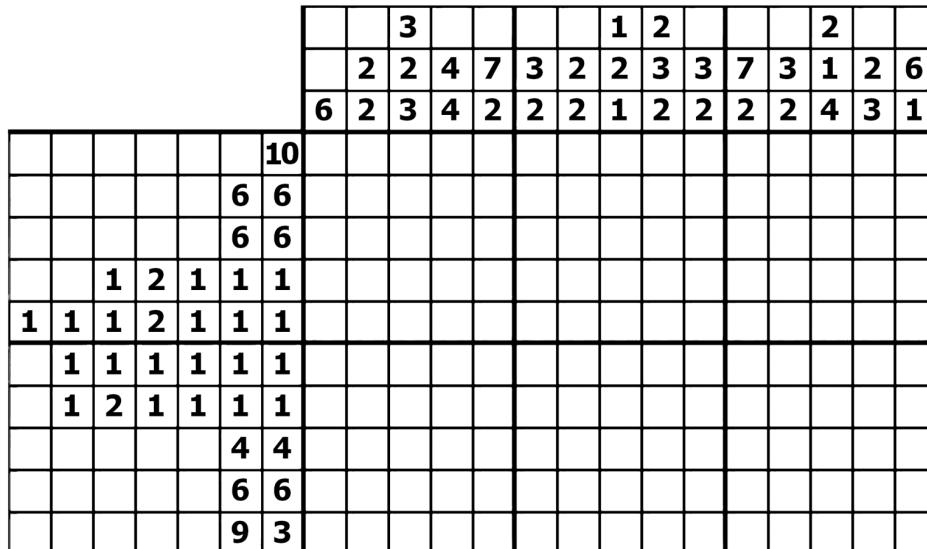




Dining Room

Dammit—ectoplasm! There are dozens of ways for spirits to communicate, and this is easily the grossest. What's worse, this looks like math and...a visual pun? Ugh!

" IN "



Artwork by Matt Smith



Parlor



As you place the planchette on your Ouija board, a malevolent energy shakes the room, and the board shatters. Undaunted, you reassemble the pieces and proceed to inquire.

"Can you hear?" DIMLY

"I am here to help. Will you follow me?" NO TRUST

"I can show you how to move on if you will listen. What keeps you in this house?" HORROR

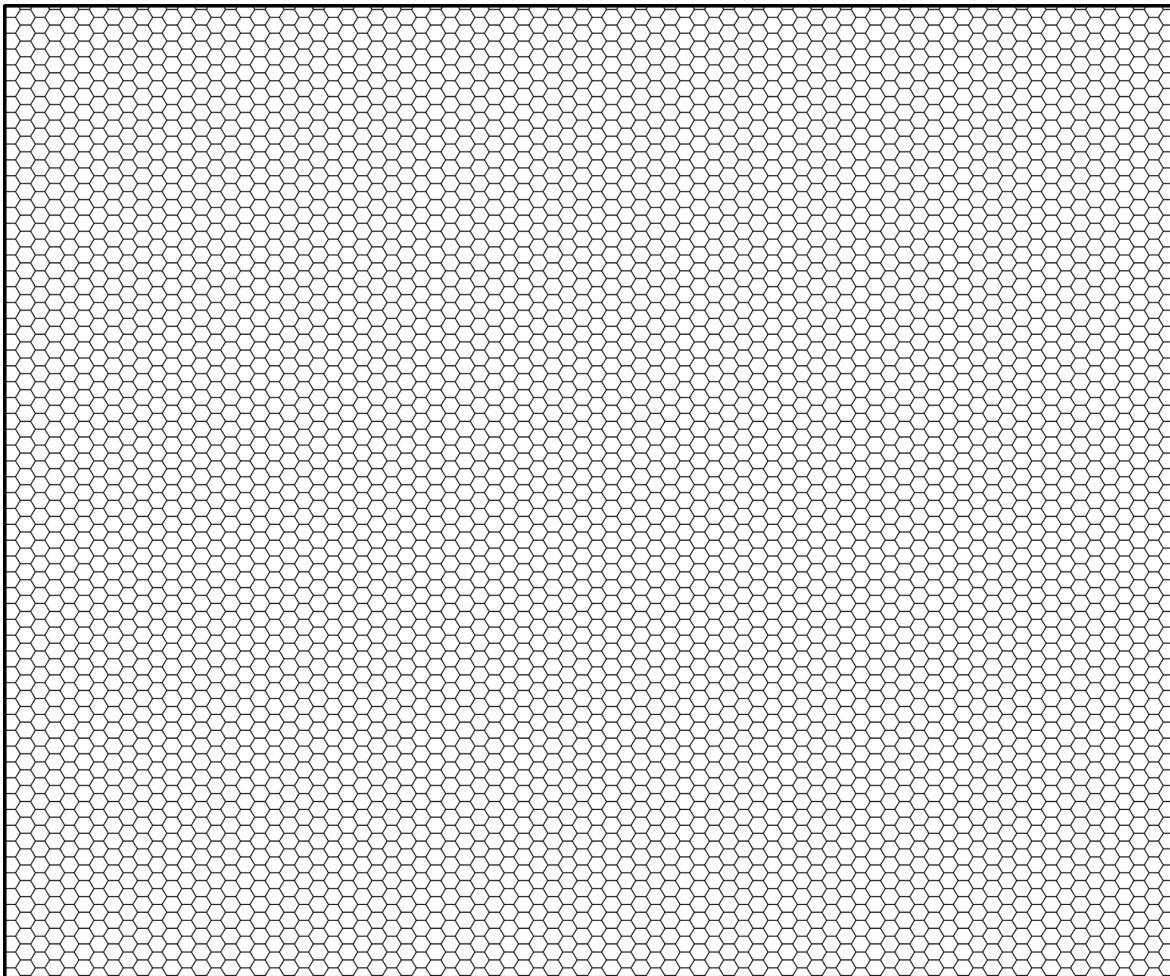
"Whatever hurt you is gone. Unless—was that—did you see what happened to my board?" STRUCK

"Then we're not safe. You are not the only one trapped here. Can you communicate with the others?"

ALONE

"You have all been held separate, for all these years?" YES GOODBYE

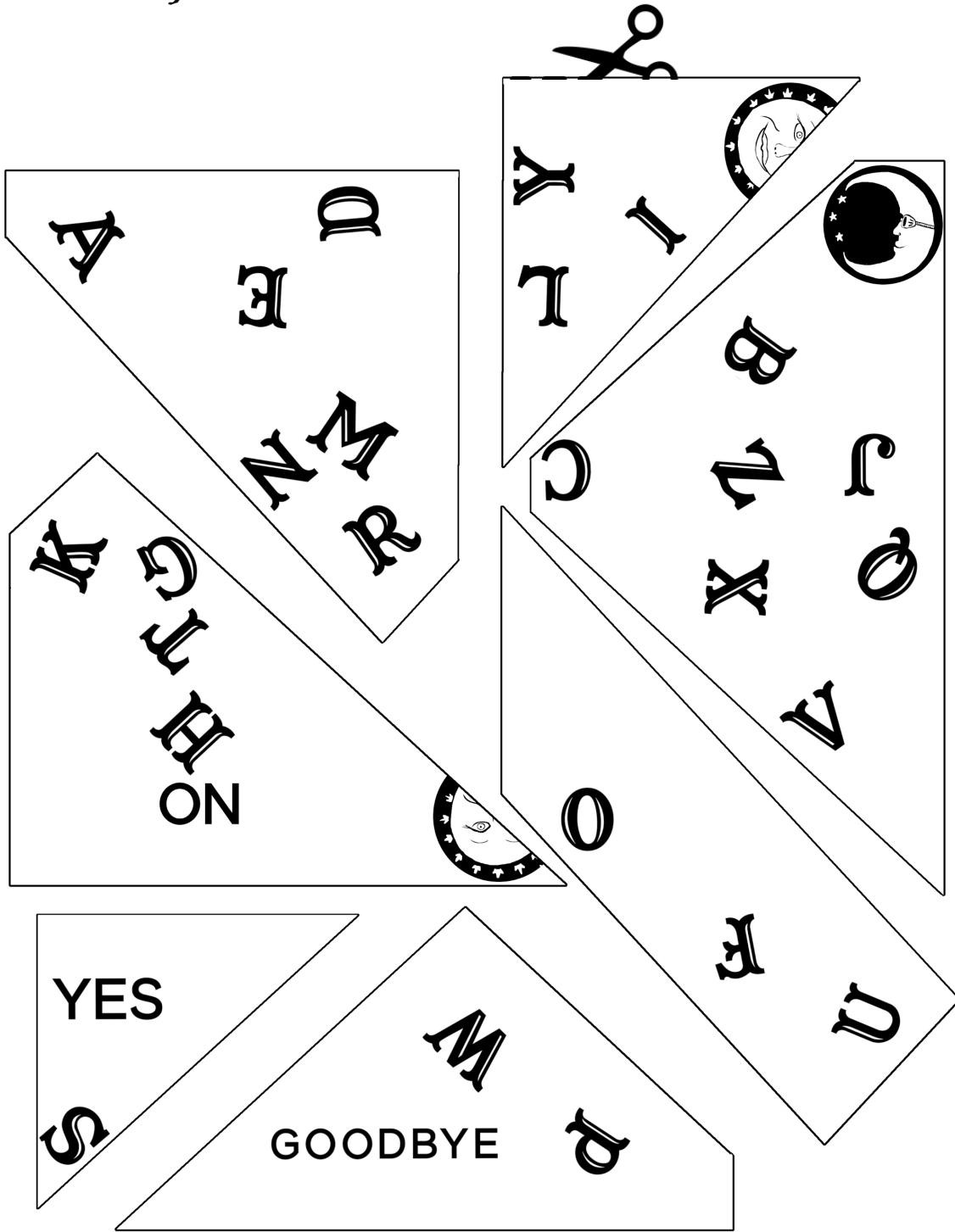
"No, wait! I can't help until I know your name. What is your name?" GO GOODBYE





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Parlor





Bathroom

A cursory investigation of the bathroom reveals discrete regions of frigid air: cold spots, a telltale sign of spiritual presence. Strangely, the ambient disturbances become more pronounced as you kneel closer to the decorative tiling.



Artwork by Matt Smith

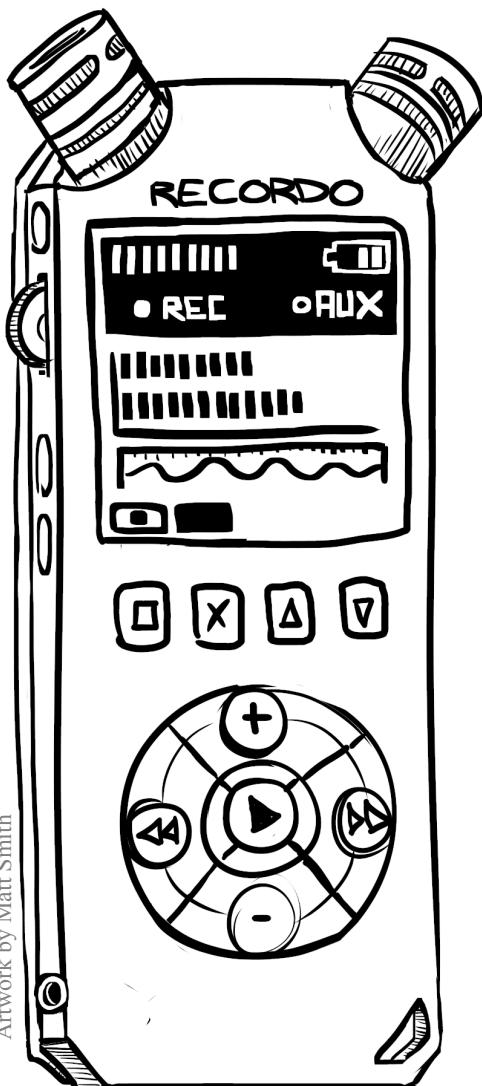
Abrupt and complete cessation
American Civil War novel and film
Ballpark staple
Big trouble
Brief period of unusually low temperatures
Brush-off
Direct phone communication link
Inside information

Lack of confidence
One who is easily enraged
Place for growing plants out of season
Showy expert
These sell extremely well
Uncomfortable position of responsibility
Unfeeling person
Way to calm overexcitement



Hall

Having explored the house briefly, you return to the entryway and retrieve your digital sound recorder. Amplifying the ambient sounds of the house to the point of crackling white noise, you detect the eerie whispers of EVP—electronic voice phenomenon.



White Noise

Crackling sound from an untuned wireless receiver (5 6)
Disturbances in a large body of water (5 5)
Dust-removal appliance (6 7)
Hot-air grooming tool (4 5)
Room-cooling device (7 3)
Running water (8 5)
What powers a coupe or sedan (3 6)

“One who takes empty space and cuts it in two”

“Two forearm bones that aren’t moving at all”

“A nickname for my grandmother when she floats to the top of the room”

“A thief who just keeps talking and talking and talking”

“One with the job of removing all the moisture from a monarch’s successor”

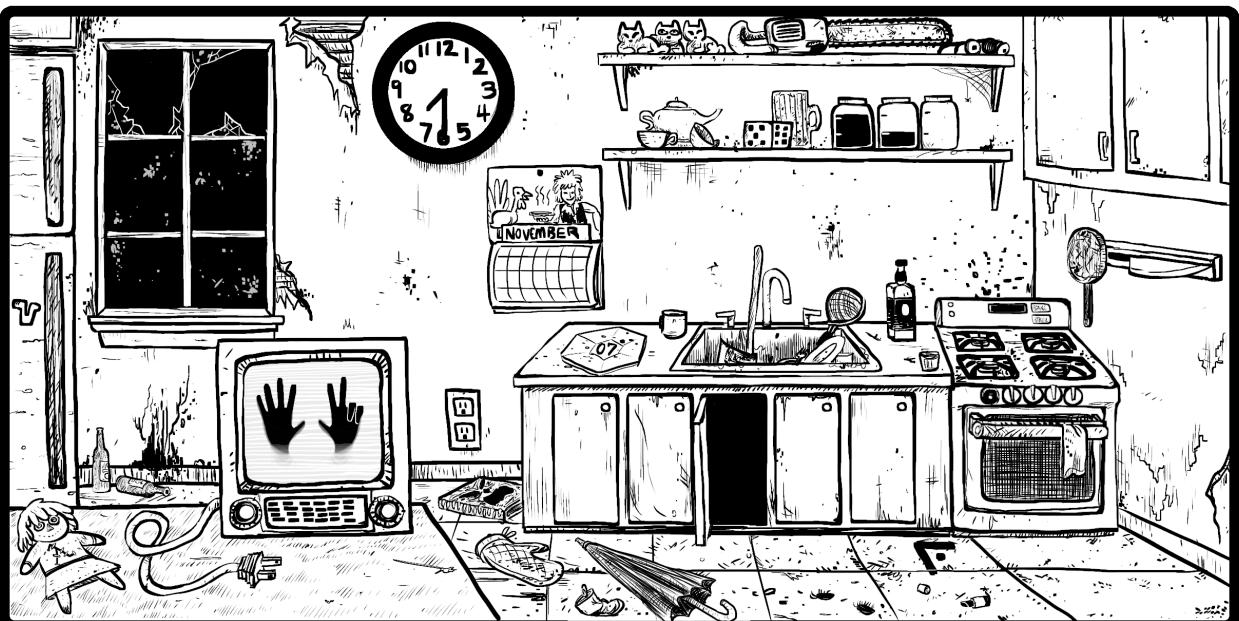
“The sea is fading... fading...”

“A motor clogged with black goo”



Kitchen

The psychokinetic din of the poltergeist is generally no more than the irksome flailing of a disgruntled spirit, disordered in scope and effect. Where the spirit's movements are subtle and controlled, however, you know to take careful note of even the smallest details.



Artwork by Matt Smith



October 2019



Crossing Over

Five times the killer hailed a guest,
Then laid them down. They did not rest.
They cannot leave and do not cease
Lamenting bonds that won't release.

The rite to free what hate engirds
Demands, first, names, and then three words.
The corpses named, your mind is filled
With visions of the ones he killed.

The first poor soul was wrestled loose
When DROPPED ten feet inside a noose.
The houseguest writhed until he died;
The noose was, after weeks, untied.

Though chained mere feet from wholesome stores
One STARVED inside the kitchen doors.
He heard her pleading every day
But only watched her waste away.

The parlor may have been the worst
That wasn't third or fifth or first.
A simple GARROTE was employed
Until the larynx was destroyed.

The third time out, he plied his art
By PULLING arms and legs apart.
He hung the remnants on the wall.
(It did not happen in the hall.)

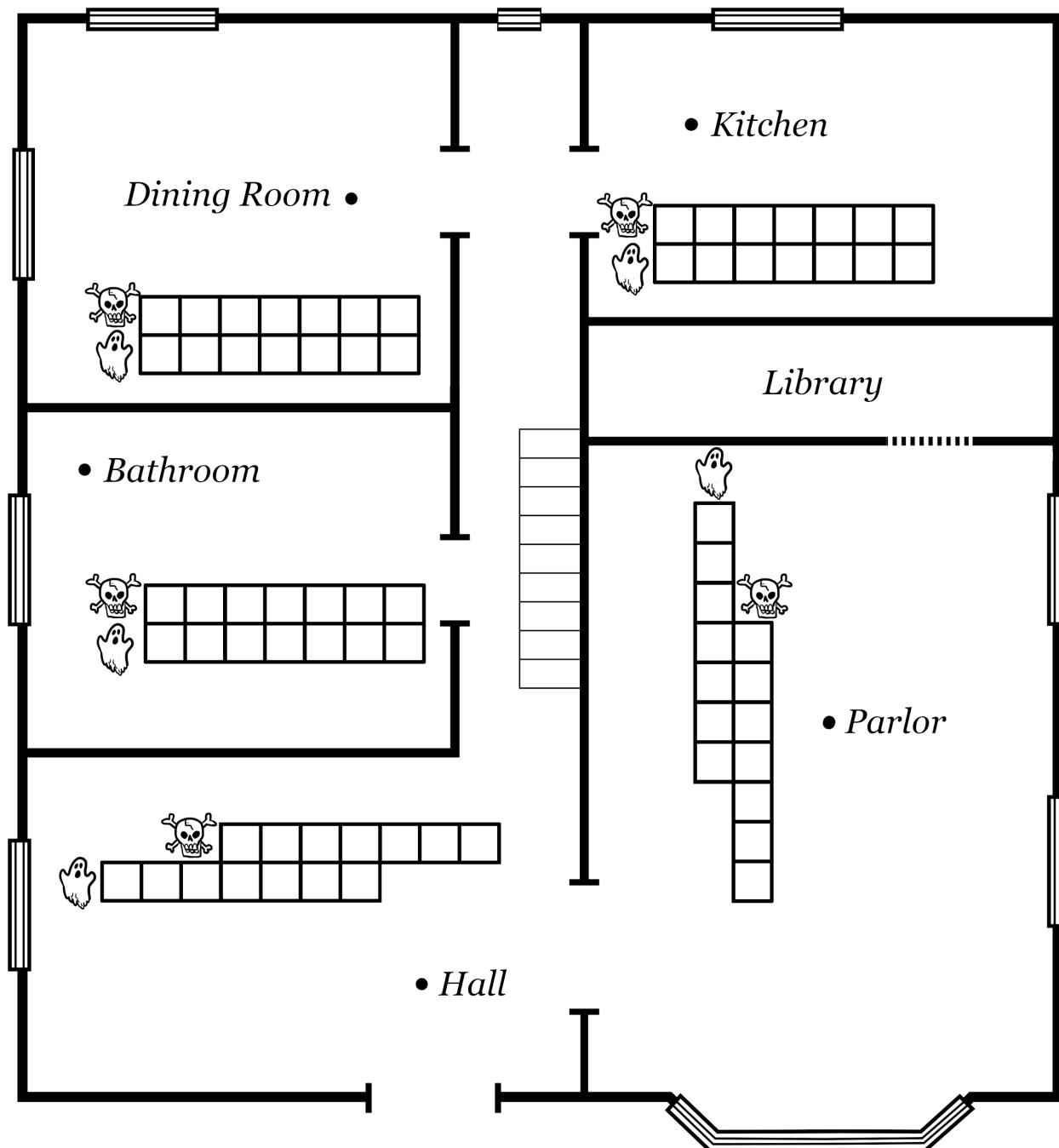
When in the bath and feeling dull
He'd plant a HATCHET in a skull.
But bathing could not cleanse his sin,
For more than once he'd kill again.

The answers are demanded now
Of when he killed them, where, and how,
Of lines to draw and words to speak,
And whence to go, and what to seek.

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Crossing Over



Artwork by Matt Smith