

# Augmented Imagination

## A Framework for Solo, Co-op/GM-less RPGs by Mick Hand



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# Recent Updates

## 1.0 Edition One

*0.99 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – tweak to Shadowdark Solo Adjustments (Luck Tokens), tweaked table entries for Rumours*

*0.98 November 2025 – additional guidance/examples and “Doing what you wanted anyway” chapter.*

*0.97 October 2025 – clarifications and re-formatting to separate the Steps/Tables from the Guidance and make the tables more visually distinct*

*0.96 8th October 2025 – Guidance on how to Frame Scenes and nudge the narrative even when you get the “wrong” type of Scene. Allow players to CHOOSE the Scene Details when they roll 1 or 2 “Chosen Focus” on the Scene Focus table.*

## Many Thanks To...

My experiences with Mythic GME 2 played a big part in shaping my Solo RPG Experience, the reliance on SCENES and Lists in my Framework is heavily based on the work of Tana Pigeon at Word Mill Games.

It was Ironsworn that first got me into Solo RPGs and the focus on narrative consequences to drive the story forward and non-specific descriptions and inspirational Action/Theme that you can interpret in the current context can clearly be seen in my Framework.

Thanks to all those who have helped me with playtesting the Framework and other of my creations such as DangerousDelves and my ROMANS! RPG. Particularly Ian, Carl, Stephen, Tomaz & Liam.

**As always, none of this would have been possible without the love and support of my wonderful wife Jo.**

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I've enjoyed Solo and Co-op (GM-less or Shared GM) games for several years but often found that enthusiasm fizzled out after a few sessions or that I sat staring into space trying to start.

I needed structure – game mechanics for travel, exploration, downtime etc - **and yet to not be too constrained** by the mechanics. I didn't want to sigh, when a quest led me to a place three days' travel away because that meant 300 dice rolls to find rations, water, avoid getting lost, check for events, check the weather, check the terrain etc!

It occurred to me that the secret for Journeys was just to decide roughly how many Scenes I wanted, then make a roll to find out which element of RPG activity should be the focus of each Scene and then focus-in on that one element.

There is a web page accompanying this book ([Augmented Imagination - Solo Framework](#)) that can help you keep track of your Lists and make dice rolls, **Ask the Bones**, and roll on the various tables without needing to flip through the book.

<https://aigm.igm4u.com/aigm.html>

Once you've got a good idea of the [Basic Procedure](#) and the section on [Starting a Campaign](#), you should be able to use the web page without needing to refer to the book.

	<b>Places of Interest</b>
<b>1</b>	Evesham Abbey and Settlement
<b>2</b>	Alauna (Alcester) - small market town on the Arrow River
<b>3</b>	A deep cave complex with many entrances in a vine-covered stretch of rocky riverside
<b>d4</b>	Monastery Library
<b>5</b>	
<b>d6</b>	

	<b>People &amp; Other Monsters</b>
<b>1</b>	Ulfstan (Father) Monk Herbalist (ex-soldier) Evesham Abbey resident (based on Cadfael)
<b>2</b>	Abbot Tiberius, Lord of Evesham Abbey, has 4 militia, fat, lazy
<b>3</b>	Grizzled Mercenary who taught me a thing or two
<b>d4</b>	Thorvald - friend of my father and one of the Watch for Evesham Abbey, he is teaching me to fight
<b>5</b>	
<b>d6</b>	

	Treasure & Things
1	
2	
3	
d4	
5	
d6	



# SCENES - The Basic Procedure

Each Scene in the unfolding story is handled with the basic procedure, with a mix of CHOICE and RANDOMNESS for all Combat encounters, Environmental challenges, Knowledge gathering & Social interactions.

**Step 0:** CHOOSE how many scenes **you think it should be** to carry out your chosen activity, such as a Journey, or Resting or Making something or Researching something or Gathering Herbs or Exploring an area or a Social interaction with one or more NPCs etc.

Then follow this loop...

**Step 1:** CHOOSE your **preferred type of SCENE** based on the current situation, location and intended activity. The choices are COMBAT, ENVIRONMENT, KNOWLEDGE or SOCIAL. This becomes the **most likely** focus of your next scene.

**Step 2:** ROLL a d6 to determine the **SCENE FOCUS** of the next scene with your Chosen Focus being the most likely. If you roll 1 or 2 (Chosen Focus) you may then **CHOOSE** the Scene Details in Step 3 if you wish, rather than rolling for the Scene Details.

**Step 3:** Use the relevant SCENE DETAILS Table (**COMBAT**, **ENVIRONMENT**, **KNOWLEDGE** or **SOCIAL**) to get specific guidelines for this scene. Your imagination can be augmented by a couple of rolls on Spark tables for further details if necessary.

**Step 4:** PLAY out the resulting scene, following the guidelines from the tables, using the Game Mechanics of your chosen RPG system to determine the outcome where you can.

**Step 5:** After every Scene, roll 1d6, on a 1 there is an IMMEDIATE Additional Scene before the character(s) have chance to rest and recover (return to Step 1 for the Additional Scene). Feel free to check twice or even three times for Additional Scenes, if the situation seems frantic and dangerous enough to warrant it.

## SCENE FOCUS Table

<b>Roll 1d6</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1 - Chosen Focus</b>	Choose or Roll on the relevant SCENE DETAILS table
<b>2 - Chosen Focus</b>	Choose or Roll on the relevant SCENE DETAILS table
<b>3 - Combat</b>	Roll 1d6 on <b><u>COMBAT SCENE DETAILS</u></b> table
<b>4 - Environment</b>	Roll 1d4 on <b><u>ENVIRONMENT SCENE DETAILS</u></b> table
<b>5 - Knowledge</b>	Roll 1d6 on <b><u>KNOWLEDGE SCENE DETAILS</u></b> table
<b>6 - Social</b>	Roll 1d10 on <b><u>SOCIAL SCENE DETAILS</u></b> table

There is a 3-in-6 chance that you'll get the Scene TYPE you hoped for in order to push your story in the direction you think makes sense and a 2-in-6 chance that you may **choose** the details of that Scene. Part of the intended challenge of the Augmented Imagination framework is for you to interpret the Scenes in a way that moves the story forward.

So, if you think the next Scene in your adventure should be COMBAT, ideally ambushing your enemy after tracking them to their camp, but you roll a Scene Focus of KNOWLEDGE with Scene Details “MAGICAL: You encounter/discover something or someone magical” then it’s up to you to interpret this in the current context of your story.

- ❖ *Perhaps your enemy has laid a magical trap or alarm that you will have to spot and then circumvent?*
- ❖ *Perhaps as you get ready to attack, your enemy conjures a demon and starts to discuss their plans with it?*
- ❖ *Perhaps your enemy (who you thought was a mere bandit) transforms into (or reveals themselves to be) a magical being?*

50% of the time, you WILL get your hoped-for type of Scene, but even then, you may roll Scene Details that surprise/challenge you. In our example, you hoped for a COMBAT and intended to ambush your enemy. If you roll 1 or 2 you get to choose the Scene Details, but if you roll a 3 (COMBAT) you must roll for the Scene Details...

- ❖ *You might instead roll Combat:AMBUSHED and discover that your enemy knew you were tracking them and planned a nasty surprise, so you’ll need to make some sort of skill check to avoid having the tables turned.*
- ❖ *You might instead roll Combat:RESCUE and discover your enemy has a prisoner.*
- ❖ *You might roll Combat:BRAWL and discover a reason why you need to capture them rather than kill them, or the enemy’s henchmen attempt to capture you, using non-lethal combat.*
- ❖ *You might roll Combat:ENCOUNTER and just as you are about to pounce an unexpected random encounter occurs.*

50% of the time you will roll a different type of Scene Focus and then have to roll for the Scene Details, but don’t despair! Part of the (intended) fun for this type of Solo Framework is to challenge yourself (the Player, not the Character) to interpret the results in a way that fits and still advances the narrative.

- ❖ *If you rolled SOCIAL, perhaps you get an opportunity to negotiate with the enemy, or you meet someone else.*
- ❖ *If you rolled KNOWLEDGE, perhaps your intended victim meets with a “spy” and you get an opportunity to listen-in. Perhaps you discover something important before you carry out your attack.*
- ❖ *If you rolled ENVIRONMENT, perhaps you stumble into a marsh, get delayed by bad weather, get injured or sick.*



## Doing what you wanted anyway...

You may still choose to carry out your original ambush plan once you have dealt with the Scene you've rolled, **as long as it makes narrative sense**.

Make the Roll to see if there is an Additional Scene immediately after resolving the Scene BEFORE going on to run your planned ambush.

Alternatively, you **may choose to** continue to roll for and play Scenes (and Additional Scenes) until you finally get the COMBAT result you were hoping for.

Exactly how much you allow the rolled Scenes to control the narrative, is up to you and how "close" you are in your narrative to the action your character is planning.

As an example of this planned ambush...

- ❖ *If you were close enough to attack but got a Knowledge Scene, maybe you witnessed your werewolf enemy transform into its human form (or vice versa!). In this case, it sounds like you are close enough to imagine still making the attack without waiting to roll a Combat Scene, assuming you still want to. Ideally you should still roll for the immediate Additional Scene **before** going ahead with the ambush. Doing so might surprise you with another Knowledge Scene or maybe an unexpected Social or Environment Scene or might change the Scene Details of the Combat.*
- ❖ *On the other hand, if you were travelling a few days to get to the ambush site, you might want to let the Scenes mechanism determine exactly when you get there and get a chance for combat.*

# Types of Scene

## COMBAT SCENE DETAILS Table

Make rolls on the [Spark Tables](#) for inspiration if necessary.

<b>Roll 1d6</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1 – Ambush</b>	Your party <b>gets the chance</b> to ambush one or more enemies/prey.	<a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> and then imagine your Motive.
<b>2 – Ambushed</b>	Your party is ambushed by enemies.	<a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> and then choose or <a href="#">ROLL FOR A MOTIVE</a> and then determine whether you are SURPRISED or using your Game Mechanics or <a href="#">Ask the Bones</a> .
<b>3 – Rescue</b>	Either YOU are rescued by, or you <b>have the chance</b> to rescue, an NPC or NPC party.	<a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> and then choose or <a href="#">ROLL FOR A MOTIVE</a>
<b>4 – Brawl</b>	You get into a fight that is not intended to be fatal.	<a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> and then choose or <a href="#">ROLL FOR A MOTIVE</a>
<b>5 – Encounter</b>	Roll on the <a href="#">Random Encounter</a> table for your current Biome and assume a Hostile Reaction.	
<b>6 – Combination</b>	roll twice ignoring further 6s	

## Examples/Guidelines...

**1 - Ambush:** This is a **chance** to ambush your enemy, so there should be some sort of skill check (maybe a Stealth roll?) to see if you manage it. You could allow yourself to concoct a clever plan and then use some other Skill or Attribute-based check to see whether you deserve Advantage on the Stealth roll or can swap Stealth for some other skill.

If you succeed then use whatever type of “Surprise” benefits your game system supports (maybe the enemy can’t respond in the first round, maybe you get Advantage to the first attack, maybe extra damage).

**2 - Ambushed:** This is a **chance** that an enemy will ambush you, so there should be some sort of skill check (maybe a Perception roll?) to see if you detect the ambush in time. If you have imagined some course of action for your character that would reduce the chances of surprise, feel free to give yourself Advantage on the roll. When you are

planning an ambush of your own, this result should be a significant surprise (to the Player as well as to the Character).

**3 - Rescue:** Depending what you were intending/doing when this result occurs, it can make a big impact on your story. If you were about to engage in combat with a significant threat or be affected by a significant Environment threat, perhaps a rescuer might arrive to help/save you. If you were in control and confident of victory, perhaps you discover somebody who needs rescuing, and it could give you a moral choice about pursuing the treasure or enemy or stopping to save the innocent victim.

**4 - Brawl:** If your game system has good rules for non-lethal combat, suddenly switching to a “brawl” can be an interesting challenge. If it makes narrative sense, is there some reason why you need to take your enemy alive rather than hurling fireballs or attacking with a battleaxe! First you have to determine if this is a genuine brawl with both sides doing non-lethal damage, or if it’s a lop-sided challenge with either just you or just your opponent making non-lethal attacks. Go with what makes narrative sense or [Ask the Bones](#).

**5 - Encounter:** A sudden “random encounter” can spice up most situations. You were about to do something when XXX arrives!

- ❖ *If you were about to attack an enemy, a third party arrives. Maybe an ally of yours? Maybe an ally of your enemy? Maybe a Monster and you have to make a temporary truce with the original enemy, just to survive?*

**6 – Combination** These can sometimes be trickier to define, especially if you roll the same option twice (eg. Ambushed + Ambushed when you are trying to ambush an enemy!) but this COULD mean that not only does your enemy turn the tables somehow, but perhaps they have additional allies waiting to spring an ambush or perhaps they have a trap prepared (like a net from above) to make things even more dangerous for you.

- *Exactly how combat encounters proceed will largely be determined by the RPG System you have chosen to use. In general, you should aim for easy to medium challenges and/or allow your Solo character chances to gain advantage or to flee from combat rather than experience frequent deaths.*
- *I’ve found a tendency to over-penalise my solo characters because of a feeling that as GM and Player, I shouldn’t give myself plot-armour. Just don’t make things too tough on yourself or frequent re-starts will drain away your enthusiasm.*

## ENVIRONMENT SCENE DETAILS Table

Make rolls on the [Spark Tables](#) for inspiration if necessary.

<b>Roll 1d4</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1 – Movement</b>	Something impedes your Movement, perhaps an obstacle to be overcome or an injury. Perhaps a locked door or a dead-end. Perhaps unexpected guards or traps or dangerous flora/fauna.	Imagine what could be in your way. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to overcome the issue.
<b>2 – Exploration</b>	You either find something or believe there is something to find, or you stumble upon something unexpected. Perhaps a place, perhaps a thing or perhaps a person.	Imagine what could be found. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to locate your target or to cope with or understand what you have found.
<b>3 – Hardship</b>	Life is tough! Hunger, Thirst, Disease, Injury. Either you are suffering or one of your party is suffering.	Imagine what it could be. Some kind of Skill check will be needed to overcome or cure it.
<b>4 – Combination</b>	roll twice ignoring further 4s	

### Examples/Guidelines...

“Environment” is often the Chosen Focus when travelling. It’s easy to imagine hardships, fatigue or injuries from the journey, or environmental obstacles/hazards (rivers, climbs, dense undergrowth, bad weather etc).

**1 - Movement:** Take a moment to imagine the environment around the Character. In a forest, perhaps there are fallen trees, the path is washed away by recent storms, there is a sudden cliff to climb up or down? In a modern city, perhaps you run into a traffic gridlock, or a demonstration or procession? In a cavern, perhaps a rockfall or water-filled tunnel or a locked door? There should be a challenge to overcome, hopefully suggesting some Skill or Attribute or Spell that your Character can use to overcome it and some penalty for failure that makes sense and yet doesn’t bring your narrative to an impossible end (damage, loss of equipment or other resources, extending your journey, making you late etc).

If you fail to cross the river, maybe you can follow it for a few hours and find a ford or a bridge? Perhaps you can build a raft? Be kind to yourself and consider some alternative route, unless you are happy to be stopped.

**2 - Exploration:** This can be one of the more difficult Scenes to imagine without giving the Player knowledge that the Character shouldn't yet have. If there is something you already know is in this area, then perhaps it's just a matter of checking whether you find it. If there's nothing already known, it's OK to just make some kind of Perception or Investigation check (before deciding whether there is anything or what it might be). Then only if you succeed do you have to fill-in the details.

It's also OK to decide that there IS something significant here and there's something that hints at it so that the character would spend some time and effort searching (and maybe using the Knowledge Chosen Focus to get some clues about it if the initial Exploration fails).

Maybe the thing that's here is a hidden tomb or other adventure site? Maybe a ruin with a valuable artefact? Maybe the lair of a monster? Use the Spark Tables for inspiration if needed.

**3 - Hardship:** It's up to you whether you want to have the Character suffer an injury and then have a chance to remove it via a Skill roll or Spell, or whether you prefer to have a chance to avoid the injury by use of a Skill, Spell or Saving Throw.

In most game systems, you could imagine something like a twisted ankle, reducing your movement speed. In D&D you could take a d6 Hit Points of damage or a level of Exhaustion. In Dragonbane you could gain a Condition.

Perhaps you could tough it out by making an Attribute roll based on Strength or Constitution. Perhaps you could do first aid using a relevant skill or resources such as a healing potion or healing kit.

**4 - Combinations:** As there are only three different sets of details for Environment, it's quite likely you'll get multiples of the same result. In a dungeon situation a door might be locked and trapped. A river might be fast flowing as well as wide or might also contain crocodiles!

## KNOWLEDGE SCENE DETAILS Table

Make rolls on the [Spark Tables](#) for inspiration if necessary.

<b>Roll 1d6</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1 – Magic</b>	You encounter/discover something or someone magical.	Imagine what it could be. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to understand/learn from/acquire/bypass the knowledge/power/item.
<b>2 – Religion</b>	You encounter/discover something of religious significance or someone religious.	Imagine what it could be. A Tomb or Temple or Artefact? A Priest? An Omen or Portent? Some kind of Skill check should be needed to understand/learn from/acquire/bypass the knowledge/power/item/person.
<b>3 – Folklore</b>	You encounter something from a local legend you know about or learn of some local superstition.	Imagine what it could be and/or how you learn of it. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to benefit from the knowledge
<b>4 – Secret</b>	You encounter something secret or learn a secret. Alternatively, you are put in a position where you must struggle to keep a secret.	Imagine what it could be and/or how you learn of it or who/what could be trying to wrest the knowledge from you. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to benefit from the knowledge or keep it hidden.
<b>5 – Rumour</b>	You learn a Rumour.	Consult the <a href="#">RUMOUR</a> Table
<b>6 – Combination</b>	roll twice ignoring further 6s	

## Examples/Guidelines...

**1 – Magic:** Much will depend on your setting and the presence (or lack) of magic-using folk, magical creatures, magical effects and treasures. Remember to define the “magic” as something that will engage the game’s mechanics to get some benefit from and imagine what your character(s) might experience that indicates the presence of “magic”.

An old woman at the side of the road MIGHT be a Witch (or might be a victim of a curse). A cat that crosses the path MIGHT be a witch’s familiar, or a lucky omen if you manage to give it food, or MIGHT be a talking animal, or a disguised faerie.

A slight shimmering heat haze on the road ahead MIGHT be a sign of a magical trap.

A boy selling apples at the roadside MIGHT be a faerie creature, or one of his apples might have magical properties.

Carvings on a strange looking stone might be magical, possibly indicating the way to a site of magical importance, possibly teaching a spell, possibly a magical trap or a warning about an upcoming magical threat.

**2 – Religion:** As always, interpret this in the context of your setting. Do you have any “religious” figures or locations or items in your existing Lists? If so, can you involve them in the current scene? If not, decide whether you’d like to encounter a place, location or item or “mystical” religious phenomenon (feel free to roll a d4 to help decide or [Ask the Bones](#)). If your setting is particularly low magic (or low “divine” magic) then you could encounter a Priest in a non-religious situation or find a ruined temple or shrine with only mundane significance to your story.

**3 – Folklore:** Are there any folkloric creatures or items in your setting? Possibly Faerie creatures of a whimsical, kind or antagonistic nature? This is very similar to the “Magical” result but there should be a good chance your character is aware of stories about this and might know how to deal with it or at least, what’s at stake. Alternatively think of some folklore about our own world – ideally from a location that is “similar” to the location your character is in – and apply that knowledge to the game situation. Even in a zero-magic/real world setting what could be behind a piece of folk lore?

**4 – Secret:** Imagination is key for this one. What might you encounter that is “Secret”. Do you find something that was hidden? Does somebody tell you a secret? Do you find a clue or work something out from things you already know? Alternatively, do you already have a secret of your own – if so, maybe somebody or something is trying to uncover it.

**5 – Rumour:** A “rumour” does not have to be true and certainly doesn’t have to be entirely true or entirely accurate. It’s a good opportunity to give you an adventure hook and to inject some tension and uncertainty into the narrative. For example, if you learn



the location of a treasure and decide to follow it up, when you get there use the Ask the Bones mechanism to see if it turns out to have been true and/or whether there is also some added danger. When deciding how Likely/Unlikely the rumour is, consider how you heard it, whether it seems too good to be true and how much fun there might be from the uncertainty/anticipation/hope.

**6 – Combination:** Most of the combinations are fairly straightforward, but it can get particularly complicated if you roll the same thing twice. If you get Rumour twice, perhaps you hear that some distant person knows a rumour about a magical treasure. This gives you two opportunities to inject uncertainty. Maybe the first rumour is false and the informant doesn't exist, or doesn't know the second rumour, or maybe they do know the rumour about the treasure, but that turns out to be false. Remember that part of the fun (hopefully you agree) is the challenge for the Player (not the character) of weaving these random elements into a satisfying narrative.

## SOCIAL SCENE DETAILS Table

Make rolls on the [Spark Tables](#) for inspiration if necessary.

<b>Roll 1d10</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1 – Romance</b>	<p>You (or somebody in your party, or somebody from your “<a href="#">People &amp; Other Monsters</a>” List) gets the chance for Romance.</p> <p>If you are playing with others, check whether this topic is acceptable and use the Lines &amp; Veils procedure to determine whether to go into details or even skip it altogether.</p>	<p><a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> to see who is available, and then imagine who you (or they) could become romantically interested in.</p> <p>If you aren’t directly involved, you could <a href="#">IDENTIFY A TARGET</a> twice.</p>
<b>2 – Duty</b>	<p>If your character is a member of an organisation, or a religion etc. they might be tasked with something or have a strict duty to do something.</p>	<p>Imagine what this could be in the context of your story.</p>
<b>3 – Economics</b>	<p>You either need money, or you come upon a way to make money. If money isn’t relevant, then you could run out of, or find a supply of, something else (Rations, Water, Equipment).</p>	<p>Envision what this could be.</p> <p>Some kind of Skill check should be needed to acquire the resource or make use of the resource.</p>
<b>4 – Family</b>	<p>In some way, a Family member is involved with the scene, or your Family Name is significant. If it’s unlikely to be direct involvement, you could perhaps receive a message concerning them.</p>	<p>Envision what this could be.</p> <p>Some kind of Skill check should be needed.</p>
<b>5 – Friends</b>	<p>In some way, a Friend is involved with the scene. If it’s unlikely to be direct involvement, you could perhaps receive a message concerning them. Alternatively, you get a chance to make a new Friend.</p>	<p>Envision what this could be.</p> <p>Some kind of Skill check should be needed.</p>

<b>6 – Enemies</b>	In some way, an Enemy is involved with the scene. If it's unlikely to be direct involvement, you could perhaps receive a message concerning them. Alternatively, you get a chance to make a new Enemy.	Envision what this could be. Some kind of Skill check should be needed.
<b>7 – Authority</b>	You encounter someone who embodies "Authority". This could be somebody suitable from your existing Lists, or a new person. Alternatively, you witness (or commit) a crime, falling foul of local authority.	Envision what this could be. Some kind of Skill check should be needed.
<b>8 – Charity</b>	You encounter someone who needs "help" or "charity". This could be somebody suitable from your existing Lists, or a new person. Alternatively, (if you are in desperate need), somebody offers "help" to you.	Envision what this could be. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to help, or to gain the help.
<b>9 – Combination</b>	roll twice ignoring further 9s & 10s	
<b>10 – Combination</b>	roll twice ignoring further 9s & 10s	

## Examples/Guidelines...

With all Social Scenes, remember to consider whether Factions could influence the Scene and whether anyone from your List of People & Other Monsters should be involved (directly or indirectly). Always consider checking the Motive table too.

**1 – Romance:** This can be a tricky topic in an RPG when playing with other people, so double-check whether any of your fellow players would prefer to skip Scenes like this. If you proceed, these types of Scene are meant to deepen the immersion, realism and link the characters involved (usually a player character and an NPC) together to provide future story opportunities. This doesn't always have to mean that your love interest will later be put at risk, but that is a possibility and a frequent story trope. It might also mean that they may try to save you if YOU are threatened or be willing to take risks to help you.

A romantic attachment to an NPC can also give you reasons to travel to visit them and reasons to adventure to make them safer or to gain enough money to live in comfort and start a family.

When romantic scenes fail, they can lead to other motivations and emotional outcomes that can be fun to play through too. You might imagine your character taking stupid risks while heartbroken, or the person you thought you loved becoming a rival or even a nemesis (or being wooed by your enemy?).

**2 – Duty:** Player characters often seem detached from the world, loners with no family ties, like Clint Eastwood’s “Man with no Name”, drifting from place to place with no permanent roots. In most well-imagined stories, the lead characters DO have some duties/obligations to other people, to an organisation or to a religion. Allowing your character to lose a bit of the “freedom” of being a maverick loner, can deepen the story and perhaps give you moral dilemmas and conflicting objectives.

**3 – Economics:** Although the word “economics” makes this seem like a dry and boring Scene Focus, it can cover many different story beats and provide motive for immediate actions. If your horse runs off carrying your supplies while travelling across a wilderness, you are suddenly faced with a whole set of new challenges. If you run out of money, perhaps you have a debt to a loan shark and they send somebody to collect. It doesn’t have to be anything THAT serious but think of something you might NEED that you don’t have and what you’d have to do to get it.

Alternatively, you might find some other source of “things” that you may need to find a way to acquire or benefit from.

**4 – Family:** Family members might help or hinder you. Your relationship might be good or bad, but they are likely to have some sort of emotional bond of shared history and shared fate that means they have the power to influence your story.

Even if you had decided you were an orphan with no siblings, perhaps you learn something about your background you didn’t know. Perhaps you learn you have fathered a child you didn’t know about or discover you are pregnant, or your significant other is pregnant.

**5 – Friends:** If your player character(s) have got friends, consider how they might influence the current situation. Might they turn up at the current location? Might news of them reach you here? Might you find something that links to them in some way or reminds you of them (perhaps you could consider a flashback scene involving them)?

Maybe an opportunity comes to make a Friend, an unexpected bond with an NPC (or between two player characters) that makes them much more influential in your future. What would you have to do to forge or strengthen or maintain this bond?

**6 – Enemies:** You may already have some enemies in your List of People & Other Monsters. In the same way as with the “Friends” option, consider how they might influence the current situation. Might they turn up at the current location? Might news of them reach you here? Might you find something that links to them in some way or reminds you of them (perhaps you could consider a flashback scene involving them)?

Maybe some NPC you are dealing with is about to turn from a Friend or from a Neutral acquaintance into an Enemy. What could cause it and what could you do to prevent it?

**7 – Authority:** Be careful not to “paint yourself in a corner” with this one. Don’t immediately assume it’s a law-enforcement posse that is chasing you down with a “Wanted Dead or Alive” poster of you. Unless you’ve been particularly naughty that is!

Consider where you are, who else is around? Who is the local authority? Perhaps a local baron or a reeve in charge of the village or an abbot in charge of a monastery. Perhaps a patrol of soldiers or a posse (not necessarily one hunting for you).

What would you do if they want to search through your stuff? If they want you to come with them somewhere? If they try to exert their authority on you? If they demand a (legal?) tax of some kind? What is the likely consequence of refusing (immediate and longer-term)?

Are you currently doing anything that could be viewed as a “crime”? Could you get arrested for “mistaken identity”? Or because they need a scapegoat?

The table of Motives might be able to help with this.

**8 – Charity:** Does it make more sense that you would be the recipient of charity or that you would be asked to provide charity?

What sort of person might be in your current location who could provide you with charity or be in need of charity?

How onerous do you want this scene to become, should it be a long-term quest to build and run an orphanage or just a beggar asking for a meal. They MIGHT then be able to help you out in some way in gratitude, or virtue could be its own reward.

**9 & 10 – Combination:** There are lots of potential combinations and duplications with Social Scenes. If the results seem too disconnected and nothing seems to fit, feel free to reroll the combination or ignore it.

## Guidance on not getting the SCENE you wanted...

The reason we roll for **SCENE FOCUS** is to allow for unexpected events and to challenge ourselves to re-imagine the situation from a different angle. Don't be afraid to "push" the plot along if you want to, by twisting the rolled result to fit your original intention.

Here's an example from one of my Solo games...

**Aiden has been ordered to remain at the Abbey by Abbot Tiberius and is looking for a chance to slip away and catch up to a group that has been sent out to capture or kill a witch.**

**As well as avoiding being seen, he'll have to either swim across the River Avon or use the rope-drawn ferry.**

### Example Scene 1

*I'll choose an ENVIRONMENT Scene as my Chosen Focus and roll on the SCENE FOCUS table (as I rolled "Chosen Focus" I could have **chosen** the MOVEMENT Scene detail rather than leave the details to a roll).*

Scene Focus: **CHOSEN FOCUS**

**ENVIRONMENT Scene: MOVEMENT** - Something impedes your Movement, perhaps an obstacle to be overcome or an injury. Perhaps a locked door or a dead-end. Perhaps unexpected guards or traps or dangerous flora/fauna. Imagine what could be in your way. Make rolls on the Spark Tables for inspiration if necessary. Some kind of Skill check should be needed to overcome the issue.

*This worked out pretty well as a scene to progress Aiden's story as it could be interpreted as his difficulty in crossing the river unnoticed.*

AS it's an **Environment: Movement Scene**, let's imagine that Aiden needs to sneak onto the Ferry or down to the river unnoticed. If he chooses the Ferry, the Stealth roll will be at a penalty of 2 because it is so open. But if he chooses to swim, he gets a bonus of 2 to the Stealth but then needs to make an Athletics roll to swim across quickly enough not to be noticed. Notice that both suggested solutions could allow him to continue even if he fails the roll if I am keen to push the story that way, but failure will definitely have future consequences.

*Nb. I like to sometimes imagine a couple of options with different levels of risk and reward to simulate the player agency that you get in games with a GM. In this case, sneaking and crossing seemed worthy of separate Skill rolls.*

**Below are examples of the sort of scenes I could have imagined if I had rolled other types of Scene Focus/Details...**

Scene Focus: **COMBAT**

**COMBAT Scene: AMBUSHED** - Your party are about to be ambushed by enemies. Choose or 'Identify a Target' then choose or 'Roll for Motive'. Determine if you are surprised or not.

Perhaps a couple of Monks have been told to keep an eye on the far side of the ferry to prevent Aiden from leaving. They will try to ambush him, grapple him and drag him back to face the Abbot's displeasure. I'd run this as a non-lethal encounter with fleeting damage.

Scene Focus: **SOCIAL**

**SOCIAL Scene: ENEMIES** - In some way, an Enemy is involved with the scene. If it's unlikely to be direct involvement, you could perhaps receive a message concerning them. Alternatively, you get a chance to make a new Enemy. Envision what this could be. Make rolls on the Spark Tables for inspiration if necessary. Some kind of Skill check should be needed.

Perhaps the Monks that try to stop Aiden can be persuaded to let him past or deceived into thinking he has a warning message from the Abbot for the group he wants to catch up with. This might require a Charisma Check.

Perhaps (as it's supposed to be an "Enemy") the person who spots Aiden might be a bandit who Aiden helped to capture. What kind of bargain could the lad make to keep the man from alerting the guards? This might require a Charisma Check with a big bonus (or auto-success) if he were willing to release the bandit!

Scene Focus: **KNOWLEDGE**

**KNOWLEDGE Scene: FOLKLORE** - Perhaps a vision begins to form in Aiden's mind, and he needs to use his skill in Ancient Lore to understand it, or perform a Ritual of Arcane Experiment to work out what it means, perhaps spending an hour so he'd have difficulty catching up in time to be any use? Perhaps he could learn something about the nature of the Witch or where exactly to find them?



## Filling in the Details

This section contains some tables to generate details...

### ASK THE BONES

Most Solo RPG systems provide a way to make decisions that would normally be made by a GM. Augmented Imagination uses 2d6 or 3d6 or 4d6.

**STEP 1: Make sure you ask a YES/NO Question.** If it is clear that one answer favours the Character and the other answer is bad for the character, try to phrase it so that a YES is the “good” answer.

For something ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE,	roll <b>4d6</b> and add the two <b>lowest</b> results.
For something that is UNLIKELY,	roll <b>3d6</b> and add the two <b>lowest</b> results.
For a “Normal” 50/50 question,	roll <b>2d6</b> and add the results.
For something that is LIKELY,	roll <b>3d6</b> and add the two <b>highest</b> results.
For something ALMOST CERTAIN,	roll <b>4d6</b> and add the two <b>highest</b> results.

Result	Answer
2-4	No and... (there is some major drawback/penalty in the result)
5-6	No
7	No But (the character may get some minor benefit)
8	Yes But (there is some minor drawback or issue)
9-10	Yes
11-12	Yes and... (there is some major additional benefit in the result)

### Benefits MAJOR or Minor

Imagine, choose or roll 1d6...

1	It didn't take long
2	It didn't draw attention
3	It made future attempts easier
4	It didn't cost as much
5	Something connected happened at the same time
6	Something unconnected happened at the same time

### Drawbacks MAJOR or Minor

Imagine, choose or roll 1d6...

1	It took longer than expected
2	It drew attention
3	It made future attempts harder or was only a temporary success
4	It cost something, or cost more than was expected
5	Something connected went badly at the same time
6	Something unconnected went badly at the same time

## IDENTIFY A TARGET

If there is an “obvious” or “particularly suitable” target, feel free to just choose that, or [Ask the Bones](#) after deciding whether it is 50/50 or LIKELY or ALMOST CERTAIN.

If necessary, you can roll on the Identify a Target Table below instead...

<b>1d6</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Biome Encounter</b>	Roll on the current <a href="#">Random Encounters by Biome</a> table
<b>2</b>	<b>Biome Encounter</b>	Roll on a <b>different</b> <a href="#">Random Encounters by Biome</a> table
<b>3-6</b>	<b>People</b>	Roll on the <a href="#">People &amp; Other Monsters List</a>

If you roll a 2, pick some other Biome at random from your area map. If you don’t already have an encounter table for it, follow the usual procedure and add 2 entries, then use a d4 to roll.

## ROLL FOR A MOTIVE

### Motives for “People”

<b>d20</b>	
<b>1</b>	Love (or for love of killing/hunting/hurting if the “person” is unlikely to feel Love)
<b>2</b>	Hate
<b>3</b>	Envy
<b>4</b>	Greed for Wealth
<b>5</b>	Greed for a Specific Item
<b>6</b>	Lust
<b>7</b>	Anger
<b>8</b>	Desire for Respect/Acceptance (possibly as a rite of initiation)
<b>9</b>	Political Advantage
<b>10</b>	Hunger
<b>11</b>	Protect Territory
<b>12</b>	Protect Family
<b>13</b>	Vengeance
<b>14</b>	Fear (Revealing of a Secret)
<b>15</b>	Fear (Loss of Status)
<b>16</b>	Fear (of Reprisals)
<b>17</b>	Mistaken Identity (roll again for underlying motive)
<b>18</b>	Duty
<b>19</b>	Oracle/Destiny
<b>20</b>	Combination (roll twice ignoring further 20s)

## Motives for “Beasts”

d6	
1	Hunger
2	Protect Territory
3	Protect Family
4	Fear
5	Joy of the Hunt
6	Combination (roll twice ignoring further 6s)

## RUMOUR Table

Roll on the Sparks tables for inspiration if needed.

Roll 1d6	Instructions
1-2 – Points to a thing	PERSON (Imagine or roll <a href="#">People &amp; Other Monsters</a> ) VERB d4 1) Has 2) Wants 3) Needs 4) Knows location of THING Choose something or roll on <a href="#">Treasure &amp; Things</a> or <a href="#">Random Encounters by Biome</a> for a random Biome
3-4 – Points to a Secret	PERSON (Imagine or roll <a href="#">People &amp; Other Monsters</a> ) VERB d4 1) Knows the Secret of 2) Knows the location of 3) Is guilty of 4) Is secretly THING Choose something or roll on <a href="#">Treasure &amp; Things</a> or SOME CRIME or SOME CRIMINAL
5-6 – Points to a Place	There is something here that can tell you a location that contains... a THING ( <a href="#">Treasure &amp; Things</a> ) or PERSON ( <a href="#">People &amp; Other Monsters</a> ) or SOME CRIMINAL or MONSTER ( <a href="#">Random Encounter by Biome</a> for a random biome)

## Your Lists

When you start writing a List (for future random rolling), try to add a minimum of 2 entries and then use 1d4 to choose an entry. This stops you from spending too much time and effort up-front.

If you roll an empty entry, make something up on the spot (in order to give yourself the opportunity for surprise or to encounter something “fitting” for the immediate situation).

Until you have 20 items in a List, **roll the nearest die size that is LARGER** than the number of items in the list and if you get an empty result, dream something up. (This still allows for sudden surprises even though you have pre-written the lists and slowly extends the list).

1-3 items = **d4**, 4-5 items = **d6**, 6-7 items = **d8**, 8-9 items = **d10**, 10-11 items = **d12**,  
12+ items = **d20**

Each time you use an entry from one of the lists, consider adding another entry to the end of the list. It's OK to wait until after you've dealt with the current Scene if nothing comes immediately to mind, just put a question mark to remind you to do it later.

When you get to 20 entries, either start removing and replacing the oldest/least interesting entries or switch to using a digital dice that can roll with unusual numbers of die sides and always roll with a 10% higher number of sides.

Don't be afraid to add more entries whenever they occur to you, just remember to always use a dice size that's a few larger than your number of entries and empty-out any entries that you are definitely bored with.

## People & Other Monsters

In the course of Setting Creation, Character Creation and while playing the game, you may imagine various people and creatures. You should always add them to an on-going numbered list, so that you can roll randomly to determine which one of them is involved with various types of Scene.

Bear in mind that the "person" doesn't have to actually be present in the scene to be interesting. If you roll and find that the mayor of your home village is involved, it could be a family member of theirs, the thugs might be secretly working for them, the stolen painting you found might belong to them, the Rumour you just discovered could be about them etc.

## Factions for People & Other Monsters

Whenever you add a new Creature (particularly "people") to the List, consider whether you imagine them to be members of a Faction, decide how likely it is and then roll "Ask the Bones" to find out. If the result is "No, BUT" then you can put (F?) next to their entry and check again each time you encounter the person until you either get a clear YES or clear NO result.

## Places of Interest

In the course of Setting Creation, Character Creation and while playing the game, you may imagine various locations (your home village/town/city, various dungeons, standing stones, the road to somewhere, a named section of forest etc.) You should always add them to an on-going numbered list, so that you can roll randomly to determine which one of them is involved with various types of Scene.

You can learn secrets or rumours about that location or hear about the location in some other context, or somebody you encountered might have come from there or be going there.

## Treasure and Things

In the course of Setting Creation, Character Creation and while playing the game, you may imagine various treasures/artefacts. You should always add them to an on-going numbered list, so that you can roll randomly to determine which one of them is involved with (or linked to) various types of Scene.

## Random Encounters by Biome

**To avoid having to do a lot of work up-front**, the first time you require a list for a new Biome (such as Forest, Swamp, Plains, City, Farmland, Village, Mountains), you should make a list of 2 likely/possible creatures (people, fauna, flora, or undead) you might meet there and use d4 to randomly pick one.

As usual with Lists in Augmented Imagination, **roll a die size that is LARGER** than the number of items in the list.

1-3 items = **d4**, 4-5 items = **d6**, 6-7 items = **d8**, 8-9 items = **d10**, 10-11 items = **d12**,  
12+ items = **d20**

When you roll an entry that hasn't been filled-in yet, dream one up on the spot.

It's up to you (and the type of game you want to play) how many of the creatures you add should be habitually hostile to your character(s).

If you prefer to add a generic type of Creature (eg. "FAIRY" or "UNDEAD") to the list, write it in capitals and then write a sub-table for it with just 2 types eg. "Pixies, Redcaps"; or "Zombies, Wraiths". Use a d4 to randomly pick and slowly extend this sub-table in the same way as the main lists.

### Encounters by Biome

d4	d6	d8	d10	d12	d20	
Rocky Hills						
-----						
1 Wolves						
2 Bandits						
3 Herder (Sheep or Goats)						
4						
Grasslands						
-----						
1 Troll						
2 Bandits						
3						
4						
Abbey Grounds						
-----						
1 Ulfstan						
2 Abbot						
3 Monk						
4 Villager						
5						
6						

## Factions for Random Encounters

Whenever you add a new Creature (particularly “people”) to the List, consider whether you imagine them to be members of a Faction, or at least whether you want there to be a CHANCE that they are.

Decide how likely it is and then roll “[Ask the Bones](#)” to find out. If the result is “No, BUT” then you can put (F?) next to their entry and check again each time you encounter the person until you either get a clear YES or clear NO result.

If your setting or rule system doesn’t have in-built Factions to choose from, then you can either imagine what the Faction is about or make rolls on the [Sparks](#) and [Motive](#) Tables to guide your imagination.



## Spark Table 1

- |                  |                   |                 |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Accepting     | 39. Evil          | 80. Key         |
| 2. Acrobatic     | 40. Expensive     | 81. Kind        |
| 3. Aggressive    | 41. Explosion     | 82. King        |
| 4. Agricultural  | 42. Extraordinary | 83. Knife       |
| 5. Antagonist    | 43. Faint         | 84. Knowledge   |
| 6. Argumentative | 44. Faithful      | 85. Languid     |
| 7. Asking        | 45. Fiendish      | 86. Lazy        |
| 8. Back-stabbing | 46. Fire          | 87. Leaping     |
| 9. Backwards     | 47. Flowery       | 88. Light       |
| 10. Bearing      | 48. Forthright    | 89. Lion        |
| 11. Begging      | 49. Friend        | 90. Lunatic     |
| 12. Bewitching   | 50. Frightened    | 91. Luxury      |
| 13. Blind        | 51. Frightening   | 92. Magnificent |
| 14. Bothersome   | 52. Frozen        | 93. Master      |
| 15. Broken       | 53. Gallant       | 94. Mean        |
| 16. Brook        | 54. Garden        | 95. Meandering  |
| 17. Cantankerous | 55. Ghoulish      | 96. Men         |
| 18. Chance       | 56. Grapple       | 97. Miracle     |
| 19. Chuckling    | 57. Grave         | 98. Miserly     |
| 20. Close-by     | 58. Grieving      | 99. Misguided   |
| 21. Closing      | 59. Gruesome      | 100. Morose     |
| 22. Confined     | 60. Half-witted   |                 |
| 23. Conquering   | 61. Handsome      |                 |
| 24. Cosmic       | 62. Hangman       |                 |
| 25. Dangerous    | 63. Healthy       |                 |
| 26. Dark         | 64. Heavy         |                 |
| 27. Dead         | 65. Hoard         |                 |
| 28. Deadly       | 66. Holy          |                 |
| 29. Dozing       | 67. Horde         |                 |
| 30. Dreadful     | 68. Idol          |                 |
| 31. Dreamlike    | 69. Innocent      |                 |
| 32. Dripping     | 70. Insomniac     |                 |
| 33. Eager        | 71. Intercept     |                 |
| 34. Earnest      | 72. Interesting   |                 |
| 35. Elegant      | 73. Internal      |                 |
| 36. Evening      | 74. Invention     |                 |
| 37. Event        | 75. Jade          |                 |
| 38. Every        | 76. Jasmin        |                 |
|                  | 77. Jeering       |                 |
|                  | 78. Joyful        |                 |
|                  | 79. Jumping       |                 |

## Spark Table 2

1. Nascent	36. Raging	73. Vain
2. Native	37. Range	74. Velvet
3. Natural	38. Rapid	75. Verdant
4. Nervous	39. Rest	76. Vicious
5. New	40. Ring	77. Victorious
6. Nobody	41. Risk	78. Vile
7. Noise	42. Ritual	79. Volcano
8. Note	43. River	80. Watch
9. Oak	44. Roiling	81. Water
10. Oath	45. Root	82. Way
11. Obedient	46. Round	83. Weird
12. Oblivion	47. Rousing	84. Wield
13. Obvious	48. Savage	85. Wild
14. Old	49. Sensation	86. Windy
15. Open	50. Slimy	87. Wolf
16. Ore	51. Squalid	88. Wonderful
17. Organism	52. Squid	89. Yacht
18. Path	53. Stolen	90. Yarn
19. Pattern	54. Stone	91. Year
20. Peasant	55. Strange	92. Yearning
21. Pit	56. Swamp	93. Yellow
22. Poke	57. Thief	94. Yield
23. Pony	58. Thought	95. You
24. Pot	59. Thunder	96. Young
25. Propel	60. Tiger	97. Yours
26. Purity	61. Timid	98. Zealot
27. Quail	62. Torch	99. Zenith
28. Quake	63. Tornado	100. Zone
29. Quality	64. Trembling	
30. Quandary	65. Trench	
31. Quarter	66. Trial	
32. Queen	67. Trouble	
33. Quest	68. Ugly	
34. Quiet	69. Undead	
35. Quote	70. Underground	
	71. Underhand	
	72. Upheaval	

## Example Journey (2 Scenes)

*Young Aiden wants to travel from his village to visit a hermit in the wilderness about 3 days away.*

**STEP 0:** The player decides this is going to be a minimum 2 Scene Journey.

### Scene 1:

**STEP 1:** Choose a SCENE FOCUS as the most likely/preferred.

*Chooses ENVIRONMENT as young Aiden is heading into rocky and remote terrain.*

**STEP 2:** Roll 1d6 on the SCENE FOCUS Table, gets a 2 so it is the Chosen Type “Environment”.

**STEP 3:** Rolls 1d4 on the ENVIRONMENT SCENES Table, gets 1 “**Movement**”. (Could have simply CHOSEN “Movement” but preferred to roll).

We must now devise a Scene around that Focus. We could make further rolls for inspiration or just imagine something.

*A bridge has collapsed due to heavy rains, and Aiden needs to cross a river.*

If we just imagined a “Place”, consider adding it to the “Places of Interest” List.

*Adds the “Ruined Bridge” to the list of Places.*

**STEP 4:** Use some skill roll(s) from the game system to determine success and consequences and play out the Scene.

If needed, roll on the two Spark Tables for inspiration.

**STEP 5:** At the end of the Scene, roll 1d6 to see if there is an Additional Scene in the Journey, gets 2 so **no**.

### Scene 2:

**STEP 1:** Choose a SCENE FOCUS as the most likely/preferred.

*Chooses ENVIRONMENT as young Aiden is still in rocky and remote terrain.*

**STEP 2:** Roll 1d6 on the SCENE FOCUS, gets 6 SOCIAL.

**STEP 3:** Roll 1d10 on the SOCIAL SCENES Table, gets 7 “**Authority**”.

We must now devise a Scene around that Focus.

*Perhaps the character(s) encounter a patrol of soldiers. They could be looking for a criminal or looking for contraband. Perhaps they search our bags or expect a toll?*

**STEP 4:** Use some skill roll(s) from the game system to determine success and consequences.

*Maybe they are headed in the same direction, and I could tag along (safety in numbers) if I can make a Persuade (skill roll).*

If I just encountered a Person or significant Creature, consider adding to the List of “People & Other Monsters”.

*Add the “Patrol” to the list of People & Other Monsters. Possibly add the name of the Patrol Leader and the local Ruler they serve and maybe add the name of the Fort/Settlement they come from to the Places list.*

**STEP 5:** Roll 1d6 to see if there is an Additional Scene in the Journey, gets 1 so **yes**.

### Additional Scene:

**STEP 1:** Choose a SCENE FOCUS as the most likely/preferred.

*Chooses ENVIRONMENT as young Aiden is still in rocky and remote terrain.*

**STEP 2:** Roll 1d6 on the SCENE FOCUS, gets 3 COMBAT.

**STEP 3:** Roll 1d10 on the COMBAT SCENES Table, gets 1 “**Ambush**”.

We must now devise a Scene around that Focus.

*Perhaps the Patrol spots a camp of bandits and intends to sneak up.*

**STEP 4:** *Will the character(s) help in the ambush? Or warn the bandits? Or try to stay hidden?*

Even if the Bandits are all killed, consider adding them to the list of People & Other Monsters. If they are randomly rolled in future, perhaps this indicates they left some treasure in their hidden camp, or they served a Bandit Chief who is looking for revenge, or a fellow traveller was previously robbed by them and recognises your new horse!

**STEP 5:** After the Additional Scene, roll 1d6 again to see if there is another Additional Scene, gets 2, so **no**.

This 2-Scene Journey is now complete (after 3 Scenes).

# Starting a Campaign

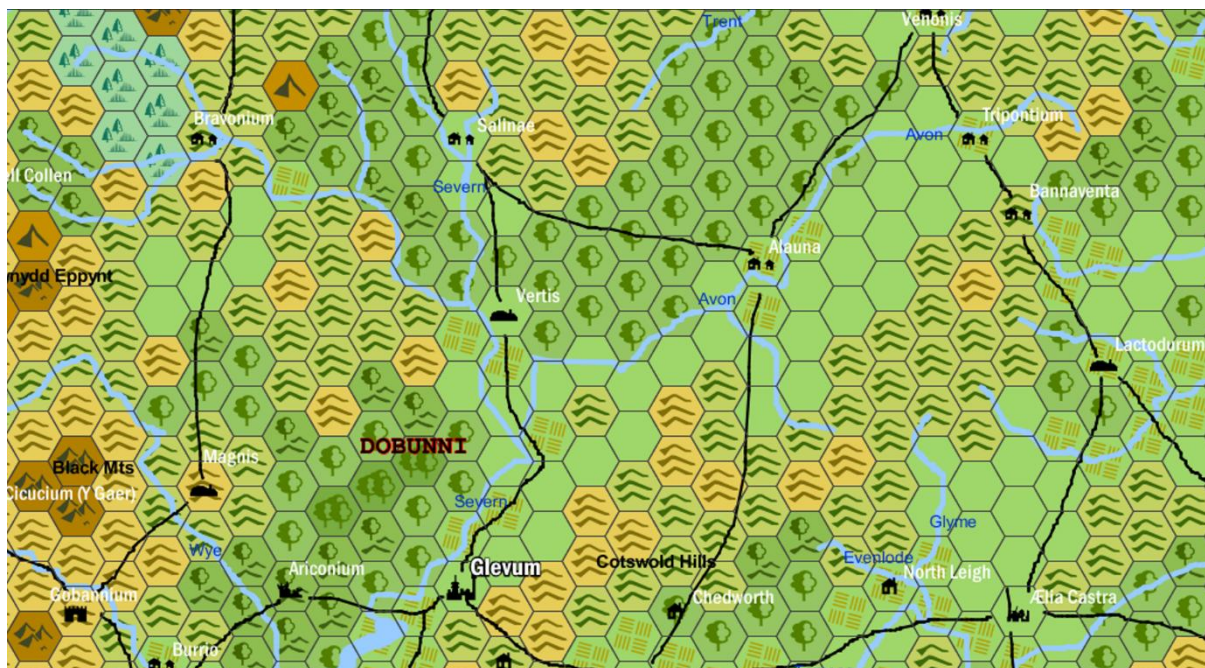
It may seem a bit vague to suggest this, but the best way to start is ... just start.

The following steps are to start a campaign with an EMERGENT Story. ie. A story that emerges from the combination of your imagination augmented by the semi-random rolls of the framework.

## 1. Imagine a SETTING (LOCAL and UNDETAILED)

Find a hex map that looks interesting. *I decided to use one of Dark Ages/Roman Britain* <https://darkagebritannia.weebly.com/> This map is supplied freely for personal use in RPGs. It shows the whole of Britain in 6-mile hexes.

Just zoom in and pick an area that looks interesting to use as your home region. *I picked somewhere around where I actually live...*



A bit of googling discovered that Alauna is probably an old Roman name for Alcester, a small town near my own home of Evesham, 2 hexes SW along the Avon, so I intend to start in ancient Evesham in about 700 AD. There was an Abbey and Monastery with surrounding farmland.

*I plan to use a roughly historical setting, but where folk lore and superstition (Magic, Faeries, Ghosts, Witches etc.) are basically true. I'll not generally impose the gender roles and restrictions that probably existed back then and won't focus too much on disease and*





infant mortality. My Dark Ages will be a “green and pleasant” grey, rather than unremitting gloom.

I add Evesham Abbey and the nearby town of Alauna to my “Places of Interest”

1	Evesham Abbey and Settlement
2	Alauna (Alcester) - small market town on the Arrow River
3	
d4	

Remember to roll a d4 when a random “Place” is required and you have fewer than 4 entries.

## 2. Imagine a few LOCAL FOLK

### 2.1 Family?

Not every Adventurer needs to be an orphan/loner with a traumatic past. Perhaps you envision having one or more parents? Perhaps one or more siblings? For a quick start, just imagine one Parent, what’s their occupation, what’s a significant trait or “thing they do”? Or roll for it if you have a suitable random table.

I’ll add my Father to my List of People & Other Monsters, **Ulfstan** – one of the Monks who tends the Herb and Vegetable gardens of the Monastery (I’m thinking of Cadfael!). Maybe he joined the Order a few years ago having previously been a soldier.

### 2.2 Local Authority?

Imagine who is “in-charge” of the local community.

The Abbot is in charge of the community around the Abbey and has a small (maybe 4 guys?) militia to keep the peace among the Monks and surrounding farmers. Let’s call him **Abbot Tiberius** and imagine him to be chubby, lazy and more dedicated to his religion and his authority, than he is to the actual welfare and happiness of his folk.

I’ll add Abbot Tiberius to my List of People & Other Monsters.

	People & Other Monsters
1	Ulfstan (Father) Monk Herbalist (ex-soldier) Evesham Abbey resident (based on Cadfael)
2	Abbot Tiberius, Lord of Evesham Abbey, has 4 militia, fat, lazy

Remember to roll a higher dice (1d4) when rolling to determine a random one. If you roll an empty entry, make up something new and interesting.

### 3. Pick a nearby hex as a place to start

Pick somewhere 2 or 3 hexes away and imagine that your character is **heading home** from there.

### 4. Answer These Three Questions

Just jot down brief answers to these questions (as brief or lengthy as you feel comfortable). There may be some overlap in the answers. Don't worry if you add some extra facts but keep it brief.

#### 4.1 Why are you there?

*I'll say... I'm in the hills, 2 hexes due south of the Abbey. I went up there to have some peace and quiet.*

#### 4.2 Why are you alone?

*I'll say... I went up there to be alone and have a think about what I want to do with my life. At 17, I'm considering whether to go travelling or to join the Monastery. From the hilltop, I can look down at the little community that has been my entire life.*

#### 4.3 Why are you heading home?

*I'll say... I'm heading home for my evening meal and to tell my father what I've decided (Travelling for a while before settling down). I've only been out for a day. I may get into trouble for wandering off when there is always work to do in the gardens.*

### 5. Work out the FIRST SCENE for your Journey Home

You will be using the mechanics from "[The Basic Procedure](#)" (as further explained in the "[Example Journey](#)") as a JOURNEY to make your way back home, with an estimated two Scenes.

For now, just determine what type of Scene you'll be playing for the FIRST one.

Once you've determined the [Scene Focus](#), roll on the table for the specific type of Scene.

You don't have to plan this First Scene out in detail yet, you just want to plant the seed of it in your mind before you go into the next step, [Character Creation](#).

### 6. CREATE YOUR CHARACTER

Note that I've already decided on the **Setting**, got some idea of my **home** life, been thinking about **what I want to do with my life** and discovered what **Scene** I'm about to be thrown into and I haven't "officially" decided on a Race, a Gender, a Profession, a Name or even what RPG Game System I'll be playing!



In reality, I MAY have come into this with some of these things already in mind. It doesn't really matter at this point, but thinking about Setting, Family, Local Authority figure and then "Where am I" and "Why am I there" and "Why am I heading home" questions has hopefully given you a few ideas for an emergent story. Later on, we can use various suggested Quest/Mission suggestions to give us ideas, but for now we'll just play through the simple journey home to get familiar with the framework.

*For my examples, I've decided to use a D&D-adjacent system called "Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures" which has a Lifepath system where you can pick a Character Playbook (equivalent to picking a Class and Background) and then have random tables for Life Events that shapes the character's Attributes and Skills as well as asking you to define a couple of key people and places and events. It is ideal for creating young adventurers in a low-magic, historical setting.*

Most of the Character Creation process is outside the Augmented Imagination Solo Framework but I'll suggest a few modifications to aid survivability as a Solo character using D&D5E and also using Beyond the Wall. See the Appendix [Adjusting Game Mechanics for Solo Survivability](#).

*The Core Rulebook for "Beyond the Wall" includes Character Playbooks for...*

- *The Self-Taught Mage*
- *The Untested Thief*
- *The Village Hero*
- *The Witch's Prentice*
- *The Would-be Knight*
- *The Young Woodsman*

*There are dozens more Playbooks in later supplements.*

*With the guidelines described in the Appendix [Adjusting Game Mechanics for Solo Survivability](#) I'll make a **Young Woodsman**, but I intend to let them also use Magic like a Mage.*

**Dex & Wisdom = 10, all other stats = 8.**

For "**What did your parents do in the village?**" I rolled 7 "*Your parents ran the local inn. You grew up meeting many travellers and hearing their tales*", but as that contradicts what I'd already decided for my father Ulfstan (Monk Herbalist and Former Soldier) in Step 2.1, I instead CHOOSE 10 "*Your father was a watchman, stern but fair with child and stranger alike*". This gets me **+2 Str, +1 Cha, +1 Con, Skill: Athletics**

If I'd rolled something for my mother, or for some other person, I'd have added them to the List of "People & Other Monsters".

For “**What distinguished me as a child?**” I rolled 4 “*No secret escaped you.*” And gained **+2 Int, +1 Dex**. Having decided in advance that my character will be able to use Magic, perhaps this unearthing of secrets was when my fascination with Magic started.

For “**Who else in the village befriended you?**” I rolled 8 “*The grizzled mercenary who settled in town taught you a thing or two*” and gained **+1 Dex, +1 Con, +1 Wis**. I’ve added them (still unnamed) to the List of “People & Other Monsters”.

You become a level 1 Rogue. You gain the class abilities **Fortune’s Favor** (you start with 5 Fortune Points) and **Highly Skilled** (2 additional Skills at +2), and the **skill Survival**.

For “**What sort of woodsman are you?**” I rolled 4 “*You wander the wilds, making nary a sound*” and gained **+3 Dex, Skill: Stealth**.

For “**What is your hidden Talent?**” I rolled 6 “*You make the best stews*” but decided to CHOOSE 3 “*You collect Old Lore*” and gain **+2 Int, Skill: Ancient Lore**. I’ll use that to reinforce how I came to learn Magic. I’ll also assume I learned to read and write at the Monastery Library, so will add Monastery Library to the List of Places of Interest.

For “**How do you make yourself useful to the village?**” I rolled 5 “*You bring delicate herbs to the healer and aid him in his work. The friend to your right often aids you in this endeavour, and gains +1 Wis*” and gain **+2 Wis, Skill: Herbalism**. The “Healer” can be Ulfstan, my father and the Solo Character gains the **+1 Wis** that should have gone to a friend.

The final Playbook roll is for “**What did you find in the woods that no one knows about?**” and I rolled 1 “*Hidden chest of money and a gem*” but CHOOSE 2 “*A deep cave complex with many entrances hidden in a vine-covered stretch of rocky riverside.*” And gain **+2 Int, my own little cave**.

I’ve used the two additional skills to make **Stealth +4** and **Ancient Lore +4**.

Following the suggestions in *Appendix [Adjusting Game Mechanics for Solo Survivability](#)*.

- I get one additional skill for starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> Level. I’m going to choose **Sense Magic** instead of an actual Skill (an ability usually limited to Mages).
- I also give Aiden two Cantrips, two Spells and one Ritual (as a Mage character would normally get these).

Finishing off the Character Playbook gives me ...

- Max Hit Points at each Level = 3d8 = 24
- 5 Fortune Points (as a Rogue I’d get “Fortune’s Favor” anyway but I recommend giving it to ALL Solo characters).

- Aiden is a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Rogue (also having the Cantrips, Spells and Rituals of a 1<sup>st</sup> Level Mage)

(I'm using Roll20 VTT for the Charactersheet)...

Character Sheet
Bio & Info
Attributes & Abilities

NAME: Aidan
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
PLAYER: SOLO (Augmented Imagination)
EXPERIENCE: 3,000
CLASS: Rogue
BASE ATTACK BONUS: 1
LEVEL: 3
INITIATIVE: 3

STRENGTH

10

0

melee to hit  
melee damage

DEXTERITY

15

1

ranged to hit  
armor class  
initiative

CONSTITUTION

10

0

hit points per  
level

INTELLIGENCE

14

1

languages  
known

WISDOM

14

1

save vs mind  
control

CHARISMA

9

0

max # of allies

13

5

24

24

Armor Class

Fortune Points

Hit Points

Current

WEAPONS

Knife	2	1d4	0
Name	To hit	Dice	Damage
Longbow	3	1d8	0
Name	To hit	Dice	Damage

+Add

Modify

SKILLS

Athletics	Str	+2	Normal
Name	Attribute	Bonus	Difficulty
Survival	Wis	+2	Normal
Name	Attribute	Bonus	Difficulty
Stealth	Dex	+4	Normal
Name	Attribute	Bonus	Difficulty
Ancient Lore	Int	+4	Normal
Name	Attribute	Bonus	Difficulty

+Add

Modify

SAVING THROWS

13

16

12

15

14

Poison

Breath

Polymorph

Spell

Magic Item

MAGIC



<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; padding: 5px;"> <span>Poison</span> <span>Breath Weapon</span> <span>Polymorph</span> <span>Spell</span> <span>Magic Item</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; padding: 5px;"> </div>	<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">MAGIC</div>
<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">CLASS ABILITIES</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;">Fortune's Favor - 5 Fortune Points</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;">Highly Skilled - 2 Skills at +2</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;">Sense Magic</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"></div>	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <b>Cantrips:</b>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 70%;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;">Mage Light</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">Name</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;">Second Sight</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">Name</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">+Add</div> </div> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: right;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">Int <span style="font-size: 0.8em;">▼</span> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">Int <span style="font-size: 0.8em;">▼</span> </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">Attribute</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">Attribute</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">Modify</div> </div> </div> <div> <b>Spells:</b>  <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;">Abjuration</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">Name</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;">Opening Touch</div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">Name</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="font-size: 0.8em; margin-top: 2px;">Description</div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 2px;"></div> </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">+Add</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">Modify</div> </div>

**Rituals:**  

Arcane Experiment

It's clearly "cheating" to add the abilities of a Mage to a Woodsman character but remember that this is a Solo Adventure with a Solo Adventurer and there is no need to strive for "balance" with the PC of another player. The Solo character can usually only use one ability at a time, so it merely helps to make them more versatile and have more options for how to tackle problems.

I've chosen cantrips and spells that have a low-magic feel, rather than blasting my foes with beams of fire. I also chose things with the potential to lead me into adventure... Aiden has Second Sight so he will be able to see spirits and faerie creatures that most folk cannot. He can summon a Mage Light (useful to explore dark tunnels). The spell Abjuration lets him try to repel hostile spirits. His other spell, Opening Touch, should prevent him from being locked out of interesting locations and help him get free if he's ever imprisoned. His Ritual, Arcane Experiment, acts like D&D's "Identify" spell and should allow him to understand magical things he discovers in the course of his adventures.

## 7. Play the Journey Home

You can now imagine the first scene (determined in Step 5) and now you know a bit more about your Character (and the RPG System you've chosen to use), you can describe the scene to yourself in a way that suits the character (their skill set and level) and the system (suggesting what skills and abilities the scene might challenge and what type of obstacle, enemy or situation you need to overcome).

**STEP 0:** Decide roughly what you'd like to do and how many Scenes it should take.

**We already decided on 2 Scenes to make the journey home in section 5 above.**

### 7.1 Scene 1 of the Journey Home

**STEP 1:** Pick your Chosen Focus (COMBAT, ENVIRONMENT, KNOWLEDGE or SOCIAL)

**STEP 2:** Roll for the Scene Focus.

**STEP 3:** Roll for the Scene Details (or you may CHOOSE if you rolled 1 or 2 on the Scene Focus Table)

- Add any relevant/interesting characters, places or things that crop up to the relevant List.
- Use the [Ask the Bones](#) mechanism if you need help deciding something.

**STEP 4:** Play out the Scene. A Scene can be as short as you want or as extended. It should ideally contain at least one challenge that requires either creative thinking/narration to deal with or at least one Skill Roll or Saving Throw using the RPG system to resolve.

*Other Scenes might involve multiple such dice rolls or entire combats. Deciding how long a Scene should be and when to end a Scene is a skill you will quickly develop after a few sessions of play. There is no single RIGHT answer as it will depend on your preferences and the narrative framing.*

**STEP 5:** Check for an immediate Additional Scene. Assuming you survive it, once the scene is over, make the roll (1 on a D6) to see if there is an immediate Additional Scene. If the situation seems more dangerous or frantic, feel free to check twice or three times if you prefer.

If there is an immediate Additional Scene, go through the [Basic Procedure](#) again and remember you won't have had any opportunity between the scenes to recover from injury (hit points) or regain any spent resources (like spells or Fortune points).

After the Additional Scene (if you had one) make the roll to see if there is another immediate Additional Scene. If there is, loop back to 7.1 and **STEP 1**.

## 7.2 Scene 2 of the Journey Home

Following the Basic Procedure again...

- **STEP 1:** Decide on a Chosen Focus. Either pick what best seems to suit your intended activity (eg. Environment if you're travelling) or pick what you'd LIKE to do next (eg. Combat if you particularly want to do that).
- **STEP 2:** Roll for the [SCENE FOCUS](#).
- **STEP 3:** Roll for the Type of Scene on the [Combat](#), [Environment](#), [Knowledge](#) or [Social](#) Detail tables (or you may CHOOSE if you rolled 1 or 2 on the Scene Focus). Follow the instructions from the result to Imagine a relevant and suitable scene.
- **STEP 4:** Play out the Scene using the Game Mechanics of your RPG to determine success/failure and any costs/losses.
- **STEP 5:** Assuming you survive it, once the scene is over, make the roll to see if there is an immediate Additional Scene and follow the same basic procedure.

## 7.5 You Reach Home

Assuming you survived the number of encounters you decided in Step 0 (not counting the ones that arose as Additional Scenes), and didn't generate any consequences that prevented you, your character should have made it back home. **CONGRATULATIONS**, you've completed your first small adventure!

## 8. CONTINUE PLAYING

The Basic Procedure always remains the same.

- **STEP 0:** Decide roughly what you'd like to do and how many Scenes it should take.  
*If nothing comes to mind, or you want to have the framework suggest the next chapter of your story, you can roll for Quest/Mission Ideas and let that guide you.*
- **STEP 1:** Select a Chosen Focus.
- **STEP 2:** Roll for [Scene Focus](#)
- **STEP 3:** Based on the result, roll the detail on the [Combat](#), [Environment](#), [Knowledge](#) or [Social](#) Detail tables.
  - Use the [Sparks Tables](#) for inspiration where needed.
  - Add new [People](#), [Places](#) & [Things](#) to your Lists.
  - Use the [Ask the Bones](#) mechanism if you need help deciding something.
- **STEP 4:** Use the mechanics of your chosen RPG System to play the Scene and help you work out whether you succeed or fail and what consequences you get.
- **STEP 5:** Always check for an immediate Additional Scene.

## Quest/Mission Ideas

If you have trouble with “Decide roughly what you’d like to do”, then you should consider generating a Quest or Mission idea using the mechanisms in this section.

This ideally needs an awareness of your Setting and any Places/People/Things but there are some more generic guidelines that you can use to augment your imagination.

You can choose who might be the Quest Giver or [Ask the Bones](#), or make a short list of possible sources and roll for it.

I recommend CHOOSING a general type of Quest/Mission but if you want to roll for it there are 6 types, so roll 1d6.

1	Monster hunting
2	Artefact hunting
3	Person to be rescued/found
4	Some information is to be found
5	There is a gathering/event you want/need to travel to
6	You are being hunted by something/someone dangerous

## Monster Hunting

You learn the rough location of a monster that is...

1	Terrorizing the locals
2	Has valuable treasure
3	Contains a useful resource
4	Dangerous enough to boost your reputation
5	Amazing enough for you just to want to see
6	May or May Not exist, but you have to find out

You might use your Random Encounters by Biome to determine the type of creature or just imagine a good target. You could roll on the table below but should bear in mind your Setting and RPG System and character’s capability. It may be better to write your own 1d6 Table including creatures that sound **interesting** and **narratively appropriate** and **not impossibly dangerous**!

1	Dragon/Wyvern
2	Undead (Zombie, Ghoul, Wight, Wraith, Vampire, Lich)
3	Dire Beast (Wolf/Boar/Bear)
4	Lycanthrope (Wererat, Werewolf, Wereboar, Werebear)
5	Ogre/Troll
6	Faerie Creature/Hag

You can randomly determine the distance and direction, but feel free to imagine these yourself if you want the story to include an epic journey or prefer it to take place much nearer.

When you get to the target area, you could hope for one or more Knowledge Scenes to pinpoint the creature. You might hope for a Combat Scene and interpret it as the creature finding you.

You might roll a Knowledge Scene before you set off on the journey, to represent further investigation into the creature's location or vulnerabilities.

You might roll a Social Scene (before or during the journey) and use it to either hear rumours about the Creature, or to attempt to recruit help.

You might roll an Environment Scene and imagine that it presents a physical obstacle to reaching the creature or offers the chance of finding somewhere or something along the way.

## Plot Twists for Monster Hunting

If you feel that a Plot Twist is POSSIBLE any time, decide how likely it is and [Ask the Bones](#). It's worth considering this when you are about to have a Scene that finally reveals the target monster.

You could also **consider** triggering a Plot Twist (or at least a check for one) any time you fail a roll and get matching numbers on the two dice.

While Monster Hunting, the following would make interesting/challenging Plot Twists...

1	The Monster is a much less impressive foe than expected
2	The Monster is a much more dangerous foe than expected
3	There are more of the Monster(s) than expected
4	The Monster is a "pet" to an evil NPC
5	The Monster is an Undead version (or if Undead, it is a living creature)
6	The Monster is intelligent (or if it was already intelligent, it can cast spells)



## Artefact Hunting

You learn the rough location of an artefact that is...

1	Needed to cure some local issue/disease or curse, or answer some puzzling problem
2	Valuable as treasure
3	A useful magic item
4	A stolen item the owner wants returned
5	Amazing enough for you just to want to see it
6	May or May Not exist (but you have to find out)

A Knowledge Scene might provide information to pinpoint the thing, or a warning about magical protections or severe dangers in the artefact itself.

A Combat Scene might indicate a guardian to be overcome

A Social Scene might indicate a negotiation required with some people who guard/worship the artefact, or an opportunity to recruit help or supply equipment.

An Environment Scene might indicate an obstacle or a natural resource.

### Plot Twists for Artefact Hunting

If you feel that a Plot Twist is POSSIBLE any time, decide how likely it is and Ask the Bones. It's worth considering this when you are about to have a Scene that finally reveals the target artefact.

You could also **consider** triggering a Plot Twist (or at least a check for one) any time you fail a roll and get matching numbers on the two dice.

While Artefact Hunting, the following would make interesting/challenging Plot Twists...

1	The Artefact is a much less impressive one than expected (perhaps a forgery, or bronze rather than gold, or coloured glass rather than gems)
2	The Artefact is a much more significant than expected (perhaps magical, legendary)
3	There are other valuable (or cursed) artefacts at the site
4	The Artefact has already been claimed by an NPC
5	The artefact is cursed
6	The artefact is intelligent (or if it was already intelligent, it can cast spells)

## A Person to be Rescued/Found

Somebody has gone missing and either there is a reward offered, or the person is known to or valued by your character, or your character is just a kind & decent person.

1	They were travelling and haven't returned
2	They were taken by someone or something
3	They simply vanished from their local area
4	A ransom note has been received
5	They were on a Monster Hunting or Artefact Hunting mission of their own
6	They are guilty of something and Wanted Dead or Alive

You could use [IDENTIFY A TARGET](#) for the victim AND for the perpetrator.

You could create victim and/or perpetrator NPCs using the guidelines in the [NPC Chapter](#) and the [MOTIVE table](#).

You could pick a location at random or maybe pick a few potential locations and need to investigate them to determine which is the right one.

## Plot Twists for Person Hunting/Rescue

If you feel that a Plot Twist is POSSIBLE any time, decide how likely it is and Ask the Bones. It's worth considering this when you are about to have a Scene that finally reveals the target person.

You could also **consider** triggering a Plot Twist (or at least a check for one) any time you fail a roll and get matching numbers on the two dice.

While Person Hunting/Rescuing, the following would make interesting/challenging Plot Twists...

1	The Person doesn't need rescuing after all, but is happy where they are
2	The Person is being guarded/imprisoned by a much more dangerous foe than expected
3	There are more people to rescue than expected
4	The Person is now a "pet/servant" to an evil NPC
5	The Person is now Undead
6	The Person is already dead

## Some Information is Required

You (or an NPC) want some information that is not easily obtained locally.

1	It will need to be found from a distant Library
2	It is only known to a distant Sage/Wizard/Hermit (who may demand a quest of their own before being willing to tell you)
3	It may involve solving a multi-stage riddle
4	It may need stealing from some dangerous individual
5	It may be carved onto Standing Stones in the territory of some hostile clan/creatures
6	It may be a secret known only to some evil cultists/thieves' guild

## Plot Twists for Information Gathering

If you feel that a Plot Twist is POSSIBLE any time, decide how likely it is and Ask the Bones. It's worth considering this when you are about to have a Scene that finally reveals some significant information.

You could also **consider** triggering a Plot Twist (or at least a check for one) any time you fail a roll and get matching numbers on the two dice.

While Information Gathering, the following would make interesting/challenging Plot Twists...

1	The Information is not available here
2	The Information is a much more dangerous/significant than expected
3	The Information is far more cunningly concealed/cryptic than expected
4	The Information has been taken/hidden by an evil NPC
5	The information is hidden nearby
6	The information has been deliberately hidden or twisted into a lie

## There is a Gathering/Event you want to travel to

This is mainly a reason to get you on a journey in order to have a narrative that supports more Scenes.

1	A Religious Pilgrimage
2	A Wedding
3	A Birthday Party
4	A Funeral
5	A famous teacher may be willing to teach you
6	A vision/dream is leading you somewhere

## Plot Twists for Gatherings/Events

If you feel that a Plot Twist is POSSIBLE any time, decide how likely it is and Ask the Bones. It's worth considering this when you are about to have a Scene that finally reveals the other guests (or the host) or the Event.

You could also **consider** triggering a Plot Twist (or at least a check for one) any time you fail a roll and get matching numbers on the two dice.

While Gathering, the following would make interesting/challenging Plot Twists...

1	There are fewer guests than expected (possibly only you) or more attendees if you expected to be alone
2	The host (or one of the guests, if you are the host) is a much more dangerous foe than expected or the event itself is much more dangerous than expected
3	The Gathering/Event was a trick to ambush you or the quest-giver
4	The Gathering/Event was a trick to ambush one or all of the guests/attendees
5	The Gathering/Event happened yesterday
6	The Gathering/Event will happen in a day or a week or a month's time

## You are being Hunted (Why?)

The idea of the “Hunted” set of quests/missions is that you have somehow become aware of it and it should trigger some activity from you such as running away? investigating? preparing?

1	As a result of a Prophecy received by the antagonist (true or false or mistakenly interpreted)
2	Revenge for something you have done or are believed to have done (possibly instigated by the spirit of someone you killed or thwarted)
3	Because of something you possess (or are thought to possess)
4	For Sport or as an Initiation by some cult/faction
5	For a crime you are known (or thought) to have committed
6	For a random Motive (roll on the Motives table)

## Hunted by What/Who?

If/when it makes sense that you should know what or who is pursuing you...

1	A magically summoned/compelled monster or beast or golem
2	A hired assassin or bounty hunter
3	One or more Undead
4	A child or ill-suited mostly harmless person
5	A sorcerer
6	A whole tribe or family

## Plot Twists for You are being Hunted

1	The Hunter has good intentions
2	The Hunter has mistaken you for it's true prey
3	The Hunter is merely a pawn of whoever sent/tricked/coerced them
4	The Hunter is really after a different member of your party
5	The Hunter is not as dangerous as you believed or is far more dangerous than you believed
6	The Hunter is really something different than expected (roll again on the “ <a href="#">Hunted By</a> ” table)

# NPCs

This chapter contains guidance for fleshing-out NPCs and suggestions for how to handle encounters with them.

1. Imagine or Roll to gauge the NPC's initial level of [Hostility](#) (or Friendliness).
2. Imagine or Roll a Motive. If the NPC is Unfriendly or Hostile, then this is the reason for that reaction, otherwise it is more of a general personality focus.
3. Imagine or Roll their other Characteristics such as Apparent Age, Apparent Gender, Apparent Social Class and a couple of NPC Descriptors

## 1. Hostility Table

**Roll 2d6 + Hostility Modifier** (ranges between -3 and +3)

<b>4 or below</b>	Friendly, willing to help without obligation
<b>5-6</b>	Willing to listen, could be persuaded to help without obligation
<b>7-8</b>	Neutral – might help if given an incentive
<b>9-10</b>	Unfriendly/Aloof – unlikely to help unless given a VERY good reason
<b>11-12</b>	Hostile/Aggressive – likely to attack or actively hinder
<b>13</b>	Hostile/Seething with hatred – either attacking or conspiring against you
<b>14+</b>	Hostile/Nemesis! Will only be satisfied with your utter destruction

### Hostility Modifiers for Beasts

For most Beasts, the Hostility Modifier should be +2 for predators, +1 for wild herbivores and +0 for domesticated creatures. For Beasts known to be particularly aggressive, make them +3.

If the result is two odd numbers, then use the “[SEEMS](#)” mechanism.

### Hostility Modifiers for People & Other Monsters

There should be a much more diverse spread of Hostility Modifiers for “people”.

Combat-trained people are generally more aggressive so...

- Soldiers, Guards, Militia +1
- Bandits and Poachers +2
- Assassins and Fanatic Cultists +3

Rural Folk are generally more friendly (+1 to other locals\* at least)

- Farmers and Labourers +0\*
- Priests and Monks -1\*
- Tavern-keeper and Merchant and Herbalist -2\*
- Tinker, Pedlar -3

## Hostility “SEEMS”

Each type of NPC should be given a Hostility Modifier based on how likely they are to attack the PC on sight.

When the NPC is encountered, roll 2d6 + Hostility Modifier and consult the HOSTILITY Table below...

**If the dice are both odd numbers**, then the result means that this is what their basic reaction **SEEMS** to be, but depending on your actions (and relevant Skill or Ability checks using the RPG System mechanics) their basic reaction **MIGHT** be re-rolled.

Most of the time, it is assumed that you can accurately judge the mood/intention of people you meet, but sometimes, you will be unsure. In such cases it may be worthwhile trying to negotiate with an outwardly hostile person using Persuade or Intimidate skills or a Charisma check, or trying to use a skill like Insight, or a Wisdom check to confirm their true mood/intent.

The higher the result of the Reaction Roll, the more hostile the NPC appears to be. This should always be interpreted IN CONTEXT. So meeting a “hostile” berserker in the wilderness might lead to an immediate attack, while the same “hostile” result in a Lord’s Hall might be a heated argument and angry glares.

This Reaction mechanism (with the SEEMS sub-system) is aimed to provide interesting twists in behaviour such as...

- An apparently friendly person who turns out to be a psycho.
- An apparently hostile person who is really just blustering but is actually a softie.
- A skilled diplomat who is hiding their true feelings with a veneer of civility.

The Hostility Modifiers for most types of beasts, people & other monsters should range from -3 to +3.

Eg. Local Priest (generally -1, additional -1 for other Priests, additional -1 for his flock)

Eg. Bandit (generally +2, additional +1 if you seem rich and outnumbered)

Eg. Wolf +2, Cow +0

## Changing Hostility

In RPG Systems with an INTIMIDATION skill or a PERSUADE skill\*. use the one that most matches your actions and intent. In other games you might use a CHARISMA Check. As with all such rolls, feel free to grant yourself a bonus or a penalty based on the situation.

You may want to consider giving yourself a tactical choice when doing this...

Normally you could move the Hostility Level up or down by a single row on the table. If you fail by 5 or more, consider moving them in the opposite direction.

Allow attempting to move them two rows if you make the roll with a significant penalty (eg. Disadvantage in D&D5E, or a penalty of 4 in Beyond the Wall). However, if the roll fails, move them one step further in the other direction.

\*In rare circumstances, you might use a skill like DECEPTION or PERFORMANCE to get them to reveal their true intent/motive (or a CHARISMA or INTELLIGENCE Check in systems without such skills) or get them to change. When dealing with Beasts, you might substitute ANIMAL HANDLING skill, (or even RIDE Skill if dealing with typical mounts).

## 2. Motive

Once you have determined an NPC's level of [Hostility](#), if you get any of the Hostile results, you should work out a Motive for it. Either Imagine a [Motive](#); or use the [Ask the Bones](#) mechanism; or roll on the [Motive \(People\)](#) or [Motive \(Beast\)](#) Table.

If the original roll on the [Hostility Table](#) was **two odd numbers**, then the result is to be interpreted as what their level of hostility **SEEMS** to be. The same remains true for their Motive.

If they SEEM Hostile, then their Motive will SEEM to be what you've determined.

### Recognising True Intentions & Motives

Once you've decided on your intended behaviour, you can narrate what you do or say and then make a roll to see whether you can discern that they may have a different level of Hostility and/or a different Motive.

In RPG Systems with an INSIGHT skill, use that. In other games you might use a WISDOM Check.

If the roll fails, you should act as though you believe they are what they SEEM. This may mean getting into a fight with a potential friend or allowing yourself to be swindled or ambushed by a hidden enemy.

If you don't yet know the true Hostility and Motive, to preserve a sense of uncertainty and potential for surprise, when the story reaches a point where you (as the GM) need to know, [Ask the Bones](#) (making it 50/50, Likely or Almost Certain, depending on how you feel about the situation) whether to re-roll the [Hostility](#) & [Motive](#).



### 3. Other NPC Characteristics

#### NPC Apparent Age

Feel free to imagine how old an NPC is (or appears to be) or to roll but have a minimum and/or maximum age in mind (so you don't generate a Bandit Leader who is a toddler or an Ancient). **If the roll is two odd numbers**, then the result should be interpreted as the age the NPC [SEEMS](#) to be. If/When it becomes necessary/possible to tell for sure, you could use [Ask the Bones](#) to see if a different result is needed.

2d6	
2	Baby
3-4	Toddler
5	Child
6	Youth
7-8	Adult
9-10	Middle-aged
11	Old
12	Ancient

#### NPC Apparent Gender

Feel free to choose, and feel free to use non-binary descriptors if they would be appropriate in your imagined setting. If the roll is two odd numbers, then the result should be interpreted as the gender the NPC [SEEMS](#) to be. If/When it becomes necessary/possible to tell for sure, you could use [Ask the Bones](#) to see if a different result is needed.

2d6	
2-6	Female
7-12	Male

## NPC Apparent Social Class

Feel free to choose, and feel free to use whatever labels/titles would be appropriate in your imagined setting. If the roll is two odd numbers, then the result should be interpreted as the social class the NPC [SEEMS](#) to be. If/When it becomes necessary/possible to tell for sure, you could use [Ask the Bones](#) to see if a different result is needed.

2d6	
2	Beggar
3	Thrall
4	Labourer or Entertainer
5	Shepherd or Militia
6	Farmer
7	Tradesman or Warrior
8	Craftsman or Bard
9	Monk or Priest
10	Abbot or Bishop or Official
11	Noble
12	Royal

## NPC Descriptors

- |                  |                 |                  |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Able          | 35. Hungry      | 69. Pleasant     |
| 2. Angry         | 36. High        | 70. Proud        |
| 3. Artful        | 37. Holy        | 71. Pompous      |
| 4. Artistic      | 38. Hairy       | 72. Pale         |
| 5. Bullying      | 39. Hopeful     | 73. Popular      |
| 6. Brave         | 40. Indignant   | 74. Quaint       |
| 7. Bold          | 41. Idle        | 75. Querulous    |
| 8. Beautiful     | 42. Impulsive   | 76. Quiet        |
| 9. Big           | 43. Impish      | 77. Rosy-cheeked |
| 10. Cold         | 44. Joyful      | 78. Rotund       |
| 11. Cuddly       | 45. Jaded       | 79. Randy        |
| 12. Callous      | 46. Jaundiced   | 80. Raging       |
| 13. Cantankerous | 47. Jealous     | 81. Strange      |
| 14. Craven       | 48. Kind        | 82. Staggering   |
| 15. Crooked      | 49. Loving      | 83. Sweet        |
| 16. Childlike    | 50. Little      | 84. Stupid       |
| 17. Dull         | 51. Languid     | 85. Tall         |
| 18. Dangerous    | 52. Lazy        | 86. Terrifying   |
| 19. Dirty        | 53. Long-winded | 87. Timid        |
| 20. Dense        | 54. Mighty      | 88. Talkative    |
| 21. Dozing       | 55. Morose      | 89. Ugly         |
| 22. Emotional    | 56. Merciful    | 90. Upset        |
| 23. Exotic       | 57. Mangy       | 91. Unkind       |
| 24. Energetic    | 58. Miserly     | 92. Unbelievable |
| 25. Eerie        | 59. Nice        | 93. Vile         |
| 26. Empty        | 60. Naughty     | 94. Violent      |
| 27. Foul-mouthed | 61. Nasty       | 95. Vapid        |
| 28. Foreign      | 62. Nervous     | 96. Vague        |
| 29. Fetid        | 63. Naked       | 97. Wild         |
| 30. Forceful     | 64. Odious      | 98. Weedy        |
| 31. Grand        | 65. Old         | 99. Whimsical    |
| 32. Gay          | 66. Obese       | 100. Young       |
| 33. Gruesome     | 67. Obscure     |                  |
| 34. Grave        | 68. Outrageous  |                  |

# Appendices

## A. Adjusting Game Mechanics for Solo Survivability

### D&D5E Solo Adjustments...

I'll use D&D5E as an example of the types of Solo adjustments you may need to make...

- a) you may want to allow a Solo hero to try and give themselves Advantage on an attack by making a relevant Skill check as a Bonus Action (eg. Stealth or Deception for a feint, Acrobatics to swing on a chandelier), or an Intelligence Save representing a clever idea, if they can't get chances for Flanking bonuses from allies. Perhaps risking Disadvantage if the roll fails. Come up with some narrative justification to exercise your creativity.
- b) You may want to ignore the extra damage from critical hits made against your Solo character.
- c) You may want to have your character's critical hits always do maximum damage.
- d) You may want to let your character always gain maximum hit points each Level and when spending hit dice to recover or when receiving healing from potions and spells.
- e) You may want to award your character Inspiration whenever they roll a "1" as it can be easier to have a "mechanical" rule like this than to have to judge if something you did is worthy of gaining Inspiration.
- f) You may want to ignore the rule about Death Saves with a "1" counting as two fails, or even determine that any successful Death Save, stabilises and restores the hero to 1 hp. In this way they can avoid ignominious deaths by bleeding out and only die when it seems narratively fitting that the enemy actually finishes them off.
- g) You may want to give your Solo Character the Rogue's Cunning Action (Hide, Disengage or Dash as a bonus action)
- h) You may want to allow your Solo Character to begin at a higher Level. Typically, 3<sup>rd</sup> Level is a decent place to start, with more options (Feats & Class Abilities, spells, hit points etc)
- i) You may want a non-magical character to be able to cast spells, so feel free to grant them Magic Initiate Feat and/or multi-class into one of the spell-casting classes.

## Shadowdark Solo Adjustments

- a. You may want to allow a Solo hero to try and give themselves Advantage on an attack by making a relevant Skill check as a Bonus Action (eg. DEX or CHA for a feint, DEX to swing on a chandelier), or INT representing a clever idea, if they can't get chances for Flanking bonuses from allies. Perhaps risking Disadvantage if the roll fails. Come up with some narrative justification to exercise your creativity.
- b. You may want to ignore the extra damage dice from critical hits made **against** your Solo hero.
- c. You may want to have your hero's critical hits always do **maximum damage on the additional dice rather than rolling.**
- d. You may want to let your hero always gain maximum hit points each Level and when spending hit dice to recover or when receiving healing from potions and spells.
- e. You may want to award your hero a LUCK TOKEN whenever they roll a "1" as it can be easier to have a "mechanical" rule like this than to have to judge if something you did is worthy of gaining Luck Tokens. **Allow your hero to have (and start with) a number of Luck Tokens equal to their Level instead of just a single one. Also gain a Luck Token at the start of each session.**
- f. You may want the Death Timer to count how many rounds the "dying" hero is helpless for. When it runs out, the hero automatically stabilizes and returns to 1hp. The Solo hero only dies when it seems narratively fitting that the enemy (or environment) actually finishes them off.
- g. You may want to allow your Solo hero to begin at a higher Level. Typically, 3rd Level is a decent place to start, with more options (An extra Talent Roll, spells, hit points etc)
- h. You may want a non-magical hero to be able to cast spells, so feel free to grant your non-spellcasting hero first-level Priest or Wizard abilities **ON TOP OF** the abilities of their starting class. When they increase in level you can choose whether to increase their effective Class Level or their Spell-casting Class Level and gain more "Spells Known By Tier" and choose which Talent table to roll on.

## Beyond the Wall Solo Adjustments...

- a) I'll use one of the Character Playbooks rather than "design" the character as it prompts you to develop a few NPCs.
- b) If you have a strong idea what you want to be, feel free to CHOOSE one of the entries in a table but only if you REALLY don't like the one you rolled.
- c) Because I'm going to adventure with a single character rather than a Party, when the Playbook tells me to add to the Stats of the Player to my right or left, I'll give that extra point to my character.
- d) If you want to be able to cast spells, just allow it. For a more magical character, feel free to allow them Cantrips and Spells and Rituals too (like a Mage) and to pick **Sense Magic** as a Skill.
- e) As suggested for D&D5E, I'll start at a Higher Level than usual (3<sup>rd</sup>) and this system has some vague elements to what that involves...

*Over the course of a longer campaign, groups may find it appropriate to award other advantages for levelling up. For instance, we often like to allow everyone to gain a simple +1 to two different ability scores every five levels or so, or occasionally to award a character a new skill when it makes sense for her to have learned something new and exciting.*

- I'll just grant 1 additional skill (gaining +2) or you can choose a skill a second time to become an expert (+4).
- f) I'll grant maximum Hit Points at each level (not just at 1<sup>st</sup> Level).
  - g) Hit Point Recovery will be at double the normal rate ie. 2 pts for a night's rest. With the usual +2 HP if you are being tended by somebody with relevant skill. If you get bedrest all day you get another +2.
  - h) All Solo Characters (not just Rogues), get Fortunes Favour (5 Fortune Points)
  - i) A Solo character who has run out of Fortune Points, regains 1 at the start of every play session and whenever you roll a Natural 1 on an attack or Natural 20 on a Skill Attribute Check.
  - j) Even though there are no official Critical Fumbles in this game, you should feel free to imagine what has gone wrong (serious or comical) when one occurs. You can spend a Fortune Point to re-roll any dice result made for the Character EXCEPT for Natural 1s on Attacks/Saves and Natural 20s on Skill/Attribute Checks. This is a general House Rule suggestion, not just for Solo.
  - k) If a Solo Character is at zero HP or below and Stabilizes (usually by spending a Fortune Point to Cheat Death or by being healed by an NPC) they recover to 1 HP instead of recovering to zero.
  - l) Beyond the Wall doesn't have any official Morale Check rules for NPCs and Monsters, but feel free to [Ask the Bones](#) at any time when it seems like an opponent might surrender, flee or try to negotiate. Is it 50/50, Likely or Almost Certain?