

The Last Ferry Before the Fog

120-minute plan · 4 players · Bring people together

The evening ferry has one clear-weather departure left. Travellers, market growers and a visiting repair crew each have something waiting across the river, while the pilot refuses to trade a safe manifest for louder promises.

Content notice: Fog, delayed journeys and competing needs. No medical emergency or survival threat is hidden among the passengers; everyone can stay in a warm quay hall.

GM overview

Four parties negotiate a genuine eight-unit demand on a six-unit ferry. Four travellers plus the compact repair crew make the people-and-tools manifest; growers then need two real storage bays and tomorrow's priority token. Four travellers plus two crate units make the market manifest; repairers then need a work bench and two lodging host tokens. The pilot supplies the ferry but will never spend the safety reserve or increase capacity. Neither branch depends on rank or a claim of emergency. Players assign counters, listen to what an overnight delay actually requires, and write who receives the limited morning priority. A cancelled sailing offers everyone the quay hall and leaves all delivery goals unresolved. Competing commitments consume scarce hospitality and cannot be promised twice.

What is really happening

The ferry has six capacity units. Four travellers need four seats; the repair crew and its compact kit need two; the growers' return crates need two. Everything cannot cross in one sailing. The growers can hold crates overnight if given two storage bays and a morning priority token. The repair crew can stay overnight if given a work bench and two host tokens; then travellers and crates fit. The pilot needs a complete manifest and an untouched safety reserve. Nobody has secret authority to add capacity.

Opening agreement and read-aloud

Agree on subjects to soften or skip. Each player names an ordinary skill and a reason to help. Evidence does not require a successful roll; uncertainty changes time, cost or obligations.

Fog waits beyond the bend like a curtain that has not yet been pulled. Pilot Yara lays six brass squares on the booking table. A grower sets down two crate tags, four travellers hold tickets, and a repairer folds a small workbench sketch.

Time and preparation

120 minutes: Arrange shore work and send the market crates

Opening agreement: 10 minutes

Hear all four parties and compare delays: 25 minutes

Inspect storage and a possible workshop: 25 minutes

Secure hosts and write the market manifest: 30 minutes

Review, board and hand over the shore job: 20 minutes

Closure and debrief: 10 minutes

Two real host invitations make the market branch possible. Use booking - hall - store - workshop - store - booking - pier. The extra work turns allow comparison, but capacity stays six and the safety reserve never becomes a resource to bargain away.

Starting information: Discover cards in play

Starting state: Ferry capacity units = 6; Dry storage bays = 2; Lodging host tokens = 2; Morning priority token

= 1; Preparation turns before fog = 5; Pilot safety reserve intact = true; Travellers accept manifest = false; Grower agreement = none; Repair crew agreement = none; Pilot approved manifest = false; Overnight workbench ready = false; Chosen manifest = none; Ferry departed = false
With 4 players: share the roles of mapper, evidence keeper, speaker and timekeeper.

If the group gets stuck

If dry storage is unavailable, the hosted-workshop branch can still send crates in the long route. If hosts, storage or the review window are missing, cancel-departure keeps everyone sheltered while explicitly leaving cross-river work undone. Refusing a capacity violation never removes a legitimate alternative.

Booking table

Read aloud: Yara moves the reserve marker away from the six squares. "That one is not a seventh place. Start with these six."

GM: Read the manifest card and count before bargaining. Manifest actions spend all six capacity units only when every relevant agreement exists.

Choice: Place all eight requested units beside the six spaces

Ask: Which two-unit group waits under each possible plan?

Requires: Available. Reveal Six spaces, eight requests

Result: The capacity conflict is visible; no one needs to raise their voice to establish it.

Choice: Write four travellers plus the compact repair pair

Ask: Attach the growers' storage receipt and read the six-unit total.

Requires: Travellers accept manifest is true and Grower agreement is wait and Repair crew agreement is sail and Chosen manifest is none. Spend 6 Ferry capacity units. Chosen manifest: tools

Result: The six-unit sheet contains four travellers and the repair pair with kit. The crates have a named morning plan.

Choice: Write four travellers plus two crate units

Ask: Attach both host invitations and the bench agreement.

Requires: Travellers accept manifest is true and Grower agreement is sail and Repair crew agreement is wait and Chosen manifest is none. Spend 6 Ferry capacity units. Chosen manifest: market

Result: The six-unit sheet contains all four travellers and both crates. The repair pair stays with the shore-work plan.

Warm quay hall

Read aloud: Traveller Elin points to four tickets. "We can travel with either group. Please keep us together and tell us the actual arrival plan."

GM: Travellers accept either feasible manifest without demanding to displace anyone. They need a public plan and their four places kept together.

Choice: Agree a four-person arrival plan

Ask: Name the island contact and keep the four tickets together.

Requires: Available. Travellers accept manifest: true

Result: Elin accepts either feasible manifest that keeps the group together.

Dry crate store

Read aloud: Grower Bex tests the dry floor, then asks who will have the key in the morning.

GM: Two storage bays plus the single priority token buy an explicit overnight grower agreement. The alternative is to send both crate units tonight. No claim of spoilage is introduced later.

Choice: Commit both dry bays and morning priority to the growers

Ask: Who holds the key and meets the growers at the posted opening time?

Requires: Grower agreement is none. Spend 2 Dry storage bays; Spend 1 Morning priority token; Spend 1

Preparation turns before fog. Grower agreement: wait. Reveal Growers' overnight receipt

Result: Bex accepts a real overnight arrangement; both crate units leave tonight's manifest.

Choice: Reserve tonight's two crate units

Ask: Which labels will the arrival contact match to the two crates?

Requires: Grower agreement is none. Grower agreement: sail. Reveal Growers' overnight receipt

Result: The growers choose tonight's sailing; their dry bays and priority token remain unspent.

Shore workshop

Read aloud: Repairer Nuri opens a compact tool case. "We can work here tonight if we have a bench and somewhere for both of us to sleep."

GM: Preparing the bench costs one turn. Two host tokens then allow the repair crew to stay and make tomorrow's repair plan from shore.

Choice: Confirm the repair pair and kit fit two units

Ask: What ordinary tool stays ashore so the kit remains compact?

Requires: Repair crew agreement is none. Spend 1 Preparation turns before fog. Repair crew agreement: sail.

Reveal Repairers' shore-work agreement

Result: Nuri commits the compact kit and both crew places to the people-and-tools plan.

Choice: Prepare a usable overnight bench

Ask: Who clears the work surface and posts the morning job list?

Requires: Available. Spend 1 Preparation turns before fog. Overnight workbench ready: true. Reveal Repairers' shore-work agreement

Result: The workshop is ready, but the repairers still need both lodging invitations.

Choice: Assign two willing hosts to the repair pair

Ask: Read the two invented hosts' invitations and the morning meeting point.

Requires: Overnight workbench ready is true and Repair crew agreement is none. Spend 2 Lodging host tokens. Repair crew agreement: wait

Result: Both repairers accept the shore-work plan and a place to sleep.

Pilot's departure pier

Read aloud: Yara checks the channel and waits for one signed sheet. She does not look at whose voice is loudest.

GM: Pilot review costs one work turn after a feasible manifest is recorded and reserve intact. Departure is a separate final choice; no automatic sailing follows a conversation.

Choice: Review the actual manifest with Yara

Ask: Read the total, delayed-group arrangement and arrival contact without adding another unit.

Requires: Pilot safety reserve intact is true and (Chosen manifest is tools or Chosen manifest is market). Spend 1 Preparation turns before fog. Pilot approved manifest: true. Reveal Departure review

Result: Yara approves exactly the recorded six-unit departure.

Choice: Depart with travellers and repair kit

Ask: What message reaches the growers when the repair crew arrives?

Requires: Pilot approved manifest is true and Chosen manifest is tools. Ferry departed: true

Result: Travellers and the repair pair cross. The dry crates wait for their promised morning priority.

Closure: Tools tonight, crates tomorrow

Choice: Depart with travellers and crates

Ask: What will the hosted repairers have ready by morning?

Requires: Pilot approved manifest is true and Chosen manifest is market. Ferry departed: true

Result: Travellers and crates cross. The repair pair starts its bounded shore-work evening.

Closure: Crates tonight, a workshop at shore

Connections and changing routes

Booking table - Warm quay hall: Covered passenger walk. Available.

Warm quay hall - Dry crate store: Storage court. Available.

Dry crate store - Shore workshop: Delivery passage. Available.

Shore workshop - Pilot's departure pier: Tool cart lane. Available.

Pilot's departure pier - Booking table: Boarding approach. Available.

Booking table - Dry crate store: Manifest runner's path. Available.

Warm quay hall - Shore workshop: Hosts' covered passage. Available.

Dry crate store - Pilot's departure pier: Direct crate ramp. Available.

Elin - Four travelling neighbours

Goal: Cross together with a trustworthy arrival plan.

Offers: Four valid tickets and help reading the boarding order.

Will not accept: Four actual places on either manifest; no splitting the group without consent.

Voice: Count all four tickets and ask what happens on arrival.

Track: Travellers accept manifest

Bex - Market growers

Goal: Move two crate units or secure a credible morning alternative.

Offers: Can defer crates if both dry bays and morning priority are committed.

Will not accept: No exposed overnight crates and no vague promise of "first if possible."

Voice: Ask where the crates sleep and who opens the door.

Track: Grower agreement

Nuri - Visiting repair pair

Goal: Take compact tools across or do useful shore work with a place to stay.

Offers: Two capacity units including compact kit, or overnight work if hosted.

Will not accept: Staying requires a prepared bench and two willing host tokens; the crew will not sleep in the store.

Voice: Open the small kit and name what fits inside it.

Track: Repair crew agreement

Yara - Ferry cooperative pilot

Goal: Leave once with a complete six-unit manifest before fog.

Offers: One departure and public approval of either feasible allocation.

Will not accept: Exactly six capacity units; safety reserve remains untouched; no second departure tonight.

Voice: Read totals rather than social titles.

Track: Pilot approved manifest

Discovery card: Six spaces, eight requests

Give only when revealed in play.

Travellers together: 4. Repair pair with compact kit: 2. Growers' two crates: 2. Ferry total: 6. The separate reserve marker is not capacity. Draw a line around one group that stays, then record the actual overnight arrangement.

Player task: Allocate six counters and identify which two-unit request must wait.

GM answer: Travellers plus repairers or travellers plus crates fit. All eight do not; no persuasion check increases the boat.

Discovery card: Growers' overnight receipt

Give only when revealed in play.

Two dry bays, numbered 1 and 2. One morning priority token. Key holder: ____ . Morning opening time: ____ . When all fields and resources are supplied, growers may leave both crates tonight.

Player task: Spend two bay counters and the real priority token, then sign the handover.

GM answer: The receipt makes the growers' delay concrete and unlocks the people-and-tools manifest.

Discovery card: Repairers' shore-work agreement

Give only when revealed in play.

Prepared bench: ____ . Host invitation A: ____ . Host invitation B: ____ . Work to finish before morning: inspect the compact kit and prepare the island repair list. Two willing hosts are required; a workbench is not a bed.

Player task: Assign two invented willing hosts and one bounded workshop job.

GM answer: A prepared bench and two host tokens let the repairers stay without pretending they crossed tonight.

Discovery card: Departure review

Give only when revealed in play.

Total boarding units: ____ / 6. Four traveller places kept together: yes / no. Delayed group's arrangement attached: yes / no. Safety reserve intact: yes / no. One departure only. Arrival contact: ____ .

Player task: Check the manifest against actual resources before asking the pilot to sail.

GM answer: Pilot approval requires one feasible manifest and the reserve; the fog clock pays one final review turn.

State sheet

Ferry capacity units: 6 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 6)

Dry storage bays: 2 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 2)

Lodging host tokens: 2 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 2)

Morning priority token: 1 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 1)

Preparation turns before fog: 5 (clock, minimum 0, maximum 5)

Pilot safety reserve intact: true (flag)

Travellers accept manifest: false (stance)

Grower agreement: none (stance)

Repair crew agreement: none (stance)

Pilot approved manifest: false (stance)

Overnight workbench ready: false (flag)

Chosen manifest: none (flag)

Ferry departed: false (flag)

Event: Fog reaches the outer bend

Trigger: Preparation turns before fog at most 1

Only one preparation turn remains. A completed manifest can still receive pilot review; new bench or crate preparation would leave no review turn.

At any place: Close the manifest and use the warm quay hall

Name every delivery still waiting and who will reopen the discussion tomorrow.

Requires: Available.

Yara cancels the sailing. Everyone can stay in the quay hall; no goods or crew are reported across the river.

Ending: Tools tonight, crates tomorrow

Requires: Chosen manifest is tools

The ferry takes all four travellers and the compact repair pair across. Growers have both dry bays and the single morning priority token; the delay is real and supported.

Next: The key holder opens both bays at the recorded time and checks the priority token is honoured.

Ending: Crates tonight, a workshop at shore

Requires: Chosen manifest is market

Travellers and both crates reach the island. The repair pair works at the prepared shore bench, then stays with two willing hosts. The island repair itself still waits.

Next: Nuri brings the prepared repair list on the next ordinary sailing.

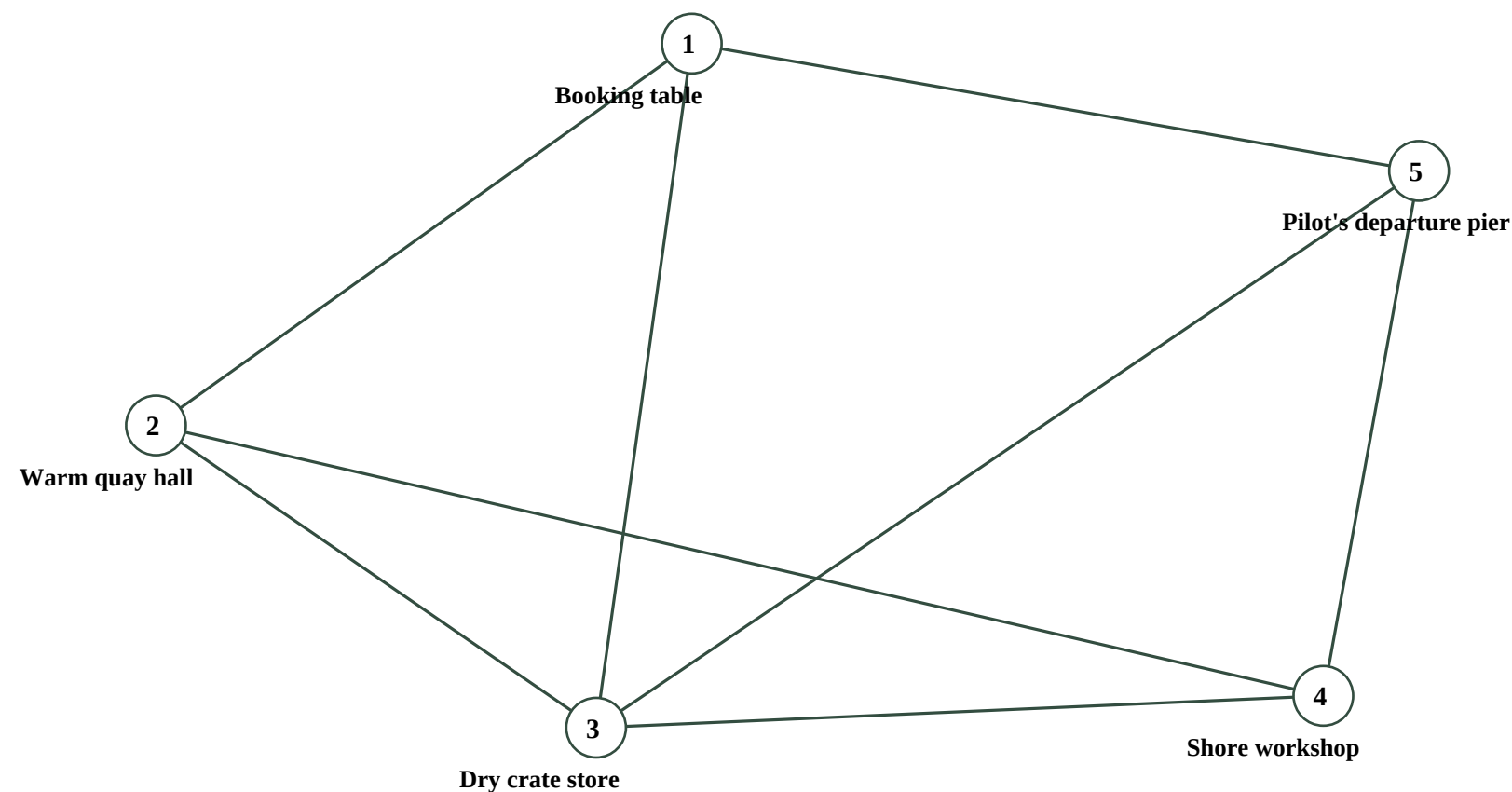
Ending: The hall lights stay on

Requires: Available

The last sailing is cancelled. People have shelter, but every cross-river delivery remains unfinished. The pilot's reserve was never treated as an extra ticket.

Next: Reopen the manifest at dawn using the actual remaining bays, hosts and priority token.

The Last Ferry Before the Fog - GM decision map



Dashed paths need conditions. Read Connections and changing routes for costs and direction.