



猫の夢

CAT'S DREAM

A SOLITAIRE ADVENTURE RPG BY TOBIE ABAD



ART BY IVAN FRANI

2018 IVAN FRANI

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This game was originally released as a blog post game
intended as a Studio Ghibli inspired RPG. It has now been
further developed to have a wider experience.

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"Time spent with a cat is
never wasted."

Sidonie Gabrielle Colette



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Inspirations

The Cat Returns, Studio Ghibli

My Neighbor Totoro, Studio Ghibli

Castle in the Sky (Laputa), Studio Ghibli

Papurika, Satoshi Kon

Labyrinth, Jim Henson

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll

Little Nemo, Winsor McCay

Over the Garden Wall, Patrick McHale



For Rocky,

My heart and my love.
You remind me that reality, despite all its failures
and absurdities, is worth it because you
are in it to complete me.
I love you.

And to Yoshi,

I promise you, I will also write a dog game soon.
Keep running across the rainbows.
We love you.



BASIC GAME

CAT'S DREAM ♦ SINGLE PLAYER ♦ AGES 7+

What is Cat's Dreams?

Every now and then, for reasons they alone would know, a cat leads a person to an unexpected journey.

They walk up to a person, stare at them until the person notices them, and brings them to where the adventure begins. Only those curious enough to follow find themselves lead down strange alleyways, unfamiliar paths, and twisting corridors until they are brought to a place where they - deep down - desperately needed to go.

Some say, this is because cats know the secret passages that exist between rooms. Between streets. Between cities. Maybe even between worlds. Cats can be feisty, demanding for your attention one moment and then completely care-free and aloof the next. Many have offered ways to care for and understand one's pet cat. But know this: if a cat ever offers to lead you somewhere, do not hesitate.

Follow.

If you don't, you've lost the chance to experience something that only happens once in a lifetime.

To Play

This is a GMless solitaire story building role-playing game. The Basic Game explores fantastic and surreal stories.

Advanced rules and rules for Group play shall eventually be released as well.

"I, as is well known, do not like cats."
Sigmund Freud writing to his friend Arnold Zweig.

Setup

To play this game, you need the following:

A deck of cards

One six-sided die

Writing tool

Paper or Notebook,

if desired



In this game, you are a person whom has been chosen by a Cat.

The Cat has chosen to lead you somewhere where you are needed. And your choices determine what events transpire, how they will unfold, and when the journey ends. Unlike most role-playing games, there is no need to have a Game Master in this game.

Instead, you only need to use the deck of cards to determine the events that unfold and resolve the challenges you may face. Every story is different.

And how it ends depends on how fate chooses to tell it for you, and how you interpret and color the choices in the events that unfold.

The Character Sheet

The game uses a “character sheet” although it might be easier to image it as a play mat rather than a character sheet, because in this game you do not fill it up with stats or scores. Instead, the sheet is used to keep track of three things: Hope, Strength, and Fear.

Imagine dividing your sheet into four areas:

Your Character

Come up with a name and a short description.

If you need help, check out page 11.

Hope



This side is where you keep your cards for Hope Challenges.

Fear



This side is where you track fear difficulty.

Strength

This side is where you keep your cards for Strength.



“Your Character”

In “Your Character,” make a small sketch to represent you. Write down the name of your character. You can choose a simple name or a complex one. So long as it is a comfortable name for you, it is a good one. Your character can be of any age, gender, or social class you want them to be. This is your character.

Under the sketch and the name, complete this sentence for your character:

“I want....”

“I Want...”

This is something your character wants to accomplish. This can be a simple desire or dream that they want to accomplish (“I want to learn to dance,” or “I want to visit my mother,”) or it can be something that seems impossible and fantastic (“I want to be able to fly.”)

The way you answer this question sets the mood and gives you an idea of what kind of game you want to have. More serious or somber “wants” will end up creating a game that may explore a heavier emotional dream. Interesting and exciting “wants” might become roots for a fun adventurous dream. Quirky “wants” can result in wacky and funny dreams. It is up to you what sort of dream you want to create in the game.

If you need ideas, use the table on the next page to generate your character.



“Your Character” Generator

Draw a card to generate an answer for each area:

I am a...



Student, Book keeper, Doctor, Architect, Child



Artist, Magician, Fisherman, Parent, Singer



Baker, Writer, Orphan, Pilot, Construction Worker



Athlete, Chef, Farmer, Blue-collar Worker, Twin

I want to...



Visit mother, Find my sibling, Fly, Go home, Sleep



Help someone get home, Adventure, Leave, Escape



Learn magic, Get well, Build something, Find a friend



Get something, Taste it, Know, Transform, Fall in love

I actually...

(for those wanting a bit more detail)



Am blind, Talk to animals, Scare easily, Hate cats



Can't step out, Need glasses, Miss my friends



Ran away, Lost something valuable, Am sick



Am a ghost, Did this before, Heard stories of this

My name is....

(in case you can't think of any)



Aina, Chester, Daniel, Flip, Joshua, James, Lanz, Mon, Sen



Adrian, Maki, Dee Dee, Bench, Jheyar, Rupert, Mon



Adam, Alan, Banana, Ben, Dan, Jim, John, Ryan, Elizabeth



Christopher, Joseph, Maria, Rose, Valeria, Yoshi

Preparing for the Journey

Cat's Dreams is a zero-prep role-playing game. This means you do not need to read up on the game's setting or learn a lot of rules before you can play. The rules are extremely light and are intended to facilitate instant play.

As mentioned earlier, Cat's Dreams uses a deck of cards. That stack of cards shall be referred to as the Story Deck. Designate an area for your Discard Pile. If you used some cards earlier to create your character, that's fine. Place those cards now in the Discard Pile.

In this game, cards will be used to both generate the unfolding story, determine the challenge numbers, determine your scores when you attempt to overcome a challenge, and when the Journey ends. A Journey is composed of Scenes and once you've played through the last Scene, the story ends. There are some events, however, that might abruptly end the Journey sooner.

Decide on the Journey Length

Given this is a solitaire game, decide on how long you want this Journey to take. A standard game is 10 Scenes long. For short games, you can have fewer Scenes, but it is recommended to be no less than five. For longer games, you can have as many as fifteen Scenes, but this may mean multiple reshuffles of the deck, depending on the Challenges you face.

Length	Number of Cards	Estimated Time
Short	5 to 9	15 - 30 minutes
Standard	10	30 - 60 minutes
Long	11 to 15	60+ minutes

Draw the desired number of cards, then place them in a single row, face down. These are now to be called the Journey Cards.

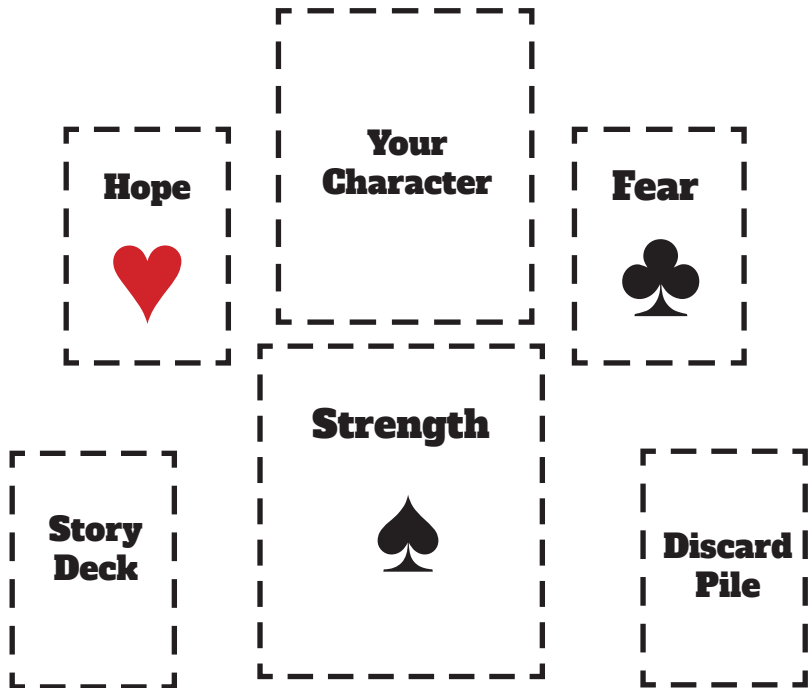
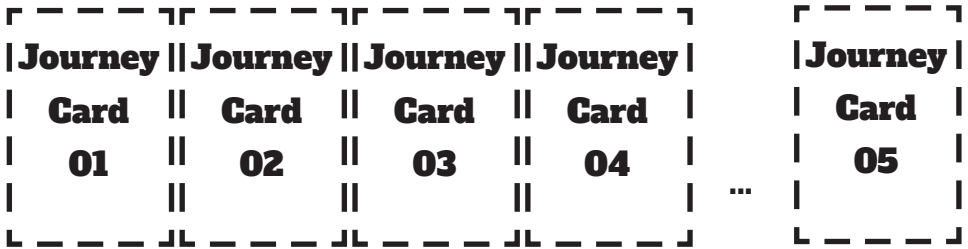


With or Without Jokers?

A standard game does not use Jokers. Optional rules using them can be found at page 48.

Sample Set-Up Below:

This is not a hard rule. You can always arrange things differently so long as each area is clearly defined for you.



"In ancient times, cats were worshipped as gods;
they have not forgotten this."
Sir Terry Pratchett



Starting the Adventure

The story begins with you at some common location you normally go to. Perhaps at a coffee shop, or a corner café. Or maybe you just stepped out of the market or just left school. The Cat catches your attention. Roll a six-sided die three times to determine how the Cat grabs your attention.

Table A-1: Cat's Descriptor (Your First Two Rolls)

Die Result	First Descriptor	Second Descriptor
01	White	Long Coat
02	Gray	Solid
03	Black	Harlequin
04	Orange	Two Colors (Roll for the second color)
05	Cream	Patchworked
06	Brown	Pointed

Table A-2: Cat's Special Trait (Your Third Roll)

Use Option A on your first game. Use either afterwards for more variety.

Die Result	Special Trait Option A	Special Trait Option B
01	Can Talk	Walks upright
02	Sings	Ghostly
03	Has a prop (Examples include hat, umbrella, suitcase, eye glasses, etc)	Roll twice in Option A to generate two different Traits.
04	Walks on walls	Shapechanging
05	Is followed by a procession of other cats	Is an inert stuffed toy when others are looking
06	Can become invisible, leaving paw prints	Choose 3 traits from either column

The Cat's unique Traits grab your attention and cause you to break from your usual routine.

Perhaps it is curiosity or amusement, but you find yourself following the Cat as it leads you down a winding path. It leads you to a place where your "Wish" can be granted.

What about the Journey Cards?



The Journey Cards come in after the First Encounter. For now, the narrative is building up to the first encounter. The First Encounter is a good way to give the story "bookends," so they have a starting narrative detail that the story can return to at the end of the Story.

Feel free to narrate what the Cat leads you through until you reach the Door. Remember, the focus of the game is the Journey, so don't take too long to choose when you get to the Door. During this trek to the Door, feel free to mention small details that imply a connection to your Wish. Finally, when you get to the Door, generate it using the table below.

The Door brings you to the place where your Wish can be granted.

Table B: The Door

Roll two dice to generate the Special Door.

Die Result	...Door	...that...
01	Tiny	Calls to you
02	Glowing	No one else can see
03	Invisible	Reminds you of your bedroom door
04	Floating	Has a golden cat paw as a door knocker
05	Talking	Has your name on it
06	Transforming	You have seen in your dreams

Stepping Through

As the Cat leads you through the door, you find yourself entering a whole new world. Generate the world by rolling a six-sided die three times, the first two rolls on Table C-1 and the last roll on Table C-2.

Table C-1: The Door Leads You to a...

Die Result	Place Descriptor A	Place Descriptor B
01	Magical	Forest Kingdom
02	Mysterious	Miniature Town
03	Dangerous	Underwater City
04	Hidden	Steampunk Village
05	Moving	Beach Island
06	Quiet	Floating Castle

Table C-2: [Place] ...that...

Die Result	Place Descriptor C
01	Where Objects are able to talk
02	Filled with your imaginary friends
03	Your grandmother used to tell you about
04	You used to draw as a child
05	You once read about in a children's book
06	Perfectly matches a story you wanted to but never had a chance to write

“Like all pure creatures, cats are practical.”
William S. Burroughs



Upon arriving in this new location, you have your first encounter. Roll the six-sided die, and draw a card to generate who you meet!

Table D-1: First Encounter

Die Result	Black Card	Red Card
01	A Lost Princess	A Warrior
02	A Witch	An Old Woman
03	A Kind Spirit	A Hospitable Insect
04	Another Cat	An Irritating Bird
05	A Monster!	A Talkative Painting
06	Your Reflection	You encounter two beings, roll for them (one from each column) and ignore any rolled sixes.

Also generate what happens in this first meeting. Roll the six-sided die.

Table E-1: What Happened in that First Encounter?

Die Result	Upon Meeting...
01	Issues a Challenge
02	Casts a Spell/Curse on You
03	Welcomes You and Gives You Advice
04	Gives Directions
05	Gives You a Gift
06	Asks Of You a Favor

Narrate how the encounter unfolds. How the event affects you and how this whole journey seems to promise the possibility of getting what you Want. It is also possible what you Want seems unlikely so far, and the adventure instead becomes the obstacle you must complete to once more have the opportunity to get what you want.

Other Encounters

You can choose to use these tables to generate other characters you encounter in your Journey. Draw a card to generate who you meet!

Table F: More Encounters

Card	Black Card	Red Card
Ace	Talking Animal	Kind Stranger
02	Scary Guard	Stern Elder
03	Shy Imp	Talking Statue
04	Drunken Farmer	Bookish Guard
05	Hungry Driver	Burping Bodyguard
06	Bold Poet	Inquisitive Servant
07	Colorless Clown	Weeping Grandmother
08	Nervous Weaver	Confused Lamp Lighter
09	Lonely Fisherman	Singing Highwayman
10	Sleepy Builder	Gentle Giant
Jack	Fragrant Vassal	Entangled Archivist
Queen	Vengeful Swordsman	Blind Priestess
King	Forgetful Nobility	Disembodied Voice

None of these personalities are innately good or evil. They are free to be interpreted as you will. If you are having trouble working with the generated personality, you can always shift down one row, or shift to the other column. You can even switch the descriptor of one column with the actor of the other column.



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"I am not lost... I am not lost..."

The Journey Has Begun!

With the use of the Journey Cards in front of you, craft the narrative of your journey. Each Journey Card becomes a Scene that involves your character. Use the Keywords of the card to color the narrative.

Note that some Cards might have more than just Keywords on them. Some cards may have Challenge rating. Some might have effects.

Should the Journey Cards be face-up or face-down?

The original idea has the Journey Cards face-up and allow the player to map out in advance a possible narrative flow.



Players seeking for a challenge can leave the cards faced-down and only reveal them one by one as they tell their tale. Both are valid ways to play.

Solitaire Role-playing Game

Given this is a Solitaire Role-playing game, each Journey Card is intended to be a jumping point for ideas on what happened or unfolded in your story. If you were cursed by a Witch in an earlier scene, for example, and the next Scene card you chose shows "Play with locals," it is your chance to flex those creative muscles to narrate how that unfolds. Do the locals hate the witch too, so they still play with you despite your curse? Do you interpret the card to mean instead you come across a makeshift theater with the locals performing on stage and you watch from the shadows? That is up to you. What is important is that you come up with a story that makes sense and have fun in the process.

No Wrong Interpretations

Don't be afraid of how you choose to interpret a card. It is completely up to you to define how a card contributes to the unfolding fiction. Use them as guides but do not be afraid to shape the story as you see fit.

Taking the Journey



Step 1

Select one of the Journey Cards. Place this Card directly above your Character. This is the Current Journey Scene.

Build a story connecting this to the First Encounter, or to any previous Journey Cards that have been played.



If the Card calls for a new Character, use the Table D (p17) or Table F (page 18) generator as needed.

Step 2

As you shape the story unfolding in the Scene based on the Keyword on that card, find a good point when to inject the Challenge written on the card.

Attempt to resolve the Challenge.
(See Facing Challenges, in page 22)



Step 3

If you succeed, proceed to Step 4.
If you failed, you may Try Again.
(see Trying Again, in page 28)
If you fail a second time, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4

Gain the bonus or fulfill the penalty of the card as listed.



Step 5

If the Story Deck has not run out of cards, continue to the next Journey Card.
(Return to Step 1)

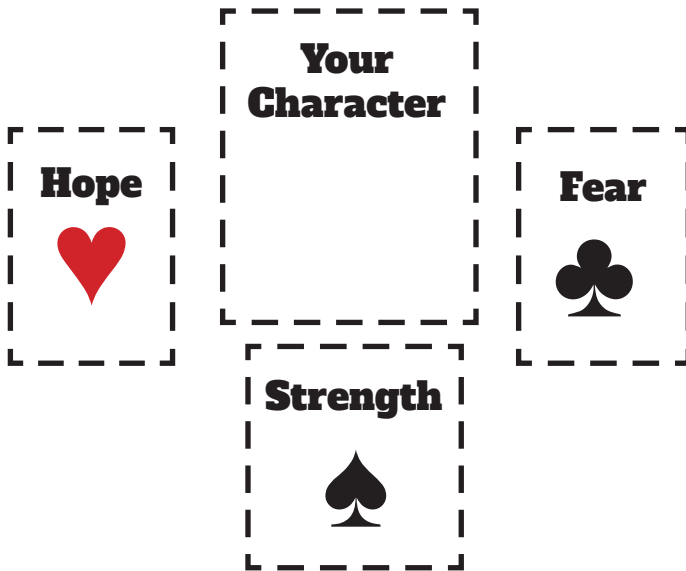
If the Story Deck has run out of cards, proceed to Ending the Dream.
(see Ending the Dream, in page 29)



Facing Challenges

When a Journey Card is selected, the player must eventually attempt to Overcome the Challenge listed on it. Be sure to build the narrative to work with the card and any previous stories established by previous scenes. In this game, the Story deck is used to attempt to overcome Challenges. The dice can help, but only when you are Trying Again.

There are three kinds of Challenges:
Hope Challenges, Strength Challenges and Fear Challenges



Hope Challenges are overcome using Hope.

Strength Challenges have a value to beat based on Fear, and are overcome using Strength.

Fear Challenges can be overcome using either Hope or Strength. But these cannot be Tried Again.

Also remember, Fear will always win ties.
Let's explore these concepts in detail in the next few pages.



Hope Challenges

Hope is the Trait that is important whenever the character tries to do something positive which is not being contested or opposed by someone.

Examples include:

Trying to find a dropped earring, following the trail of a lazy firefly, or climbing a wall are examples of actions that are tested by Hope.

Journey Cards that are Hope Challenges typically mention the value of Hope needed to Overcome the Challenge.



If you fail to pass a Hope Challenge,
you can Try Again.



“Children, old crones, peasants, and dogs ramble;
cats and philosophers stick to their point..”
H.P. Lovecraft



Strength Challenges

Strength is the Trait that is important whenever the action of the character is being opposed by other characters.

Running from one rooftop to the others is just a Hope action. But if you're doing this while being chased by soldiers, then it becomes a Strength action. Trying to talk and convince the living stone wall to let you pass is also a Strength action.

Don't look at this as physical actions. Look at this more as when the character's strength of conviction and determination are key to succeeding in the task.



If your Strength card is red, you can also add the number of your Hope card to your Strength, regardless of its suit. Strength can come from unexpected places.

Fear is the Trait that tries to make things more difficult for you in Strength Challenges. In many ways, Fear stops you because you allow it to. While there are instances when Failure cannot be avoided, it is only through Strength that one can overcome Fear. During all Strength tasks, the target you have to beat is based on what you have currently in Fear. Don't worry, this will get clearer soon. But know that what you have here in Fear, is what makes your Strength action a challenge.

If you fail to pass a Strength Challenge, you can Try Again.



Fear Challenges

Finally there are just some threats that may be faced with Hope or Strength, but are just so tremendously terrifying that they cannot be tried again.

These types of Challenges are more part of the Advanced Journey game and are recommended only for advanced players who are used to the game. Fear Challenges are horrifying because they can lead to character death if you aren't ready for them.

The full rules for the Advanced Journey will be released in the Supplement, ***Another Cat's Dream: Advanced Journey Game***.



If you fail to pass a Fear Challenge, you cannot Try Again.



The Brave Protagonist

While the Protagonist might not necessarily be a brave person, it is in these small moments of courage that the protagonist continues on in their journey. See Strength as a representation of inner power, rather than a display of physical prowess. Explaining where the strength is drawn from, whether it is from a growing sense of self-esteem or a desire to make one's parents' proud, can be great narrative details to add to your evolving story.



Card Values

Each suit resonates with a specific Trait in the game. A resonating card is worth its face value. Otherwise, it is only worth 1 point in facing the Challenge.

Jokers are not usually used. But if you choose to use them, they have their own rules (see Optional Rules, in page 48.)



Hearts = Hope

Hearts resonate with Hope.



Spades = Strength

Spades resonate with Strength.



Clubs = Fear

Clubs resonate with Fear.



Diamonds = None

All Diamonds are considered to value 1.

Overcoming a Challenge

If your current Journey Card which has a Challenge, draw three cards. Turn one card face up and choose where to place it between Hope and Strength. It is best to place the card in the area you feel that matches the current narrative. The remaining two cards are then placed face-down in each appropriate remaining area.

While you have not turned the cards over, you are free to switch them around. However, once you've decided to turn any of the remaining cards over, you can no longer change their positions.

Once you are final with your decision, turn the three cards face up and see if you succeeded. If any of the cards are face cards (Jack, Queen, or King), something special happens!

Face Cards

If a face card is drawn instead (Jack, Queen or King), an NPC can enter the scene. Face cards do not have a value, but are considered to always succeed unless the story otherwise says so.

If the Face card is in the Hope, the character is an ally and will help you accomplish a task.

If the Face card is in Strength, it can be an Ally or an Enemy depending on whether or not the suit is red (Ally) or black (Enemy). An Enemy in Strength means the Enemy helps you, for now (usually a henchman or unusually dangerous character choosing to help you instead).

If the Face card is in Fear, however, then your story will have an Antagonist. For this action, you automatically fail. From this point on, every time a Face card with Spades or Clubs appears, it will now represent that same enemy once more making an appearance in your story. Antagonists always have a value of 8 to overcome.

After cards are dealt, and an Action is resolved, all cards are discarded save for the Fear card. The Fear card is removed from play.

“But cats to me are strange, so strange
I cannot sleep if one is near.”

W.H. Davies



Try Again

If you did not have enough to overcome the Challenge, you can Try Again. When you Try Again, you discard your Hope and Strength card, and draw two new cards. If that is still not enough, you may also roll a six-sided die and can add it to the result to try to overcome the Challenge one last time.

If you do choose to roll the die, you must discard a third card from the deck at the end of the Challenge. You may see what card was discarded if you want to.

Try Again allows a failed attempt much greater chances at success. However, it does so at the cost of discarding more cards. You are only allowed to Try Again once per Challenge. You can never Try Again Fear Challenges in an Advanced Journey Game.

Failing to Overcome a Challenge

When a Challenge is failed, the player simply continues the narrative to reflect the failed action. The story continues, however, as the dream only ends when the last Journey Card is played, or when the Story deck runs out of cards.

Can I die? I failed right?



In the spirit of how dreams tend to work and the inspirations behind this game, players rarely - if ever - die in this game. Instead, they wake up alive and discover they were saved by an old ally, or were given mercy by their antagonist at the last moment. This is keeping with the genre of the game's inspirational muses.

What about in the Advanced Journey Game?

Death can happen. In fact, death tends to happen with a failed Fear Challenge.

Out of Cards

If at any time you run out of Story Cards, sadly that means the Story comes to an abrupt end. Your character suddenly sits up and finds herself in her own bed. A cat stares at her from the window, then very calmly, and nonchalantly, walks away.

The dream is over.

Reaching the End of the Journey

If you successfully reach the end of the journey by playing and overcoming the challenge of the last Journey Card, then you have reached the ending of your Journey! You can simply narrate the ending the way you want, and have any characters you enjoyed in the story be part of the finale.

Alternately, you can generate the ending with two die rolls.

Table G-1: The Unexpected Ending

Roll two dice to generate the Finale using the first and second Descriptors.

Die Result	First Ending Descriptor	Second Ending Descriptor
01	A Confession	A Shooting Star
02	A Festival	A Blossoming Flower
03	A Reunion	A Delicious Treat
04	A Promise	A Familiar Song
05	A Kiss	A Letter
06	A Farewell	Another Door/ A Key





**"Hello? Is anyone there?
Who is there?"**

Example of Play

Daniel of Norham decides to play Cat's Dream. He tries generating a character and from the deck, he draws four cards and gets 10♥, 3♣, 8♠, and K♥.

Looking at the table, Daniel looks at the possible combinations. He can play a Construction Worker (♥) who is named Alan (♥), who wants to Go on an Adventure (♣), and is actually someone who scares easily (♠) or...

He can play a Magician (♣) who Lost Something Valuable (♥). He can name the Magician, Cheska (♠) and she really wants to Learn Real Magic (♥).

Then, he feels inspired and decides to make his own character. Daniel decides to play a single mother named Bethany who wants to travel (since she could never afford it, especially with the kid). Daniel decides in the opening scene, she can lose her kid and that leads to the whole adventure.

Breaking the Rules

As always, feel free to break the rules if you want. The game is designed to help facilitate an experience but if you find yourself still having fun doing something in a different way, go for it!



Realizing he doesn't really have that much time today due to adulting responsibilities, Daniel decides this will be a quick Journey and draws 5 cards from the Story Deck. He lays them out on the table, and designates places the Story Deck down nearby. On a separate pile, he gathers all the cards he used up in coming up with a character and places them in the Discard Pile.

Used Cards

All used cards go to the Discard Pile, unless told to remove them from the game.



With the 5 Journey Cards now set down, he picks up the six-sided die he normally uses when he plays A Single Moment and rolls it three times. He gets a 3, 6 and a 3. He looks at Table A-1 and Table A-2 and considers the possible combinations:

He could meet a Black Harlequin cat who can turn invisible (3,3,6) or a Brown Harlequin cat which has a monocle (6,3,3) or even a Black Pointed cat with two traits (using Option B) and after rolling two more times, he gets 2 and 1, so the cat can talk and loves to sing.

Daniel decides Bethany was in the supermarket with her baby, Thom, when they come across the Black cat. When Bethany sees the singing cat, she ends up placing Thom down as she tries to quietly follow the cat. She does not see Thom crawl away from her.

Move the Story Forward

Notice how Daniel is already setting the stage for Bethany to “Lose something important” even if the actual meeting hasn’t happened yet. When playing, embrace opportunities that move the story forward.



As Bethany follows the singing cat, Daniel decides the cat stops by the wet market area to grab a bag of tuna. Bethany remembers to check on Thom just as the young child slips into The Door.

Quickly rolling two dice, Daniel generates 2 and 5 and determines that the door appears as either a Glowing door with her name on it (2,5) or as a Talking door that no one else can see. Daniel opts for the talking door.

“Oh my!” Behany exclaims, “My baby. Please. I need to get my baby.”

The door laughed, “What’s a baby?”

Bethany shook her head, “I’m talking to a door. Thom! Thom???”

“Who is Thom?” a second voice asked. Bethany turned to see the black cat looking at her with a puzzled expression. Bethany covered her face with her hands, “Oh! Oh... Am I going crazy? I just lost my child..”

“Did this child go through here, Mister Knob?” the cat asked. Bethany looked up to see the door responding with a smile creaking on its surface, “If she means the tiny version of her, yes. he went in.”

Conversations and Dialogue

While not required, it will play much more better if you also choose to speak out lines for the other characters. Rather than simply saying, “They argued” you giving words to what the characters exchange helps you also get a better feel of their personalities as the game goes on.



“May,” Bethany gasped, “May I please step in as well?”

“You might get lost in there, milady. Perhaps I should assist you?” the black pointed cat offered.

“I... I would appreciate that,” Bethany nodded. The door slid open and the two stepped through.

Daniel quickly rolls and determines the door brings Bethany and the cat to a Hidden Floating Castle that she once read about in a children’s book. With the same result of 4, 6, and 5, she could have instead had it bring them to a Quiet, Beach Island that she used to draw as a child. Daniel decides he likes how its a Floating Castle more. He describes how Bethany and the cat step through the door and find themselves immediately on a platform atop one of the towers of the Castle. He can see the clouds spewing out from underneath the Castle, making it look like it was nothing but clouds.

Daniel decides he likes the sense of tension and wonder and opts to keep at the Journey Cards face down. He then pulls his hand back as he realizes he nearly skipped the First Encounter!

Drawing a card, he rolls the die and looks at the combination: Jack ♥ and a 4.

Bethany stares at the irritating bird (4 and Jack of Hearts, which is a black card). The bird whistles at them and a quick roll reveals a 4, it greets them with a mix of tones. Bethany calls out for Thom, wondering where her son had gone. The black cat points stretches, admitting, "I don't normally keep track of humans. You all look the same to me." Daniel sticks his tongue out, before he covers his face as he laughs. He didn't expect to find himself wanting to act out the reactions. Bethany growls, "Come on Cat! Where is my son, Thom?" To their surprise, the bird responds, whistling as it flutters in one direction.

"It would seem," the cat sighed, "You will already have a guide. Hurry on now, adventure awaits!"

And with that, Daniel draws the first Journey Card.

Opening it, he discovers it contains the 3 of ♠ .

Referencing the tables, he sees the card is a moment of Mistaken Identity. And it calls for a Strength Challenge! He draws three cards and places them down nearby. Picking up the first card,

he turns it over and reveals it as a 5 of ♦. Now has to decide where to place them between Strength and Hope. Not knowing what the others might be, Daniel decides to place it in Strength, thinking even if it counts only as a 1, it allows Bethany to add her Hope to its final value. He opens the two other cards and learns her Hope is a 5 of ♦ and her Fear turns out to be a 10 of ♠! This means Fear is only 1, which means she overcomes it!

Acting Out

Do you have those moments too? I love acting out what the characters do. It just feels more natural to do so.



Daniel works out the narrative to work with the results. Bethany runs after the bird, leaping over cloud mounds and leaving a smoky trail in her wake. Daniel realizes someone has to mistake Bethany for someone, so he quickly goes back to Table F for encounters and draws a 9 of ♦. This means Bethany encounters the Singing Highwayman!

“You there,” Daniel talks as the highwayman who emerges from the shadows of a tree, “Aren’t you the one I’m supposed to hold up?”

“What?” Daniel replies as Bethany, “I think you’ve mistaken me for someone else, dear sir.”

“I am a highway man. I am no sir.”

“I’m looking for my son,” Bethany replies, “I think you’re not someone who can help me though. If you don’t mind, I’ll be going ahead now..”

Daniel decides the Highway man shrugs, letting Bethany leave. The Highway man stares at the path, waiting for the woman he was supposed to rob.

Daniel draws the next Journey Card. It turns out to be an Ace of ♣ . Looking at the chart, that means it is a Threat of Discovery and requires a Strength Challenge. Daniel thinks about this for a bit and decides there’s need of some time before this moment. He needs an antagonist of some sort. So Bethany continues down the path, and soon enters a small clearing where something was busy eating. Once again, Daniel opts to generate an encounter and draws a Queen of ♦ . That generates a Blind Priestess! Bethany sees a pale woman whose hair is twisted into horn-like extensions. Her eyes are gone, with scarred skin covering there previous place. Her fingers are stuffing a dead bunny into her lips as she suckles on their bones.

Gross Out Moment

Keep in mind, you can always define the result in whatever way works best for you. In this example, Daniel loves horror too, so he had the priestess look kinda ghastly.



One thing for sure, Bethany did not want to be noticed by this priestess! Drawing the requisite three cards, Daniel looks at the first one and it is a King of ♦ !

This being a Face card in his possible three card spread means it is a distinct character. Being red, it can be an ally. Looking at the rules in page 27, Daniel opts to place it in his Strength! This means it is an ally, and Hope can add too!

Generating the Ally, Daniel draws a fourth card, and this turns out to be 7 of ♠. Bethany clamps both hands over her mouth in shock as the priestess rips the rabbits foot off with her teeth. She backs into a black and white figure that clamps its hands over her mouth and pulls her safely back. Bethany turns and sees it is a colorless clown. Daniel decides the clown is a mime.

“What is that thing?” Bethany gasped. The clown mimes “I don't know” by raising both hands and shoulders.

“I just want to find my son,” Bethany sighs.

The clown mimes holding a baby in its arms. Bethany motions Thom is older. The clown nods affirmatively.

“Please show me where,” Bethany mumbles. Daniel decides Bethany tries to follow the clown. Daniel then realizes since the Clown is a Face Card in Hope, he automatically passes the Challenge with the Clown's help! He peeks at the two other cards, and they happened to be a 2 of ♠ for Hope, and a 9 of ♠ for Fear. Good thing it was a Face card!

Remember: Face Cards are auto win



A Face Card in Hope or Strength means an auto win. If it was in Fear, however, the antagonist reveals itself and becomes a recurring threat! AND you automatically fail too! If FACE cards appear in both Hope/Strength and Fear, then the Fear wins. Fear wins all ties.

Having snuck away, the third Journey Card is drawn. It happens to be a 6 of ♥. The table defines it as Make New Friends. The rules tell Daniel to draw a card and its color determines what happens next. Daniel finds a 4 of ♦ which means he shuffles back all discarded cards. The Clown and Bethany find a moment to sit down. Bethany tells the Clown her story and about how she is looking for Thom. The Clown mime laughs and points towards where they came from.

The Clown mimes the priestess' actions and Bethany understands. Her son is in danger from that thing unless she finds him first. Emboldened, Bethany stands up and thanks the Clown and asks for its name. The Clown just bows.

Pay Attention to your Journey Cards



Seeing its three down from five, Daniel knows the story is nearing its possible end in this short game. He reminds himself to make the narrative have a cool ending somehow.

Daniel draws the fourth Journey Card. It turns out to be a 6 of **♦**. According to the table, that means Cursed! An ear-splitting roar breaks out from the woods and Bethany grabs the Clown's hand. She drags the clown with her as the forest around them tears apart. The priestess screams with her bloody talons reaching out to grab them. The two try to run but the priestess grabs hold of Bethany and curses her, telling her that she will feel nothing but sadness in her heart!

"Why are you doing this to me?" Bethany cries.

The priestess laughs, "Because I can. These are my woods and you are not meant to be here. You will find no hope in this place! This is mine! Mine!"

Daniel realizes this will be bad. The curse means he automatically has to discard the card assigned to Hope. He prays that the last card won't require a Hope Challenge.

Daniel describes the Clown running to one side, the Priestess holding him up and choosing which side to eat first, the upper half or the lower half. Daniel draws the fifth Journey Card and flips it over.

The card turns out to be a Jack of **♦**. This means "Transformation! A friend all along" The effect shuffles back all discarded hearts, which aren't many given the earlier reshuffle. But the card's keywords also offers story options. Is the Priestess a friend, after all? One testing to see her mettle? Is the Clown actually Thom and in this world her son is an older helpful fellow? Daniel considers the story so far then realizes the Friend All Along can be the highway man from earlier. The Priestess and Bethany hear singing and suddenly, a shot rings out! The Priestess pulls back at the lead strikes her in the face, forcing her to withdraw. A second and third shot ring out as the Highway man fires a few more rounds at the monstrous Priestess.

"Well, if I ain't wrong this time. I believe that's my target," the highway man laughs. The Priestess pulls away, screeching but her antler like hair catches on vines, keeping her from running away. The Highway man hums as he fires a few more shots, singing about keeping the roads safe and the rides light, and reloads a new round of bullets.

Bethany runs to the Highway man and hugs him, thanking him for the help. As she turns to check on the Clown, she sees him motioning at her to come closer. She and the Highway man approach and see what the Clown has found.

Daniel rolls the dice twice and gets a 1 and a 4. Looking at the list, he quickly realizes he knows how to end the story.

Could he have kept the story going?

Absolutely. If the player feels the current narrative can still keep going, then they can simply draw as many Journey Cards as they want. You can even ignore the abrupt waking up ending when cards run out if you want, and just reshuffle cards. Whatever makes it more fun for you is acceptable!



More ideas are in page 48, Optional Rules.

On the grass, Thom is sleeping with his thumb in his mouth like a pacifier. Bethany hurries and picks up her boy, hugging him tight. The boy barely wakes up, telling her he's tired and ready to go home.

Bethany starts to hear a familiar song and looks up at the Highway man. He sings a lullaby she has heard before:

Good night, good night
Your eyes are getting heavy
Good night sweet light
It is time to sleep and dream.

Good night, good night
This is the end of your journey.
Let's close the light
and return on your next dream.



Bethany stares at the Highway man and realizes, "You were the dreams I used to have. When I was little!" The Clown nodded quickly. The Highway man bowed. Even the Priestess now emerged from the woods where she fled and bowed too. She no longer had bullet holes in her body. Bethany looked around and smiled, realizing she once used to have fun here often.

"Promise to us that you'll come back," the Highway man asked. "Or at least promise to us," the Priestess hissed, "That you will let him play with us?" She pointed at Thom.

The Clown nodded a yes. Bethany smiled, "So long as it is just for play." They all hugged her tight.

Another door emerged and hoped to lead her home. Bethany and Thom wake up, back at the market, having seemingly fallen asleep on the side against an aisle. In the distance, they see the singing cat from earlier and realize his fur pattern would look like a highway man. The cat hurries away. Thom and Bethany share a secret smile between them knowing there's a place they alone can go to and have fun.

Daniel feels the story is a good complete session.

He packs up his cards and has just finished a quick session of Cat's Dream.

The End





**"Eat all you want, my dear.
So yummy!"**

CARD TABLES

CAT'S DREAM ♦ BASIC JOURNEY

Clubs : Basic Journey



Table H-1: Clubs

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Threat of Discovery!	Strength Challenge
02	Disguise Fails	Strength Challenge
03	Poisoned!	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard next red Face card revealed.
04	Chased by monster! Run for it!	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard five Story Cards
05	Riddle Too Tough	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard ten Story Cards
06	Horribly Lost	Hope: 10 Fail: Discard ten Story Cards
07	Forgiveness. Second Chances.	Reshuffle back up to 7 discarded Story Cards
08	The Long Wait.	Hope: 4
09	Curse Broken. Spell Undone.	Strength challenge.
10	Friend badly injured.	The next revealed red Face Card is instantly discarded.
Jack	Imprisoned. Captive!	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard 10 Story Cards
Queen	Gloating enemy. Enemy victory.	Strength Challenge Fail: Remove 3 red Story Cards from the game.
King	Prove you care. Sacrifice. Courage.	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard 20 Story Cards



Spades : Basic Journey



Table I-1: Spades

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Sudden Twist! Way home is closed!	Hope: 6
02	Thank you. Grateful.	Reshuffle back all Diamonds
03	Mistaken Identity.	Strength Challenge or mistaken identity affects next 3 challenges
04	Resolve! Can do it!	Reshuffle 4 Story Cards of your choice.
05	Twist! Enemy posed as your friend!	Strength Challenge
06	Safe Journey. Long roads. Winding paths.	Hope: 1
07	Antagonist not really evil! Explanations.	Reshuffle back all odd Story-cards.
08	Running on unsafe path! Danger!	Hope: 5
09	Console someone.	Hope: 2
10	Fooled! Confusion! Trickery!	Strength challenge
Jack	Friend has disappeared. Abandoned.	On next challenge, discard the Strength card.
Queen	Cheerful thanks.	Reshuffle Diamonds or Hearts back to the deck.
King	Invitation to go home.	Hope: 8 Fail: Dream ends early.

Diamonds : Basic Journey



Table J-1: Diamonds

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Play with Locals	Hope: 2
02	Glimpse of family/ real world.	Shuffle back 2 Story Cards
03	Argument with Locals	Strength Challenge
04	Confront someone everyone else fears	Strength Challenge
05	Ate something you shouldn't have	Hope: 5
06	Cursed!	On next challenge, discard the card assigned to Hope. Do not replace. Curse ends.
07	A good night's rest!	Shuffle back up to 7 Story Cards
08	Can't Sleep. Bad Dreams.	On next challenge, dis- card the card assigned to Strength. Do not replace. Curse ends.
09	Good breakfast!	If the next Fear card is a Face card, discard and replace.
10	Missing home. Sad Memories.	On next Strength challenge, add 1d6 to Fear
Jack	Transformation! Friend all along!	Shuffle back all discarded Hearts.
Queen	Transformation! Gain authority! Title!	Shuffle back all discarded Spades.
King	Transformation! New Dimension!	Reroll and generate a new setting to continue the story

Hearts : Basic Journey



Table K-1: Hearts

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Explore, Fascination	Hope: 1
02	Get Lost	Hope: 2
03	Meet Nice Townsfolk	Hope: 1
04	Dead End	Hope: 3
05	Lost	Hope: 3
06	Make New Friends	Draw card. Black: Shuffle back up to 7 discarded Story Cards. Red: Shuffle back all discarded Story cards.
07	Try Interesting Food	Hope: 1
08	Pretends to be from here	Hope: 2
09	Learn more about this place	Hope: 1
10	See glimpse of the Antagonist.	Hope: 2 Fail: Discard 5 cards!
Jack	Friend offers to guide you.	Automatically succeed in the next Challenge as well.
Queen	Authority figure welcomes you.	Reshuffle all discarded cards.
King	Deus Ex Machina	After this card, automatically succeed on your very next Strength Challenge.





"Calm down, Mister Cat. I got this!"

OPTIONAL RULES

CAT'S DREAM ♦ ANOTHER JOURNEY

Optional Rules to Try

When I first wrote the rules for Cat's Dream, the game only had one table of options to generate the story. For this first published release, however, I felt it was apt to offer a few alternative rules and tables to use to add more replay options and value to the game. Hope you like them as well!

Optional Rule: Jokers

If you want to play a version of the game that uses the Jokers, you can use this simple rule:

The Joker:

Each time a Joker is drawn, the Challenge is automatically resolved in a humorous or hilarious unexpected way. Afterwards, three cards must be discarded from the Story deck.

Optional Rule: Shorter Dreams

You do not have to finish the entire deck. At any time when you feel the story has reached a nice point, you can always opt to end the Dream there.

Optional Rule: The Long Dream

You can chain multiple sessions of Cat's Dream into one long story. To do this, however, it might be important to have a page where you can keep track of all the characters you have in the story, based on the card that was drawn. That way, if the card is drawn again in a later game, you can reintroduce the character to the narrative.

Each session can end with the Dream ending, but the start of later sessions can skip the preliminary introductions and simply have the Cat return to start a new dream.

Optional Rule: Gaming Tool

At the start of each game session, or any time you need a creative push, you can use the tables to generate ideas on where the game can go.



"It was just a dream!"

CREATIVE IDEAS

CAT'S DREAM ◆ TIPS & THOUGHTS

How This Game Began

Back in January 4, 2013, a dear friend of mine informed me of a n activity that was making circles in a social network. Jovan introduced me to something called the 2013 Creative Pay-It-Forward. I never quite figured out who started it but I thought it was an incredible idea and rather than just offer it to the first five who commented, I offered it to seven people.

Jovan had a slot and her request was a tabletop role-playing game inspired by Studio Ghibli movies. Since I wanted her to be able to play the game once it was done, I decided to write it as a solitaire experience. The first dive into writing the rules was finished in February 21, 2013. And it took a few more years later to find the courage, the confidence, and the tweaking necessary to bring it to where it is now. A lot of kind people have fun playtesting it and their feedback proved to be incredible in seeing how the design could be better tweaked to work in a smoother way. I listed them all in the credits page and I will forever be grateful to them for their kind words and their honest feedback. Ignacy Trzewiczek talks about the paradoxical importance of playtesters and their feedback and I took that insight to heart. I also drew strength from Jared Sorensen's 3 Design Questions (What is the game about? How is the game about that? How does the game encourage or reward it?) and John Wick's fourth Question (How do you make that fun?)

The joy of seeing the results of people playtesting the game was unparalleled. From feedback that helped smoothen the way the rules are told to considerations on how certain cards or activity can mechanically affect the game, I realized some rules worked well, others needed a bit more tweaking, and a few would better function as rules for more advanced versions of the rules or even for more mature stories that can include character death.

One of the big influences in the creation of this game is an old beautiful tabletop game that used Tarot cards. The game did not use character sheets and it was, in my opinion, an amazing work of design. The name of the game was Psychosis and it was published in 1994 by Charles Ryan of Chameleon Eclectic. Another influence was the beautifully crafted game of steampunk heroism and magic, Castle Falkenstein designed by Mike Pondsmith in 1994 for R. Talsorian

Games. Of course, it goes without saying that Studio Ghibli movies such as Hayao Miyazaki's *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Castle in the Sky*, and most especially Hiroyuki Morita's *The Cat Returns* were massive influences in the tone and the feel of this game. Part of the greater challenge was finding ways to allow the game to breathe and invite more options and narratives to explore.

I also remembered a lot of other stuff which I loved that explored similar "ordinary person explores an unexpected world" such as movies like *Labyrinth*, or books like *Alice in Wonderland*. These also resonated with modern shows such as *Over the Garden Wall* and in some ways, shows like *Steven Universe*, and *Adventure Time*. I realized I could offer a wider range of character types to meet and encounter, and feel less constrained to limit interactions and encounters to only fantastic personalities.

So here we are with the actual release of the *Basic Journey* rules. I do hope you enjoy the game as much as I had enjoyed crafting it. And I do hope you all enjoy it enough to also support the later supplements of the game.

Improvisation and Narrative

For people who love playing role-playing games, or for people who are fans of theater, the concept of improvisation is often reduced to the idea that one should never say, "No" to another's contributed concept in a narrative. A common adage is to always reply with, "Yes" or "Yes, and.." or even "Yes, but.." But it is important, in my opinion, to bear in mind that there's a world of difference between improvisation and simply throwing anything at the other player, "just to see how they would react to it."

The best improv tries to build on the existing narrative, and not just throw something different or unexpected. And when writing this game, I tried to think of the card tables in that direction. Each entry tries to help develop further the original premise of the cat bringing the character to a strange yet familiar fantastic world. There's no avoiding that some elements might feel a bit out of place as it is impossible to anticipate every single possible twist and flow the story has taken, but care at least was taken to work with a general thematic feel in mind.

Here are some tips and ideas to consider when interpreting the cards (as well as when you lay any other table top games that may welcome improvisation at the table:

Pay Attention to Contrast

If every single event is worldshaking, and every single character is super unique, distinct, named, and prominent, then it can get very complicated and confusing quite quickly for the narrative. The best stories pay attention to balancing the "screen time" between the key characters who are vital in the narrative and those who are important to serve as set dressing.

Just as a good story guides the reader in identifying who the main character is and who the key supporting characters are, a good game should also guide the players who are important in the unfolding narrative. If the man who serves the wine at the tavern doesn't really have anything important to contribute to the narrative, then there's no need to waste time learning their name or building their backstory. In a solo game, you're spending time detailing something that you won't even explore further in the game. And in a group game, you're wasting everyone else's time with things they cannot really relate or connect with.

Embrace Opportunities to Connect With Each Other

Learn the secret of finding small interconnections between characters and scenes. They don't all have to be massively intertwined as that simply leads to convoluted plots and unrealistic narratives ("Wait, so you mean the man who murdered my brother's cat turned out to be the former lover of the teacher who taught me about sword magic despite him being the father I never really knew?"). The connections you can identify can be simpler ones. Maybe it could simply be someone you remember travelling alongside in the past. Or someone who you saw in a previous scene. Or someone, who like you, also was absent in a specific instance.

To be more specific with *Cat's Dream*, characters you meet in your narrative might share the same opinions as you for some nonsensical things ("You hate flowers too? I think they really suck.") and that can be enough to create opportunities for the characters to connect.

Make Choices And Bring Change

It can sometimes be easy to take a backseat and leave the hard work of plot change to the other players. For some, it could be due to the fear of “not having a good idea”. For others, it might be because they feel unsure if the other players will want to do the same action. But in a solitaire game, this can manifest instead as thinking that changes to the plot and narrative can only happen if the cards say they do.

In all cases, allow me to stay that as a Storyteller who has been running games for practically thirty or so years, players who declare the choices they make are players who are invested in the unfolding narrative. These are players who are telling the group they're enjoying the game so much that they want to see where it goes. After all, if any of the other players feel the idea might not be a good one, they're also now able to speak up and in character, debate on the matter as well. The declaration of a choice leads to reactions and interactions.

In a solitaire game, this can be represented as simply adding more narrative twists of your own when you feel like it would be a good time to do so. You don't have to wait for a table result saying someone welcomed you to their home to narrate how a resident of the fantastic world welcomes you to thier home to join them for tea. Don't be afraid to allow your imagination to add details.

The Present = Opportunties, The Past = Factchecking

When throwing in twist and ideas, it helps to have them always reflect events in the present and not the past. While flashbacks can be cool and fun, any game that has more than a single key flashback in the narrative starts slowing down as other players might start worrying about fact checking their own contributions to the new “past” that was established.

To avoid losing time with too much, “So what again happened back then and how did that effect things today?” kind of questions, try to limit any improvised details to the present. While television and movies work wonderfully well in surprising the viewer with “actually this is what really happened in the past” moments, for players who are collectively trying to tell a story while they come up with it on the fly, this manner of fact-checking can be tedious and frustrating.

Games do not have the leisure of editing time before the broadcast.

In a solitaire game such as *Cat's Dream*, the same can still be said. Limit your flashback twists only to when they are really needed to keep the flow of the story clean and easy to manage.

Integrity Matters in Personality

While twists are fun, twists work best when they happen in comparison to everything else that embraces the existing status quo. Pay attention to what has been established for certain characters and do not be afraid to help further develop them with new details that contribute to the story. A nobleman might have been established as a lover of art. But maybe you can also reveal that he refuses to go hunting too, because he despises seeing animals killed for sport. Likewise, a knight that watches over the forest might turn out to also be the same person who visits the shrubbery trolls and teaches them to read. If the new contribution supplements the existing facts, then embrace that opportunity to further build on the personalities.

Also pay attention to the emotional integrity of the characters. A detail you add might seem completely unique or new but if they still hit the same correct emotional notes or personality touchstones, then they can help in defining the person better.

Be Open To Learning Later

You do not need to know and be able to answer everything as the story unfolds. Be open to the possibility that some things might only become clearer as time passes. Or that some information might only be revealed in the later part of the story. A dangerous monster might choose to leave the character unharmed and the reasons behind it might only come clearer later in the game. Maybe the beast received kindness from the player character in the past? Or maybe some magic or enchantment protects the character? Allow certain details to remain undefined or incomplete for now and simply try to answer them later on.

These standing questions are fine to have so long as the player character is involved in the unfolding narrative at the present.



CARD TABLES

CAT'S DREAM ♦ ANOTHER JOURNEY

A Darker World

The Cat leads you to a world that currently is besieged by war! While this is a darker world than the Basic Journey, this is still not the Advanced Game where death is a possible result. Instead, here, opportunities for more serious or introspective narratives on war can be explored.

Is there anything you can do to help? Generate the world by rolling a six-sided die three times, the first two rolls on Table C-3 and the last roll on Table C-4.

Table C-3: The Door Leads You to a...

Die Result	Place Descriptor A	Place Descriptor B
01	Smoldering	Rural Town
02	Ashen	Urban City
03	Well-Guarded	Campsite
04	Silent	Underground Cavern
05	Ruined	Makeshift Hospital
06	Rebuiding	Brokendown Train

Table C-4: [Place] ...with...

Die Result	Place Descriptor C
01	People desperate to escape
02	Survivors hurriedly gathering their belongings
03	Injured soldiers tired of fighting
04	Mothers and children worrying over their husbands
05	Music playing from a band refusing to embrace fear
06	Armed soldiers suspicious of any strangers... like you.

Upon arriving in this new location, you have your first encounter. Roll the six-sided die, and draw a card to generate who you meet! Use table D-2 to see who you meet.

Table D-2: First Encounter

Die Result	Black Card	Red Card
01	A soldier	A translator
02	A mother	A musician
03	A child	An artist
04	A dog	A grandparent
05	A reporter	A doctor
06	An automaton	Choose two from any column. Describe why they're together.

Also generate what happens in this first meeting. Roll the six-sided die.

Table E-2 What Happened in that First Encounter?

Die Result	Upon Meeting...
01	Asks for your help to deliver a message
02	Begs for food
03	Warns you to be careful of the dangers out there
04	Blames you for being part of the war (which you have no idea about)
05	Asks you to stay close in their last moments
06	Asks if you would be willing to accompany them to get to someplace important

Narrate how the encounter unfolds. This is the starting point of the Darker Journey. This type of story is inspired by movies such as Graveyard of the Fireflies, Howl's Moving Castle, or even television shows such as Over the Garden Wall.

In this game, the card deck might move much more rapidly than a Basic Journey. The Face cards will also feel much more powerful here as they have a much more notable effect on the game.



Clubs : Another Journey



Table H-2: Clubs

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	War.	Fear Challenge Fail: Search deck for Face Cards. Shuffle and remove from game half. Reshuffle deck.
02	Shot at by Soldiers.	Strength Challenge
03	Handcuffed to post.	Strength Challenge
04	Hunted!	Strength Challenge
05	Ouch. Sprained foot.	Hope: 4
06	Friendship Ends.	Hope: 10 Fail: Reveal ten Story Cards. Remove from game all Face Cards revealed. Reshuffle deck.
07	Such a Heavy. Burden to Bear	Strength Challenge: Fail: Discard five Story Cards
08	There are too Many. Find another way.	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard ten Story Cards
09	Walls Block the Way.	Strength challenge. Fail: Discard five Story Cards
10	Something breaks.	Replace Strength and Hope immediately.
Jack	Following orders. Surrender.	Strength Challenge Fail: Discard 10 Story Cards
Queen	Fearless Judge. Demands answers.	Two Strength Challenges Fail: Reshuffle back all Clubs.
King	Alchemical. Noble. Loss of memory. Stoic.	Strength Challenge Fail: Reshuffle back all cards. Remove 10 from the game.

Spades : Another Journey



Table I-2: Spades

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Major Curse.	Fear Challenge Fail: Search deck for Even cards. Shuffle and remove from game half. Reshuffle deck.
02	Tea and Biscuits.	Choose ten cards from the discard and shuffle them back.
03	The Dog.	Hope: 5 Success: May replace Strength card on next challenge with a Discarded card.
04	Threat of Discovery. No more hiding.	Hope: 5 Fail: Discard 5 cards.
05	Misfire! Look out!	Strength Challenge
06	Fog of War. Navigate in the dark.	On next challenge, replace Fear card with a new facedown card. Reveal when ready.
07	Friendship is tested.	Hope: 5
08	Fireworks in the sky. Or are they bombs?	Reshuffle back all odd Story-cards.
09	What's the Password?	Hope: 2
10	We have you surrounded!	Strength challenge
Jack	The Bounty Hunter. On their sights.	Pass two Strength challenges, one after the other.
Queen	A Towering Giant.	Hope: 8 Fail: Discard all odd cards.
King	Double Crossed! Wrong Titles.	Hope: 4 Fail: Dream ends early.

Diamonds : Another Journey



Table J-2: Diamonds

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Mass Destruction. Bombs. Poison. Cruelty from Above.	Fear Challenge Fail: Roll the six-sided die. Remove from the game all cards with the rolled number.
02	A moment of unexpected Kindness	Shuffle back half the discarded cards.
03	Sharing a meal	Hope: 2
04	Argument over food.	Hope: 5
05	A surprising find! Treasure in the junk.	Draw two cards, choose higher one for Hope next challenge.
06	Starving.	Discard 10 Story cards unless your Strength is an even number.
07	It is safer here. Sturdy shelter.	Shuffle back up to 7 Story Cards
08	They want what you have. Give it!	Strength challenge. Fail: Discard 5 cards.
09	Dream of family.	Gain +3 bonus on next challenge.
10	Checkpoint! Friend of foe?	Hope: 5
Jack	Colors Changed. Pain for Peace.	Shuffle back all discarded Hearts.
Queen	Symbol of office. Definite identity.	All Fear challenges from this point are Hope challenges.
King	Golden Throne. Dying Monarch.	Shuffle back all discarded Diamonds.



Hearts : Another Journey



Table K-2: Hearts

Card	Keywords	Challenge / Effect
Ace	Fear and Anger grow worse.	Reshuffle back all Spades cards into the deck. Remove this card from the game.
02	Meet refugees along the road.	Hope: 3
03	Abandoned Homes. Might have food or medicine inside?	Hope: 3
04	Fireflies dancing in the sky.	
05	Desperation leads to unnecessary violence.	Hope: 3 Fail: Next challenge is read as a Clubs result.
06	Some candy still left.	Draw card. Black: Next challenge is a Clubs result. Red: Autosucceed in the next challenge.
07	Something heavy. Help out!	Strength challenge
08	People in pain. Will you help?	Hope: 2
09	Kind strangers offer shelter.	Hope: 4 Fail: Discard 5 cards.
10	Dreams of before the war began.	Hope: 2
Jack	Amnesiac figure. Forgotten duties.	Replace the Hope and Strength card immediately.
Queen	Last goodbyes.	Discard 5 cards immediately.
King	Shooting Stars Fall.	Draw card. Black card, the Dream ends.

A Quiet Meditation

As with the normal rules, when you reach the end of the Journey, you can use this table G-1 to narrate how the dream comes to an end.

In addition to this, in a Darker Journey, you can use the table below to generate one final activity to close the Darker Journey. As the Darker Journey can explore heavier themes, it can help to give the session a closing activity to help wrap up the game. This is completely optional.

Table G-2: A Quiet Meditation

Roll two dice to generate the losing activity using the first and second Descriptors.

Die Result	First Ending Descriptor	Second Ending Descriptor
01	Write a short poem	Share it with the author of the game (you can reach me via email or social media)
02	Light a candle	Make a wish
03	Play a song	Say the names of each character in the game session
04	Eat something small	Give thanks
05	Sit quietly alone	Shout as loud as you can
06	Lie down and look at the sky	Share the game with a friend

Thank you for playing!

“You know what I should do?” Hoshino asked excited. “Of course,” the cat said. “What’d I tell you? Cats know everything, Not like dogs.” Haruki Murakami, Kafka on the Shore



about the author and artist

Tobie is a Game Designer, Artist, and brains behind TAG Sessions. He used to be terrified of dogs and has no particular attachment to cats, but people change and now he laments all those wasted years of not liking pets.



He is a game designer for mobile games and is a member of the Indie Game Developer Network.

He lives with his partner-for-life, Rocky, and they have a wonderful geeky piece of heaven where they introduce lots of people to new role-playing games and awesome board games. And yes, he loves ice cream.



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about the artist

Ivan Frani is Senior 2D Video Game Artist who works in the mobile gaming industry. His passion for Games and Art since childhood pushed him to pursue a career in the growing video game industry.

Having experience with different types of art style and animation for the past 5 years, he has become flexible in adapting in more than one style of work that would be beneficial in doing different kinds of projects.

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Author's note:

This is the second project Ivan has worked on with Tobie Abad. The first was his Fiasco playset, **Sickening Queens**.



about the expediter

Thomas Regala is a game designer from The Epic Gaming Regiment based in the Philippines. When not creating his own games, he assists others in making theirs, helping as he was helped.

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“The creation of a single world
comes from a huge number
of fragments and chaos.”

Hayao Miyazaki



Sometimes...

...a cat can lead you on an adventure unlike any other.
One where dreams can lead to unexpected twists and
unbelievable experiences.

This game was inspired by the works of Hayao Miyazaki, Toshi
Suzuki, Isao Takahata, and Yasuyoshi Tokuma.



猫の夢

CAT'S • DREAM

A SOLITAIRE ADVENTURE RPG BY TOBIE ABAD



First Edition

