

BETTER THAN SIX

Rules-light D6 system for beginner Game Masters

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FOREWORD

No, congratulations on choosing the most simplistic, rules-light, low-cost rule set on the Internet. No, really. You don't need anything except some paper, pens, a D6 and some Players to join the Adventure.

No doubt you're wondering why this e-book is so special. Well, it may be because it uses only the bare minimum of materials for a tabletop RPG. It might be because it's free in all respects. It could even be because you want to finally be the guy in charge of the Game and smite some obnoxious Characters. No matter the reason, welcome to *Better Than Six*.

This book is dedicated to you, dear reader, for taking the time to download it and read it with interest. I assure you that you will not be disappointed. And if you are, for whatever ungodly reason, just change that stupid aspect to something you like better. Yes, that's right, CHANGE THE RULES. The rules listed herein are really just guidelines to nudge you along the way of bigger and better systems, namely D20 systems and the almighty D&D 4th Edition and beyond.

For now, let's stick with the basics. In this book you will find simple explanations of tabletop jargon, how to create a character and a how-to guide on actual game-play with *Petr the Archer*. I have created The *World of Aliisen* just for this book - it is a High Fantasy setting and as such has many wonderful and worrisome beasts, a full-fledged Magic system and a short History of the world. Lists of these things are included later on for your benefit. In the last chapter is a pre-made Adventure just for you to use in your first game. But don't stress about that just yet, you'll do fine. I'm sure of it.

Finally, a thanks to Dad; without him I never would have had an interest in Dungeons & Dragons. To Mum, for putting up with me staying up to unholy hours of the morning for 'no apparent reason'. To Cody, for being a master storyteller after many requests, to GC and the LARPer's for opening my eyes just that little bit more, and finally to DRLFF for just being awesome. To anyone that I've missed - you know who you are - thanks for all of your help. It means a lot.

That's it. Get to learning already.

Jase 'Yoman987' Robinson

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GLOSSARY

Action:	The act that a Character performs during their turn. See <i>Major Action</i> , <i>Minor Action</i> .
Adventure:	Many Scenarios strung together with an overall goal for the Characters.
Aliisen:	A fictional world defined in this book for use as a setting in Campaigns.
Attribute:	A descriptive property of a Character. See <i>Health</i> , <i>Energy</i> ,
Campaign:	The entire story, beginning with Character Creation and ending with the Quest completed.
Character:	A fictitious person in the story.
currency:	The valued items used in trade. Not necessarily Gold or Silver, nor must it even exist in a world.
D:	The shorthand meaning of <i>die</i> or <i>dice</i> when referring to how many sides it has. e.g. D6, D8, D20.
D6:	A six-sided die. 2D6 refers to two six-sided dice; 3D6 means 3 dice and so on.
dice:	Plural form of <i>die</i> and commonly misused when referring to the single object.
die:	Singular form of <i>dice</i> .
Damage:	How harmful something is, specifically referring to how much HP it removes from a Character.
DM:	Dungeon Master. The designated person who runs the game and describes the world and events.
Dungeon: adventure.	A generic name for a below-ground man-made setting, but is also used for generic places of adventure.
Encounter:	The event where PCs must deal with NPCs.
Enemy:	A hostile Character towards another Character. Normally an opponent of a PC.
Game Event:	A major happening during a session.
GM:	Game Master. See <i>Dungeon Master</i> .
GP:	Gold Pieces. See <i>currency</i> .
Health:	The amount of damage that a Character can survive before death.
HP:	Health Points. See <i>Health</i> .
In-game:	Happening during the game session.
Inventory:	The place where a Character stores items on their person. Includes bags, clothing and body parts.
loot:	Treasure, specifically that which is taken from a newly killed enemy or discovered place.
looting:	The act of collecting loot. See <i>loot</i> .
Major Action:	An Action that takes a Character a full Turn to complete.
Minor Action:	An Action which does not require a full Turn to complete.
one-shot:	Things that will only be used during the current session or game. Normally refers to Characters.
Overworld:	The area above-ground between landmarks and settlements.
NPC:	Non-Player Character. A Character created by the Game Master for use in the story.
Party: game.	A group of Characters partaking in an Adventure. <i>The Party</i> specifically refers to the PCs playing the game.
PC:	Player Character. A Character used by a Player.
premade:	Made before the current moment, specifically Characters and their associated sheets.
Quest:	A task that the Characters have dedicated themselves to finishing.
Round:	The largest part of a game; where each Turn must be completed. See <i>Turn</i> .
Scenario:	Multiple Encounters with a small amount of adventuring between them.
session:	The real-world game activity that takes place between two times without majorly stopping.
Skills:	Particular acts that a Character is mutually able to perform.
Trap:	A mechanism, object or entity that is meant to cause harmful consequences via a trigger.
Turn:	The time allocated for each Character to perform an Action. See <i>Action</i> .

INTRODUCTION

What is 'Better Than Six' ?

Better Than Six is a simplistic role-playing rule-set that requires nothing more than a six-sided die, three or more people, pen and paper and a truckload of imagination. Think of it like a Choose Your Own Adventure novel being written then-and-there.

What kind of 'novel' is it? What is it about?

The genre of your game can be anything you wish: Pirates sailing the seas and plundering the world, Warriors and Wizards in a land of Fantasy and Magic, Scavengers trying to survive Armageddon or even a race of Space Robots in the future. It can be whatever you and your friends desire.

How long does the game go for?

A session can last anything from an hour to a day, and games can lead on over however many weeks, months or maybe years that you need or want. Instead of Chapters, this game has Encounters. Scenarios. Adventures and Campaigns.

A short session that has the Players versing a few 'baddies' and/or getting some treasure is called an Encounter. Multiple Encounters is called a Scenario, many Scenarios with some questing and exploring makes up an Adventure. ... and a long Adventure with an end goal is a Campaign.

Campaigns can be put back-to-back for however long your players wish to play, mostly broken up with short semi-meaningless Quests ('Go find my lost ring' for example), training and research if needed, a trawl through a village/town/city talking to citizens and even a bar fight if you want to.

Who does the story-telling and narrating?

The narrator is normally called the Game Master or GM. The Game Master is also known as many other names (Dungeon Master, Dice Master, Controller, etc) but they all mean the same thing: This is the person who guides the Players through the world with descriptions of what they see, what they do and all consequences.

How do you play?

Every turn, a Player makes an Action (technically a 'Major Action') for what they want their Character to do. A Minor Action is seen as something small, like dropping an item, drinking a potion, talking, re-opening or closing a door, and so on. These Actions are then determined to succeed or fail depending on a dice roll and any appropriate modifiers.

Are there any pictures or illustrations?

The only graphical representations are what you can imagine or what the Game Master can draw. For maps and the like, some grid paper and coins or pins work well for illustrating the field, but official, painted, card-stock *Dungeon Tiles* and *Monster Tokens* work even better. They can be bought from any place that sells role-playing supplies, particularly Dungeons and Dragons gear.

Any other tips?

Just one; Innovation. If you find that you need to do something that isn't listing or explained in this rule book, just make it up. Use a die or two for choosing a result. You're the one in charge and the Players look to you for what happens. Make the game worth playing instead of reading straight out of this or any other book.

CONVENTIONS USED IN THIS BOOK

A number of formatting styles are used throughout this book to assist the reader in differentiating between paragraphs of explanations, set-in-stone rules, advice and examples. Any normal noun that is Capitalised means that that particular word means something specific in the world of role-play. If you are not sure if you know what that word means, have a look at the Glossary on Page 2.

Paragraphs that are indented, italicised, red and begin with “For example” are in-game examples to help with explanations.

For example, Petr (pronounced ‘Peter’) the Archer and his hated foes the Goblins are the main subjects in the examples. They get up to all sorts of instructional antics for your pleasure of reading and learning.

Paragraphs that are centered, italicised and separated by horizontal lines above and below are written for the reader.

Every so often, I will write a paragraph specifically from my own experience and aimed at you, a Game Master, and not just as another reader at large. You can take it as advice from me.

Tables like these are used to describe and list particular traits of enemies, traps, items and other entities.

Goblin <u>Small Weak humanoid</u> Loves to cause mischief. Attributes Health: 10 Damage: 1D6 Movement: 2 squares per turn Skills Annoying: Cause an enemy to fail an attack roll. Equipment: Dagger, clothing, 1D6 money	Spike Pit <u>Unmoving Gravity Trap</u> A 10 foot pit filled with spikes - and long-dead victims too. Discovery The pit can be easily seen if it is not covered over. Disabling: The spikes cannot be removed. Dodging: The spikes do not move. Damage: 1D6, the Character is also stuck in the pit.
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CHARACTER CREATION

A Character is the entity that a Player has control over. This does not necessarily have to be a human being or even something living if you so desire. But each Character has the same Attributes:

- The Name of the Character, surname and age are optional.
- Appearance/Backstory, also optional.
- Class: Knight, Astronaut, Pilot, Sniper, Wizard, Assassin, Kung-Fu Master, etc.
- Health or Hit Points: The amount of Damage they can take before unconsciousness and then death. New Characters begin with 15 HP plus the result of rolling three 6-sided dice. (15 + 3D6 HP)
- Energy or Magic Points: Only used by Magical Characters when they use Magic. Starting with 20 plus one Die Roll.
- Skills/Abilities: Specific actions that your character is good at. These can be anything from Bullet-time to Summon Demon-spawn to Zero-Gravity Walking. Make them appropriate for the character and give a new one every so often.
- Currency: Usually Gold or Silver of some kind. Between 2 and 5 Dice Rolls, results combined any way you wish.
- Inventory/Bag: Where they put their stuff. Can be infinite or limited.
- Mannerisms: This is how the character acts normally. Personality, if you will.

NONE of the above are mandatory. Yes, none. If it doesn't make sense to include an attribute by all means don't include it. If a Character is created to be immortal, don't write in any Health Points. Infinite Energy? Don't include Magic Points. Skills are also optional if you decide not to use them, and if you do use them you don't have to add to the list if you don't wish to. Remember this is about YOU and YOUR RULES. I'm giving inspiration here, foundations.

Two pre-made Characters for a generic Fantasy world are listed on the next page for you to freely use and modify.

EXAMPLE CHARACTERS

Name:	Elicia Wellsdown	Name:	Brannon Trindle
Appearance :	Female, Human, 24, athletic slim build, small bust, 5'6", 135 pounds. Long raven-black hair, bright green eyes, thin eyebrows, cute nose and a cheeky smile. She wears a thin red bandanna and various small colorful items on her clothing.	Appearance :	Male, Human, 29, strong build, 6'1", 196 pounds. Short blond hair, dim blue eyes, thick jaw, cleft chin, hairy chest. A tattoo of his broadsword bearing the name <i>Darling</i> is on his left shoulder.
Class:	Rogue / Thief	Class:	Fighter / Warrior
HP:	28 + 0 armour	HP:	33 + 4 armour (37 total)
Magic:	21	Magic:	24
Skills:	Conceal (+1 to finding or hiding objects) Sneak (+1 to hiding herself) Backstab (+2 damage when behind)	Skills:	Strong-arm (Blocked attacks give 2 damage to the attacker) Throw (Can throw <i>Small</i> enemies)
GP:	52 Monies	GP:	34 Monies
Inventory:	<i>In use:</i> Short Sword (1D6 -1 damage) Knife (1D6 -2 damage) Pale cloth long-sleeve shirt Black leather vest, hooded, no sleeves Red/Black billowing striped trousers Shin-high black cloth boots <i>In storage:</i> 2x Dagger (concealed, 3 damage) Lock-picking set 30ft Rope 6x wall spikes	Inventory:	<i>In use:</i> Battle Axe (1D6 damage) Iron Helm (+1 armour) Chain-mail Shirt (+2 armour) Olive green padded tunic Studded leather chaps (+1 armour) Tan trousers Steel-toe leather boots (+1 armour) <i>In storage:</i> Dagger (3 damage) Broadsword (1D6 damage) 2x Health Potions (1D6 +2 health)
Mannerisms	Elicia is drawn to collect any small and colorful trinket, pin or item that she sees to add to her collection.	Mannerisms	Brannon refuses to back down from a fight once started, except when a friend appeals to his good nature. Headstrong.

GAMEPLAY

As mentioned before, Encounters make up Scenarios, Scenarios make up Adventures and Adventures make up Campaigns.

An Encounter is made up of rounds and turns. A round entitles each Player to take a turn, then the Enemies and any NPCs take their turns, then any major game events are announced.

A Scenario has any small number of Encounters in it as well as some exploring and treasure hunting.

Adventures can go for much longer - sometimes up to days and weeks - and they can be much more thrilling. An Adventure can have any number of Encounters and Scenarios in it but will have at least one major goal for the players. It won't be as big as 'Saving the World', more like 'Go Save the Boy' or 'Find My Lost Item' or 'Fix This Thing'.

... and now, the Campaign. The Campaign is the total playtime of the Characters - from start to finish - on a single great goal. They could be 'Stopping the Insane King' or 'Killing the Zombie Army' or 'Saving the World'.

ACTIONS, TURNS AND ROUNDS

The Game revolves around Players making Actions, having Turns and completing Rounds. Every Player chooses an Action for their Character to perform during their Turn, the Game Master rolls dice and tells them the result, then it moves on to the next Player's Turn. This continues (in any order you wish) until each Player, Enemy and NPC has had their Turn, then the Round ends. Any Game Event that occurs is explained now and the next Round starts with the first Player making their Action.

Actions are separated into two categories: Major and Minor. Major Actions are intensive things that take full concentration to perform, like movement, searching an area or interacting with an object. Minor Actions include anything that someone can do without fully concentrating on, like talking, flipping a small lever, pushing a button and tossing a coin. Actions are the Players' link to their Characters and the virtual world.

THE DICE ROLL

The meanings of each die roll are at the core of this game. These are the 'Default Dice Results' as referred to as later on. 'Relative Results' means that the Game Master is allowed to make up what the numbers mean and are situation-specific.

- 1 - Epic Fail: The Character failed in all aspects of the action. If attacking, their attack is countered and/or they take damage for some silly reason. (Tripping over is a common result)
- 2 - Fail: The Character tried and failed, but nothing else happens. In battle, they are blocked or dodged.
- 3 - OK or Meagre Success: The Character barely succeeded at what they wanted to do. If in battle this is commonly a bruising or scratch hit (literally).
- 4 - Good Success: The Character did well. This means they performed almost exactly what they wanted with no negative repercussions. In battle, this is a good solid hit.
- 5 - Perfect: The character did brilliantly and got exactly what he wanted, if not more. In battle, this is a 1-hit kill or leaves the enemy stunned or at a loss in some way.
- 6 - Overshot: The Character tried so hard he failed. They get what they wanted but also something they didn't. In melee battle they swap places; ranged they hit someone/thing else.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Sometimes a situation calls for something different to happen. This is how you handle a few of them:

When an action involves an NPC that will resist the action (eg an attack, a pickpocket), counter roll for that NPC and the highest roll wins. If both rolls are equal, either roll again or think of a consequence where neither the Character or NPC comes out better.

For example; Petr the Archer wants to tackle a Goblin Thief to the ground. Of course, the Goblin doesn't want to be tackled and will resist Petr's action. Petr rolls a 3 and the Goblin rolls a 2 - Petr wins the duel and successfully tackles the Goblin to the ground. In contrast, if the Goblin rolled a 4 versus Petr's 3 then Petr loses. The Goblin trips Petr over as he charges ahead. Finally, if both the Goblin and Petr rolled 3s then they grapple and fall over each other and nobody wins. A Draw.

Traps and the like count as NPCs as they all make their own actions, if only once or for one turn, round, encounter, etc. When a Character activates a Trap (or similar object/situation) the Game Master can choose to roll a result for the Character, for the Trap or for both. The Default Die Results apply for the Character, Relative Results for the Trap.

For example, Petr ventures into a room with a smoke cloud trap activated by a pressure plate in the floor. If the Game Master rolls for Petr only, the results are as the default results describe. Fail, Success, Perfect, etc.

However, if the Game Master ONLY rolls for the trap, the results could differ slightly to normal. Customised, if you will.

*For example, the results of a Pressure Plate Smoke Trap could be made up as such:
If the roll was a 1 or 2, the plate could malfunction and not activate at all. A 3 or 4 would mean a successful activation, a 5 could mean the plate releases the cloud quickly and quietly and a 6 could be a misfire.*

If the Game Master decides to roll for BOTH the Character and the trap, a combination of Default Dice Results should be used for the Character and Relative Results for the trap.

*For example, if the plate rolled a 4 and Petr a 6, the following events could take place:
"Petr nudges the door open with his shoulder and steps through the doorway. His foot touches smooth stone and sinks an inch lower than the floor with a slight click. Thick white smoke billows up from all around Petr and he panics, spinning around every which-way and he loses his sense of direction."*

What if multiple Characters decide to work together? You could roll one die for an overall result - or roll for each character. Both are valid and work well, but each have their good and bad points. If two characters were to help each other, one could theoretically do perfectly and the other could absolutely fail. This situation does make sense in some respect, but some may argue that the perfect act should help the other action succeed. In contrast, a failure using just one die roll for multiple Character leads the Players to argue that their actions were independent and should be rolled separately.

Personally, I attempt to let the Players think that they did well by taking multiple dice and rolling them one-by-one. If the first die has a poor result, I roll the second die and so on for each Character partaking in the situation. If the first roll is good, I end the turn there and continue like that's exactly what I meant to do. If all the rolls are failures then bad luck.

BATTLE

Battle is comprised of three different aspects: movement, attacking and defending. Most of the time the battle plays out in this order over and over again. First the Characters move, then they trade blows, one side is defeated, rinse and repeat. At the beginning of the battle, the Game Master should tell the PCs where they are in regards to their opponents, where the opponents are, the nature of the battlefield and any notable objects or situations that may happen.

Next, either the PCs or the opponents move. Determining who moves first is a matter of the situation before the battle, or just a 'coin toss'. Each Character moves around until one of them gets in range of their enemy. This final act of movement requires a Dice Roll to determine if the Character is able to move *and* attack in one action. If the Character rolls a 5 (Perfect) then they succeed, and the opponent rolls to counter the attack. Normal Dice Roll Results apply here, but there are two exceptions for Melee Attacks and Counters:

If the two rolls are equal or the Counter is higher than the Attack, then the attack is blocked or parried respectively. If either roll was a six then the two entities swap places.

For a ranged attack, roll for maximum number of attacks (eg arrows, fireballs) the attacker can fire (if it makes sense, of course) then roll for damage dealt for each attack.

For example, Petr the Archer decides to shoot arrows at an unsuspecting Goblin Warrior. First he rolls for his success - he rolls 4, a Good Success. Then he rolls for the maximum number of arrows he can fire - he rolls a 2, so Petr takes two arrows and fires them simultaneously at the Goblin. Finally, he rolls for Damage for each arrow - a 3 and a 5 - making a total 8 Damage to the Goblin and a loss of 2 arrows to Petr.

When using a ranged attack, you will lose ammunition. Magic counts as a ranged attack IN ALL SITUATIONS and its ammunition is Magic Energy. (See next chapter for information about Magic) After a ranged attack, the Player rolls for how much ammunition or Magic Energy (or both, if appropriate) that they lose and minuses the result from their pool.

For example, Petr is able to utter an Ancient Word while holding a Magic Gemstone to make his arrows fly precisely where he wishes. The Game Master rolls a 4 for this action and a 1 for the amount of arrows to be shot. Petr draws his bow, clutches the Gemstone in one hand and fires the arrow while speaking the Ancient Word.

Before anything else at all happens, The Game Master then rolls for how much Magic Energy was used by performing this Spell - the result is a 3 - and minuses it from Petr's pool of Magic Energy. He also minuses the single arrow from Petr's quiver.

Now the battle can continue, starting with how much Damage Petr's arrow caused and to whom or where.

LOOTING

At the end of battles, each player rolls a die for the loot or treasure that they find. The Game Master can choose if they can roll more than one dice for multiple corpses if s/he so wishes. The meanings of each number are listed:

- 1 means no loot was found - at all.
- 2 can also mean no loot, but can be something tiny or worthless.
- 3 means something minor, like a piece of food, some ammunition or a small potion.
- 4 means something pretty good: a weapon, lots of ammunition, a new spell, some kind of cool item, etc
- 5 is used for Quest/Plot/Story Items, but it can be an awesome weapon/spell/other item too.
- 6 means something useless, like an apple core, a rusty dagger or an empty magazine.

For example, Petr has just fended off two goblins and decides to search the corpses. The Game Master decides that Petr is allowed to roll twice - once for each goblin. Petr rolls a 6 and a 4 and the Game Master describes his findings:

“Petr finds a few broken arrows on the first goblin, but discovers a valuable elixir on the second.”

If the Game Master chooses to, the Players also rolls for how much money they find. Each player rolls between two and five dice for how much money they find. You as the Game Master have the choice of adding the results together, multiplying them, using each number for a digit or whatever you wish. (e.g. 2 and 5 were rolled: 2+5=7 or 2x5=10 or 2&5=25, etc)

For example, Petr has just searched the corpses of the goblins and also picked up a bag of gold. The Game Master rolls 3 dice for how much coin is in the bag, the results are a 1, 3 and 4. The Game Master decides to simply add each digit together to make 8 and Petr receives 8 Gold in the little bag.

EQUIPMENT

Before the Characters go flying in deep space or exploring those mangy caves, they need equipment. To get equipment, they need money. Money can be any currency that you can think of: Gold and Silver, metal tokens, feathers or microchips.

Below is a list of generic equipment for Fantasy or High Fantasy settings, similar to that of Lord of the Rings.

AP stands for "Armour Points". Basically, just add this number to the character's health.

DMG stands for "Damage" and is added onto a successful attack roll - a 4, 5 or 6.

ARMOUR	PRICE	AP	WEAPON	PRICE	DMG	ITEM NAME	PRICE	NOTE
Woolen Tunic	5	+0	Dagger / Dirk	1-5	-1	Thieves' Picks	30	1D6 open
Leather Jerkin	20	+1	Knife	2-6	-1	Quiver	1	30 Arrow
Chainmail Shirt	45	+2	Short Sword	4-10	+0	Bolt Case	1	30 Bolt
Breastplate	90	+4	Longsword	8-15	+0	Rope (per 30ft)	1	1D6 grip
Cloth Hat / Beanie	2	+0	Broadsword	15-20	+1	Torch	3 for 1	4D6 time
Leather Skullcap	8	+1	Bastard Sword	20-25	+1	Lantern	10	9D6 time
Chain Coif	30	+2	2-Handed Sword	22-28	+2	Oil (per flask)	1	
Plate Helmet	75	+3	Battle Axe	15-25	+0	Backpack	2	20 items
Woolen Gloves	2	+0	Club weapon*	0-5	-1	Pouch / Purse	1	200 Gold
Leather Gauntlets	12	+1	Pole weapon*	10-50	+1	Scroll Case	1	10 scrolls
Chainmail Gloves	25	+1	Spear weapon*	8-30	+0	Sack	2 for 1	10 items
Plate Gauntlets	60	+2	Mace	10-20	+0	Piton / Spike	20 for 1	1 use ea
Sandals	1	+0	Quarterstaff	5-15	-1	Flint & Steel	2 for 1	100 uses
Leather Boots	5	+1	Warhammer	20-30	+1	Whetstone	1	150 uses
Chainmail Boots	25	+1	Whip	5-10	-1	Rations (Food)	5 ea	15 meals
Plate Boots	45	+2	Sling	1-5	-1	Chalk	1 for 50	10 uses
Woolen Pants	5	+0	Short Bow	8-15	+0	Paper, Pen, Ink	2 ea	
Leather Leggings	20	+1	Longbow	15-25	+1	Water/Wineskin	1	3 drinks
Chainmail Greaves	40	+1	Yumi Greatbow	40-60	+2	Healing Potion	20	2 uses
Plate Greaves	80	+2	Crossbow	25-40	+2	Energy Potion	20	2 uses

*Club weapons include any bludgeoning object without a blade and wielded primarily in one hand.

*Pole weapons differ slightly to Spear weapons, including the Glaive, Poleaxe, Halberd, Bardiche, Maul, Partisan and Sickle.

*Spear weapons include the Spear, Lance, Pike, Javelin, Harpoon, Fork and Trident.

THE WORLD OF ALIISEN

Pronounced "al-EE-sen"

In another place, at another time, the High One sought to create something meaningful. He spoke in the Ancient Language and wove new Magic to create the Seven Servants: Rana of Fire and Energy; Dobo of Air and Wind; Eidi of Earth and Rock; Lere of Water and Body; Orin of Spirit and Light; Baka of Death and Poison; and Guru of Destiny and Time.

The High One gave control of a single element to each of the Seven Servants, who then created the entire World of Aliisen.

* * *

Those who inhabited the World of Aliisen lived in constant struggle between Good and Evil. All manner of beasts and monsters wandered about, thinking of nothing but to attack the Good People. But the Good People had the Seven Servants to keep them safe from harm.

One fateful day, Baka and Orin argued over the newest addition to the World - Orcets. Baka believed them to be superior to all current life in Aliisen, but Orin thought them useless. They fought for an indefinite time over the species, with Baka finally overthrowing Orin and multiplied the species' numbers by thousands before disappearing into the Depths of the World.

With the World now overrun with the pest-like beasts, the Good People began to lose their battles and die, becoming slaves to Baka. During the Last Fight, with the Good People dwindling, Orin spoke up to the High One for help. The Orcets were vanquished to the Depths of the World, not to be heard from for ages, in exchange for the Seven Servants' lives. In one last act, each of the Seven Servants divided their power into special Gemstones scattered across Aliisen and then passed on.

* * *

In this Age, the Orcets - short, grey-skinned, pig-faced humanoids - run rampant all over the world. Over the years, the Aliisarians have fought back the tide of Orcets and forced them back into the Depths. Year after year, massive armies rise from the Depths and assault the many Cities of Aliisen and year after year they are fought back to where they came from.

However, in recent years, the Orcets have become stronger. Each battle becomes harder and more men are lost.

It is during this time that the Adventurers' Guild is created. Many pass through the Guild on their way down to the Depths and many never return from their quest. The World is slowly being overrun and the Aliisarians need a hero.

TIME

Time in Aliisen is measured in the same units as us - Years, months, days, hours, minutes and seconds. Of course, 60 seconds make a minute, 60 minutes in an hour and 24 hours in a day. However, 10 days make a week, 5 weeks make a month and 10 months make a year. There are four seasons every two years, with each being 5 months long.

REGIONS

Aliisen has not been fully explored due to environmental barriers: To the North and North-East lies the Frostplane where little can survive the harsh cold and buffering winds; the Sands - an inhospitable desert - lead from the East to the South-East, from there and along the southern coast is the Murk, a constant swamp that swallows whole sea ships and leaves no trace; past the Murk, back to the West and all the way North is the Stonethrow Ocean - an ironic name due to it never being crossed. Lastly, the center of origin of the Orcets has been named Dead Middle as is located equally between all four borders.

Within the World of Aliisen are the territories of the Farr, the Iaia, the War'en, the Blacktooth Family, the Jauntman Family, the Driftwood Tribes and the Casusites. The Farr inhabit the borderlands of the Frostplane, the Iaia live beside the Sands, the War'en shelter themselves within the Murk, the Blacktooth Family owns most properties in the South-Eastern corner of the World, the Jauntman Family proclaim themselves as Royalty in the Northern areas, the Driftwood Tribes live alongside the coast to the South and West and the Casusites settle in the Western areas close to Dead Middle.

INHABITANTS

Not only do Humans live in the land of Aliisen, but so do the older races such as Dwarves, Elves, Halflings and so on. Monstrous beasts can be anything you think of, from common pests to rare terrors to unique creatures of the unknown.

The Blacktooth and Jauntman Families are Human, as are the Casusites and Driftwood Tribes in varying technology.

The Farr, from the north Frostplane, are white, wooly humanoids that resemble bears or gorillas and are extremely territorial.

Iaia (eye-eye-ah) resemble lizards in respect to their four-limbed appearance yet act as monkeys do in groups.

War'en are intelligent bipeds that live in primitive tribal clans. They appear to be related to crustaceans of sorts in looks only.

Elves are the normal pointy-eared folk that live in forests and woodlands. They look Human but are taller, more slim and live many hundreds (if not *thousands*) of years more. They are very magical and nature-loving and care for all races but the Farr.

Dwarves live in the mountains and underground. They are stocky, heavy-set Humans with masterful building skills and quite often loud-mouthed and rowdy. Though they have a high sense of honour and family and live between 300 to 1000 years old.

Halflings are miniature Humans, about half their height, and are renowned for their trickery, mischief and fun-loving antics. They live anywhere that Humans do and have slightly longer lives - about the 150-200 mark.

All Races EXCEPT the Farr are Magical to different degrees. I'll let you work it out exactly.

... and just for those people who wonder this sort of thing, all of the races are, *ahem*, 'sexually compatible'.

The War'en are the only ones that lay eggs, however, and all of the Races are warm-blooded mammals.

So yes, Wooly Lizards, Crabmen and Half-Elves are all possible - and more if you wish. Now let us continue.

MAGIC

Anyone can tell you that Magic has been used by those with the Skill for eons. Gemstones and Ancient incantations form the basis of this art, but only beings born with the Skill are able to bend it to their will. Gemstones are scattered across Aliisen and Words of Power are highly sought after, just for the knowledge of them. The seven types of Gemstones are below:

- Rubiod, from Rana, powers Fire and Energy. It is a glowing red stone.
- Ditrion, from Dobo, powers Air and the Mind. It looks like a dusty transparent pebble.
- Emrest, from Eidi, powers Earth and Rock. It is easily distinguished by its deep brown colour and etchings.
- Lapia, from Lere, powers Water and Body. Swirling waters seem to float just under its blue surface.
- Opez, from Orin, powers Spirit and Light. It looks like a sparkling, opaque white stone.
- Bryss, from Baka, powers Death and Poison. Its colour is deep purple, like no other rock.
- Gepp, from Guru, powers Destiny and Time. When shone with bright light, brilliant rainbows explode from its surface.

Not only do you need the Skill and a Gemstone, but also an Ancient Word of Power to summon a particular 'spell'. Each word from the Ancient Language means something just like modern words do, and when used with particular Gemstones produce varying results. Most Ancient Words can be directly translated into the Common Language. There are a few widely known words that any Magician will know about, but s/he would still need a Gemstone to use them. Some of them are listed on the next page with their resulting effects and examples.

ANCIENT WORD	TRANSLATION	RESULTS	EXAMPLE/S
Ve'ran	Vortex; Spin; Turn	Creates a spinning or sucking embodiment of the appropriate element	Tornado; Quicksand; Whirlpool
Tyra'an	Reverse; Repair; Heal	Changes the target into a previous version of itself by elemental means	Heal; Reverse Time; Remove Energy
S'ikrell	Strike; Attack; Charge	Summons a pure form of the respective element	Lightning Bolt; Fire Strike; Rock Hammer
Prac'tal	Shield; Protect; Cover	Envelops the target in the chosen element	Force Field; Stone Fist; Magic Armour
Bask'ar	Sphere; Ball; Orb	Summon and/or 'throw' a ball of the element	Fireball; Water Bomb; Boulder; Poison Bomb

For example, Petr the Archer knows an Ancient Word that translates to "Precision; Perfect; Exact". He can use this word and a Ditrion Gemstone to bless his arrows with perfect accuracy using the element of Air. If he used a different Gemstone or targeted a different object, he would get different effects.

For example, Petr speaks the Word for "Change; Influence; Modify" with a Ditrion (Air/Mind) Gemstone and with his target being a hostile Goblin. The Goblin then has a change of mind and turns on its previous friends. He then speaks the same Word again, but uses a Ruboid (Fire/Energy) Gemstone and targets one of his arrows. The tip of his arrow is then set on fire. Finally, he speaks the same Word but with a Lapia (Water/Body) Gemstone - and the ground beneath the Goblins turns to mud.

STARTING A GAME

Now, the beginning of a game is not necessarily when everyone actually starts playing. The beginning - the *real* beginning - is when you come up with the idea to *start* the game with those Players.

The very first thing you should ask yourself is: How many people are going to be playing? Depending on the amount you may want to run a long Adventure with permanent Characters - or just a few Encounters with one-shot pre-mades.

Now that you have some idea of how many are playing, you can create the story and major Quests. Feel free to conjure up your entire game as it plays out in front of everyone, but many Game Masters prefer to have an idea of what will happen, where the Party will go and for what reasons written down beforehand.

If none or not many of your Players have played a game like this before, read the below paragraph to explain it to them:

What we will be playing is called a tabletop role-playing game based upon Dungeons and Dragons. You will create a Character to use in this game and that Character will go on an Adventure in a Fantasy World, similar to Lord of the Rings. To play, you tell me what you want your Character to do when it's your turn and then you roll a die to see if you succeed or fail. You will fight monsters, crack puzzles and defy death many times. And at the end of the Quest, you get the treasure. So first things first, let's all make Characters...

Now you get to the first fun part, making Characters! I'll quickly list the character sheet from page 7 for your reference:

Name, Appearance/Backstory, Class, Health, Energy/Magic, Skills, Money, Inventory space, Mannerisms

Furthermore, I will run through a quick Character Creation method on the next page that you can follow along with. Feel free to use this Character as well in your Adventure.

STEP BY STEP CHARACTER CREATION

First off, choose the gender of this character. An easy step, to be sure, but it's a start nonetheless. Gender should not have much - if any - impact on the game at all. If it does change the game in a major way, make sure it is balanced and fair.

For an example, I will chose Male.

Second, choose a name and race. There are many ways of selecting a name, whether they be random or based on information, so I will let you work this one out. If you absolutely need help, a Google search of "Fantasy Name Generator" will turn up instant results, as will "Sci fi", "Robot", "American" and so on. The different races have been described on page 15.

I will use the name Graff, a rough fantasy name. He will also be Human from the Casusites.

You may now decide on appearance and backstory. It may be easier to work on other details and use them as inspiration.

Graff is a tough guy, but rather short. He finds himself in pointless fights because he got on someone's nerves trying to do the right thing. But he can handle himself well in a fight, so that's no problem. He wears a full thick beard.

Now, Class is a tricky one - it depends on a number of things, including the genre of game and the upcoming Adventure. However, don't try to make your Characters fit a set of requirement. Rather, make the Adventure work around the Characters. Class can also be anything, from a profession to a title to a hobby and even description of what the Character does. For very early gamers, let them start with a basic Warrior, Fighter, Ranger or similar. These three (and more) are easy to start with.

Graff's class is Barbarian, so he is rather rash and brutal. He will use mostly melee weapons and little magic.

Health and Magic/Energy Points are next, and this is an easy one. For Health, get 2 six-sided dice and roll them fairly. Add them up, then add another 10 to that and you have your Health Points, which should be between 17 and 33 inclusive.

Magic or Energy is basically the same deal: start with 20 and roll two dice for a result between 22 and 32.

Graff has 24 Health Points, maybe because he is always being beaten up. He also has 27 Magic Points.

Now, Skills or Abilities is a tough one just like Class. Think of a bunch of special things that you want your character to be able to perform - specifically actions that the Game Master would see as important or affect the gameplay. This can be as simple as "Hide", "Scale Wall" and "Bluff", but can be as extensive as "Super Jump", "Planar Teleportation" and "Professional Hacking". It can also include what is sometimes called "Power Attacks" - somewhat unique combat actions that can change the tide of battle one way or another, such as "Power Punch", "Flame Explosion" and even "Impenetrable Defence".

Graff has two skills: Intimidation, which hurts an opponents ego; and Choke Hold, where he grabs a foe by the throat.

Currency is easy. Pick a number of dice to roll - any number - and roll them, then combine the results in any fashion you wish. Add them together, multiply them, stick each digit together with the next digit or any combination you can think of.

*Graff has 12 gold pieces, from 3 dice added together (5 + 3 + 4). He could have had $5*3*4=60$ gold, or even 534 gold.*

Another easy one is Inventory or Bag space. A character can have belt pouches, pockets, a backpack or sack, a chest he carries around on his back, a mule that carries all of her things, anything that makes sense - but there should be a definition of how much this storage can hold, in weight or slots or vague spaces.

Graff has his things on his thick leather belt, but that can only hold so much. To be exact, let's say 8 things.

Finally, Mannerisms. This refers to the personality of the Character - how she talks, what she does in certain situations, bad habits, everything like such should be described here.

Graff is quite arrogant, but has a soft side for the nice ladies. He is also very defensive of other people, even

strangers.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER: GRAFF THE BARBARIAN

Here is the above character styled into a sheet to easily read. Appropriate equipment has also been described, which was not touched on in the last page. There is a general equipment list on page 13.

For those who do not know, lamellar is a type of armoured shirt made up of many slightly overlapping shapes. It could be described as a quilted-together vest, but sometimes includes shoulders and upper legs. Can be made of leather or metal.

Name:	Graff
Appearance :	Male, Human, 32, stocky build, strong shoulders 5'4", 175 pounds. Bald but with a bristly brown, long full beard. His hands are quite callused and has very strong arms.
Class:	Barbarian
HP:	24 + 5 armour (29 total)
Magic:	27
Skills:	Intimidation (-1 to opponents' attack rolls) Choke Hold (Immobilises both self and foe)
GP:	12 Monies
Inventory:	<i>In use:</i> Warhammer (1D6 +3 damage, two-handed) Cloth vest, sleeveless Iron skullcap (+1 armour) Brown leather lamellar vest (+3 armour) Brown leather bracers (+1 armour) Dark grey trousers Squared-toe black boots <i>In storage:</i> Belt Knife (3 damage) Wooden torch (5 uses)
Mannerisms	Graff is quite arrogant, but has a soft side for the nice ladies. He is also very defensive of other people, even strangers.

ADVENTURE!

Journey into the Depths, for beginner players.

The Adventure begins in the Town of Grovemore in the southern states of Aliisen. The Characters can just be passing through, or they can originate from here, or they they can be called upon by the Town Mayor Benburr Chack. For whatever reason, the Characters come together in this town to begin the Adventure.

Choose a 'hook' from below to get the interest of both the Characters and Players:

Captain Trentan of the Guards has been losing guard dogs during night duty. Their handlers complain of headaches and a loss of memory and Trentan needs someone to find and stop those responsible for the stolen or killed dogs. He seeks out the Characters himself and asks them if they can help him. If so, he will give them access to the Guards' Armoury for equipment. He has already discovered that the culprits are Orcets and that they are too organised for this to just be random attacks. Trentan believes that they are commanded by a much smarter enemy, hidden in the surrounding hills.

Redith Picker, a farmer, is trying to sell his wares alongside the main road. When the Characters get nearby, Redith spots them and calls them over. He explains that his fruit harvests are worse than ever before and he thinks that Orcets are stealing all of the good fruits from the crops. He tells a short story about one night where he heard a commotion not far from his house. When he went outside to see what it was, he spotted "those bloody piggies taking off with sacks of my fruit!" He wants the Characters to find where they're coming from and stop their hurtful antics. He will supply a map of the area, including the countryside and a few notes about caves and such.

A ragged Adventurer races in from the northern gates, screaming about being attacked by "pig-nosed bandits" when he woke this morning in his camp just outside the Town border. He sees the Characters and splutters and begs for them to save his prize horse and possessions, which were taken in the attack. If the Characters accept the help, the man explains his name is Anap, that he is a Ranger and that he can track where the 'bandits' went with his things. If the Characters come back with his things, he'll give them a bag of Gemstones that he found.

If none of the above examples strike your fancy, use the short hook below:

While travelling to or from Grovemore, the Characters spy a huddle of Orcets off in a cow paddock. The Orcets race off with a calf when they realise the Characters saw them. The Characters should take this chance and follow.

In any case, the Characters should head out in the morning to find the source of the Orcets. By using their tracker, their map, or just their luck, they find a cave hole at the bottom of a hill and beneath a Great Oak's roots.

Around the hole are various broken weapons, mostly farming tools and axes, a chewed bone or three and an unlit torch. Only one person can fit through the hole at once and they must crouch down low to fit through. The cave quickly widens out however, at an incline of about 1 foot down every 5 feet along. 20 feet down the hole the tunnel is wide enough to let three people stand side-by-side. This is where the cave stops with an iron-bound wooden door.

At this point the Adventure changes from just a story to an actual game. This is where the the first Encounter begins.

Encounter 1: Skill Challenge

The tunnel here is much wider and taller than back at the entrance. There are a few green glowing mushrooms that illuminate the walls and ceiling. Pieces of junk and old tools are lying about along the walls, ready to trip up an unsuspecting explorer. At the end of the tunnel is an old, worn out wooden door bound with iron straps.

Simply, the door ahead is both locked and trapped. A description of the door has been supplied - you can read all or any part of it to the Players. The trap, however, is explained in the table. It should **not** be read to the Players.

The door itself is wooden and is braced with four bolted iron straps running horizontally across the door. A rusty metal handle, obviously scavenged from a much fancier object, is bolted onto the right-hand side of the door. The lock mechanism sits in a cut-out hole beneath the handle. The entire door has scratches and slices everywhere but mostly along the bottom.

Hinges of Hurt <u>Door Trap</u> <i>Each of the iron bindings is attached to a hinge on the side of the door. If the handle is pulled or a key inserted, the iron bindings lash out. Must be manually reset by pushing the bindings into place.</i> Discovery: <i>A successful check of the door reveals that the bindings move, that there are hinges on the side or that there are scratches and impact marks on an adjacent wall.</i> Disabling: <i>The trap can be deactivated by pushing the handle in, which makes the door swing open by itself.</i> Dodging: <i>To dodge the trap a Character must roll a 3 or higher. A 6 results in causing another Character harm.</i> Damage: <i>A Character is dealt 1D6 damage if they are hit by the bindings. After it is sprung it can simply be pulled open.</i>	<i>This space left intentionally blank.</i>
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The Characters now have to choose how to proceed. Ideally, they should check the door for traps, disable the trap, pick the lock and enter. But they can choose to hack the door down - and depending on the roll, you can set off the trap if they do.

Once the Characters get past the door, read the next room description:

Carved into the rock behind the door is a hallway 4 feet wide by 10 feet high and covered in dust and cobwebs. There is no light further than a few feet inside the hallway, and none at all if the door is closed. You cannot see the end of the hallway.

If the Characters succeed in a listening check:

You can hear some grunts and clip-clop sounds far down the hallway.

At the end of the hallway, approximately 30 feet away, is another wooden door. This one, however, is ajar and the characters can glimpse movement in the next room. Another listen or sight check reveals:

A few Orcets populate the room beyond, lazing about as if waiting for something. One of them seems to be asleep.

The Characters can choose one of two ways to enter this room: quietly and hope for a surprise attack, or charge in screaming bloody murder. Either way, the Characters get first strike - the Orcets aren't expecting anyone.

Encounter 2: Combat

The stone paved room is quiet, dingy and dim - just how the Orcets like it. A tiny rickety table sits in the middle of the room and is immediately turned over when the Orcet Aggressor sleeping on the nearby chair awakes. Another Orcet is pacing back and forth across the room and a third is sitting against the wall, playing with a short weapon. The two Scouts yelp at the sight of the Intruders and stand side-by-side with short swords at the ready, guarding the second hallway behind them.

If the party charges into the room, one Character can achieve an unblock-able attack on the sleeping Orcet Aggressor, but the two Orcet Scouts are aware enough to defend themselves. The Orcet Aggressor, if it survives the first hit, attacks without pause until it dies. It uses Brutal Charge once as soon as it can and again when it has lost half its health. The two Scouts work together to attack the Party and will perform Flanking when they get the chance.

If the Orcet Aggressor has been defeated, the Scouts will try to escape through a hallway behind them to warn their friends.

Orcet Scout <u>Small Weak humanoid</u> <i>Smart enough to know how to use weapons but dumb enough to take on enemies twice their size. They use sneak tactics to get the upper hand in battle.</i> Attributes Health: 20 Damage: 1D6 -1 (Short Sword) Movement: 2 squares per turn Skills Flanking: Alongside 1 or more allies, it will move to either side of the target/s for sneak attacks. Backstab: If successfully flanking, next attack is 1D6 +1 Equipment: Short sword, leather clothing, 1D6 money	Orcet Aggressor <u>Small Weak Humanoid</u> <i>Not exactly the smartest of the bunch. This one charges into battle without thinking, but can handle itself.</i> Attributes Health: 25 Damage: 1d6 (Battleaxe) Movement: 2 squares per turn Skills Brutal Charge: Can be used when there is an empty square between it and an enemy. 1D6 damage, target is knocked down. Can be used twice per encounter. Equipment: Battleaxe, leather clothing, 2d6 money
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Aftermath and Treasure

When the Orcets have been defeated or they have run away, the room can be searched for treasure:

The table, toppled onto its side, has a scattering of gold pieces around it on the floor. They add up to 12 gold pieces.

If the body of the Orcet Aggressor is available to loot and a Character rolls a Perfect 5 for their search:

Hidden in an inside pocket of the Orcet's vest is a red brooch with a skull carved in it.

The Brooch

This clothing pin is actually cursed, and is called *Baka's Brooch of Madness*. It causes its wearer to be unable to flee from a fight once started but also allows an extra point of damage if using a bladed weapon. Don't tell this information to the Character who picks it up - though you can read the following if you wish:

The brooch is warm to the touch and faintly glows red when held or pinned. A simplistic skull is scratched onto its face, like from a sharp blade or rock.

The Party should now continue on through the hallway to the next room.

Encounter 3: Combat

At the end of the hallway, lit by a flickering torch, is a set of stairs below an unlocked and open trapdoor. The stairs are grimy and moss grows down the wall to the bottom. There is a small puddle at the bottom of the stairs and footprints leading from it. The walls of this place gradually get less dirty and more ancient-looking the further you go. A thick-set Orcet watches from the archway into the next room. Guttural voices and scuffling can easily be heard, along with the squeaks of rats.

Depending on the last encounter, this room's residents may already be expecting the Adventurers. If this is the case, the only change is that the Brawler will be watching for them through the archway. The escaped Scout/s will not be in this room.

If the Brawler is not expecting them, they have a chance of a Sneak Attack, resulting in +1 damage. The Brawler has a -1 to detecting an attacker from behind, so the Character who attempts the backstab must roll a 2 or higher, then 1D6 +1 damage. After two rounds, those in the room ahead realise they are under attack and will move to help the Orcet Brawler. There are two Orcet Scouts and one Orcet Crossbowman. 1D6 Giant Rats are also in the room, but will only attack if threatened.

If the Party stays in the hallway before the room, the Orcet Scouts can't get past the Brawler and must wait. This is what's called a 'bottleneck' or 'choke point' strategy. When the Brawler is defeated, both Scouts attack and the Crossbowman will only now begin to fire bolts at the Party.

If the Party enters the room quickly, they will be surrounded with the Brawler on the hallway side, the Scouts beside them and the Crossbowman firing from the back of the room beside a strong wooden door. There is no loot in this room.

Orcet Brawler <u>Strong Small Humanoid</u> <i>The Brawler is tough and slow, relying on endurance to win the fight. Heavily scarred from many, many battles.</i> Attributes Health: 40 Damage: 1D6 +2 (Club) Movement: 1 square per turn Skills: Heavy Stance: Gains a +2 to successfully attacking at the expense of movement for that encounter Pummel: Attacks twice in one round for 1D6 damage each time. Cancels all other skills. Equipment: Club, leather clothes, 1D6+2 money	Orcet Crossbowman <u>Small Weak Humanoid</u> <i>Not a very good shot, but deadly in numbers. Does not like close combat and very skittish.</i> Attributes Health: 15 Damage: 1D6 -2 (Crossbow Bolt) Movement: 2 squares per turn Skills: Double Action: Can fire twice in one turn after every 3 turns Quick Step: Can move 1 square and fire 1 bolt every turn. Equipment: Crossbow, 3D6 +5 bolts, clothing, 1D6 money
Giant Rat <u>Small Weak Beast</u> <i>Just like any other rat, except bigger.</i> Attributes 5 health, 2 damage, 4 movement per turn Skills Quick Escape: Instantly flee from battle if hurt.	<i>This space left intentionally blank.</i>

Encounter 4: Passive Encounter

Behind the strong wooden door is a long, uneven stone hallway - about 40ft long, 5ft wide and 8ft tall - lit by one torch at either end and a matching strong wooden door at the other end. The specifically-positioned torches leave a large pool of darkness across the middle of the passage. Some of the paving floorstones are lifted and unevenly placed in the floor, as are some sections of the ceiling. Water drips unseen and something glints from within the deep darkness in the middle of the hallway.

This Encounter is a Passive Encounter, meaning that there is a possible situation available if the Characters do something. It can also be called a Puzzle or Trap Encounter, depending on what the result is. This hallway specifically will not harm the Characters as long as the *Everglinting Knife* in the darkness is left alone. As soon as one of the Character tries to pick it up or move it in any way, a trap will activate. Below are described three different traps that can occur when the dagger is moved - it is your own decision which one to use. You can even combine or make one up if you want to.

Trap #1

You lift the dagger from the floor, but it puts up a fight - you can just barely see a thin line that leads between two stones. The wire pulls on some hidden mechanism and you hear a definitive click from above you. You drop the dagger - it is attached to the wire after all. Upon looking at the ceiling you discover that it is lowering at a rate of 1 foot per 10 seconds - you have approximately 80 seconds until you will be crushed beneath it.

Trap #2

As the dagger leaves the floor the paver it was resting on rises up an inch and then down again - there are several loud clicks and the sound of shifting stone from behind the walls. All of a sudden the flooring stones begin to drop one-by-one until they are level with each other, at which point the entire floor begins to slowly shift to the side. A gap opens on the other side of the room at the corner of the wall and the floor. It moves at about a foot every 10 seconds - you have about 50 seconds until you cannot stand on the receding ledge and fall into the spiked pit below.

Trap #3

As you step beside the dagger, your foot pushes a rigged paving stone in the floor - and two giant axe blades begin to swing out horizontally from either wall in front of you at half-height of the wall, gradually getting closer and closer. Another blade begins to swing in front of the door you entered from. The approaching blades shift along the room at a pace of 10 feet every 10 seconds, giving you about 40 seconds before you get cut to pieces.

Each of the Traps described above will cause damage to the players if they are not careful in avoiding the dangers. There is a time limit described for each trap, but what is not said to the players is that the traps self-reset after the same amount of time has elapsed AFTER the trap has run its course.

- Specifically, this "Falling Ceiling" trap stops moving with a 2 foot gap underneath it - just enough room for a Character to lie flat between the paving stones. After 80 seconds at that point, the ceiling will lift upward again and reset.
- The "Ledge Pit" trap stops with a 1 foot ledge against the wall. Characters can stand on this ledge until 50 seconds has elapsed, which is when the floor shifts in reverse, the pit closes and the trap resets.
- Finally, the 'Swinging Axes' leave approximately 3 feet of empty, safe space above and below them, but the blades move in reverse once they reach the end of the hallway, which the Characters will find out after dodging the danger!

If someone decides to search for traps, they can possibly find the wire in #1 and the moving paving stone in #2 and #3. To deactivate the trap, the wire can be cut or something can be wedged into the gap between the moving paver.

All three trap sheets and the knife are detailed on the next page.

The Falling Ceiling <u>Moving Gravity Trap</u> The ceiling is suspended on chains attached to a simple gear. A replaceable chuck is inserted below the gear and attached to a wire that runs behind the walls and into the room - then attached to an item of choice for the trigger. Discovery: A successful check of the room reveals that the ceiling is suspended, that there is a hidden wire attached to the trigger or that there are scratches against the walls from the ceiling moving down. Disabling: The wire can be held by another item or person or the ceiling can be propped with a pole object. Dodging: The ceiling cannot be dodged, exactly, but tall enough items can stop it from falling further. Damage: The ceiling will crush you to death.	The Receding Ledge Pit <u>Moving Gravity Trap</u> The floor is positioned on specialised rollers beyond the room. A simple spring set underneath waits for the pressure to be taken off before the trap is sprung. Discovery: A successful check of the room reveals the trigger plate, a slight smell of corpses coming from below or scuff marks where the ledge stops at the wall. Disabling: The pressure plate must be stopped from moving or the item subtly replaced with another. Dodging: The trap leaves a ledge to one side of the room that must be carefully shimmed across. Movements must be rolled for and results called as appropriate. Damage: The spike pit causes 1D6 of damage, however a lucky character can fall between the spikes unharmed.
Triple Swinging Axes <u>Moving Blades Trap</u> Two large, semi-circular blades are positioned horizontally at half-wall-height and move from one end of the hallway to the other using springs, weights and pulleys. A third blade swings vertically left-to-right to stop any retreat. Discovery: A successful check of the room reveals two gaps on either wall that run the length of the room, a gap in the ceiling for the escape-blocking blade or the trigger plate in the floor. Disabling: The trap can be deactivated by spiking the pressure plate to stop it from lowering. Dodging: To dodge the trap a Character must roll a 3 or higher and either go over or under the moving blades. Damage: A Character is dealt 1D6 damage if they are barely hit by the blades, otherwise they are sliced up.	<i>This space left intentionally blank.</i>

The Everglinting Knife

The dagger from the passive encounter is magical but must be Examined for its obvious effects to be known. Two descriptions of it are listed, the first is a 'first impression' and the second should be read after intense scrutiny.

This dagger looks very special. The metal of the blade shines brightly under any light and has runes engraved upon its surface. The blade curves up and back to a very sharp point with the reverse side jagged for what seems like sawing actions. The handle is a deep, rich red wood of unknown sorts and many small, impossibly black gems are studded along the back of the grip. There is a slight finger guard beneath the blade.

When you inspect the weapon, the blade turns out to be everlastingly sharp through magical means, possibly powered from the small gems in the handle - and will never rust. Substances also fail to stick to the blade; anything can be cleaned from it with nothing but a simple wipe of a towel or cloth. The knife's origins cannot be determined in any way.

Encounter 5: Boss Fight

Upon entry of the next room, the Characters will see a group of 5 Orcets muttering together quietly in what looks like a chapel or church. If the Orcet Scout/s escaped a battle from earlier then they will be here now. Read both descriptions below:

The place you are now in looks like a room of worship. There is an altar positioned at the far end with a cauldron of fire burning on top of it. Four pillars are positioned to the sides of the room reaching upwards to the ceiling, which is cloaked in near-darkness. There are broken pews strewn throughout the room and large gouges and scratching all over the stone. There are two exits to the room apart from the door from which you entered: dark archways to either side of the altar. There is an old, possibly bronze candelabra hanging by a rusty chain and between all four pillars.

Between the broken pews and the altar is a group of Orcets muttering to one another. They soon catch sight of you and scramble to run away, some of them squealing like piglets. They split off into two groups, each going through the separate archways. An iron gate closes behind the left archway when the Orcets leave through it, but the ones that go to the right stop and back away before they can exit through it. A huge, hulking Orc with a giant spiked club ducks under the archway and enters the church, snarling. The Orcets seem frightened of it and stay away from both you and it.

This new enemy is a Dire Orc, a monstrosity of an epic proportion. Character sheets are on the next page, but here are described the tactics and consequences of the enemies and the battle.

Dire Orc tactics

The Dire Orc will Roar at the beginning of the fight and charge at the front-most Character. It will not change opponents unless there is a Ranged attacker present - and will only change to attack them once it becomes annoyed. It will always use Slam on the 3rd turn of attacking the same opponent. It will pursue a moving opponent in complete disregard of being able to attack on that same turn.

The 3 Orcet Scouts will scatter when the Dire Orc roars; 1 to either side of the Adventurers and 1 running headlong into the middle of them. They will all attempt to flank as soon as possible and fight to the death.

When the Dire Orc gets down to less than 10 health it cannot use any skills and its damage becomes 1D6 -1. If the Dire Orc goes from more than 10 health straight to 0 or less in one round, it will collapse on top of anyone, chosen at random. If the chosen character is an Adventurer, they can lose 2 health if they cannot dodge the fall. If the chosen character is an Orcet, it will squeal in fright and be crushed to death.

After the Battle

There is nothing of interest in the room except behind the altar. Behind it is a quite fresh corpse of a priest in white, bloodied linen cloth and hood. Beside the remains is a small locked chest and within the chest is a degraded and faded book and scrolls. The scrolls and the book that are not faded, missing and readable are in a language the Characters cannot understand, but one of the scrolls, a letter, is written in Common (or whichever other language you have chosen).

The letter looks hastily written, its author scratching in words with little ink left in his pen. It is only a few words long. "Gurhnash the pigs are running rampant we dont have enough men here to keep control of them send more quickly High Priest Bolon"

The corpse is that of the High Priest Bolon; his letter never gotten delivered to "Gurhnash". On the bottom underneath this letter - in someone else's writing - is a single Ancient Word: *Dov'lur*, with the words *Push*, *Press*, *Force* next to it. This Ancient Word can be used to push objects around, put pressure on things and force entities to do what you want. For example, a stuck key in a lock can be forced to turn or a person can be pressed to do what you want. Remember that the correct Stone must be used for these actions.

The Dire Orc and the Orcet Scouts are detailed on the next page.

Dire Orc**Large Strong humanoid**

This monster is a sight to be seen. Its skin is bubbly, very scarred and scabbing in places. It stands about 8 feet tall, thick as a tree and fists as large as an Orcet. It groans and moans when not angry, which isn't often at all. In combat it swipes and roars, and only attacks the most annoying opponents.

Attributes

Health: 100

Damage: 1D6 +3 (Huge Spiked Club)

Movement: 1 square per turn if not attacking

Skills

Slam: If next to an enemy for at least 1 round prior, can raise its weapon high and crush the opponent for 1D6 damage and disabling their movement for that encounter.

Roar: Disallows its own movement and attacking for one turn. Causes an intimidation to all foes in the encounter, resulting in a -1 to their attack rolls.

Swipe: Able to move 1 square and swipe at an opponent, causing 2 damage. Must use Roar afterward.

Equipment: *Huge Spiked Club (too heavy to lift)
loincloth*

Orcet Scout**Small Weak humanoid**

Smart enough to know how to use weapons but dumb enough to take on enemies twice their size. They use sneak tactics to get the upper hand in battle.

Attributes

Health: 20

Damage: 1D6 -1 (Short Sword)

Movement: 2 squares per turn

Skills

Flanking: Alongside 1 or more allies, it will move to either side of the target/s for sneak attacks.

Backstab: If successfully flanking, next attack is 1D6 +1

Equipment: *Short sword, leather clothing, 1D6 money*