

Adventure Sketches

One of the hardest things for me when GMing a role-playing game is trying to come up with a decent adventure. I want something that I can put together in a few short hours, a day at most, and that we can all have fun with. Usually, once I have a plot, I have no problem coming up with the rest of the adventure, but coming up with a fun plot that hasn't been played out hundreds of times already can be pretty challenging when one has been playing for quite a few years. So, as with the [Trap Collection](#), I asked other people on the Internet to send me their ideas on some adventure sketches. Not necessarily full blown adventures, but at least a basic plot to get started. Here is what I've received so far.

From: Chris Chalfant (cchalfan@elmail.cc.purdue.edu)

400 years ago, the greatest rogue/pirate that ever lived, Robert Rogers, sailed the seas. It is said that he was the son of the Trickster god Baacris and that the god favored him in his voyages.

Once he was asked by his uncle, Angbard Mountainsmith, god of the Dwarves to recover a wonderful gem lost in very distant land. To aid Rogers, Angbard gave to him the Earthcutter, a ship that sailed on land and sea.

When Earthcutter sails, it travels ten times the speed of the fastest ship. It cuts furrows in the earth behind it like an enormous plow but is slowed by hard-packed earth. It cannot sail through mountains. Rogers took the Earthcutter and completed the quest for the god but kept the ship and continued his piracy. He even founded a major port city, Java.

Certain Earth Elemental Lords serving Angbard thought this ship to be a sacrilege and a travesty. They conspired to send many powerful Earth Elementals after Rogers and his ship in order to "sink" it and end this abomination. One day they at last cornered the Earthcutter in a Mountain Valley and ripped a great hole in her side. Amazingly, the ship began to take on earth and sink! Rogers managed to escape but most of his crew were drug underground and crushed by vengeful Earth Elementals. Rogers returned home and retired a rich man. His son took over ruling Java (and the piracy that filled its treasury) when he died.

Now the nephew of the current ruler of Java has discovered the location of the wreck of the Earthcutter. He has hired a dwarven priest of Angbard to accompany him to the site and raise and repair the great ship. He just needs muscle to defend him and the priest from possible Elemental attacks and to help him "dive" on the wreckage and recover it.

After traveling to the site, the PC's will be asked to don special helmets with long breathing hoses hooked up to a hand-pump. One PC will have to work the pump to supply his companions with air. Then, Jargrahd, the Priest, will cast a Geomancy spell on the "divers" which will decrease their Earth Buoyancy and allow them to sink under the earth and search for the Earthcutter's wreckage. *Note to GM's : Explain this effect in a strange, pseudo-scientific matter, bringing density and buoyancy into your argument. Also describe what it feels like to descend*

under the surface of the earth like you could "swim" underground. Make the players feel that their characters will be crushed by the pressure or suffocate from lack of air at any moment.

After diving for a while, the PC's will locate the wreck. Let them work for a while to make them tired and then hit them with a few powerful Earth Elementals. I recommend killing off the Dwarven priest to put fear into them.

If the PC's succeed, the nephew will pay them well. In fact, he will offer them a new job on his next voyage. He wishes to sail the Earthcutter to the Edge of the World to see what is there!

Favor within a Favor within a Favor...

From: Chris Chalfant (cchalfan@elmail.cc.purdue.edu)

The PCs owe a favor to a crimelord or a king or someone of equal power. This VIP asks the PCs to steal something of value from a powerful Necromancer (or maybe he wants them to kill the Necromancer).

The Necromancer catches the PCs in the act in such a way that he has them at his mercy. On a whim, he decides that he will spare their lives if they do him a favor...

It seems that Cedrick Barnard, Lord and leader of the Knights of the Sphere (an order of Paladins) has just died. His body is to lie in state during the time of mourning at his castle. Lord Barnard was a military genius and a great warrior. The Necromancer feels that the Lord's remains would make a powerful undead soldier. He sends the PCs to steal the remains from the Knights of the Sphere.

Of course the PCs are captured by the Knights and held at sword-point. Just before they are to be slain, a priest arrives with an ancient scroll. It seems that the PCs are "destined" to recover the Holy Gauntlet of Garvin which is said to be held by the savages of Foria in the Cold Wastes of the North.

It is not surprising that, once again, the PCs are captured. And, once more, their captors have a job for them. A cruel GM would keep this going until the Players go insane. Personally, I think it would be cool if one of the final missions is to steal something from the VIP who started this mess, thereby returning balance to the universe.

Dave Hughes (nhughes@dash.com)

The party is in a tavern or something, when guards storm and knock the party out (have a fight if you want to, but have more guards storm in afterwards.) They wake up in a cell with a note on the door "You have been found guilty of magic use, we must purify you. -The (insert cult)" the door opens easily and into a dungeon (the ritual of purification begins.) Background: This is like

a Spanish inquisition thing. A cult is slowly taking over the land and their scapegoat is "magic." This includes any use of magic items, being a demihuman or nonhuman, or (surprise!) being a mage or a priest. The cult is headed by a pretty powerful mage trying to wipe out all competition, get all the items, you know. Remember though, all his followers believe in this no magic, and they don't know that he's a mage.

No! It Couldn't Be A Vampire! We're Not High Enough Level!
Poxy Scum (shughe10@checlaba.scu.edu.au)

Scene: Dark Ravenloft type of countryside. Gothic and Scary! oooh.

Time: Early morning, sun just risen or just about to.

Hook: Players see smoke from a campfire over the next rise and hear the sound of people getting ready to move on.

Level of Characters: 4th - 5th with no magic weapons.

Action: Over the next rise is a camp of 'bandits' they have captured a young and undoubtedly beautiful woman who needs rescuing. The bandits are just that, bandits, however they have been charmed by a vampire into taking his charmed daughter prisoner. The idea is that the party rescues the damsel in distress and she says that she is the daughter of a local count or baron or whatever and that her father will reward them for their bravery.

The players should reach the small oppressed looking town about midday with a large brooding castle overlooking. They are lead in and offered lunch. If asked the young lady says that her father is in the crypt visiting the tomb of his wife who passed away about 10 years ago. She will say that he has never really gotten over it and so spends a great deal of time mourning her loss in the crypt. After lunch it should be getting on towards sunset when the lady will offer take the party down to the CRYPT to see her father. It should be about this time that party members will start saying that the guy must be a vampire. Others will probably tell them that's nonsense.

Anyway, if they follow her down into the crypt they will be ambushed by loyal followers of the vampire who will overpower the party and drag them off with no equipment. Naturally the party will break out and look for their stuff. Have them enter the CRYPT and see their stuff in a pile at the base of a big COFFIN. It should be really playing on their nerves about now that the big guy who is to reward them is a vampire. When the players go for their stuff the COFFIN opens and a dead guy sits up very slowly (it isn't dark yet) and begins to get out of his COFFIN. Since it is still during daylight hours the vampire is without power and moves really slowly. There should be enough time for the party to get their stuff and start out of there. Just as the party is up the stairs they will see the sun set. Now sit back and watch them run like buggery!!! hahahaha. If they don't show them the vampire and have him attack them until they do go running away. I think it important to note however that since as the DM you have purposefully placed the characters in conflict with a vampire that they can't hope to defeat, allow them to get away with only the most minor of cuts and scrapes. This little adventure will, however show the party to not take anything for granted. (like the fact that just because they can't beat something doesn't mean you won't throw it at them). In fact the party I DM is always cautious when entering battle or

challenging someone even when they are 8th level or so they are cautious about being too egotistical in a peasant village, because they just never know.....

Earl Harrison (harrison@comsys.net) Club Sleepy Willow

The characters find an Inn that has 4 shapeshifted demons running around in it as the cleaning "ladies" they give the characters a good time only to kill them at the end

David Hawley (vlad@golden.org)

You start the PC's off waking up and everything looks normal. Anything after this point is up to the DM.

The plot is that a high level MU has acquired an hour glass (from Piers Anothony's Bearing an Hour Glass Novel) and has used it to make a parallel timeline, thus changing the alignments of everyone except himself and the PC's. In this timeline paladins are evil and death knights are good. Everyone is affected except neutrals. Have the PC's figure out what is going on, then spring the second part on them.

When they figure out things are not right, get them to right the wrong. When they have killed a lot of so called EVIL guys (ie. Paladins, etc.) and have almost finished, Let them find out that whatever they do in this timeline affects the original timeline you were running before this happened (if they kill a Paladin here, they kill him in your original game too, SNEAKY EH!!)

The DM knows that the villain created this timeline for the sole purpose of getting rid of the good guys in your original game and hopefully making things easier for him to do his dirty work.

Earl T. Netwal (Earl.T.Netwal-1@tc.umn.edu)

This is one that a friend of mine hit me with. Our party went on what we assumed was a standard "We're the Heroes He's the Vampire Let's bust up his castle mission." We went through the mission fighting all the enemies and traps. It was your basic romp through a castle to fight it's lord in climatic battle. We fought everything and defeated the castle's lord. we figured we had won and that we were ready for the next adventure. Then the fun starts he tells us all that we wake up and that it seems that we all just had the exact same dream. My dead druid was alive, and the drained levels of my comrades returned. we were puzzled then we looked towards our road it was the same but still different. We traveled again through the castle but everything was just slightly different. the floor plan was similar and many other things were as well. Players will be frustrated if the mission is just close enough to the last that they let their guard down and then their witty way to beat the trap their expecting blows up in their face. Changing weaknesses and strategies of enemies or their motives will change the adventure totally without actually playing the same one twice. Players can find out if their first idea was better after all, and they might end up just a little bit more aware of what's going on.

Scenario: Find 2 Crowns for Pelis the Mage. He says that they are of utmost importance to him, being part of his family's heirloom. He says they were stolen from him by a master Ninja, who lives in an underground cave. Pelis says he can't go for himself cause he has duties in the city.

Plot: The Crowns are not Pelis'. The owner of the Crowns is the Master Thief Shownuff. Pelis wants them because each one gives a specific ability. The Golden Crown makes the character gain an Intelligence and Strength point. The Silver Crown makes the character to gain a Wisdom and Charisma point, Allowing him to be more powerful in the field of magic. Shownuff will try to tell the PCs the real story that the Crowns were a gift to him by a grateful man who he rescued from a burning building. He also tells you how he befriended the Hobgoblins. He found their cave and needed a place to stay, but when he got there he found that they were being attacked by a group of Ogres. He helped the hobgoblins because he hates Ogres. After killing a lot Ogres with his speed and agility, he was knocked unconscious and woke up in the King's bed. He was thanked by all of them for helping. They offered for him to stay and live with them he agreed because he wanted a place to live anyway. So after a while him and the King became good friends and have been ever since, even though that humans and hobgoblins rarely get along. The king told Shownuff that he accepted him cause he seemed to be a good ally. While everything is going on, Pelis has summoned a Steel Stalker to follow the PCs as they defeat the enemies on the way and to finish the job if they don't.

Setting: A cave dug nicely w/ reinforced metallic walls.

Reward:

1. If the PCs kill the King and/or Shownuff and give Pelis the Crowns they will have to fight the Steel Stalker and Pelis if win go to 3.
2. If the PCs believe Shownuff then help him kill Pelis they gain alliance from The King and Shownuff, 1,000 GPs, and 5 potions of life.
3. Get the Crowns and 3,000 GPs to divide as they please.

From: Feensdecorni

The PC's are wandering in a dungeon that they found when they somehow (Step on falls floor, pulled lever, stepped on pressure plate, etc.) fall into a chute. As they fall down they should notice a hissing sound. The chute ends and they land on a giant lizard, which instantly falls dead. As they look around the see a weak looking man in the corner (If the PC's decide to attack him for no reason, then twenty other lizards come from the side walls, which raise and then lower to let the lizards through...) If the party talks to him he tells about a secret that he'll talk about if they save him. On examination of the room they will find a trap door that opens easily. They then must navigate the dungeon to the surface. On the way they'll find a few lizards and some low level monsters. At the surface the man will tell of a magical diamond in a nearby castle. If the PC's attempt to get it they will find...You guessed it, lizards. In the northern tower on the castle wall they will find the diamond and a wizard. After a battle, they will get the diamond. If they...

1. Give it to the man they will get 5000gp and a few gems that sell for 500gp each, as well as a fire wand with 30 charges.
2. If they keep it they find they can't use it and the man (Now known by his true identity...A dragon!) attacks them with more (sigh) lizards.
3. If they sell it, the man (dragon) attacks them with (again) lizards for a backup.

Well, that is it for now. These adventure sketches should demonstrate what I am looking for. If you are interested in submitting an adventure sketch, send it to jseeley@aros.net with the word ADVENTURE in the subject line.

Take me on back to the [Trap Page](#) so I can look at more traps and have fun GMing.