



Bites of Midnight



Bite-sized RPG material without all the bloat.

Josephina's

by Neal Hyde

Josephina's is the best place in Pinebox for fresh pasta, homemade sauces, and fine wines. It's also haunted, and more than one patron has received a side of chill with their Chicken Marsala. The ghost in question is the restaurant's founder, Eduardo Settimio. The haunting was never a problem, but now the ghost has become violent, giving the owners, Eduardo's descendents, plenty of scares and scrapes. They've asked the heroes to investigate and see if they can get Grandpa Ed to settle down.

History

Eduardo Settimio fled fascism in his native Italy and immigrated to Texas in 1938. A chef by trade, he quickly established the restaurant and named it after his young wife, Josephina. With hard work, a talent for great food, and patience, Josephina's thrived and Eduardo (now called Grandpa Ed) was able to pass it on to his son in 1978, who did likewise when he passed away in 2000. Eddy Settimio the third is the current chef and owner and his wife Vicky is manager. Their teenage daughter Marilee helps out with waiting tables and making home deliveries.

Grandpa Ed Settimio passed away in 1983, and soon after the family noticed strange goings on in the restaurant. Objects would vanish and reappear in odd locations, lights flickered for no reason, and the odors of Grandpa Ed's favorite dishes permeated Josephina's long after the kitchen had closed.

The family attributed it good old Grandpa Ed and considered it endearing. Until recently, that is.

Starting a month ago, Grandpa Ed's antics took a nasty turn. Pots, pans, and glasses rattle for no reason, the gas burners ignite by themselves, and both patrons and workers have been shoved, scratched, and tripped. Marilee has taken the worst of the abuse, and can show off numerous bruises the ghost gave her and tell as terrifying stories of being locked in the dry and cold storage rooms. It's getting to the point that loyal patrons have stopped coming and workers have quit rather than face the haunting.

Heroes that do a little digging through local sources and succeed at a *Research* check (DC 10) can find the following information: The building was built in 1897 and housed a general store until 1907, when it became a barber shop until 1918. It reopened in 1920 as a gentleman's club, but really it was a speakeasy and brothel. The brothel was the site of several murders, including that of a prostitute named Emma May Frye, who was stabbed to death by a drunken customer in 1927. It closed in 1930 and remained shuttered until Settimio arrived and opened his restaurant.

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The Real Story

The ghost causing all the trouble is Grandpa Ed, but he's upset for a good reason. Marilee has developed quite a meth addiction and owes a lot of money to local drug dealer, Hutch Miller. Rather than force Marilee into prostitution or beat the money out of her, Miller has forced her to make Josephina's his personal storehouse. Also, Miller uses Marilee to make deliveries for him, using Josephina's popular delivery service as a front. For her part, Marilee is trapped between her addiction, fear of the violent Miller, and terror of the ghost of Grandpa Ed.

To make the hero's job more difficult, Josephina's is home to more than one ghost. The weak and confused spirit of Emma May Frye haunts the upstairs dining rooms, occasionally making herself known to observers.

Miller's drugs are hidden in the cold storage locker in a box labeled "sardines." They are wrapped in cellophane. Marilee receives a call from Miller before every delivery and retrieves the correct amount from the box and hides them in the food containers.

Action

The heroes have been invited by Eddy to conduct a "ghost hunt" and help out the family. He allows the heroes access to Josephina's after hours and makes the family available for interviews. For every hour the heroes are in the restaurant, roll 1d10 and see the following table. If Marilee is in the restaurant, add 4 to the roll, with the event centered on her. Witnessing each of these activities requires a *Will Save* (DC 10).

Roll	Result
1-3	No activity.
4	The lights flicker on and off for 1d4 rounds and then remain off until turned back on.
5	The smell of Italian cooking permeates the area for 1d6 rounds and then fades.
6	The temperature around a hero (unless Marilee is present) drops 30°.
7	The pots and pans in the kitchen or the glasses at the bar suddenly rattle for 1d6 rounds.
8	The water taps in the kitchen sink turn themselves on the drain becomes plugged.
9	A hero (unless Marilee is present) is pushed through the nearest door and the door closes and locks behind them.
10+	A hero (unless Marilee is present) is attacked with Grandpa Ed's Cluster Attack.

Marilee fears that the heroes will discover the drugs and her arrangement with Miller and will try to prevent their discovery, going so far as to fake an incident to pull their attention away or even feigning attraction to a hero.

NPCs

Eduardo "Grandpa Ed" Settimio, poltergeist

Charismatic Hero 2/Smart Hero 2: CR 5; Medium-size undead; HD 4d12; Mas 0; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15, touch 15, flatfooted 13 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +2 class); BAB +2; Grap +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, weapon), or +4 ranged (1d6+0, weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3; AP 2; Rep +4; Str 8, Dex 14, Con n/a, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Occupation: Entrepreneur (Diplomacy, Knowledge [Business])

Skills: *Balance* +4, *Concentration* +2, *Craft (cooking)* +9, *Diplomacy* +8, *Forgery* +3, *Gamble* +3, *Gather Information* +9, *Intimidate* +5, *Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences)* +3, *Knowledge (Business)* +6, *Knowledge (Civics)* +3, *Knowledge (Current Events up to 1983)* +3, *Knowledge (Popular Culture)* +5, *Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy)* +3, *Perform (Opera)* +9, *Profession* +7, *Read/Write Language* +1 (Italian, English), *Search* +3, *Speak Language* +1 (Italian, English)

Feats: Confident, Creative (Craft [cooking], Perform), Focused, Meticulous, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trustworthy

Talents (Charismatic Hero): Charm

Talents (Smart Hero): Linguist

Special Qualities:

Channel – Can communicate with the living for short periods.

Cluster Attack – Can select a 30" area for attack for 10 rounds. Can throw 8 small items weighing 5 lbs or less (1d2 damage); 4 items weighing 10 lbs or less (1d4 damage); 1 item weighing 20 lbs or less (1d6 damage).

Cold Spot – Can reduce the temperature in a 5" area by 20°.

Darkvision – Can see in the dark up to 60 ft.

Bites of Midnight: Josephina's

Dreamweaving – Can communicate with the living through dreams.

Gift of Life – Can restore 2d4 Hit Points per hour on a touch attack. Costs 1 HD.

Incorporeal – Can pass through solid objects, can only be injured by other incorporeal creatures, +1 magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities.

Invisibility – Is naturally invisible but can reveal itself at night.

Lesser Telekinesis – Can move an object weighting less than 1 lb a short distance.

Rejuvenation – Can restore itself in 2d4 days.

Suspended FX – Cannot have magic or psionic abilities.

Emma May Frye, lesser manifestation

Dedicated Hero 2: CR 3; Medium-size undead; HD 2d12; HP 10; Mas 0; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14, touch 14, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +2 class); BAB +1; Grap -1; Atk -1 melee (1d6+-2, weapon), or +2 ranged (1d6+0, weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ; AL none; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 1; Rep +1; Str 6, Dex 12, Con 0, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Knowledge [Streetwise])

Skills: *Bluff* +2, *Diplomacy* +2, *Disguise* +2, *Hide* +3, *Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences)* +3, *Knowledge (Streetwise)* +4, *Listen* +1, *Sense Motive* +1, *Sleight of Hand* +2, *Spot* +3

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Deceptive, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Toughness

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Empathy

Possessions: weapon, weapon; Wealth +6

Special Qualities:

Channel – Can communicate with the living for short periods.

Cold Spot – Can reduce the temperature in a 5” area by 20°.

Darkvision – Can see in the dark up to 60 ft.

Dreamweaving – Can communicate with the living through dreams.

Incorporeal – Can pass through solid objects, can only be injured by other incorporeal creatures, +1 magic

weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities.

Invisibility – Is naturally invisible but can reveal itself at night.

Lesser Telekinesis – Can move an object weighting less than 1 lb a short distance.

Rejuvenation – Can restore itself in 2d4 days.

Suspended FX – Cannot have magic or psionic abilities.

3 Hired Goons (Headphones, Lazy Eye, and Zit-face) Use Low-Level Thugs from the *D20 Modern* rule book.

Hutch Miller, drug dealer

Use the Mid-Level Drug Dealer from the *D20 Modern* rule book.

Eddy Settimio, Josephina's chef and owner

Use the Mid-Level Reporter from the *D20 Modern* rule book. Replace Craft (writing) and Knowledge (streetwise) with Craft (cooking) +9.

Vicky Settimio, Josephina's business manager and wife to

Eddy

Use the Mid-Level Politician from the *D20 Modern* rule book.

Marilee Settimio, addicted teenage daughter and drug mule

Use the Low-Level Taxi Driver from the *D20 Modern* rule book.

Wait Staff

Use the Low-Level Dilettante from the *D20 Modern* rule book.

Complications

Hutch Miller won't tolerate anyone getting in the way of his lucrative drug trade. If his stash is discovered, Marilee attempts to warn him. If she is successful, he arrives at the restaurant with his goons around closing time and offers the Settimio's a deal they can't refuse: continue to do things his way, or he'll burn down the restaurant and kill the family. He offers a token payment to the heroes to keep their mouths shut, but lets them know he can have them "taken care of."

Resolution

If the heroes can remove the drugs from the restaurant, the ghost of Grandpa Ed is satisfied, although continues to give Marilee a difficult time (tough love from the spirit world) until she cleans herself up. Emma May Frye can be convinced to “move on” if a female hero makes a successful *Diplomacy* check (DC 15) for her to do so.

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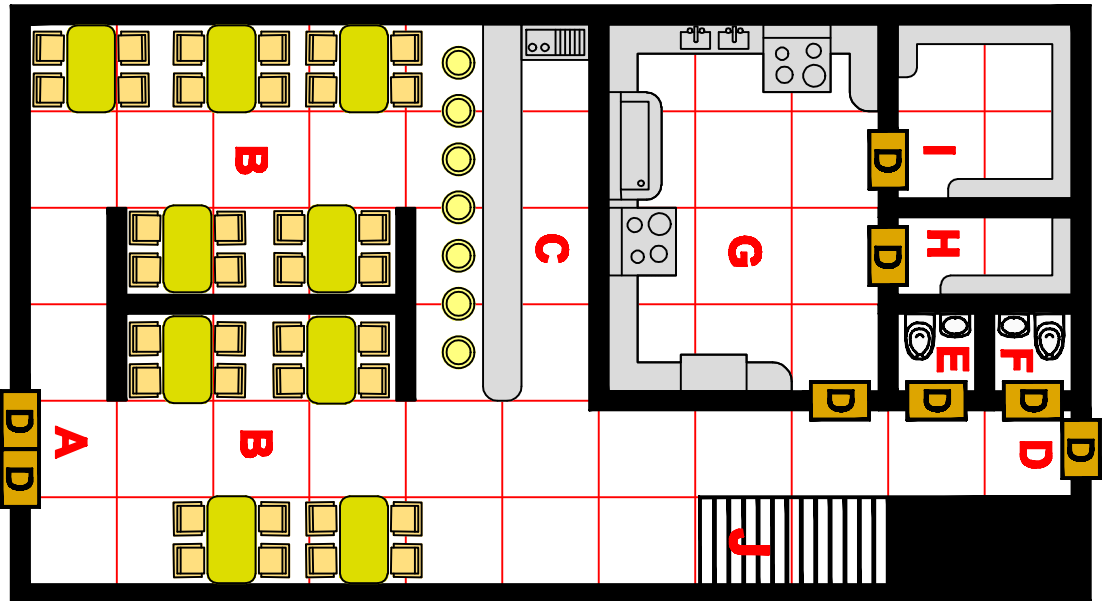


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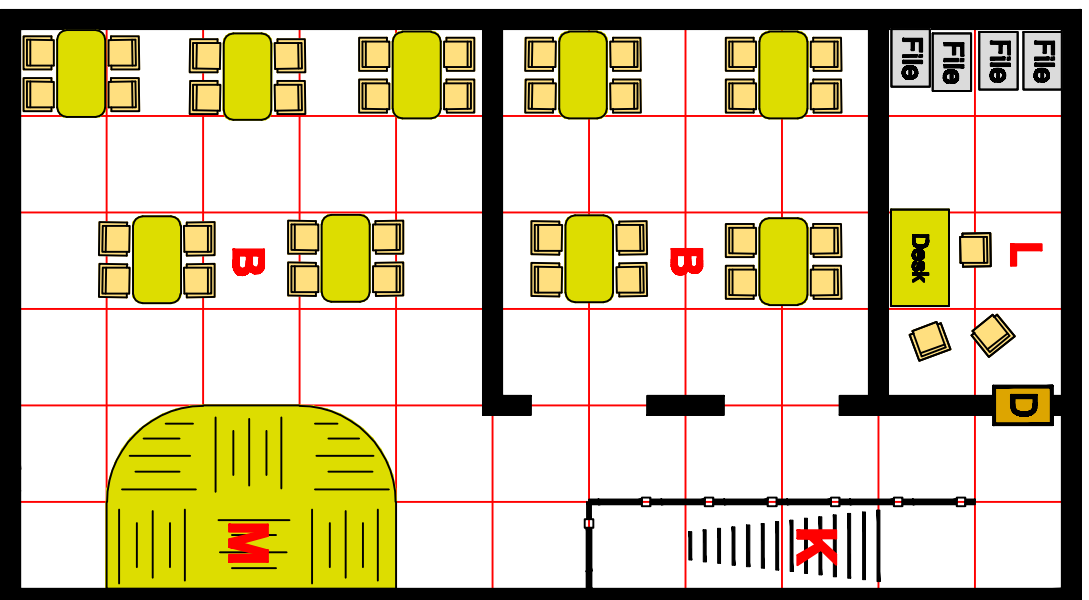
Map Scale: 1 square = 5 feet

JOSEPHINA'S (1st AND 2nd FLOORS)

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



- ROOM KEY**
- A** = ENTRANCE
 - B** = DINING AREAS
 - C** = BAR
 - D** = EMERGENCY EXIT
 - E** = MEN'S ROOM
 - F** = WOMEN'S ROOM
 - G** = KITCHEN
 - H** = COLD STORAGE
 - I** = DRY STORAGE
 - J** = STAIRS (UP)
 - K** = STAIRS (DOWN)
 - L** = OFFICE
 - M** = STAGE