

A card game of discovery and improvisational storytelling for 1-4 players



# *The Land Whispers*

Jessica Osborne





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# THANKS

This game wouldn't have been possible without the support, play, and good company of the "No Chill Crew." I love you all dearly; you're the best globe-spanning family anyone could ask for.

Thank you to Grant Ellis for your encouragement and volunteering to be one of the first players of the game.

Thank you to Ethan Hudgens for co-playtesting with Grant, and for asking if it was possible to roleplay a dog in this game. Try it and let me know how it goes?

Thank you to Dylan Grinder for being my game-running, design-slinging partner in far too much crime.

Thank you to my WonderCoven sisters, Em and Julie, for the never ending support, ridiculous number of OTPs, willingness to hack the heck out of games, and every sparkle-heart emoji we've ever traded.

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Version 1.3

Loosely inspired by card prompt games  
*The Quiet Tear* by Avery Alder and *For the Queen* by Alex Roberts

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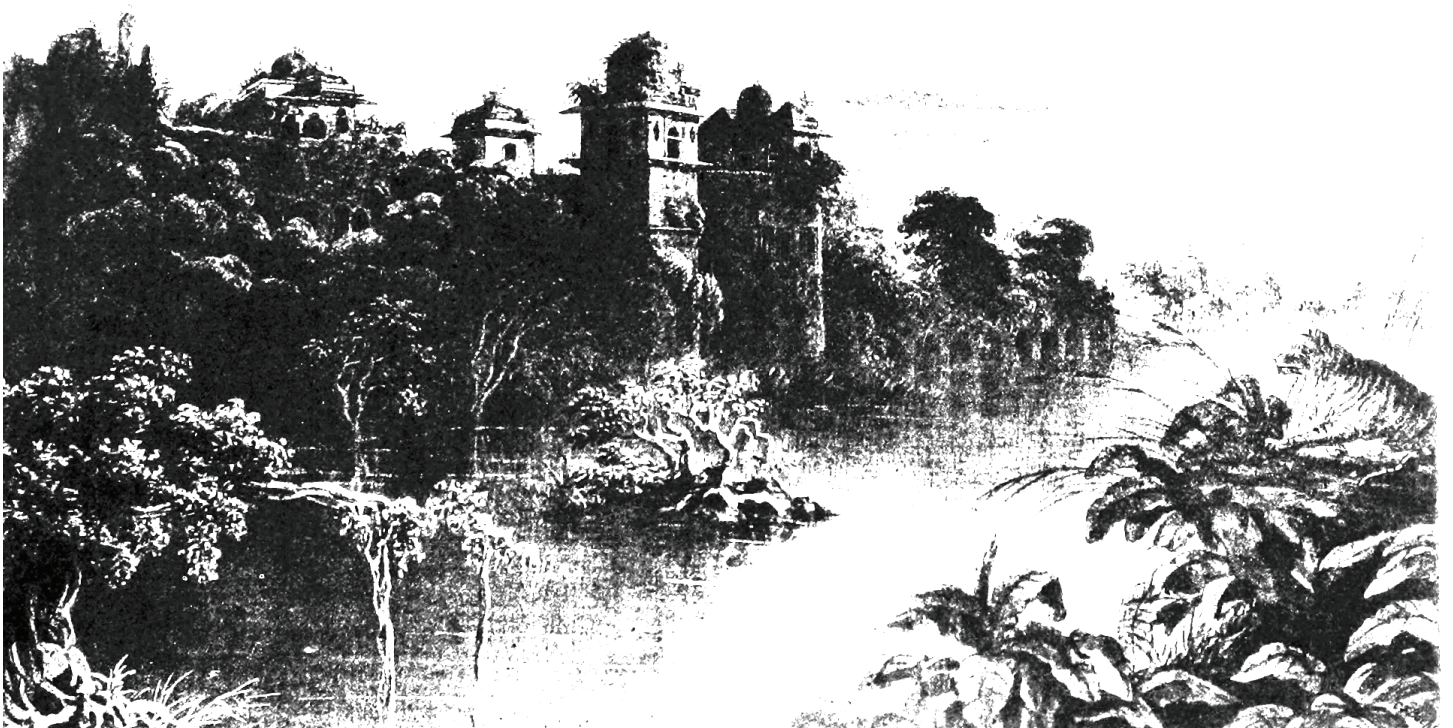




*You left your old life behind to settle in a  
vast and distant wilderness.*

*It is untamed, but it is beautiful, and with  
time, it whispers stories of old to you.*

*Play to reflect on where you came from,  
and to learn about the life that  
the land itself has led.*



# ABOUT THE GAME

The Land Whispers is a collaborative, peaceful, settlement-based RPG where you and 1-2 other players\* build a homestead in the wilds of a distant landscape and, by purpose or by chance, begin to discover the secrets of the land you live on.

Build a quiet home for yourself and your friends or family, discover a great secret hidden within the land, and tell stories of the land and the people who came before you.

Players: 1-4\*

Supplies: A deck of playing cards, paper and pencils/pens for writing notes and drawing

Time: Each hand generates around 20-40 minutes of roleplay

*\*Although initially built for 2-4 players, you can easily play The Land Whispers as a solo game, using a journal to capture your exploits. Where references to other people are made, consider making up additional characters as befits your narrative.*



# PLAYING THE GAME

## *Preparing to Play*

The Land Whispers is played by drawing cards and answering the prompts on them. Whether you choose to create characters and roleplay them as a means of answering the prompts is up to you, but it is recommended that before you start, talk with your fellow players and decide as a group whether you will lean toward roleplaying or not.

The Land Whispers card deck is comprised of four categories. Each category aligns to a suit within a deck of playing cards, so you can use a playing card deck and the prompt key in the back of this book to play the game if you aren't able to print the custom cards. Split the deck into four piles by suit and shuffle them.



# PLAYING THE GAME

## *Introductions and Discoveries*

Decide the order in which you will take your turns by whatever means you like. Taking your turns, each person will introduce their character by name, their pronouns, and by giving a brief description of their most notable feature. This could be a physical trait, or something your character wears or does that's unique to them.

Going in your turn order, ask a single questions of any other player.

Each player should ask and answer only one question.

Once everyone has answered and asked their questions, the first person pulls one card from each deck and the round begins.

On their turn, each player creates a hand by drawing one card from each of the four decks (You, Your Home, The Land, The Past). Going around the table, each player will answer their hand of cards.

Discuss with one another who participates in the scene if you are roleplaying, or discuss the potential answers to the prompt. The person whose hand is currently being played ultimately has the final say, but remember to encourage and be receptive to collaboration.



# PLAYING THE GAME

## *The Changing Times*

After everyone at the table has completed their turn, going in your turn order, ask any one of the following questions of any other player.

Each player should ask and answer only one question.

- ☞ How has your time here so far changed you?
- ☞ What do you love most here?
- ☞ What do you struggle with here?
- ☞ What can I do to help you?
- ☞ Do you want to leave this place?

After each player has answered one question, everyone draws a hand and completes the turn process again. Do this until all the cards are gone, or until you decide you are done playing.



# PLAYING THE GAME

## *The Future ~ Your Epilogue*

When all cards have been drawn, compose your epilogue.

Discuss your findings, weave the tale of the past, and describe the end of your characters' tale.

Together, answer the following questions:

- ❧ Do you live out your lives here or eventually leave?
- ❧ What becomes of your home over the next few generations?
- ❧ What changes occur in the land over the next several generations?
- ❧ What things of yours are left behind long after you and your home are a thing of the past?

And with that, you've reached the end of your tale. If you chose to sketch maps or drawings of your findings, or make notes, collect them or share them as a memento of your characters and the tale you wove.



# THE CARDS

## ♥ You

These prompts ask about you, the player(s), and help define who you are and the story of why you're here in the wilderness.

*You may roleplay scenes out to answer these prompts, if you wish.*

## ♦ Your Home

These prompts ask about the home you're building steadily over time, and occasionally include obstacles that must be overcome.

*You may draw the layout of your home, roleplay the routines, and set other scenes within your home.*

## ♠ The Land

These prompts ask about the land you live on, allowing you to explore locations and features of the landscape and examine their importance and impact on you.

*You may add these locations to your map, roleplay their discovery with the other players, and set your other scenes within them.*

## ♣ The Past

These prompts ask about the objects you find, artifacts that tell a story of the land's past, and that of others who may have lived there before you.

*You may draw these objects if you wish, roleplay your discoveries with the others, or simply make notes about them in your journal.*



# CARD GUIDE:



- A Why did you settle here of all places?
- 2 What drew you to this location?
- 3 Of the things you left behind, what will you miss most? Why?
- 4 Of the things you left behind, what will you miss least? Why?
- 5 Who are the people you brought with you? Why did you choose them?
- 6 Who did you leave behind? Why them?
- 7 Did you tell anyone where you were going? Why or why not?
- 8 What secret have you kept from the others? Who finds out? How?
- 9 What will you do if someone comes to find you? Who are they? Why were they searching?
- 10 What has this place given you that you could not gain elsewhere?
- J What has this place taken from you that you will never regain?
- Q Describe your daily routine. What three things must you do without fail each day?
- K One day, visitors arrive. Who are they? What do you do?



# CARD GUIDE:

## ◆ *Your Home*

- A Did you build the home, or was it already here when you arrived?
- 2 What material is your home made out of? How did it get here?
- 3 How large is your home? What rooms do you have in it?
- 4 When the weather is good, you decide to add a new room onto your home. Describe the room's purpose and the process of building it.
- 5 Describe a typical breakfast. Where do the ingredients come from? How do you prepare and partake of the meal?
- 6 Describe a typical dinner. Where do the ingredients come from? How do you prepare and partake of the meal?
- 7 Describe an area in your home used for recreation. What do you do there?
- 8 What sort of livestock have you acquired? How did you come by them? What do you use them for?
- 9 What produce do you grow around your home? How do you cultivate them?
- 10 You decide to add another building to your property. Describe its purpose. What happens during construction?
- J You add another structure to the property, not necessarily a building. What is it? Why are you building it?
- Q How do you protect your home?
- K A storm arrives. What becomes of your home?



# CARD GUIDE:

## ♠ *The Land*

- A There is a body of water near your home, from which you source your water. What makes it unique?
- 2 There is a place in the wilds you retreat to for quiet moments. Describe the location and tell how you discovered it. What draws you to it?
- 3 Out in the wilds, you have seen something you fear is a threat. Say what you've observed about it and discuss with the others how to deal with it.
- 4 You come across a creature in the wilds that you have never seen before. Describe the encounter. Do you tell the others about it?
- 5 You get caught in a storm while out exploring. Where do you manage to take shelter until it passes? What do you find there?
- 6 You have a close call in a particularly dangerous locale. What makes this place so perilous? What happened to you?
- 7 What is the most beautiful location you have found here? Why do you think so?
- 8 Exploring well beyond your home, you discover a place with an air of mystery. What strangeness did you witness there?
- 9 On a hike, you find a place with an incredible view. What do you see from this spot? How difficult was it to get to?
- 10 You find a cavern less than a day's journey from your home. What lies within it?
- J Out late one night, you discover a place perfect for stargazing. Describe the location and talk about how you first found it. How are the stars different here?
- Q There is a place near your home that fills you with sorrow. Why?
- K There is a place near your home that fills you with joy. Why?

# CARD GUIDE:

## ♣ *The Past*

- A You discover a mysterious image etched upon a stone. Describe the scene it depicts, and tell the others how old you think it might be.
- 2 You discover the remnants of an old object in the water near your home. Enough of it remains to be useable. Describe the object, and tell the others what you think it was used for.
- 3 You find a mysterious old door that you are unable to open. Describe the door. Do you tell the others? Do you try to find a way to open it?
- 4 You find a circle of stones in a sunlit place. There are time-worn etchings on some. Describe what you see and talk with the others about its purpose.
- 5 You discover scraps from a device seemingly used for transport. What could it have been? Can you use what remains?
- 6 You find the bones of a creature, massive and ancient. Describe how you make this discovery. Do you know what it once was? Do these creatures still exist?
- 7 You discover part of an ancient burial ground. Describe the location and the things you learn there. How does this discovery make you feel?
- 8 You find a site that appears to have ritual significance. Describe what you find and say if it has any connections to other discoveries you've made so far.
- 9 You come across a written account left behind by someone in the past. What form does it take? Can you understand the writing?
- 10 You find what remains of a wondrous feat of engineering. What is it? Does it still work?
- J You come across a lone structure amid the ruin that is incredibly well-preserved. What is it? How do you think it survived when others did not?
- Q You discover a set of ancient tools. What are they? Do you know what they were used for?
- K You discover something that is not so very old at all. What is it?



# CHANGES NEW & OLD

This is the first(ish) version. After another round of playtesting, I've added some structure to help with character creation, and an epilogue phase to help players tie up their tale more neatly.

What's coming in the next version?

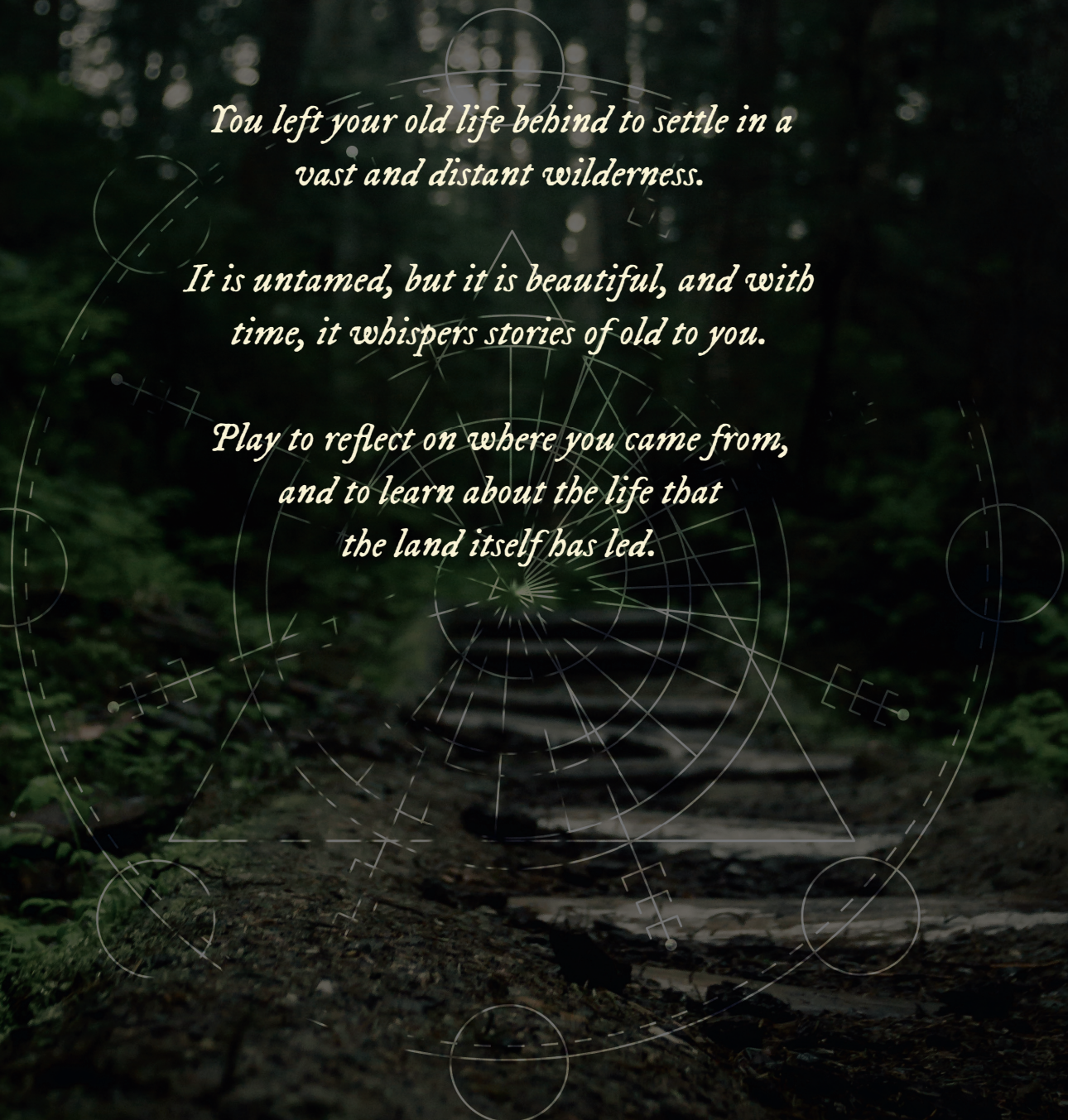
- ☞ Print & play cards
- ☞ Pre-gen settler premises to help you get up and running faster
- ☞ Alternate play rules

If you discover an exciting way to play that isn't already prescribed somewhere in this book, I'd love to hear about it! Feel free to reach out to me on Twitter @littlecuppajo.

Happy discoveries, friends.

*Jessica*





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