

What to Do About Earth: A Short LARP

By Matt Michaelson

Telepathic Pre-Instructions: I am instructions for a short game (a LARP) to be played by 4-6 people, designed to take ~40-45 minutes. Read it in order and you should be ready to go with no other prep. Sections of the game come with time limits, and so the recommended way to play (although obviously feel free to disregard this or any other particular instruction) is to hew closely to the times noted. Part of the idea is you won't really have enough time. You have to hurry!

Thkzplq, **—_*-***-, and hello!**

As a member of the **Committee to Decide What to Do About Earth**, you are probably already aware of your own identity, your position, and your secret(s) — to say nothing of the workings, bylaws, purposes and etc. of the committee itself. But since not all sentience works the way I might think, I'm here to help anyway! So read me! Start here and then when you've read this side (or imbibed, absorbed, etc.), proceed to turn me over and read my better half! No other prep needed!

THE COMMITTEE

For some reason, Earth might be about to explode. Maybe this is something to avoid? Or delay? Or ensure, with extreme prejudice? Or maybe instead of that we want to use Earth for some reason? Space is posed a question and so, Space decides! With a committee!

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE MEETING DO THIS

There are several questions that follow. For each answer you think up and write down (and there can be more than one per question), you get one vote. Votes are the coin of the realm! With enough votes, you can get what you want! Spend 7 minutes on this part.

Who are you?

How many tentacles do you have? Are you made of goo? Are you a secret human? Robotic yet gelatinous? Cyber-plant? How many senses do you have? What's the average amount of time one of your species takes between gestation and pupation? Do you have a species? Do the words "corporeal form" mean anything to you? Is your mind split between different bodies? How far away is your home, and is it where your heart is located? Physically or metaphorically?

Whatcha wanna do with Earth?

Are you in a space military? Is Earth of scientific significance to you? Archaeological significance? Romantic significance? Is Earth the perfect color? A good size for your condo? Do you wanna play with it? How much does it cost in your fave currency? In your least fave currency? Did you bribe your way on to the committee? Inherit? Get voted? Do you want off the committee? Do you want to stop someone(or something) else? Think about what you want with Earth, or what you want to prevent. Remember, if you do nothing, maybe Earth will explode!

What's something(s) no one else on the committee knows aboutcha?

The password to your briefcase, sure, but something juicer? Like, your relationship to another committee member (whether unbeknownst to them, or knowns). Or your relationship to a human. Or to the formation of the committee. Or to your goal — maybe your goal is actually someone else's goal and they hacked your neural interface! Or hypnotized you. Or you hypnotized someone else? Or there's a bomb in your shoe, set to go off at some time during the proceedings. Or half of your genes were stolen from some other member's gene bank. Or you have a hostage. Or today's your birthday!

WHEN IT'S TIME TO START DO THIS

In each phase of the committee, the committee may (or may not) decide to pass one or more motions. Start out each phase by arguing about what motions you might propose, and whether anybody's gonna help anybody else, and for what on what conditions! Then (or really whenever) propose motions, and vote!

The Rules:

— You can at any time propose a motion, which you do by saying "For a motion! [wait for acknowledgement by the committee here] I move that..." Then you say what you move. After saying what you move, you may either request an immediate vote or open the floor for further discussion. The proposer of a motion gets to decide when to vote on it — unless someone else proposes a motion to move on another motion! All passed motions are binding.

— If you want to exercise a vote, you must tell the group the fact you made up previously which gives you that vote. It is up to you how you reveal the information, but it must be actually revealed, not merely hinted, nor lied about. This goes once per vote, so if you want to exercise 3 votes on one motion, you must tell those 3 things!

Introductions (1 minute per player)

Go around once saying your name, what you look like (or smell like or whatever), and what you hope to accomplish at this committee. Who knows if anyone's lying! Might even be the moral move in their pseudo-culture. No votes are needed in this part, so really, the lying thing is almost most likely here.

Argue about the Purpose of the Committee (6 min)

What is the committee going to decide, exactly? And furthermore, what are its rules? This is the only phase when you can get meta. For instance, "I move that this committee's purpose be the location of Zentradi Military Installations across Earth", or "I move that future motions require a two thirds majority to pass!"

Argue about What's Going on on Earth (6 min)

Are the puny (and non-puny) humans aware of this committee? Are they launching weapons at us as we speak? Are they on my side, or yours? Is Earth doomed because of an asteroid? Or the sun? Or a superweapon? Or someone's furious aunt?

Argue about What's Going on in the Wider Universe (6 min)

Is there a war on? Is there a race to uplift humans? Is there an intergalactic human shortage? Whale shortage? Are cosmic rays from the sun turning aliens who visit into super-beings? Is Earth destruction the normal elimination of accumulated floating point error in a super-galactic database query? Whose database?

Argue about the Fate of Earth (8 min)

Given all the above, what is to be the Final Fate of Earth? Will a decision even be reached? Does the committee even really care about Earth per se?

Once the time is up, whether a decision has been reached or not, stuff happens! If no final motions are passed, then Earth will explode. Otherwise, the committee's word is enacted. That's all and thanks for all the...time you've taken!