Adventure Idea Factory

Revised and Expanded

A system-less and setting-less Game Master's tool for creating memorable and imaginative adventures. Made for use in any science fiction role-playing game.

DwD STUDIOS

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– C R E D I T S –

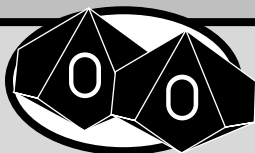|	
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– A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S –

> *"A life without adventure is likely to be unsatisfying, but a life in which adventure is allowed to take whatever form it will is sure to be short."*
>
> *--Bertrand Russell*
> *English Logician and Philosopher*
> *1872-1970*

Using this system

This was originally developed as a GM tool-set for the FRONTIERSPACE[TM] role-playing game. It has been modified into the form you now hold in your hands and will work with most science fiction games and settings.

The d00 System

"d00 System" (pronounced *dee hundred*) is the name of the game engine used to power the FRONTIERSPACE[TM] product. FRONTIERSPACE[TM] is the first game book using this game system, but may not be the last. The d00 system is named that because it is a set of rules based on percentiles whose dice are interpreted 00-99 instead of 01-100 as in most percentile systems. Future products built upon the well-tested framework of these rules will feature this same logo on their covers.

Although this document is not specifically part of the d00 system, it is work derived from that system and is considered the intellectual property of DwD Studios. Use of this product in your own games and modification of it for your own use is not only permitted but encouraged, but sale of this product in this or a modified form is not permitted.

DwD Studios Presents
ADVENTURE IDEA FACTORY

Within this document, the generic term "GM" is used to refer to the game's game master, and "frontier" is used to refer to the setting (the galaxy, the sector of space, etc.). This is to help keep this document setting non-specific and allow individual game masters to readily use it in whichever science fiction game they run.

Use this step-by-step process when you need some ideas for a quick adventure. It generates ideas, not full adventures. Nothing can replace you as the storyteller of the game, but this process can help give you ideas you may not have come up with on your own.

First, you'll determine a number of specific adventure areas. Second, you'll provide descriptors to make each adventure area a unique experience. Third, you'll determine what your primary objective is in each of those areas. Fourth, each area will have one or more obstacles preventing the adventurers from obtaining that objective. Finally, you'll define the final encounter (the story's climax) of the entire adventure. But that's just the nuts & bolts… The final and most important step is an exercise in creativity, the juice that makes you a good GM. You must weave the tale that links this all together.

ADVENTURE IDEA FACTORY SUMMARY

1 DETERMINE AREAS

Roll on the area quantity table to determine the number of areas in which adventure will take place. Areas are like acts in a play, or chapters in a story. They will help define where the adventure takes place, and each area will have a goal, one or more obstacles, and an atmosphere all its own (partially defined by descriptors). Then it is your job as the GM to link these seemingly unrelated areas into a cohesive mission.

Next, for each area you must roll on the specific area table to determine which areas your mission will focus on. This is not to say there will not be other areas mentioned in your story, but these will be the specific areas where adventure will take place and should be detailed.

In boxed sections such as this, you will find a running example of using this system to create an adventure. If you're having any trouble understanding any instructions, jump to these examples to see things in action.

AREA QUANTITY TABLE

d100	#Areas
00-09	2 Areas
10-59	3 Areas
60-89	4 Areas
90-99	5 Areas

SPECIFIC AREA TABLE

d100	Area
00-04	Asteroid/Moon
05-09	Factory
10-14	Frontier Town
15-19	Large Mansion
20-24	Manmade Wonder
25-29	Military Base/Camp
30-34	Mining Complex
35-39	Office Building
40-44	Outpost
45-49	Pirate Hideout
50-54	Science Lab
55-59	Space Anomaly
60-64	Starport
65-69	Starship
70-74	Underground
75-79	Underwater
80-84	Urban Sprawl
85-89	Vast Wasteland
90-94	Weapon Silo
95-99	Wilderness

Revised edition – the version of this book you now read is a revised and expanded version of the original. It includes clarifications, additional editing, expanded sections, more artwork, and some expanded material at the back. This is how DwD Studios thanks you for showing interest in this product. As additional GM Tools and other products become available, we hope to hear from you about them! Visit our site at www.dwdstudios.com and discuss this or any other product (available or otherwise).

Asteroid/Moon

A surprising amount of activity occurs on the moons and larger asteroids of the frontier. Some minerals only exist in these locations, while others exist in ways which make them easier to mine. Sometimes science outposts will be built on a moon or asteroid, due to the proximity of that location to spatial anomalies or significant places.

Although often barren and without air or moisture, some asteroids and moons are lush with vegetation or spoiled by toxins and radiation. Be creative when describing the asteroid or moon, as each should be distinctly different from others. Important things to keep in mind: lack of atmospheric pressure (most likely anyway), no way a character can breathe, probably very cold/icy, and very little gravity, reliance on gear that may have limited supplies.

If an adventure area is an asteroid or moon, the first question is how the players arrived there… were they dropped off by a passing spaceship?

Players on a moon or asteroid are probably on their way to an outpost, science lab, factory, weapon silo, pirate hideout, mining complex, or some other type of thing found there.

Factory

The frontier is a very industrious place. Goods and services are in high demand, and corporations span the stars in order to deliver those goods and services.

Since central governments tend to lack jurisdiction on foreign outposts, moons, and asteroids, factories often exist without environmental restrictions. If the factory is found within the more civilized locations in the frontier, the factory will be clean and will probably be forced to participate in initiatives to keep the environment clean and green.

Examples include vehicle factories, food and drink factories, packaging and boxing factories, robot factories, and factories which create support items and subassemblies for all of these and more.

Factory floor plans should include an assembly facility (usually filled with specialized machinery and robots), offices, maintenance areas, loading/unloading bays, engineering, control areas, security, meeting/conference rooms, and more. Approximately a third of factories found in the frontier are fully automated, with robots performing the specialized tasks and doing so mostly in the dark.

Any fight that takes place in a factory has the advantage of being baffled by much background noise, but all that background motion can also make it more dangerous to move around safely.

Frontier Town

A frontier town is either an outpost that over-grew its original size on a distant world, perhaps in a star system on the fringe border between the civilized worlds and the unknown, or else it is a town distantly located on an otherwise civilized world. For whatever reason, the town is more rustic, lacking some of the more modern accoutrements and luxuries. It is often governed by an elected official (mayor or similar) and enforced by a local lawman (sheriff, etc.)

People in a frontier town tend to be rugged and self-sufficient. They lean on one another in times of crisis, and know one another well. It is important that you keep notes on the names of people and places you use in any given frontier town, so if the players have their characters return to it someday, they will get the feeling that the frontier is real and familiar.

Large Mansion

There is a large separation between the wealthy and the common man. This is true throughout most cultures, and is so in the frontier as well. This doesn't necessarily mean that the common man lives in squalor; quite the contrary. But the truly wealthy have veritable fortresses of mansions, heavily populated with security patrols, guard animals, robots, assistants, vehicles, and all manner of (oft eccentric) devices. Mansions usually include some amazingly large tract of land with an amazing view, outbuildings, and towers.

The mansion itself is usually an impressive affair designed to withstand centuries and still look great. Depending on what the objective and obstacles are, a large mansion can make for an epic exotic locale. Populate it with fragile statues and paintings, delicate ceramic and glassware, and top it all off with a huge chandelier someone is bound to swing from, or make fall on an enemy.

Manmade Wonder

Any culture is likely to have ancient ruins that defy architectural study, impress historians, or serve as tourist attractions. Some manmade wonders are still in use, such

as huge dams keeping water levels regulated in a valley, or turbines drawing power from tall waterfalls. Some manmade wonders will be a bit more exotic, such as great pyramids or sculptures in a mountainside. Imagine the mysteries that might be uncovered and the stories that might be told while the players guide their characters through the wonders of the frontier!

As a twist, consider the wonder to be made by someone other than man. Even if your game setting lacks aliens, there's no reason why aliens couldn't serve an archaeological place in the stories you tell!

Military Base/Camp

The frontier is full of military organizations. With so many sets of beliefs spread around the many worlds of the frontier, and with so many corporations struggling over finite resources, battles occur. A man can make a fine – if dangerous – living with a quick gun, a handful of bullets, and a bucket-full of guts. Militias, mercenary companies, security agencies, and fully-organized armies, navies, space forces and more all must have bases.

For one reason or another (to be determined by you, the GM), the adventure takes the characters to one such military base. This is a very dangerous place, since everyone is armed and trained. Depending on the objective and the obstacles, the players might be here seeking protection against a numerous foe, or might be here for diplomatic purposes. If, however, they are here to conquer then they better have an army at their backs or be highly skilled in stealth!

Assume a military camp houses 200-2000 soldiers and support personnel. A "base" might hold 10 times that number.

Mining Complex

People are numerous and therefore so are the piles of resources consumed by the many settlements, industries, and energy needs. Corporations have stepped up to the plate, and mining complexes are found all throughout the frontier. Most are in areas where atmosphere is present or where life support can be provided inexpensively, though some are in far more risky environments (where the payoff is high).

Mining complexes are not completely underground – some components (offices, chemical labs, repair facilities, etc.) can be found in buildings above-ground. The mining complex itself, however, is often labyrinthine (carved into as opportunity and resources presented themselves).

Mining complexes might be in very exotic locales, and GMs should be encouraged to describe some outlandish environments. Many mines are automated, with robots working their industrious trade day and night. Others are

full of inexpensive labor from nearby mining colonies, outposts, or towns. In some cases, the mining complex itself is an outpost, completely self-sufficient. Such an expensive endeavor would only be funded by a corporation who is claiming proprietary rights to a huge payload of resources.

Office Building

Perhaps the characters were in the office building already (for one reason or another) when the action of this area begins. Or perhaps they must infiltrate the office, climbing through ductwork or using window-cleaning scaffolding. Maybe they need to skulk about from cubicle to cubicle. Or maybe the office building isn't even an office building but a front for an illegal operation? Maybe the office building is a red herring, having nothing to do with things (maybe the characters are being pursued through there).

For whatever reason, the characters find themselves in an office complex. It might be the offices of a single company, or might be a skyscraping office building with suites or even entire floors belonging to specific businesses. Or maybe it's a doctor office building? Common components to a large office building: mail rooms, security centers, cubicles, desks, chairs, lots and lots of paper, cafeterias, designated smoking areas, lavatories, conference rooms, meeting halls, etc.

Outpost

An outpost is like a remote village, usually devoted to a specific agenda, found in an obscure area of space or wilderness. An outpost might be a refueling station for vehicles, located conveniently. It could be a military outpost (housing 10-100 soldiers). It is probably a civilian or industrial/corporate affair.

Outposts are scattered around the frontier, usually located near someplace of convenience or interest. They are not normally self-sufficient, usually relying on shipments of supplies from afar. In rare circumstances, an outpost run by a clever leader can become self-sufficient but in doing so the occupants tend to give up many normally-expected luxuries as they learn to live more simple lives.

There are even a few religious outposts in the frontier, self-proclaimed utopias ruled by charismatic leaders who convinced his masses to liquidate their credits and help fund this new Mecca. Fanatics can perhaps be more dangerous than militants; they cannot be reasoned with.

Pirate Hideout

Pirates tend to find distant places to call home. They need a place to escape to when the lawmen come in force. GMs should be creative when coming up with a pirate hideout. Remember that there cannot be too many epic pirate hideouts in your frontier. Consider having the players return to the same one or the same few, keeping the number of them to a minimum.

Imagine a place in space where 20 or more large stolen spaceships have been welded together, their corridors and cargo areas interconnected at odd angles floating freely in space (defended by weapons connected externally but controlled from within, and maybe given life support and power from components stolen from an outpost). Or imagine an asteroid in space, its metallic makeup making magnetic docking possible, a makeshift outpost concealed in its core (surely no passing ship would be able to find such a place, since scanning the area would only reveal metal-core asteroids!).

Depending on the reason the characters are here, players may be facing complete unknown. No prior knowledge dealing with pirates would help someone entering a new pirate hideout, as they all differ significantly from one another.

Science Lab

Just because you're playing a science fiction game where lasers and robots and spaceships are real doesn't mean the frontier isn't stocked with science labs trying to discover the next great thing that changes the setting. In this area, the characters are bound to see experimental devices, amazing technology, and cutting edge test and measurement equipment. They'll also encounter scientists who talk about things that nobody in the group could possibly fully understand… at least that's what the scientist believes.

If a science lab is a crucial part of an adventure, consider it large enough to support the type of activity based on the objective and obstacles. Make the objective exist on the bleeding edge of scientific/technical development. If your objective is one of theft or recovery, the science lab could have the most complex security anyone has ever seen. If your obstacles are robots enemies, make them have some ridiculously complex cutting edge superstructure. Players should be concerned about what surprises face them when they have to deal with a frontier science lab.

Space Anomaly

Space science is one which is always evolving. As scientists explore the great vast unknown around them, they are always learning new things about the formation of stars, solar systems, black holes, nebulae, how gravitational forces interact, and much more. The formation of the faster-than-light drive has been miraculous, but even it is evolving as new theories are tested and yesterday's science becomes today's technology. Corporations and governments often fund scientific exploration of items of interest in space in hopes that they will be the frontier's next owner of some amazing breakthrough. It is a good time to be a scientist in the frontier.

Because of these facts, these locations can become hotly contested and intrigue abounds near and around these locales. Adventuring characters will sometimes find themselves wrapped up in these politics and power struggles, and new scientific breakthroughs might be within even the player's grasps.

When rolling a space anomaly result, consider the many ways this area can be used. Perhaps the characters aren't entering an area already being explored. Maybe there is a scientist in the group when sensors indicate something interesting in space, and the players are the first on the scene? Or perhaps the characters are sent (or stumble) into an area under such extreme contest that guns are drawn? Space anomalies can become a chance to add the truly fantastic to your adventures, having things happen that only happen in books and movies.

Starport

With so many people trying to get from here to there, star ports have replaced the role of airports in most lives in the frontier. Star ports are large affairs, some of which are in orbiting space stations (with lander services available), while others are planet-bound, only able to support smaller space ships. In either case, they are sprawling and full of commercial areas on heavily-populated worlds. On the more fringe worlds, the star ports are simpler with no baggage handling and no automated services ("Okay we landed. Head on out, and turn the lights out in the starport once you've exited.")

Most star ports cater to the frontier traveler, with sleeping accommodations and eating arrangements, as well as a small amount of entertainment. Even those star ports lacking such luxuries at least have lockers and sleeper chairs with a single common holovid screen streaming news or propaganda. Unless the starport is on a very distant fringe world, characters will normally not be allowed to carry around their weapons in plain sight and might be at a slight disadvantage if they run into trouble.

Starship

Either the players have an adventure during a long space voyage or they find a floating hulk in space or a crashed starship on the ground. This becomes an adventure area for the group – going room to room, deck-to-deck, searching for answers or items or safety (or whatever is their purpose here).

Starships can be large and sprawling, or might be a single lander or shuttle or small ship. Remember that any ship larger than a scout is probably built for a specific purpose, and GMs need to make the purpose become known to the players as their characters explore. There may even be usable technology on board, able to be taken by technician characters and later integrated into the player's own ship (if they own one).

Starships floating in space can be dangerous, filled with ravenous diseased crewmen. Or they might be silent and spooky but otherwise safe. Crashed starships might have become home to creatures of the area, maybe mutated by leaky reactor cores! All sorts of possibilities present themselves to a starship area encounter. The starship might be fully operational – and belong to someone else – and depending on the objective of the area might be what the players are after!

Underground

Not all underground areas are mining complexes. On some worlds, the surface is toxic yet the world is otherwise valuable. In such cases, entire towns or even cities might exist under ground, and great highways or monorails could exist between these underground settlements.

For whatever reason, the characters must spend time underground either in rustic caves containing lost secrets or in settled locales where people live, eat, sleep, and work. Air is re-circulated (maybe great scrubbers exist which extract the toxins from surface air and pumps bring that air underground?) and supplies are rationed in an underground environment. But then again, maybe the residents have all that they need.

Perhaps vast fields of crops can be grown in such an environment? Maybe conditions are right, and artificial light is sufficient to grow all the underground settlement requires? Or maybe it's an old abandoned underground area or a complex of cavernous corridors made from gaseous or liquid activity in the planet's core. It could even be the network of tunnels made by great burrowing creatures who seasonally return… probably when the characters are there, of course.

An underground adventure area is often a series of interconnected tunnels and larger chambers, some rustic and natural and others finished by technology and effort. The underground area can be as large as you wish, and can turn this part of your adventure into a "dungeon crawl" in science fiction splendor.

Underwater

If the adventures take characters into underwater areas, special considerations need to be made. If they have vehicles, submersion becomes fairly simple, but if they are swimming and dealing with aquatic life or conditions, they'll need to be able to breathe.

Rebreathers, oxygen packs with wetsuits, and swimming fins might exist in the game, and this is the most common form of underwater apparel. But players need to consider the implications of their gear becoming wet: most robots and computers are not built for underwater use, most terrestrial vehicles won't function underwater, and most other technological devices will short out and fail when wet. Projectile weapons will work more or less okay, but energy weapons will have diffusion to their beams and be all but useless. Sonic-based weapons (if they exist in your game system) will actually work quite well underwater.
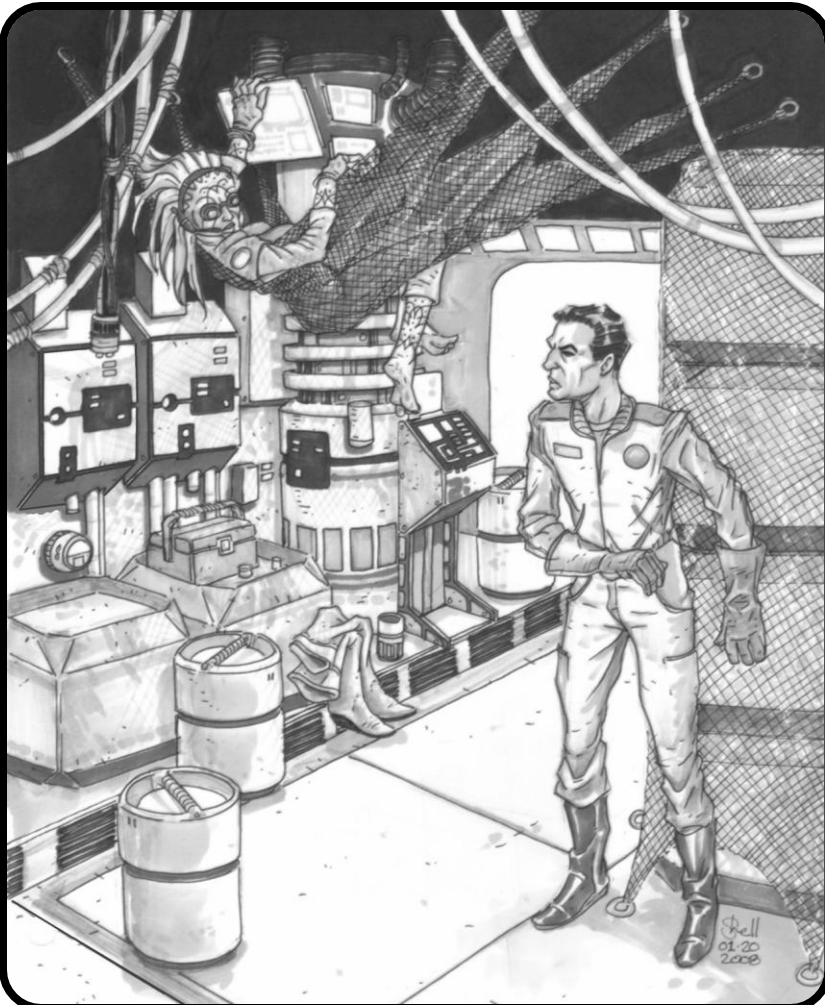
Depending on what the characters are doing here, underwater can be a very dangerous place. Large fish, eels, octopi, or other aquatic dangers exist, but so do toxic reefs and worse. GMs should play up on the danger of underwater adventuring, force players to keep track of hours of oxygen or filter remaining, and be liberal handing out fatigue conditions to the players.

Of course, if they're in vehicles, they'll have a slightly easier time of things. But GMs can still use scare tactics on the characters – just make the dangers larger in scope to include the vehicle.

Urban Sprawl

Not all adventures need to take place on alien worlds featuring new discoveries. Some adventures can take place in the cities of the core worlds. In these locations, crime lords are sometimes as influential as the great corporations, and legal systems… and adventurers can find themselves working in the shadows of the corporate skyscrapers just as often as they work for these corporations and orders of law. Sometimes both are one and the same.

The urban sprawl is full of a mixture of the wealthy and the poor, with the middle-class walking a fine line between those two… often finding themselves pawns of both. Adventures in an urban sprawl can be a challenge for GMs to maintain consistency. The sprawl changes often, with different power players coming and going… but players should feel a consistency whenever they return to the same locale, in order to make the frontier feel living and real.

Keep in mind that weapons are not often allowed to be carried around in a city, though criminals tend to ignore that rule.

Vast Wasteland

Sometimes your adventures will take the players out into the wilderness, but sometimes the areas between cities (or the wilds around an outpost area) are not lush wilderness but vast wasteland, where resources are limited and opportunities to re-supply are negligible.

Wastelands are called that for a reason: character survival will be tied to player creativity and preparedness. Wastelands are often barren places where any animals found will often be ravenously territorial and competitive, each creature fighting with the other over food and resource rights. If characters find a water source that isn't tainted, they'll be sure to find it defended. Vast Wastelands should have random encounter tables and players are often passing through or searching for something.
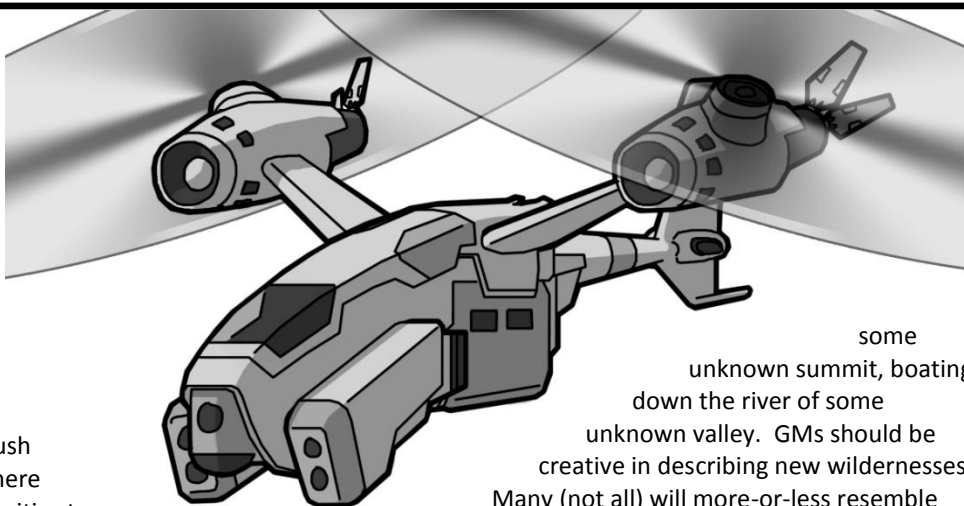
Weapon Silo

The frontier is a very dangerous place. The corporations, crime syndicates, mercenary companies, and governments protect the resources they have. Whether it's in defense of people, place, or thing – many organizations build large-scale weapons.

A weapon silo is a location where a huge weapon exists. Not bunkers or trenches… not pillboxes or emplacements… a weapon silo is a veritable fortress whose main purpose is to keep the weapons functional, continuously improve them, and to know how to operate them. Unfortunately, sometimes these very valuable weapons fall under the control of those who should never be trusted with such technology.

For whatever reason, the characters find themselves in such an interesting and dangerous location. As a GM, one of the challenges will be to describe the enormity of the installation's weapon, and the way in which the technology of the place is designed to support it. Technicians, scientists, and military personnel will be everywhere, and players should find it challenging to survive the location. Organizations will kill to protect knowledge of their military strength!

Wilderness

Characters could find themselves in wilderness quite often. Braving the jungles of the unknown, climbing the cliffs of

some unknown summit, boating down the river of some unknown valley. GMs should be creative in describing new wildernesses. Many (not all) will more-or-less resemble our real-world environments. Critters will scurry around gathering fallen food from trees, avians will make their shrill call, and fish will roam around looking for meals.

Most environments will have somewhat common vegetation such as trees and lakes and mountains and such, but you can be more creative to make wilderness is more exotic and memorable. Characters will remember the "blue-tinted leafy *thraka*-trees" that grow in a world easier than they'll remember the "trees" that grow there. Consider forests made up of large fungus instead of wooden trees. Consider cliffs that rise thousands of feet into the sky, disappearing in the clouds and leading to plateaus so high up that no cloud rises high enough to drop rain there. Consider skies of greenish tint and seas of hot dark red waters (reflecting the molten lava undertow passing beneath them).

Wildernesses should be memorable, and players should be forced to use all their survival skills to endure the wilds. Creatures might pose a serious threat to the characters or might just be background events to keep the story going. Wilderness locations allow the GM to stretch his imagination far and really engage the player's own imagination.

Example: Larry is creating a story for tonight's game. He doesn't have any new ideas (he's been running games every night this week!) and so he grabs the dice. He rolls d100 and gets a 44, so his mission will comprise 3 areas. Very typical. Larry rolls d100 three times (one for each area) and gets an 68, 11, and 14. He sees that his mission will have adventure in a starship and in two (different or the same?) frontier towns. He thinks about it for a while and decides to place them in the order of frontier town, spaceship, frontier town. He's imagining a courier mission where players are seeing something to safety between two frontier planets. His imagination is starting to fill in blanks– but he's open to changing this idea…

2 DETERMINE AREA DESCRIPTORS

There are many areas, but you're bound to roll the same one more than once now and then. Area descriptors help to make one area unique compared to another. Also, as a launching point for your imagination, the area descriptors might give you ideas for your area that you otherwise didn't consider. Roll an area descriptor for each area.

In some cases, your initial response might be to reject a certain result for your area because you don't see how it applies. But you should strongly consider finding a place for your result – the purpose is to drive your imagination to a place you might not have considered. For instance, if your area is a wilderness and you roll "tools strewn about" – that doesn't make a lot of sense. However, once you've rolled the area's objective (step 3) and obstacle(s) (step 4) you might find that it makes perfect sense, or might be able to use the result in an unusual/un-anticipated way.

AREA DESCRIPTOR TABLE

d100	Descriptor	d100	Descriptor	d100	Descriptor
00	abandoned/vacant/forgotten	33	eroded/worn-away	66	powerful breeze
01	activated alarm	34	everything a solid color	67	pristine, clean
02	all-natural/unmodified	35	extraordinarily dry/parched	68	recently burned
03	always in motion/moving	36	extreme winds	69	roaring sound of running water
04	amazing view	37	flooded	70	rocky/jagged
05	appended-to/built-up/added-on	38	flowery scent	71	rusted/corroded
06	art/sculpture covered	39	foggy/misty	72	sacred/spiritual
07	barren/empty/void	40	fresh scent	73	scored by laser fire
08	blazing heat	41	garbage everywhere	74	shiny new
09	blindingly bright	42	glass everywhere	75	slippery/slick
10	blood stained	43	gothic architecture	76	small rodent-infested
11	brightly lit	44	greasy/grimy/filthy	77	smell of baked bread
12	busy/bustling with activity	45	hastily-assembled/built	78	smell of exotic spices
13	cheap/breakable/fragile	46	heavily patrolled	79	smell of oil/gas
14	chilly/cold	47	high air pressure	80	smells like stale air
15	choked with vegetation	48	insect infested	81	smells of vomit
16	clicking sound	49	intermittent lighting	82	smoothed/rounded/plush
17	cluttered/messy	50	isolated/stand-alone	83	soot-covered
18	columned with arches	51	labyrinthine/confusing/twisted	84	splintered/smashed
19	constant buzzing noise	52	littered with bones	85	sticky/gooey
20	constant machine-noise	53	low air pressure	86	stormy/rainy
21	covered in darkness	54	luxurious/comfortable/expensive	87	strikingly beautiful
22	crystalline/sparkling	55	many colored/gaudy	88	subterranean
23	damp and dank	56	metallic scraping sound	89	tools strewn about
24	dangerous moving parts	57	moldy	90	toxic/poisonous
25	distant howling or growling	58	mysterious/secret/hidden	91	trapped/protected
26	divided/segmented/partitioned	59	noisy	92	undersized/small/cramped
27	dripping sound	60	obfuscated/covered/concealed	93	un-owned/unclaimed/frontier/wild
28	dung covered	61	old/ancient	94	used/recently visited
29	dust covered	62	overbearing herb smell	95	vacuum-sealed
30	easily defended/safe	63	oversized/overgrown/spacious	96	war-torn/bombed-out
31	eerily silent	64	peeling paint	97	water soaked/logged
32	electromagnetic interference	65	politically divided	98	well-maintained
				99	worn out/dilapidated

Maybe your objective is to rescue someone and your obstacle is an enemy creature… and you decide the character's mechanic (who insisted to remain with the lander to overhaul its engines) was attacked and dragged off to some creature's lair, leaving behind a trail of tools from his toolkit for the characters to follow.

> *For example, Larry rolls d100 for his first frontier town and finds that it is 68, recently burned. His spaceship area turns out to be 15, choked with vegetation (sounds like it's a crashed ship, not one in space), and his last frontier town has 62, overbearing herb smell. He'll have to work these into his adventure idea generated in these areas…*

3 DETERMINE AREA PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Each adventure area will have a primary objective. What are the players trying to accomplish there? Start with the first area and roll on the area objective table. Repeat for each area.

AREA OBJECTIVE TABLE

d100	Objective
00-04	Activation
05-09	Cessation
10-14	Collection
15-19	Communication
20-24	Confiscation
25-29	Creation
30-34	Desertion
35-39	Destination
40-44	Destruction
45-49	Elimination
50-54	Exploration
55-59	Information
60-64	Liberation
65-69	Protection
70-74	Relation
75-79	Salvation
80-84	Sanction
85-89	Survival
90-94	Vaccination
95-99	Roll Twice More

Activation

The characters are in this area to activate something. Of course, activating it might require overcoming some obstacles… but in general this objective can be a quick one unless the obstacles are time-consuming to overcome.

What are the characters going to activate? Why do they need to activate it? What happens when they do… or more importantly, what happens if they don't? Remember, this term is relative: activating a disarming circuit is de-activating, but still a possibility under this objective.

The act of activating (or de-activating) might be as simple as pushing a button or turning a key switch – but the obstacles should be sufficient to prevent players from sweeping through this area quickly by walking up to a button and pushing it.

Cessation

In this objective, the characters must stop something that either is about to happen, or is in process now. The manner in which the activity can be ceased might be simple or complex, might require role-playing, combat, or skill use. Whatever it is that must be stopped may not wish to be stopped (if it is sentient) and might work actively against the characters (in addition to whatever other obstacles are present in the area).

Cessation objectives can work in many ways. Perhaps a comet is on a collision course with an outpost where people live and for one reason or another, no escape is possible. The characters might not be able to stop the impending action, but might be able to find a way to protect the people from what is known to occur soon. Or perhaps they have a way they can divert the comet… or even come up with a way to move the colony itself! Further, this objective could take the form of pure role-playing, where players must find a way to cease an impending revolution, war, or stop one that is already happening.

In many ways, this objective falls under many others (depending on how it is used) but the common theme is that the objective requires the players to stop something which is either about to occur or already occurred and is in progress.

Collection

In this area are several items, creatures, or people scattered around. It is the character's objective to seek and collect all of them if possible, or as many as they are able (as few as 3 and as many as you wish, depending on how hard the items, creatures, or people are to collect).

The collection might take the form of arrests of criminals, saving crash survivors, or finding enough crystals in a cave to provide to the scientist NPC chaperone so he can repair damaged parts in his deepspace communicator.

A collection objective can seem quite video-game-ish if used too often, and for this reason it is not recommended to be used more than once in a game session.

Communication

In this objective, the characters need to communicate with their home. Maybe they need to call for backup or need to report something important to their employer. Perhaps they need to contact a mercenary group to help clean up a mess they made. Or maybe someone is hurt and they need to contact a medic. For whatever reason their objective is to communicate with someone distant. This often requires specialized equipment: radio-frequency communicators, satellite uplinks, or deep-space communication.

You must provide a situation where this isn't easy to do. Perhaps they are in a canyon and cannot get any type of signal, and must climb an amazing distance to the top of the cliff to do it, encountering their obstacle(s) along the climb? Like many objectives, the difficulty isn't in the doing, it's in the obstacle(s) the characters will face.

Confiscation

In this objective, the characters have to take something that is in the possession of someone (or something?) else. Unlike the information objective, in this objective characters are not just learning or filming, they are taking. Examples of confiscation objectives include stealing access cards, obtaining parabatteries from parked vehicles in an enemy garage, or even stealing a robot for re-programming. This might be an illegal action and if characters work for the law they will need a reason why they must confiscate the objective.

Creation

No, this isn't a chance for the characters to play gods. In this objective, characters must build something. They might already have all the parts they require in order to build it, or they might have to assemble them. The erection of their objective should be time-consuming and would be easy if not for the obstacle(s) the characters will face. Since a lot of time is required in this area, a random events table might be necessary in order to create dramatic situations.
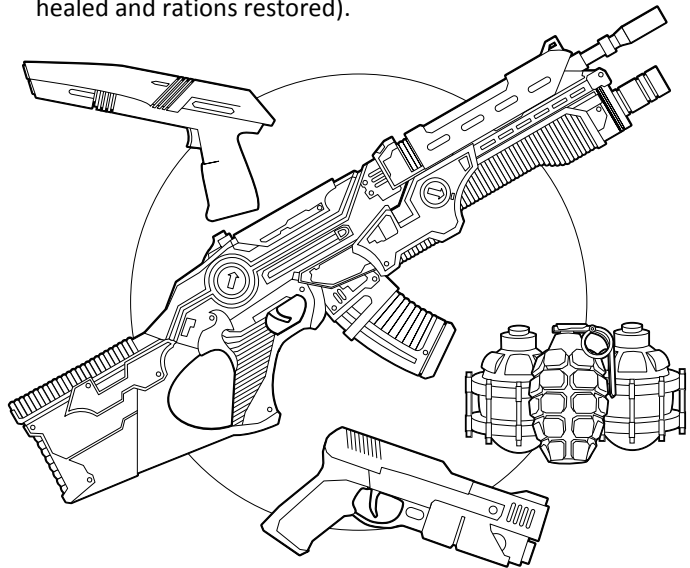
Desertion

The characters must flee this area. It may be falling down or on fire, or it may be swarming with enemies. Or maybe it's simply an area just outside a place they rescued captured characters. For whatever reason, the characters must leave right away. Depending on the obstacle(s) they'll face, the characters might have to sneak, sprint, coerce, or fight their way out of the area. Depending on how large the area, a random event table might help build the intensity of the objective. Why must the characters flee? What happens if they fail to escape?

Destination

In this simple objective, players are simply passing through. It's a typical travel area, crossing some distance from point A to point B. The travel will be at a given rate (depending on distances and velocities) and the path should be fairly obvious (depending on the obstacles). The time it takes to traverse the distance might be accelerated by crafty players.

If the distance is sufficiently far, the characters may be forced to deal with many events or obstacles along the way in order to give the players the sense of the difficulty of the travel. Random events are encouraged.

In a twist on the destination objective, characters might be faced with multiple destinations without knowing which is the proper one, building a sense of frustration that can be rewarded by their destination being overwhelmingly helpful (perhaps a sanctuary where all their injuries are healed and rations restored).

Destruction

In this objective, characters must destroy something. It has to be broken, disabled, or even blown-up or caught on fire. The item or place to be destroyed will be known, and the method of destroying it should be known (or must present itself). In fact, the act of destroying it can be relatively easily… if not for the obstacle designed to make this objective more adventurous.

But the two questions that must be asked: why must the players destroy it (ordered to by their employer, or it is obvious it must be destroyed through the story) and what are the consequences of not destroying it? (can there be some other way the players can resolve the situation without destruction on that magnitude).   Or, maybe for a fun twist, what are the unforeseen consequences of destroying it?

Elimination

The characters must defeat someone. Either they are sent for that very purpose (a military operation to eliminate an enemy general or leader, for instance) by a commanding officer, or they are self-determined to eliminate that person (perhaps out of revenge, justice, or to protect others). Elimination doesn't necessarily mean kill – it may mean you must capture, bind, arrest, or disarm them in order to eliminate that person's threat against others. In an elimination objective, characters are normally required to display a show of impressive force, or else a deadly fight will occur from which not all characters may emerge.

Exploration

The characters are in a place where either nobody has ever been, or where nobody has been in a very long time. In an exploration objective, characters are mapping the unknown and searching for new things. In some ways it is similar to an information objective, except the player's don't really know what it is they need to learn – they're searching for it.

Exploration objectives often include slow progress, taking samples and images, learning, and random events along the way. Sometimes it includes unanticipated footing, loose handholds, and terrain which is unforgiving. Explorers give names to the things they find, and often the scientific community applies names of the discoverers to those newly learned items. Museums, universities, and arcologies (as well as private collectors) might fund expeditions to newly discovered places. Or maybe a merchant house is interested in just knowing a new path to get from here to there.

Information

In this objective, the players must learn some fact(s). Perhaps they are looking for evidence to solve a mystery, get photographs of secret plans held in a science lab, or record someone's appearance from various angles to help create a holographic projector clone, or maybe access a computer in an installation to view information about the living location of an important enemy or contact.

Information objectives need not be boring or without conflict – the obstacle should provide ample opportunity for adventure. The information should not be easy to obtain and there must be a reason why the players must search for it: instructed to by a superior, need to clear their names, require the important information to complete some other action (for instance, obtaining a password to access a computer in a later area).

Liberation

In this objective, characters are faced with a very difficult task: liberate a group of people from some form of tyranny. Perhaps the players come across an outpost ruled by a warlord who took control by force, and the people live in fear and do his bidding?

Maybe the goal isn't to perform the liberation themselves, but to edify the people into performing their own self-liberation? Revolution is justified when it is against injustice. In some ways, liberation is a hybrid objective of protection, salvation and elimination. It can be challenging and might include intense military action, impressive role-playing opportunity, and dramatic skill resolution.

Characters that succeed in this objective will have certainly made friends of the people liberated, who will provide aid in the future. Of course, they probably will make an enemy as well.

Protection

This is your basic guard duty. The characters must protect something or someone. If that person is traveling somewhere, it's the player's job to make sure that person arrives safely. If that person is the target of an assassin, it is the player's job to root out the assassin and prevent him from doing his job. Perhaps the characters are delivering a package which is desired by other forces willing to kill for it? Or maybe the characters must protect a location against military siege?

Relation

The characters must settle or create a dispute, deliver a treaty or threat, or in some other way affect the political climate of the region. Perhaps they are sent by someone to deliver something, or are sent to make one faction believe aggression is from another as a form of subterfuge. Or maybe one of the characters is a diplomat himself and the objective is to get him into talks with an enemy leader – to persuade him to halt hostilities on a border where innocents are being killed by mistake.

This kind of objective presents a role-playing opportunity for players who enjoy tense in-character situations. Of course, the obstacle(s) will be arrayed against them, perhaps preventing them from accomplishing their area objective.

Salvation

This objective is an opportunity for the character's fame to spread. They are sent by someone (or perhaps are not sent but decide to do it themselves) to rescue someone who has been captured. In many ways similar to the confiscation objective, a salvation objective has a living sentient person as the focus of the goal.

Why was the person captured? Who captured him/her? Does the captured person know they need rescued? Will they come along willingly? Is the person even captured –

perhaps the characters are the ones doing the capturing (remember: salvation is a relative thing, one person's capture is another person's liberation).

Sanction

Some law has been broken, or some rule violated. Someone has done something they aren't supposed to do and so the players are sent by their employer (whoever that may be) empowered to make arrests. They might even be wearing uniforms or badges, where appropriate. They are sent to enforce the law, even if it means capturing whoever they must in order to enforce it. Sanction objectives normally have a limited scope – player's characters are never above the law, and their actions while enforcing their employer's rules are subject to later scrutiny. The questions to ask yourself are: why were the characters chosen for this law enforcement task? Who broke the law and why? Will the perpetrators come along willingly?

Survival

In this objective, the primary reason the characters arrived in this area matters. Did they crash here? Did they escape capture into this area? This is the first question you should answer. Once you know this, you'll understand why survival is their primary goal. The next question you should ask yourself is how long must the characters survive? Until help arrives? Until they find their way out of something or somewhere? Until a storm passes? Finally, find a reason why survival is actually an obstacle. Invoke a situation where some sort of finite resource isn't available and the players must become creative and apply their skills in order to overcome this resource limitation. Limited resources in the face of such survival odds is part of what makes the frontier feel… well… frontiersy.

Yes, this objective doesn't end in "–tion." Sorry about that. Had a good thing going.

Vaccination

Unfortunately, along the frontier fringes, diseases are commonplace. On the core worlds where much technology is developed and implemented, diseases are mostly cured through inoculation. However, out in the deep black of space, on worlds far removed from the core, diseases and infections occur and sometimes they're difficult to combat. In this objective, one or more of the characters are infected and need vaccinated. Or perhaps someone they are with (a non-player character) is infected instead of one of them. They may need to travel a great distance to get the vaccine, or it may be in the clutches of someone who owns it and isn't willing to give it up.

The objective may become a confiscation or protection or even a communication objective, all with the common element that someone is infected with disease or parasite

or worse, and need a cure that they hope will work. If not for the obstacles they'll face, obtaining the vaccine might have been simple.

For example, Larry rolls d100 for the objective in his first frontier town and gets a 47, elimination. The story will begin with the players sent to kill someone or some creature? Perhaps a criminal has escaped and is holed up in a town policed by the megacorporation the characters are employed by and they are the nearest employees to deal with it. Or maybe the players don't discover they need to eliminate the person right away, perhaps they figure this out later? He'll have to come back to this during the next step once more is known of the area.

Next, he rolls a 55, information. The players will be on an information gathering recon mission while in the starship location. Whether they are piloting the ship and learning about something in space or investigating a crashed ship is yet unknown, to be determined. For the last adventure area, he rolls a 41, destruction. The players must destroy something which may not be easy, depending on the obstacles they'll face.

So Larry is seeing his originally-conceived courier mission take an interesting turn. Players must kill a bad guy, investigate some area on or with a starship, then destroy something. Does any of this have anything to do with their courier assignment, or should Larry dump the courier idea? Larry decides he'll keep it and try to work it into the story since he thinks it'll be an easy way to wrap the players up in whatever the random mission entails.

4 DETERMINE AREA PRIMARY OBSTACLES

If the objectives in each area were easy to do, you wouldn't call this an adventure. Fortunately for the fun of the game, the objective won't be that easy to accomplish at all. Obstacles will be in the player's way - some of them will be actively attempting to stop the characters, some will just be things to be mindful of. Some will be downright deadly. For each objective in each area, roll on the following area obstacle table.

If you roll a 95 or higher, you'll roll twice more and have two primary obstacles! However, don't be afraid to decide for yourself if additional obstacles should be rolled, depending on the objective and the rolled obstacles, you may wish to continue rolling until your imagination is sufficiently spurred.

AREA PRIMARY OBSTACLE TABLE

d100	Obstacle
00-04	Against the Clock
05-09	Captured
10-14	Easy Mistake
15-19	Endangered Innocents
20-24	Enemy Character(s)
25-29	Enemy Creature(s)
30-34	Enemy Robot(s)
35-39	Equipment Limitation
40-44	Have to Go Around
45-49	Hopelessly Outgunned
50-54	Hostile Environment
55-59	Infection
60-64	Lost
65-69	Middle of Things
70-74	Mistaken Identity
75-79	Morale Problems
80-84	Natural Disaster
85-89	Persuade Other
90-94	Unnatural Disaster
95-99	Roll Twice More

Against the Clock

The characters must accomplish their objective in an extremely short amount of time… so short that they need to come up with some kind of shortcut way to accomplish their stated objective. Working against the clock is a special kind of obstacle that requires creative thinking on the part of the players, and proper tracking on the part of the GM.

Captured

The characters are captured and must escape while still trying to meet their objective. It's not fun to be captured multiple times in an adventure, and keep in mind that clever players may find a way to avoid being captured! Alternatively, have someone they need be captured, making them have to find a way to free or contact him.

If this is your first area in your adventure, consider stating that your characters were captured already, and begin the adventure en-media-res, in the middle of the action. If you do this, make sure they have a way to get gear back, because they'll be very limited if they have to complete the remainder of the adventure with limited gear.

Easy Mistake

Present a situation that the characters come across where the obvious choice isn't the correct one. It would be easy for them to make the wrong choice, side with the wrong combatant, help a bad guy, etc. Then how do they make things right?

For instance, have the players come across a family in a ground vehicle beset upon by savage native aliens. Have the family scared to death, sure that they've met their doom. The obvious choice is to rescue the family. However, after saving them and sending them on their way, the players might come across a village of these native aliens and might learn that something valuable and sacred was stolen from them, by a family in a ground car. Suddenly, completing whatever objective is involved in the area might become difficult as the players try to undo their mistake and catch up with the family of thieves!

Endangered Innocents

There are innocent people that are endangered… players have a moral choice to make: pursue the objective or save/aid the innocent people. They may be teetering over a ledge or unconscious in a burning building, etc. Innocent bystanders need not be unskilled and defenseless, but they need to be considered in all decisions made by the players.

Enemy Character(s)

Either many non-player character minions or fewer major characters trying actively to prevent characters from meeting their area's objective. Must defeat or avoid or persuade. This should be a significant encounter, not a random one. Maybe the enemy characters work for a rival organization, or perhaps they're an old enemy from a previous adventure, rivaling the players because they're on the same mission.

Enemy Creature(s)

Creatures are everywhere - or perhaps they're being stalked by one tough creature or a pack of slightly tough creatures. Must defeat, avoid, or bypass in some manner. This should not be a minor random encounter – it is one where tactics and resourcefulness must be used to be successful. An enemy creature obstacle should be severe – players wasting all their efforts, ammunition, and tricks on random encounters up until this encounter should wish they saved some for the big fight.

Enemy Robot(s)

The players must defeat or deactivate or avoid securitybots, warbots, a spybot or two, etc. Robots may not be trying to kill the players, they may only be trying to capture them or keep watch over an area. This is a planned balanced thing, not a random encounter – designed to be a dramatic obstacle to the area's objective.

If the adventuring party consists of characters with a technical background and skill set, they may be able to capture, reprogram, and repurpose robots encountered during an adventure. GMs not wanting the characters in possession of such technology should carefully consider their implementation in his adventure.

Equipment Limitation

The character's gear is either limited or lacking, they must improvise or obtain what they need; resource limits are a great contributor to the "frontier" feel. They may have to acquire 1-5 things in order to accomplish the objective. Use sparingly – the find-the-key-to-open-the-ogre's-door theme is an over-used one that has a distinct video game feel.

Have to Go Around

The path the players must take through the area to achieve the objective has a major physical obstacle preventing passage. Players have to be inventive to find a way across/around/through or find another path. Provide a random encounter table of some sort for the players to endure danger while going around. Examples include blown bridges, rifts caused by earthquakes, raging rivers, etc. Not necessarily a disaster – just an obstacle.

Hopelessly Outgunned

The players face a situation where going for their weapons would mean their death, yet the force that wants them dead isn't going to stop. What do they do, surrender and hope they are willing to take prisoners? Try to talk their way out of things? Flee for their lives and hope they can escape? Hide? Violence isn't an option for this obstacle. If players attack this obstacle with physical violence, they should find themselves waking up in hospitals, or not at all.

Hostile Environment

The environment itself is deadly, characters must deal with very deadly plants, toxic air, pitfalls, loose footing, quick sand, lava beds, etc. Similar to a natural disaster except this is what constitutes "normal" for this location and ways may exist to deal with it.

Infection

Characters must avoid being afflicted with an effect or disease while trying to accomplish the mission… or perhaps they get infected and must seek vaccination! The frontier is a place full of parasites, toxins, diseases, and maladies. That's why frontiersman are so hardy… whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Lost

The characters must navigate a labyrinthine area. Perhaps it is a deep canyon with many paths, or an office building with multiple floors and theelevators are out, and no single stairwell goes all the way up. Maybe they're in a wilderness area and they lose their way. This obstacle slows characters down trying to accomplish their objective, giving more opportunity for random encounters/events.

To help make their situation feel completely lost and hopeless, consider communications methods. A player won't feel that his character is lost if he can simply pull out his cellular phone and call for a pick-up. There should be some reason why the players are lost and also why they cannot easily be found.

Middle of Things

The players find themselves in the midst of something big that takes place seldom, such as a war, revolution, competition, celebration, etc. The event they find themselves in the middle of should be an obstacle to them completing their objective. Perhaps they were told to look for a man in a red hat, and come to find a parade full of people in various red hats… or maybe they are supposed to destroy a building but find it being used by a camera crew filming a holovid!

Mistaken Identity

The characters are mistaken for someone else. Perhaps that makes them wanted criminals or maybe the opposite: people might expect more from them than they're willing to give. A creature young may mistake a player for its caregiver. A child might latch on to a player's character and consider him her guardian.

Mistaken identity obstacles might be more fun if you use them consistently. If a player's character resembles the dread space pirate Havan-knarr, then don't place the players in a situation where their characters might defeat that pirate. It's best to continue the mistaken identity for the character's career, to make more fun obstacles in future adventures.

Morale Problems

The characters, either because of a past problem or one they just endured, begin suffering from morale issues. They become emotionally compromised: they bicker, hold grudges, and generally behave in a manner un-becoming a hero. Have a randomly chosen player select a negative emotion or mental state and cling to it (jealousy, helplessness, remorse, etc.) until the area's objective is complete. Successful completion of this area's objective is just what the characters needed to shake this morale problem!

Natural Disaster

The players must deal with an extreme disaster of natural origin, making the objective difficult. Sand storms, hurricanes, radiated areas, lava eruptions, landslides, tornados, heat flares, earthquakes, rapid erosion, pressure fluctuations, are all fine examples. Opportunity for extreme dramatic license – find ways to damage the characters, make the threat real.

Remember that this is science fiction. You aren't forced to use natural disasters that you are aware of in real life. You can make some up (perhaps a nearby lake erupts from some natural gas fissure beneath, and as it passes metallic rocks which float in the lake, explosions are common). Also, don't forget that natural disasters can occur in space as well (in case this part of your adventure takes place in outer space).

Persuade Other

There is another person – a non-player character – who is vital to the area's objective in some way. He doesn't wish to comply and must somehow be coerced or forced to help in order for the area's objective to be met. This can be an excellent role-playing opportunity (or bribery).

Unnatural Disaster

A disaster is at hand, but it is one caused by mankind. Perhaps it's illegal use of a terra-forming device, or detonation of an explosive causing a tidal wave or collapse of an underground structure, a raging inferno fire set by an arson, etc. This is another opportunity for dramatic scene descriptions. The threat of danger should be extreme.

For example, Larry rolls d100 for his first area and gets a 07, his players are captured in the first frontier town. They're captured but have to defeat someone or some creature. Perhaps when they arrive, they're falsely accused of a crime they didn't commit and jailed for it by a corrupt lawman in the frontier town - maybe that lawman is who they were sent to destroy! He puts that idea to the back of his mind and rolls for his next area.

He rolls a 76, natural disaster. Hm... in a spaceship they have to investigate for information... Larry's not sure what to do with this one.

He rolls his next one and gets a 95 so he gets to roll twice more. His two new rolls are 37, equipment limitation and 56, infection. In the last frontier town where they're going to have to destroy something, it won't be easy because they lack the supplies to destroy it and must obtain them somehow (through diplomacy? theft? Larry will have to put this to some thought) and will have to be somehow avoiding being infected.

5 DETERMINE FINAL ENCOUNTER

Every story has to have a climax. Although each area might have mini-story arcs, the entire mission would feel less than cinematic if not for the presence of a final encounter. It is here that the characters will face the story's main villain or deal with a main encounter area. GMs should put some thought into the results rolled so far and see if they can intuitively make up a final encounter. The final encounter usually takes place in the last area of the story, typically after that last area's objective has been met (though sometimes the last area's objective might be tied into the final encounter to make it more dramatic).

Final encounters should be designed for the players. Don't just make up a final encounter before knowing what the players will be... you need to make sure to give each player something to do. If all of the characters are militarily inclined, you can make a challenging combat encounter as a final one. If one of those players is a technician with little to no violent skills, you might want to give an opportunity for him to use his skills in that final encounter.

If ideas are escaping you, roll on the following final encounter table. Keep in mind that "facing" a major enemy may or may not take place on a battlefield. Players might be facing them in contests of skills, or in a crazy chase scene in which they must reach somewhere before their foe.

FINAL ENCOUNTER TABLE

1d10	Final Encounter
1	The NPC Horde
2	Creature Horde
3	The Robot Horde
4	Traitor
5-6	Master Villain
7	The Creature
8	Face-off
9	Double-cross
10	Obstacle

The NPC Horde

The players must deal with horde(s) of minor NPC foes while trying to accomplish some time-demanding task. In this case, the horde should be full of characters who, alone, pose little to no threat against the players. But when facing so many, the characters are undoubtedly going to be hard pressed to come out on top.

Creature Horde

The final encounter is against a horde of creatures trying desperately to kill the characters, though the players may

be creative enough to find a way to get around or avoid them. The adventure might culminate into a main encounter with such a creature horde, but don't forget that the threat of this horde should permeate the entire story. Players should feel concern for their characters, knowing that this is coming. When it arrives, describe it in such creative fashion that the players consider fleeing.

The Robot Horde

The players must deal with a large number of robots who have a directive to destroy them or capture them. Defeating the robot horde might not involve going toe-to-metal-toe with them. In fact, the final encounter might be a pitched battle of a few militant characters holding off the horde while the technical-oriented character hacks into the computer that is controlling them, in an attempt to shut them all down. A robot horde can be very powerful, especially if they're equipped with weapons and defenses.

Traitor

The main enemy has been with the players all along, and the final encounter is with someone they believed to be an ally. Don't use this too often, since players will begin mistrusting every non-player character who wants to accompany them on a mission. The traitor might regret what he is doing, or might embrace it with an evil grin.

Master Villain

An epic and truly cinematic bad guy who thinks himself unstoppable, faces off against the players. He may have a small minor NPC or robot contingent, and may try to escape if he's outclassed.

Master villains can be very fun, especially if allowed to escape. Recurring villains helps give consistency and identity to the player's character's plight. The eventual defeat of a master villain might, in fact, be the entire purpose of an adventure in the future.
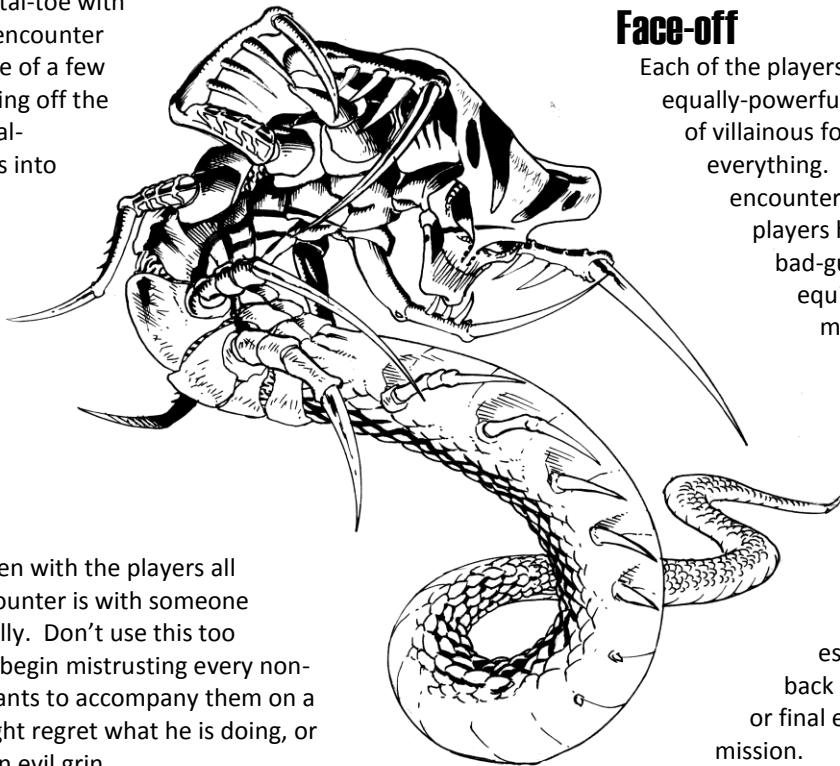
The Creature

Players must have a final encounter with a powerful creature or alien being – something they surely think will kill them all! Keep this final encounter in mind throughout the adventure, and perhaps try to give clues to how the creature might be averted or defeated.

The final encounter will undoubtedly have a lot of collateral damage associated with it. Especially if the creature is large. Keep this in mind during the final encounter, because this collateral damage might be a part of the amazing memory the encounter should eventually become in the minds of the players. For instance, if during the fight the creature destroys a power reactor and plunges an outpost into darkness, suddenly the encounter just got more interesting! Or maybe a thrashing alien creature compromises the hull of a pressurized starship, leading to all new obstacles in the middle of a gripping fight.

Face-off

Each of the players faces off against one equally-powerful major NPC, a group of villainous foes probably behind everything. The GM designs this encounter so that each of the players have a negative, a bad-guy equally skilled and equipped. The players might not be facing off in a fight – some characters might be duking it out using software or racing using vehicles. This is sure to be memorable, and any enemy who escapes is sure to come back again as an obstacle or final encounter of a future mission.

If the final encounter is to be a face-off, consider having foreshadowing all through your story. Have the players encounter the enemies, perhaps in a role-playing situation. Or maybe they are rivals, all pursuing the same objectives. However you do it, when the players divide up and face off against their nemesis, they should be rubbing their hands in excitement to finally teach that person who's the best.

Double-cross

The characters have been double-crossed by their employer. Whoever sent them to do what they've done turns out to be opposed to the characters in some way. Perhaps the characters were sent to accomplish something that the employer didn't really want done, and the employer thought he was sending you to your doom. Or perhaps the employer planned this double-cross all along, to give you to one of your enemies in exchange for money or power. Or maybe the employer simply disavows any association with your group because it has become

politically expedient to do so. Whatever the reason, this is an excellent role-playing situation. Players might have to think creatively how to bring all this crap back home to the employer.

Like the traitor final encounter, double-cross should be used sparingly or else players will always be assuming it will happen from every employer.

Obstacle

Roll on the obstacle table then roll again on this table, re-rolling further results of 10. This can make for a very exciting scene, one that requires a lot of cinematic-style storytelling.

> *For example, Larry rolls 1d10 and gets a 5. His final encounter is with a master villain. He decides his master villain will be a scientist rather than a warrior… but to give his militant players something to do, he makes the villain scientist protected by a megacorp security guard contingent.*

6 PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you have all the story elements, it's time to try to weave it all into a cohesive story ready for a night's session. Brainstorm on what each obstacle might entail, and how the objectives of each area might lead to the next area. At this stage, you don't need maps or statistics or anything yet, you're just working with the story.

For each adventure area, consider making a random encounter table. Just jot the numbers 1-10 on a piece of paper and write down some kind of enemy, obstacle, or background story that results for each of those numbers. Use this during that area if players are spending a great deal of time moving around, searching, exploring, etc. Nothing breaks up monotony like razor-winged swoopers looking for a face dinner.

Don't think that just because you didn't roll something that you can't add it to an area. The idea of this process is to give you an imaginative direction from which to derive your story. The best way to explain how to weave story element into your results is by example:

> *Larry tries to fit all this together, still using his "courier" mission idea to get the mission going. He immediately sees a storyline concept. He looks at his notes so far and comes up with the following:*
>
> *Area 1   area   frontier town*
> *   descriptor   recently burned*
> *   objective   elimination*
> *   obstacle   capture*

The players are sent to a frontier town under the control of the megacorporation for which they work. They are to deliver an important package of medicine to the town doctor. He requested this medicine long ago and has recently sent an urgent request for the package to be delivered immediately. The players book passage on a space liner, to be deposited by a loaner lander at the destination world. Their lander will be their way off the planet when their mission is complete (another liner will be passing in a few days).

When they arrive at the fringe star system and land on the planet and head for the hospital, they find that it is burned to the ground and when they're seen by the local law, they're immediately arrested and thrown in jail! The sheriff isn't acting quite right. He doesn't care much about enforcing the law, but when he sees the players are bringing some medical supplies for the doctor, he confiscates the package and arrests them. The players are outnumbered two-to-one by deputies that seem a bit over-eager to draw their pistols.

In jail, they meet up with the doctor who's been thrown in wrongly like them... who attests that the "sheriff" crashed here in a starship a few months back and is afflicted with some nervous-system-affecting malady that makes him have no conscience and crave power and control. He claims the sheriff is pure evil. The doctor was the one who requested the medicines, which are psychotropic in nature. He wanted to treat the sheriff, who has since taken over the town by killing the previous sheriff (whose body lies rotting in a canyon). The townsfolk are afraid of the sheriff and won't act against him. A group of thugs and cutthroats have allied themselves with this sheriff, and now wear deputy badges.

The players have to escape jail, get their weapons (or acquire new ones) and defeat the sheriff (perhaps with the aid of the medicines and the doctor) to give order back to the town. Once this is done, the doctor reluctantly takes the role of the new sheriff until the corporation can send a new one.

> *Area 2   area   spaceship*
> *   descriptor   choked with vegetation*
> *   objective   information*
> *   obstacle   natural disaster*

Once they accomplish the events of area 1, the doctor shows them where the defeated sheriff's ship crashed on a map he gives them, out in the badlands where the dust storms raze. The players are asked to go investigate it because he believes whatever afflicted the sheriff might be contaminating the ship still, because the local wildlife has become very violent of late. They are given a sampling kit and surgical masks and asked to go take samples of the area.

The players must brave the wilds of the sand storms, traveling to the crashed spaceship (which turns out to only be a lander, not a starship). On the way, they have random encounters with local wildlife (a random encounter table should be made, using statistics similar to common but aggressive real-world animals). The creatures are acting very aggressive and violent – as if they, too are afflicted with the mental illness that affected the sheriff.

Once they make it to the crashed lander, they find it overgrown with vines and weeds, difficult to gain entry into. While trying to clear all the foliage, they are attacked by a large creature who has made the lander its lair. The creature is thoroughly crazed by influence of the contagion within the lander! Once they defeat the creature, they gain access to the lander and find that it still has cockpit power. Players can learn that the lander came from another town on the other side of this same world, only about 15 hours travel by lander.

The distant town isn't under control of the player's employer corporation, it's a town where another megacorp does scientific research. The pilot must have picked up whatever neuro disease he had from the labs there. The players relay this back to their employer, who instructs them to get on the next vehicle bound for that port, to find a way to put a stop to this biological virus.

Area 3	area	frontier town
	descriptor	overbearing herb smell
	objective	destruction
	obstacle	equipment limitation
		infection

The players traverse the distance between towns in their loaned lander. It is a long journey (about 15 hours or so), and the lander is able to fly at an altitude above the raging sand storms. They encounter a few flying creatures but they pose no threat. Their mission: find whatever is causing this contagion and put an end to it.

They arrive and it is a pretty normal frontier town (though there is an overbearing smell of rhynthus, an herb used in local recipes), self-sufficient and full of rugged, durable people. The characters ask around and find that the lab in the center of town is a highly defended place and to gain access they will have to prove they work for the other megacorp.

To do that, they'll need to get uniforms and badges and will have to falsify registration in a computer database. They must acquire these things.

The uniforms can be acquired at the laundry shop (breaking and entering, bribing the proprietor, etc.). The badges are a little trickier and cannot be acquired easily... players will have to falsify them or steal them (or, if they lack imagination, hire a forger to do the work for them).

The database work will be the most difficult and will require a bit of hacking by the players. Once they've acquired all the equipment they need, they can try to get into the complex.

That's where the problem begins. The locals have all been given antidotes to the contagion (once the virus got out of the lab they had to act quickly, and have added medicines to the local water supply in an attempt to contain their mistake). The characters will not be immune, and will be facing exposure while in the lab.

If damaged (the first time they receive any damage), a character must roll a ten-sided die. On a roll of 3 or less he has become infected. An afflicted character has no conscience and will do whatever he wishes, hurt anyone he doesn't need later, and generally seek personal wealth and power.

Once in the lab, they find evidence (video logs, documents, or information in a computer) showing that the psychotropic lab experiment first infected the lead scientist, Dr. Drekkan. His megalomania made him mad, but not before he swayed most of the scientific staff to work with him in seizing control of the town. Drekkan was eventually captured by the security force, and the few uninfected scientists worked out an antidote, curing Drekkan and the rest of the town.

The laboratory is quarantined due to contamination by a new strain of the virus that they haven't yet found a cure for (this is what afflicted the sheriff the players defeated in area 1). Evidence shows that extreme heat caused by fire can kill the strain, but they want to study it and learn from it and that is why it is quarantined.

The players are instructed by their employer to set fire to the building, especially the lab area, or set the place to explode. Of course, the security force doesn't want them to do that, since they are under orders from their own employer as well. When the players destroy the laboratory, they succeed in the objective of this area.

| Final Encounter | master villain |
| | |

When the players succeed in destroying the lab, they have to leave in a hurry. The security force is calling in reinforcements and they need to get in their lander and leave now.

When they get to the landing platform, however, they are surprised by a very angry Dr. Drekkan (creator of the virus and once a victim, now cured of course) and a contingent of well-trained security officers. They demand the characters surrender and drop their weapons. But even if they do, the doctor orders a massacre.

Based on the look in his eyes, it seems Dr. Drekkan might not be cured after all, and whatever is afflicting him seems to be also infecting the small security force he brought to the fight...

7 ADVENTURE SUBPLOT

Each of the sections in this book creates compartmentalized story components. This works well to build a framework , but good stories often include subplots. If you're concerned that the story you came up with is too linear or too simple (or if you just want more complexity) consider rolling on this table. These sub-plots help build a separate unassociated storyline to help increase the guts of your adventure.

These are just examples. If you roll a result you don't like, twist it around to meet your needs. For instance, if you roll Crotchety Old Curmudgeons and don't like the idea of the players being forced to deal with a bunch of grumpy old people, consider making them children that were on a school field trip, or a bunch of unfinished robots acting like morons because their programming isn't complete.

It is very important that these elements not be overused. For instance, if every time the players have an NPC with them they turn out to be a traitor or backstabber, then the players will never allow an NPC along with them again. So if you use a plot element from this list (or create some of your own), make sure to occasionally make non-problematic versions of your subplot occur during other adventures (that is, have an NPC come with the party that turns out to be actually helpful and useful). Likewise, if every time they're on a long space-liner voyage a creature is escaping or pirates are attacking, they'll eventually learn to hate space-liners. Make some voyages go well!

ADVENTURE SUB-PLOT TABLE

d100	Sub-plot
00-03	Boarding Party Madness
04-07	Courier Mission
08-11	Critter on the Loose
12-15	Crotchety Old Curmudgeons
16-19	Drunken Specialist
20-23	Ewwwww!
24-27	Girls Just Want to Have Fun
28-31	High-Tech Calamity
32-35	In the Middle of Things
36-39	Joy Ride
40-43	Make a New Friend
44-47	Mystery Medical Agenda
48-51	Nick-Knack Paddywhack
52-55	Price on Their Heads
56-59	Problem Child
60-63	Promises of Riches
64-67	Reporter Tagalong
68-71	Rookie Sidekick
72-75	Something Wicked This Way Comes
76-79	Stolen Identity
80-83	The Packmole Incident
84-87	Toxic Rampage
88-91	Troubles with Trills
92-95	Used Vehicle Nightmare
96-99	Who's the Good Guy?

Boarding Party Madness

At some point in their adventure the PCs are on a starship going from place to place. The ship is boarded by pirates, who demand all money from all passengers. They don't wish to harm anyone, but will. Their leader sizes up the PCs and decides they would be difficult to handle if people started going for their guns, and so he lets them keep their money (but not everyone else!). The pirates leave, hopefully without problems.

Later in the adventure, the PCs find that another passenger on the spaceship (or the pilot, etc.) testified that the PCs were in on the robbery, allied with the pirates! This inaccuracy is spread around the frontier and gives them a false bad reputation. Of course, all this assumes the PCs don't go for their blasters as soon as the pirates show up!

Courier Mission

The characters are given some package at the beginning of the adventure that they must protect safely. It has nothing to do with the main mission. They must deliver it to someone at the end of the adventure. GMs should find a way to tie this into the mission ("by the way - since you're going that way - I have a package for Dr. Trallan at the Klimbar Institute, if you would be so kind as to deliver it.").

The package is annoyingly large (a 1 meter tall plastic drum) and flammable, and special arrangements will have to be made by the players to manage its safe transport.

If it isn't burned/destroyed and successfully delivered at the end of the mission, the recipient (Dr. Trallan or whatever the GM names him) might offer some special bonus to the characters.

Critter on the Loose

While the party is travelling (by ship, train, plane, etc.) a large creature escapes. They hear about on the news or are directly involved in witnessing the escape. The creature either can't be defeated or escapes the characters (if they wanted to get involved).

Later in the adventure, they encounter it again in such a way that it escapes again. During their mission they learn that there is a substantial reward for the re-capture of the creature.

If the characters are ready, they'll have their chance towards the end of the adventure when it rears its ugly head in their presence once more.

Crotchety Old Curmudgeons

A vehicle or spaceship the party is travelling on breaks down. Members of the party are asked to help repair. Some of the passengers are elderly and in need of medical

attention. Medical kits do not have the required medicine to assist; the characters are asked to transport the elderly.

Unfortunately, this means they'll have a bunch of crotchety old people being dragged along on their mission through whatever areas they must travel. They will have to keep them safe from creatures and natural hazards that occur along the way. While travelling, the elderly will complain incessantly about the sun, the moon, that they are being carried too roughly, that they forgot a pocket book and the characters must go back, etc.

Drunken Specialist

The players have a specialist sent with them on their mission. He has important skills or knowledge mandatory for the mission's success. Unfortunately, he's a drunk. He always finds a way to get himself inebriated, then acts embarrassingly. He might get himself into trouble as well, such as bar-room fights or thrown out of public buildings. In the end, when he is needed, he pulls through and manages to apply his skills effectively.

Ewwwww!

Early in the adventure, have the characters get dirty. Really dirty. Make it mud, oil, ash, dust, spray from an animal defending its lair, or any combination. Make it smelly. Make them repulsive to be around. For the remainder of the adventure, create situations where being repulsive to the senses creates difficulty for them in their mission objectives. Each time they SHOULD have an opportunity to clean up, have something urgent occur which prevents them from being able to do so. A fun way to end the play session is with them FINALLY getting a shower.

Girls Just Want to Have Fun

The players are introduced to their employer's daughter early in the adventure - it seems like an unimportant thing, not a big deal. He avoids talking about sensitive issues around her, using code words or occasionally asking her to "cover your ears honey." She's only 14 years old. She might make flirty eyes with one of the characters.

Later in the adventure (wherever the Referee can find a place to make it occur), the characters come across her partying with older guys and obviously under some kind of illegal narcotic influence. If they try to interfere, she threatens to tell "daddy" that the PCs are the ones responsible for her current state!

By the end of the adventure, the characters should have a chance to set the record straight if they care, but if they do nothing then they might end up in trouble with their employer or even the law!

High-Tech Calamity

While the characters are adventuring their employer ask them to investigate false claims from a local news agency in the area. The untrue claims could affect the company's stock prices. The news agency gladly shares the electronic data with the players and then removes them from their network.

The file contains a well-hidden virus program. Whenever the infected computer accesses a public network it broadcasts the false claims on public news sites. Characters should suspect something after a few incidences where they connect and a brief time after they see news reports. Make sure they figure this out at some point in the middle of the adventure, in order to make them worry about connecting to other networks or other systems. For instance, if they connect their infected equipment to a robot to repair or modify it, that robot is now a carrier.

If a tech-savvy character in the group wants to remove the virus, it should be difficult. At the end of the adventure characters should have time to track down who wrote the virus and what the ultimate goal is, and find a removal process to clean up their own gear and protect it from future infection.

In the Middle of Things

There is a war brewing. It is not the main purpose or obstacle of the adventure, but it touches nearly every element in this adventure. It might be a war between two races or governments, or even a corporate war. A revolt may be occurring against a tyrannical dictator. Although it isn't the main focus of the adventure it will be sure to color every aspect of it. Players might end up the unwitting pawns of one side or the other, or may find that their mission is accomplished easiest by working with one of the groups. If the characters try to stay out of it, they'll find themselves tossed into it by events that transpire.

Joy Ride

While on their mission, the characters receive an automated repeating distress call from a nearby spaceship. When they investigate it, they find that the ship is empty

and the self-destruct is activated (which sent out the automated distress call).

The ship, if they can stop it from self-destructing, has all computer logs erased/empty. The propulsion system is in need of overhaul and it won't move from its current position. The lifeboats are all missing, and the nearest place they would seek to land is at their next destination in the adventure.

Later, they find that a spaceship was hijacked by a bunch of youngsters on a joy ride and ditched in space. They find evidence that the "survivors" of the lifeboat went into a nearby city. Lead the players along like this so that each step of the adventure their path follow these youngsters.

By the end of the adventure they should be able to catch them and bring them in to the local authorities.

Make a New Friend

Characters will (early in the adventure) earn the respect of an important NPC by some action they take, and that person will help them out of a jam later in the adventure and become a long-term contact/friend. Or, as a variant, have them make a new enemy that later comes back to make them regret their actions!

GM TIP

Building a network of contacts helps players feel a sense of static realism to an otherwise dynamic frontier. Good players will keep track of the name and location of this contact, and will likely consider coming to them in the future for one reason or another. For this reason, it's important that you also, as GM, keep track of not only the name and location but also the conditions by which the characters met this NPC. Consider jotting down notes about the NPC's mannerisms as well, and the players will enjoy your living frontier.

On the other hand, adventurers often land themselves (intentionally or otherwise) in the middle of a lot of chaos. Loose creatures, powerful political upheavals, confiscation of valuables, apprehension of chaos-spewing criminals, etc. This makes adventurers seen as dangerous and unpredictable to local legal systems, often such that they make enemies of NPCs. These types of characters should not just be viewed as unimportant enemies to kill… they should also be part of a living frontier. Keep track of NPC enemies as intently as you do their allies, and the players will have a richer experience for it.

Mysterious Medical Agenda

While traveling on a space liner it stops on the edge of a star system or very far from civilized space. The ship is boarded by an emergency medical staff. After hours of waiting the characters wake up, it appears they fell asleep. Some will notice pin-pricks in their fingers and arms. Later in the adventure characters learn directly from their employer (or a news network) that ships all over the frontier have been stopped for a medical emergency, boarded and then released without anyone taken. After the adventure characters can investigate the strange occurrence.

Dr. Zeppel is an outcast medical practitioner. He and his crew have been taking tissue samples for some nefarious purpose, some of those samples came from the characters! This helps build a potential story for future adventure.

Nick-Knack Paddywhack

While the party is in port a peddler attempts to sell them a small nick-knack. The being will do anything to sell something to them even to the point of giving it away as a good-luck charm. He will then slip a small statue into the shopping bag, hidden in the wrappings.

Later in the adventure the party is accosted by two beings wearing tall pointy hats with golden tassels. Outgunned they will flee. Later the same beings with reinforcements show up. They want the statue at all costs. Have them speak with thick accents and ham up the role-playing.

If one is captured and questioned he will state that the characters have something that must be returned to their temple. They are sworn to protect the temple at all costs. If the party still has the statue by the end of the adventure they could return it and the temple priest will grant them a favor in their time of need (they have agents all over the frontier).

Another twist on this is that the statue is somehow contraband, and the PCs get in trouble for trying to get it through security at a space port!

Price on Their Heads

Throughout the adventure, the players keep being attacked randomly by bounty hunters. At first, it's just a single bounty hunter, but later, they'll be hounded by multiple. They'll arrive at the worst moments and might even manage to capture the characters and force them to have to escape.

By the end of the adventure, allow them to figure out that the bounty hunters were hired by a rival group of adventurers who heard of the character's past successes, and want to eliminate the competition! They put a large

price on the character's heads, and don't want them alive. Allow this subplot to end in such a way that the players learn of the rival adventuring group's location and can go confront them.

Problem Child

The players are asked to check out some interesting news of persons demonstrating special powers at their destination or close to their mission's main objective. They find out that a young boy/girl exhibits psionic powers. The local people are afraid of the child and have locked the child up for his/her own protection, and the child grows angry and resentful and is lashing out with his special abilities. The situation is getting ugly.

The players will likely want to bring the child back for study and safety. As they travel, another group comes along showing extreme force. They want the child dead or alive because they say he's too dangerous, and in truth he is. This is a moral decision for the party… how do they manage this in addition to their normal adventure/mission?

Promises of Riches

The adventurers are approached while eating dinner by a hunched-over little human guy with thick spectacles who tells them in a hushed tone that if the characters hide him, he'll make them rich, then he goes under their table.

Soldiers come in and shine flashlights at each person's face in the dimly-lit eatery. The players have a choice to make - if they turn in the little man, they'll later (at the end of the adventure) hear in the news that he got away from custody and is still at large, wanted for questioning in conjunction with a murder investigation.

If they hide him, he'll tell the characters that if they bring him with them he'll make them rich. Keep this up as much as possible, have him make promises of riches in exchange for passage and hiding until at the end of the adventure (or whenever you think the players have had enough) he gives the players the slip, leaving a note behind thanking them for their help and giving them a combination to a locker at a nearby spaceport.

The locker is being monitored by the law... let the players notice this. There is, indeed, a large amount of money in the locker. But it will be difficult to obtain without being labeled accomplices to the suspect. Let this play out however you wish, it will certainly have repercussions no matter what the players choose to do.

Reporter Tagalong

The characters have a reporter who is sent on their mission with them. She has an agenda, and is always trying to expose the character's operations as illicit and dangerous. She seems to be right for much of the adventure, but hopefully by the end of the adventure the players have won her over and her report will be favorable of the characters and the company they're working for.

Rookie Sidekick

A rookie NPC is assigned to your group by the company you work for. The rookie is actually working for a rival company and is gathering information about their activities and perhaps breaking into private network system if the opportunity arises. If the players expose the agent he/she is in a position to call for backup. The players shouldn't underestimate this rookie.

Something Wicked This Way Comes

There is a strict time limit the PCs must face throughout this entire adventure, in addition to all obstacles currently presented in each area. Some event will take place, and the players should feel a sense of urgency the entire time. If they don't succeed in time, something very bad could happen to them, their employers, or someone they care about.

Stolen Identity

A pickpocket takes a character's ID card early in the adventure. The thief cannot be caught (maybe make a fun chase through a busy port). In the middle of the adventure (if he didn't think to close his accounts), have the character find out that money is missing from his account and that it is closed. At the end of the adventure, have the character spot the thief trying to steal from someone else, offering him a chance to catch the young dodger. This might erupt into a more dramatic chase scene that leads to a thieves' guild in your city's underbelly, if your setting permits!

The Packmole Incident

The characters are passengers of (or are operating) a vehicle (rental, on loan, whatever). Later, after being out of the vehicle, they notice items missing. For instance, later in the adventure when someone wants to pull out a blaster or a communications device, inform the player that the item is missing.

The vehicle they rode in had a packmole living in the seat cushions, who steals shiny things. It lives in a nook behind the seats and has access to the cargo hold/trunk. Packmoles are large enough to take hand-held items, but are stealthy and quick. If players want to retrieve their gear later (if they even figure out what happened), they'll have to backtrack and find the car.

In a science fiction role-playing game, the equipment your player's characters tote around with them can define their potential as much as their skills and wits. For this reason, sometimes it's helpful to create conditions where their gear is taken away from them. This is a fun subplot to make that happen. If the players are possessed of some item that makes them breeze through too many of your obstacles, consider using the packmole to steal that item in addition to some others. When they finally find the packmole-infested vehicle and reclaim their gear, roll a few dice behind your screen and announce sadly "oh no… your quaziwhadzit is in shambles, as the packmole was in process of munching on its circuit board when you arrived. It may be repairable, but not in the field. You gather up the pieces and hope you'll be able to find someone to get it working again."

Toxic Rampage

The party is using a long haul public transport between star systems, from one side of a planet to another or between the planet and a space station. A large dangerous creature in the cargo hold breaks out and is rampaging the transport. The characters could be in danger or sit idle by and play it safe until help arrives. Character should be compelled to help as innocent people are hurt. One of the characters is hurt by the creature, at first it's just a scratch. As the adventure progress the character becomes ill.

Perhaps it is obvious that the character is ill because the rampaging creature had a toxic bite. The party must find help or the character might die. They might have to go back, retrace their steps, to find the creature's body to get samples so that a medical professional can create an anti-toxin before the character dies from this poison.

Troubles with Trills

Early in the adventure, a merchant sells the characters a small adorable little fuzzy critter called a Trill. If the players aren't the sort to purchase something like that, create a condition where they must carry the animal for their employer as a side plot. Later in the adventure, the cute little guy gets loose. Then things start to go wrong: electrical problems which cause lights to flicker, speakers crackling, fuzzy unfocused camera systems, display noise, etc. The characters will occasionally hear the little guy squealing in delight as it munches on electrical components.

By the end of the adventure, they should find the little guy nested in an electrical console with half a dozen little young sleeping cozily. It smiles at the players and allows them to catch it.

Used Vehicle Nightmare

Something large the characters just purchased or rented was used in a robbery or is something that was in the area the robbery occurred. A bounty hunter was sent to gather clues and either matches the serial number of the thing, finds chemical evidence or locates unique identifiable marks. It looks suspicious that the party has this thing.

Later in the adventure after the bounty hunter has reported his findings, each port the players find themselves in they are questioned. Maybe they don't get in trouble, but the constant questioning can become very annoying. Perhaps someone in the party flips out or they avoid public ports for a while. They could even track down the bounty hunter to find out what he was after or what event occurred to have them hassled all the time.

Who's the Good Guy?

Early in the adventure, the players will come across a scene where there is a conflict and it appears that innocents are in trouble/danger. Encourage the scene to make the players believe they should help one side or the other.

At some mid-point in the adventure, have them discover they helped the bad guy, not the good guy. If they don't seek to fix their mistake, have it haunt them towards the end of the adventure where the side they didn't help causes complications to the success of their mission. Or, the good guy goes to the press and exposes the character's actions, making sure to associate them with their employer on a live news cast.

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