

# Dwolma

A Story Game for 3 Players.

By David King

*Somewhere between here and there lies the **Dwolma**, a dream world filled with abandoned souls seeking their escape. Blind to the incomprehensible world around them the **Abandoned** have little hope.*

*A few of the first to be lost in **Dwolma** have found ways to understand and manipulate the world around them, they are known as **Ushers**. As the **Ushers** are cursed to be trapped in **Dwolma** forever, they seek pleasure in playing with the souls of the newly abandoned.*

***Ushers** will often play **Bēodan**, a bidding game, and make wagers with each other, attempting to elicit specific moods from any **Abandoned** that they find. Appearing to act as guides they will attempt to influence the **Abandoned**'s mood to create a story to their individual taste, each **Usher** a different audience to the **Abandoned**'s misfortune.*

## Getting Ready to Play

### Requirements

- 3 willing players
- 30 tokens of no worldly value
- 9 mood cards (Cold, Hostile, Creepy, Dark, Tight, Quiet, Barren Slick, Old)
- A blindfold

### Game Play

Players will take on the roles of **Ushers** and an **Abandoned** in the dream world of **Dwolma**. Taking turns the players will cooperatively describe both the world and its inhabitants.

- The player who embodies the **Abandoned** will learn about their character and their desires as the game and story progress.
- The players who are the **Ushers** will attempt to evoke certain moods in the **Abandoned** player, specific to each individual **Usher**.

Each game has four scenes. Each scene takes place in a different location in **Dwolma**, these places do not have to be related to each other. During each scene the players will find something out about the **Abandoned** and the **Abandoned** will overcome an obstacle.

### Play Respectfully

This game is designed to be as varied as the players that play it and open to different interpretations.

If at any point any of the players feel uncomfortable with any of the topics or subject raised during the game they should let the other players know by knocking three times, no further explanation is needed. These subjects or topics should be avoided. If necessary either temporarily halt the game or stop playing completely.

### Game Setup

- Select one player to be the **Abandoned**, the other two players will be **Ushers**.
- The **Abandoned** should be blindfolded. During the rest of the setup the **Abandoned** should relax and think about who their character is.
- Place the 30 tokens in a central pile where both **Ushers** can reach them.
- Shuffle the mood cards, and deal four mood cards to each **Usher**.
- Each **Usher** should secretly select two mood cards, and place them face down in front of themselves.
- Discard all the other mood cards face down in a pile.
- Each **Usher** should briefly consider how they will elicit their two moods on the **Abandoned** throughout the game.

## The First Scene

The *oldest Usher* should read the following aloud:

*“Do not worry Abandoned, we are Ushers although you cannot sense this world around you, we can, and we will help you find your way.”*

The *younger Usher* should ask the following question:

*“What is your name Abandoned, describe yourself to us?”*

Allow the **Abandoned** to answer the questions, give prompts where necessary and get as much detail as seems reasonable. Once they have finished answering thank them.

Both **Ushers** should take tokens from the central pile, until they each have 15 tokens in their personal stock.

The *older Usher* should describe the *location* that the **Abandoned** is in.  
The *younger Usher* should describe an *obstacle* in the path of the **Abandoned**.  
The *older Usher* should describe an *object* in the location.  
The *younger Usher* should describe another *object* in the location.

Play **Bēodan**

### Bēodan

One of the **Ushers** should ask the **Abandoned** what they would like to attempt in order to pass the obstacle.

Once the **Abandoned** has finished each **Usher** should secretly place a number of tokens, from their personal stock, in their hand and then reveal them to each other simultaneously.

- If one **Usher** has more tokens in their hand, they describe exactly how the **Abandoned** fails to overcome the obstacle, whilst remembering to elicit one or both of their two chosen moods.
- If both **Ushers** have an equal amount of tokens in their hand, they must return those tokens to their personal stock and bid again.
- If neither **Usher** has any tokens in their hand, the **Ushers** should ask the **Abandoned** to describe how they overcome the obstacle.

All tokens bid by both **Ushers** should be returned to the central pile of tokens.

Repeat the game, until the **Abandoned** overcomes the obstacle.

## The Second Scene

The *younger Usher* should read the following to the **Abandoned**:

*“That is but one of many encounters you will find here in Dwolma”*

The *oldest Usher* should ask the following question:

*“Where did you come from and why did you leave?”*

Allow the **Abandoned** to answer the questions, give prompts where necessary and get as much detail as seems reasonable. Once they have finished answering thank them.

Both **Ushers** should take tokens from the central pile, until they each have 15 tokens in their personal stock.

The *younger Usher* should describe the location that the **Abandoned** is in.  
The *older Usher* should describe an obstacle in the path of the **Abandoned**.  
The *younger Usher* should describe an object in the location.  
The *older Usher* should describe another object in the location.

Play **Bēodan**

## The Third Scene

The *oldest Usher* should read the following aloud:

*“Another step closer or another step back that is not for us to decide.”*

The *younger Usher* should ask the following question:

*“How did you get lost here and where were you trying to get to?”*

Allow the **Abandoned** to answer the questions, give prompts where necessary and get as much detail as seems reasonable. Once they have finished answering thank them.

Both **Ushers** should take tokens from the central pile, until they each have 15 tokens in their personal stock.

The *older Usher* should describe the *location* that the **Abandoned** is in.  
The *younger Usher* should describe an *obstacle* in the path of the **Abandoned**.  
The *older Usher* should describe an *object* in the location.  
The *younger Usher* should describe another *object* in the location.

Play **Bēodan**

## The Final Scene

The *younger Usher* should read the following to the **Abandoned**:

*"You are close to your goal, it appears you have a natural affinity with Dwolma, this is rare."*

The *oldest Usher* should ask the following question:

*"What is it that you seek to find and how will it change your life?"*

Allow the **Abandoned** to answer the questions, give prompts where necessary and get as much detail as seems reasonable. Once they have finished answering thank them.

Both **Ushers** should take tokens from the central pile, until they each have 15 tokens in their personal stock.

The *younger Usher* should describe the location that the **Abandoned** is in.  
The *older Usher* should describe an obstacle in the path of the **Abandoned**.  
The *younger Usher* should describe an object in the location.  
The *older Usher* should describe another object in the location.

Play **Bēodan**

## End the Game

Both **Ushers** should reveal their mood cards to each other, shuffle them, and place them onto the table facing the **Abandoned**.

Remove the **Abandoned**'s blindfold.

The **Abandoned** should arrange the mood cards in order; from most relevant to least relevant, and explain why.

The **Ushers** should not respond to this, but should consider how well they managed to elicit their favoured moods on the **Abandoned**, privately noting which one of them did so better.

Without ever answering aloud the **Abandoned** should consider whether they decide to become an **Usher** or if they leave **Dwolma**. If they decide to leave they should think about where it is that they go to and what happens there.

Without ever answering aloud the **Ushers** should both individually remember one thing that they miss because they decided to stay in **Dwolma**.

## Mood Cards

*(Print and cut these out or make your own.)*

**Cold**

**Hostile**

**Creepy**

**Dark**

**Tight**

**Quiet**

**Barren**

**Slick**

**Old**