In-Class Sample Adventure

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**Instructions for the Storyteller**

You will be the storyteller for 4-5 other students in a roleplaying game that we’re about to play in class. Ira will be available to help you during this class. Your goal is to set the scene for the players and facilitate their fun. The goal of this exercise is to familiarize everyone with tabletop roleplaying games.

**Overview**

This 45 minute adventure is split into 4 primary sections:

1. Set up and understanding roleplaying
2. Cave entrance
3. Exploring the cave
4. Final room

**Set Up and Understanding Roleplaying**

Give each player a random character sheet. Give each player a few minutes to review their character sheets and ask you questions. You can say, “Does anyone have any questions about the character that you will be portraying today?” You can help get the players in the mindset of actors.

Once everyone has their character, you can start the story:

“**You all are out on a camping trip together, and you wake up in the morning in your tents after a pleasant night sleep camping in the forest. It feels like a crisp, fall morning.**”

At this point, you can give a little more description of the day, or just stop talking and give the players a chance to act. If they are in an acting mindset, they will probably want to explore the nearby area, start to make breakfast, go to the bathroom, etc. Once someone starts to explore the campsite, you can add.

“**As you leave your tent and start to explore the campsite, you notice a large metal hexagon in the middle of the fire pit.**”

If people wander away, you can add, “**You feel drawn to the fire pit. As you walk away from it, you feel like there’s a powerful magnet pulling you back. By the time you get 20 feet away, it’s practically impossible to move away from it any more.**”

That should keep them all stuck nearby... If the players want to get help by calling someone, I recommend letting them remain stuck, so they must solve this puzzle on their own. Cell phones don’t work, etc. Also, the hexagon should be impervious to damage.

Someone will probably want to touch the hexagon and look at it.

**“As soon as you touch the hexagon, you get a clear vision of a cave. You know that it’s nearby. The hexagon is about the size and weight of a stop sign.”**

If any character walks away from the hexagon, the magnet effect will kick in and they won’t be able to get far away. If they try to go toward the cave without the hexagon, they’ll get stuck. Hopefully they’ll realize they can pick up the hexagon and take it with them to the cave.

Eventually the players will probably go and explore the cave. That’s just the way most games work. If they don’t want to explore it, you can either make up a totally new story on the spot, or you can “force” them to go there by saying something like,

“**You think about walking away from the cave, but after walking for a minute, you realize that you’ve actually walked towards the cave without intending to.**”

As the players are walking through the forest, you can describe it. The cave is a 10 minute walk away from the campsite.

**Cave Entrance**

Once the players reach the cave entrance, you should describe it:

“**The cave entrance is quite large; it’s big enough for everyone to fit through together. The cave is dark inside.**”

If they start to walk away, you can tell the person holding the hexagon:

“**The hexagon seems to get heavier and heavier as you start to move away from the cave**.”

They can put down the hexagon, but they’ll still have the magnet effect, so they won’t be able to get very far. Eventually, they’ll choose to explore the cave. If the group ever tries to leave the cave later, this same effect will occur – basically, they have to explore the cave with the hexagon, or they’ll be stuck just outside the entrance of the cave.

Investigation skill will reveal that no one has been in this cave for a long, long time, which is odd considering it’s in a relatively popular camping area.

**Exploring the Cave**

Once all players cross the threshold of the cave, you can say:

“**Once the last person crosses the threshold of the cave, the hexagon starts glowing faintly. It also seems to be slightly less heavy.**”

You can describe the inside of the cave:

“**Though the tunnels are quite large, it does wind this way and that way. Also, it’s getting quite warm, and there are even some hot gasses steaming out of the floor.**”

Once the players are inside the cave, the hexagon grants special powers to anyone touching it. Specifically, that person doesn’t feel hot; they feel pleasantly cool instead. This can be shared; the character gets the effect if they are touching the hexagon directly, or touching someone who is touching the hexagon.

Other powers of the hexagon, which the players might or might not discover by the end of the story:

* With a successful Repair skill check of difficulty 20, the player can roll a d20 again. Ask for the result. If it’s less than 10, nothing happens. If it’s even, a blast of cool air fills the section of the cave for a minute.
* With two people cooperating, and both making a successful repair skill check of 20, the hexagon can levitate along with those two people (plus anyone else touching the hexagon.)
* With three people cooperating, and at least one person getting a repair skill check of 20, the hexagon can shoot three icy beams at enemies within 100 feet.
* Feel free to make up other things too.

It’s important to give the players some choices, so the path should split.

“**The cave branches left and right.**”

**Left**: (or, whichever way the players choose first) They walk for a bit, then enter a room filled with very hot steam shooting up from the floor all over the place. Anyone not touching the hexagon will start to take damage. At the far side of the room, they can see a fire.

To cross the room, they can do a few things:

* Run across and take some damage (1-4), depending on athletics skill check (1-4)
* Walk across with everyone holding the hexagon and take a little damage, but not very much. (1 damage)
* Use the levitate ability and get high enough above the geysers to avoid damage entirely.
* Some other solution that you’ll just need to improvise.

Once they reach the fire, they see that there is a jeweled ring inside the flames, and it’s not burning away. Anyone can reach in and put it on. Reaching into the flame without touching the hexagon will cause 2 damage every second the character keeps their hand in the flame. While touching the hexagon, the character can reach in quickly and put the ring on without getting hurt. If they leave their hand in the flame, they will take damage eventually, even while touching the hexagon.

If a character tries to take the ring from the flame without putting it on immediately, it simply passes through their fingers like mist. Once someone puts on the ring, they have it, but another copy appears in the flame just like before. If a person has a ring and tries to take another, the second copy passes through their hands like mist. Once someone puts on the ring, they can’t seem to take it off.

Anyone wearing a ring seems to become a bit more attractive, and gets a +5 bonus to all Style skill checks. They also feel a bit healthier, and they gain 2 hit points (could go higher than 10 if they were already healthy.) Everyone who wants a ring can get one. No one can get more than one. Once the ring is on, they can’t take it off.

The room is a dead end.

**Right:** If the characters go right, they start to descend. They go at least 4 minutes, and keep getting deeper and deeper. The hexagon starts to glow brighter. After 7 minutes of walking, they enter a corridor with lots of small lights on the ceiling. A successful investigation check of 15 or higher will reveal that those are actually sleeping bats that seem to be glowing with flame. As soon as the party proceeds down the corridor under the bats, have everyone make a stealth check. If anyone in the group gets under a 10, the bats wake up and attack the party. If people are intentionally being careful and quiet, they get a +2 to their roll before rolling.

In the most likely case, the bats will wake up and attack. The bats like to attack people wearing fire rings (assuming the party went Left first.) If no one (or everyone) is wearing a fire ring, they they’ll attack random people.

There should be a number of bats attacking equal to the number of people in the party times two. So if there are 4 adventurers, there should be 8 bats. Bats attack by swooping down at someone and trying to bite them. Roll a d20 and hit a character on a 14 or higher, and do 1 point of damage. Also, the hit player should roll a d20. On a 9 or lower, they catch on fire and need to spend a turn putting it out or will continue to take fire damage. Players can hit bats on a 10 or higher (including bonuses from unarmed combat or melee combat.) A bat only has 1 HP of life, and will die instantly when hit.

When there are only 1 or 2 bats left, they will retreat and fly up the corridor. If the players chase the bats, they will eventually reach the left branch (the bats fly into the flame containing the ring and disappear.)

After fighting off the bats, the hexagon glows brighter, and feels even lighter than before. At the end of the corridor is a door.

**The Final Room**

Describe the door:

“**The door is a heavy steel door, with a single handle that’s glowing orange with incredible heat.**”

Players can bypass the door in a variety of ways:

* Just open it, taking a lot of damage from a burning hand (~6)
* Open it while touching the Hexagon (~3)
* Use some other material to open it (0)
* Blast the handle with icy blast, then open it (0)
* Some other solution

Once inside, describe the room:

“**The room is a large hemisphere, well-lit by torches along the curved walls, as well as a shaft of light coming from the hole in the ceiling. At the center of the room, there is a man sitting cross-legged on the floor, looking at you and smiling slightly. He says to you, ‘I haven’t had any visitors in a long time. I’d offer you something to eat or drink, but as you can see, I don’t have much.’**”

The room is empty. The man is sitting on top of a hexagon-shaped indentation in the floor, which the hexagon could probably fit into. Note to the storyteller: You should roleplay this man and react to what the players do. This is the climax of the story. You can choose what you want it to be. Here are some options:

* The man is an immortal devil, here to trick people and keep them stuck. He will try to get the players to give him the hexagon and put it in the indentation in the floor, so he can use it to escape (it will levitate up and out.)
* Maybe the man is a prisoner down here, waiting to be rescued and returned to his wife and children. He doesn’t remember much, or how long he’s been down here.
* Maybe the man is a demi-god who controls this cave and the bats were his pets and protectors. He has a non-violent oath that prevents him from attacking first, but if the party attacks him, he can fight back. He doesn’t want to let them escape without paying for killing the bats!
* Maybe the man is a tempter, here to test the party. He is the one who made the fire rings. He says, “Those of you who took my rings, I’m glad. There’s more power where that came from. Destroy your so called friends here and now, and I will grant you even more power and influence.”
* Anything else you want to make up.

In the end, the hexagon probably goes in the indentation in the floor, and whoever is on it or holding onto it will get carried up and out of the cave. As soon as it’s placed in the indentation, the magnetic effect wears off, it stops glowing, and it stops providing cooling powers to those nearby. Anyone left in the cave probably burns up from the heat.

**Ira’s Brainstorming Ideas for this Adventure**

* Something for 5-6 players
* Target ~60 minutes of game time
* Something good for beginners
* Some meaningful choices, but not too open-ended
* Some magic/supernatural abilities, but not too crazy
* Maybe something with camping or exploring a cave, and then the cave can have twisty/branching passages that the players can explore.
* Probably only 1 combat.
* Some romantic interest.
* I want the characters to stay together and not separate, because otherwise it’s difficult to tell simultaneous stories. Players end up waiting while action happens elsewhere. Need to give players a strong incentive to stay together, or minimize separate time. (Note: this is an issue in multiplayer video games too, especially ones that share the same screen.)
* Players are free to create their own goals for their characters, but I will include a few goals and relationships to help stir up the story and give character motivation.

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Josh Furstein

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 4

Athletics 4

Stealth 0

**Mental**

Investigation 3

Medicine 2

Repair 4

**Social Skills**

Performance 1

Subterfuge 0

Style 2

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, Dried fruit, Flashlight, Backpack, Digital watch, Digital camera, Matches

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Cheerful, Talkative

How optimistic are you? Self-Confident

How trusting are you? Gullible

How assertive are you? Humble

How do you feel about following rules? Flexible

How courageous are you in dire straights? Brave

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Ben Buckwald

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 2

Athletics 2

Stealth 3

**Mental**

Investigation 3

Medicine 1

Repair 0

**Social Skills**

Performance 4

Subterfuge 2

Style 3

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, Rope, Flashlight, Backpack, deck of cards

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Relaxed

How optimistic are you? Hopeful

How trusting are you? Cautious

How assertive are you? Easygoing

How do you feel about following rules? Honest

How courageous are you in dire straights? Cautious

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Michael Matthews

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 0

Athletics 3

Stealth 4

**Mental**

Investigation 2

Medicine 0

Repair 0

**Social Skills**

Performance 5

Subterfuge 1

Style 5

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, trail mix, Flashlight, Backpack, notepad and pen, songbook

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Talkative

How optimistic are you? Enthusiastic

How trusting are you? Open-minded

How assertive are you? Impatient

How do you feel about following rules? Pragmatic

How courageous are you in dire straights? Competitive

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Michelle Branson

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 2

Athletics 4

Stealth 5

**Mental**

Investigation 3

Medicine 0

Repair 0

**Social Skills**

Performance 0

Subterfuge 3

Style 3

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, Flashlight, Backpack, cell phone (no reception), cheese, baby carrots, hummus

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Cheerful

How optimistic are you? Self-Confident

How trusting are you? Suspicious

How assertive are you? Easygoing

How do you feel about following rules? Wild

How courageous are you in dire straights? Brave

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Liam Greaves

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 3

Athletics 5

Stealth 0

**Mental**

Investigation 3

Medicine 5

Repair 0

**Social Skills**

Performance 2

Subterfuge 1

Style 1

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, gum, Flashlight, Backpack, first aid kit

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Cheerful

How optimistic are you? Hopeful

How trusting are you? Open-minded

How assertive are you? Easygoing

How do you feel about following rules? Pragmatic

How courageous are you in dire straights? Brave

**Player:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Character Name:** Huntington Seavey

**HP:** 10 

**Skills Skill Points**

**Physical**

Fighting 2

Athletics 4

Stealth 1

**Mental**

Investigation 2

Medicine 1

Repair 4

**Social Skills**

Performance 1

Subterfuge 2

Style 3

**Inventory**

Water bottle with water, Flashlight, Backpack, beef jerky, comic books, harmonica

**Personality Traits**

How are you in social interactions? Reserved

How optimistic are you? Grim

How trusting are you? Open-minded

How assertive are you? Easygoing

How do you feel about following rules? Flexible

How courageous are you in dire straights? Cautious