

The Train Job

An Iron & Aether adventure for 3-5 1st level characters
This adventure is a work in progress and is not indicative of the final product

Quickplay Guide

So, you want to play an introductory session of Iron & Aether but you only have about an hour or so. No problem! Simply follow these tips to facilitate a quicker, easier session.

1. Use the pre-built characters found in the “Characters” section of the Pre-Made Content area of the I&A website.
2. Have your players read the Quick-Reference Guide found in Part 1 of the Rulebook.
3. Constrain the adventure to everything from “The Heist” on; that is, explain to your players the premise of the adventure (that they have been hired to protect a shipment of what they’ve been told is arms and armor) but keep it constrained to just the action on The Autongrad Express.

A Secret Cargo

Baron Vanessa Vermeyer of the great industrial city-state of Autongrad has come across a stash of Dark Aether, about 100 pounds worth. Initially considering selling it throughout her district, she instead decides to do business outside of Autongrad to avoid having to give up part of her profits to the Governor. Her primary method of protecting her investment is secrecy, masquerading the true sale as an arms deal between herself and the town of Subiel; however, she fails to protect the secret well enough, and some of her employees catch wind of her sale and get it in their head to steal their boss’ find and sell it themselves.

Due to her desire for secrecy, Vermeyer decides to outsource the protection of her investment via the local chapter of the Adventurers’ Guild, though she does not mention the true nature of what she is selling and again frames it as protecting a shipment of arms and armor. Due to the seemingly mundane nature of the shipment, she only promises a reward of 15 Aeons per party member once the delivery has been verified. Upon picking up the quest, the party is given instructions to appear at the Vermeyer estate in 1 day, giving them 1 day of downtime to spend as they wish.

Downtime in Autongrad

The time between picking up the quest and going to the estate is downtime for the party, and they are free to do as they wish. Autongrad is a massive city, with nearly endless possibilities for what anyone might want to do with their spare time. The city is at the forefront of technological progress and advancement, and has every type of person, product, or business one can think of. The full list of possible downtime activities is given in Part 6: Chapter 10 of the Rulebook, but some suggestions are given here:

Alchemy. Covered in Part 7: Chapter 2, party members with training in Alchemy Supplies can take this time to brew some *weak* concoctions, provided they have or can afford the materials;

Autongrad is a large enough city to have essentially any materials an alchemist might need – legal or otherwise – provided they can afford them.

Carousing. A classic, but not entirely productive method of spending one's time and money.

Charity. Good-hearted party members may wish to spend their time helping the less fortunate.

Crafting. Covered in Part 6: Chapter 11, party members with proficiency in a set of Tool Skills can spend their time crafting; whatever they make can likely be sold for some spare cash.

Crime. Criminals gotta criminal.

Gambling. May be a good way to win some money... or lose it all.

Performing. Party members trained in the stage or with a musical instrument can spend their time entertaining the masses, possibly earning some money in the process.

Personal Business. If a party member has personal business to attend to in the city, now would be a prime time to get around to it.

Pit Fighting. Those who wish to warm up their fighting skills can spend some time getting their face broken and bloodied in a fighting pit.

Shopping. Since this is a low-level adventure, it would likely be wise for the party to purchase some arms and armor for themselves to ensure their own protection and safety. This can be done quickly (i.e. in a couple of in-game hours) if a player has a particular item in mind that they want to buy.

Training. Though they don't have enough time or money to increase their proficiency in anything, party members can get started training in a skill of their choice.

Working. Working odd jobs is a very straightforward method of earning money if that is what a party member desires.

A Place to Stay

Unless the party wants to start suffering severe penalties to their Health, they're going to need a place to spend the night. Given here are 3 options for the party: the lower-class Goblin-run Ungok hostel, the middle-class inn The Drunken Auto, or the high-end Ír Hinda Felígen hotel.

Ungok. Where those with barely any money in their pockets go, Ungok (meaning "lake" in Gobic) is run by a family of Goblins who take pride in their humble little hostel. The father, Horkik, takes care of the housekeeping and meals with his children while the mother, Darfy, takes care of the business end of things. Despite its lowly stature in the city, most of Ungok's patrons are kind-hearted people who have either come to be good friends with the Ungok family or are, at the very least, polite and respectful during their stay. Nights are 25 change and meals are 5 change.

The Drunken Auto. A fairly bog-standard three-story inn run by a 3½-foot Automaton named Harvey, who has one functioning eye. Harvey keeps a flintlock and dagger on his person and a musket under the bar. The Drunken Auto caters to all sorts, and as such shows both some of the best and worst Autongrad has to offer – on a good day, the whole place can erupt into merry

laughter and songs; on a bad day, well, let's just say Harvey doesn't keep weapons on him for nothing. It costs 80c for a night and meals are 25c apiece.

Ír Hínda Felígen. Translating to “The Victory Queen” in Elvish, Ír Hínda Felígen is a multi-story high-end hotel that caters to the rich and elite. Run mostly by City Elves, this is where visiting aristocracy and nobles go to be pampered and to sleep safely away from the rabble in the streets. Though Ír Hínda Felígen is willing to serve anyone who can pay, they prefer the upper class first, humanoid-type Sentients second, and everyone else third. Nights cost 2-3 Aeons and meals cost 75 change on the low end.

The Vermeyer Estate

Baron Vermeyer controls roughly 75 square miles of Southeastern Autongrad (roughly the size of Washington D.C.), and her estate is near the Northern edge of that territory; deep enough into the city to be fairly close to everything, but not too close to the border of Baron Aubry's district.

The estate itself is nothing overtly pompous or flashy, though it is easily recognizable given its size (it's the only three-story home in the immediate area) and the letters “B.V.” adorning the gate. When the party arrives, they are greeted by two security guards, one Kobold and one Drakon, both armed with repeaters and wearing gambesons. They are on the inside of the gate, and one of them promptly leaves to notify the Baron of the party's arrival.

A few minutes later, the Baron herself comes out to greet the party, along with a locked crate – detailed below – that is being moved via a dolly being pushed by one of Vermeyer's employees, a brown Goblin named Kungin. The Baron is half Human and half City Elf, with shoulder-length black hair and a gundagger on her hip. She is dressed in fine clothes appropriate to her position.

The Baron wishes to oversee the transfer of her goods as personally – but safely – as possible, and so wishes to meet and greet the party herself, as well as see her investment off. She is a cold and calculating woman, withdrawn, and not keen to answer questions, especially personal or probing ones, unless she sees a good reason to. A successful DR 14 Insight check reveals that Vermeyer is standing strangely close to the crate, is usually physically touching it, and glances at it frequently. If questioned about these behaviors, or why she is outsourcing this particular shipment to adventurers and not her own employees, she simply remarks that this sale is particularly important to her but won't reveal anything else (she can be convinced to double the party's pay with a successful DR 12 Persuasion check; a Partial Success here only increases it to 20 Aeons per party member).

The Baron tells the party that they are to board the Autongrad Express – for which she gives them tickets – and when they get to Subiel they will be greeted by her contact's representatives, who will confiscate the crate, inspect it, and give them their reward. As she is explaining this, a truck, also marked “B.V.”, pulls up, driven by a Dwarf named Gr with a mechanical left hand. As it arrives, the Baron's employees will begin loading the crate onto the

truck, which the party is also recommended to hitch a ride on. Once they are aboard, Baron Vermeyer thanks the party for their assistance and stands to watch as the truck drives off.

The Crate

The crate containing the Dark Aether is an iron box about 4 cubic feet in size, with the lid sealed shut via a padlock (DR 25 to unlock with Thieving Tools). Once opened, inside lies 3 repeaters and revolvers, 6 muskets and flintlocks, 3 sets of reinforced leather armor, and 6 gambesons. Upon removing all the equipment or moving it aside to see the “bottom” of the crate, a DR 10 INT/Perception check will reveal that the bottom of the crate’s inside is not at the same level as its outside; alternatively, one might notice that the crate is far heavier than it should be. Upon investigation, it is revealed that the crate has a false bottom, underneath which lies the crate’s true cargo: 100 pounds of solid Dark Aether.

The Aether is completely black, utterly devoid of color and light, to the point that it actually makes the area immediately around it slightly dimmer. It is also cold to the touch, but is otherwise smooth and crystalline in nature. Aether is widely-known enough to be easily identified by any who might see it, and a successful DR 12 Arcana/Alchemy Supplies check will reveal that, aside from the creation of Dark Aetherians, it is used for elixirs, poisons, and enchanted items that cause blindness, help one lie, deceive, be stealthy, or extinguish light.

The Autongrad Express

The Autongrad Central Station is a bustling hub of activity, and contains a microcosm of all the different people Autongrad as a whole contains. Upon arriving, Gr parks the truck next to the loading area for the cargo cars of the trains, flags down a couple of workers to help him unload the crate (who then promptly begin loading it onto the Express), and then wishes the party the best of luck before driving off. The party has a couple of hours before the train leaves, but there isn’t much to do in the station itself aside from get food or buy a newspaper.

The train itself is 10 cars long: the engine and fuel cars, a passenger car, a dining car, a second passenger car, a refrigerator car, 3 cargo cars, and the caboose. Exactly which cargo car Vermeyer’s shipment is in is unimportant, and how the party chooses to protect the crate is up to them.

The train’s security is as follows: 1 guard in the engine, 2 guards in each passenger car, 2 guards in the dining car, and each cargo car – where passengers are not allowed – is locked via a DR 15 padlock. Should a violent disturbance, such as a murder or robbery, occur in a car, 1 guard in each surrounding car will go to investigate, while the other stays behind to ensure the safety of the passengers in that car. It is also not uncommon for passengers to travel with weapons in order to ensure their own safety.

The Heist

Eight of Baron Vermeyer’s employees have decided to make an attempt on their boss’s goods, and six of them are posing as passengers in order to get to their prize; the other two are

waiting in Verstadt as getaway drivers. They do not know of the party, and so do not take them into account when planning their heist.

The Thieves' Plan. Halfway between Autongrad and Subiel lies the budding town of Verstadt, a small settlement that essentially functions as a place for travelers going through the region to spend the night. Roughly 30 minutes before the train reaches Verstadt – several hours into the train ride – one of the thieves in the dining car – the Dwarf, specifically – suddenly and without warning shoots the nearest guard in the head, killing them instantly; at the same time, one of their companions takes the other one hostage, and they both announce that this is a robbery; taking advantage of the confusion, the thieves' leader sneaks from the passenger car closest to the engine to the engine itself, where he kills the guard in that car before taking the engineers hostage and ordering them to stop a couple of miles outside Verstadt. At the same time, the Lockpicker and her bodyguard sneak from the backmost passenger car through the refrigerator car to the cargo cars, where they systematically go through each car looking for the Baron's crate. Once they've found it, they will unlock it, steal all of the Aether, and then split up and wait hidden in the other cargo cars until they are let out by their compatriots shortly after the train stops. From there, the thieves will load into two cars, splitting the Aether evenly between both groups, and then drive off in different directions. Six days later, they will meet up in the Dwarven mining town of Glwl Candok ("Victory Mountain" in Dwarvish), where they plan to sell the Aether themselves.

Subiel

The port city of Subiel is smaller than Autongrad, but so is every other city in the world. About 150 square miles of it is actual city, with other, smaller settlements in the surrounding hills. When the Autongrad Express arrives, it will stop at local train station inside the city limits, which is much smaller than the Autongrad Central Station, with just a handful of tracks for different trains.

Assuming the party has stopped the thieves, they will be greeted by a pair of representatives from the local chapter of the Aetherian Guild – specifically a Water Elf Aquamancer and a blue Goblin Gravimancer. If the party asks the pair how they knew who they were, they will reply that the Baron sent a telegram telling them who to expect. The representatives will accompany them to where the train's cargo is being unloaded, whereupon one of them will cast the *Sense Arcane* spell to confirm that the Aether is still in the crate. Once they have, they will load the crate onto their wagon, pay the party their reward, and promptly leave.

NPC Statblocks

Baron Vanessa Vermeyer

Human/City Elf (Medium)

Statistics

STR 1.5 **CON** 2 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 3 **INT** 3.5 **WIS** 3 **CHA** 4

DEF 3 (*Armor 1, Dodge 2*), **RaDEF** 6

Health 16 (3d6 +6)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+3), Will. 4 (+4)

Speed Walking 30 feet

Action Skills All 1, Lore 3 (+3), Mechanics 2 (+3), Appraisal 2 (+3), Insight 2 (+3), Perception 2 (+3), Beguilement 2 (+4), Persuasion 3 (+4)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 3

Languages Common, Humanic, Elvish

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Gundagger. Revolver: ranged weapon (60/150), 1 target, 2/action, 3d6 +3 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded, takes 2 actions to reload; Dagger: melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 2d4 +3 physical damage.

Small Guard

Any Small Heritage

Statistics

STR 2 **CON** 2 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 3 **INT** 2 **WIS** 2 **CHA** 2

Initiative +3

DEF 7 (*Armor 4 (Gambeson), Dodge 3*), **RaDEF** 11

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+3), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 25 feet

Action Skills All 1, Perception 2 (+2)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Languages Common and their racial language

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Shortsword. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +3 physical damage.

Repeater. Ranged weapon (150/400), 1 target, 1/action, 2d8 +3 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded; takes 2 actions to reload.

Medium Guard

Any Medium Heritage

Statistics

STR 2.5 CON 2 AGI 2 DEX 3 INT 2 WIS 2 CHA 2

Initiative +3

DEF 6 (*Armor 4 (Gambeson), Dodge 2*), **RaDEF** 9

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+3), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 30 feet

Action Skills All 1, Perception 2 (+2)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Languages Common and their racial language

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Shortsword. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +3 physical damage.

Repeater. Ranged weapon (150/400), 1 target, 1/action, 2d8 +3 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded; takes 2 actions to reload.

Big Guard

Any Big Heritage

Statistics

STR 3 CON 3 AGI 2 DEX 2 INT 2 WIS 2 CHA 2

Initiative +2

DEF 5 (*Armor 5 (Reinforced Leather)*), **RaDEF** 7

Health 13 (2d6 +6)

Saves Fort. 3 (+3), Ref. 2 (+2), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 35 feet

Action Skills All 1, Perception 2 (+2)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Languages Common and their racial language

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Shortsword. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +3 physical damage.

Repeater. Ranged weapon (150/400), 1 target, 1/action, 2d8 +2 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded; takes 2 actions to reload.

Thief A

Elf/Human (Medium)

Statistics

STR 2.5 CON 2 AGI 3 DEX 3 INT 1.5 WIS 3 CHA 2.5

Initiative +3

DEF 5 (*Armor 2 (thin leather), Dodge 3*), **RaDEF** 8

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+3), Will. 3 (+3)

Speed Walking 35 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 2 (+1), Perception 2 (+2)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Senses Infrared vision

Languages Common, Humanic, and Elvish

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Rapier. Melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 2d4 +3 physical damage.

Flintlock. Ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 2d6 +3 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

1d100 change, 1d4-2 Aeons

Thief B

Dwarf (Small)

Statistics

STR 3.5 **CON** 3 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 2 **INT** 1.5 **WIS** 2 **CHA** 1

Initiative +2

DEF 6 (*Armor* 4 (*Leather*), *Dodge* 2), **RaDEF** 10

Health 13 (2d6 +6)

Saves Fort. 3 (+3), Ref. 2 (+2), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 25 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 3 (+1), Intimidation 3 (+1)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Languages Common and Dwarvish

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Shortsword. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +3 physical damage.

Revolver. Ranged weapon (60/150), 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +2 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded, takes 2 actions to reload.

Treasure

1d100 change, 1d4-2 Aeons

Thief C

Automaton (Medium)

Statistics

STR 4 **CON** 2.5 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 1.5 **INT** 1.5 **WIS** 2 **CHA** 1.5

Initiative +2

DEF 4 (*Armor* 4 (*Metal chassis+thin leather*)), **RaDEF** 7

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+4), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 25 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 2 (+1), Perception 2 (+2), Intimidation 3 (+1)

Weapon Skills Firearm 2, Unarmed 3

Languages Common and CSL

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Brass Knuckles. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 3d6 +4 physical damage.

Flintlock. Ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 2d6 +1 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

1d100 change, 1d4-2 Aeons

Lockpicker

Green Kobold (Small)

Statistics

STR 1.5 **CON** 2 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 4 **INT** 1.5 **WIS** 2 **CHA** 1.5

Initiative +4

DEF 8 (*Armor 4 (Scales+thin leather), Dodge 4*), **RaDEF** 12

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+4), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 25 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 2 (+1), Perception 2 (+2), Sleight of Hand 3 (+4), Stealth 3 (+4)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 2

Senses Infrared vision

Languages Common and Drake

Difficulty Tier 1

Locations All

Actions

Claws. Melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 1d4 +1 physical damage.

Dagger. Melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 2d4 +4 physical damage.

Flintlock. Ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 2d6 +4 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

1d100 change

Lockpicker Bodyguard

Black Drakon (Big)

Statistics

STR 4 **CON** 2.5 **AGI** 2 **DEX** 1 **INT** 1 **WIS** 3 **CHA** 2

Initiative +2

DEF 6 (*Armor 6 (Scales+gambeson)*), **RaDEF 8**

Health 16 (3d6 +6)

Saves Fort. 3 (+4), Ref. 2 (+2), Will. 3 (+3)

Speed Walking 35 feet

Action Skills All 1, Intimidation 4 (+2), Perception 3 (+3)

Weapon Skills Medium 2, Firearm 3

Languages Common and Drake

Difficulty Tier 1

Locations All

Actions

Breath Weapon (1/Night's Rest). 15-foot cone/20-foot line, 2d6 rot damage.

Claws. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 1d4 +4 physical damage.

Sword. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d6 +4 physical damage.

Musket. Ranged weapon (80/200), 1 target, 3d8 +1 physical damage; takes 10 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

1d100 change

Thief Leader

Human (Big)

Statistics

STR 1.5 CON 2 AGI 2 DEX 4 INT 3 WIS 2 CHA 3

Initiative +4

DEF 8 (*Armor 6 (Chain shirt), Dodge 2*), **RaDEF 10**

Health 16 (3d6 +6)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 3 (+4), Will. 3 (+3)

Speed Walking 35 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 3 (+3), Perception 2 (+2), Persuasion 2 (+3), Sleight of Hand 3 (+4), Stealth 3 (+4)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 3

Languages Common and Humanic

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Gundagger. Flintlock: ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 3d6 +4 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired; Dagger: melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 2d4 +4 physical damage; can fire the flintlock immediately after dealing final damage with the dagger, dealing 3d6 +4 true damage.

Revolver. Ranged weapon (60/150), 1 target, 2/action, 3d6 +4 physical damage; can be fired 6 times before needing to be reloaded, takes 2 actions to reload.

Treasure

1d100 change, 1d3 Aeons

Getaway Driver A

City Elf (Big)

Statistics

STR 1.5 CON 2 AGI 2 DEX 2.5 INT 2.5 WIS 2 CHA 2

Initiative +2

DEF 3 (*Armor 3 (Thin leather)*), **RaDEF 5**

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 2 (+2), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 35 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 2 (+2), Perception 2 (+2), Sleight of Hand 3 (+2)

Weapon Skills Small 2, Firearm 1

Languages Common and Elvish

Difficulty Tier 1

Actions

Dagger. Melee weapon, 1 target, 1/action, 2d4 +2 physical damage.

Flintlock. Ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 1d6 +2 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

3d10 change

Getaway Driver B

Goblin (Medium)

Statistics

STR 2 CON 2 AGI 2 DEX 3 INT 1.5 WIS 2 CHA 2.5

Initiative +3

DEF 8 (*Armor 4 (Thin leather), Dodge 4*), **RaDEF 12**

Health 11 (2d6 +4)

Saves Fort. 2 (+2), Ref. 4 (+3), Will. 2 (+2)

Speed Walking 30 feet

Action Skills All 1, Beguilement 2 (+2), Perception 2 (+2), Sleight of Hand 4 (+3), Stealth 3 (+4)

Weapon Skills Firearm 1, Unarmed 3

Senses Infrared vision

Languages Common and Goblic

Difficulty Tier 1

Passive Abilities

Poison Resistance. Resistant to poison damage and advantage on saves against poison and diseases.

Actions

Claws. Melee weapon, 1 target, 2/action, 3d4 +2 physical damage.

Flintlock. Ranged weapon (40/100), 1 target, 1d6 +3 physical damage; takes 5 actions to reload after being fired.

Treasure

3d10 change