



To Return a Wallet

A Tale of mystery and suspense, with a dash of the supernatural.

You find a wallet while out walking with no one around to claim it. The owner (and presumed address) is listed on identification inside. What story will be told as you try to return the wallet to its rightful owner?

Required to Play: Imagination. A single piece of notebook paper with a pen or pencil. One to fifteen six-sided die.

Number of Players: One person is the Keeper and plays the finder of the wallet, who makes all decisions on what to do with it and its contents. Other players guide the story and are known as Collectors.

Final Scenario: Either the Keeper keeps the wallet, returns the wallet, or dies trying.

Player Roles: Decide on who will play The Keeper. If multiple players want to be the Keeper, the player with more items in their purse or wallet gets to decide who plays The Keeper first. All other players become the Collectors.

The Contents of the Wallet: The Collectors decide the contents of the wallet, according to the rules set down in the COLLECTOR'S SECTION.

The Keeper's Role: It is assumed The Keeper does not know the owner and that the address is out of the way but reachable. The Wallet Items are used to progress the story. Any item can be used logically to progress the story, such as using a quarter wedged in the wallet's folds to make a phone call at a nearby pay phone. If The Keeper decides to keep the wallet, the story immediately ends, and that's not very fun at all.

Randomness: At the discretion of the players any of the random tables in the Collector and Keeper sections can be ignored in favor of choosing all details. If they are used then they may be rolled in order or they may be rolled then assigned from the dice rolled.

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KEEPER'S SECTION

The Collector(s) will describe the world to you, and ask you what you want to do. Feel free to ask for more information and to ask clarification questions. From there you will go through the world making decisions using the contents of your pockets and the contents of the found wallet to keep it, deliver it or die trying.

As the Keeper you will find the world acting in strange ways as you attempt to return the wallet to its rightful owner, whoever that might be. Every time you enter a new area or use something from the wallet The Collectors will gain a token to introduce further complications and interfere with your actions so you are best off relying on your wits and progressing quickly and directly, not that you'll manage that easily.

When facing off against a Complication remember that something that will probably succeed will, something that will probably fail will and something on the verge will succeed unless the Collectors interfere. Go forth brave soul.

But, before we get into all of that... Who are you Keeper? The results of these rolls should be told to the Collectors so they can be weaved into the story.

When you picked up the wallet you felt...

- 1 – A Righteous Sense of duty
- 2 – Strangely compelled to return it
- 3 – An intense curiosity about the owner
- 4 – Somewhat afraid of the innocuous object
- 5 – Nothing out of the ordinary
- 6 – Like this was something more important than you

What is it you do, Keeper?

- 1 – Homeless (One item)
- 2 – Factory Worker
- 3 – Student
- 4 – College Drop-Out
- 5 – Office Worker
- 6 – Wealthy (Three items)

What do you have in your pockets?

Roll Twice to assign the two items you have, unless otherwise noted. You may switch one item you have for one that is actually in your pocket. This may be done at any point in the game until you have revealed the object in play

- 1,1 – ID/License
- 1,2 – Change
- 1,3 – Crumbled Bills
- 1,4 – Billfold
- 1,5 – Wad of Cash
- 1,6 – Credit Card
- 2,1 – Knife
- 2,2 – Screw Driver
- 2,3 – Multitool
- 2,4 – Comb
- 2,5 – Sewing kit
- 2,6 – Wad of Keys
- 3,1 – Prepaid Phone
- 3,2 – Flip Phone
- 3,3 – Smart Phone
- 3,4 – Handheld Game
- 3,5 – MP3 Player
- 3,6 – Calculator
- 4,1 – #2 Pencil
- 4,2 – Mechanical Pencil
- 4,3 – Ballpoint Pen
- 4,4 – Space Pen
- 4,5 – Magic Marker
- 4,6 – Permanent Marker
- 5,1 – Napkin/Tissue
- 5,2 – Receipt
- 5,3 – Sticky Note
- 5,4 – Thumb Drive
- 5,5 – Pocket Bible
- 5,6 – Business Card
- 6,1 – Candy Bar
- 6,2 – Pack of Gum
- 6,3 – Beef Jerky
- 6,4 – Reading Glasses
- 6,5 – Paperback Novel
- 6,6 – Watch

Anything else you want or need must be acquired through play, interacting with the world through The Collectors.

COLLECTOR'S SECTION

Before play begins, roll 13 six sided dice. Assign one die to each category below at your discretion. Keep this information between the Collectors until the Keeper discovers it through play. You will want to write this down. All details can be tweaked, but generally no major changes should be made to what is rolled. A scrap of paper with GPS coordinates should remain that even if you change the coordinates.

Whose identification is in the wallet?

- 1 - Mortimer Smythe
- 2 - Esther Denbow
- 3 - Jebediah Mercantile
- 4 - J.L. Winthrow
- 5 - Agatha Delacroix
- 6 - Annabelle Lee

Where does their ID say they reside?

- 1 - 13 Alibaster Lane, Lot 666, Sunny Valley Trailer Community (Suggestion: Sunny Valley is abandoned, all of the trailers falling apart and exposed to the elements and wildlife, except lot 666. The lot is immaculate, covered in lawn gnomes. The trailer is sparkling, newly painted bright pink and olive drab.)
- 2 - 100 Old Dorian Gray Road - (Suggestion: A forgotten mansion, deep within unoccupied woods, at the end of an overgrown drive.)
- 3 - 123 Mercantile-Willoby Avenue (Suggestion: The 'odd numbered' side of the avenue is a graveyard on the appropriate block. There is an unsecured manhole between the homes at 122 and 124 Mercantile-Willoby Avenue, however...)
- 4 - 99999 SR 100 – (Suggestion: An underground parking garage, devoid of attendants or automation. The lights glow dimly and a dull drone hums throughout.)
- 5 - The Nexus, Apt 401 (Suggestion: The search for the Nexus is the puzzle. Ultimately, the only connection to our world is a bank of postal boxes in an abandoned town. Box 401 opens a 12 inch by 4 inch portal into Apartment 401 in The Nexus, wherever it is.)
- 6 – 1 Lime Quarry Lane (Suggestion: An 'abandoned' limestone quarry, a pit deep deep in the earth. Entry requires a twenty minute drive down, down, on a loose gravel road spiraling along the edge. At the bottom of the quarry giant earth moving vehicles rust. A tarp is tied to one as a sunshade, with a mailbox stuck into the ground nearby.)

What kind of identification is in the wallet?

- 1 – Driver's license
- 2 – State ID (Similar to Driver's license in appearance)
- 3 – A passport, tucked into the large billfold.
- 4 – A handwritten note, scrawled, offering a reward for the wallet's return
- 5 – A business card secured to the outside with hoof glue.
- 6 – The wallet is found in an envelope, marked for delivery to the owner but abandoned and torn.

Wallet Contents

Pick four things from this list to be in the wallet. Each entry requires two dice with the listed values. For example, a “local library card” would require assigning two dice showing “1”. Any item picked from the list may be replaced with an item that a Collector has in their wallet or purse at the time of play.

- 1,1 – A library card, local
- 1,2 – A college library card from another country
- 1,3 – A guild member's card, Silversmithing
- 1,4 – A guild member's card, Coatswaine
- 1,5 – A guild member's card, Fleshsmithing
- 1,6 – A letter of marque, fragile paper tightly folded
- 2,1 – A pair of disposable latex gloves, rolled tight and small
- 2,2 – A set of dog tags from World War One, British
- 2,3 – A set of dog tags from World War One, Austrian
- 2,4 – A set of dog tags from World War One, Iroquois
- 2,5 – A jewel-encrusted bump key
- 2,6 – A wedding ring, the wallet owner's name engraved on the inside
- 3,1 – A rock of crumbling white powder (Cocaine)
- 3,2 – A rock of crumbling white powder (Grants prophesy)
- 3,3 – The deed to a gravesite, signed for transfer
- 3,4 – Baptism record for the wallet owner, speckled with dried blood.
- 3,5 - \$200 in Confederate States Of America currency
- 3,6 – A seemingly endless supply of skin flakes
- 4,1 – 20,000 Yen
- 4,2 – Diner's Club card
- 4,3 - The deed for a 1955 Cadillac Series 62
- 4,4 – A receipt for five gallons of white paint, a roller, a roller tray, and seven spools of hundred yard long, fifteen foot wide, eight mil plastic sheeting.
- 4,5 – A scrap of paper reading “39.720936, -74.672663”
- 4,6 - \$85 in Euros
- 5,1 – 115 Deutschmarks
- 5,2 – An unlabeled recipe, requiring baking, boiling, and reducing three tablespoons of allspice, two garlic cloves, a spring of mint, and the tails of two large rats.
- 5,3 – A black and white frontier-style photo of a large family. All but the mother are deformed.
- 5,4 – A double edged razor blade
- 5,5 - A small mirror, the size of a credit card.
- 5,6 – A section of map, torn from an old magazine and folded several times. It details Mason Neck, VA
- 6,1 – A credit card in the wallet owner's name
- 6,2 – A credit card in a stranger's name
- 6,3 – A very thin, very small, VERY sharp pocket knife.
- 6,4 – A numbered, tarnished, no-joke Sheriff's badge.
- 6,5 – Hand written instructions, in excellent penmanship, about how to tie a noose.
- 6,6 – A presidential campaign button for John C Breckinridge

What happens if the Keeper should lose control of the wallet without returning it?

- 1 - When they return home, the wallet is in their mailbox or on their front step.
- 2 - When they reach in their pocket, their wallet has been replaced by the wallet they tried to get rid of.
- 3 - Same as above, but now there are blood stains on it.
- 4 - No matter where the wallet is dumped, half an hour after a passerby exclaims, "Excuse me, you just dropped this," and places the wallet in their hand before walking away.
- 5 - Within the week they encounter another wallet, of a different design, but with the same exact contents.
- 6 - They are immediately compelled to retrieve the wallet no matter the risk.

Motivation – Why are the forces at work behind the wallet doing what they are doing?

- 1 – Revenge
- 2 – Murder and Cruelty
- 3 – Justice
- 4 – Curiosity
- 5 – Obsession with the Keeper
- 6 – A cruel prank, or study in human behavior

What is the cause behind the strange events surrounding the wallet?

Don't roll, choose one which works best with the way the dice have been assigned. Keep this between the Collectors, for the Keeper to discover in play. Don't feel limited to the options listed here.

- A restless spirit or ghost (Who? Why do they remain behind, attached to this world?)
- A delusional but living person (Who? What is the nature of their delusion?)
- A secret government agency (Why?)
- Something "Other" (What?)
- The Wallet is part of a confederation of sentient objects
- The owner is dead. This is a trap. The Keeper should run.
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The Duties of Each Collector

The collectors may distribute their duties in any way they deem fit. The main duties that the Collectors have are describing the mundane world, describing the wallet and things related to it, sharing details, providing warnings, making clarifications and spending tokens to initiate complications and cause failures. Below are some suggestions for the split, depending on the number of Collectors present.

If there is only one Collector, they are responsible for describing the world and determining the way it reacts to the Keeper's actions.

If there are two Collectors, one should determine the way the mundane things in the world are, and the way they react to the Keeper. The other player should describe any elements involving the wallet, the wallet's owner, and should be the one to spend and describe "Complications."

If there are three Collectors, one is responsible for determining the way the world reacts to the Keeper, one should describe the things the Keeper sees, and one should chime in with sounds, smells, and the moments of hind-brain awareness the Keeper undergoes. Any of them can initiate a Complication.

If there are four Collectors, one should describe the mundane, one should describe the things involving the wallet or the forces behind it, one should describe what the Keeper's non-visual senses tell them, and one should decide when and where to initiate Complications. They should describe them in brief, or state a broad category of things that might delay the Keeper, and the others should make it come to pass.

With five or more Collectors decide before playing how to delegate responsibilities for telling the story, showing the world, and initiating Complications.

If multiple NPCs are present it is best for them to be divided among the various Collectors so that each can act independently. They should be assigned by agreement between the Collectors. This allows one Collector to avoid having a conversation with himself.

PLAYING THE GAME

Start by describing how the Keeper comes upon the wallet. Allow the Keeper to narrate their actions and narrate the reaction of the world appropriately. Continue in this manner until the Keeper has returned the wallet, given up and kept it or can no longer get rid of it.

Every time the Keeper travels to a new place, or uses something from the wallet in a way that damages or loses the object, the Collectors get a token, which can be traded in at any time to initiate a Complication or to cause the Keeper to fail at an action that has an uncertain chance of success.

In general actions are resolved in a simple manner. If the Keeper announces an action which would reasonably work in their situation they succeed. Something which would almost always fail will, unless the Collector in charge of describing the world feels generous.

If the Keeper announces something that could work well or could lead to suffering then the Collectors may spend another token to make the Keeper fail and to harm their character somehow. If the Collectors do not spend a token the Keeper's character will succeed in spite of the risk.

Creating Complications

One of the main actions that the Collectors will take, besides describing the scene is adding complications to hinder the Keeper's actions. Adding direct obstacles during the initial description also counts as creating a complication. This can be something as simple as a locked door or a lack of phone reception or something overwhelming like a hellish fire or a terrible storm.

A Complication is anything which prevents the Keeper from moving forward towards their goal. It may or may not place them in physical danger, but if it is not resolved it will prevent them from returning the wallet. For example they may be mugged. Physical blockades, like high fences or broken bridges, can directly block their progress. Violent confrontations, like wolves or armed men, can bring about an early end for their journey.

Trying to make insurmountable complications will make for a short and dull game, so even if you've decided that something unstoppable, like the devil, is trying to stop the Keeper from delivering the wallet you should still at least have a notion of how the Keeper can escape. Yes, you can immediately end the game by introducing a deadly complication then spending another token to make the Keeper fail to defend themselves, but you shouldn't do that, at least not without asking a few times if they really want to do that. Complications should be used to guide the story not to beat the Keeper.

Example of Play

Tom – The Keeper

Jess – First Collector, managing the mundane

James – Second Collector, managing the wallet and the supernatural

Before play begins Tom rolls to determine he is a student with a screwdriver and a prepaid phone. He is strangely compelled to return the wallet.

Jess and James also roll determining that the Wallet belonged to Annabelle Lee, at 100 Old Dorian Gray Road. It contains a State ID, A Library Card, a Bump key, a small mirror and a credit card. The motive is Justice and the Wallet will be found in the Keeper's mail box if they lose it. Jess and James discuss it and decide that the ghost of Annabella's dead husband is responsible for the mysterious incidents and will stop the Keeper from approaching the house.

Jess: You're walking through the park

James: You happen upon a wallet. You feel strangely compelled to pick it up.

Tom: I pick it up and look inside.

James: There is no money in the wallet, but you notice several cards

Tom: I take out the cards to look at them.

James: You have an ID card belonging to Annabelle Lee, her library card, and her credit card. The last card was actually a small mirror the size of a credit card.

Tom: I look for an address on the ID.

James: She lives at 100 Old Dorian Gray Road.

Tom: I use my phone to call a friend and get directions to the address,

Jess: Your friend answers and checks on their computer. They tell you it will be about 3 hours by foot.

Tom: I walk to the road and hail a cab.

Jess: A cab driver pulls up after about 5 minutes and you get in.

At this point they have changed locations and the Collectors take a token.

Jess: So you take a ride in the cab.

Tom: Yeah. While I'm in the cab I check to see if there's anything else in the wallet.

James: While digging through it you pull out a key. It's encrusted with jewels.

Tom: Can I tell what it's for?

James: It's a normal key. It could be to a deadbolt or a master lock. It doesn't look like a car key.

Jess: The cab arrives at your destination. The driver gruffly asks "How will you be paying today?"

Tom: I hand him the Credit Card from the wallet.

Jess and James consult each other regarding this.

Jess: The driver doesn't check the name, but you used money from the wallet

The Collectors take a token for the money and another because they are entering a new scene.

Jess: The cab driver drives away.

James: You arrive at 100 Old Dorian Road. There is a long winding driveway behind a metal gate that seems to lead into a wooded area.

Tom: I push open the gate and walk in.

James: The gate is locked.

James spends a token to introduce the complication.

Tom: I try the key from the wallet.

James: That key is for a modern door lock. This has one of those old keyholes.

Tom: I try to pick the lock using the screwdriver from my pocket.

Jess: You don't succeed. You think you might have broken the lock.

Tom: Then I'll try to climb over the fence.

Jess: If you fall climbing the fence you could get hurt.

Tom: That's fine. I climb up the fence and drop over the other side.

Jess: The fall is bad. You think you might have sprained your ankle.

Jess spends a token to cause Tom's injury.

James: You hear dogs howling in the woods you must enter.

James spends a token to introduce the complication

Tom: I ignore the howls and trudge forward

Jess: Pain runs up your leg as you continue moving despite your injury.

James: As you reach the wooden area you start to hear growling to accompany the earlier howls. You can see the shining eyes of a hound.

Tom: I take out the screwdriver since it's the closest thing I have to a weapon?

James: It won't do much good against the hounds if they jump at you.

Tom: I confidently stride forward keeping an eye on the hounds.

James: Walking confidently doesn't make the hounds waver as the one you can see jumps at you.

Tom: I stab the hound in the eye.

As James only has one Token left he chooses to let Tom succeed in his attempt to fend off the first hound.

James: The hound lets out a loud yelp and slams to the ground dead.

Jess: The screwdriver is stuck in the dog's head but you can probably get it out if you take a few minutes.

James: You hear more hounds. They're coming closer after hearing the sound of their companion.

Tom: ...

... Play continues in this manner until Tom has delivered the wallet, or died trying.