

Missions

Missions in *Planetfall* are a linear adventure in which a group of player characters (PCs) attempt to achieve some goal. They'll generally consist of:

- An overall plot
- Around 12 Encounters (more if they're shorter, fewer if they're longer)
- Downtime afterwards during which the players can act based on the Mission
- A Mission report detailing the outcome

The Plot

- The Plot basically wants to answer throughout the adventure the classic 6 Ws: who, what, when, where, why, how?
 - **Who?**
 - Is someone is up to something?
 - Is there a villain, or is there a more general threat?
 - Is there an NPC sponsoring the PCs?
 - Which factions might be have an interest?
 - **What?**
 - What is the problem the PCs have been brought in for?
 - What is the goal for the antagonist if there is one?
 - What is the goal for the PCs?
 - **When?**
 - When are the events taking place that the PCs are involved with?
 - Do they have time to work in or are they on a deadline?
 - **Where?**
 - Which world is this Mission taking place on?
 - Where do the PCs make planetfall?
 - Where are the encounters taking place?
 - What environmental hazards might this add?
 - **Why?**
 - Why are the PCs involved?
 - Why is the antagonist the way they are?
 - Why are NPCs in encounters opposing the players?
 - **How?**
 - How do you expect the PCs to approach or solve each encounter?
 - How do you expect the PCs to become aware of what they need to know to finish the Mission?
 - How can you be flexible when the PCs do something you weren't expecting?
- The Plot should be flexible in response to the PCs
 - Your players will inevitably draw their own conclusions from what they experience on the Mission - this is a good thing!
 - Be prepared to make changes on the fly, and write encounters that can be modified based on what the players are doing
 - This doesn't mean you should write a bunch of encounters for every eventuality, but you should avoid railroading your players - or at least provide opportunities for the next step to feel natural

Ref Secrets

- Certain areas of *Planetfall* contain metaphysical secrets and plots that the Ref Team are keeping close to their chest. That doesn't mean you can't run something within them - far from it - but if you are going to do so we would like to chat about what you're looking to run so we can help provide consistency for exploring and interacting with the hidden lore of *Planetfall*.
- Those areas are, currently:
 - What happened to Orion Station
 - Hive IV
 - Meaningful attempts to contact the galaxy outside of the Keter Borderlands
 - Deep Lore on the Decay
 - Deep Lore on Ship Hearts

Your Co-GM

- Every LARP needs 2 people to GM it - you (who will likely be guiding the players and describing the world), and your Co-GM (who will stay with the Monsters and explain the encounters, provide stats, and set everything up).
- Find someone who is happy to Co-GM (remind them they get a juicy 2 XP once the Mission Report is written up if they need persuading!) and give them a copy of the Mission you've got planned. Ideally do this in advance so they can ask questions.
 - If you're struggling to find a Co-GM, email the Ref Team and we'll help you out!

Briefs

- The Brief for your Mission is what hooks in the players. It should tell them roughly what they'll be looking to do, for who, and what the reward will be.
- This allows players to choose why their character might be interested in going on the Mission.
- You should also detail the "Threat Level" of the mission - this roughly describes the power level (or lethality) of the Mission.
- Before the Mission starts proper, players may also have Background abilities that allow them to ask for an additional brief from an organisation
 - *Help, I don't know what that pre-brief would be!* - don't worry! Ask the player what their usual priorities are and ad-lib from there, or ask your co-GM or a Ref present to help.

Encounters

- In general, around 12 encounters will provide a LARP of about the right length.
- Around a third should include a heavy roleplaying element rather than being a straight fight (though the best adventures incorporate roleplaying into most, if not all, encounters).
- Try to have some encounters where every class can shine. Innovative challenges and unusual situations can help ensure everyone gets a chance to do something cool.
- Monster stats should be designed to push characters, but shouldn't be designed to kill them unless they do something foolish.
- Most monsters should be simply statted and have a vastly less wide range of capabilities

compared to a player character. A few powerful NPCs could be stat'd like characters, but these should be the exception rather than the rule.

- For more information on statting see the [Bestiary](#).
- Consider as well introducing twists and environmental modifiers to help flesh out your encounters - see [Environmental Hazards](#) for inspiration.

How do I use the Decay?

- The Decay is, of course, a big part of the world of *Planetfall* and we would encourage every Mission to have multiple Decay encounters.
- Aside from taking inspiration from the [Decaying](#) section of the Bestiary, there are some useful things to keep in mind when writing the Decay:
 - Decaying creatures are not sapient and are barely capable of even imitating sentience. They're a force of nature, ultimately.
 - Decaying encounters should be characterised by prevalence of DRAIN calls, and (for particularly nasty encounters) BREAK.
 - Decay should have multiple waves of weaker creatures - players should feel outnumbered but able to fight through it.
 - Unless you have a very good reason to (consulted with the Refs), Decay should not be present in proximity to Ship Hearts.

Help, I knocked out the party!

- Challenging the characters is a good thing. Sometimes, however, you'll get the stats a bit wrong, and what was supposed to be a simple encounter will end with the whole party knocked out. At this point, unless there's a very good reason not to, steps should probably be taken to ensure that not everyone dies horribly. A variety of options are available, some examples of which are:
 - **Make it look like part of the plot:** fantasy media and video games are full of examples of fights the protagonists were supposed to lose. While this should generally be avoided in a larp setting unless carefully handled, having all of the PCs wake up in a pile somewhere mysterious a few hours later with their wounds strangely healed can work well if the encounter that killed them was more metaphysical in nature.
 - **Mighty heroes make valuable captives:** Or ritual fuel or sacrifices to bloodthirsty local deities etc. If the intelligent antagonists start looking like they're going to win, wave a dead monster in as someone with healing abilities skill to start stabilising PCs while his mate ties them up. That the monsters will probably later be slain as the PCs stage a daring break from the cells they're thrown into is their problem for being antagonists.
 - **Last Minute Rescue:** If the players have been travelling with NPCs, maybe they can stage a rescue, or at least burst in to heal up a few bleeding PCs.
 - **Ship Heart Intervention:** The setting has supernatural forces which can intervene through the Startouched. This should really only occur in the direst circumstances, but it is there as an option. Other powerful beings may have similar capabilities.
- Any "get out of jail free" the PCs receive should not be without consequences, which can range from loss of items to full blow metaphysical deformity depending on severity and the situation. Sometimes a given mechanism won't quite save everyone, and this is part and parcel of taking a character out on a linear.
- Ultimately, Severe Injuries exist as a mechanism for letting players survive while taking a consequence.

Downtime and Mission Reports

- You've run a Mission! Great!
- Your job isn't quite over yet, after the uptime Mission is done, Players have the opportunity to act in Downtime.
- As per [Downtime](#), each character may perform a freeform action and any 'Downtime' abilities they have access to.
- Either in person in the car park, or via text, find out what the characters want to do and then write up the result as well as a summary of the Mission!
- This write-up doesn't have to be detailed, just bullet points as to what characters do after the Mission, and a summary of the events of the Mission.
 - Why? This helps other players and GMs know what's going on in the game - to inspire them and keep them up to date!
- Once you finish your write-up you can publish it on the [mission_reports](#) page, and gain a juicy additional XP.

Help, I don't know how this thing works!

- Running a Mission in *Planetfall* by no means means you need to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of the game! While some is desirable, you're not going to be alone - your Co-GM, Monsters, and even Players will be able to help you, and the Ref Team will always be available to answer questions.
- If you're not sure how something metaphysical works that you want to poke, you're more than welcome to ask, and we'll help you out as best we can!
- If your players want to do something in Downtime you have no idea about, don't panic - you can always get in touch with the Ref Team at planetfall.larp@gmail.com to ask for help.
- We do insist that everyone running a Mission be familiar at least with the game's [Themes and Accessibility](#) and [Social Contract](#) though.

Resources

- There's a lot to think about when putting a LARP together but don't worry, you can absolutely crib from other GMs, other adventures, and the shared resources at the [Bestiary](#) and [Environmental Hazards](#) to help you!
- Be sure to add to these resources as well!

From:

<https://planetfall.oxfordlarp.com/> - **Planetfall**

Permanent link:

https://planetfall.oxfordlarp.com/running_a_mission?rev=1679131530

Last update: **2023/03/18 09:25**

