to rage.

In dreams you are The Viper, a sly creature that whispers of misguided righteousness while pouring poison in the ears of its victims. Its deadly fangs are always ready to strike, but it prefers to rely on its poisons to slowly drain strength from its victims.



Your father is a wonderful man. You owe him everything; your whole life, your career, and your courage. He has always been there for you, to help you or to guide you, or even just to be your friend. And that's why you will be there for him too.

In his old age his strength is faltering, and it is hurting you to see the man he was slowly fading away. But it is as if something else is taking hold of him. Many nights he suffers from horrible nightmares that seem to consume his body and soul. It has gotten so bad that you decided to move back to take care of him. But you weren't prepared for what you saw during the nights; your dad sitting upright, scared and screaming in horror. If you could just do something to help him.



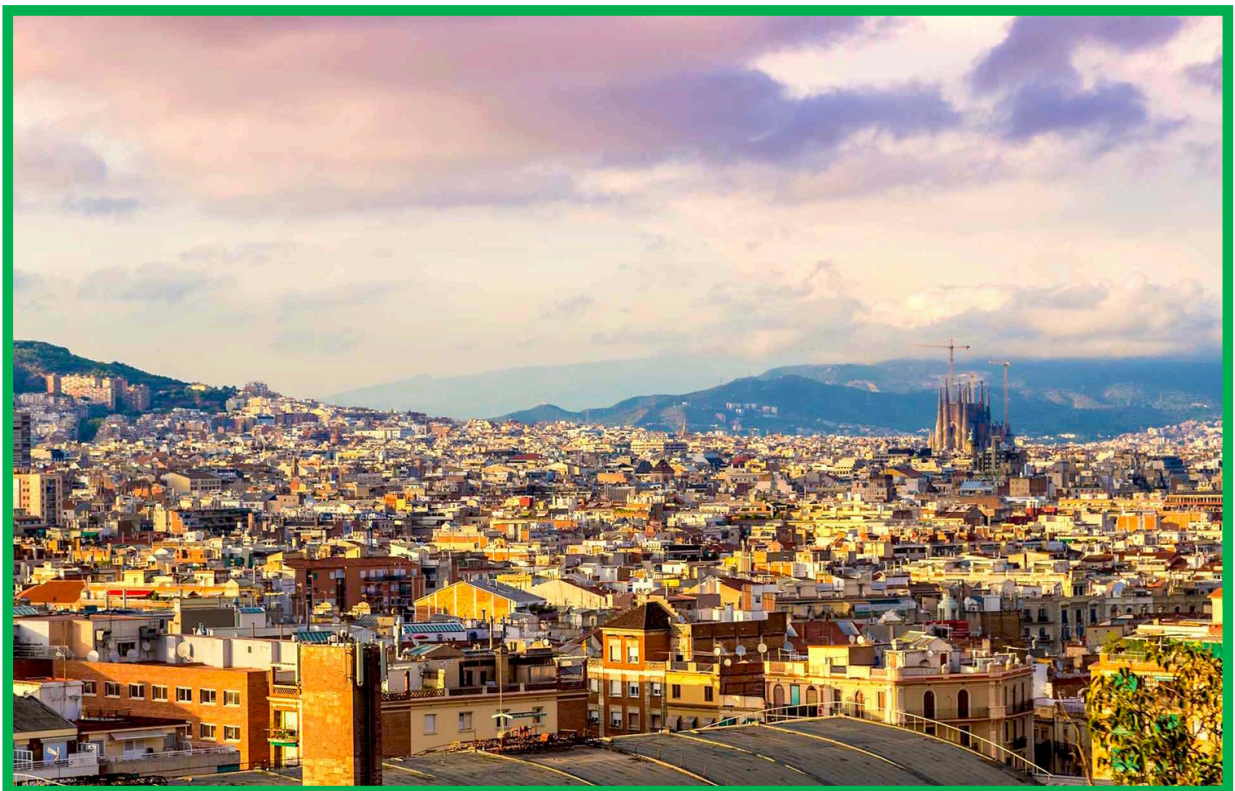
You're an honest hard-working man. Always has been. And it is the words you respect and aim to live by - until your very last day. You've always believed in doing what's right, respecting your peers, being honest to yourself and others, and being a good friend. But most importantly you believe in doing something, taking a stance, as opposed to doing nothing.

And that's what's eating you now. Being helpless, being forced to do nothing. Being old. And what's worse is the damned nightmares that seem to follow you, night after night. In your life you haven't really been scared of anything, not really, but you are scared of the things you see during these nightmares. Really scared. And you can't do anything to get rid of them. In fact it's like you can't do anything at all, once the nightmares begin.

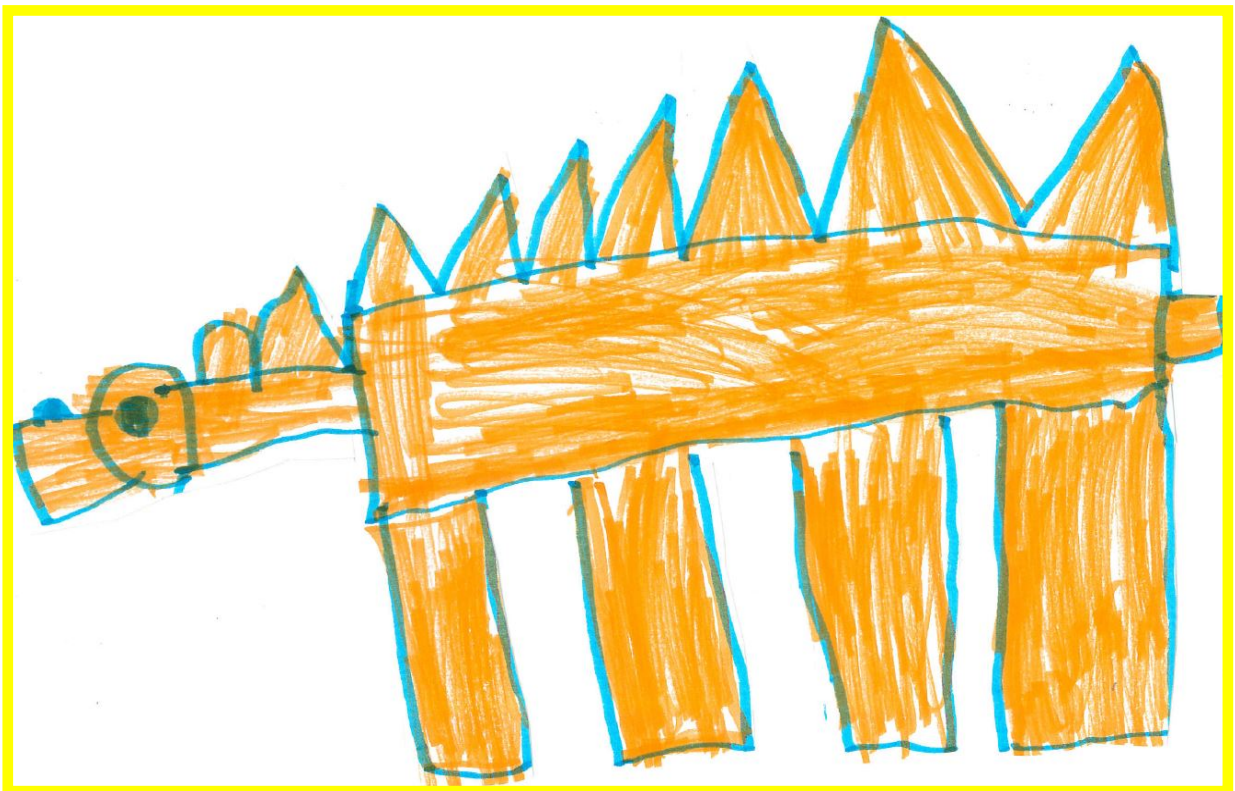


You are the fear of emptiness, the dread of oblivion. It is your purpose to instill the fear of death in people's hearts, to make them see their undoing and what little legacy they leave behind. It is your purpose to let them know that with time they will be forgotten - even by their loved ones. You like nothing better to see the love between two people dwindle to despair and emptiness when they realize the insignificance of their feelings.

In dreams you take the form of Death, the hooded reaper. You may not let people instantly know you, but you make sure that in their hearts they know what you are. And they shall fear you, for you are their undoing.





















You can finally see her. You recognize that what she does she does out of love for you. She is willing to do this to help you, and her strength is fierce. You love her, you want to submit to her, and you want her to save you.

**Now hug.  
For as long as it takes.**



It's alright, your mum is here to help you. You thought for sure you were alone. With your mum here you feel safe, you can always rely on her. In fact you are completely dependent on her.

**Now hug.  
For as long as it takes.**





You see her. She is here to help you. She makes you feel calm and safe, and you know that she cares deeply about you. Had you just met her earlier, it could have been so perfect. She is wonderful. You care deeply about her too.

**Now hug.  
For as long as it takes.**



You daughter is here to help you, faithfull as always. She is such a wonderful person and you can't help it but feeling a little proud for who she is. You know now, that for all the things you've been doing over the years, she is actually your finest creation. You love her.

**Now hug.  
For as long as it takes.**



It is a lie. She is not helping you. She is controlling you, forcing her will on you. Maybe that was her plan all along. And now you are in her power. You can not break free, you can not disobey. You can only do what she says. Is this what love is?

**Now scream.**



She is not real. This is just a trick they're trying to play on you.  
Your mum is not here. Your mum has left you. You are alone.  
You have always been alone. Your mum never loved you. It  
was all a lie. Don't listen to them.

**Now scream.**



She is mocking you, she's not helping. You're a cripple and she's a professional doing her job. Nothing more.. Why would she let you believe that this was special. It is not. How dares she. You want to lash out at her for being so cynical. You want to shout. You want to rage.

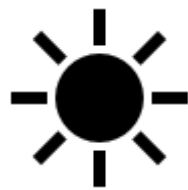
**Now scream.**





This is goodbye. She is not here to help. She is just here to pay her dues to a man that will soon be gone. You can see now how false she is. She is not thinking about you at all, only about herself. And when you're gone she won't have to bother with this anymore. Why can't you just die.

**Now scream.**



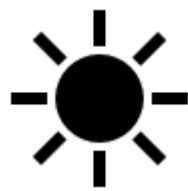
Who are you? Who is this person that you love? You can't remember what you were trying to do or why it was so important before. You did everything you could, sacrificed so much, but they have broken you. You just feel so immensely tired.

**Now scream.**



What is this place? Why are you here? You used to have a child once, or was it just something you dreamt? Was there ever a child? You feel all dizzy and confused, like something isn't right. But you don't know what it is.

**Now scream.**



Who are you? Who are you trying to be? There used to be somebody important to you. Not anymore. You feel deceived. Like you've been lied to. Who are they? Why have they tricked you? You want to shout at somebody.

**Now scream.**



Where are you? Why have you come here? You wanted to say goodbye to someone, but you have forgotten who it was. Was it somebody important? Is anything really important? It doesn't matter. Eventually you are going to die anyway.

**Now scream.**











