

SKY-STORIES

A Mini-Supplement for the Skyfarer RPG

By Chris Gardiner

Sky-Stories is a short collection of additional materials to help you run games of SKYFARER, the tabletop roleplaying game set in the world of the *Sunless Skies* videogame from Failbetter Games. It includes:

- new starting situations to kick the action off,
- new allies and antagonists to complicate your adventures,
- ideas for missions your locomotive's captain was pursuing before they met their unfortunate fate,
- and short descriptions of perils, ports, treasures and discoveries your players could find in the sky.

All entries are organised into tables of ten, so if you want to trust the dice and roll on them randomly, you can. We hope you'll use this material to invent your own stories and adventures. The skies are yours, now.

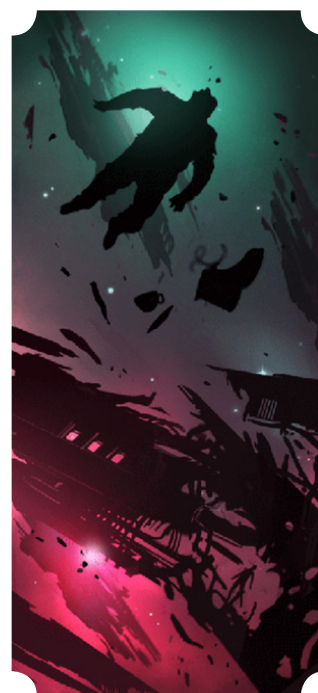
Good luck, skyfarer!

Starting Situations

To supplement the lists given in the Skyfarer RPG, here are some more ideas for crises, characters and motives to help you get your games up and running.

Ten More Troublesome Crises

1. *Hiding in a monster-haunted sea of mists from the ingenious bounty-hunters that are hunting for you.*
2. *Caught in the middle of a bitter battle between London-loyalist Stovepipes and rebellious Tacketies.*
3. *Tethered by harpoons to a furious sky-beast which turned out to be much bigger and angrier than anticipated.*
4. *The last of your locomotive's food has just run out. You're still a long way from home. The engineers are sharpening knives.*
5. *Surrounded by a herd of irritable Cantankeri, into whose territory you have strayed.*
6. *Your engine is being pulled apart by the bronzewood fingers of a Scribe-Spinner as the creature hunts for books and scrolls.*
7. *You probably shouldn't have brought that egg aboard. Something's been following you ever since, and now the egg is beginning to hatch...*
8. *Caught in the Storm that Speaks, whose lightnings write fiery sigils across the sky, and whose winds speak to you in voices from your past.*
9. *Separated from your locomotive and lost in a hostile fungal wilderness. What's worse, one of you is badly wounded.*
10. *Locked in the cargo hold by a mutinous faction who have seized control of your engine. Their purpose is nefarious.*



Ten Missions your Captain was Engaged Upon Before Everything Went Horribly Wrong

1. *Engaged in a race around the sky with a rival, after rashly betting the last of his fortune on victory.*
2. *Carrying secret information that could affect the course of the struggle between the London-loyal Stovepipes and the independent Tacketies.*
3. *Fleeing a disastrous heist with the haul they stole from their vengeful (former) accomplices.*
4. *Responding to a distress signal from a perilous part of the sky.*
5. *Providing passage for a dignitary of Her Majesty's court as they travel to their new appointment: is it a promotion? Or an exile?*
6. *Braving a Windward Company blockade to smuggle a hold full of freshly-mined hours to an impatient client.*
7. *The captain is an author or poet seeking inspiration among heaven's marvels... and its terrors.*
8. *Undertaking a journey of discovery into an uncharted part of the sky. What buried mysteries did they hope to find?*
9. *Seeking a glorious death in the skies. He had not informed the crew of his intent.*
10. *Returning home to the family that awaits them. This was, after all, supposed to be the captain's final voyage.*



Ten More Allies and Antagonists

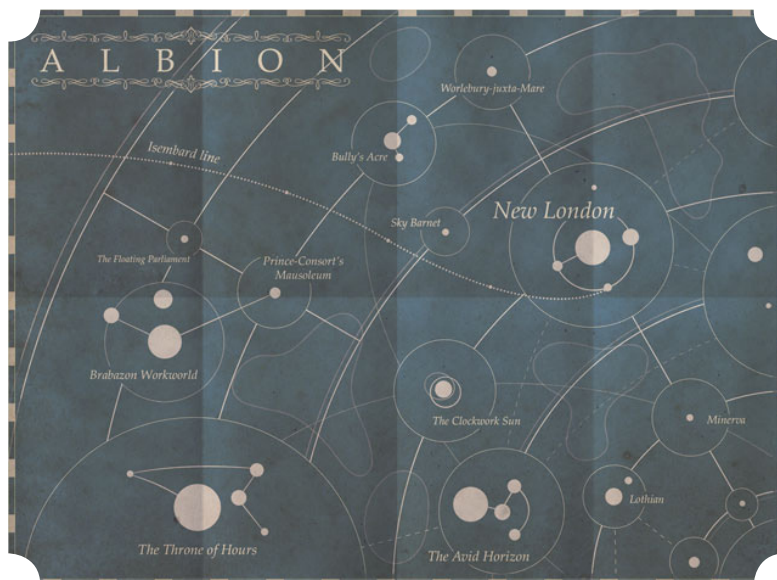
1. *A fastidious agent of London's Horological Office, charged with resolving chronological irregularities across the Empire.*
2. *A group of escapees from one of the workworlds, hoping to make a new life in the days remaining to them.*
3. *A pitiful collection of tentacle-faced Rubbery Men in battered hats and mouldy overcoats. They probably want something, but it's impossible to tell what.*
4. *A gang of ravaging marauders in scrappy engines, looking for any sign of weakness or wealth.*
5. *A struggling, hustling trader, who has invested everything in one last deal he hopes will transform his fortunes.*
6. *The injured survivor of a locomotive crash, desperate to get home. But is she keeping a secret?*
7. *A travelling magician, fleeing a pact he made with the things behind mirrors.*
8. *An alliance of Spirifers — illegal soul-traders — operating under the cover of a different vocation.*
9. *A band of secret cannibals, always on the lookout for victims who won't be missed.*
10. *A collector of antiquities, who has acquired — through dubious means — something they shouldn't have.*

A Skyfarer's Miscellany

Here are lists of dangers, places, treasures and discoveries that you can incorporate into your games. Use them as twists, as scenery, as motives for you characters, or just as colour to make the world feel rich.

Ten Perils of the Heavens

1. **The Sky Itself:** *the sky is wide and remorseless. Its air is breathable (if thin) but the cold is savage. Unless you're wearing a properly-manufactured sky-suit, it'll kill you in minutes. What's more, it is plagued with thick mists, savage storms, and numberless winds. The Peacock Wind causes food to sprout distressing and occasionally talkative growths. The Candlewind causes ravening hunger. The Waste-Wind provokes intense loneliness.*
2. **Cantankeri:** *irritable, half-fossilised isopods capable of battering through an engine's hull. Sometimes, miners digging into sky-rocks for buried hours find sleeping cantankeri instead. The cantankeri are not pleased to be disturbed.*
3. **Scrive-Spinsters:** *tall as giants, wrought of bronzewood and clad in tatters of paper, the Scrive-Spinsters once managed the greatest library of heaven. Since its destruction they are bereft, and keep to forgotten places unless roused by the scent of paper and ink.*
4. **Marauders:** *pirates, outlaws and murderers, who adorn their scrappy locomotives with fearsome heraldry. Some are lone thieves; others are part of extensive criminal clans.*
5. **Star-Maddened Explorers:** *they drove their locomotive too close to the stars, for too long, and were driven mad. Unpredictable and dangerous.*
6. **Scorn-Flukes:** *vast, spiky sky-anemones whose spines and pulpy cores are decorated by ritual scarification. They are the raving outcast-prophets of their kind, typically furious, and speak fiery, destructive syllables in the tongue of heaven.*
7. **Curators:** *intelligent, locomotive-sized chiroptera, able to pry an engine apart with their claws, or pummel it with their hellish shrieks. Curators accumulate hoards, which they guard violently. Each hoard collects artefacts or creatures themed to the Curator's particular obsession.*
8. **Chorister-Bees:** *bees the size of dogs, each marked with a blazing sigil. They don't buzz, but sing in plainsong. They may be benign – as long as you don't carry any Chorister nectar.*
9. **Aeginae:** *vast beasts that lurk in the mists at heaven's feet. The suns contract them to perform deeds of apocalyptic destruction. They devour time.*
10. **Wells:** *holes in the sky, prowled by harrying well-winds which drag reckless locomotives in. Each well is a prison for some enemy of the stars: anything too powerful, too personal, or too useful to kill outright.*



Ten Ports in The Reach

1. **New Winchester:** *the greatest port in the Reach, fought over by the independent Tacketies and the London-loyalist Stovepipes.*
2. **Port Prosper:** *often called 'Little London,' a stronghold of the Windward Company, who wish to quash the Tackety rebels and monopolise the hours-trade.*
3. **Lustrum:** *a riotous, independent port on the slopes of the Mother of Mountains. It throngs with prospectors mining for buried hours.*
4. **Magdalenes:** *the House of Small Comfort, where skyfarers find solace in lies. For a price, the attendants will become a face from your past, an unattainable muse, or an invigorating rival.*
5. **Carillon:** *an infernally-sponsored sanatorium dedicated to the betterment of the soul. It's devils concoct imaginative penitences for an affluent clientele.*
6. **Titania:** *a bohemian port tucked in the petals of a gargantuan orchid. Prone to being destroyed by swarms of Chorister-Bees.*
7. **Hybras:** *a far-flung, isolated speck of a colony upon a lonely, fungal wilderness.*
8. **Leadbeater & Stainrod Nature Reserve:** *a wilderness preserve under the stewardship of the Leadbeater & Stainrod company.*
9. **Port Avon:** *a quaint village nestled amidst apple orchards and cyclopean ruins. Beneath the ruins are stores of prehuman souls, which the locals excavate and export.*
10. **Traitor's Wood:** *a sealed, pre-human grave lies at the heart of this hunted wood.*

Ten Things of Value

1. **Barrels of Unseasoned Hours:** *hours are mined from sky-rocks in geodes, within which grow the salt-like filaments of individual minutes. The Reach is rich with them. Once mined, most make their way to London where Her Majesty bestows them upon her favoured servants.*
2. **Ministry-Approved Literature:** *comprising such works as have been edited and approved by the Ministry of Public Decency before being declared fit for general consumption.*
3. **Bottled Souls:** *wispy and restless. They are extracted and purchased by devils, who accompanied London to the sky. Souls can be of varying quality and the more exceptional may be traded to minions of the stars.*
4. **Bronzewood:** *hewed from the gargantuan trees of the Reach. It is resilient, the heartwood (which must be tunnelled for) is flexible, and it makes good plating for engines.*
5. **Navaratine Gemstones:** *one of the currencies of heaven. Said to be the sparks that fell from the Forge of Souls, they are extortionately expensive.*
6. **Caddies of Dried Tea:** *real tea is rare, but acceptable substitutes have been manufactured from assorted leaves found in the heavens.*
7. **Sacks of Verdant Seeds:** *the flora of the Reach is improbably fecund. Its seeds grow quickly, even violently, into crops that sustain London's settlements in the sky.*
8. **Crates of Carefully-Packed Munitions:** *there is no peace in heaven. The simmering conflict between the Windward Company (and others loyal to London) and those settlers who want independence for the Reach frequently boils over.*
9. **Gourds of Chorister-Nectar:** *used as a sweetener and as an aid to the voice by singers and performers. It is gathered by Chorister-Bees, who are frenzied in their pursuit of it.*
10. **Panes of Stained Glass:** *this close, the light of the stars can prompt dangerous obsessions. Most locomotive windows are made of stained glass, to provide a modicum of protection.*

Ten Discoveries to Find in the Heavens

1. **Sky-Rocks:** *chunks of rock, tumbling through the sky. Mining-engines crack them open in search of precious hours.*
2. **Homesteads:** *most settlement in the Reach takes the form of tiny homesteads, clinging to drifting spurs of land. You may find welcome and a meal there, if you are courteous.*
3. **Fragments of the Past:** *the Reach is peppered with ruins; all that remains of the kingdom once ruled by its long-lost sun.*
4. **The Stacks:** *fragments of the Sundered Library of Heaven, in which scraps of ancient records and maddening stellar wisdom can be found.*
5. **Curator's Eggs:** *large, sticky, papery globes which contain the collections of the chiropterous Curators. You'll never know what's inside one until you open it. Or something inside does.*
6. **Wrecks, Flotsam & Jetsam:** *countless engines have met a gloomy end in the sky. They may still hold supplies or valuables, if you are brave enough to walk among the dead.*
7. **Wefts of Unravelling Time:** *in some places, the weave of time has worn thin. A locomotive caught in a weft will be buffeted by warring moments, as its past and futures fight over the present.*
8. **Beds of Pardoner-Eels:** *writhing knots of temperamental eels, three to nine feet in length. Eel-fishers catch them and pickle them in what they claim is a Reach delicacy.*
9. **Chorister-Hives:** *the Chorister-bees gather in grand hives, bringing their nectar and singing their mournful plainsong. Don't antagonise the bees.*
10. **Messengers:** *vast celestial crustaceans who carry messages from one star to another. Colonies of lesser creatures (like Rubbery Men or Curators) often populate and build on their shells, riding them through the sky.*

