

YT070

One Minute to Midnight!



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ONE MINUTE TO MIDNIGHT

A MCless mini-RPG by Côme Martin for 3 to 5 Robots, written in May 2019.

The Planet will die out. You're Robots running on their last batteries and everyone else is gone. Soon, you will die out too.

THE PLANET

The Robots are the last beings to tread a dying planet, deserted by humankind. Gather tokens or scraps of paper to symbolize them: decide where they start on the map, together. Agree on why the planet is dying: natural disasters? Aftermath of industrial accidents? Cooling down of the surface?

During play, the Robots can freely move around on the map. Each zone is at least several miles and days or weeks of walking from the others.

The map is going to be torn off as its zones become obstructed. When Robots arrive in a new zone, darken as many boxes of the clock as their number: for instance, if two Robots move to a new zone, darken two boxes. This represents time advancing. When the clock is full, tear off a zone from the map and describe the consequences of this destruction on the rest of the Planet. Tear off another zone when the Robots' actions durably destruct the landscape. If the destruction of a zone causes others to be unreachable, you can decide to create new connexions on the map, paths which will be longer and more dangerous to trod.

THE ROBOTS

Before play, each player fills their Robot's sheet: they freely decide what are its 4 functions, its original mission and its current ambition (which is more a narrative indication than a goal to be reached by all means). They also create a name or a code number for their Robot. Finally, they decide how the Robots met and since when they have been roaming together, which may be a good opportunity to give them one or several common goals.

Play is divided into turns, during which each player freely describe what their Robot is doing.

The Robots can accomplish as many actions as needed during a turn (as well as during another player's turn): the players decide whether their actions fail or succeed.

When a Robot undertakes an action corresponding to one of its functions, its player tears off a box from its battery level: its energy is impacted by this effort. If the action doesn't match one of the Robot's functions, it's going against its programming: its player darkens a circle next to one of its functions. When two circles are darkened, the player tears off the function from their sheet and cannot use it anymore.

It's possible to reprogram a Robot and modify one of its functions, but rummaging through its circuit has a cost: immediately tear off another function. However, it is impossible to repair a function which has been torn off or to recharge batteries during play.

When a Robot has no remaining functions available, or no battery boxes left, it turns off forever.

When Robots arrive in a new zone (including the starting zone), their players share its description, each adding a detail: what it looks like, what

was its functions for humans and what may be of interest there to one of the Robots (not necessarily those present). If moving is difficult for a Robot, going from one zone to another is considered an action.

MIDNIGHT

When there is only one zone left on the map, when only one Robot is working, or when it makes sense within the story, players take a minute to think about the fate of their Robot and of the Planet. Was this existence meaningful? Which trace will it leave? Is this Planet disappearing for nothing?

Examples of functions: Attack/Defend - Repair - Roll - Detect - Recycle/Transform - Analyze - Carry - Communicate - Demolish - Light - Memorize - Guide...

Examples of missions: Build habitations - Accumulate energy - Defend a zone - Dig drilling wells - Stitch anti-radiation suits - Form roads - Give information - Gather topographic data - Be a playmate - Heal wounds and diseases - Recycle waste...

Examples of ambitions: Make a dream - Feel something - Flee this Planet - Reproduce - Fulfill one's mission - Break out from one's program - Understand why the humans disappeared - Forge a friendship bond - Stop the Planet's destruction - Find a lost relic...

THANKS, more than 2359 times, to Guillaume Jentey for this game's wonderful map and layout! Thanks to Erwik, Ethelen, Jean, mass, Nitz and Stéphane for playtesting and feedback!