

Open the Pod Bay Door



a story game for 2 to 5 players by Bryan Hansel

While investigating a distant star system, the cryogenic, terraforming, colony starship Appleseed became infected by a computer worm. A planetary scouting team was caught outside on the unarmed, short-range pod, the Snow Day. The ship's infected robot killed everyone awake on the Appleseed and locked the team out. The pod's air supplies are almost gone...

### ***The crew:***

1. Lieutenant Commander Michelle
2. Lancer the pilot
3. Ruhan the computer expert
4. Janya the Navy Seal
5. Misa the exobiologist
6. Kirima the engineer
7. Nico the unpaid intern

### ***First Scene***

The first player to take a turn plays Michelle on Snow Day's bridge. Other players play Lancer and Ruhan, and anyone can add outside events. The players must drive Michelle to take an action. After Michelle takes an action – something difficult or something that could cause harm (*see Resolving Actions*) – proceed to the next section.

### ***Meanwhile, Therefore, But***

Before play passes to the next player, the person to the right of the current player picks one word from these three: **meanwhile**, **therefore**, **but**. This works as a conjunction for the next scene. The next player then sets the scene based on the word (*see The Next Scenes*).



“Meanwhile” takes the play to a completely different scene, area and characters.

“Therefore” means that the next scene builds on the last.

“But” continues the last scene and introduces an entirely new set of circumstances.

## ***The Next Scenes***

Play continues left around the table with each player taking a turn during which he sets a scene, includes characters that aren't tied up resolving actions and tells us who he is playing. The other players play the other characters in the scene and can add outside events to drive the scene towards an action.

After an action, go back to *Meanwhile*, *Therefore*, *But* and continue until all the characters are either dead, or they have

recaptured the Appleaseed.

## ***Add Pressure***

The oxygen onboard Snow Day runs out in the two rounds (3 to 5 players), three rounds (2 players). If the crew hasn't solved this issue somehow, they die. Each character should get to tell the others how she feels about facing death in the void. One round is when all the players have taken a turn.

## ***Resolving Actions***

When a character wishes to do something, roll a d6 (six-sided die). The result determines the time taken. If the action relates to her job, it takes 1 (1-3), 2 (4-5), or 3 (6) turns.

If the character attempts something not related to her job, it takes 2 (1), 4 (2),



6(3), 8 (4), 10 (5) or 12 (6) turns.

At the end of the required turns, roll a d6 to determine success. If the action was related to her job, it succeeds on 1-4, otherwise it succeeds on 1-3.

Track the number of turns that pass on the Turn Tracking Workshop. The character cannot be brought into a new scene until the number of turns pass that were required for the action. If all characters are tied up at the end of a round, all actions fail and Something Desperate happens.

## ***Failure***

When an action fails, pick a player to tell us what has gone wrong. If there was potential of death, roll a die. On a roll of 4-6, the character dies. Tell us how. If others were also in danger because of the action, they also roll.

## ***Something Desperate***

A last ditch effort to save the crew occurs. Play enough scenes to allow all living characters to take an action in an attempt to save the crew. If there are more successes than failures, those that succeeded live and those that failed died. Tell us how. Otherwise, they all die. Tell us how. Each character should get to tell the others how she feels about facing death in the void.

## ***Credits***

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# Example Turn Tracking Worksheet

One round for four players is four turns long.

Number of turns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Lt. Commander Michelle		→				An action from turn one takes 4 turns.										
Lancer the pilot	Lancer fails and then dies.					→			×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Janya the Navy Seal		→			Action will take three turns.											
Ruhan the computer expert																
Misa the exobiologist		Misa's failed action ties her up for 10 turns.														
Kirima the engineer		The yellow highlight shows when the air runs out.														
Akio the unpaid intern		Tied up for 4 turns.			→											



# Open the Pod Bay Door *Turn Tracking Worksheet*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Lt. Commander Michelle															
Lancer the pilot															
Janya the Navy Seal															
Ruhan the computer expert															
Misa the exobiologist															
Kirima the engineer															
Akio the unpaid intern															



# Open the Pod Bay Door *Turn Tracking Worksheet*

	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Lt. Commander Michelle															
Lancer the pilot															
Janya the Navy Seal															
Ruhan the computer expert															
Misa the exobiologist															
Kirima the engineer															
Akio the unpaid intern															

