



# Astral

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by Jay Sylvano

## WHAT IT IS

THIS A PERVERSIVE FREEFORM LARP FOR 8 - 10 PLAYERS THAT INVOLVES WANDERING AROUND A GAMING CONVENTION WHILE BLINDFOLDED, TRYING TO FIND YOUR FELLOW PLAYERS AND ENLISTING THE HELP OF NON-PLAYERS YOU HAPPEN TO COME ACROSS, ALL THE WHILE ENVISIONING A DIFFERENT WORLD AROUND YOU AS YOU CONTEMPLATE EXISTENCE BEHIND THE VEIL AND PERCEIVE MAGIC IN THE MUNDANE. PUT YOUR BELONGINGS IN A SAFE PLACE BEFORE STARTING THE GAME.

## WELCOME, TRAVELER

YOU HAVE BEEN SEPARATED FROM YOUR BODY THROUGH ASTRAL PROJECTION AND NEED TO GET BACK TO THE PHYSICAL PLANE. THE ASTRAL PLANE IS A STRANGE PLACE AND IT'S HARD TO NAVIGATE THERE. YOU CANNOT SEE THE LIVING OR THE WORLD AROUND YOU, BUT YOU CAN SENSE PEOPLE AND SOMETIMES COMMUNICATE WITH THEM. YOU AND YOUR FELLOW TRAVELERS WILL NEED TO FIND EACH OTHER'S SPIRITS AND FORM A CONGA LINE TO KEEP TRACK OF EACH OTHER AS YOU MAKE YOUR WAY BACK TO YOUR PHYSICAL VESSELS. DON'T WORRY, YOU WILL HAVE A SPIRIT GUIDE TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE SAFE.



## SPIRIT GUIDES

One half of your group will play the Spirit Guides. This is like a shared facilitator role. Gather everyone in a room and welcome them to their first course in astral projection. Get into character as much as you like. The more you get into the Spirit Guide role, the more the players will enjoy it and engage with the journey.

Choose one person to lead a meditative group warmup exercise, like focused breathing.

Team up with one of the Travelers. You will be responsible for this person's safety as they traverse the world beyond, so be reassuring and kind to them. They're putting a lot of trust in you.

Now put a blindfold over their eyes, then help them to form a conga line in the order of Spirit Guide/Traveler/Spirit Guide/Traveler. You should be standing in front of your Traveler, their hands on your shoulders, with your hands on the shoulders of the Traveler in front of you. Your spirits are now linked.

The Spirit Guide at the front of the line now leads the group out of the room and out of their bodies. Take it slowly at first and find a walking rhythm. As you start moving through the larger spaces, take turns describing the astral plane to the Travelers. What strange beings dwell here? What sounds should they be hearing? What should they be wary of? Ask the Travelers what they can sense and perceive. Go into as much detail as you like while you guide them. Walk around like this for a few minutes, allowing them to get used to their blindfolds while you talk to them about the astral experience.

Starting with the Spirit Guide furthest to the back, choose a moment to let go of the Traveler in front of you, severing the spirit link and stranding yourself and your Traveler. As the others walk away, tell your Traveler the time has come to set out on their own and find their way back to the physical world. When the rest of the conga line is completely out of sight and a decent amount of time has gone by, ask them to let go of your shoulders and find their own way. Each Spirit Guide repeats this process when they feel the conga line has progressed a good distance. You don't want to break off from the line while you're close to another pair. Try to get to far flung parts of the convention space. If you decide to play on different floors, awesome! But make sure you have elevator access and that you very diligently keep your Traveler away from staircases.

From this point on the Travelers must find their own way. Follow discreetly behind them and make sure they're safe. Don't let them walk into things or people or enter inappropriate spaces (such as other games in progress). If you choose, you can keep the mood focused by telling them interesting things about where they are. "You're entering the Vale of Tears, around you are souls in Limbo. Your kindred spirit was here not long ago..." But don't feel like you need to fill up the silence constantly. Let the Traveler discover things on their own, too. Being in the next realm is a time for reflection and discovery.

*Spirit Guides can use their phones to communicate with each other and keep track of other Travelers. Do this to make things interesting and to help with pacing the game. You probably want to be in the spirit world for more than 40 minutes, but not much longer than an hour.*

Once all the Travelers have found each other and formed into a conga line again, it is time to head towards the light. Inform them that they must seek the light of day in order to return. Monitor them as they find their way to the nearest exit as a group. Let them ask others for help if they choose to.

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## THE RETURN

Once outside, Spirit Guides, remove your Traveler's blindfold and welcome them back. Take a moment to breath and collect yourselves. Ask the others what strange and wondrous things they experienced during their journey. Optional: decamp to a nearby bar or restaurant to swap stories about your otherworldly experiences, or just go find a nice spot outdoors. If this isn't possible, return to the room you started in and debrief there. The full scenario shouldn't last longer than roughly 2 hours from setup to debrief.

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## TRAVELERS

The other half of your group will play the Travelers. You are here because you signed up for a course in astral projection and you're about to get serious. If all goes well, you and your Spirit Guide will embark on a journey through the realms invisible.

After you have met your fellow Travelers and Spirit Guides, you will be lead through a brief, guided meditation.

Now you will team up with one Spirit Guide who will be protecting you during your journey. You will be trusting this person to keep you safe as you navigate the world beyond the veil, so make sure you're both comfortable with each other. If you have any doubts or questions, don't be afraid to address them.

The Spirit Guides are now going to blindfold you and show you how to link your spirits by forming a conga line. Let yourself be guided. Once your blindfold is on, you will be entirely dependant on your Spirit Guide to lead you.

There will come a time in your journey when you will be separated from the other Travelers and will have to break the link with your Spirit Guide. From that point onwards, you will not be allowed to speak to your Spirit Guide and will have to navigate the astral plane on your own (but don't worry, your Guide is still with you and will speak to you at times; it's just that you can't speak back). Now your objective is to find your way back to your fellow Travelers and join in a line with them again. Only when all your spirits are again linked will you be able to return to your bodies.

Calling out in an attempt to find the others could draw unwanted attention to you in this realm. You can't be sure what strange beings lurk here, so stay cautious and get creative with the tools you have at your disposal.

*Talk to the living (people who are neither Travelers nor Spirit Guides) to help you seek out other Travelers as you fumble your way around. If you're not having any luck, you can ask the living if they've seen any other blindfolded people, but staying in character will be more fun.*

Allow yourself to imagine what this other realm looks like as you wander around, seeking your friends. What do the other Travelers look like in spirit form, do they glow? Blur? Take on another form entirely? Imagine what the people look like whom you speak to during your journey. What are their true intentions? Do they appear as human, or something else? Picture the differences between the realm you're in and the one you are trying to return to, and try to remember these things so you can tell your fellow Travelers later.

As you join up with Travelers, you should continue to search for the others. Once you have all found each other and linked back up in a conga line, you will be contacted by your Spirit Guide, who will help you back to the physical plane.