



*moonsailors*  
a journey among the stars for the lonelyhearted

*A game about being alone  
& not quite being alone  
for 3-5 players.*

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## To Prepare,

### The things you'll need are:

*10 location coins and 10 star tiles*

*Index cards, with some of them cut into thirds or fourths (or scraps of paper, etc)*

*Something to write with*

*3-5 people*

*A couple of hours*

Everyone should take a seat around the table, facing each other for now, and should take an index card and a pen.

### Who are you?

Pick one of the options in each of the bolded segments and write them on your card. Don't share your answers to your location, but feel free to talk about the rest of it.

- You are a **drifter** | **courier** | **castaway** | **surveyor** | **oracle**.
- You travel the system in search of **work** | **meaning** | **solitude** | **entities** | **flotsam** | **things of value**.
- Your ship is **battered** | **plain** | **elegant** | **gaudy** | and **reliable** | **finicky** | **powerful**.
- You've landed **among the stars** | **on Viridian** | **at Rozie's Moonlite Diner** | **near Mining Base Celadon** | **on the I.A.R. Pitch** | **at System Satellite 415** | **on City Ship Sage** | **on Tyrian** | **near the Aureolin** | **on Carnelian** | **at Cyclamen Terminal**.

Next, name your character if you'd like to. Write that on your card as well.

Last, on a section of a second index card - a fourth or a third of it - draw out your ship. It doesn't have to be fancy; don't spend too long on it now. You can always add to it as you play.

## Playing the Game:

### What does a game look like?

A game of Moonsailors progresses in a series of turns or scenes. These scenes consist in three parts (Setting, playing, and then ending,) each of which will be controlled by the player whose turn it is. That player will then move their spaceship onto their next location - or, if they'd like, can stay on the current location.

The turn passes onto the right and the next player begins their turn. This pattern repeats until just before you've run out of steam, time to play, or story to tell. You'll go to the **Ending the Game** section at that point.

## Setting Out Among the Stars

Collect all 10 of the location tiles and all 10 of the star tiles. Scatter them onto the table. Allow them to be random, unplanned, and chaotic. Adjust the tiles afterwards so that all things seem to be connected to one another - nothing's too off in oblivion. Ideally, there should be a star tile between most things, but doesn't have to be.

Once everyone's content with the map, simultaneously place your spaceships on the locations you decided while creating your characters.

Then pick someone to go first - either whoever volunteers, or through another method devised by the players.

This player remains facing in towards the table. All other players turn themselves, their chairs, or any variation of around so that they end up facing outwards, away from the table. The player whose turn it is will always face in, and all other players will always face out.

The player whose turn it is will be referred to as the active player through the rest of these rules.

### **If Playing While Facing One Another:**

If you still want to face each other during play, do so.

Players who are meant to be facing away from the table can either close their eyes, or you can ignore this rule entirely. It's only here to help the feelings of isolation - but maybe that's not your style of play!

### **An Exception to Leaving and Taking:**

If your location is 'Among the Stars' (a.k.a. travelling and inside your ship,) you don't take or leave anything, but you'll otherwise play out a scene as normal.

## On Turns,

### (1) The Active Player Sets the Scene

You've already decided where your character is. So tell us about it - what are you doing there? Are you looking for something? What is it that you see, feel, smell, or taste?

### (2) All Players Interact With The Scene

#### **Active Player(s):**

Your role is the narrator of your scene. You'll tell the supporting players where you are, what it's like, what's happening, and what you're doing there. You describe to them what they see.

*If there's multiple characters in the same location, decide if your characters will interact. If yes, both players look at each other and play the scene. If no, continue with natural turn order.*

In the event that the characters do interact, both players take on the role of the active player.

#### **Supporting Players:**

Your role is to support the active player through asking questions. Through these questions you might learn more about the character or the location, or you might introduce challenges to the character's goal.

For example, if the active player says "I'm going to open this box," you might ask, "If it sticks, what will you do?" or, "What do you hope is in the box? What do you hope isn't?" If you wanted to introduce a threat to the situation: "While you're opening the box, you hear a rattling sound behind you. What do you do?"

### (3) The Active Player Ends The Scene

The active player can end the scene at any point, but should try to let it come to a natural end. You don't have to return to your ship, but there shouldn't be much standing in the way of you doing so.

*Some things you could take:* a key, a stain on your clothes, a plant, the memory of a good meal, a dent on your ship, an interesting rock, a bit of broken glass.

#### What do you take?

If you've collected something during the scene and you're taking it back with you to your ship, write it or (better yet,) draw it on a bit of index card and keep it with you. At the end of scenes, you can also look under the location tile for things other players have been left behind. Take one of these, if you'd like.

#### What do you leave behind?

We leave parts of ourselves wherever we might go.

What mark is it that you've made when you depart?

Whatever you leave behind, write it or draw it on a bit of index card and set it under the location tile. You have to leave at least one thing, but you can leave multiple things.

*Some things you could leave:* An item you've collected, a description of something you changed here (an open door, footprints in the sand, a dirty plate at a table), a note for someone else to find, a response to a note someone's left.

Play continues to the left until every player's had their turn.

**If at some point two characters have interacted:**

That turn counts for both players turns. Skip the player who is later in the order when you get to them.

## **Movement**

At the end of your turn, pick where you're going to go next and move your ship to that location. You don't have to move if you don't want to. If you want to keep investigating the place you're at, just leave your ship where it is.

Your ship can travel from one tile to an adjacent tile. In simpler words, you can go to something near you. If there's a location directly next to your ship, you can go there. If there's a star between your ship and the location you want to go, you put your ship at the star, and your location is 'Among the Stars'.

## Ending the Game

You can end the game at any point, but ideally you end at the end of a round. Stop when you feel like stopping, whenever that may be.

Everyone turns back in towards the table. Share the things you took or left behind, if you want to. Why did you leave certain things behind? Why did you take certain things?

Go around telling about what happens to your character after the end of your game, if you'd like. Other players are free to ask questions, or offer suggestions, but you don't have to answer every question or take every suggestion. You don't even have to say anything at all.

The vastness of space does not separate you anymore.  
Welcome home.

