

The Troubleshooters – The Runaway Train

This scenario is a quick scenario for The Troubleshooters. It is intended for a small group of troubleshooters with good technical skills, and who are not afraid of getting involved in adventure (and even danger).

Plot hooks

This hook is most suitable for characters that have any of these hooks; *Do-Gooder*, *I Owe You*, *Looking for a Case*, and *Secret Service*.

Hook: “Professor Alain Giroux, who is an eccentric inventor and a friend of yours, calls you and ask for your help with a problem. He thinks that someone is spying on him and trying to steal his new invention. He would like some help with extra security as the project will be moved by train from Paris to Nice.”

Scene 1: Still on track, all aboard!

Professor Giroux recently had a major falling out with a former financier, Monsieur Saint-Croix, about the market for the professors’ invention. The professor has now rented an old warehouse in Nice, and will continue his research there. The professor is working on making more more efficient water purification and desalination plants, that are still small enough to be portable by trucks, or heavy helicopters, something that could be used to help disaster stricken areas. Saint-Croix wanted to sell it to the very wealthy for huge sums, so they would be safe in their luxurious mansions.

The professor thinks that Monsieur Saint-Croix has sent men to spy on him, and steal the equipment. He is in fact correct, though the men that were sent is not that competent. They will try to observe the professor’s movements, but have no clue on what to actually steal. However if the equipment is left unattended for a lengthy time, they will try to take it all on a nearby truck.

Scene 2: Off the rails

The train trip between Paris and Nice takes on average over 8 hours. Freight trains make more stops along the way, and is not pleasant to travel with. The professor and maybe some of the characters will travel aboard the train

The diesel-powered train slowly sets of from Gare du Sud. The train consists of two locomotives up front to deal with the heavy load, and 75 wagons. The 3 rearmost wagons are hired by the professor for his project. From the rear, they are cooling, generator, and equipment. A person can walk between them, even when they are moving. The rest of the wagons are loaded with heavy steel tubes, fuel and other dangerous dangerous chemicals such as propane gas. It is not intended to be able to move between the other wagons while in motion. Moving between them is normally an Agility-check at -2 pips unless they characters do something to make it safer, in which case it is a normal roll or better depending on how safe they made it. This can be a challenge, with for example

Agility, Alertness, and Willpower instead of many separate rolls for just Agility. Boarding the train when it is at full speed is at -5 pips.

About an hour after departure, the driver suffers from a heart-attack, and falls unconscious. Unfortunately, when he does that he falls over the controls and sets the train to increase to maximum speed. Someone now need to enter the front locomotive while it is in motion, stop the train to prevent a crash, get medical help to Monsieur Leblanc, and also let the traffic controller know where the train is so no other trains run into it. Easier said than done. Stopping the train is a Vehicles-check, though it takes time for the train to slow down properly.

Scene 3: Journey's end

If the characters succeed, they will be considered heroes, for stopping the runaway train, and avoiding a disaster. Monsieur LeBlanc will make a recovery if he gets medical help, but will retire. The professor will succeed in making his new equipment, and it will be put into production, and picked up by various organisations later.

If they fail to stop the train, the crash will be spectacular, with a huge explosion as a result.

Persons of interest:

Professor Alain Giroux

The professor is a thin jovial man in his mid thirties. He has a reddish hair, grey eyes, and the odd freckle. Always wears a white shirt, even when working with mechanical things. He somehow manages to keep it from becoming dirty. If needing stats, he should be about the same level as the characters.

Maurice LeBlanc

He is the unfortunate driver on the freight train from Paris and Nice. He is a man in his early sixties, with thin brown hair, and brown eyes. Too much food and a glorious misspent youth, has made him rather fat, and in quite bad health. No stats are normally needed as he is unconscious. If needed use those for super-generic specialist (page 207).

Philippe Saint-Croix

He is a wealthy man in his early fifties, with short blond hair, and a well-trimmed moustache, and blue eyes. He always dresses in fine suits. If asked about the goons, he will first deny any knowledge about it, and then if presented by facts, claim that he was only looking after his investment. He will refuse to engage the characters in any further dealings, and might make their lives problematic in the future. Use the characteristics of a Lieutenant for him if needed (page 208).

The Goons

The goons are three heavily built men that try to be as inconspicuous as possible. They fail to blend in though, and stick out like sore thumbs, as they are too well dressed to be truck drivers. Use the characteristics for underlings for these guys (page 209).