



Waiting for Flight GO901

By

Simon James Pettitt

Introduction

Welcome to the larp script for Waiting for Flight GO901. The game is a story of people waiting in an airport for their loved ones on board Flight GO901. The plane is first delayed, then has technical issues until it finally crashes. It's a quiet story about uncertainty and about waiting.

This text should contain all the information you need to prepare for it and run it, but if you have questions, you can write to: simonjamesp@gmail.com



The evil gamemaster grin, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

The game has so far run at Black Box Copenhagen 2014, Knudepunkt 2015 and Minsk Larp Festival 2016, as well as some private runs.

The designer is me, *Simon James Pettitt*. You are allowed to run this game, all I require is to be credited as the designer. But I would also like to be informed, mostly because it's always nice to know where one's games are run. I would also be very happy to hear how it went.

Time: 4 to 6 hours

It takes longer with more players, but you can also control the time a lot.

Number of players: 4 to 20

Preview text

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At first the plane was just delayed, now it is gone from the monitors. Suddenly a message sounds over the loudspeakers: "Anyone waiting for passengers on Flight GO901, please contact information."

People are waiting for their friends and loved ones, who are on a flight home. We follow the characters and their reactions from when the flight is merely delayed until the unthinkable happens.

The larp centers around the uncertainty of the fate of the ones you love and the thoughts that fill your head during that long wait.

Participants are divided into groups to create the person they're waiting for, and their own characters, with inspiration from the passenger's luggage.

Setting: The arrival lobby in an airport where people are awaiting news from their relatives aboard a plane in trouble.

Genre: Quiet, tragedy, immersion.

Participant type: For those who enjoy the silent tragic immersion into the fear for the loss of your loved ones.

Costume: Everyday clothes.

Preperation

Equipment

- Projector or screen.
- Computer that can connect to the projector or screen.
- Chairs and lots of them, (at least 3 per player, preferably 4). Benches is also an option.
- Water and cups (preferably cheap plastic).
- Speakers or another mean of playing sound.
- A soundscape of people waiting, the app myNoise has an airport soundscape.
- One spotlight
- Optional: two or three lamps that can be dimmed, preferably in blue.



The many different bags, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Props

- **Bags and suitcases**
 - There should be at least as many bags as players, if the number of players is below ten a few more than players would be preferable.
 - They should be very different, so that they can facilitate many different type of travelers.
 - You should bring some yourself, and ask players to bring some also, that will give a varied selection.
 - Suggestions: suitcases, backpack, military bag, briefcase, child's bag, school bag, computer bag, women's handbags.
- **Post its:** you need many, as each player will use quite a few.
- **Passport photos:** You need a lot covering different ages, genders and races. I have a file of 126 photos, but they are not included, as I found them on the internet. If you contact me, I can send them to you. I just don't want them online.
- **Life tokens:** you will need from two to ten, depending on the number of players (see "Break and life tokens")
 - It's up to you what they are, I use small glass hearts, as they are a nice symbol, but also they are small, so the players have to look for them, which has a nice effect.
 - If the tokens are so big that you know straight away when you open the bag, that's it's not there then you don't get the impact from rummaging desperately through the bag for a small token.
 - Suggestions: a glass heart, a flower such as a rose, pretty stones, the passport photo, a post it with the word survived on it.
 - For one run I used the passport photos and it gave a nice effect of them finding a picture of the loved one in the bag. If you do this just make sure they leave behind the photo before the break.
- **Flight times slideshow:** should be included in the files for this game.



A life token inside a bag, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Location set up

This game has four spaces, but some of them can overlap. But all in all it needs a rather big open space, depending on the number of players.

- **Workshop space:** this can also be in the waiting room or in a completely separate room, but you will need a place to keep the bags during the game (see “Break and life tokens”). It needs to be a space big enough to accommodate all the players and bags.
- **Waiting room:** representing a small part of the arrivals hall at an airport. Should be a fairly large space with lots of seating. The chairs should be in rows, with at least one row in each end of the room and for bigger runs two rows in the middle facing away from each other. All in all go for the feeling of empty space and plenty of seating.
- **Meeting room:** should be a much smaller space, with around the same number of chairs as players, perhaps a few more. The chairs should be in a square facing inwards. There should be water and cups available.
 - The waiting room and the meeting room should be in the same big space, using the chairs to mark the boundaries for both.
- **Meta space for casualty list:** (see “the casualty list”) this can also be in the same space as the waiting room and should be in the same big space. It's defined more with light than furniture.
 - The whole room should be dark
 - In one end is a spotlight creating a bright spot on the floor.
 - In the other end is an area for the players, preferably defined by a few lamps (perhaps in blue) creating a small space of dimmed light. But they can also just be standing in the dark, if lamps are not available.



The waiting room set with the casualty list light setting, (blue in front spotlight at the back) Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.



The meeting room (green chairs in the back), Minsk Larp Festival 2016, by SJP

The member of staff

This game can be run by one person, but it's a big help if you are two, one to control the equipment and one to play the member of staff.

- The member of staff is a non player character who in the second half of the game informs the players on the progress of the plane.
- You should have a costume for this part, both so that you look the part of someone who could be working in an airport.
 - A casual business suit would do fine.
- But also because it can be a hard role to play, as you will be delivering devastating news to a room full of people. It's nice to put on a costume to shield you from that impact by being in character and not yourself.



The member of staff delivering bad news, (In a suit jacket to the right), Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Workshop

Welcome and short introduction - 5. min

Welcome the players in a calm and nice voice, and explain the following:

- This is a game about waiting and about the fear of losing, but primarily it's about uncertainty, what is going on? Is she okay? What if? This isn't a game about coming to terms with a loss, the game stops before that process even starts.
- Your characters are all waiting for different people on board a plane on it's way from Amsterdam to a local airport. Amsterdam is Europe's biggest transfer airport, that means the one you are waiting for could be traveling home from all over the world.
- It's a quite game, so remember silence is good, silence isn't awkward. (Well maybe for your character, but not for you). It's a slow and lingering game. A lot of the game will be inside your own head. Allow yourself to enjoy that and don't worry about speaking all the time.
- You will only have relations to one or two other players, and that's natural, an airport is a place of strangers. You might start to talk to strangers as you start to share a horrible experience together, but it's in no way mandatory.
- Soon you will create the one you are waiting for, we call her the traveler, from one of these bags, by asking the question: "who would own this bag?" When you have made the traveler you will create your own characters by asking: who would be waiting for her? This will all happen in the workshop.
- Just remember: silence is good, silence is intense.



The silent waiting. Minsk Larp Festival 2016, by Pavel Hadzinski



The fear of losing. Minsk Larp Festival 2016, by Pavel Hadzinski

Expectations - 10. min

Do two quick rounds having all answer these two questions:

- Who are you: Name, where are you from, a sentence about waiting.
- What do you expect from this game

Use the answers to get a feel of the room, and to clear up any misunderstandings.

The story - 10. min

This game is transparent, so tell the players how the story will run:

But first mention these two things:

- You can't contact those on board the plane. It is just not possible in this fiction, and not something you even consider.
- At some points I'll play staff at the airport, and it will be natural for you to ask me questions. Just don't expect any answers. It's not about the whys and hows, but the feeling of uncertainty. So you can try to get answers as part of your play, just know as players: you won't get any. That should of cause not stop you from thinking about it and worrying.

The game will run non stop, but it has several stages:

- Plane is on time: first you are just waiting, use this time to get into character. You can discuss the plans you have. Happy, expectant?
- Plane is delayed: Slowly the plane will become more and more delayed, deal with this as you see fit, maybe planes will have to be changed. Annoyed, impatient?
- Plane disappears from the screen: At one point the plane will disappear completely from the screen. Confused, questions?
 - A note on time: as you will see from screen to screen, more time has passed in game than in real time. See this as a movie. If someone waits around for hours the movie will only show the interesting bits, do the same here. Act as if more time has passed than have in real time.
- A member of staff shows up: soon after this a stressed member of staff will show up asking for people waiting for people on board Flight G0901. Chock, relieved?
 - He will tell you that the plane has some small technical difficulties, nothing serious, but that they don't know how long it will take before it lands.
 - He asks you to please follow him to a meeting room, so they know where you are, and can get information to you more quickly.
 - You can play up against him, ask questions as such, just know, that he will not give you answers. Remember this is a NPC, he has limited actions.
 - You as players also has to follow his instructions.
- Now the game changes and you get information from this NPC not the screen.
- Lost contact: He shows up and tells you that they have lost contact with the plane. It might just be the radio and nothing serious, they are working on reestablishing contact. Fear, scared?
- The plane has crashed: He shows up and tells you, the plane has gone down. Rescue personnel is on the way, and there are reports of a few survivors. Waiting, uncertainty?



Stage one: waiting for a plane that is delayed, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.



The Member of staff gives bad news, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

- Casualty list is in: He shows up one more time with the list of casualties and survivors. Here there game changes and moves into a place outside time and space.
 - You are still ingame but if this was a film, this is where they would put in a filter and slow down time. It's the representation of your whole world sharpening down to one point.
 - Talking from now on is not allowed, or at least keep it quiet and to a minimum.
 - You will be let to a dimly lit area.
 - A spotlight will be opposite you.
 - One at a time the bags used during the workshop will be placed in the spotlight.
 - When the bag you used is placed you have to go up to it. If it contains this token (show lifetoken) your traveler has survived, if not then she is dead.
 - If no one owns a bag the member of staff will look into it and show you if there's a token in it.
 - When you have discovered the fate of your traveler move away so the next bag can be placed.
 - But remember you are ingame all this time. Even while you wait and watch the others.
 - There will be very few tokens and they will have been placed randomly.



Waiting for their bag to show up, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Safety - 5. min

- Opt out: you can leave the play area for any reason at any time. Luckily that fits the fiction, as it's only part of the airport. If however you want to leave the game permanently, tell me and your group.
- Brake: You can say or whisper "brake", to signal your fellow players, that what is going on is not ok with you and they should shift the play away from it.
- Cut: If you say "cut" the game stops, and does not continue until the issue has been resolved, if at all.
- For all three points: No explanation as to why this is an issue for you is needed.



..., Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Warm up

Play the following games:

The melting game: 10 min

The reason to play this game is to get everyone moving, get over the first shyness.

- Give all players a number and write down those numbers. Instruct them, that when their number is called out they need to start to melt. To slowly collapse.
- All other players have to run and support them and hold them up. When the player feels supported everyone can start walking again
- Have the players walk around the room. One by one or two and two shout out numbers and have everyone try to melt and be supported.

The Machine 10 min

The Reason to play this game, is to get the players into the mood and feel of playing more silent and quiet.

- Stand in a circle, one player starts by going in and making a motion and sound that should be like some part of a machine or assembly line.
- One by one the other players can join and add their own movement and sound to the machine.

The silence machine

- Same exercise but now make a machine that produces silence. They still have to make a sound and moment but it should be all about silence.
- Have them make it more and more quiet until they are silent.
- Then more and more slow until the machine stops.
- Keep them there for a beat and then stop the game.

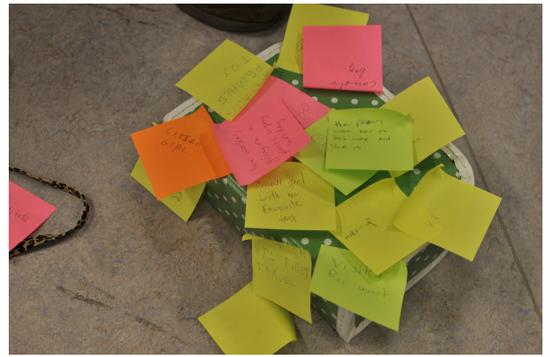


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Character creation

Bag brainstorm - 10. min

- Give post it's to all players.
- Have them walk around the bags and try and place at least one post it on each bag, they can place more on one. Challenge them to spread them out so that all bags have about the same number.
- Tell them to write thoughts, ideas, characters, emotions anything that pop into their head when they look at a bag.
- Start them with the question: who would own this bag?
- If they need more inspiration you can during the workshop add more questions.
- Towards the end they can also look at other people's notes for inspiration.



Bag Brainstorm, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Group distribution - 10. min

- Ask the players to look over the bags, skim the notes, and think about which bags would be fun to play.
- Then have them in their mind chose two bags they most want to play.
- Then have them stand at the bag they most want to play.
 - The groups has to be two or three each.
 - People can play alone, but that has to be by choice not forced.
 - Now negotiate with the players until all the groups are made, and everybody is happy.
- Any bags left over should be moved to the side.

Creating for impact - 3. min

Now in the groups they must talk about and create the traveler they as a group are waiting for. This is were they also decide on how hard an impact a game they want to play for, not that this is any guarantee in either direction. But the following parameters can affect how hard the game can affect you:

- The age of the traveler, the loss of an old man will hurt less than the loss of a child.
- Unresolved conflicts and arguments with the traveler can hurt a lot, but also give good play. Try to include at least some of that.
- Close to home: the closer the traveler is to someone you know the harder it can hit.

Closeness - 3. min

Now that they are in groups have them talk quickly about physical contact, and do this exercise:

- Take turns and ask: is it ok if I hug you now?
- If all say yes then hug each other.
- If one says no then don't, and now you know.
- It's perfectly okay to say no, that's why we do the exercise.

Creating the traveler - 15. min

Now the players can look at the notes for their bag. Have them talk about the traveler, they want. Start them off with doing a few rounds where each player gets to say a few words about, why they wanted this bag and who they think owns it. With that the players knows where they each stands and should be able to start working on the traveler. Different groups might need different amounts of help. For some runs I have set out the questions from them to work on, for others they don't need that at all. So feel the room, and see how strict they need it. Below here is some questions you can ask them during this process.

- Who owns this bag?
- What is the traveler called?
- How old is the traveler?
- Where does the traveler live? (can both be geographical location, but also what type of house or flat.)
- Where have the traveler been to?
- What kind of a trip was it?
- How long has the traveler been gone?
- What will the traveler remember from this trip?
- Who is waiting for this traveler?
- Have the traveler written home, and if yes to whom?
- Is the traveler bringing home a gift, and to whom?

Let them work on the traveler for 10 min, at this point ask them to go to the table with passport photos and chose one for their traveler.

Then have them look at the picture and take a few turns with each member of the group adding details to the traveler to see if they agree.



Creating the traveler, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.



Passport photos, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Creating the characters - 5. min

Ask them to not distribute the characters yet, but to talk freely about the following:

- Who could be waiting for the traveler?
- What relations could be between the characters, whats good, whats not so good? Is there some conflicts simmering beneath the surface, not a demand, but something to think about.
- Talk about who would like to play what, try to resolve any differences with respect for each other's wishes. (Help out if needed).
- When everyone knows what they are playing, give their character a name.
- When that is done, have them signal you, so you know when the groups are ready for the next step.



A finished traveler, Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

Fleshing out the characters - 5. min

- Any single players should work together during the next part in groups of two to three.
 - If there's only one player playing alone have him hook up with a group of two.

Ask them to sit down in their groups and close their eyes, and say this to them slowly:

- See your character in front of you.
- How does it move?
- What does it think about it self?
- What does it do on a normal day?
- Imagine an everyday situation for it, let it play out in your mind as if it was you doing it. What happens, how do you act?
- On the count of three say your character's name out loud as it would.
- Count to three.

Now have each player in one sentence describe the scene they played in their mind for the others in their group.



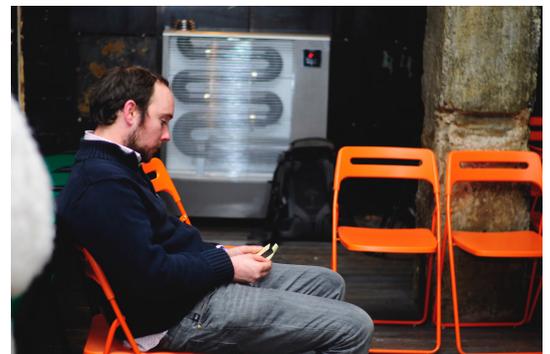
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The characters relationships to the traveler - 5. min

Ask them again to close their and say this to them:

- From now on I speak to your characters
- What is your relationship to the traveler?
- What is good?
- What is not so good?
- Imagine an everyday situation between you and the traveler
- What happens? How do you act together?
- Now imagine the last time you saw the traveler
- What did you do?
- How did you act?
- What was the mood between you?
- What was the last thing you said to the traveler?
- On the count of three say that outloud as you said it then.
- Count to three.

Have them in the groups describe the last time they saw the traveler in one sentence.



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Relations - 5. min

Now have the players talk shortly about their relations. Have them consider the following:

- How do you act when you are together?
- How do you feel about the others relations with the traveler?
- What's the mood as you wait?
- Are there any unresolved conflicts among you or the traveler? Not a demand, but could be a good idea.
- What are your plans, if any, when you have picked up the traveler?

Brake and life tokens - 10. min

Have everyone leave the room, and tell them that when they come back that they can no longer touch the bags. Now you must load the life tokens in to the bags via this random process:

- You need either dice or a person that is not involved in the game, something to give you random numbers.
- Pick a maximum which must be below the number of travelers.
- Pick a minimum which must be at least two and around 10 to 20 percent of the number of players.
- Now randomly pick a number between those two, including those two.
- (Example: 15 players 5 travelers, so maximum could be 4 and minimum could be 2 now pick a number between that, for example roll a d3.)
- That number is the number of survivors, and you need that amount of life tokens
- Now place all the bags used in the workshop (including the ones that weren't used by the groups) in a row and assign a number to each.
- Now randomly pick one of those numbers and place a life token in that bag.
- Continue this until all the life tokens are in bags.



Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

One last exercise - 10. min

If you have workshoped in a different room move the players into the play area and show them around.

- Then have them stand in the groups.
- Now they must narrate a postcard that the traveler has sent the group, by taking turns writing a sentence of the card. Let them go around one or two times.
- Then have them each narrate a message that their character have sent to the traveler, perhaps as a reply to the postcard.
- Ask them to chose a place they feel like would make sense for them to start.
- No one is arriving, they have all been here for between 2 and 10 minutes.
- Tell them that the game starts when the soundscape goes up.
- But until then sit or stand in silence as your character would and look around at the other players, study them. If you make eye contact with someone look away to someone else.



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The game run

Quick overview

1. 10 to 15 min: slide: 18.51 - the plane is on time
2. 5 to 10 min: slide: 19.08 - the plane is delayed
3. 5 to 10 min: slide 19.40 - the plane is more delayed
4. 5 to 10 min: slide 20.10 - no arrival time
5. 3 to 5 min: slide 20.50 - the plane is not on the screen
6. 1 to 3 min: Member of staff moves them to the meeting room
7. 10 to 20 min: Waiting in the meeting room
8. 10 to 20 min: Member of staff informs: loss of contact with the plane
9. 10 to 20 min: Member of staff informs: plane has crashed
10. 5 to 10 min: The casualty list is revealed
11. 1 to 3 min: Soundscape goes to max then is stopped - the game is over
12. 30 min: Debrief

The game run detailed

1: 18.51 - 10 to 15 min

For the first half of the game the players are in the waiting room part of the play area. The game is paced by the arrivals screen. It's your job to keep an eye on time and change the slide when appropriate. The first slide has more time, because this is the only normal play they get. So give them a bit more time here, to let them settle down and get into character, even though not much will be happening.

2 to 4: 19.08 to 20.10 - 3 times 5 to 10 min

During this time the tension slowly rises as the plane is more and more delayed.

You will have some confusion at point 4 as that is not covered in the game run.

When emotions are at the max you give them point: 5

5: 20.50 - 3 to 5 min

The game normally explode at this point, and the players become very excited and anxious for that reason it should not be that long, so they can move on to the important part of the game.



Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.



Knudepunkt 2015 by Jacob Nielsen.

6: Move to the meeting room - 1 to 3 min

This is where the member of staff shows up, that is you.

Put on your costume and move into the play area.

- Ask out loud: Anyone waiting for travelers onboard Flight GO901?
- They will move around you and properly ask a lot of questions.
- Tell them in a professional and calm voice that the plane is having some technical difficulties. Nothing serious, but they don't know when it will land.
- But to make the wait more comfortable and so that you can get information to them as soon as you have any, we would like all of you to wait in a meeting room we have made available for you.
 - As characters they might protest and ask questions.
 - That's why it's important that they know as players that they have to move to the meeting room.
 - You might have to push them a bit depending on the mood of the room.
- But try and get them in fairly quickly, keep reassuring them that there is nothing to worry about, this is just a routine precaution.
- Answer questions with I don't know, or we don't know yet, or I have not been informed of that.

And this is important; don't give them any details, they will obsess over any details you give them so give them none. This is very important! And also important that you tell them that during the workshop, so they know to expect this.

7: The meeting room - 10 to 20 min

When they are in the meeting room give them some time before showing up again.

8: Loss of contact - 10 to 20 min

The next time you show up, you inform them in the same professional calm voice that they have lost contact with the plane. This could just be a technical failure and they are working on reestablishing contact with the plane. You will likely receive even more questions now just keep up the straight face and be the caring but unhelpful member of staff.

9: The plane has crashed - 10 to 20 min

This time you can show some emotion, be a bit hesitant, have sympathy for them. Tell them that they can now confirm that the plane has crashed and that rescue personnel is on the way. There's reports of a few survives.



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10 The casualty list - 5 to 15 min

Inform them that the casualty lists are in.

- With a hand motion move them to where they should be.
- Turn of the lights, turn on the dampened lights and the spotlight.
- For this bit you you should be distant, you are no longer the member of staff but some kind of meta character.
- Move the bags in one at a time.
- If someone moves up to it to open it let them, give them time to open it and react, but if they spend too much time step in with the next bag and slowly signal that they have to move on.
- If no one moves up to a bag, you open it look inside and and show whether or not there's a life token in it, then move it away and get the next one.

11 End of game - 1 to 3 min

When all the bags have been shown let them stand for a bit, after a minute or so turn up the background sound to maximum and then cut it all at once. That is the end of the game, and you can start the debrief.

12 Debrief - 30 min

Give everybody a very short break if needed but instruct no talking.

When everyone is back have them dance and jump around shaking out the experiences. Have them:

- See how high up they can get.
 - See how low they can get.
 - See how wild they can move around.
 - See how much space they can take up.
- Sit everyone down in a circle and do these rounds:
 - How do you feel right now.
 - One thought that's on your mind right now.
 - One moment you remember from the game.
 - A question or memory you would like to ask a sharer with the group. (This last one is optional.)
- And then give the talk free



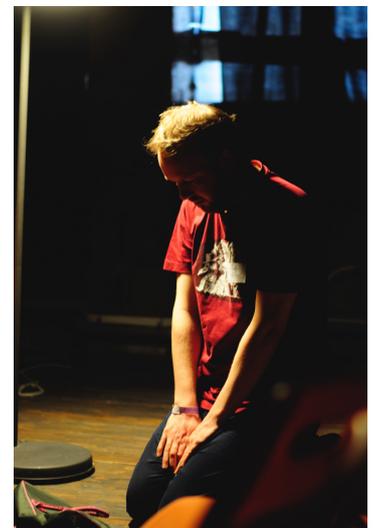
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