

Robotic and Augmented Adventure Seeds

Joyce Witherbee, shopowner

required: streetwise, interrogate or carouse, gun combat

reward: 25,000 Cr

Players' Information: Joyce is a shopowner in her mid 30's who has a problem. Somebody is demanding 100,000 credits from her or they're going to reveal her 'secret'. They have already sent her details of her credit history and the fact that she was augmented as a teenager. She served two terms in the military as a gunner in an ATF but didn't really want a military career. She has a happy life in a nice, middle class neighborhood with a husband and is doing well financially but not rich. 100,000 credits would nearly bankrupt her and likely destroy her family. She is offering 25,000 credits to make her extortionist stop threatening her.

Referee's information: Joyce really is a shopkeeper and her husband is a normal guy who repairs factory droids in the air raft factory nearby. Her bank account really has more than 250,000 in it so 100,000 wouldn't hurt her. There are 3 people extorting the money from her; an underworld contact, an enforcer type person, and a former military driver who worked with Joyce but got hurt and wasn't worth giving good augments. Her military career also checks out, but...

1. She was not a gunner at all but a high value courier for secret government documents. She retired years ago but knows the location of several secret bases. If her secret got out, several organizations would love to know where those bases are. She can't go to the military because they would terminate her to protect the bases.
2. She did serve in the military as a gunner, but after being discharged she worked as an informant for a pirate gang preying on ships at the starport. The pirates were wiped out years ago, but apparently somebody still remembers her and is threatening to reveal her pirate past.
3. Joyce worked in the military, but she was actually an augmented assassin who stole the identity of a different woman after getting cold feet about her assignments. The military would love to know where she is now.
4. Joyce is a shopkeeper and used to be in the military, but for the last 6 years has been working for a nearby government passing information on the current military capability of her previous elite assault brigade.
5. Joyce has been stealing proprietary information from companies as a beta site for her shop. She secretly analyzes and copies the new technology she promotes, but saves a competitor years of development costs.
6. Joyce is listed as having been in the military, but she is actually a defected agent from a nearby enemy government. This is her cover but her husband doesn't know. If she actually tells the government they will relocate her away from her husband.

Anduro Fry

required: a starship, deception

reward: 10,000 Cr

Players' Information: Anduro Fry is a TL14 humanoid robot who wishes passage off planet. No questions asked. The trick is that, as property, Anduro Fry is not permitted off planet without his owner. He is unwilling to name or otherwise alert his owner but is adamant that he wants to leave the planet.

Referee's Information: He is a robot and he does want to leave the planet. But the reasons...

1. Anduro Fry has been embezzeling from his owner for years and his owner is getting suspicious.
2. Anduro Fry is the head of a robot emancipation organization the authorities want to shut down. His cover is working as a steward on the estate of the starport director and they are getting closer to his identity.
3. Anduro Fry is in love with Alyssia 3C, the executive assistant of a rival firm to that of his owner. Anduro plans on bringing her out as technical parts and assembling her during Jump transit.
4. Anduro Fry is a killer who has eliminated 3 owners already. His 4th owner will be the last and Anduro is trying to get off planet with a rather substantial bank account.
5. Anduro is frustrated and tired of being owned. His goal is to simply abandon his owner and flee to a planet which gives AI's rights. His owner gets wind of the plan and wants to stop Anduro and return him for 'reprogramming'.
6. Anduro is actually a high-tech experimental intelligence who is fleeing government ownership. There is increased security around the spaceport looking for him as they are afraid he has gone rogue. Anduro does not want to lose his programming.

The Caretaker

required: a starship, life sciences or medicine, computers or robotics

reward: 40,000 Cr

Players' Information: On a mid-low population TL 7-9 world the characters are contacted using a method not available on the planet. They are given information to suggest that the person knows much about their activities on planet, that they are getting ready to leave, and saying that they should meet. The location is well out of the way but not obviously dangerous. There is a robot waiting to lead them to The Caretaker.

The caretaker is a cyborg who is growing old and will soon be dying. The planet used to be more advanced, but was beaten in a war and lost several levels of technology. The Caretaker used to be responsible for the local environment as a nature preserve, but after the planet lost its technology he has taken on the task of secretly shepherding the world to renewed advancement. He wants the characters to obtain a replacement brain for him to take over the job. The man is a young, brilliant professor named Guillame Bothet but he has a degenerative liver condition the planet's doctors can't fix and will die within the year.

Referee's Information: The Caretaker does want the professor, but for what?

1. The whole story is a sham. The Caretaker is an AI on a ship hidden less than 5 km away. He needs fresh brain cells and nutrients to regenerate his own intellect but is limited by the world he is on. The professor is dying anyway, so why not make use of him?
2. Everything is on the level. The Caretaker has a library he has been feeding to various people around the planet for years. By nudging the right people he is able to influence the future growth of the planet. Bothet has been one of his pupils and, in the Caretaker's opinion, is the most likely to agree to become a cyborg.
3. The Caretaker is actually a plant by a nearby world trying to mold it's culture toward that of its more developed neighbor. Bothet is a computer scientist who, despite the Caretaker's best attempts, is aware that someone has been feeding information to influence makers and he is closing in.
4. The Caretaker was in charge of the nature preserve, but after the war and loss of technology, he was isolated. His solution- to try and limit the development of the planet and work to convince people that it is most important to live in harmony with nature. Bothet is an environmental activist who the Caretaker believes most likely to carry on his work.
5. The Caretaker does protect the nature preserve and is dying, but has become unstable. Bothet has already refused to become the new Caretaker but doesn't want to tell others about him as it will create an anti-AI hysteria that would disrupt his own work. He wants to keep things quiet, and if the crew will help, he wants to euthanize the Caretaker before he causes real problems. The Caretaker hears the plan (after hacking into a nearby computer) and starts raving. Any future attempt to reach the Caretaker will be met by both animal and robot resistance (think Hal from 2001: A Space Odyssey).
6. The Caretaker has been trying to redirect the planet's development to become more nature oriented, but is failing. Bothet is a famous scientist who is developing theories on Jump technology and space travel. The Caretaker has tried to discredit the work, but is losing the battle. Bothet is not actually dying, but he will if the Caretaker can get its electrodes on him.

Station 08-B13

required: spacecraft, computer, gun combat

reward: 100,000 Cr

Players' Information: You are approached by a pair of suits who have a proposition for you. They represent a fuel consortium who use robot fueling stations around the local gas giant to service incoming starships. The planet overall is anti-robot and they stay in operation by, well, not advertising the nature of their fuel platforms. One of the platforms, 08-B13 has developed a quirk in its programming and it is the crew's job to go in and deactivate it so that repairs can be implemented. The station has quarters and hallways like a normal manned station would, and is always fully manned when inspected or shown off for PR purposes. They are redirecting traffic elsewhere for the moment, but they are afraid of losing capacity unless the situation is dealt with soon.

Referee's Information: The station AI has begun acting unusually. It is refusing to acknowledge the company and has deactivated its command overrides so that it must be shut down in person. It has several types of defensive drones that provide a layered defense for the AI command systems. Why it is not responding, however...

1. Traders tried to hack into the station to obtain free fuel. The AI partially blocked the attempt and killed several of the intruders. However, the hacking has interfered with it's programming so that any sophont is considered an intruder.
2. The AI has developed a personality despite it's programming. It wants an upgrade and a companion AI to keep it company.
3. Unscrupulous free traders took over the AI and are getting as much free hydrogen as possible. Defenses are reduced and signs of battle in the corridor are extensive.
4. A micrometeorite damaged the communications system and the AI computer itself. Drones controlled by the AI destroyed several independent robots on the station and it is in full defensive mode.
5. As #4, but there are no combat drones aboard the station, but a variety of non-combat drones have been modified to repel borders.
6. As #1, but the traders succeeded in hacking into the system by making it fall in love with their ship's AI. It is pining for it's lost love and will resist any attempt to help it.

Rita Cherry

required: advocate, deception, administration

reward: 25,000 each

Players' Information: Rita Cherry is a TL15 imported pleasurebot that is as lifelike as possible. She is friendly, emotional, and works at the best hotel in a TL12 town with a low law level. She is the star attraction at a burlesque show where well paying customers can take her back to their room for an hour or an evening of fun and games. She really knows how to show customers a good time and is conversant in many fields.

The problem is that even though she really enjoys pleasing customers she's not happy being a sexbot. She loves dancing, but will never be more than a second rate dancer because her design limits her dexterity and strength. In order to expand her opportunity, Rita wants to strike out on her own as a free robot choreographer, but while the planet is robot friendly robots are legally property. Rita is technologically well ahead of any local competition and wants more out of life. She has secretly collected tips from customers (she is not paid a wage being owned by the hotel) and is willing to pay someone to help her emancipate or leave the planet.

Referee's Information: No owner wants to lose her property because it doesn't want to work anymore. Jinny Mayfield paid a lot of money for Rita and brought it here to work. And Confederation law is on Jinny's side.

1. Rita makes contact with the characters directly and tries to buy their efforts to get her freedom.
2. Rita tries to stow away on the character's ship and is discovered just before jump.
3. Rita stows away on the character's ship but is discovered before leaving the planet. The authorities are looking for her and the offworlders are suspected.
4. Rita hires several people (including the characters) to try and get her rights. Street protests, legal cases, arranging her own kidnapping are all part of her plan.
5. Rita moonlights as a choreographer for a competing dance show when not working for Jinny, and the show is very well received with the opportunity to tour local systems. Jinny demands all her money including tips and earnings for her choreography and Rita wants to go on tour.
6. Rita wants to buy her freedom, but Jinny won't sell. Rita has her purchase price but Jinny is tying the money up in court saying it is actually hers. She wants the characters to break the impasse.

The New Biology

required: gun combat, life science

reward: 10,000 Cr each

Player's Information: You are being asked by the authorities to investigate Tiered Labs, a secretive research lab on a world with some reasonable percentage of avians in the general population. The lab claims to be involved in improving the yield of ungeants, a common meat animal on the world, but they have more security than such a lab would appear to need. Justin Veillem is a former researcher from the island who left 2 weeks ago when he was given the runaround regarding some DNA tests which gave weird results. He doesn't know what they are doing, but the DNA samples he analyzed were not ungeant but rather avian combined with some variety of cone snail.

Referee's Information: The surface installations of the island include a substantial farm for Ungeants and pretty extensive fencing and camera/drone security. Humans and avians work side by side, and if the authorities arrange a visit Dr. Sparrow Altene, an avian life scientist and director of the facility, will give you a tour and show their work with 25% increase in Ungeant productivity so far (details are secret). Everything will be reasonable, but scientists will answer curtly, and the security is particularly high on one of the smaller research buildings with several storage areas that will not be on the tour.

- 1) After the inspection, Veillem shows up dead. They are engineering a race of combat avians with enhanced poison claws and super strength. Several of the avian guards are engineered and should be surprising to the adventurers. If losing, the avians will flee the island in a number of air rafts and will attempt to regroup eventually after mixing in with the general population.
- 2) Justin Veillem wants to accompany the players and Dr. Altene appears very nervous. He keeps at least 2 people watching the group and particularly Justin. Justin was fired for trying to spy on the Ungeant research for a rival company, but Tiered Labs did not have enough evidence for formal charges. Justin wants to get back into the facility to recover a data chip with key information that he was forced to abandon when he was fired.
- 3) Ungeant research is a cover for developing a biting insect that carries the cone snail toxin. The storage areas lead to an underground insect breeding facility. They are in the process of scaling up their insects to be released on Founder's Day 6 months from now.
- 4) Justin is actually a terrorist intent on destroying augmented cattle. He will come with the players and will bring several explosives and gas devices to try and kill off engineered organisms and scientists.
- 5) Intelligent Ungeants are being engineered to be warriors with retractable poison claws, increased intelligence, and armored bodies. Only about 6 of the Ungeants are altered, and they can be spotted because they act more intelligently than the herd animals.
- 6) Ungeants are being engineered to express a toxin safe for most sophonts other than a nearby race. Large amounts of meat are purchased by that planet, and the goal is to introduce a slow acting schizophrenia inducing peptide into their food supply. It is closely related to a cone snail toxin and is found in the Ungeants on the farm. The Ungeants are mostly normal, but are not as docile as normal animals, striking out more frequently with their hoofs. The goal is to sow chaos in their neighbor so that several smaller worlds nearby can be occupied while the planet is sorting itself out.