

THREEFOLD

FIVE AND

INFINITY

CHAPTER 0



THE ADVENTURE
GENERATOR

MODERN AGE



THE ADVENTURE GENERATOR

WHAT IS FIVE AND INFINITY?

Five and Infinity is an adventure series for *Threefold*, the *Modern AGE* setting of planar travel and genre-bending adventure. With some loose connections built in, these adventures can be added to your campaign occasionally, or serve as the basis for a story arc themselves, bringing you from level 1 to 16 as the stakes run from the simple satisfaction bringing peace to a corner of the Earth or some far-flung dimension, to preventing the end of worlds.

Five and Infinity was originally slated for release as a physical book, but as of this time of writing in March 2020, social distancing and quarantine measures to address the spread of COVID-19 have prevented printers and distribution workers from moving books. Consequently, we're releasing these adventures in serialized form. Watch for them as they appear!

THE ADVENTURE GENERATOR

Unlike the other chapters of the *Five and Infinity* series, this isn't an adventure—it makes them. Or at the very least, it provides an outline for your own *Threefold Modern AGE* adventure. The adventures this generator produces can be adapted to other *Modern AGE* campaigns, but it will take some adaptation to remove *Threefold*-specific elements.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

By following the tables here, you'll develop a short adventure with a few twists and turns, complete with a central problem and an antagonist. String a few of these together to build a campaign. Choose or roll for salient elements to get a starting point, a problem, and a twist, all leading to a conflict the players must confront. Since the random tables are merely a tool, you can choose how to use them. It's up to you to tweak, reroll, or modify the results according to your desires—you're not spending points or crafting levels, you're developing inspirational points for drama.

Keep these important points in mind while using the Adventure Generator:

1. **Tweak the outcomes as necessary to make your story interesting and relevant to your players.** Total randomness generates nonsensical stories or creates bland structures because there are no high points or uniquely personal moments. Your goal should be *managed randomness*. Generate an adventure, then tweak it based on your players' story desires, their character powers, and the direction you want to underscore with your game.
2. **These adventures assume that the basic premises of the setting hold true; break from them only to deliberately bend the setting.** For example, the Vitane is an essentially just and equitable society. An individual from the Vitane (even a highly placed one) might perform a criminal or immoral act out of desperation, personal conviction, or subversion, but this doesn't mean that the Vitane is

THREEFOLD?

Threefold is a complete setting for the *Modern AGE* role-playing game. In a Metacosm of many worlds, heroes either travel from plane to plane, exploring and solving problems, or investigate strange, secret phenomena closer to home—even if that home isn’t Earth. Characters can belong to one, many, or none of the factions in the setting, though adventures flow easily from the plane-hopping exploration group called the **Sodality**, or as transhuman agents of **Aethon**, who guide Earth’s history to protect humanity and advance the agendas of transcendental machine intelligences.

The main *Threefold* setting book requires *Modern AGE* to play, and information about both of them can be found at modernagerpg.com. To sample *Threefold* and the *Modern AGE* system for free, check out the complimentary *Threefold Quickstart*, also available on modernagerpg.com, which provides characters, basic rules, and an adventure to get you started, all for free.

institutionally corrupt or that such people are common in the society.

3. When you finish noting down an adventure, take a step back to look at it and ask, “Why do my players care?” A random adventure can say “insert a hook for your players here,” but only you know your players well enough to understand what motivates them. You’re the one with their character sheets, telling you what kinds of challenges they want to face. You’re the one watching their interactions, so you know who wants to be in the forefront of every challenge, who wants to stay in the background supporting the team, and who’s most interested in social interaction over throwing dice. Consider how your players will collide with the adventure and ensure you have something for every participant.

GENERATING THE ADVENTURE

Your adventure has five overarching qualities, each determined by tables which follow. Some tables will, in turn, direct you to additional rolls on sub-tables. At any point you should, of course, feel free to scratch out whatever you rolled and make your own decision instead.

To build an adventure from start to finish, roll or pick from the tables in the following order. (You might, of course, only need a specific section if you’re modifying an adventure in progress or one that you’ve already written.)

STEP 1: THE KICKOFF

The **kickoff** is the basic start to the story. You can skip a kickoff if you already have the characters together in a group in a known location. The kickoff serves as the call to action, the initial spark that instigates the story and drives the characters into drama that will lead inevitably to the problem and the crisis.

Note that while the kickoff *starts* the adventure, the players don’t need to follow it to its conclusion. The kickoff simply serves to get the ball rolling. The players may well take the adventure in a different direction, especially as the problem comes to the fore.

The characters’ Drives can also motivate a kickoff. If a character has a Drive to pursue arcane knowledge, the hint that someone has stolen a data drive with many arcane secrets can draw the character into pursuit. If a character has a Drive to protect their family members, a starting scene where a family member is involved—even if that person isn’t part of the actual problem of the story—can set the character on a track to investigate strange situations or confront strangers if they seem like a possible threat.

STEP 2: THE PROBLEM

The **problem** indicates the nature of the central crux of the adventure. This might be a conflict, it might be a puzzle, it might be a dearth of information, or some other issue. How it’s solved is dependent upon the players—not every problem is solved with violence, but most require the players to take active steps. These problems are taken from *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations* by Georges Polti, a list designed to categorize dramatic stories. This book lies in the public domain, so it’s readily available for further inspiration.

In some cases, the problem strikes the characters directly; in other cases, someone else comes to them with the problem and the characters are enticed to intercede. If a problem doesn’t seem to make sense for your group (for instance, you roll that one of your characters is kidnapped, but this seems impossible in their current safehouse), roll again, choose a different result, or re-interpret the result. Don’t deploy a problem that takes a character out of play unless the player isn’t averse to it—for instance, kidnapping a character means that player probably won’t have much to do for most of the adventure, so deploy such a hazard against friends and relatives, or against a character whose player can’t be present for the game session.

Expect your players to come up with creative solutions to problems! The problem generated here provides a groundwork from which to build the adventure. How it’s solved will depend upon the players. For instance, you might roll (4, 2) *sacrifice for an ideal*. You decide the team must visit a plane where technology is taboo—nobody’s allowed to have anything more sophisticated than a sledgehammer or a pulley. The problem, at first glance, is that the team must make a sacrifice—hiding or leaving behind their technology—to pursue their ideal of helping their group on this plane. The players may just leave their technology behind and try to blend in, but they could try other solutions, too; they could use magic to hide their devices, or try to contact a sympathetic local group to help blend in. The problem simply sets up a conflict. How the players solve it is up to them.

STEP 3: THE CRISIS

A **crisis** is a story development that accelerates the problem and adds pressure to the players. The crisis typically happens partway through the adventure, making the initial attempts

at solving the problem nonviable. Sometimes it's a "twist," other times it's the hammer falling as time runs out to solve the problem. The players might not recognize the true nature of the crisis until it happens—for instance, discovering that their magical powers are ineffective for solving the problem; they don't realize this until *after* they try to solve the problem and their solution fails.

STEP 4: THE ENVIRONMENT

The **environment** describes *where* the action takes place. You might consult the Planar Generator for more detailed descriptions of other planes. Otherwise, the environment table gives you a random place to use as the backdrop for a scene. Depending upon your adventure, the entire piece may take place in one setting, or it might move from setting to setting as your players change scenes. For example, the players might start in an urban environment like a shopping mall or factory, discover clues that lead them into the desert far from civilization, confront an enemy there, then follow the lead from that foe to a political climax that happens in the spires of a center of government. Or, they could have a quiet meeting that takes place in a forest at night, and play through the complications of betrayals, secrets, and relationships over the course of that mist-shrouded night in the woods.

STEP 5: THE STAKES

Stakes determine what the players stand to lose if the problem isn't solved promptly and correctly. The stakes are almost always personal: loss of resources, abilities, wealth, allies, or even more abstract characteristics.

WHERE REQUIRED: DRAMATIS PERSONAE

In addition, there's one more table at the end of this section: **Dramatis Personae**, which you can use to quickly generate bullet points for any important Non-Player Characters the protagonists meet.

ONE PART, THREE PARTS, FIVE PARTS

Dramatic stories usually take place in one act, three acts, or five acts, and you can use these templates depending on how long you want your adventure to run. These give you a broad handle on the complexity of the adventure. Of course, it's possible for a one-act piece to run long or a five-act piece to move by quickly, but the act structure at least gives you some degree of control over your adventure length and pacing. In AGE, these adventure pieces are called parts, but if you're looking at literature or theater for examples, they correspond to acts. Just like dramatic acts, these parts are built out of scenes, with each scene covering one contiguous piece of drama, such as a swordfight, an interrogation, or a journey across a vast landscape.

ONE PART

A one-part adventure introduces the problem immediately and challenges the players to solve it in a straightforward



THE PLAYER NUDGE

In addition to using these tables to generate adventures beforehand, you can roll an adventure on the fly at your game table. When you do so, give your players a chance to “nudge” your rolls. Roll for an appropriate part of the adventure, then announce what you’ve rolled. Give your players the opportunity to nudge a die roll up or down by one. This way your players have a slight “veto” power over story directions they’d rather not pursue.

When you build an adventure like this, you must ensure that everyone at the table is invested in a good-faith development of the story. First, remind your players that there’s no stigma for vetoing a choice: Nobody should feel bad about saying they don’t want a specific story, and everyone should agree on this up front, so that no one feels pressured to remain silent if the adventure includes something they find objectionable. Second, remind everyone that there’s nothing wrong with picking the next phase of an adventure: It’s up to you to make the challenge interesting, even if the players have some idea of the form it takes. If your group rolls several options they don’t like, it may be best just to start looking for choices that seem like they fit what people want. Third, solicit feedback from your players: If someone has an idea they like, they should feel free to speak up, and let the group decide whether that piece will work for everyone.

fashion. These are good for short one- or two-hour sessions or convention games, where the players start due to the kickoff, the problem arises almost immediately in the location where the character team forms up, and a crisis happens as the players try to solve the problem *in situ*.

THREE PARTS

In a three-part structure, the kickoff happens in the opening location, and the characters assemble to deal with the task at hand. The problem is introduced and the team likely travels to a second location for the second part. While dealing with the problem, the crisis emerges. The characters move to a new location for the third part, where they resolve the crisis and end the story. Each part might have a few scenes, or just one, depending on your dramatic needs; scenes tie together because they are all involved in moving through the current part, before the introduction of the next twist. This is good for a four- to six-hour game, depending on how many challenges you throw at the players.

FIVE PARTS

A five-part structure is like an extended three-part structure, in which the characters assemble in response to a kickoff, a problem arises, and they move to a new part and new location to handle the problem. A crisis emerges and they move again to deal with the crisis. When the crisis is resolved, a new problem happens, and they move once more to solve it. Finally, they move to a final location to handle a second crisis that emerges. Often the first and second problem and crisis are thematically linked, or the second problem and crisis are larger versions of the first or a direct result of the

solutions to the first. Oftentimes the ending location is the same as the starting location, as the group comes full circle to close the story.

IN MEDIA RES

To drive your players straight into the action, you can start an adventure *in media res*—right in the middle of the action. In this case, you describe the situation in which the characters find themselves, and something has *already* gone wrong: the problem is already revealed. The players must be on their toes to react immediately to the situation. This is a common formula in drama because it thrusts the participants immediately into action, which is an easy way to engage players. It’s a great format for your first game session with a new group, because the players *react* to the problem erupting around them, rather than *acting* according to their as-yet unformed character motivations. During the action, the characters can use their special abilities, giving everyone a chance to see what kind of role they’re going to fill in the group.

FLASHBACKS

You can use flashbacks to flesh out character backgrounds in the middle of an adventure, by cutting to scene in the past that shows how a character gained a skill, ally, drawback, power, and so on. When you flashback, an easy way to include the whole team is to use one player as the center of the flashback, and have other players take on the roles of other participants in the past scene, whether friendly or hostile. This way, everyone still has a stake in the story. The flashback lets you draw parallels to the problem in the current time or expose some facet of the character’s backstory that’s relevant to the problem at hand.

SPOTLIGHTING

Game players often want opportunities to feel like their contributions matter and their characters are doing things that are effective. Creating chances for these contributions is *spotlighting*, in which you set up a conflict where one of the characters has a quality that’s perfect for solving the conundrum at hand.

As you set up your random adventure, look at the character sheets of your players. The highest-level powers and abilities on their sheets are ones they probably want to use—after all, they put their points into those areas, so they want to be good at those tasks! Pick one of these as a likely solution to each problem in each act of your adventure.

For example, Amy Wilson is a great hand-to-hand combatant. That makes it easy for her to take the spotlight when close fighting breaks out. How else can you spotlight that ability? Perhaps Amy can take an opportunity to teach someone self-defense techniques, thereby building a stronger bond with another character. Or those skills might be useful in recognizing the fighting style of someone who attacked an ally, so Amy can help to figure out who the enemy is and how to fight them.

Sean, on the other hand, has excellent social skills. That implies Sean will take the spotlight in scenes in which the

characters gather information, make friends, or intimidate people. This means you should set up one of the challenges in your adventure so that the problem can be solved by Sean's use of social acumen: Figuring out a secret someone's holding out, convincing someone to help the group, or talking down an angry ally when a misunderstanding erupts and threatens to break into a fight.

Some players prefer supporting roles; these players don't need the spotlight but prefer to take actions that help other players do well. Often, these characters have ancillary knowledge talents or specialties in powers that improve other people's capabilities. To give them chances to help, lay down clues that can be interpreted by judicious use of knowledge, and create hazards and enemies *just above* the level of difficulty that the more action-oriented characters can handle, thereby prompting the supporting characters to use their bonuses to help their allies in overcoming problems.

ADVENTURE TABLES

The following tables provide short descriptions of various outcomes. Each outcome has a more detailed description later in the text.

KICKOFFS

Roll or choose from among the following kickoffs to bring characters into the story.

1 A DAY IN THE LIFE

The characters are going about mundane tasks, such as research, shopping, training, or debriefing. When they meet up for their personal or professional business, the problem occurs.

2. A STRANGER ARRIVES

A stranger to the characters arrives in their area, with mysterious motivations. Roll 1d6: 1-3, the stranger is hostile; 4-5, the stranger is friendly but comes with a request; 6, the stranger is cryptic and does not divulge details, so the characters must investigate to learn the stranger's motivations. Working with or against the stranger ultimately leads to the problem.

3. AN ENEMY STRIKES

An enemy of the characters—whether a personal one, or a more general enemy such as soldiers of the Nighthost or the

| KICKOFF | |
|----------|----------------------|
| 1D6 ROLL | KICKOFF |
| 1 | A Day in The Life |
| 2 | A Stranger Arrives |
| 3 | An Enemy Strikes |
| 4 | Disaster Strikes |
| 5 | Opportunity Arises |
| 6 | Sent Forth on A Task |

fanatical warriors of a hostile Optimate—descend upon the characters, meaning to cause harm. They may be targeting the characters, or simply engaging in their own agenda while the characters happen to be nearby. In the course of the characters defending against them, the problem strikes.

4. DISASTER STRIKES

A natural or supernatural disaster strikes, and the characters has the chance to intervene to save lives and to protect important places or objects. While the characters deal with the disaster, the problem makes the situation harder.

| PROBLEM | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1D6 & 1D6 ROLL | PROBLEM |
| 1, 1 | (1) Supplicant |
| 1, 2 | (2) Deliverance |
| 1, 3 | (3) Vengeance for a Crime |
| 1, 4 | (4) Vengeance for Kin |
| 1, 5 | (5) Pursuit |
| 1, 6 | (6) Decline |
| 2, 1 | (7) Cruelty or Misfortune |
| 2, 2 | (8) Revolt |
| 2, 3 | (9) Daring Enterprise |
| 2, 4 | (10) Abduction |
| 2, 5 | (11) Enigma |
| 2, 6 | (12) Obtaining an Object |
| 3, 1 | (13) Enmity of Kin |
| 3, 2 | (14) Rivalry of Kin |
| 3, 3 | (15) Murderous Love Affair |
| 3, 4 | (16) Derangement |
| 3, 5 | (17) Imprudence |
| 3, 6 | (18) Unwitting Taboo Romance |
| 4, 1 | (19) Unwitting Kinslayer |
| 4, 2 | (20) Sacrifice for Ideal |
| 4, 3 | (21) Sacrifice for Kin |
| 4, 4 | (22) Sacrifice for Passion |
| 4, 5 | (23) Sacrifice of a Loved One |
| 4, 6 | (24) Professional Rivalry |
| 5, 1 | (25) Forbidden Love Affair |
| 5, 2 | (26) Crime of Love |
| 5, 3 | (27) Discovery of Dishonor |
| 5, 4 | (28) Obstacles to Love |
| 5, 5 | (29) Enemy Loved |
| 5, 6 | (30) Ambition |
| 6, 1 | (31) Conflict with the Divine |
| 6, 2 | (32) Mistaken Jealousy |
| 6, 3 | (33) Erroneous Judgment |
| 6, 4 | (34) Remorse |
| 6, 5 | (35) Recovery of a Lost One |
| 6, 6 | (36) Loss of Loved Ones |

5. OPPORTUNITY ARISES

The characters see a chance to gain access to a person, object, or piece of useful knowledge, or to help someone in need. As they move to seize the opportunity, the problem complicates the situation.

6. SENT FORTH ON A TASK

The characters are assigned a task by the Sodality. Roll 1d6: 1-2, fetch an item; 3-4, eliminate a rival or threat; 5-6, engage in diplomacy with a possible ally. As the team proceeds to their destination and attempts to undertake the task, the problem arises.

PROBLEMS

Choose from the following or roll for a specific problem as detailed.

1. SUPPLICANT

A person or group comes to the characters and asks that they use their influence to intercede in a decision that will be made by an authority figure. Roll 1d6: On a 1-3 the supplicant is an individual; on a 4-6 it is a small group, such as refugees, a secret society, or a small research team. The authority figure is either more powerful than the characters or occupies a position with which the characters cannot legally interfere. The characters must decide whether to help (there may be legal or moral ramifications), and then figure out how to make their case.

2. DELIVERANCE

A person or group has caused a problem and asks the characters for protection against someone else who seeks to mete out justice or revenge for the problem. Roll 1d6: On a 1-3 the supplicant is an individual; on a 4-6 it is a small group. Typically, the avenger is either someone too powerful for the characters to confront, or someone who won't readily listen to the characters' pleas and over whom they have no sway.

3. VENGEANCE FOR A CRIME

A criminal (or several) commits an offense against the characters that will not see justice unless the characters take the matter into their own hands. Roll 1d6: This is the number of criminals involved in the act. Generally, the criminals are in positions in which they cannot be directly confronted, so the characters must use subterfuge and guile to undermine them.

4. VENGEANCE FOR KIN

A criminal (or several) wrongs, wounds, or kills a relative or close friend of one of the characters. The characters are tasked with righting the matter in some fashion. Roll 1d6: This is the number of criminals involved in the act. Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, the criminal(s) have some sort of position, power, or influence that makes it difficult to prosecute them directly. On a 5-6, the character's relative was involved in something suspect, illegal, or compromising, and investigating risks exposure, which can cause social complications for the characters.

5. PURSUIT

A fugitive flees from punishment. The characters become involved either to catch the fugitive, or to aid in the escape. Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, the pursuer represents a group or organization; on a 5, the pursuer is alone; on a 6, one of the characters is placed in a situation in which fleeing from (likely inaccurate or unjust) persecution is the best option in the moment. Both sides are usually in a position in which the characters will not want to engage them, or the situation cannot be broken down into a simple "good-bad" dichotomy, so the characters must engage in investigation and debate to decide on the best course of action.

6. DECLINE

Someone has fallen from a position of power and authority. Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, it is an individual; on a 5-6, it is a group. The characters know of the person or people and can take advantage of the sudden shift in politics or might offer succor and aid to the fallen. Flashbacks are a particularly useful technique here, to show the fallen potentate in the past during their time of power.

7. CRUELTY OR MISFORTUNE

A misfortunate demotion or cut in team resources strikes the characters, whether due to mischance or deliberate attempts to undermine the team. Roll 1d6: On a 1-5, it is due to a mistake, clerical error, administrative review, tightening of budget, or other procedural problem. On a 6, it is due to an apparent vendetta or deliberate sabotage by a superior. (Note that in the Sodality, sabotage by a superior usually means the superior is being extorted, controlled, or has a hidden agenda that isn't obvious to the team.) The characters must conduct their operations with their newly reduced position until they can find a way to reverse their fortunes.

8. REVOLT

A cruel authority figure could be overthrown or assassinated by a revolution. The characters become involved in planning or aiding the revolution and must try to temper more blood-thirsty elements while seeking justice for the oppressed.

9. DARING ENTERPRISE

The characters gain the opportunity to acquire an interesting, powerful, useful, or valuable object by overpowering a foe. Roll 1d6: On a 1-3, the foe can be defeated by confrontation; on a 4-6, the foe is too powerful to confront directly, but could be defeated by subterfuge, misdirection, or forming an alliance with others. Usually the opportunity comes about because an authority figure or scholar informs the players of the location of the item; the players can decide on their approach, whether via combat, negotiation, or heist.

10. ABDUCTION

Someone important to the characters (possibly a member of the team!) is abducted. Roll 1d6: On a 1-2, the kidnapper wants the target for personal reasons, and doesn't communicate with the characters. On a 3-6, the kidnapper has some other agenda, and communicates with the players, making ransom demands for money, power, or concessions.

If the abductee is a player character, consider intercutting scenes, having the other players take on the roles of kidnappers or ancillary characters while the kidnapped character tries to determine the motives and location of the kidnappers. Then switch back to the rest of the team while they attempt the rescue.

11. THE ENIGMA

Someone poses a riddle to the characters, who must solve it through wits and insight. The solution to the riddle usually isn't immediately apparent; instead, the characters may find themselves facing dreamscapes, illusions, or trickery in order to learn the wisdom necessary to solve the enigma.

You can make an adventure of this kind take "no time at all" by having a questioner pose a conundrum to the players, then playing through a scenario in which the characters "imagine if we did this..." The results of such an imaginary scenario provide them with the information to solve the riddle. In such scenarios, you can also explore uncommon outcomes like character death or elevation to unusual positions of power, as these are "what if" situations that won't have a lasting impact on your campaign—except perhaps for revealing to other characters how their teammates feel about certain issues, or what kinds of secrets their teammates hold!

12. OBTAINING

Two parties seek an object and the characters become the intermediaries in the struggle. Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, it is a valuable or noteworthy item; on a 5, it is a notable location; on a 6, it is a person. The characters must safeguard the object from theft or destruction while deciding which side to favor. Both sides have a carrot and a stick: a reward if the players help them, and a threat if the players thwart them.

13. ENMITY OF KIN

A family member or close friend plots against one of the characters. After the character learns of this treachery, the team must figure out the motivation and make sure that no further incidents occur. Hopefully the characters don't inadvertently kill a family member! Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, the plot happens due to a secret that the kin holds, such as a dying wish from another family member or a dark secret that the character doesn't know; on a 5, the treachery is the result of a dark turn that the kin has taken due to belief that they will receive some sort of fulfillment for betraying the character; on a 6, the treachery is the result of mind control, illusion, or some other clouding of judgment of the kin.

14. RIVALRY OF KIN

A family member or close friend becomes engaged in a contest with one of the characters for a position, a promotion, a gift, or some other reward. The situation is only resolved when one or the other proves to be worthy. Make sure that the reward is something that your player's character wants, but the rival is also someone important to the characters, so that the player feels the dilemma of deciding whether to pursue the reward or save the relationship. Roll 1d6: On a 1-3, an authority figure or other relative is judging the two characters over a span of time and will reward the most worthy; on a 4-5, the contest is personal, with the rival trying to prove them-

selves via comparison with the character; on a 6, the rival is an involuntary opponent, having been blackmailed or otherwise forced into the conflict.

15. MURDEROUS LOVE AFFAIR

Two (or more) personages engage in a romantic affair that leads to one (or both, or all) of them conspiring to kill a rival for affections. Roll 1d6: On a 1-4, one member of the illicit romance has conspired to kill the rival; on a 5-6, all parties are involved. A character could be the target of this murder attempt, whether due to being involved with another party or due to the belief that the character is a rival for affection. Otherwise, the target is someone known to the characters, and the characters become aware that an attempt on the target's life is imminent. They must then uncover who has planned the murder and why.

16. DERANGEMENT

Someone known to the characters, or the characters themselves, suffer a breakdown or derangement. Roll 1d6: On a 1-2, it is the result of a specific mental stressor; on a 3-4, it is a result of a drug, technology, or spell tailored to alter the character's perceptions; on a 5-6, it is a result of a deliberate program of gaslighting and engineered situations to cause the target to doubt their perceptions. If the derangement isn't a form of staged deception, roll 1d6: 1, the derangement causes partial memory loss; 2, the derangement causes delusions and sensory phantasms; 3, the derangement causes extreme uncertainty and unwillingness to act; 4, the derangement causes the character to be unable to access or use their most significant talent (magical ability, high-level skill, etc.); 5, the derangement causes the character to suffer sudden bouts of euphoria and laughter in spite of the situation; 6, the derangement causes sudden bursts of irrational anger and hostility.

If you inflict this derangement on a character, ensure it's within the player's comfort zone—a specifically-inflicted derangement of this sort should not be equated to issues of mental illness. The derangement should only show up to complicate scenes, not to leave the character unable to participate through the whole story. If you inflict the derangement on an ally, it should cause the players problems as they protect the ally and pursue a solution.

17. FATAL IMPRUDENCE

Someone accidentally or unwisely conducts an act that causes a problem by breaking or losing an item or making trouble for the characters. The offender is someone friendly to the players, or someone they otherwise don't wish to confront, like a child, a foolish relative, an influential official, or a victim of circumstances. Roll 1d6: 1-2, an important item is misplaced or lost, possibly destroyed; 3-4, the offender does something that could implicate the characters in a criminal act; 5-6, the offender does something that could cause the characters to lose standing in the eyes of their superiors. The characters must find a way to replace the object or the acclaim that's been lost, and to deal with the offender.

18. UNWITTING TABOO ROMANCE

A surprising revelation shows that one of the characters, or someone close to them, has engaged in a romance that



involves a taboo. They did not know about this in advance. Now they must deal with the ramifications. The taboo will cover a relationship a culture that the characters are in considers problematic. Roll 1d6: 1-4, the team discovers the complication in the relationship through an accidental revelation or a surprise, such as a relative dying and revealing a secret, or finding a family record; 5-6, the team discovers the complication when an outside party tries to blackmail, extort, or threaten one or more of the lovers with the information. The group must decide how to deal with the revelation, whether to change the relationship, and if necessary, how to deal with the potential threats that come with this information.

19. UNWITTING KINSLAYER

The characters have an altercation—or discover from a prior conflict—that someone they killed, or for whose death they were at least partially responsible, was a relative. As a result, complications arise. Roll 1d6: 1-2, someone else from the family takes umbrage and arrives to exact vengeance or to confront the characters; 3-4, the team's sponsors or advisors uncover information after the fact and sends the team on a mission to follow up, choosing the relative as part of the mission; 5, the team learns of the relation by discovering it through an alter on another closely-aligned plane; 6, the char-

acter inherits an item or receives a post-mortem message from the decedent, revealing information or granting an item that causes a significant problem, such as an artifact of Infernal powers or evidence of corruption of a high-ranking official in the team's organization.

20. SACRIFICE FOR AN IDEAL

The team confronts a problem where they must perform a painful sacrifice to showcase their ideals. This might be a mortal sacrifice (giving up one's life willingly to save others) or it might be a sacrifice of power, prestige, magic, or material goods. Choose a character who has an appropriate strong ideological position and something to lose. The problem arises out of a situation that can be best solved by the character giving up their power in order to demonstrate their commitment to the ideal.

21. SACRIFICE FOR KIN

The team learns that a relative or close friend of one of the characters needs help, and a personal sacrifice may be able to save them. Roll 1d6: 1-2, it is a health problem that can be solved with some kind of donation from the character; 3-4, the relative is in dire need of help in the form of money and influence that would put a strain on the resources of the protagonist; 5-6, the relative is in mortal peril and the characters must intervene to protect, at risk to themselves. The donation that a character must make should have lasting repercussions—depending upon the player, you may choose to make the initial choice a fatal one! Donating an organ or a mystical source of power could permanently lower an ability rating, while interceding with wealth and influence might inconvenience the characters in their upcoming missions for some time. Make sure to pick a player whose character will feel a sense of obligation that will cause this to be a dilemma—a choice between two bad results (either their kin or the character suffers in their stead).

22. SACRIFICE FOR PASSION

A character in the team has a chance to achieve something for which they have a great desire—but at a cost. The team might learn the location of a much-desired item, a piece of lost knowledge, or a wise teacher, but to achieve it, the character must be prepared to give up something valuable, which will be lost forever. Roll 1d6: 1-2 the cost is some mundane item or heirloom; 3-4 the cost is a mystical or miraculous technological item; 5-6 the cost is a personal sacrifice of body or mind, such as a finger or an eye or an important set of memories. It's possible that the adventure may involve acquiring the item to trade for the desired goal instead.

23. SACRIFICE OF A LOVED ONE

The team has a chance to achieve something significant, but to do so they must sacrifice a close associate. Roll 1d6: 1-2 a lover; 3-4 a relative or close friend; 5-6 a mentor or dependent. The team must grapple with what to tell the associate, and how to convince them of the necessity of the sacrifice. The sacrifice is not necessarily fatal: the associate may have to travel to another plane and live there or give up a personal gift or item of great significance. The sacrifice will put a great strain on the relationship; the characters and the associate will not have the same relationship afterward.

ROMANTIC CAUTION

Ensure your players are comfortable with romantic entanglements, such as *unwitting taboo romance, forbidden love affair, crime of love*, and *enemy loved* before you use them. Your players will have their own preferences about their characters' romantic entanglements, and you should respect their boundaries in this regard. Some players are happy to let their characters fall for anyone. Others have a specific comfort zone to their character romances. Both are valid positions, and you should know in advance before you spring a romantic attachment on a player's character.

Keep in mind that romantic taboos, arrangements, and love affairs are a sensitive topic, especially because many players have different ideas about which forms of romance they consider appropriate. For some players, taboo romantic elements may be uncomfortable or unpleasant. Always discuss the possible topics with your players beforehand. If you feel like your players may not be comfortable doing so, don't force the issue—roll or pick a different problem.

24. PROFESSIONAL RIVALRY

Someone above or below one of the characters, or the team in general, fosters a rivalry or grudge. Roll 1d6: 1-3 someone lower in authority; 4-6 someone higher. A higher authority rival will "arrange" missions for the team that challenge them in a specific way, frequently highlighting their weaknesses, underdeveloped skills, and personal shortcomings. A lower authority rival will try to outdo the characters, often creating additional complications or even (1 in 6 chance) trying to sabotage the team on their mission. The mission itself would be straightforward if not for the rivalry.

25. FORBIDDEN LOVE AFFAIR

A character or someone close to the team engages in a relationship under false, hidden, or misleading pretenses. If it's revealed, it will cause hurt feelings, jealousy, perhaps even professional repercussions due to workplace tensions—maybe even further betrayals. While the lovers don't plan to dispose of any competitors, they do mean to hide their affair. Roll 1d6: 1-2 someone discovers the illicit affair and threatens to reveal it; 3-4 one party in the affair chooses to end it but the other party does not agree; 5-6 the character is put into a position where they must undertake a mission that will expose the relationship (whether for themselves or someone else).

26. CRIME OF LOVE

Two or more people knowingly decide to engage in a forbidden love affair, something that breaks an important cultural taboo. One of them may be a character, or someone close to the characters. The team becomes aware of this relationship and must either convince the parties to end it, become complicit in hiding it, or find a way to break the taboo socially—none of which are particularly good options, as the Sodality frowns both on hiding troublesome secrets and on meddling in social customs.

27. DISCOVERY OF DISHONOR

A friend or loved one of one of the characters commits a reprehensible act, which the characters learn about. Now they must decide whether to cover up the offense, aid the offender, or stand firm at seeing justice done. Roll 1d6: On a 1-2, the offense was unintentional but still grave (such as accidentally injuring someone); on a 3-4, the offense was intentional; on a 5-6, the offense is procedural but the officials investigating are inclined to be harsh to the offender.

28. OBSTACLES TO LOVE

Would-be lovers face obstacles to their connection. This could be the common refrain of coming from warring factions (a follower of a Divine Empire Optimate with someone from the Nighthost, for instance), or due to a more practical problem like living on different planes or having careers that will keep them apart. The characters are enmeshed in the scenario either due to a request for aid, or because they can use this situation to generate a favor for their own uses—helping the lovers to unite would place the lovers in their debt, and this could be called upon for future considerations. Alternatively, the team might be tasked with keeping the lovers apart, if the Sodality thinks that this particular union could cause problems, such as a marriage-alliance between the leaders of two or more rival factions. The lovers might have a complication that comes from having a group relationship, such as a group where certain members have a background that makes them pariahs to the home culture of the other members. The team may have to juggle complications revolving around multiple people, each with a specific issue that makes the relationship grouping difficult.

29. ENEMY LOVED

One of the characters, or a close friend or relative, develops strong feelings for an enemy of the team. The characters' sponsor or friend sends the team on a task to eliminate or counter this enemy, which is complicated by the emergence of these emotions. Roll 1d6: 1-4, the enemy reciprocates; 5-6, the enemy does not, but may try to manipulate the smitten subject.

30. AMBITION

Someone means to get the object of their desire, and the team is involved. Roll 1d6: 1-3, someone in the team's organization (or perhaps an unaligned friend or relative) means to use the team to retrieve an item or accomplish a personal goal; 4-6, a foe means to steal an item or achieve a desired power and only the team can stop them. In the former case, the team receives marching orders to eliminate obstacles, often under cloak of authority or "secret orders." In the latter case, the team may only become aware of the threat when someone suddenly attacks with the intent to seize a valuable artifact or to assassinate someone who prevents the plotter's rise to power.

31. CONFLICT WITH THE DIVINE

The team comes into conflict with an actual divine being—a deity or demigod. The nature of these conflicts can be wide-

ranging; the Optimates and Hierarchs in *Threefold* often seek direct divine rulership over entire planes, but sometimes they engage in sublime conflicts over fine points of philosophy or have divine desires that don't always match up with mortal agendas. Gods in other worlds may be tricksters, adversaries, or would-be monarchs. Roll 1d6: 1, a divinity sends its followers to hunt the team; 2, an divinity sends followers to offer the team the opportunity to join its cause (which should be morally objectionable to the team); 3, a divinity's followers take action in a plane where the team feels an obligation to defend the locals; 4, the team's organization or sponsor sends the team to undermine the followers of a particular divinity; 5, the team is tasked with retrieving an object of religious value to an divinity; 6, a divinity takes a direct interest in the team and personally makes contact to threaten them or make a demand. Note that some divinities may be subtle in their interference, simply nudging events or placing subtle curses and obstacles on the team.

32. MISTAKEN JEALOUSY

Someone becomes convinced that one of the characters has an item, special knowledge, secret power, or favor that could make their life much easier or simpler. An error or accident causes the mistaken impression, but the person is convinced that the team has something that they want. If the person gains the object, they may refuse to believe it when it turns out that they were wrong, and the item or knowledge doesn't do what they want. Roll 1d6: 1-3, the person arranges to confront the team directly in an attempt to take the object of jealousy; 4-5, the person arranges through subterfuge to try to steal the object or convince an authority figure to take it from the team; 6, the person is convinced that the team has something that they don't actually possess, and won't stop trying to get it, believing that the team is lying in their denials.

33. ERRONEOUS JUDGMENT

Someone erroneously believes that one of the characters, or the whole team, has wronged them, when it was someone else's fault. Roll 1d6: 1-2, the victim believes that the team was responsible for a loss on their part due to mistaken identity or uncertain circumstances; 3-4, the victim has followed a trail of indirect evidence that seems to implicate the team; 5-6, the team was framed by someone else to make the victim believe that they are guilty of malfeasance. Generally, the victim is someone that the team doesn't want to harm, but they can't easily prove their innocence without tracking down what happened, and the victim interferes in the team's operations.

34. REMORSE

Someone has wronged another, but the culprit is now being interrogated or investigated by someone at odds with the culprit. For instance, an ally might accidentally cause a problem for the team during one of their tasks, but now the team's sponsor is holding the ally responsible. The team has reason to believe that the problem was unintentional, but the investigator looking into the problem insists on a thorough and complete investigation, which hinders the team's operations and risks digging into their personal secrets. The culprit means to make amends, but their actions have complicated the situation and the team can't simply absolve them.

35. RECOVERY OF A LOST ONE

The team is sent to recover something: Roll 1d6: 1-3, the object is an item; 4-6, the object is a person. This could be an action-packed prison rescue, a theft of an object, even a diplomatic negotiation to purchase or win allegiance from someone or something thought lost. For added drama, the lost one is someone from a character's past: a missing relative, a former lover, a friend thought deceased, or a personal effect of emotional value.

36. LOSS OF LOVED ONES

A friend or relative of one or more of the characters dies under pressure. Roll 1d6: 1, killed by dangerous circumstances (such as environmental hazards) while opposing foes of the Sodality; 2-3, killed by an operative of a hostile power; 4-5, valiant sacrifice in pursuit of a noble cause against a foe; 6, suffers a mortal wound or condition that will lead to death in a short time, as a result of an encounter gone awry. The team likely can't save the victim, but will they seek revenge? Or do they carry on with their tasks, leaving behind their kin?

PICK YOUR POISON

If you know your players are hankering for a certain kind of adventures, but you still want the specifics to be somewhat random, you can alter the table to generate specific types of adventures based on the preferences of your players as follows:

- Your players like **Action!** Treat the first die as a 1.
- Your players like **Puzzles!** Treat the first die as a 2.
- Your players like **Overcoming Bad Circumstances!** Treat the first die as a 3.
- Your players like **Moral Dilemmas!** Treat the first die as a 4.
- Your players like **Romance!** Treat the first die as a 5.
- Your players like **Drama!** Treat the first die as a 6.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

If you generate an adventure hook that feels like it won't be meaty enough to provide a full adventure for your players, roll another adventure hook and slam them together, like an A-plot and a B-plot. For instance, if you roll (5, 1) *Forbidden love affair*, but you want your players to do a more action-oriented adventure, throw in another action roll—a roll where you treat the first die as a 1 automatically—and mix the two problems. Some examples:

EXAMPLE: THE SQUIRE AND THE STALKER

(1, 1) Supplicant + (5, 1) Forbidden love affair: *The characters are approached by a young person who asks for their help on another plane, where the supplicant is training to fight against a terrible foe. The supplicant needs help to learn how to defeat the raiders of the enemy and implores the team for aid in fighting against them. While the team helps the supplicant learn how to fight, they discover that the supplicant's mentor is smitten with one of their number. They could use this to influ-*

ence the supplicant's mentor and guarantee passing the tests, but refusal might mean that the mentor fails the supplicant from the testing process as retribution.

EXAMPLE: OCEAN'S TRANSPLANT

(2, 3) Daring enterprise + (4, 3) Sacrifice for kin: The characters are tasked with recovering a powerful magical relic, currently held in the lavish estates of a powerful divine figure. Since fighting a deity is a dangerous proposition, the team is encouraged to engage in a covert operation – a heist – to acquire the artifact. While preparing for the heist, one of the team members learns that a relative has a terrible wasting illness, which can be resolved by the donation of an organ, a magical graft, or a transplant of a posthuman technology, but sacrificing this will mean that the character no longer has the means to fill a vital role in the heist. The team can't wait, because the deity has plans for the artifact. Can the team come up with a new plan or will they conduct the heist in riskier-than-usual circumstances?

EXAMPLE: THE REWARD FOR RASHNESS

(3, 5) Imprudence + (6, 4) Remorse: A cocky youngster is assigned to the team by their sponsor, with the hope that the characters will train and mature them into a better operative. During the task at hand, the youngster accidentally does something that ruins the team's goals or hurts one of the team members. Filled with remorse, the trainee tries to make amends, but an investigator arrives to place the trainee under arrest and decide whether the trainee's careless attitude led to harm. The trainee shows true remorse, but the investigator believes the trainee simply lacks the attitude to work well in the team; the players must decide whether to argue on behalf of the trainee, who might cause more problems in the future with recklessness, or to let the investigation run its course, which could lead to the trainee's expulsion from future training.

CRISES

Each crisis has its own description; as before, roll or choose appropriately.

1. AN UNEXPECTED SETBACK

One of the powers or items upon which the characters depend proves to be ineffective in the current problem. A spell or piece of technology might fail due to local planar laws; a particular weapon may prove ineffective against an enemy; a skill that a character usually considers reliable may suddenly prove challenging due to foibles of the task at hand. The players don't know there's anything wrong until they try to deploy a solution they *think* should work, and it fails. If this happens in the middle of a fight, the team could be in some trouble! The players must come up with a new solution and find a way to deploy it.

2. EXIT POSTHASTE

The team must leave their location – the town, the continent, maybe the plane – in a hurry. Enemies or authorities with



overwhelming power have been alerted to look out for them, a critical problem such as a plague or magical curse erupts from which the characters must flee, or a natural disaster strikes, and the characters cannot stay and complete their task. Once they've fled, they must figure out how to get their job back on track.

3. THE SOLUTION LOST

The players discover that there is a solution to their problem, but it's been lost or destroyed. Perhaps they already had it, but now it is gone – broken, stolen, discarded, or countered. The players must find a way to recover the solution or devise a new one.

4. THE TRUE SCOPE REVEALED

A problem that seemed surmountable suddenly turns out to be much more difficult than expected. A foe proves to be more competent than originally believed, a dangerous weapon is far more than the team can defend against, a complication due to a friend or relative in peril turns out to be a much bigger problem, a bureaucratic issue turns into a massive political problem for the team's side. The team discovers the resources they committed may not be up to the task, so they must regroup and find a new way to approach the task at hand.

CRISES

| 1D6 ROLL | CRISIS |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 1 | An Unexpected Setback |
| 2 | Exit Posthaste |
| 3 | The Solution Lost |
| 4 | The True Scope Revealed |
| 5 | Turnabout |
| 6 | Under the Covers |

GONZO CRISES

| 1D6 ROLL | GONZO CRISIS |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | I Am Like Unto a God |
| 2 | I Am Not Myself Today |
| 3 | The World Just Ended |
| 4 | This Time It Will Be Different |
| 5 | Too Many Cooks |
| 6 | We're All Dead and This Is Hell |

5. TURNABOUT

A former ally turns enemy, or the team must go to an enemy and seek a tenuous alliance. In either case, the team is in a compromised position: a former ally knows their abilities and their motivations, while a former enemy may demand concessions or place the team into a morally compromising position. Either way, the team needs a resource that the other party has, and now it is only available to them under duress.

6. UNDER THE COVERS

The team suddenly discovers they must make their operation covert. An enemy has turned an eye toward them, a local authority is watching them, or the Sodality itself questions whether the team is behaving appropriately. Now to complete their task the characters must do so without drawing attention and while pretending that they are not involved in anything violent, illegal, or remotely offensive.

GONZO CRISES

If the preceding crises aren't over-the-top enough for you, roll on the Gonzo Crises table to set up a strange or challenging conflict for your players. You've probably seen a few of these in a science fiction show.

The gonzo crises give you an over-the-top game. These can be memorable but also tend to make the game more difficult to run. Choose from the following or roll *if you dare*.

1 I AM LIKE UNTO A GOD

Due to a convergence of kanna, a synthetic hyper-evolution, a ringing of fate, or some other mysterious circumstance, the powers of one or more characters no longer suffer limitations. They can be used as often as desired at no cost. This may make it easy to solve problems, but if your only tool is a hammer... The players don't know when the effect will end,

so they are driven to try to do as much as they can while it lasts, and risk biting off more than they can chew—especially if the tables are suddenly turned with their powers returning to normal while an enemy's are amplified!

2. I AM NOT MYSELF TODAY

A powerful effect changes the personality or agenda of every member of the team. Roll 1d6: 1-2, everyone in the team gains a new Relationship with a different idea; 3-4, everyone in the team gains a new Drive until the adventure concludes; 5, everyone at the table switches character sheets and plays as someone else's character through their own lens; 6, everyone at the table switches character sheets and plays someone else's character but with their own character's personality in the body.

3. THE WORLD JUST ENDED

While the characters are going about their business, the entire structure of their world crashes down around them. Roll 1d6: 1-2, one of their home planes unravels or is destroyed by a massive catastrophe; 3-4, the team's entire nation or sponsoring group itself comes apart due to a tremendous disaster or targeted assassinations or a coup; 5-6, an enemy faction such as a rival god or infernal being stages a successful invasion and takes over the plane. Now the team must fix this problem or else forge a new world out of the ashes of the old.

4. THIS TIME IT WILL BE DIFFERENT

The team finds that the problem unravels completely, and they are unable to stop it from spiraling into disaster, but then they discover an alternative through which they can try again. Now, like reliving Groundhog Day, they have a chance to replay the same problem in a different context. Of course, what they *thought* they knew might not be true in a different plane or different timeline, and even if they solve one problem, it may open the door to others. How many times do they jump to new alters before they get it right?

5. TOO MANY COOKS

Alters of the team, or of their allies, enemies, or targets all converge on one place and suddenly there are dozens or hundreds of copies of each of them. Roll 1d6: 1-2, someone else has called all of them together; 3-4, all of them are pursuing a solution to the same problem; 5-6, a convergence of fate in the planes has brought them all together. Of course, their Relationships and Drives may vary from those of the players' characters, and some might even be enemies. Worse still, if the problem is one that can only be solved by one person, they're all jockeying to be the one who solves it—whether grabbing the artifact, bringing the criminal in for questioning, or winning the heart of the potential suitor. In a particularly chaotic conflict, some of the characters might die, and this is a perfect way for a player to play a slightly changed version of their own character, as the main character dies and one of the alters steps up to take their place. For characters who come from a world without Alters, these might be clones, magical duplicates, reshaped bodies with implanted memories, or other versions of copies.

6. WE'RE ALL DEAD AND THIS IS HELL

As the problem unfolds, the characters learn that they are not actually in "reality." They're dead, or in a dream, or a digital

virtualscape, or trapped in a spell that simulates another plane. Their new crisis becomes figuring out how to escape.

ENVIRONMENTS

Each setting's description explains the landscape or gives you ideas about what the players might find in that region. Rural areas are generally less populated and less technologically developed; urban spaces will have other characters the team can meet, and present social problems like dealing with local law or customs.

2. RURAL, EXTRAORDINARY

The scene takes place in a natural setting with unusual hostile or magnificent conditions. This could be a massive magical tree, a crystal cave filled with arcing lightning that forms natural circuitry, a floating island that somehow constantly flows with a waterfall that pours to the river valley below, a looping strip of broken ground that whirls up into the sky with local gravity always pointing to the center of the loop, a volcano that belches clouds of radioactive gases, a huge dimensional portal, a series of natural pillars of columnar basalt stretching hundreds of feet up and with their own ecosystem... imagine a scene from a science fiction painting or a vivid dream.

3. RURAL, DESERT

An arid climate, often plunging to extreme cold at night. Desert settings may have austere architecture in the few habitations, little water, and dangerous local flora and fauna. Desert can also include polar areas – taiga and tundra – which are cold versions of deserts, with the same problems of limited sources of food, water, or shelter, extreme temperature and exposure issues, and hazardous local animal life.

4. RURAL, MOUNTAINOUS

Mountain terrain is generally rugged and craggy. Traveling across mountainous terrain may mean taking windy roads and switchbacks, riding on ponies, or soaring in ornithopters, gliders, or helicopters. Mountains provide challenges because desired destinations are often hard to reach.

5. RURAL, FORESTED

Forested areas are common places for stories both whimsical and horrific. Forest and jungle locales usually include a wide range of animal and plant life, and low visibility that makes it easy to become lost or to have trouble navigating. Survival is usually a matter of having the right tools and knowledge, as climate is generally favorable to humanoid life.

6. RURAL, AGRICULTURAL

Agricultural land is sparsely settled regions with fields, rolling hills, and river valleys. These areas tend to have small communities with some distance between estates. In a plane with medieval technology, this is a land of farming communes broken by unsettled open pasturage or monster-haunted plains. In a high-technology plane, these are likely to be massive agribusiness holdings, with only a few people present to run the machinery used for planting and harvesting crops.

ENVIRONMENT

| 2D6 ROLL | SETTING |
|----------|------------------------------|
| 2 | Rural, Extraordinary |
| 3 | Rural, Desert |
| 4 | Rural, Mountainous |
| 5 | Rural, Forested |
| 6 | Rural, Agricultural |
| 7 | Urban, Commercial |
| 8 | Urban, Residential |
| 9 | Urban, Industrial |
| 10 | Urban, Academic |
| 11 | Urban, Resource Exploitation |
| 12 | Urban, Extraordinary |

For a guaranteed rural environment, roll 1d6+1 and reroll 6s.

For a guaranteed urban environment, roll 1d6+6.

7. URBAN, COMMERCIAL

Stores, malls, businesses – these are stock locations for much action. As public or semi-public spaces, they are easy places for a team to move through (or to get lost among a crowd), often with amenities. Of course, if a fight breaks out, these places also tend to have strong responses from local law enforcement. In a low technology plane, these are open-air markets, souks, bazaars; in a high technology plane, these could be strip malls or indoor malls, department stores, warehouse stores, or virtual shopping plazas. Commercial spaces also include shipping complexes, piers, and ports of sea, air, or space.

8. URBAN, RESIDENTIAL

A wooden-walled town, an apartment building, an arcology – all of these are different examples of residential urban spaces. Residential spaces are homes for people, so disasters and fights here tend to catch bystanders in the mix. Residential areas can be perversely difficult to navigate (sometimes by design), with walls, hedges, mazelike streets, and barricades that make them hard to traverse for people who don't know the local layout.

9. URBAN, INDUSTRIAL

Factories, refineries, smithies, forges, and foundries are all industrial: Places where goods are processed or constructed. In low technologies, these are blacksmith shops, armorers, and other workshops. In high technology planes, these include oil processing plants, assembly lines, nanotech extrusion facilities, and chemical plants. Heavy machinery is a common backdrop in these locales.

10. URBAN, ACADEMIC

These are sites where people gather to pursue knowledge: libraries, universities, churches, deep sea or space observation posts. Often these locations have their own security, and their own secrets. Characters in these places must be careful not to risk damaging artistic or historical pieces, and they may face opposition from locals with entrenched viewpoints.

11. URBAN, RESOURCE EXPLOITATION

These backdrops include mines, solar arrays, recycling plants, logging operations, waste dumps, windmills, and power plants. Any location where raw materials are harvested or turned into energy falls into this category. Usually these places are heavily guarded. Strangers are not permitted entry, so the team may have to find a way inside. In high technology societies with low ecological awareness, these can be massive wastelands, such as strip-mines or vast tracts of land ruined by tar sand extraction, making them home to environmental toxic hazards and sometimes monsters.

12. URBAN, EXTRAORDINARY

The landscape is dominated by a constructed feature of incredible proportions, such as a mile-high castle, a set of standing megaliths with supernatural properties, an otherworldly cathedral that connects to its own Heavens and Hells, a space elevator, a massive crashed alien spacecraft, a giant rack of people in suspended animation tubes, a huge book containing all the knowledge of the plane, a series of ever-changing and shifting shacks and rooms illuminated by eerie lights with constantly-moving walls and doors... in short, a great work of people (local or otherwise) that might draw visitors or may be a place that people assiduously avoid. Either way, the locale presents a unique place for the character to engage in their adventures.

STAKES

The stakes determine what the team could lose—friends, money, powers, prestige; if the team wants to keep their reputations and their possessions intact, they must carefully thread the problem and the crisis in the story.

1. FREEDOM

The situation can devolve into the characters being imprisoned, unable to leave a plane, or losing their own agency. Perhaps the team's employer gives them stringent orders because they are no longer trusted to operate unsupervised, or they might even be arrested on a remote plane, stranded in a faraway place and unable to leave for some reason, or fitted with a spell or device that prevents them from exercising their own free will!

2. KNOWLEDGE

A secret or skill eludes the team. If the characters fail to resolve the problem, they may find that something that they once knew is no longer true or realize that a secret has changed.

STAKES

| ROLL 1D6 | STAKES |
|----------|---------------|
| 1 | Freedom |
| 2 | Knowledge |
| 3 | Power |
| 4 | Prestige |
| 5 | Relationships |
| 6 | Wealth |

and they no longer know the relevant information. This could also represent a chance to gain information, squandered by their failures.

3. POWER

A personal power may become inaccessible, unreliable, or dangerous. Characters might lose access to their posthuman technology, spells, or occult powers for a time, or even have the threat of permanently losing a power (which can motivate another adventure, of course). A character might suffer injuries or setbacks that reduce their abilities or talents.

4. PRESTIGE

If the team fails in their task, they will lose esteem in the eyes of their peers or their loved ones. This could endanger their ability to ask for favors, result in withholding of resources, or cause mentors to reassess the value of teaching and sponsoring them.

5. RELATIONSHIPS

Personal relationships are strained by the team's failures. Friends are upset or distant; loved ones are quarrelsome or unhappy. The characters are at risk of alienating their family, friends, and lovers if they can't resolve the scenario.

6. WEALTH

The team stands to lose money or items they find useful. A home could be lost or destroyed, an heirloom or object of power stripped away or broken. Depending upon the nature of the problem and the crisis, this might be lost due to being stolen, it might be damaged or expended during the conflict, or it could become inaccessible or powerless as a result of the team's failure.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Your *dramatis personae* are the central participants in the story, beyond the players' characters. These are the people that the characters will meet, deal with, fight, or evade; even if they don't appear personally, they have an interest in the outcome of events, or they have a goal and they'll work to achieve it, even if this leads to confrontation with the team. As before, roll or choose to determine who's who in your story.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE DESCRIPTIONS

The following description tells about the *kind* of person the individual is, be it a human opponent, a talking animal, an intelligent computer, or something more unusual.

1. CONSTRUCT

The person is a magically or technologically animated being, such as a statue given life by magic, a doll animated by ritualistic occult forces, or a robot with an advanced AI.

2-4. HUMAN OR HUMANOID

The person is a human or one of the humanoid ancestries common to the setting.

5. SUPERNATURAL

The person is Emanate, Machinor or Alastor, or closely related to them, such as an Inimical or Optimate.

6. UNIQUE

The person is a unique entity such as a Threshold with a mixed ancestry, a sentient plant, a gaseous extraterrestrial, or a faerie.

MOTIVATION DESCRIPTIONS

Each motivation pushes the *dramatis personae* in a different way. Depending on motivation, the individual might rely on violence, diplomacy, or stealth. The Drives and skills of the individual will tend to reflect these motivations.

1. AVARICE

The person seeks wealth or treasured items such as magical trinkets, art objects, or the finest tools and materials for their crafts.

2. CHALLENGE

The person seeks situations or people who will challenge their skills and hopes to grow through such conflicts. The person might be prone to dangerous challenges and killing opponents or may be a good-natured seeker of self-improvement through friendly competition.

3. COMPASSION

The person seeks to help others and to improve the world and acts accordingly.

4. KNOWLEDGE

The person seeks knowledge, either in general or of a specific topic.

5. LOVE

The person seeks love and approval, either from a specific person or from an organization. The person might have a target (or targets) of affection or may be trying to find one.

6. POWER

The person wants power over others, whether through bureaucracy, through manipulation, or through physical domination.

ADVANTAGE DESCRIPTIONS

A *dramatis personae*'s advantage explains *what* or *how* the person goes about achieving their aims. This is some sort of quality or possession that gives the person means to carry out

DRAMATIS PERSONAE TYPE

| ROLL 1D6 | TYPE |
|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Construct |
| 2-4 | Human or humanoid |
| 5 | Supernatural |
| 6 | Unique |

MOTIVATION

| ROLL 1D6 | MOTIVATION | ROLL 1D6 | ADVANTAGES |
|----------|------------|----------|---------------|
| 1 | Avarice | 1 | Magic |
| 2 | Challenge | 2 | Occult |
| 3 | Compassion | 3 | Relationships |
| 4 | Knowledge | 4 | Resources |
| 5 | Love | 5 | Technology |
| 6 | Power | 6 | Unique |

their goals. The person will tend to approach problems with this as a primary solution.

1. MAGIC

The person has magical spells.

2. OCCULT

The person is attuned to occult powers.

3. RELATIONSHIPS

The person is well-connected to individuals or groups who can help them to achieve their aims and can use these relationships to advance their goals or stymie the team.

4. RESOURCES

The person has access to special resources such as extraordinary wealth, useful devices, magic items, or something that the players want.

5. TECHNOLOGY

The person has access to unusual technology for their plane.

6. UNIQUE

The person has access to a unique or unconventional benefit. Roll 1d6: 1, the person is functionally unkillable due to magic, occultism, or technology; 2, the person has access to wide knowledge bases that can allow them to learn secrets about the players' characters; 3, the person has access to a special plane where the laws of the plane give them extraordinary powers; 4, the person has a talent or ability with a superhuman quality (rating 5+); 5, the person is a Wandersoul; 6, the person is a Threshold with a power that breaks the normal rules.



FIVE AND INFINITY

CHAPTER 0

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