

THE LAST COFFEE SHOP ON THE LEFT

"It's the middle of a non-descript soulless small town, early evening on a rainy Tuesday in November. You know the time, when the stores have closed, and the few people left in town hurry to put work and shopping behind them. Only one storefront is lit – the last coffee shop on the left. Inside, under the tired and apathetic eyes of a barista who has worked ten straight hours, sit a smattering of people, alone at their tables. Who are these people?"

IMPORTANT: This works better if you don't read it through before you play. Read each step aloud then play it.

The game takes place in a coffee shop in a nondescript town. Don't describe it. Don't even name it. That's important. The other thing that's important is to keep it quick, snappy and short - get straight to the point.

== Step 1 ==

Each player takes it in terms describing four things about a patron of the coffee shop – appearance, mannerisms, attitude, actions. No names at this point. Keep it short and snappy because you need to remember these people; what would someone sat in the corner notice about them. End with their coffee order. Keep going until everyone has introduced a character. If there are lots of you, or you are tired or drunk then scraps of paper for recording it work.

== Step 2 ==

Once everyone has introduced a character somebody (anybody, no particular order) claims one of them and fills in some details about their life. Again, four things – What do they do? What kind of person are they? What are their hopes? What are their fears? Keep it short-ish; imagine you are describing someone you know to someone else and do it like that. Refer to them by name. Avoid over-embellishing specific events, and don't talk in any way about why they are in the coffee shop. Make the others see them as a real person. Each character can only be chosen once. Keep going until everyone has had a turn.

== Step 3 ==

So, here's the rub – this coffee shop in this town is the last stop on the path to Hell. Everyone here has done something to damn them. It's time to find out what.

Each player (again, no specific order) chooses one character and tells us what they did to deserve a trip to eternal damnation. Don't choose either the character you introduced, or embellished; choose someone new. Deliver it as if you are that character ("So, I've got a confession to make"). Use the first person, throw in some mannerisms if you want. The crimes or actions can be anything, but remember this is a coffee shop not a backstreet pub; frame accordingly. Keep going until everyone has had a turn.

== Step 4 ==

Remember the barista? Well, he's the Gatekeeper, and he's almost hit his quota for the day, so one of the hapless souls is about to get a second chance they don't deserve... more the pity.

Re-introduce customers to the table. The players should decide amongst themselves which two of the customers are the most detestable and black-hearted. Which two should never even be considered for a second chance...

== Step 5 ==

The two players who did the confessions for the chosen two characters play those characters in this final step. The others get to be the collective thoughts of the Gatekeeper.

Let the argument commence! It's up to the two remaining characters to argue for their chance to return to life. The Gatekeeper can throw in whatever he wants to the argument, and should make them work for it. Once the Gatekeeper is satisfied one of them 'deserves' (for whatever reason) to return to life the game ends... and everyone else embarks on the final stage of their journey to damnation.