



Area 1 - The Bar

This bar is large enough to fit roughly one hundred patrons. While it is usually well-stocked with plenty of booze, it is almost always filthy.

A staircase near the ice machine leads down into a crowded, dark basement filled with paint fumes and dead rats.

Area 2 - Bathrooms

The bar has two large bathrooms. Slapdash gender-neutral signs on both doors read “Animal Shithouse.” The westernmost bathroom is much cleaner than the easternmost one.

Area 3 - Storage

This storage area holds empty kegs and back-up beer, liquor bottles, and a bag of lemons.

Area 4 - Office

The small office is a place for the staff to get away (and hide) from patrons.

The staircase behind the door in the southeastern corner leads up to the roof of the building.

Area 5 - Back Alley

The player characters keep their van in the back alley. For some reason known only to the characters (the players can decide why), the back of the van is filled with barrels of gasoline. Blowing the van up causes an explosion with blast power 6.

The Dive Bar

“The PCs Get Held Hostage”

A Horror RPG Scenario for PaxUnplugged 2023.

Get a new scenario each day of the con from Tom Cartos (#4300) and DMDave (#3831)

A trio of ghoulish creatures take the player characters, a gang of dive bar owners, hostage. The ghouls claim that this an act of vengeance for perceived slights against them and their kin. Subjected to constant acts of depravity by the ghouls and gripped with fear, the characters must devise a way to escape.

Set-up

Before you begin play, carry out these steps in the following order:

- Each player chooses one of the characters from the Characters sheet. The remaining characters become NPCs in the dive bar.
- Let the players view this side of the scenario brochure so they can get a sense of the dive bar and its layout.
- Referencing the Personal Agenda table on the reverse side of this brochure, give each character their agenda for Act 1.



Writing by DMDave



Maps by Tom Cartos

Act I

The scenario kicks off when a trio of ghouls (see the sidebar) enter the bar and threaten the PCs. The ghouls communicate only through telepathy, the grotesque purple veins in their heads throbbing with each thought.

The Ghouls Arrive (Mandatory). The three ghouls—two brothers and a sister—interrupt the PCs normal activities and take them hostage.

Francis' Treasure (Mandatory). The character Francis has treasure hidden somewhere in the bar. He can use it as a bargaining chip or keep it a secret. Regardless, Carlos knows about it.

Fork Stabbing. To show they mean business, one of the ghouls uses its telekinesis to stab one of the PCs with a fork. The PC must make a Mobility check or take 1 Damage.

Explanations. It's up to the players whether or not their characters recognize the ghouls. Regardless, the ghouls accuse the characters of past misdeeds. They seem particularly obsessed with an event in which one of their kin was injured and could not evolve into a great bird.

Acts of Depravity. The ghouls wish to shame the characters. They force the characters to perform acts of depravity, such as eating cat food, dancing for hours on end, and singing old '90s R&B songs acapella.

Act II

Much of Act II depends on how the characters utilize their personal agendas.

More Acts of Depravity. The ghouls continue to force the characters to humiliate themselves. Characters who refuse are attacked.

Bored Ghoul. One of the ghouls—the GM's choice—begins to grow tired of the operation. The other two ghouls argue with their restless sibling. This may give the characters a chance to get over on the ghouls or sneak away.

Raggedy Regular. One of the bar's regulars—a raggedy dopefiend that lives in the rear alley—enters the bar, causing a scene. Unless the characters intervene, the ghouls use their psychic powers to explode the regular's head, forcing **PANIC TESTS**.

Act III

In the final act, the characters must decide to fight the ghouls, join them, or flee.

No Way Out. It soon becomes apparent that the ghouls won't allow the characters to escape with their minds, bodies, or souls intact.

The Final Confrontation. All three of the ghouls grow bored of the game and decide to finish the characters. They attack first with their psychic assault (automatic), and then as their attacks table allows them. They fight until one of their kin is killed or until they kill all the characters.

Epilogue

Ultimately, the ghouls are weak-willed and only want an easy fight. If the characters show that they are capable of fighting back, the ghouls flee, swearing vengeance. Otherwise, the ghouls continue to attack until all the characters are dead.

If the characters survive the encounter with the ghouls and wish to continue to a franchise campaign (see the Horror RPG Core Rulebook), then the ghouls could make excellent recurring villains, constantly appearing to trouble the characters.

Some of the characters may offer to align with the ghouls. If they do, the ghouls offer to transform the character into one of their own. The process is long, painful, and arguably a fate worse than death. Ω

Character Agendas

Character	Act I	Act II	Act III
Carlos	Find Francis' hidden treasure	Sneak into the basement to look for Francis' treasure	Get Francis' treasure and flee from the dive bar
Dan	Self-preservation	Charm the female ghoul	Escape the bar
Denise	Self-preservation	Join the ghouls	Fall in love with the ghouls
Francis	Keep his treasure hidden	Sneak into the basement	Stop Carlos from taking his treasure
Mickey	Protect the others	Draw the ghouls to the roof	Fight the ghouls



Art by Rick Hershey

Ghoul

Speed 2

Health Points 6

Skills Mobility 8

Armor 5

Ghoul Attacks

d6	Attack
1-5	Claws. Six Base Dice, 1 Damage.
6	Psychic Assault. The ghoul emits a wave of psychic energy. Each PC in SHORT range must make a INSIGHT roll or take 1 Damage.