

## The Game's Afoot (DOG EAR)

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 05 March 2015 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 05 March 2015 07:55

---



riting is all about the worlds we create. Even if it's contemporary, even if it's fantasy, we need a background for our actions to take place in (or, rather, where our heroes can be heroic at).

When writing ***Fire and Bronze*** back in the pre-internet days, I spent a lot of time in the public library, looking at old maps, trying to get my head around the layout and atmosphere of what had been the city of Carthage. How high was Brysa hill, the rise on which the city was centered? What was the harbor like? What did the surrounding mountains look like - high and craggy or low and worn? I only had a couple of aerial shots and an old elevation map to create my world. Must have worked since it was published.

Later, my wife and I were able to travel to Tunisia. There, I stood on Brysa Hill and looked over the port backdropped by the rugged Atlas Mountains. I still remember the warmth of the February sun, the distance, the layout. And I'm happy to say it was pretty close to what I imagined. In fact, it was eerie to stand in a world I'd so carefully imagined. It was as if I'd crossed a line and entered the world of mind.

Happened again last night. Now, this isn't writing - it's game design (but there is still imagination at work here). My friend Jesse and I have been working on our grand game of trading in our Solar System in 2075, a time when ships can cross the distances between our known planets but it's still a dicey affair. Using a neat system of vectors (which permit actual planet orbiting), we manage to get the space navigation to work. Later, as we developed the city game (where you prowl the ports looking for cargos), we had to envision these worlds. Gradually it took the form of a Chinese- and Corporate-dominated system, one of teeming slums and gritty asteroid mines. You can see more about what went into the game storyline [HERE](#)

So a few nights ago, I made the usual run to Jupiter, clearing the belt and slipping into orbit. There, I eased into the heavy gravity well and arrived at a city with it's civic-minded blurb: 'Jupiter Collective' represented the first major city out-orbit from Earth, a massive assemblage of cargo drums welded together into an ungainly collective of living quarters. With heavy gravolift mining taking place on the gas giant below, it has become the refueling stop the

## The Game's Afoot (DOG EAR)

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 05 March 2015 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 05 March 2015 07:55

---

system over.&quot;

All fun and games. But last night, when my wife and I were out in the backyard with a borrowed telescope, we managed to tumble across Jupiter (after about an hour of effort). The planet stood in stark relief against the depths, its equatorial banding quite clear, four moons arrayed for our pleasure. And while I looked, I got that deep writer's satisfaction. I couldn't see Jupiter Collective, no, not in the scope. But I'd been here before. It was just as vast and cold and out-on-the-edge as I'd imagined it to be.

**[&gt;&gt;&gt;ACCESS TO THE GAME &quot;SOLAR TRADER&quot; HERE \(BETA VERSION ONLY\)&lt;&lt;&lt;](#)**

**[&gt;&gt;&gt;ACCESS TO MY FINELY IMAGINED BOOKS HERE. READ THEM AND I&#39;LL TAKE YOU TO PLACES YOU NEVER IMAGINED!&lt;&lt;&lt;&nbsp;](#)**