

Space Opera Support #3

Mysterious Passenger



Introduction

Mysterious Passenger is a small free product in the same vein as 15 Space Opera Passengers. *Mysterious Passenger* details one passenger with 6 different possible stories. 15 Space Opera Passengers offers a selection of 15 people (or groups of people), each with 5 different stories – 75 stories in all. Some of these stories can be the entire focus of a session, while others merely provide a diversion on the trip to make things more interesting.

Several of the stories for the passengers are exclusive of each other (for example, if you use option #1 you may not be able to use #3 with the same passenger). But that doesn't mean you can only use one of the stories each passenger has. By changing just a few details around (the passengers name, their sex, their age), as far as the PCs and players are concerned you have a new passenger who is causing a totally different problem.

Mysterious Passenger

On first impressions Vladimir Phalo seems like a quiet, if unremarkable man in his mid thirties who has managed to stay in reasonable shape. However the more someone speaks to Vladimir, the more they get the feeling that something isn't quite right – Vladimir doesn't come across as fully normal. If asked, no one is really sure why they get this impression. Because of this, after a while other passengers on board will unconsciously decide to avoid him where they can, or view him with some suspicion.

1. It's unfortunate that people view him with suspicion, as deep down Vladimir really is a nice guy. He just never quite mastered the art of human interaction (most of his pre-teen life was spent on a research station with only his mother and occasional assistant to interact

with). In particular his body language (and recognition of other people's body language) is totally wrong, which is the main reason why people unconsciously feel uncomfortable around him. If an effort is made to befriend him, after a short time that person will be able to tune in to Vladimir's mannerisms and the feeling of unease will leave.

2. Vladimir suffers from multiple personalities, without one personality being dominant. Most of the time Vladimir is under the control of several personalities at once, who all run things in a type of group consensus. It is the collective consciousness that makes Vladimir seem so unusual – his body language is a combination of the multiple personalities (causing him to give off mixed signals), and his speech and responses tend to seem slightly off as the collective decides on what to say, and how to say it. However there will be times where other, usually submerged consciousnesses will come to the front and control Vladimir for a time. These consciousnesses usually don't know what is going on (having been "asleep"), and may cause much confusion when Vladimir starts acting differently and asking everyone in a slightly different voice where he is. At the gamemasters discretion one or more of the consciousnesses may be violent or anti-social – when that personality finally submerges again, Vladimir will have no idea what he has just done.



Writing

Jason Anderson

Editing

Sarah Badcock

Copyright © 2006

Polgarus Games

All rights reserved

Some artwork

Misfit Studios ©

2005 by Steven

Trustum, used with permission.

All Rights Reserved

Some artwork ©

Jupiterimages

Corporation

SOS – Space Opera Support

The Space Opera Support line from Polgarus Games is an aid for busy gamemasters running a game in a space opera setting. No setting is assumed – the products are intended to be as generic as possible so they can be used in most settings. If you need quick adventure ideas, a planet or space station for the PCs to visit, or even passengers to travel on the PCs ship and cause trouble, Space Opera Support is the answer!

3. Up until a few years ago, Vladimir was a regular guy stuck in a low-paying job. Then the government on his homeworld came and offered him the chance to earn a large amount of money if he took part in a new experimental program. He was told the program was designed to help people from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds get ahead in life through a special learning program that taught subjects in their sleep. In reality the program was a trial of a new method for training assassins via subliminal programming. The process had a lot of side effects, and many people died during and shortly after the experiment. All of the survivors (including Vladimir) were changed, viewing the world in a slightly detached state and not really connecting with events or people – they seemed to lose their emotions. There was also an additional side effect. All the would-be assassins were programmed with a trigger phrase that would cause them to try and kill anyone around them if they heard that phrase. Unfortunately one of the passengers accidentally says Vladimir's trigger phrase one night during dinner, sending him on a killing rampage. If he survives, Vladimir won't remember anything about what happened and be horrified at what he has done.

4. Until several months ago Vladimir had it all – great job, great friends, fantastic wife, and lots of “things”. Then everything seemed to go wrong. His best friend caused him to lose his job (and tarnished his name so he hasn't been able to get a new one). The banks took back his house and most of his things. His wife ran off with another man. And his friends no longer return his calls since he is now a nobody. The entire experience has left Vladimir as shell of his former self, and with a severe distrust of everyone around him. Vladimir sold everything he had to buy passage on the PCs' ship, with the idea of trying to make a new start in a new location. But the treatment of him

of the other passengers will send him into a spiral of despair (ending with him attempting to take his own life) if the PCs don't try to befriend him and give some comfort.

5. Earlier in the day, as he was leaving his work to go home, Vladimir was surprised by a masked figure who demanded money from him. In a panic, Vladimir fought the man and accidentally killed him. To make matters worse, when he took the man's mask off he discovered the attacker was the business owners son! Vladimir panicked, figuring that he would be arrested for murder and sent away to prison. He headed straight to the nearest starport and booked passage on the first ship he could find. Vladimir is worried that he is being chased by the law and going to get arrested. This is playing on his mind constantly – so much so that he may have a nervous breakdown! At the very least it is making him react strangely to everything that goes on around him.

6. Vladimir doesn't seem normal because he isn't human. Depending on the setting he could be an android attempting to hide in human society (or an android that doesn't know he is an android), an alien in some sort of disguise, or even a creature that has taken over Vladimir's body and is controlling him like a puppet. This façade could be an attempt to infiltrate society to cause trouble, or it could just be a case of curiosity (to see what humans are really like first hand).

Vladimir Phalo

Age: 33

Height: 5'9"/175cm

Weight: 149lb/68kg

Eyes: Brown

Hair: Black

Skin: Pale

Clothes: Loose,
unstylish, plain