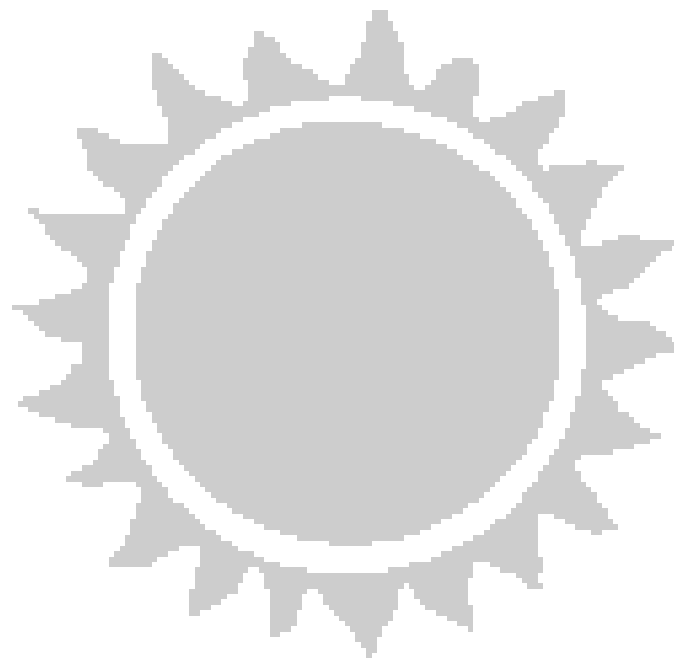


# *Playing Solo Classic Traveller*



*Paul Elliott*

**ZOZER**

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Written by Paul Elliott of Zoyer Games 2021

Art: Danger in Deep Space Free Clip Art

Thanks to Marc Miller for a fantastic game.

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Chris Kubasik's wonderful blog about Classic Traveller is recommended reading, and can be found here:

<https://talestoastound.wordpress.com/traveller-out-of-the-box/>

Zoyer Games can be found at: [www.paulelliottbooks.com](http://www.paulelliottbooks.com)

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## THE ELEVATOR PITCH

A few years ago I wrote SOLO, a solitaire gamebook for the Cepheus Engine, which allows a solo player to run a group of characters through a number of different sci-fi solo campaigns, from explorer scouts to navy patrols and from merchants to world-hopping travelers. SOLO has proven to be Zoser Games' biggest seller - by a wide margin. People want to play solo and this booklet takes some of the mechanics pioneered in SOLO to power the Classic Traveller rules.

No players? No problem.

<https://www.paulelliottbooks.com/solo.html>

See also **Rules Companion for Classic Traveller**, written by Paul Elliott at Zoser Games. This set of quick-play rules for use with Classic Traveller is the perfect companion for use with **Playing Solo Classic Traveller**.

## INTRODUCTION TO SOLO TRAVELLER

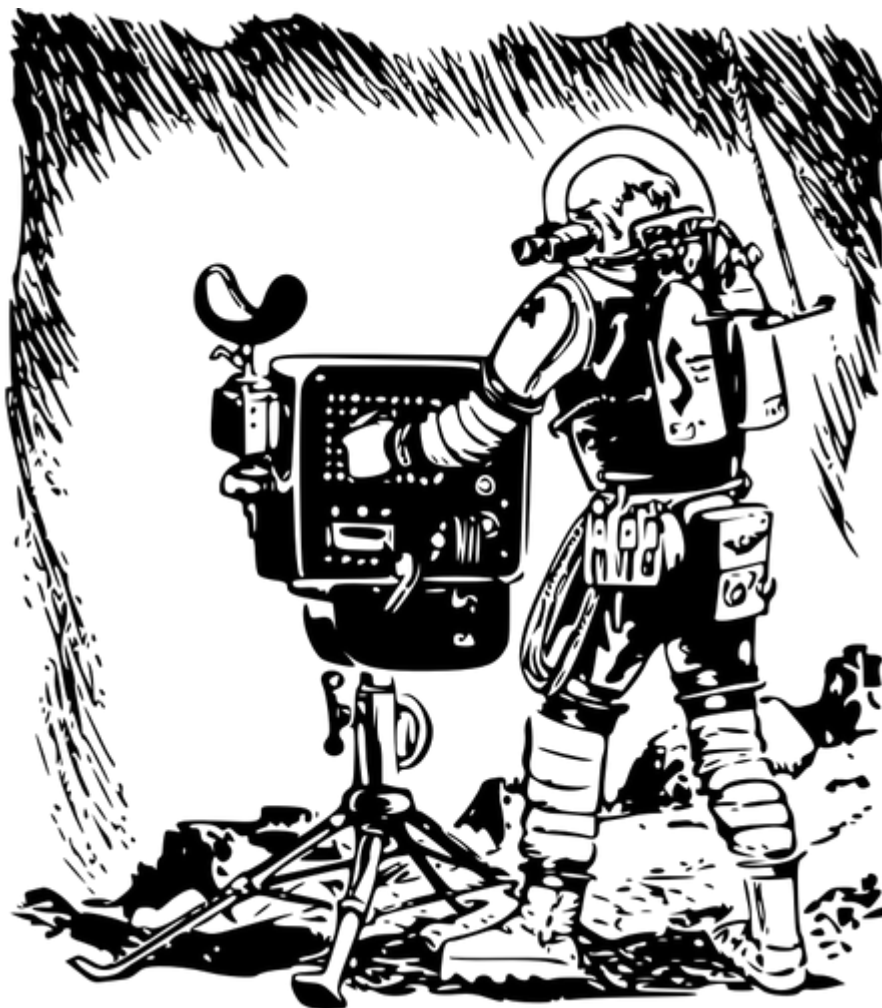
There are few roleplaying games that lend themselves so well to solitaire or 'solo' roleplaying as much as Traveller. Its emphasis on tool-kit style rule systems creates a game that can be enjoyed alone for hours and hours on end. Of course the referees of other RPGs could always draw maps, design castles and monsters and plot out schemes and bad-guys, but very few other RPGS come with any in-built mechanisms for this, other than character creation itself.

These guidelines are aimed at the referee or player who either has a copy of The Traveller Book or the three Little Black Books (numbers one to three, if we are counting, although I find Supplement 5, Citizens of the Imperium, a godsend). But saying that, any version of Traveller will probably do. The aim is to create a roadmap for solo play; rolling dice, creating and recording with a purpose. With an added table or two, this can involve running a group of characters through some daring heist or fighting with alien pirates over a lost treasure long sought, and is an incredibly enjoyable, imagination-stimulating pastime. Of course whatever is created also provides a ready-made setting with adventure hooks for a group of Traveller players at the table top.

Some of the advice here includes fantastic ideas first put forward in Traveller Book 0, which was first released with the Deluxe Traveller boxed set in 1981. I read the chapter entitled *Getting To Know The Territory*, and was instantly hooked – particularly because this was my

very first RPG and I had to practice with this game before I unleashed it (and my untried refereeing skills) on my friends. The chapter explained that solo activities such as creating characters, building a starship and creating worlds introduced the concepts of the game itself and also created elements that could later be used within my table-top game. We shall be doing this, of course, but we will also be going further to stretch our imaginations and indulge in full-blown world-building as a legitimate form of solo entertainment.

Book 0 recommended that a prospective referee, or solo player, first create a few characters to familiarize himself with those rules. He was encouraged to use the process to 'read between the lines' and to create some kind of narrative or backstory for each character. Next, the player gave himself a stake of million credits and practiced with the trading rules in Book 2. He was to imagine himself on a rich world, surrounded by each of the other five types (industrial, non-agricultural, agricultural, non-industrial and poor), and could buy and sell cargoes without any of the annoying operating costs of a starship.



Once he was familiar with the process, the player was encouraged to take up a free trader from Book 2 and crew it with the characters he created earlier. Now the game could move up a notch, with real crew-members and real operating costs for fuel, wages, and so on, all played out against the backdrop of a trade and commerce game using the same cluster of six worlds. The player took on the role of the ship's captain. This activity proved to be the lifeblood of any Traveller game, whether solo or table-top, and could prove remarkably long-lived!

Going further, Book 0 asked the player to have a group of characters try to hijack the character's ship in an effort to gain some experience with the combat rules. Next came a spell of starship construction, building a merchant ship to replace the characters' free trader. Finally, the six worlds could be replaced with completely new, randomly generated worlds created using the rules provided in Book 3. In this way the player became familiarized, step-by-step, with all of the different rules of Traveller whilst providing a lot of fun along the way!

This booklet takes the simple approach pioneered by Book 0 and pushes it much further, into the realm of world or setting building and beyond. It will allow the solo player to make decisions for his characters and help them navigate through a dangerous universe, where set-backs, prison sentences or even death may be waiting for them!

The reader is encouraged to move methodically through all of the steps, in order, rather than skip forward to a later section that sounds more exciting. The game is the process itself and the enjoyment and satisfaction comes from building up the many layers of imagination: the characters, the decisions, the worlds, the starships and so on. It makes the later stages of the solo game so much rewarding, since you are effectively living and operating within an entire universe of your own creation.

## A SUMMARY

Lets run through the various stages of playing **Playing Solo Classic Traveller**. Rather than first engage in several weeks of world building, creating a subsector and its worlds, along with a host of patrons and important NPCs, we world build as we go along, in small chunks between periods of roleplaying. In this way you get to create characters and start playing immediately. One of the stages (creating the subsector) can be skipped if you intend to use a published map from GDW or elsewhere. But the individual worlds themselves will need to be fleshed out when the time comes. Personally, I recommend creating your own

subsector from scratch, it is all part of the game – building up and playing within your very own setting. But I do understand that some players are not a fan of world creation. Have fun – use these rules your own way! I will provide a brief description of each phase of the game:

**The Character** – Here we create your character, and we try to add a little backstory using the cues from the characteristic values, the dice rolls and skill gains. We will be following the ‘in-depth’ method used to create the sample character Alexander Lascelles Jamison from Book 1.

**Friends** – Next we create two or three comrades or adventuring buddies for our hero using the same ‘in-depth’ method. How did they meet, what are their plans?

**Starting World** – The adventurers must begin their adventure somewhere and so the player must create the world that they are currently based on. This will be the location of their first adventure.

**The Patron** – The adventure will be triggered by a job offer; create the patron and the job offer in this section.

**The Mission** – Rules are provided in this phase which will enable the player to find out how the first mission was resolved. Was it completed? Did anything go wrong? Were any of our characters hurt or killed?

**The Big NPC** – Next, create an NPC individual or organisation that has interests on the starting world. It might be a corporate official, a law enforcement agent, a noble, a naval officer or a crime lord. This individual is not a patron but an influential part of the setting whose plots and plans will intersect the activities of the player characters.

**More Missions** – The previous patron, or perhaps one or two *new* patrons, offer more jobs for the characters on the worlds that have so far been created.

**The Subsector** – It’s time to finish the rest of the subsector using the world generation rules in Book 3. This expands the scale of the game.

**The Capital** – Flesh out the capital of the subsector, add another major NPC individual or organisation – perhaps a rival of the first major NPC that you created earlier.

**A Ship** – Now its time for your characters to somehow acquire a ship which means that they can roam easily across the new subsector and will have to pay for the ship's upkeep and any upgrades with more jobs, or by combining jobs with some interstellar trading.

**Bad Guys** – The player characters will make enemies. Record these individuals and organisations and reuse them in future missions – this creates long-term storylines. Storylines, where you spot a link or a thread connecting events and NPCs, should also be recorded and expanded if possible.

**Record Your Results** – Remember to record your creations – not just worlds and UWPs, but patron details, details of the major NPCs, antagonists encountered during missions (who might be met again), particular starships encountered and of course, a brief account of your characters' exploits.

## THE CHARACTER

Create a character using either the Book 1 rules or the rules in Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium. But watch every roll. This will be your primary character. Just as Alexander Lascelles Jamison was created with tons of backstory in Book 1 by analysing every dice roll, the player, too, can try to figure out what is going on at each stage of his character's career. How close did he make his survival roll? Why did he fail that promotion roll? He made his re-enlistment roll by 6 points – why? Imagination will be required here, in order to extrapolate the results of the rolls and the skill gains being made.

What is the finished character like? I've found nearly all characters to be playable, but perhaps I am a masochist! As a referee it was always the players' ideas that solved the problems and not just skill rolls and incredible characteristic scores. I remember creating an Other character with pretty average characteristics and only Computer-1 skill. I played him well and had a great time, justifying him and adding enough backstory to make him interesting. Neo in *The Matrix* probably had the same skill; Taylor in *Planet of the Apes* might have had Pilot-1, Navigation-1 or Engineer-1; who knows? It wasn't his skills that defined him, it was the decisions he made along with his bravery. Skills add to a character, as do characteristic scores – but, in the end, the character itself is just a vehicle for the player's will and decision-making within the setting. That said, if you really find a character to be unplayable, then save it – put it aside as either an NPC or a friend of the main character –

and move on. Create another. After five attempts you are going to have to choose one and stick with it.

Let's have a go with *The Traveller Book*. We do well whilst rolling for characteristics, consecutively we achieve: 88A8C7. At aged 18 he is fit and healthy, tough with plenty of stamina and an incredible education, despite his average social standing. We can expect he gained a degree or doctorate, despite his age, perhaps one of his parents was a gifted academic and passed on a lot of their knowledge to our character. We look at the Navy as a career, which requires a high Education for promotion, as well as the Marines, which has increased chances of a commission for a high education recruit. We decide on the Marines because the Navy's commission requirements are strict; 10+ with a +1 for Social Standing 9+, which our character does not have. Let's see how he does. He enlists and with his characteristics is accepted into the Marines easily!



*First Term:* He would have failed his survival roll if it weren't for his Endurance score. This means he could have died, but perhaps an injury in combat was sustained, but his stamina kept him alive as his comrades carried him to a medevac point. These are good comrades – good friends. He fails the commission but reenlists successfully. Our marine gains Cutlass-1 automatically, and rolls for his two skills gaining Tactics-1 and Rifle-1, suggesting he quickly gains a promotion as an NCO.

*Second Term:* He passes his survival roll comfortably, and goes on to ace his commission roll. His bravery in combat and tactical excellence has gained him a commission as a lieutenant! Even better he rolls a 9 for promotion. He is now a marine captain. He makes the roll to reenlist. Our character gains three skills this term, on top of his automatic Revolver-1 gain as a lieutenant. We roll on the Advanced Education table twice (because we can) and gain Tactics and Administration. His third skill is ATV. Clearly, this young officer is given staff duties rather



than platoon or company command. Maybe he knows a colonel or general, or his exploits gained him fame.

*Third Term:* He rolls 12 for his survival. Obviously our marine is nowhere near the fighting! And this time he fails his promotion roll, which is difficult to achieve at the best of times. He can reenlist, however. As for skills, he gains only one: Mechanical. Has he been transferred to the motor pool? Perhaps he found something out that the senior officers didn't want exposed and he was transferred.

*Fourth Term:* We decide this will be the character's last term and roll  $4 + 2 = 6$  to just survive. That was close! He is back in combat again, no doubt leading a company of marines into a war zone. His promotion roll is abysmal – no chance at all. He rolls for his skill: Gun Cbt – he gains another level of Revolver. That makes sense. He could reenlist with a successful roll, but decides, instead, to muster out. He is disillusioned with the marines. He fought hard, spilt his blood and was promoted to a staff position, but he made an enemy – he was shut out and sent back to the frontline, almost losing his life again in a deadly close quarter firefight.

*Mustering Out:* After serving four terms, and gaining the rank of Marine Captain, our character is eligible for 5 benefits. He rolls twice on the Cash Table and gains Cr11,000. He rolls three times on the Benefits Table and gains +1 Education, a cutlass and a High Passage travel ticket. We check the aging rules, and find that our character loses 1 point of Strength and Endurance.

### Kris Armatt

*Marine Captain                      7898D7              Age 34              4 Terms              Cr11,000*  
*Cutlass-1, Tactics-2, Rifle-1, Revolver-2, Admin-1, ATV-1, Mechanical-1*  
*Revolver, High Psg*

Kris owes his life to his squad buddies and still has scars from his injury. He is extremely knowledgeable, charming and always very cool under pressure. He made an enemy of Marine Brigadier Veronian. Kris knows a secret that could get him killed if he should tell it. His father is a famous scientist.

## FRIENDS

Although this booklet is about roleplaying solo – that is *alone*, it doesn't mean you only have to consider using a single character. Star-spanning adventures might get tough for a single character, and having a couple of comrades around livens things up, widens the pool of available skills and gives the party more to do – more options. Let's create two comrades to work alongside Kris Armatt, one from Book 1 and the other from Supplement 4. I won't describe the procedure in detail again with all of my decision making and thought processes, but simply present the two finished characters.

### Merko Brookes

*Pirate*                      *C65936*                      *Age 26*                      *2 Terms*                      *Cr900*  
*Brawling-1, Vacc Suit-1, Shotgun-1, Mechanical-1*

Merko joined a smuggling ring which led him to be recruited on to a pirate vessel. He is big and muscular as well as quick-witted and perceptive. Disillusioned with life on the run, he learned a practical skill and got out. He is trying to stay out of trouble by sticking with decent folks.

### Ariadne Zemalaya

*Scout*                      *488678*                      *Age 34*                      *4 Terms*                      *Cr70,000*  
*Pilot-1, JOT-1, Electronics-3, Vacc Suit-1*  
*Scout Ship, Low Psg*

Ariadne is adaptable, she thinks on her feet and knows when to 'call it a day' if the situation is getting out of control. She blames a disastrous expedition, in which she was one of the survivors, on a scout who is now a senior scout commander.

**We've Got A Ship!** It may be that your character, or one of his comrades (see Ariadne Zemalaya, for example), gained a ship during the mustering out procedure. We aren't going to give that ship to them immediately, though. It will be handed over in a much later phase due to in-game bureaucratic or technical reasoning. This might seem unfair, but the aim of this solo procedure is to start small and work outwards, with hopping around the subsector in a privately-owned starship coming much later on. To start small, the characters must travel on commercial star liners if they wish to travel, or they might prefer to remain for a while on the starting world.

**Why Are They Together?** Why are the three or four characters that you have created working together? What do they intend to do? What will each hope to gain from the partnership? Why do they need one another? How did they meet? I'm going to say that Kris's scientist father knew the chief scientist on Ariadne's doomed expedition, it was through this connection that the two PCs met – perhaps Kris was looking up old comrades of his father to follow up some rumour of lost treasure and bumped into Ariadne doing just the same. Merko has Mechanical skill, just like Kris, but that's not a very strong link. Perhaps Kris got caught in a barfight and Merko stepped in to help. The two joined forces for a few days as the local toughs tried to hunt them down and now they are inseparable, Merko hoping that Kris and Ariadne are his ticket off-world and away from a life of crime.

## STARTING WORLD

The world upon which the player characters begin their adventures can be created using the rules in Book 3. The aim is to provide an interesting environment to be explored during a short series of missions. It will be the anchor or jumping off point from which the rest of our setting will be built – similar to Tatooine in George Lucas's 1977 movie *Star Wars*.

Zoyer Games publishes *Universal World Profile*, a handbook for *Cepheus Engine*, that helps players to interpret the six different planetary characteristics of the UWP and players will certainly find the guidance in that book of use in fleshing out both the starting world and the other worlds of the subsector. In addition, players with access to back issues of the *Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society* will find a fantastic two-part article in issues 10 (1981) and 11 (1982) called *A Referee's Guide to Planet-Building*. This superb article, written by J. Andrew Keith and William H. Keith, gives the reader a grounding in how to turn the UWP into a living, breathing world. The two articles were reprinted in the *Best of the Journal* 3 (1983).

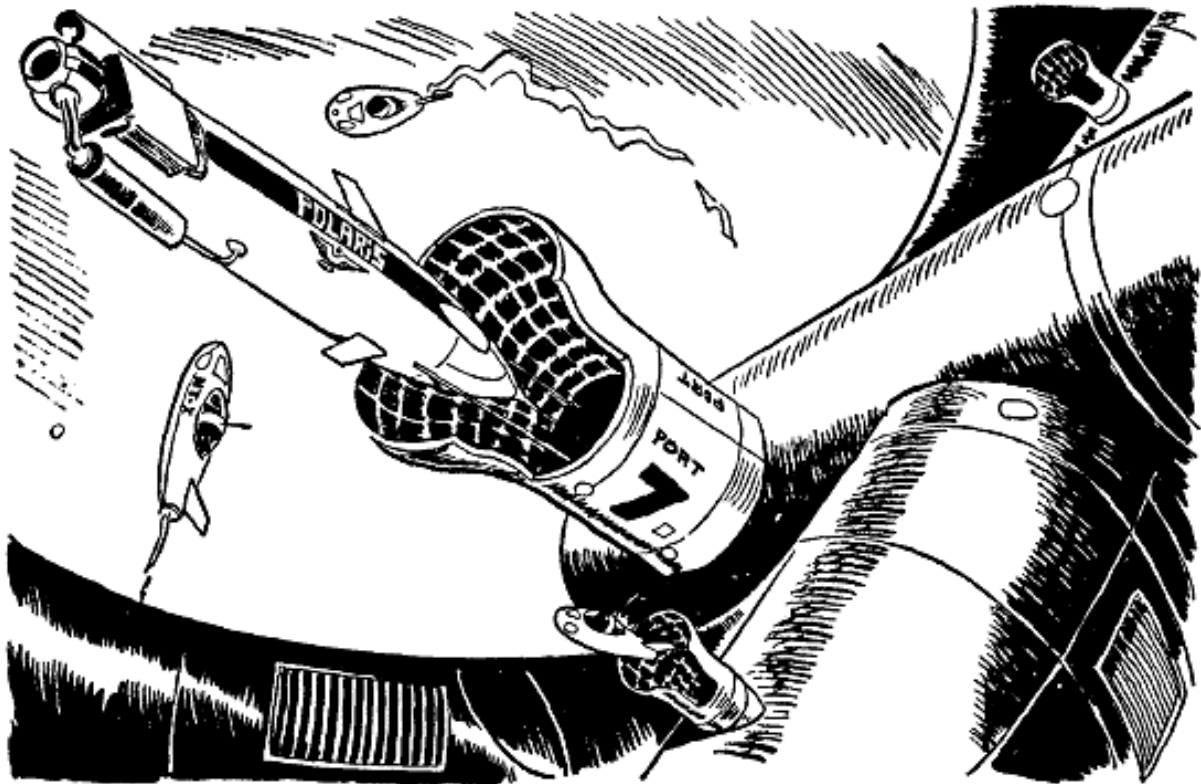
For players without either of these two resources, we provide some guidance here as we build the world with our dice rolls. Note that the Traveller rules regarding the creation of planetary characteristics make it plain that they are guidelines and an aid to the imagination: '*At times, the referee will find combinations of features which may seem contradictory or unreasonable. Common sense should rule in such cases; ... the referee should generate a rationale which explains the situation.*'

**Talthea**

We roll the dice and create a world with the following UWP:

<i>Talthea</i>	<i>B9A7453-A Non Industrial</i>	<i>G</i>
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It's easy here just to list the various values and their entries on the world characteristic tables and call it done. Although that gives some guidelines on what the characters can do, or expect on that world – it does little to make that world memorable, and that is the key. What is going on, NOW. What are the big themes and problems of this world. Answer that and you've created an adventure factory – not just a planet. Think back to old episodes of *Farscape*, *Space:1999*, *Blake's 7*, *Star Trek: Next Generation* and so on ... what is this world's dilemma or concern, something that might affect or interest the player characters?



Talthea is a large world with a dangerous exotic atmosphere, a small population with few restrictions, and oceans of chemicals. Its starport is bigger than you would expect for such a population and the world has an interstellar-level Tech Level. The government is a feudal technocracy – a group has come in to manage affairs because of its competency.

Let us say the atmosphere is filled with sulfur from extensive volcanism, making the seas highly acidic and dangerous. That sets the stage. What

about the people? Why was an agency or group brought in to manage society? Was there a catastrophe? Was the volcanism the catastrophe? That might explain the low population, maybe a million people fled, leaving a core behind to man the starport and keep things running – the ‘feudal technocrats’ could be some interstellar version of FEMA – a group of scientists and engineers trying to protect the infrastructure and people that remain. But why didn’t everyone just leave? Maybe something is keeping them there? A prison? Are they prisoners? The low law level doesn’t match that idea. How about religious shrines? If the people of Talthea are very religious, perhaps they worship shrines built by the first colonists to their god – ‘godstones’ or ‘hearthstones’ or ‘citystones’. The population have remained to protect them, and the PASE government (‘Planetary Agency for Science and Engineering’) are converting townships into airtight settlements and reconfiguring open field cultivation toward sealed-environment hydroponics. Meanwhile mining continues and ore is exported off world via the starport, which was Type A, but that has dwindled quite a bit with the loss of the population.

What caused the catastrophe? Maybe, as in *When Worlds Collide*, it is a rogue moon that passed close by, made a pass around the star and is now in an irregular orbit around Talthea, causing tidal flexing and global volcanism. Let’s say it occurred ten years ago. This is an unstable society, trying to turn itself around despite many problems – a place rife for adventure.



## THE PATRON

Patrons play a large part in Classic Traveller adventures, hiring the characters to carry out some mission. Often the patron with-holds some vital information from them, adding extra danger to the venture. Create a patron and a mission for your characters to take up and complete. This will be their first job and hopefully their first paycheck!

Roll first for the Patron, then roll for the Mission and finally roll for the Mission Target. Use your imagination to put those elements together. Who is this person? Whom do they represent and what do they want achieve? Gauge the level or risk and provide a payment accordingly. For a limited mission (on planet, a day or so) offer Cr800 each. For an extended mission (several days or a couple of weeks) offer Cr3,000 each. If deadly dangerous, double the fee. If an extended mission involves traveling to a nearby star system then offer Cr8,000 each; ship costs for the outward and return trip will be covered by the patron upon completion of the mission. First create a patron, roll on the Patron Encounters table in Book 1 or on one of the two patron tables in *The Traveller Book*. Alternatively use the table below.

## PATRON ENCOUNTERS

### D66 Patron

11	Naval Officer
12	Reporter
13	Hunter
14	Soldier
15	Diplomat
16	Army Officer
21	Noble
22	Marine Officer
23	Belter
24	Bureaucrat
25	Starport Official
26	Peasant/Farmer
31	Assassin
32	Avenger
33	Merchant
34	Rogue
35	Professor
36	Gangster

### D66 Patron

41	Corporate Official
42	Scientist
43	Spy
44	Broker
45	Technician
46	Financier
51	Government Official
52	Scout Pilot
53	Doctor
54	Corporate Boss
55	Local Military Officer
56	Pilot
61	Smuggler
62	Researcher
63	Engineer
64	Mercenary
65	Police Officer
66	Ship-Owner

## PATRON MISSIONS

### D66 Mission

11	Explore a moon or asteroid
12	Explore ruins
13	Salvage
14	Survey area
15	Capture animal
16	Hijack vehicle or ship

### D66 Mission

41	Protect someone
42	Assist someone
43	Rescue someone
44	Join Expedition
45	Infiltrate Group
46	Find Missing Ship

21	Assassination	51	Find Missing Goods
22	Theft	52	Join Expedition
23	Blackmail	53	Security Escort
24	Burglary	54	Trick Someone
25	Blackmail	55	Bribe
26	Discredit	56	Sabotage
31	Investigate Theft	61	Find Missing Person
32	Investigate Murder	62	Transport Special Item
33	Investigate Mystery	63	Transport Illegal Goods
34	Investigate Accident	64	Transport Data
35	Research a target	65	Transport Dangerous Cargo
36	Spy on a Location	66	Transport Person

### MISSION TARGETS

#### D66 Mission Target

11	Yacht
12	Free Trader
13	Security Ship
14	Naval Craft
15	Cargo Ship
16	Orbital Station
21	Artwork
22	Chemical Canister
23	Data Chip
24	Money or Bonds
25	Prototype
26	Weapon
31-	Illegal Cargo
33	
34-	Cargo
36	

#### D66 Mission Target

41	Remote Base
42	Orbital Station
43	Starport
44	City Building
45	Vault or Bunker
46	Nightclub
51	Crime Gang
52	Corporation
53	Intelligence Agency
54	Media Corporation
55	Planetary Government
56	Local Police
61-	Roll on Patron Table (S1)
63	
62-	Roll on Patron Table (S1)
66	

We create our patron and our rolls create the following results: reporter, bribe and security ship. Perhaps a reporter on Talthea has arranged to bribe a security captain in order to be given secret documents about corruption in the PASE government. The player characters must arrange to be at set coordinates in a local shuttle, so that the captain's ship can pull them in for questioning and a search. While alone with them the captain will trade the data for the bribe. They will then be free to leave. The problem might be that his exec has been told to watch his captain carefully – the security service have begun to mistrust him and might be expecting some stunt like this. We call the patron mission: 'Stop and Search'.

## THE MISSION MACHINE

So far, we have focused on world and character building which is a static activity. Now we need to start resolving things. Rather than play the game out, action by action, like you would at the table top, we instead will roll the dice to see if the players characters can solve the problems and complete the mission on their own. And whether they do or don't, will there be any consequences?

- 1) *Make up a plan:* Put yourself into the player characters' boots ... what will be their plan? Where do they get the shuttle from? If there is trouble on the security ship, what will they do? Will any character have a specific role in the mission, perhaps a crucial task to complete?
- 2) *Up to three of the player characters can make a skill roll that is relevant to the mission.* Each success will add a bonus to the mission's success. If all *three* fail, then apply a DM of -2 instead.
- 3) *Roll to succeed:* Roll 2D6 with 7+ indicating the mission goal was achieved. If the characters' plan is a brilliant one, +1; if the plan is poorly thought out, -1. Apply +1 for each character's successful skill roll, apply a -2 penalty if all three skill rolls were failed.
- 4) *Were there any consequences?* For every failed skill roll, make a roll on the following Consequence Table. It is possible to achieve the mission, but still have a character shot and killed or a starship damaged. The player may need to use his imagination to interpret the result.

<b>1D6</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
1	Antagonize an important NPC
2	Player character injured
3	Lost or damaged equipment
4	The authorities intervene
5	Trapped or lost – make another plan!
6	There is a sudden twist in the story

- 5) *Explain!* Whether success or failure, the player now has the enjoyable task of explaining what happened. What piece of equipment was lost? What happened when the hero failed his vacc suit roll? What did the bad guys do and how was the situation resolved in the end? Two or three short sentences will suffice and the player is advised to write them down as a record of events.



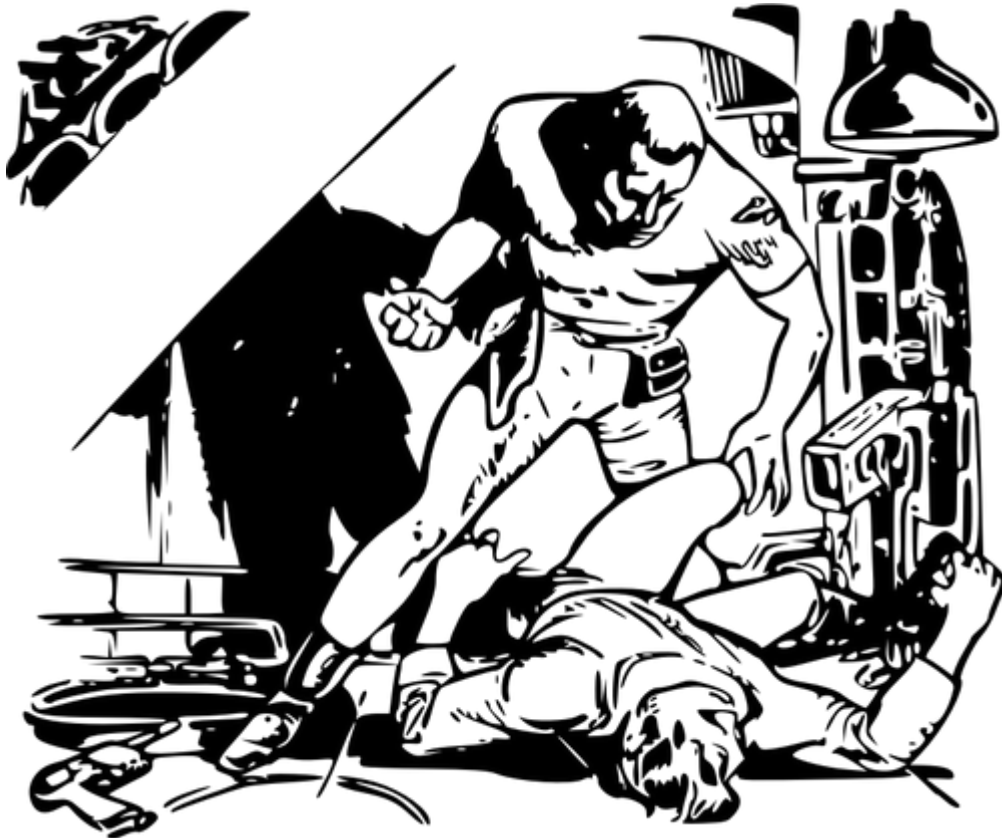


You can return to this Mission Machine time and time again when resolving any new patron jobs that the player characters take on.

*Example: Stop and Search – The PCs decide to hire a mining shuttle and pose as prospectors. We have Kris make an Admin roll (maybe to provide legitimate papers and follow customs procedures without creating suspicion) and Ariadne make a Pilot roll (making the shuttle behave as if it were on a survey expedition). We cannot see Merko's skills being of use on this mission, so do not roll any of his skills. Kris fails his roll, but Ariadne makes her roll, giving us a +1 for our roll to succeed. We roll  $4 + 1 = 5$ , the mission is failed. Since Kris failed his roll, we must check the Consequence Table once and roll a '4', the authorities intervene'. This fits well, since the authorities do feature in this mission as the crew and executive officer of the security ship.*

*So what happened? Kris' paperwork must have raised the exec's eyebrows and the plot was uncovered. The Captain and the PCs will have been apprehended by the crew. This isn't good. We decide that the PCs will want to get out of the situation fast, and try to talk their way out as innocent victims or grab a weapon and hold the exec as hostage to get back go their shuttle. If this fails, they're going to be prosecuted for something back on Talthea. Merko succeeds in an Int roll (Int or less) and Kris succeeds in a Revolver roll to snatch the exec's gun. Our roll to achieve this mission is  $10 + 2$ ; a success, they snatch the gun, temporarily disable the security ship and getaway in their mining shuttle. There were no failed skill rolls and so no rolls required on the Consequences Table. What happened to the corruption data and the bribe? I decide to roll two D6, looking for 3 or more, the first die tells me if the bribe was recovered, the second if the data was recovered; our characters manage to get away with the bribe and the data. How much money? Let's roll  $2D6 \times Cr1,000 = Cr10,000$ . That will make up for not getting paid by the patron! Did they take the Captain with them? I decide no, since he would be a dangerous liability.*

**Other Rolls:** There are other quick rolls the player can make to resolve a question, just as we did when we wanted to know if the bribe was recovered by the PCs. Pick a number from 5 to 12 and make that roll or over ... it's as simple as that. Inject stress into a situation that you find your characters in (outside of the Mission Machine) by roll 1D6 and interpreting a '1' as a unexpected disaster – the worst thing happens at the worst time. Alternatively you might want to make the occasional skill or characteristic roll as the situation dictates. Be flexible, the Mission Machine is mainly used for set piece scenes involving several player characters.



## THE BIG NPC

This section involves creating an important campaign NPC, a crime-lord, a noble, etc. or even a corporation or secret society ... it is best to represent an organization with a person, though, a faceless organization is harder to manage without that powerful individual at its heart (and note that the NPC needn't be in charge of that organization, a powerful lieutenant, under-boss or vice president might actually serve as the subsector's major NPC). The NPC is important to the PCs – and in fact might not have that much influence throughout the rest of the subsector.

To create a neat NPC whose minions, plots and influence will turn up in later games, roll on the Patron table three times and select your favourite. Next, roll 2D6 six times for characteristics and allocate them where desired. Roll another 1D6 and distribute those points between the characteristics where desired. Decide on a career or series of careers (even ones not mentioned in Book 1 or Supplement 4), then give the NPC 1D6+6 skill levels from any career table, as long as those skills and their levels fit the NPC concept you have in mind. Select a Cash Table and roll up to three times on it (if desired).

**Example:** *I roll Avenger, Technician and Starport Official ... Avenger sounds cool, but I decide to go with Technician and consider a talented and eccentric engineer who has established a subsector company (Vakaro LIC). He has big ambitions and the skills (and talented employees) to wage a techno-war against his bigger, better funded corporate rivals. He has no conscience about using criminal methods to expand his business. His characteristics are: 6A7B56 and I set his age at 34. I roll 1D for a '5' and add those 5 points to some of his characteristics. Now he is 6A7E76. He has 10 skill levels. I roll three times on the Scout Cash table. The finished NPC with his base on Talthea is:*

Xavier Barham

*Techno Entrepreneur      6A7E76      Age 34      4 Terms      Cr70,000*  
*Electronics-3, Engineering-2, Carousing-1, Revolver-1, Admin-2, Bribery-1*

## MORE MISSIONS

Create two or three more patrons and their missions. Use the Mission Machine to determine their success or failure. Remember to keep an account of the player characters' upkeep and costs, and the purchase of any equipment they might need. Roll for Law Level encounters (Law Level or less to avoid some incident) every week or so. Also every week, roll on the relevant encounter table (overleaf). These encounters might lead to patrons, spark fights or other incidents. Use the Reaction table in Book 3 (or the behavior rules provided for animals in Book 3). As the player, decide what the encounter is like and how it inconveniences or threatens the PCs. What do they decide to do about it? Is a single skill roll sufficient? Can the player just come up with some appropriate reactions for the PCs? If that reaction is complex, perhaps it is time to reuse the Mission Machine once again.

**2D6 Wilderness Encounters**

- 2-5 Animal
- 6 Harsh terrain
- 7,8 Local workers
- 9 Dangerous location
- 10 Lone traveller
- 11-12 Remote settlement

**2D6 City/Starport Encounters**

- 2 Crowd (queuing, protesting, rioting, mourning, etc.)
- 3 Meet a few angry or disgruntled locals
- 4 Entertainment opportunity, costing Cr100 x 1D6 each
- 5 Interesting NPC encountered (roll on Patron table for identity)
- 6 Transport delays
- 7 Patron
- 8 Scandal, gossip, rumour or secret
- 9 Another traveler is in trouble
- 10 Invited to a festival/function/social event
- 11 Accident
- 12 Victim of a crime (if Law Level or less is rolled, it is just witnessed)

**THE SUBSECTOR**

After playing out several more missions on Talthea, it is time to move on. Either create three more worlds in the ring of empty hexes around Talthea, or go the whole hog and follow the rules in Book 3 to create the rest of the subsector. Read the full text of the Worlds chapter to properly create your subsector and the worlds within it. You might want to refer back to the section in this booklet called Starting World.

There is a reason that the game provides tools for creating a subsector, it is the perfect geographical size to suit a roleplaying party. It not only has enough variation in worlds to keep the characters interested for a very long time, but is also compact enough to allow them to build up relationships, obligations and alliances. They get to know the subsector and begin using their experience to advance their fortunes.

The random generation of worlds is an aid to the referee's imagination, if you have an idea for an interesting world, then add it to the map. Swap out any UWP values that you feel might help conjure up a particular style of subsector. Do you want a place of unexplored worlds mixed with newly colonized planets? Do you want a highly militarized political frontier, a powder-keg ready to explode? How about a corrupt, advanced core of civilized worlds ripe for criminal exploitation by a group of daring

player characters? How about a stable frontier region that is perfect for a trade and speculation game? Or, my preferred method ... let the dice fall where they will and try your best to accept the results.



The subsector might be part of a small 'pocket empire', an interstellar government only one to three subsectors in size, or part of a vast multi-sector interstellar empire. The game lends itself best to areas of space on the frontier, remote from the levers of power, where player characters (often military veterans) have the freedom to act. As the 1981 Traveller rules state: "The typical methods used in life by 20th century Terrans

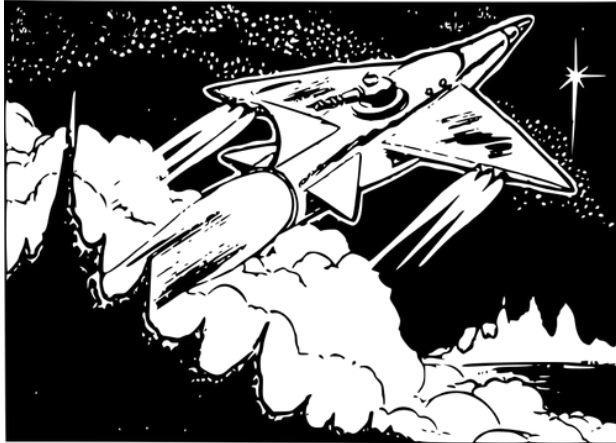
(thrift, dedication, and hard work) do not work in Traveller; instead, travellers must boldly plan and execute daring schemes for the acquisition of wealth and power." The subsector is where the brave, the desperate, the greedy and the disenfranchised come to execute those 'daring schemes'.

## THE CAPITAL

Decide which world will be your subsector capital, add depth and detail to it as you did with the starting world. Have your player characters travel there to pick up a starship that they are owed or have earned. At each stop over, have them meet a new patron and carry out a mission. The capital should hold some secrets as well as at least 3 background campaign plots and at least two new and powerful NPCs. Your 'Big NPC' should be involved in one of the plots on the capital world. The first three patrons met on the capital, will all have missions that are somehow connected with (or 'introduce') one of those plots. Creating the three patrons and their missions may give you a clue as to what those secret background plots might be.

## A SHIP

Now is the time to give the player characters a ship! We say give, but it might be used as a reward for a very tough mission, perhaps where the ship itself is needed to complete the mission successfully. Or the scout or scientist may be getting their hands on the ship that was promised to them during the Mustering Out process. Or ... out of the blue, a ship is for sale at cut price, only a few hundred thousand credits. Is it cursed?



Stolen? Seized from pirates? Decrepit? Out-of-date? You decide. The important thing is the PCs now have 'wheels' and can explore the subsector that you have only just recently created. They get to enjoy the freedom as well as all of the bills, such as fuel, life support, wages, landing fees and perhaps even a ship mortgage ...

## BAD GUYS

Hopefully the PCs have been making some enemies, I'm thinking of people like the patrol captain in the sample mission called Stop and Search. Make a note of these NPCs and now and then use one of these NPCs or organisations as a guest star in a new mission. When the player characters' path crosses with this NPC or group once again, you have created an 'on-going plot arc' something normally reserved for a table-top campaign, not a solo gaming experience!

## RECORD YOUR RESULTS

It almost goes without saying that you should record what you create as well as the actions of the player characters. Ideally, you want a notebook or loose-leaf file with the following sections:

- PC Journal
- Subsector and Worlds
- Important NPCS (including patrons)
- Enemies (carry these across from your NPC section)
- Contacts (friends or allies made on the travels of the PCs)
- Starships (memorable ships and their crews encountered or travelled on)

Enjoy your time **Playing Solo Classic Traveller!** ~ Paul Elliott

Name		<i>Str Dex End Int Edu Soc</i>											
<i>likeness</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table>												Credits
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Terms		Age											
Skills		Equipment											
Who Am I?		Homeworld											
		Friends											
		Enemies											

