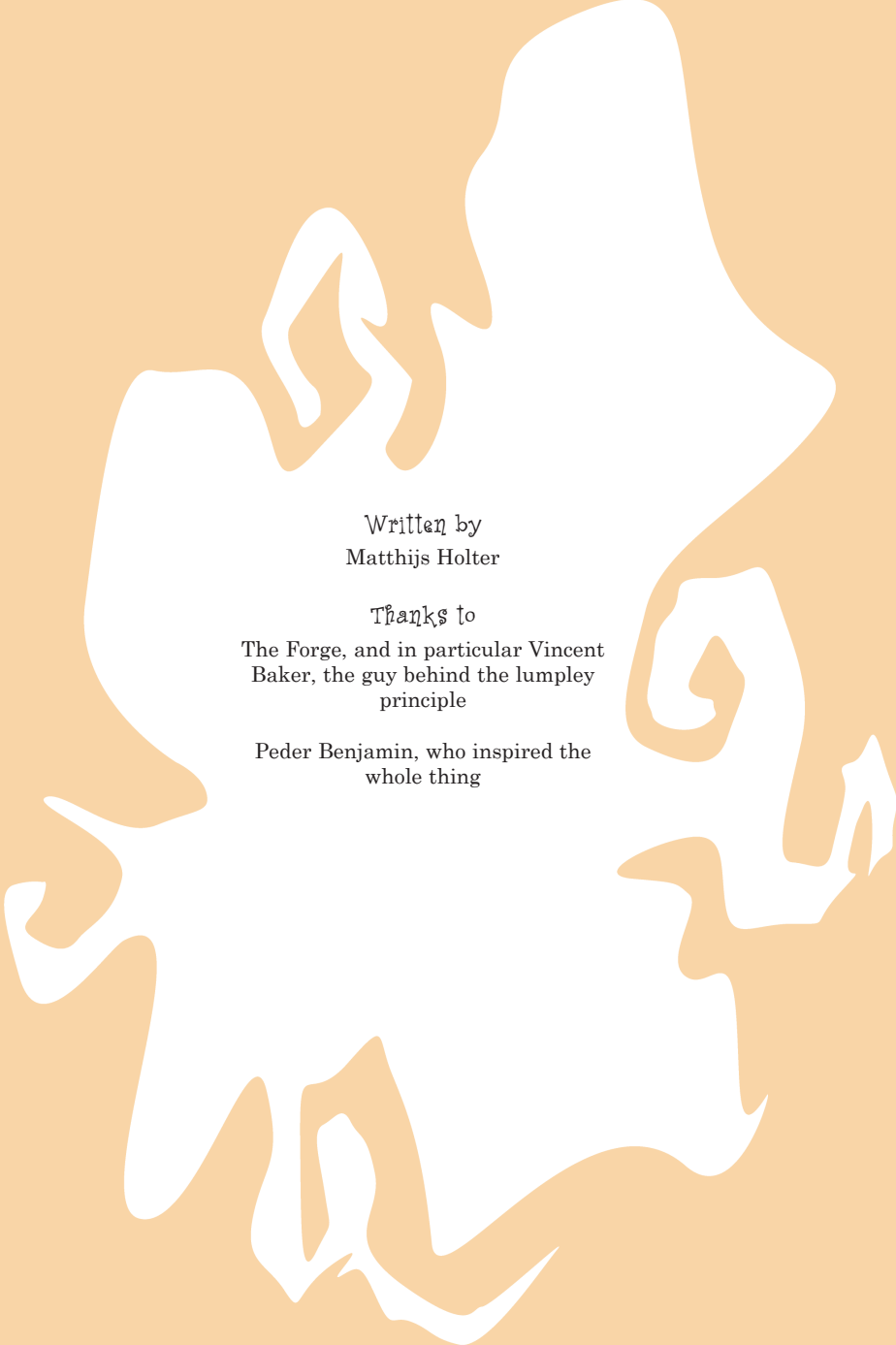


A trip to the moon



Written by
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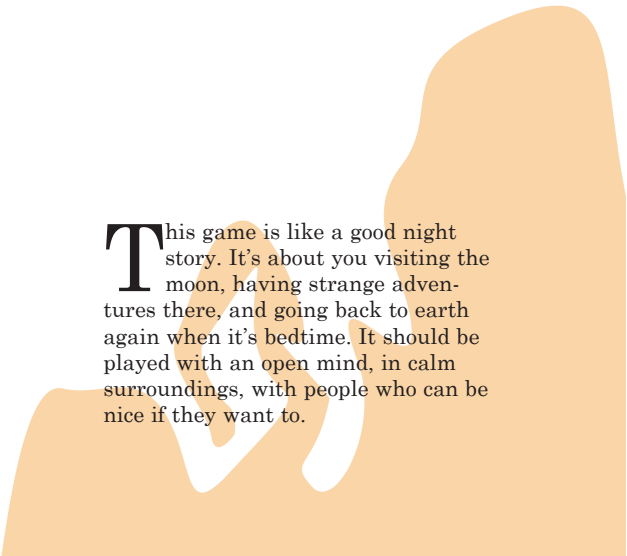
Thanks to
The Forge, and in particular Vincent
Baker, the guy behind the lumpley
principle

Peder Benjamin, who inspired the
whole thing

A role-playing game that should be played
when it's dark outside and the moon is
shining down on the rooftops.

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This game is like a good night story. It's about you visiting the moon, having strange adventures there, and going back to earth again when it's bedtime. It should be played with an open mind, in calm surroundings, with people who can be nice if they want to.

Flow of the game

“A trip to the moon” has a predetermined structure you should follow.

It’s divided into eight phases, with slightly different rules for each phase. It’s good if at least one of the players has read all the rules in advance, but it’s possible to learn the game as you play.

The phases are:

1. Everyone prepares the room.
2. The group elects a moon.
3. The story begins with the visitors.
4. The visitors start the trip.
5. The moon gets visitors.
6. The visitors say goodbye to the moon.
7. The visitors travel home again.
8. The visitors go to sleep.

Permanent rules

There are three additional rules that everyone has to follow all the time.

Listen to the others when they talk, and understand what they say.

Accept what the others come up with and use it yourself when you’re making up stuff.

Make up things that children would like to hear about.

1. Everyone prepares the room.

You start by making everything ready to start playing. The right surroundings are important to get in the mood.

The room should be clean. It should be a nice and safe place. Remove things that only grown-ups or big kids like: Scary posters, loud music, cigarettes and alcohol. Get a pillow each to sit on, and a blanket to wrap yourself in. You also need a ball you can pass back and forth - a tennis ball or something slightly larger is good.

Turn down the lights, so you can only just see each other. Sit in a circle.

2. The group elects a moon.

The moon has a special function in the game. You have to pick someone to be the moon.

Be quiet while you're thinking. Everyone should ask themselves: "If I were little again, which of the others would I rather hear a good night story from?" When everyone's ready (show you're ready with a nod), point to the one you've picked. The person that the most fingers are pointing at is the moon. The others are the visitors.

If there's a tie, the moon is the person who looks the most like a moon.

The moon can't say or do anything before phase 5, when the visitors arrive.

3. The story begins with the visitors.

"It's snowing, big white flakes falling very gently."

"There's a small cat walking through the snow."

"You can hear the sound of a train somewhere close by."

"Behind a fence, a little boy with mittens that are way too big is making a snowball."

Now you're going to introduce and choose your characters.

The visitors take turns saying a descriptive sentence. These sentences, and all other sentences you say during the game, should be simple. No compound sentences - focus on one thing and say it. Start with the player to the left of the moon and go clockwise.

You'll all get several turns, but the moon isn't allowed to talk yet. You can describe whatever you like - people, houses, animals, the weather, events, things or sounds, for example.

You must pick your characters along the way. The characters you pick to play must all be children, or something or someone that can act child-like. If you play adults or robots you won't be able to get into the game.

You pick who you play by speaking in character. The first player to speak for one of the characters, controls that character for the rest of the game. You can't describe a character and speak for it on the same turn. That means you often end up playing characters that someone else has described first.

When everyone's picked a role, start the trip.

4. The visitors start the trip.

"Hey! Hey, come over here! Look what I found!"

"What is it?"

"Lemme see! I wanna see too!"

"It looks like a huge umbrella. Look at all the colors!"

"Why are they moving?"

Now you'll tell how you travel from the earth to the moon.

The player to the right of the moon picks up the ball. Whoever has the ball, gets a turn, and can say one or two sentences - no more! Speak in character as much as you can, as if it's a radio play. Don't say lines for someone else's character.

While someone is talking, anyone can raise their hand to say they'd like to be next. The player holding the ball passes it on to whoever he likes after he's done, with two restrictions. One: Don't send the ball back to the player who had it just before you, unless there are no other players with their hands up. Two: The moon can't have the ball!

You should describe why you want to go to the moon, and what happens on the way there. But as soon as someone says you've arrived, the visit begins.

5. The moon gets visitors.

“Carrie is jumping up and down on the big rubber mushroom.”

“Hey, look out! There’s someone behind you!”

“They can all see a big head that’s sticking out of the ground.”

“It’s a giant centipede! A giant, blue centipede!”

This is the longest phase. Now the visitors get to talk to the moon and explore it.

The rules are like the previous phase, but now the moon can talk as well. The moon can say more than the visitors - up to four sentences at a time. It doesn’t need the ball to speak; but it can only talk as a response - when someone else talks to it first, or does something with or on it.

Even though the moon can’t take the initiative, it can react in exciting ways. If a visitor sits on a crater, the moon can say a guinea pig with a space helmet jumps out of the crater. If a visitor asks for directions to the Milky Way, the moon can sneeze so hard that the visitor flies up into the sky and sees the Milky Way from there.

The moon is gentle, pleasant and curious. It likes visitors, and devotes its attention fully to whoever it talks to.

During this phase you’re going to have adventures. An adventure can be a strange discovery, doing exciting stuff and meeting strange creatures - all on and around the moon.

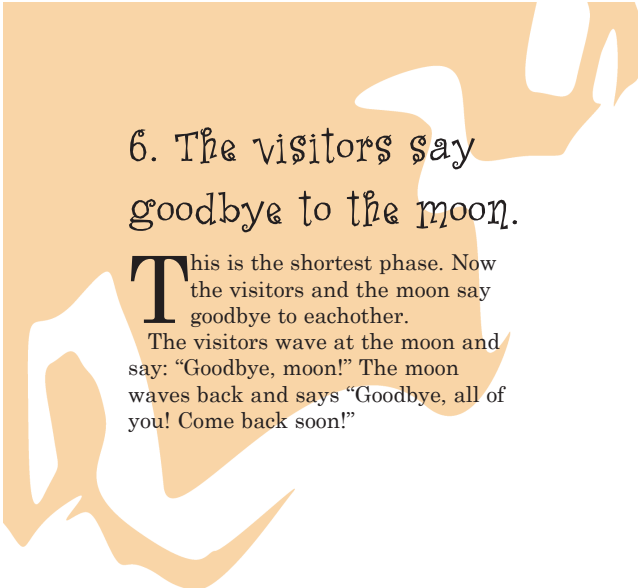
When you’ve had at least three adventures, you can start moving on to the next phase. Anytime a visitor has the ball, they can stretch and yawn to show they’re ready to go

home. (They have to pass the ball to someone else afterwards!) The next person to get the ball can also stretch and yawn, or continue this phase.

If the moon gets a turn after someone’s started yawning, it can say it’s bedtime for the children, and that it has to go out and shine on the rooftops. Then all the visitors have to stretch and yawn at the same time - it’s time to go.

When all visitors are ready to leave, go on to the goodbyes. Put down the ball.





6. The visitors say goodbye to the moon.

This is the shortest phase. Now the visitors and the moon say goodbye to each other.

The visitors wave at the moon and say: "Goodbye, moon!" The moon waves back and says "Goodbye, all of you! Come back soon!"

7. The visitors go home.

"Moby is standing by the window and looking down at the moon with a sad, sad face."

"Behind him Carrie is smiling, because she's sure they can all come back some time."

"And behind her again Mr. Centipede is sleeping on the ground and snoring very loudly."

Now you briefly describe the trip home.

Each of you says a sentence each about the trip home. Start with the player to the moon's left. Now you shouldn't speak in character, but you can say what the characters are thinking and feeling if you want to. The moon finishes by describing how everyone's back on earth and goes home to their own house.

8. The visitors go to sleep.

“Millie climbs into bed. The blankets are big and soft, and she suddenly realizes how much she’s missed them, and how tired she feels. She yawns, and little moon bubbles float up from her head and pop when they reach the ceiling.”

This is the game’s closure.

The visitors take turns telling how they go to sleep. Start with the player to the left of the moon. You can say as many sentences as you like, though about five will usually be enough.

Then it’s the moon’s turn. If it likes, it can tie up loose ends from the story. Then it ends the game by describing how it shines down on them all.

And it can use all the time it wants.





Alternative version:

Misfit kids

“Nina throws her cigarette down on the grass and crushes it with the heel of her boot.”

“Oh”, says the moon, ‘that tickles a bit. Oh!’”

“As the huge toad starts to chew on Marvin’s toes, he whines: ‘Come on! None of this is real anyway!’”

This is a different version you can try. The rules are the same, but the characters you play should be misfit kids in their teens. They might be repressed nerdy types, precocious drug addicts, have neurological afflictions or just be the wrong color of skin at their school.

“Misfit kids” is about the kids opening up and discovering themselves - again, or for the first time. It’s important that the moon still be gentle, pleasant and curious, no matter how abrasive or stunted the kids might be. It’s up to the visitors how, and at what pace, the kids open up.