

Trouble at the Lake - Demo Adventure

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Overview

This is a 2-hour demo adventure to teach 2-6 new players to how to play The Hero Instant.

There are [pre-generated characters](#) for this adventure. They are:

- Bio A biological healer and shape-shifter
- Night Sky With flight and darkness powers!
- Shaolin Fast Fastest fists and feet in the west!
- Subtlety A 35-foot tall suit of armor!
- Animus An ice monster!
- Rooster X A Moto-cross daredevil with telekinetic powers!

Add 1 more hour if you intend for the players to make their own characters for the adventure.

What you will need:

- A handful of d10's.
- A THI Time-Tracking sheet
- A Battlemat or graph paper, as you like, and marking tools.
- Pencils and erasers
- White Poker Chips for **Stun Tokens**
- Black Poker Chips for **Drama Tokens**
- One other token per player as **Progression Tokens**.
- Printouts of the above characters
- Figures or pawns to represent the characters: whatever you have around.



Step 1: Character Selection

Let the players select the pre-gen character they each like best.

1a) Players choose Hero and Drama Traits for their characters

The pre-gen characters' Hero and Drama traits have been left blank for the players to fill in, giving them a small but important part in the creation of their character.

Hero Traits - Hero Traits are aspects of your character that make them heroic. Choose things that are easy to role-play. You want to be performing these traits frequently through the game.

Drama Traits - Drama Traits are the darker, weaker aspects of your character that make them human and fallible. Choose things that would make interesting complications to the story.

There are extended descriptions, and lists of example Hero and Drama Traits in the **Character Creation Rules**.

1b) Players each tell a story about how they were Heroes recently.

When the players have selected their Hero Traits, each should describe something his or her character has done in the last hour to earn one or more Hero Points (and check the appropriate boxes.)

Step 2: GM Only! - What's Really Going On

This section is for the GM only to read. This tells you (the GM) what is really happening, and is not meant to be read aloud to the players. You can reveal bits of this information as you see fit once the game is progressing.

- **DO THIS FIRST:** After the players have selected their character's Drama Traits, write down each one at the end of this section. Think of something that you could use Drama Tokens for that would relate to each of the Drama Traits.

In this scenario, mercenaries have been hired to kidnap a bunch of beach-goers at a mountain lake. They don't know who has hired them, only that they were meant to rent a handful of trucks, drive the trucks up the lake, load them with beach-goers, then knock them out with sleep gas for the ride back into the city, where they would be unloaded at an abandoned warehouse.

This demo adventure can be used as a lead-in to a longer campaign where the Heroes have to find out who is responsible, and thwart an evil master-plan.

The lake is up in the mountains about 1 hour out of town, along a winding canyon road. It is inside the boundaries of a National Park, and so at that border, there is a gate and Forest Rangers there to take the park fees and give out maps and directions. Once inside the recreation area, centered near a beach swimming area is a boat ramp, clusters of campsites, public showers and restrooms. There are several lifeguards on duty: one at a floating lifeguard tower and one tower on the beach. The swimming area is roped off from the boating area, and the lake, which is quite large, wraps extends further up several winding canyons and wraps around several small islands.

It is a lovely summer day, and there are lots of people there; some there for the weekend camping, and some that just drove up from the city for the day. Lots of kids.

Assuming that the Heroes don't or can't stop the Mercenaries, here's how the Mercenaries' plan would go down.

- 1) They rent and drive 4 moving trucks up to the lake.
- 2) First take out and replace the rangers at the park entrance and prevent others from coming in. Load 1 van with people at the entrance and send it back to town.
- 3) Drive the other three trucks to the lake, corral all the people on the beach and campground into the back of these trucks at gunpoint.
- 4) Throw knock-out gas grenades into the backs of the trucks before closing the doors,
- 5) Then drive those three trucks back to a warehouse in the city to unload the victims.

However, that didn't go exactly as planned. The Mercs got through part 1 and 2 without a hitch, but then found that corralling up people in a campground was harder than they expected. They also did not know that cell-phone towers had just been erected at the lake, and that the victims would be able to make 911 calls, alerting the authorities. They got most of their trucks loaded, but left a few to round up stragglers, which is taking longer than expected. That's when the heroes will arrive on the scene.

Timeline (in Time Units)

Note to GM: remember that the players will arrive sometime before 0 on the timeline. If any of the heroes are flying (and not trying to fly low and be stealthy), they will likely see whatever's happening at the beach area. If the heroes arrive by the only road in, they will first interact with the fake rangers at the ranger station.

**TU Event**

- 100 A sleep grenade is thrown in the back of the truck with the victims at the ranger station, it is closed up and is driven back down toward the city. It doesn't look out of the ordinary. The other three trucks are already at the beach. False rangers are left at the station to turn anyone else back.
- 80 At the beach, People are rounded up and begin to get loaded into the trucks.
- 30 A sleep grenade is thrown into the back of the 1st rental truck at the beach, it is closed and locked and leaves the beach area.
- 20 A sleep grenade is thrown into the back of the 2nd rental truck, it is closed and locked and leaves the beach area.
- 10 A sleep grenade is thrown into the back of the 3rd rental truck, it is closed and locked and leaves the beach area.
- 0 The 1st rental truck from the beach drives out of the park past the ranger station.
- 10 The 2nd rental truck from the beach drives out of the park past the ranger station.
- 20 The 3rd rental truck from the beach drives out of the park past the ranger station. It is supposed to stop and pick up the false rangers left there.

Step 3: Set Up the STORY

Establish that the characters know each other and either are a team, or have worked together at least a few times in the past.

In fact, they have been called together as the heroes of their city by the world organization called M.A.G.I. to be ready for extra-dimensional threats. M.A.G.I. is a world-wide organization put together after some mystics broke through the barriers between worlds and discovered alternate dimensions. Your heroes, as the super-heroic people of this city, have been 'deputized' by M.A.G.I. to keep an eye out for extra-dimensional threats. The heroes have even been given a communication 'crystal' to use to alert M.A.G.I. if something extra-dimensional occurs.

But today is a beautiful, warm, sunny, summer Saturday. The group of heroes is together (at their clubhouse? HQ? Denny's?) when they get a call from 911 dispatch telling them that armed men in rental trucks are attacking the campers and swimmers at the lake. Reports are chaotic, based on 911 calls, and no-one is able to reach the Park Rangers to find out what is going on. The Heroes have the best chance of getting there quickly.

The lake is about an hour out of the city up a winding canyon road (assuming one maintains the speed limit.) It would take a helicopter maybe 20 minutes to get there.

The players should decide how to get everyone there. Do they all go together, or do some go alone to get there faster?

Whichever heroes traveling to get to the scene, they roll their Initiative dice to find out how quickly they arrive. If they go by road, they first encounter the **Ranger Station**. If they arrive by air, they can go directly to the **Beach**.

Step 4: Play it out!

Now that the characters are made and the scene has been set, you're in the game!

As mentioned before, let the players discuss and choose how they will get to the lake. They might all decide to go together, or they might send the fastest person to scout ahead.

Let each player roll their Initiative. The amount that each one rolls is the number of time units BEFORE 0 they arrive. That is, the Heroes will arrive at the scene some amount of time before '0' on the Timeline. What they roll is that amount. For any heroes that stay in a group, they arrive at same time: the time the slowest hero in the group would arrive.

If they fly, they can go straight to the **Beach**. If they take the road, they will arrive first to the **Ranger Station**.

Scene A) The Ranger Station

The ranger station is two buildings: one is a small hut in the center of the road that controls the swing arm gate that can be lowered to block the road in. The other building is off to the side, beyond a small parking lot, that has a pair of restrooms and a small shop in which you can buy snacks, water, and local maps.

The Mercs have taken control of the Ranger Station. They have closed the small shop and are in the hut in the road. The Mercs are wearing the ranger's outfits over their body armor, which makes them look a little odd and lumpy. They are not allowing any vehicles further up into the camping area because it is 'too full' or there is a 'bee swarm' they are taking care of. They do not necessarily use the same story for each vehicle.



Scene B) The Beach

A wide sandy beach drops off toward the lake's edge in round 'bay' on the southern side of the lake. The Beach is ringed to the south by a grassy picnic area, and then by a narrow parking lot. There is one small restroom / shower building in the center of the parking lot. A boat-ramp and another, larger parking lot are several hundred feet to the west.

When the Mercs first arrive, they brought 5 vans and lined them up in the narrow parking lot around the beach. They herded the frightened beach-goers into the first three and set them off back down the hill. Two more stayed to collect stragglers on the beach and near the boat ramp.

Depending on when the heroes arrive, refer to the timeline to describe what they see the mercs doing. Perhaps they arrive as the mercs are rounding up victims, or maybe they arrive in time to see the mercenaries throw a gas grenade into the back of a truck and lock it up. Perhaps they are late enough to only see trucks driving away toward the ranger station.

The Winding Mountain Road

This Mountain Road is the only way into the national park from where it turns off from the highway that runs along the base of the mountains. The road is quite winding, and has 15 mph speed limits signs everywhere. A safe speed near the lake is 8 Movement (about 20mph). At that speed, it takes 30 Time Units (6 Move Actions) to get from the Beach area to the Ranger Station without any driving rolls. It is 30 spaces between each as the Hero flies, or 48 spaces by road.

The difficulty of any driving roll is = to the speed you want to travel - the safe speed. So if you wanted to drive at a speed of 25 Movement down this road, the difficulty is 17 (= 25 - 8). Other hazards might make this roll even harder. If you fail this roll you **begin to crash**.

A crash takes 10 Time Units. To avoid a crash with a basic driving roll (Aim), you must make another roll at that same difficulty +10. If you make it, you avoid the crash, and your Movement is set = to the amount you made the roll by (meaning that you slowed down). If you fail this second roll, you crash off the cliff.

Hiking Trails (Off-road vehicles)

There are very rough and steep hiking trails scattered throughout the woods. To get from the Beach to the Quonset Hut or to the Ranger Station is an off-road drive of about 40 spaces. A safe movement speed is 4 spaces. The steep, rocky terrain and plenty of trees makes these trails extra difficult!

Enemies

Mercs

Stun = 3 (they are knocked out on the 3rd stun)

Perception: 3 (15 difficulty (+5 in combat)	Stealth: 2 (10) (+5 in combat)
Aim: 3 (15) (+5 in combat) (+10 w/ weapon)	Dodge: 2 (10) (+5 in combat)
Strength: 3 (15) (+5 in combat) (+10 w/ weapon)	Toughness: 3 (15) (+5 in combat) (+10 with body armor)
Influence: 3 (15) (+5 in combat)	Self-Control: 3 (15) (+5 in combat) (+15 to resist questioning)
Initiative: 3	Movement: 3

- **Improved Driving:** +1 dice to Aim (Difficulty 20)
- **Combat Armor:** +2 Toughness, -1 Dodge, -1 Stealth,
- **Gas masks:** (protection from their own gas grenades)
- **Professional Mercs:** +3 Self-Control to resist questioning. (Difficulty 30)
- **Combat Training:** +5 Difficulty all rolls related to combat.
- **Group Attack:** If a group of mercs can make an attack on the same target at the same time with the same weapon, treat it as a single attack at +5 difficulty for each extra Merc. That is, with 3 mercs, attack is at +10.
- **High-Tech Taser (Gun):** +10 difficulty (to Aim), ranged, requires training (or Science roll) to use the gun, electrical damage: anyone without specific defenses rolls 2 dice instead of Toughness. Dodge is OK.
- **Grenades:** Add 3 TU to any grenade attack before it explodes.
 - **Flash-Bangs:** Difficulty = 25 -5 for each space away from the center. For each success, 1 Stun and 10 TU Deafness (sonic) +10 TU Blindness (light)
 - **Sleep Gas,** 3 space radius. Difficulty 15 + 5 for every 5 TU stayed in the area of effect. Gas disperses in 100 TU.

Possible Drama-point Abilities

of Drama Points / 'Free' Action

- 1 Merc drops a grenade at his own feet. He has an Advantage when it goes off, because he knows when he pulled the pin.
- 1 Merc loses Stun tokens so that he matches his Group's Stun amount. (As a GM, this will help you track them on the Time Tracking Sheet)
- 2 Merc takes an innocent victim hostage (and is smart enough to mean it).

?? = Other Options Based on Player's Drama Traits: feel free to come up with your own, or even improvise during the game if it makes the story better.

- 1 (Animus - Angry) If injured, Animus's Self-Control is reduced by 1 until next Recovery.
- 2 (Animus - Communication Difficulties) Animus tells someone exactly the *wrong* thing.
- 1-4 (Animus - ??) _____

- 1 (Bio - Proudful) If injured, Bio's next action at -2 dice.
- 2 (Bio - Household cleaner) Merc grabs a bottle of window cleaner to use as a weapon: 30 Difficulty, biological attack.
- 1-4 (Bio - ??) _____

- 1 (Night Sky - Proudful) If injured, Bio's next action at -2 dice.
- 2 (Night Sky - Household cleaner) Merc grabs a bottle of window cleaner to use as a weapon: 30 Difficulty, biological attack.
- 1-4 (Night Sky - ??) _____

- 1 (Rooster X - Careless) One of the victims is injured accidentally
- 2 (Rooster X - Dangerous History) A Merc recognizes Rooster X
- 1-4 (Rooster X - ??) _____

- 1 (Shoalin Fast - Disrespectful) The authorities don't pay attention to Shoalin when he needs their help.
- 2 (Shoalin Fast - Fear of Drowning) If near water, Shoalin Fast's next action must be to move away from water.
- 1-4 (Shoalin Fast - ??) _____

- 1 (Subtlety - Alien Suit) The suit doesn't respond correctly
- 2 (Subtlety - Impatient) One of the victims is injured accidentally
- 1-4 (Subtlety - ??) _____