Krampus's Basket

A comedic freeform LARP by Carlos Hernandez

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4-8 Players
2-4 hours

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You are all 19th century Bavarian hellions who most deservedly have ended up in Krampus's basket. But in the spirit of the holidays, Krampus will release one child back to their families. Pray that it is you, for the rest must suffer the consequences for a year's worth of naughtiness!

Setup

Players will sit in a line throughout the game (or maybe a half-circle to make it easier to see each other). One end of the line is Spot 1 and represents the top of Krampus's basket, i.e. the closest to fresh air and freedom! The last Spot of the line, at the other end, represents the lightless nadir of the basket.

Use your favorite method of determining turn-order. Then have sit in line according to turn order, and give each person a character sheet to fill out. Have a few d20s handy in case anyone wants to use the Appendices to generate Tall Tales, Sins, or Darkest Secrets.

Cut out the Candy, Coal, and Tell the Truth! tokens from your Character Sheet and keep them handy. Cut out enough Rhyming Chants from Appendix B so that there's one for every two players (it's more fun to chant with a partner!)

Creating Your Naughty Bavarian Child

Each Character Sheet has six areas to fill in: Name**,** Age**,** Relationship, Tall Tales, Sins, and Your Darkest Secret. At the start of the game, fill in a Name fit for a rich Bavarian child, your Age, a Relationship you have with another child, Tall Tale 1, and Sin 1. After round one, you'll fill in an additional Sin or Tall Tale. After round two, you'll fill in the remaining Sin or Tall Tale.

Relationship: At the start of the game, mingle. Break up into pairs of two or three and set a timer for five minutes (longer or shorter to taste). Get to know

each other. Insist that you are a good Bavarian child who does not deserve to be in Krampus's basket. Perhaps let slip why you actually do belong here.

Once the timer goes off, rotate groups and set the timer. Keep rotating until everyone has mingled with everyone. Then, take your Spots again and write down the name of at least once child you have a Relationship with, and what mischief you get up to together. Write more than one if you wish.

Tall Tales: Exaggerate some good deed you've done to make yourself sound like an absolute saint, hero, miracle-worker, prophet, genius, and/or righter of wrongs. If you wish, use The Naughty Bavarian Child Tall Tale Generator (Appendix A) to help you. Whatever you write, it should be so amazing as to test the credulity of your fellow children.

In the "but the truth is" line, write down the mundane, utterly quotidian details of what actually happened. Reveal these boring facts only if another player plays their Tell the Truth! token on you while you tell your Tall Tale, and even the, spin them for all you're worth.

Sins: Nobody's perfect. Write down a sin you've committed in the "Sin" space. Use the Naughty Bavarian Child Sin Generator (Appendix B) if you wish.

In the "**but I only did it because**" line, rationalize your sin. You were a victim of circumstance! You only sinned to do a greater good! It was an accident! If you ate all of the candy out of the dessert bowl, it was only because your mother told you that there were starving children all over the world, and you must never let food go to waste. Yes, you slapped your wicked brother, but only because he said that Father was a drunkard. The maid is the real sinner! She falsely accused you of riding your rocking horse down the stairs, when really you just rocked your horse a little too vigorously and fell accidentally. You could have been killed! You deserve sympathy, not punishment! Etc.

Your Darkest Secret: This is a truly reprehensible thing you have done. No excuse, no spin. Use Appendix B to help you create it if you wish. You will only admit this worst moral failing during the epilogue, if you aren't the lucky child who escapes Krampus's basket.

Rounds and Pleading Your Case

Play the game in three rounds. Begin each round by forming groups of two or three and chanting together the rhyme on the left side of the Rhyming Chants slip (Appendix C).

Then, the player sitting in Spot 1 chooses either a Tall Tale or a Sin to share. They stand before the other children and do their best to spin their Tall Tale or Sin and make them seem wholly undeserving of punishment. (Perhaps, however, they let slip some hint of their iniquity). The other children may ask them questions, interrogate them, offer sympathy, add context, lie to make themselves look better, and/or play their Tell the Truth! token as they wish.

Once the player in Spot 1 has finished, they take their seat again. Now the player sitting in Spot 2 stands and pleads their case. Continue until all children have pled their cases.

Tell the Truth! Tokens: Each player has a Tell the Truth! token they may use once per game. A child may play their Tell the Truth! token (usually in a bratty and "J'accuse!"-y way) on a player who is telling a Tall Tale. The child pleading their case must reveal the portion they wrote down in the "but the truth is" port of their character sheet (though they can still try to spin it afterwards).

Tell the Truth! can't be used (and aren't used up) if they're played on a Sin.

Candy and Coal: Once all children have pled their cases, players together chant the rhyme on the right side of the Rhyming Chants slip. Then, players go around give their Candy token to the child they think most deserves mercy, and Coal to the child they think least deserves mercy. They may not give Candy or Coal to their own child.

Once all the Candy and Coal is distributed, players retake their former seats. Now, players count up their Candy and Coal. Players who received more Candy than Coal will move toward Spot 1 a number of spaces equal to the difference. Players who received more Coal than Candy move toward the bottom of Krampus's basket a number of spots equal to the difference.

The player in Spot 1 moves first (though they only move if their received more Coal than Candy). Then, the player in Spot 2 moves. Go through all players in order until you have established your new seating order.

Example: Six players are playing "Krampus's Basket": Ann, Bea, Cam, Dan, Ed, and Fan. At the start of the game, Ann is in Spot 1, Bea in Spot 2, Cam in Spot 3, Dan in Spot 4, Ed in Spot 5, and Fan in Spot 6. **A | B | C | D | E | F**

At the end of round 1, Ann receives 1 Candy and 3 Coal. The difference is +2 Coal, so she moves down two Spots to Spot 3. That moves Bea up to Spot 1 and Cam moves to Spot 2. **B | C | A | D | E | F**

Bea and Cam received no Candy nor Coal, so they remain in their current Spots for the time being. Dan, however, received 4 Candy and 2 Coal, for a difference of +2 Candy, so they move from Spot 4 to Spot 2. To accommodate the move, Cam in Spot 2 and Ann in Spot 3 move back a Spot each. **B | D | C | A | E | F**

Ed received 1 Coal and no Candy, so he moves back one space, switching places with Fan. **B | D | C | A | F | E**.

Fan received 1 Candy and no Coal, so they advance one space, and Ann moves back one space. **B | D | C | F | A | E**

Once everyone is in their new spot, give each player a Candy and a Coal. Everyone takes a few minutes to fill in either a new Tall Tale or Sin on their sheets. When everyone has finished writing, begin the next round.

Escaping the Basket... or Not

After the end of round three, the child in Spot 1 escapes Krampus's Basket. They tell the other children what they have or haven't learned from the experience. Then they skip off to enjoy a wonderful holiday.

The remaining players, starting with the player in Spot 2 and moving down the basket, confess their Darkest Secret. They share a vision of what special punishment Krampus has in store for them and talk about what they will and won't do next year to avoid a similar punishment.

Appendix A

The Naughty Bavarian Child Tall-Tale Generator

Roll a d20 twice, or just choose sentences below to inspire your Tall Tale. The first column is the start of the sentence, while the second column is the target/recipient of, or witness to, your extraordinary doings. Then, on your character sheet, develop the backstory behind the Tall Tale.

1	I am so strong, I _____		1	meine Mütter.
2	I am so pious, I _____		2	mein Vater.
3	I am so fast, I _____		3	meine Sister.
4	I am so kind, I _____		4	mein Brudder.
5	I am so polite, I _____		5	meine Grandmütter.
6	I am so obedient, I _____		6	mein Grandvater.
7	I am so trustworthy, I _____		7	mein Uncle.
8	I am so generous, I _____		8	meine Aunt.
9	I am such a good sibling, I _____		9	das Baby.
10	I am so talented, I _____		10	meine Governess.
11	I am such a good student, I _____		11	der Butler.
12	Like magic, I can _____		12	die Maid.
13	I am so brave, I _____		13	das Cook.
14	Once I saved the whole town by _____		14	das Baker.
15	I performed a miracle by _____		15	der Milkman.
16	Ghosts warned me that _____		16	der Postman.
17	I defeated a monster by _____		17	der Vicar.
18	I solved the mystery of _____		18	das Doggie.
19	I am such a saint, I sacrificed _____		19	die Kittycat.
20	I am so charming, I _____		20	die Family Cow.

Appendix B
The Naughty Bavarian Child Sin Generator

Roll a d20 twice to complete the sentence "I enjoy…" Some responses might not make sense at first glance or might be too cruel: either edit it to your liking, or roll again. Then, develop the backstory behind the sin.

1	arguing with	1	meine Mütter.
2	making fun of	2	mein Vater.
3	snitching on	3	meine Sister.
4	pranking	4	mein Brudder.
5	pulling the hair of	5	meine Grandmütter.
6	farting on	6	mein Grandvater.
7	spitting on	7	mein Uncle.
8	stealing from	8	meine Aunt.
9	shooting my sling shot at	9	das Baby.
10	putting spiders on	10	meine Governess.
11	biting	11	der Butler.
12	throwing snowballs at	12	die Maid.
13	tripping	13	das Cook.
14	lying to	14	das Baker.
15	frightening	15	der Milkman.
16	imitating	16	der Postman.
17	pinching	17	der Vicar.
18	making horrible faces at	18	das Doggie.
19	"accidentally" spilling things on	19	die Kittycat.
20	blaming my misdeeds on	20	die Family Cow.

Appendix C
Rhyming Chants to Begin and End Rounds
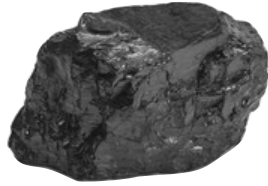
Begin each round by chanting

Krampus made a big mistake!
He mistook which kids to take!
If you make a forceful case
Krampus might just show you grace!

End each round by chanting

Now we've heard some truth and lies.
Choose we must and must be wise!
Who gets candy? Who gets coal?
One of us escapes this hole!

 Candy   Coal   # Tell the Truth!

Ada · Anna · Adolf · Alfvin · Amalia · Avelina · Auguste · Baldo · Bertha · Brunhilda · Carl · Cedric · Clara
Elsa · Emery · Emil · Emma · Ernst · Franz · Frieda · Fritz · Gannet · Gertrud · Gustav · Hans · Hermann
Ida · Maria · Max · Margarete · Nicklaus · Olga · Otto · Romy · Sascha · Walter · Wim · Winnifred · Ziggy

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Relationship: { _____ } **is my:** _____
                        name

und we cause trouble by: _____

Tall Tale 1:

but the truth is:

Tall Tale 2:

but the truth is:

Sin 1:

but I only did it because:

Sin 2:

but I only did it because:

Your Darkest Secret: