

Drifted

A game for those who are playing... without knowing it

"The ship has sailed long times ago. So it seems, so you remember. But everything is so faded now... a Dragonfly in the cosmic void, more or less it's all you've got now. *Dragonfly*... was its name, isn't it? But there was also guns, shock troops, tanks weapons. A dragon in its belly. The belly of the dragon. And still it's fragile and thin and little like a fly. Dragonfly SAS13... Marine? Yes, that's make a little more sense. *Dragonfly Shock Assault Squadron 13th!* United Terran Marine! Another little piece of the puzzle. But what was the mission? Or there was even a mission... an *alpha* mission. On mission to *alpha*. On mission toward Alpha... *Alpha Centauri*. And, somehow, it's clear that the mission has yet to begun. So, where are you? Who are you? It's a dream? No it's not, you're sure... it's something different. It's an *hyper-dream*....

Suddenly you wake up in your bed, as usual. It's 2015. It's the present. For someone this is the future. Or it was the *past*. You start your day as usual. But something seems... odd".

Adrift is a Alternate Reality Game (as you will see, it's a tabletop and a live actions and a chat/forum/playbymail game...and even somethin else).

First of all, the backstory. Dragonfly SAS-13 it's a C-class assault ship directed to the Alpha Centauri system. The war with the Centaurian Empire lasted for forty years this month. The current year is the 2158. Centaurian Empire is powerful, big and old (millennia old). It spreads through centuries of light year, and has suffocated Mankind's ambition over the star for very long, until inevitably war comes. And you are a soldier.

There is an 8 years travel to the border of the war zone, and the travel is completely managed by computer, while human crew is hibernated in hyper-sleep. But something is going wrong during the travel: some Centaurian spies has been able to sabotage the automated hypersleep systems, contaminating them with neural-reprogramming algorithm. Their goals is to transform you, so that you will attack your friend and comrades upon arrival "for the sake of intergalactic peace". Trapped within your dream, you have to fight back the mental assault, and trying to remove the Quiet that keeps you asleep. But how could you escape from a prison without any boundary, or any door?

Please note that this game does not have a "frame" as usually intended. You start it by yourself RIGHT NOW, while reading this text. You will play it during your "normal" life, and it could last some hours, days, years or decades. Do you ever tried to measure the length of a dream?

The Rules

The world around you is a dream.

Yeah, this one that, right now, seems so real to you. Anyone in it (or, at least, most of them) are your *comrades*, other Marines sharing the same simulation during the travel. Of course, that means that the world you think is populated by around 7 billions people, in fact, is much smaller. Only around 100.000 of those people are real: the other are projection made by the systems to sustain the illusion.

*Anyone in the simulation have a standard **Quiet value of 10**. That means that they are totally involved in the simulation, trapped into the dream created by the hypersleep machine and totally convinced that this is “the” reality.*

While reading this game, you are collecting the first shards of true information about who you are and what’s happening. **You may decrease your Quiet value by -1**. Now you have Quiet = 9 (you can write that down, but it’s not really necessary. Your actual Quiet score is the only thing you have to remember in this game).

Anyone with a Quiet value of 10 is called, from now on, **sleeper**. Those who aren’t sleepers, are called **awakened**. Yes, those with a Quiet of 10 are....*normal people*.

Fighting the Quiet

Your goal is simple: **you have to reach a Quiet = 0**.

When you do so, you will emerge from hyper-sleep and will be able to fix the hyper-sleep machine and/or alert Central Command about Centaurian sabotage.

There is a number of ways in which you will reduce your Quiet, and some other ways that raise your Quiet again.

Note that if you reach again Quiet 10, you lose the game and our chance of waking up. Please note also that **you can never play it again**.

Let’s hope at least some other Marine can make it. Also, the other Marine fighting the Quiet could help you: try to find them and stay together as long as possible.

On the following page you will find a list of actions that, **when performed in your “everyday” life, reduce your Quiet by the score indicated**. You can only achieve an action **a single time**. If you make what listed a second or third time, it will have no effects.

THIS is the reason why, **if you fall back to Quiet 10, you cannot play again**: you can’t benefit from reading these rules more than a single time... so you cannot wake up again.

Quiet reducing factors [-]

1. **First clue** - reading this game, you will reduce your Quiet. It's your first step to wake up.
1. **Source of Truth** - you read the novel "The Variable Man" by P.K.Dick. (this applies *only if you never read it before*. If you have already read that, this applies *only* if you casually find it out in a library, or if you convince a *sleepers* to read it).
3. **Dream of Truth** - you dreamt of the *real* outside world. That may be about Centurian, your real name, being a human fighting alien... (dreams of being a soldier isn't enough).
1. **Anchor of memories** - you have a real life encounter with a *dragonfly*. It must be alive. A medium distance seeing is required (dozen meters - 15 yards tops).
1. **Icon of Valor** - you see the movies "Starship Troopers" (*all four movies*, also those that are *crap*. Yes some of them are). You don't have to watch *all at the same time*. If you *already* seen them, this applies if you find a box for sale, or make a *sleepers* sees them.
1. **Awakening Comrades** - you make another person awakened by reading this game.
1. **Profeth** - you talk to a *possible comrade*¹ for at least a quarter of hour, making him/her admitting that he cannot in any way demonstrate that "*this is the reality*", and not some kind of elaborated illusion, mind trick or hypersleep dream. A simple doubt here is enough.
1. **Support our troops** - you make a *sleepers* (or find a sleeper that) admit we should be prepared to fight against any form of aliens while we explore the stars, and *also* admit that, in case of uncertainty, *striking first is always the best option*.
1. **Re-training** - you play a cooperative game online at any video-games who involves Terran forces fighting aliens (*Resistance* or *Starcraft* for example) with an *awakened*.
1. **The Meeting** - you find out another *awakened* out there, someone who is playing the game. The person you find out couldn't be someone you involved in the game by yourself (as in "*awakening comrades*").
2. **An Unexpected Meeting** - as "*The Meeting*", but this happen only if *accidentally* find someone (that you already know, meet on work, vacation, at a café and so on) is *already actually* playing this game.
1. **The Gathering** - you manage to set up (or participate) a meeting (real life or virtual) where you collectively try to recall who you are, how currently is your Sol systems, how is civilization you came from. Result *should* be published publicly along the Internet, and could be any form of structures data creation, from brainstorming to creative writing to Rpg. Yes, that's a collective writing effort, and anyone participating reduce his/her Quiet.
2. **Team Up** - as above, but you participate in this meeting *by person*, and you play a Rpg or board game where you are humans against an hostile faction of aliens. *Rogue Trader* may work well, as *Invasion from the Outer Spaces* and similar. Note that the Terran *should* win (if possible, like in a boardgame) to achieve this goal.

¹ Conspiracionist, chemtrails theorist, religious fanatics... those kid of people that are actually *really sure* there is something going on suspicious with this world.

A hint for the newly awakened

At the start of your journey, it's for the best if you look for safe and sound actions to reduce your Quiet. All the major sources of awakening listed in the page before comes from interaction with the others. But, as described below, any human interaction is risky, because may also result in an increase of your Quiet. So, be careful.

Falling back into the Quiet

As the "real" world can help you recovering your memories, it can also made you lost yourself in this reality. **Anytime one the events below happen, your Quiet raises by the number stated.** Note that, differently from those that reduce Quiet, **those below stack!** You may gain multiple point of Quiet if the same event happens more than one.

Quiet increasing factors [+]

1. **Hyper-sleep inhabitant** - Someone who you are trying to awake refuse to do so. He/she doesn't want to read this rule. Or, even if he/she read that, he/she doesn't believe in what's written and refuse to continue the game.
2. **Fallen Brother** - some *awakened* you know personally (one you awakened yourself, or one you find in a Meeting, Gathering, Team-Up or Re-Training) lost himself in the Quiet and fall back to Quiet 10. This applies as soon as you know that.
2. **The Realist** - someone logically demonstrates you that reality *should be* as it is and that thinking other way is delusional ([here](#) is an example of this kind of demonstration. Note that, if you clicked and read... you have to increase your Quiet right now!)
1. **Traitorous Pacifist** - a *sleepers* you are talking to (directly, not on newspaper, or by forum) proclaims that we should be pacific with extraterrestrial races and/or that any extraterrestrial race, because they will be more evolved, and they will be peaceful for sure.
1. **Mistaken Identity** - This applies *anytime you interpret an alien*. Even, for example, if you read "The Sentinel" by Arthur C. Clarke (which poses you in an alien's perspective). Or if you play an alien in a video-game, a board game, an Rpg and so on.

Waking up, or when you reach Quiet =0

Congratulations! You almost done it! You are emerging from your sleep...

- Go [there](#) and complete the form writing down your **true Marine Name** and the company you belong to, as your specialty and anything else you remembered about your almost forgotten life.
- Click on "Awake" and you will be in the Dragonfly again. Hurry up and fix the things, and watch our for Centaurian, they could ever been aboard.

It's been a pleasure fighting with you, soldier.

Extra page [not include rules and does not belong to the game]

This game has been written for the *Game Chef 2015*. You may find any relevant information (along with an slightly older version of this game) with a simple online search.

Designer's recipe

Game Chef ask you to create a game providing some hints in form of "*ingredients*". Even if I have participated in some similar competition during years, it's the first time I'm doing it in a language that is not my mother language.

My design philosophy is that it's pointless to put your effort in creating distinction and boundaries between different "kind" of games (not to mention "creative agenda"). I firmly believe that a game is a kind of *propositional attitude* we have, and not a "thing" with a possible limited description.

With this game I want to merge an introspective situation (often used in Rpg) with concepts from Alternate Reality Game, pyramidal selling, gamification and a lot of other stuff (most of them usually boring, as modal logic, motivational design, self awareness and so on).

About how I use the ingredients available... well. The main is **your public**. *Your, not mine*. In this game you start alone, but let this *loneliness* to involve more people. Also, you have to fight the Quiet (that is my interpretation of the **stillness**) and, of course, there is the concept that world is a **dream**. Another ingredient is **abandon**, used in the game on different level: first, because you can't quit (and abandon) the game. The rules doesn't allow you to do that... but you can always abandon and forget the rules itself. Also, a lot of Quiet shifts are due to awakened/sleepers abandon you or not. Ok, the last ingredient was the **dragonfly**, and I know it's a little stretched here.

Suggestion, references and "thank you"

The Alpha Centauri Empire is cited in a Dick's novel, the same one you can read to lower you Quiet.

The hyper-sleep could be found in Alien, and in particular the mental reprogramming is *exactly* the same that we have seen in "Demolition Man". The world as a illusion is a classic solipsistic paradox, well explained (between other) in The Matrix. And one very tricky to answer to...

The marine ideology and militaristic behaviour is inspired by Starship Troopers. You have to figure out by yourself if I actually *endorse it* or if I'm only joking about. The Quiet comes, name and concept, from the same RPG where there are Awakened and Sleepers. If you don't know what I'm talking about... well sorry, your Quiet rises again to 10. Go to bed dude, it's better for the true marine out there.

Of course, there could be *billions* of funny way to increase or decrease the Quiet. And if I have been able to programming probably I've made some **mobile application** to create a real-world reminder of the game. But, you know, I write this game only to show anyone how anything is possible, if you want to design it. Even create a "single player alternate reality campaign without technological support that is designed to crowdsource recruitment into the game itself". And possibly be also fun to read (to play it, not sure about that). I wish I've been able to list more sci-fi books/novels/film... but word count is a tyrant.

Thanks to my sources of inspiration: the County of Los Angeles and my girlfriend Elisa.



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