

Working Title: Choosing A Side

Quest Type: Narrative encounter / social quest

Estimated Playtime: 1-2 mins

Scope: Single location faction encounter

1. Quest Overview

The player enters a bar. Two warring factions are present. The player must choose to join one or remain neutral. The player feels like an outsider, stepping into a world they don't yet understand.

This quest introduces the faction system of the setting, teaching that each choice has tangible consequences.

2. Entry Conditions

- Location: Bar
- Required prior events: Entry to bar
- Factions involved: Diamondback Gang and Red Pirates
- Narrative context: First exposure to factional conflict dynamics

State Variables Used:

- \$diamondbackGang (integer, default 0)
- \$redPirates (integer, default 0)

Variables track faction standing.

3. Player Objectives

Primary Objective:

Survive encounter and leave bar.

Secondary / Implicit Objectives:

- Choose a side or remain neutral.
 - Deepen investment in setting.
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4. Key Decision Points

Decision 1: Choosing a side

Player Options:

A) Support Diamondbacks

- Variable effects:

\$diamondbackGang += 1
\$redPirates -= 1

- Narrative result:

You join the Diamondback Gang and receive their protection / greater access to their territory, missions, and resources.

B) Support Red Pirates

- Variable effects:

\$redPirates += 1
\$diamondbackGang -= 1

- Narrative result:

You join the Red Pirates and receive their protection / greater access to their territory, missions, and resources.

C) Remain Neutral

- Variable effects:

\$diamondbackGang -= 1
\$redPirates -= 1

- Narrative result:

Neither faction likes your reluctance to join up. They both dislike you.

Rejoin Point

The branches all come back together when the player leaves the bar. Narratively this is a natural place to weigh the consequences of their actions. Structurally it prevents exponential branching.

5. Outcome Resolution Logic

If \$diamondbackGang > \$redPirates -> Diamondback protection
If \$redPirates > \$diamondbackGang -> Red Pirate protection
If \$diamondbackGang == \$redPirates -> mutual distrust
If both are <= -1 -> ambush

This represents where the player stands at the end of the bar encounter and guides how the story will proceed.

6. Final Outcomes

Outcome A: Side with Diamondback Gang

Diamondback Gang is pleased with the player, granting protection and increased access to territory, resources, and missions. Red Pirates are displeased, making them more likely to attack the player and limiting how they can interact with them.

Outcome B: Side With Red Pirates

Red Pirates are pleased with the player, granting protection and increased access to territory, resources, and missions. Diamondback Gang is displeased, making them more likely to attack the player and limiting how they can interact with them.

Outcome C: Remain Neutral

Neither side likes the player's lack of commitment and they view them negatively. They lose standing with both factions.

Failure State:

If both factions dislike the player, then a hostile ambush occurs, ending the game.

7. Narrative Constraints

- Rule: Both factions must remain self-interested and dangerous. They do not 'grant' protection: it is earned through commitment and service.
 - Rule: Neutrality is not truly an option. Players must feel pressured to act to increase investment in the world.
 - Rule: Each choice must have tangible consequences.
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8. Design Intent Notes

- Zero sum faction alignment element;
- Meaningful consequences for actions;
- Branch rejoining to avoid exponential sprawl;
- Persistent narrative state;