The Rogue Planetoid

From: Jens-Arthur Leirbakk <leirbakk@alkymi.unit.no>

Well, here's a little intermezzo that is usable in almost any storyline. OK?

Scenario information:

This scenario is intended for the Star Wars 2nd edition role-playing game, for 1-2 characters of beginning skill levels. Good weapon skills are a necessity if the scenario is to be successfully completed, but any skill levels beyond that of a beginning character are not required.

I ran this scenario with two character, one using the Brash Pilot template, and one using the Bounty Hunter template. The Brash Pilot had a blaster skill of 5D and the Bounty Hunter had a blaster skill of 6D. Even though the Bounty Hunter had to trust the Force for a moment, they pulled through with flying colors.

If you intend to use this scenario on either more characters, or accomplished characters, I suggest that you either increase the skill dice of the major antagonist with 1D or more, or you increase the number of droids that are roaming the station. This is up to the Gamemaster, but if you feel really mean, you could up both...

About the author:

Being an avid Star Wars fan, I was quite naturally extremely excited when I first heard about the Star Wars role-playing system, and soon my friends and I were soaring about in a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

Nevertheless, there were flaws in the 1st edition system that caused the enjoyment of the role-playing game to be diminished. Therefore, I was once again overjoyed when the 2nd edition of the role-playing system was released, and it seems that most of the flaws from the 1st edition are corrected.

This is the first mission I ran for my players under the 2nd edition, and I hope your players also will enjoy it.

About the Scenario:

The Gamemaster should take the time to acquaint himself (or, indeed herself) with the scenario, carefully reading all of them to remember when going through the scenario. This scenario is place-driven, not encounter-driven, so it might be necessary to prepare a map before the scenario is played.

Nevertheless, the scenario is not so complex as to warrant more than the most simple sketch of the characters' surroundings. Personally, I ran it with no more than a topographical sketch of the area around the airlock, and an idea of what I wanted the scenario to encompass, i.e. a rouge planetoid, an abandoned research station, and a mad droid.

One of the most useful tenets for the novice Gamemaster, is to not panic if there is some fine point of the rules that you cannot remember a particular item of information. Make it up, whatever you have forgotten. If you later on realize you are wrong, for instance about a rule, merely inform the characters about the change in whatever you are doing, and get on with the game. You are doing this to have fun, after all. Also, if there are one or more difficulties that you would like to change, go ahead. The difficulties are tailored towards the level of proficiency MY players usually start with (good weapons skills, good piloting skills, and a smattering of other skills); YOUR players probably have (and should have, considering that variation is the spice of life) other criteria they use to create starting characters.

Background information for the Gamemaster:

The planetoid (moon) that the characters will encounter in this scenario, was originally part of a remote system. Under the Old Republic, this moon was chosen as the site for a small Research and Development Laboratory concentrating in weapons research. When internal strife in the Old Republic cut the R&D station off from the rest of the galaxy, there was noone to rescue the scientists from their last creation, the KR series of battle droids.

During the rest period of the scientific station, a freak power surge damaged the logic circuits of KR-1, which the scientists had left hooked up to recharge its internal energy stores. The result was several damaged personality circuits, which created major changes in the behavior of the droid. In short, the droid became a homicidal maniac, possessed of a certain cunning.

Its first victims were the security personnel of the station, which was quickly dispatched. The scientists were the next, and soon the KR-1 was the sole "sentient" being left on the station. This was 200 standard years ago.

150 years ago, the planet which the moon orbited was hit by a giant asteroid, causing great gravitational fluctuations that tore the moon from its orbit around the planet. Narrowly missing several other planets of the system, it sped out of its native system, and went rogue - a planetoid which speeds through deep space, presenting a hyperspace hazard to any passing ships because of its mass shadow.

Since then, several ships has been forced out of hyperspace by the planetoid, and have landed on the planetoid to effect repairs, or out of curiosity, as they have detected the R&D station. They have all been killed by the KR-1 droid.

This is the situation as the heroes enter. Or rather, as they drop in.

Introduction:

The introduction I used for the characters to become stranded, was that they were hired to transport a weapons shipment from Cloud City on Bespin, to Sullust. I promised them 10 000

cr, with 20% now, and the rest on delivery. Happy as larks (I usually aren't that loose with cash, you see), they prepared to be off. As usual, they rolled an Astrogation check, and made it. They thought. Unbeknownst to them, the check had become Heroic (30+) instead of Moderate (15+), because of the planetoid. Of course, I didn't say that. So after some days of travel, they were suddenly torn out of hyperspace by the hyperspace shadow of the planetoid.

"Suddenly, with red warning lights flashing and emergency klaxons blaring, your ship is yanked back into realspace. Directly in front of you, there is a giant moon heading straight for you."

The Scenario Begins...

The difficulty for making a soft crash landing on the planetoid, is 15+. If the check is a failure, let the craft take 2D damage, and each of the characters not strapped down (i.e., all of them under normal circumstances) must resist 3D damage.

Regardless of whether the pilot makes the check, they will find that the hyperdrive motivator (a popular part) is burnt out. Their backup is also burnt out by the power surge when they entered realspace. Unless they specifically have got a hyperdrive motivator, they have to get spare parts from somewhere, as they do not have that part on board. But on a desolated, cold, atmosphereless planetoid?

If one of the characters think of trying to scan for energy sources, let the character find a weak one, approximately two kilometers north of their crash site. If not, a Force-trained character might feel "uneasy" about a place to "the north of here. Definately north-ish." The character is feeling the death of the various people having entered the base over the years. As a last resort, you might let all the characters make a Perception check (Search), with a difficulty of 20. If one or more of the characters pass, remark that they for an instant thought they saw some ships farther north from their crash site when they crashed.

Eventually, they should find out that they have to look into whatever there is to the north to find spare parts for their ship. There should be emergency vac-suits in the characters' ship, but stress that this is not something they would fight in, as the suits are rather fragile compared to a real vac-suit (if one or more of the characters have bought this item, remark that it looks quite rugged, especially next to the flimsy pull-over emergency vac-suits).

Hiho Hiho To The North We Go...

The characters approach a rather steep hill as they draw closer to the place where energy is emitted/they felt bad vibes/they think they saw something. A weak light seem to come from one of the sides of the hilltop, together with a strange, fluctuating red radiance.

Remarkably, in the steepest face of the hill (which is almost vertical), there are put two giant blast doors, each 7 m wide and almost twice again as tall. They are very old; at least judging from their pockmarked surface, where meteorites have struck. Nevertheless, they are still quite serviceable, and quite difficult to destroy or penetrate.

Also, there seems to be a large crater nearby, where the characters can just make out large, angular shapes.

In the crater...

Present in the crater are several scout ships, a couple of tramp freighters, and one luxury yacht. They are all old, though it is fairly obvious (Easy (5) Knowledge for a pilot) that some are more recent than others. They span approximately (Easy (6) Knowledge) a 100 years' time span, and the most recent is approximately 5 years old.

Present in the crater are:
* 3 Star Cabs (extremely old, all abandoned, in two are wrecked droids.)
* 2 Lone Scout (as in the 2nd Ed RPG book, both have wrecked hyper-drives, there is no sign of any people inside the ships.)
* 1 Soro-Suub XTRM PLSR 23-B (old, but serviceable luxury yacht. Could fetch good price. Unfortunately, it seems that the backup hyperdrive is removed, and the main hyperdrive is hopelessly fused.)
* 1 YT-1300 (stock, as in the RPG book. Some personal effects evident, like a Heavy Blaster Pistol and some clothes. Unfortunately, this ship is locked (Moderate (15) Security roll to bypass). Also, if a check is failed two times in a row, a small anti- personnel mine will go off (as grenade).)
* 1 Ghtroc Light Freighter (stock, as in the RPG book. This ship is filled with water, as the alien race using it preferred it that way. One of the two aliens is still here, dead because of injuries sustained in the crash. The hyperdrive backup is not removed; it is destroyed in place. The alien is badly decomposed, and it is difficult to make out what it has been (Heroic (35) Alien Races to find that this is a Torraleen from the Torr system, resembling a Manta ray with humanoid arms and legs.)

All the ships, unless otherwise mentioned under the description of each ship, has got their backup hyperdrives removed, and their main hyperdrive motivator fused. For variety, the Gamemaster should enforce a feel of doom by letting the characters find some dead, possibly aliens, in a couple of the ships. There should be, in these ships, signs of forced entry. Examples include, but are of course not limited to, death by vibro buzz-saw, mangling by flechette, charbroil a la flamethrower, and an all-time favourite: the club.

Each ship have valuables in it amounting to (3D+1)*100 cr, including wild die. The luxury liner has a +1D to that roll.

The Weak Light

The weak light is a light set above an airlock door set in a niche in the side of the hill. The airlock door is partially open, as an arm is stuck in the opening. All is extremely dusty, and before the door there is a small heap of dust. The fluctuating, red radiance is an error message from the airlock panel - "ERROR: Obstruction in outer airlock door". The airlock cannot be operated before the obstruction - the arm - has been removed from the opening.

The arm is attached to a male human, perfectly preserved in the hard vacuum present here. It is quite obvious what the cause of death was - the man's legs were sawn off at the hips with

something sharp (Heroic (35) Technical (Vibroweapon repair) check to ascertain that the wound was caused by a Vibro weapon). The inner airlock door is not transparent, and the characters can therefore not see what is awaiting them on the other side of the door.

Inside the Base...

The interior of the base is in surprisingly good repair, considering its age. Nevertheless, there is a thin film of dust covering almost all of the items and bodies scattered throughout the base. The most recent bodies are badly decomposed, while the oldest are mere skeletons or mummified remains. Some aliens are not decomposed at all; these are mentioned specifically in the text. The dead people have sustained a variety of injuries causing death; most have cracked skulls, caved-in ribcages, or are decapitated by a sharp object (the vibro buzz-saw). The Gamemaster is encouraged to grisly descriptions of the dead, but remember that most are badly decomposed or merely skeletons.

All the corridor lights are low on power, and only a weak glow penetrates the dry, rotten atmosphere. When the characters move, puffs of dust will rise from the floor, and swirl among the characters, partially obscuring vision.

If the characters carefully examine the corridor in which the airlock opens before they enter, they might (Search (20)) see marks in the dust - marks that resemble tracks after a treaded object. This is obviously the droid, but the characters have no way of knowing that. After the characters have entered the corridor, these tracks will be obscured by the dust which the characters raise when moving around.

A gauge, part of any emergency or standard vacuum suit, will show that the atmosphere present in the base is thin, but breathable by humans (and all aliens compatible to humans). Nevertheless, the gauge doesn't indicate the horrendous stench that will assail the characters' olfactory organs if they de-suit. It is extremely nauseating and debilitating, and unless a character is able to succeed at a Moderate (15) Strength (Stamina) check, the character will suffer a -1D penalty on ALL skills and attribute checks (except resisting damage) – in effect being stunned. Do not tell the character this, merely say that the character feels bad, and nauseous (whether the character succeed at the check or not).

Lay-Out Of The Base

The characters will enter in the corner of an L shaped corridor. Straight ahead there is a turn, and a short corridor to a turbolift. To the left (as the characters are standing), there are three doors; one on the left wall, one in the end of the corridor, and one on the right wall.

The turbolift:
* The turbolift has got three buttons, marked with SUB, MAIN and GARAGE. The buttons are in that order, from the bottom up. The lift is currently on this level - MAIN.

SUB:
This area is the area of the power generator. It is 150m below ground. The power pile is already low on power, and will probably not last more than 30 more years. It is possible for a technician to rig the generator to overload (Heroic (30) check vs. Demolitions or Technical,

reduce by 5 if proper tools are used) in 2d6 rounds. This may not be enough for the characters to escape, but if the technician is mad enough...

The resulting explosion will be 9D, Walker scale, followed by a secondary explosion of 8D, Character scale, when the eapon stockpile goes.

MAIN:
This is the level the characters enter via the airlock.

GARAGE:
The turbolift doors open to a catwalk 6m over a cavernous hall. In the end of the hall, the colossal blast doors seen from the outside are set. They are impossible to budge, as the machinery controlling the doors are destroyed, as if by an explosion.

Present on the floor are several wrecked speeders, and a wrecked Star Galleon. This is easy to see, as the hulls are all gutted and damaged, and scorch marks adorn the sides of the various vehicles. (This is the target practice area of the droid, but again, the characters wouldn't know that.)

On the floor there is a crate. In this crate are the spare parts the characters need to fix their ship, namely the backup hyperdrive motivators of all the ships permanently parked outside.

If the characters retrieve this before having confronted the droid, an alarm signal will sound in the droid workshop, and the droid will be waiting for them when the characters step out of the turbolift.

The doors:
The door to the left is marked Personal Quarters. This door is slightly open, as the hinges were broken when somebody or something bashed the door open.

The door to the right is marked Storage. There are no other marks on this door. The door is made of durasteel, and is quite sturdy. It is locked. (The door has 10D character scale to resist damage, and a Security (15) check is required to open the door. A result of Mortally Wounded or Killed will allow the characters to open the door.)

The door straight ahead is marked Workshop. This door is also locked. The door is made of plasteel, and is relatively flimsy. (The door has 4D character scale to resist damage, and a Security (30) check is required to open the door. A result of Killed will allow the characters to open the door.)

Personal Quarters:
The door will open creakingly into a short corridor, with five doors; two on the left wall, one on the far wall, and two on the right wall. The doors on the right and left wall are open, the door on the far wall is shut.

There are three bodies evident here, one in a doorway on the right wall and two in the doorways on the left wall, one in each doorway.

The body to the right is of a green, antennaed and insectoid alien long dead, even though the body is not decayed. An Alien Races (20) check will reveal that this is a Verpine, a relatively

unknown alien race noted for their technological prowess. The cause of death is easy to see: decapitation. Over the doorway in which the Verpine is lying, a sign proclaims the room as the quarters of the Senior Technician.

The Senior Technician's room has got a hologram of the Old Republic prominently displayed in the middle of the room. The rest of the room is a mess - everything is demolished, as if a Wookie had gone berserk. The Technician's data terminal is broken, and his book chips are scattered out on the floor. If the characters search these chips, they will find that the following books are present: 'Robotics - by Dr. Krjee Slayn and Dr. Nkrsaa Korpil', 'Mechanical Contraptions – by Senior and Most Exalted Drang W'nee NF6r', 'Microtronic Circuits - 4th Edition by Sedra and Smythe', and 'Power Systems - by Dr. Xar inxallah'.

The other doorway to the left is the Chief Programmer's quarters. When the characters enter the room, they will find the Chief Programmer, literally spread out in the room. He was a male human, and is preserved by the airconditioning system in his room, which has dried out his corpse. The cause of death is redecorating. The redecorator decided to use the intestines of the Chief Programmer. A Stamina (15) check is called for to avoid vomiting, if physically able to do so, and if this is normally a sign of extreme revulsion.

Otherwise, the room is quite undisturbed. There is a bed, a computer terminal, two chairs and a small table here. If a character passes an Easy (8) Computer Programming/Repair, the character will be able to recover some data from the computer terminal. It will be the last entry in the diary of the Chief Programmer. The entry reads: "... At last we have finished one of the droids! Even though I am not quite sure if the personality that M'ragh has given it is entirely appropriate, I am convinced it will all turn out good. At the very least there isn't going to be anything wrong when it tries its functions... I am particularly satisfied with the target acquisition module. Anyways, I am anxious to see if he is fully on-line tomorrow."

The first door to the left has got a human skeleton in the doorway. The sign over the doorway proclaims that this room is the personal quarters of the Head Surgeon. The human was dispatched by cranial intrusion by a sharp object, i.e. someone punched a hole in his skull. The room is wrecked, with almost nothing interesting. There are enough medical supplies here to constitute four medpacks with increased difficulty (+5) to use because of age (they are not as sophisticated as the medpacks available today).

The second door to the left has got an alien body in the doorway. The body is badly decomposed, but there are traces of body fur and long finger and toe claws. A Heroic (30) Alien Races will reveal that this is the remains of a V'rnee, a race somewhat similar in build to that of Wookies, but not as tall or strong. They are noted for being excellent psychologists, but are also noted for a strong attraction to the bizarre, especially psychotics and the like. The alien died because someone set him on fire. Literally speaking.

This room is charred, as if a fire has raged here. What is left in the room is destroyed. Nevertheless, if the characters search this room, they may (Search (10) check) find some book chips, marked in Basic with the following titles: 'L'uee - Treatise on Abnormal Psychologies', 'Famous Irrational Persons by Nurwatha Haigh', 'The Ultimate Guide to Dream-Interpreting for 14 races by S'nee F'nkx', and 'An Expert Psychologist's Handbook to Geuss' Interrogation Technique by Bringath Morder'.

The door straight ahead is marked 'Tech and Security Personnel'. The door is locked, but is relatively flimsy (4D Strength, Killed result allows the door to be opened, Moderate (15) Security to open).

The room contains 12 beds, 4 of which has a footlocker (for weapons). There are 8 dead here, 3 in their beds. All are human. 4 of the 5 remaining dead, are scattered around in the room, torched, cut, bludgeoned and electrocuted. The last one is hanging from the air condition fan set in the roof. There are few personal effects here, though if the characters search, they may find 4 old, but still serviceable blasters, with one powerpack each (treat as hold- out blasters, but with the bulkiness of plaster pistols).

Storage:
This room contains much of little use. There are several crates of foodstuffs gone bad (some of the goo seems to have the potential of intelligent life :), and there are some opened crates of various tech parts, mostly droid parts. There is a small (1m x 2m x 2m) container here marked 'Armaments'. This container is apparently locked with a padlock-ish lock. An Easy (5) Security check will show that the lock is not locked. Otherwise, a Moderate (15) Strength check will tear the lock off the crate.

The crate is empty, except for 16 more powerpacks for the ancient blasters the characters may or may not have found in the personal quarters. There are clips for several other weapons canisters - a Moderate (15) Tech roll or [Any Weapon] Repair roll will let the character recognize clips for hanging missile launchers, flechette canisters, flamethrower fuel cartridges, and some unidentified weapons, in addition to a rather large blaster rifle.

Workshop:
This is where the droid is hidden. It has turned itself off, but will be active after the first round with noisy activity (banging open doors in the vicinity and so on).

If the KR-1 has the opportunity to do so, it will move next to the row of unfinished droids (looking even more unfinished than they were, as the KR-1 has "borrowed" parts for himself) and stand still, hoping to ambush the characters when unguarded.

Otherwise, it will not move from the middle of the room, where it currently stands, and wait while looking deactivated (a Heroic (35) Droid Programming/Repair Roll to find out that the droid is not, in fact, deactivated) until one of the characters comes close, when the KR-1 will lash out at the character with its vibro buzz-saw.

The workshop is a large, rectangular room, with five worktables spaced neatly and evenly across the room from one short side to another. (Worktables give half cover and has a body of 2D, if a character tries to hide behind the worktables.) On these tables are various (now useless) droid parts. In a row near the far, long end of the room (from where the characters are standing), there are four (or five, depending on where KR-1 is) unfinished droid "carcasses".

KR-1 will fight until "killed."

KR-1:
The first (and only) to be finished of his experimental production run, KR-1 was a try to create an ultimate battle droid - intelligent, fast, and lethal. Due to a malfunction it shorted out, and came online again with an even more psychotic personality than that the chief

psychologist had given it. It decided that if the personnel on the base were allowed to discover this, it would be deactivated. It did not care for being deactivated, and deactivated instead the base personnel.

Note: All skills and abilities not noted here are 1D.
Note: KR-1 will not suffer penalties to his dice codes while still "alive". "Killed" results and "Mortally Wounded" results will however still incapacitate KR-1. Also note that his armor can be damaged, just as normal armor.
Note: KR-1's arms are not armored. If an arm suffers an Incapacitated, Mortally Wounded or Killed result, it will be useless.

DEX: 3D
- Missile Weapons: 6D
- Dodge: 5D
- Melee Combat: 5D+2
- Flamethrower: 4D+2
- Blaster Rifle: 5D+1
STR: 2D
PER: 2D
TCH: 2D
- Droid Programming/Repair: 4D
- Demolitions: 3D
- Starship Repair: 3D
- Security: 5D

Weapons:
Flamethrower (5D), skill: Flamethrower
Vibro buzz-saw (6D), skill: Melee Combat
Flechette Canister (6D+1), skill: Missile Weapons, one attack, if a Mishap occurs, then the canister has exploded as a Grenade.
Mini-rocket Launcher (4D, two attacks if a hit is scored), skill:
Missile Weapons, 3 attacks left.
Club (3D+2), skill: Melee Combat
Blaster Rifle (5D+2), skill: Blaster Rifle, three shots left, if a Mishap occurs, then the rifle has exploded as a Grenade.

Other:
Two photoreseptors
One fine manipulation arm (+1D all TCH rolls)
Armor (+3D when resisting damage on all locations except arms)
A sonic sensor ("hearing")
Retractable datascreen
High-frequency radio

Move: 8 (two treads)