



OUR RADIOS  
ARE DYING

by caitlynn belle



# HOW TO PLAY

To play *Our Radios Are Dying*, you'll need yourself and one other person, an open space to move around in, a copy of each character sheet, a timer set for one hour, and two office chairs with wheels on them.

If you can play somewhere with the lights out (and still read your sheets, maybe through a head lamp or something similar) and with a projection of stars on the walls, that would be fantastic.

Make sure both players are aware of basic safety protocol for freeform games (no hitting each other, no damage to people or property) as well as how “cut” and “brake” work (any player can say “brake” if play is getting a little intense and they need things to slow down in order to feel comfortable or safe, and any player can say “cut” if play is getting so intense they need to stop the scene entirely.)

But also make sure both players are aware of the game's physical contact rule: you might need to show attraction and sensual touching in a way that both players are comfortable with. *Our Radios Are Dying* suggests using a modified *Ars Armandi* technique, which is where players touch each other on the arms, hands, upper back, and neck to simulate sex and romance. For this game, you'll both be playing aliens trapped inside of space suits, so, within the narrative, you wouldn't be able to kiss or have sexual contact, so this makes sense. In essence, to demonstrate romance and affection for the other player, hold their hand, touch their arm, or their shoulder. Talk about it beforehand and make sure both of you are on the same page as to where is okay to touch! This is not only how you as players will demonstrate affection and romantic interest in each other, but also how your characters are forced to.

Set aside roughly an hour to play. Start the timer

for one hour, and when the timer goes off, the game ends. At the end of the game, put your character sheets away, stand up and stretch, and spend some time talking about the game and how you felt. Make sure you and the other player are okay and in a good head space about it.

Both players sit down in the rolling chairs and roll around the open space to simulate floating through zero gravity. Your spacesuits have about an hour's worth of oxygen left, as well as limited propulsion capabilities, so you can maneuver yourself a little as you drift. You are deep in space with no hope of salvation, so make sure both you and your partner are aware: at the end of the game, you both die. There is no hope.

Your character sheets will fill you in on all the details, but essentially: you and your lesbian lover from another planet stole away aboard a space station to have a night alone. Your worlds are at war, and fraternizing with the enemy will result in jail time, while same-sex relationships will result in death. After a mishap with repairing the outside of the station, you are both propelled through space, drifting alone and afraid. You have an hour to spell out your final words to each other, revealing things you've always wanted to say but never could.

Now is as good a time as any.



# NOTES

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# GWYNNHIXRRA

## YOU

You are Gwynnhixrra, a Venusian cosmonaut. On your homeworld, you are famous for your intelligence, wisdom, beauty, and skill. You have piloted many missions of great importance for your people. You are also secretly a lesbian, which is punishable by death on your planet.

Venus is a beautiful world, full of massive gardens and rainbow rain, with a strange culture based on religion, ritual and telepathic hive-mind links. People on your planet value wisdom and knowledge, with the smartest having the strongest telepathic link among you. The link only works on the planet's surface, so if you try to use it now, no dice.

Venus is engaged in a bloody war with the planet Mars. Any contact with them or their barren, fire-blasted planet will result in several years of jail time. Mars is a horrible place, full of horrible people, who murder and sacrifice in the name of greed and dead gods.

You and your lover of two years, the Martian astronaut Vissaythaau, met in secret aboard a space station for some time to yourselves. While checking out a maintenance issue outside of the station, your tethers snapped and your propulsion systems glitched, flinging you far into space with no hope of return. There is enough oxygen in your suits for exactly one more hour. After that, you will die.

## TO PLAY

Pretend you are drifting around in space by rolling around in your office chairs. When the timer expires, the two of you die dramatically.

Until then, you have a list of topics on your character sheet. Bring all of them up during this final

hour in any order you choose. Here is where you spill out everything left unsaid. Take your time and judge the moment, volleying when it's appropriate - the other player may have questions or comments about what you've said and will want to discuss things. Do so, but remember to push as much of your argument forward as you can.

Likewise, when the other player introduces their own issues, ask questions and demand answers. Be upset, relieved, or heartbroken. This will not be a fun final moment for the two of you: here is the turning point where the relationship sours. Is there a way to salvage things?

Whatever they bring up, it is true. You may have different viewpoints on it, but it certainly happened. Modify, but don't negate.

## YOUR LAST WORDS

- Remind them of something they never apologized for and ask why.
- Tell them something they never knew about you that would break their heart.
- Tell them why you weren't there for their birthday this year.
- Explain your problem with Mars and its people.
- Tell them how they let you down.
- Ask them if they still regret not coming out.
- Bring up a problem similar to what they just brought up, in a hypocritical way.
- Ignore their feelings and promote your own.
- Mock their feelings on something very important.
- Express denial and regret.

# VISSAYTHAAU

## YOU

You are Vissaythaau, a Martian astronaut. On your homeworld, you are famous for your intelligence, power, beauty, and skill. You have piloted many missions of great importance for your people. You are also secretly a lesbian, which is punishable by death on your planet.

Mars is a passionate, artistic place, full of volcanoes that erupt gold, with an honorable culture based on strength, loyalty, and ethics. Martians can speak to all animals and plants on their homeworld.

Mars is engaged in a bloody war with the planet Venus. Any contact with them or their superstitious, soul-less planet will result in several years of jail time. Venus is a terrible place, full of terrible people, who consume and deplete and carry out secret wars against the innocent.

You and your lover of two years, the Venusian cosmonaut Gwynnhixrra, met in secret aboard a space station for some time to yourselves. While checking out a maintenance issue outside of the station, your tethers snapped and your propulsion systems glitched, flinging you far into space with no hope of return. There is enough oxygen in your suits for exactly one more hour. After that, you will die.

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## YOUR LAST WORDS

- Tell them why their opinion on something doesn't matter.
- Reveal something you were too ashamed to say before.
- Remind them of when they failed to back their promise.
- Express outrage over what the Venusians have done.
- Control the argument with a display of emotion and refuse to budge until they acknowledge you.
- Tell them what next year would have been like.
- Ask them to say they love you, like how they used to.
- Ignore their feelings and promote your own.
- Tell them why they've ruined you.
- Twist their words and make them out to be the bad guy.