



# REALMS

SIDE  
BAR

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April 2026

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Made With



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# REALMS

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## Fellowship/Cult News

### April Brings Quarter 2!

With quarter 2 we are going to have some big changes! New campaigns and new DMs are hitting our tables!

We have GetOffMacCloud taking us on some new adventures in the world of Greyhawk! This will be on Monday @8pm cst. Early D&D setting with 5e vibes!


Haavok\_rpg will be taking on the Thursday session spot to bring us Storm King's Thunder! This is a 5e campaign and the first campaign Haavok will be running with is! This will be every other Thursday 8pm CST.

### Our Charity Table

March, We had a guest, Nick from K9s for Warriors! It was so great having him with us and together we raised \$319.00

Charity Night this month is on April 15<sup>th</sup> at 8pm CST. Slots have been filling up fast so plan and book with Mandy.

**One shots!** If you would like to join in the fun contact Mandy or Cloud! It is from one shots we pick most players for campaigns!

Want to see them? check out @rpgsidebar on  **YouTube**

## Bourbon Apple Cider Cocktail



### Ingredients

- 1 ounce bourbon
- 1 ounce applejack
- 1 ounce fresh apple cider
- ½ ounce fresh lemon juice
- ½ ounce thyme-infused simple syrup (see instructions in notes below)
- 1 dash Angostura bitters

### Directions

- **Step 1** Fill a cocktail shaker with ice. Add bourbon, applejack, apple cider, lemon juice, simple syrup and bitters. Shake vigorously.
- **Step 2** Strain into ice-filled glasses and garnish with fresh thyme sprigs and apple slices, if desired.



Want to learn  
D&D?

**Join our One Shots!**

If you are trying to find a table  
that meets your needs and  
works for you?

**Reach out, We might know a  
table that is looking for  
someone just like you!**

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## From The Channel

Channel-wise we have had a big update: our logo has been refreshed so you'll be seeing her moving across all of our socials! This is exciting because it's been years since her last update. Our original logo was created by my little sister, and she has changed so much since then.



We're also changing how we stream cams during streams to make things easier for everyone! This should be a great upgrade and help make your cams look even better.tter.

### Card Packs:

I am working to add a new kind of pack for everyone. You ask and I listen, it will be a set that is a collection series. This means it will be a collection series with:

**Emotes:** This month we will be adding cosmic bunny emotes! 5 change out every month!



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# Xaretul: The Forgotten Flame

## Chapter 9: Garuth - The Small Spark

By EndYourStreamTV

Garuth had always been small. Smaller than the other boys. Smaller than most people. And when they had been abandoned, when everything had been taken from them, that smallness had seemed like a curse.

But now, here in this camp with Kira, Arian, and the others, Garuth was beginning to see his smallness as something else. It was a gift. It meant he had to be quick, light on his feet. It meant he could slip through places unnoticed. It meant he could be a quiet protector, the one who could sneak around and gather information. He didn't have to be the biggest or the strongest. He just had to be clever.

That evening, as the group settled down for a meal, Garuth slipped away. He didn't want to be noticed. He never did. But something inside him told him he needed to go. To prove something to himself.

He wandered into the woods again, this time not to run away from his feelings, but to find them. As he walked, he found a rock, a small ledge overlooking the river. He climbed it easily, his small hands finding footholds where others might have struggled.

At the top, he sat and watched the river flow beneath him, the moonlight dancing on the water's surface. His thoughts were quiet, but they swirled. He had a purpose now. He was a part of something. His fear didn't control him anymore. It fueled him.

He smiled to himself, the smallest spark of courage igniting within him. "I can do this," he whispered. And for the first time, he believed it.

### Auriel - The Quiet Leader

Auriel had always been observant. She could read people without them even speaking. She understood things that others didn't. And yet, despite her sharp mind, she was still unsure of her place. She was older than the others, more aware of the weight of the world. She had seen things, done things, that she wasn't proud of.

But this new world, this new faith, gave her something different. It gave her hope. And that hope burned deep inside her.

One evening, as she sat beside the fire, watching the others laugh and share stories, Auriel felt a tug in her chest. It was her responsibility, her turn to lead, even in small ways. The others needed direction, even if they didn't know it. They looked to Kira and Arian, but there were things that Kira could not teach, things that Arian could not see.

She stood, stepping away from the fire and toward the shadows where she felt the pull of her destiny.

"Mr. Xar... I will be ready," she whispered, as if the shadows themselves might hear her. She didn't need to be in the front. She just needed to be steady, a guide for the others when the world became too dark.

"I will be your strength," she promised, and in that moment, she knew she would find her own path.

(cont on page 9)

LEGO  
DINOS



LEGO  
DINO  
INTRO



WINS  
ON  
COD



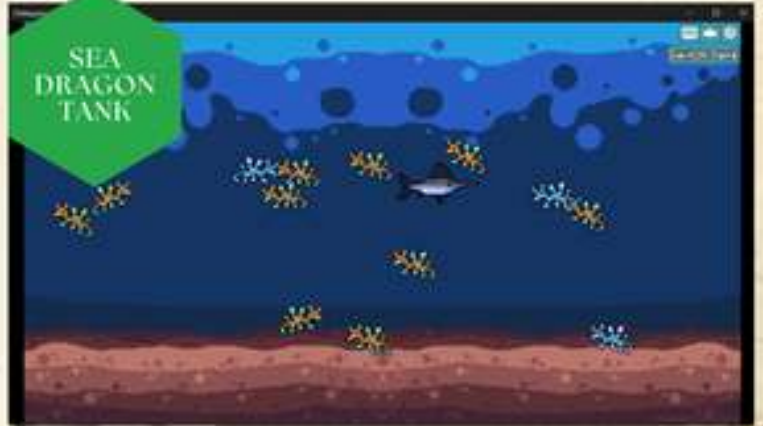
TERRARIA



CINNA  
BUNNY



SEA  
DRAGON  
TANK



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TO MAKE  
THE NEXT ISSUE OF REALMS

FROM OUR SERVERS

WE HAVE 2 ONLINE SERVERS OFFERING BOTH ARK AND MINECRAFT!!



## One Shot Recap



By Dragon Teacup

The Subs begin their travel deeper into the Mournlands eventually happening upon a Robot Dog, a Spectral Train and a Stone Goblin... Wait, is that Garunda? The train rushes in, and destroys the dog, but luckily Garunda is saved in the nick of time! Just in time, for a nest of Cockatrice to attack the party! A fight ensues with tolls of the dead, bites, arrows and talon strikes, leaving two of the party down. Garunda is de-stoned, and The Subs take her back to Belaluur. Enjoying a new 10% discount on many items (except those from Irullan Karnach's Table) the party heads to an inn for the night. Heals gifts Vult a new book, which he immediately uses to launch into a boring historical lecture until the party heads to bed and he passes into a trance on a little armchair. A good night's rest before more adventures bright and early tomorrow.

*This recap is from one of our Friday one shot sessions! If you would like to roll into the fun?*

*Join the SideBar  
Discord!*



If you would like to follow Dragon\_Teacup and keep up with the rest of of the Dump Stat check them out on Twitch!



# Xaretul: The Forgotten Flame (cont)

By EndYouStreamTV

## Sandra - The Unseen Protector

Sandra, the youngest of them all, had never spoken much. But her eyes, her quiet observation, spoke volumes. She knew more than the others realized. She had seen too much, heard too much, to be fooled by the world. And yet, she clung to her faith in Xaretul, in the hope that things could be better, that they would be better.

That night, as she lay awake, she felt something stir in the air. A presence. Xaretul was near, and she could feel his power, gentle yet strong, like a hand resting on her shoulder.

"I'm not alone," she whispered to the night, to the wind. "I'm not alone anymore."

She closed her eyes, letting the peace of that thought wash over her.

### As a Whole: The Beginning of a Journey

Together, the children sat around the fire, each of them carrying a piece of the future. They were not yet ready to lead a nation, to build a great temple, or to change the world. But they were ready to start.

They had already begun, each in their own way. And with Xaretul guiding them, with Kira, Arian, and the others at their sides, they would face whatever came next.

The world was vast, and their journey was only just beginning.



Join us next issue for Chapter 10 in this series.



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for  
Campaign Prep

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Masters



# Melina Sunlance



## Character Writing

By SexySlothh

**Race:** High Elf

**Class:** Fighter-Champion



The last thing Melina remembers before appearing in Sigil was working with the party she was placed with to clear an old abandoned home that had been causing the locals issues. She could still hear the whispers in the halls, shadows flickering in the corners of her vision as they prepared to confront whatever malevolence had taken residence there. Clearing the last room she finds a wardrobe. Wanting to be sure nothing is hiding inside she opens the doors, but then finds herself stumbling into an utterly alien landscape. Quickly catching her bearing and turning to take the portal back to Faerûn only to find nothing, it was a one-way trip.

Melina cried out, bewilderment coursing through her. She stood amidst a cacophony of sights and sounds, a bustling cityscape that bore no resemblance to the verdant lands of her childhood. Twisting alleys and towering architecture unfurled before her like a maze, all shimmering under the light of multiple suns. The populace, a bizarre arrangement of beings, moved with purpose, their conversations a blend of languages that filled the air with a vibrant chaos.

Her heart raced. What had happened to her friends? Did they even know she was gone? Gathering herself, she took inventory of her situation. She was a fighter, trained to adapt in the heat of battle. But now, she needed to strategize for survival in an entirely different type of conflict, the battle against the unknown.

As hours turned into days, Melina began to explore Sigil, known as the City of Doors for its myriad portals connecting to various realms. Each encounter and every encounter taught her that this place thrived on the unexpected. She learned of its peculiar laws and discarded urban legends that swirled like fog through the streets. But the most profound revelation came from an encounter with a hooded figure who claimed to know about the portals.

"Returning home is not merely a matter of stepping through a door," the figure had said cryptically. "It is a path determined by your choices and the lives you intertwine with here." This spurred a transformation in Melina. Rather than being merely a lost soul yearning to return home, she began to feel a pull toward actively helping the lost souls herself.

She watched others making the difficult transition between worlds while struggling to find their footing in a place that could be as cruel as it was wondrous. She could sense their fears mirrored her own. So, Melina organized various endeavors: training those who felt vulnerable, setting up resources to educate newcomers on the dangers they faced, and dismantling threats that could harm the weak. She became a beacon for the lost.

Weeks turned into months, and during this time, the ache to return home dulled, overshadowed by the bonds she formed with the citizens of Sigil. In choosing to stay, in choosing to help others navigate this tumultuous journey, she found herself argued with the idea of being a mere fighter. Here, she became the shield for the vulnerable and the sword against the encroaching darkness of unwanted evils.



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# One Shot Recap



By EndYourStreamTV

The party began at the manor after successfully talking their way out of an altercation during the last session. Though they avoided conflict, they were left with several clues to pursue. Their search led them back to Marais de Tarascon and into the graveyard, where they discovered a hooded figure carrying a lantern and lurking among the tombs.

The ever-brave Tavax, always eager for friendship and adventure, approached first, accompanied by Bernice and soon followed by the rest of the party. He attempted to befriend the masked stranger, but the invitation was quickly and rather rudely rejected. Tensions escalated when the masked man hurled an unknown object into the tomb of the former sheriff, triggering a fight.

In the chaos that followed, Tavax struck down both the Masked Man and the former sheriff, now reanimated as a grotesque mutant zombie. The rest of the party fought alongside him, cleaning up the smaller undead that swarmed the graveyard. Yet in the aftermath, something seemed different about Tavax. A crack showed in his normally cheerful and lighthearted personality. A darkness appeared to be creeping up from within, his veins bulging with dark energy.

Searching the scene, the party uncovered a map pointing to two possible destinations: Port d'Elhour or a marked patch of land deep within the swamp. After some consideration, the group chose the latter.

Their journey through the swamp was grueling. Exhaustion weighed heavily on them, and relentless insects made every step miserable. Still, they pressed on, guided by the steady light of the cleric Aeliana and the relentless determination of a now darker Tavax. At last, they reached a place in the swamp that offered shelter from the rain, giving them the chance to take a long rest.

As the others settled in, Tavax stared ahead toward his goal: the tongue of the Zombie Lord. Claiming it would fulfill the promise he had made to his friend. A mission given. A mission nearing completion.

Until next time, remember, friends:

"Lanterns on the water, drift and gleam,  
Calling the lost ones out of their dreams.  
Follow the light, but never too far,  
The dead love children who chase a star."



# Setting your Players up to Fail... Forward



By W. Adam Clarke

Good Afterwhenever, everyone. I want to aim a thought at GMs, to make your encounters better and "overcome die results" in a memorable way. I want to show you how to set up your Players to fail... forward.

For those not familiar with "failing forward," it's the concept of using a failure to set up a future success. Specifically, a success that may not have been possible without failure in the first place. Much of this falls into the realm of "Advocating for the Players," so some hate mail is expected, but also in many ways it's "Advocating for your own plans in the first place."

We've all been there: You have a scene in mind, and a player is about to complete a major goal, and has only one shot at it...and that 1 pops up. What do you do now? These moments can derail GMs, ruin the moral of players, and generally cause strife. However... that's only one option. Let me show you another way.

The players have their single-shot BFG, which is the only weapon with enough mass to punch through the weakened armor of the BBEG in their underground cave lair. The sure-shot, super-buffed hero who will HIT ON A 3 OR BETTER, and has advantage, confidently picks up their dice... and roll a 1 and a 2. TPK inbound, right? Well... maybe not.

Maybe, just maybe, the BFG misses but hits the ceiling, cracking most of the way through a stalactite. I mean... that's a lot of mass, right? The plan failed... but the PCs have a new plan. Maneuver the BBEG under the stalactite (push/pull spells or abilities?) Spell or weapon damage to the stalactite, and drop the rock through the BBEG's skull.

I'll be honest... setting up fail forward schemes requires a LOT of thinking on your feet for the GM. But, the more you practice it, the easier it gets... and also you can re flavor or reuse ideas with different groups (we've touched on that (cont on Page 14)

*IamMyrddin  
on  
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Mon 7 PM TYRRANY OF DRAGONS  
5E Campaign  
DM: Jerrica

Tues 8PM NEONHEART  
Daggerheart  
GM: Adam

Wed 7PM CHILDREN OF ELYSIUM  
Blades in the Dark  
GM: Jerrica

Thur 8PM THROWBACK THURSDAY  
Ghostbusters Int'l  
GM: Adam

Fri 7PM Rust Belt Romp  
Monster of the Week  
GM: Jack

Sat OFF

Sun 7PM SPINESPUR SUNDAY  
Blades in the Dark  
GM: Adam



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# SERVER PETS



**Send in yours by April 20th**  
in the SideBar pets channel!

## Setting your Players up to Fail... Forward

(cont.)

by W. Adam Clarke

before). But I'll tell you, the work is worth it. These are the moments your players will talk about for years.

- You swing at the baddie, who blocks your attack and slaps you to the ground. But from there... you notice the hinge on the knee of the armor is about to give out.
- Your attempt to make a new concealed armor for the crew's vehicle fails. The material isn't armored... it seems squishy on one side, while being non-newtonian on the other. (Rather than being anti-ballistic plate, this could be used as crash plating.)
- You've planned the heist for weeks, and been unable to find a weakness in the fortresses defenses... but you notice the garden generally only has 4 guards. Can the party change tact and get the Evil Lord to bring the art object into the garden?

For clarity: Never give the PCs the win on a fail. Make them still earn it. But always give them a new way to work to gain the advantage.



W. Adam Clarke  
Can be found on  
SingleStepGaming



**Live session**

*Mondays 8pm CST*

[twitch.tv/sparkles\\_mandy](https://www.twitch.tv/sparkles_mandy)



# 5E to 5.5: Surprise! Let's Fight!



By Skyline

Welcome back readers! In this month's newsletter, I decided to continue sharing the differences on 5E to 5.5 and highlighting my thoughts on them, through personal research and experience.

Without further ado, let's jump back into it!

For this month, I wanted to jump into some aspects of combat, crazy from me I know, and some specific things it can provide with the latest edition.

After some research of my own and some testing, here's what I have for the 'Surprise' element of combat.

5.5 has significantly changed the Surprise rules. Gone is the "you're frozen until your first turn, then you're standing still looking pretty until your next turn", in its place for being at Disadvantage on Initiative! 5.5 also goes to normalize the Hiding / Cover aspects of Surprise, in part by making being "Hidden" the functional equivalent of being Invisible (i.e., having the Invisible condition). Which sometimes makes for odd situations, but ...

After a session where things got a bit complicated, I did a re-read of the 5.5e rules. The rules, as always, look straightforward, a framework that should make sense, whether it does or not. The problem lies, as always, is in applying it to an actual combat scenario, whether it be oneshot or campaign.

At any rate, fundamentally Surprise happens under a combination of two conditions:

- When a combatant is "caught unawares by the start of combat" or, as phrased in the 5e rules, "doesn't notice a threat."

- In a case where being covert (in movement / positioning (Stealth), or in behavior (Deception)) is better than a target's awareness (spotting someone (Perception), or being aware of their motivation (Insight); this is likely a Passive check, since you only Actively try to perceive such things when you are already aware of the risk/threat of the situation, and so aren't prone to Surprise because of the first condition).

That second condition is mechanical — dueling skills of various sorts. The first is a bit more subjective and narrative, and requires some adjudication. Can a guard who is watching for an attack be caught unawares? If you're creeping down a dungeon corridor, looking for an ambush, are you aware that there is a threat, even if you don't know it specifically? How long can you be actively alert for such stuff, for example- "could that guard be flagging by the end of the third watch?". What if the type of combat or threat is itself unexpected: for example, if a group of kobolds drop down through the illusory ceiling?

But now that the surprise of me discussing combat has settled, let's dive further into it and begin discussing Weapon Mastery.

For those who are newer to D&D, Weapon Mastery is an additional aspect to weapons that certain characters can get by becoming "masters" of that particular weapon and learning to use its more interesting features!

More specifically, a trained user of a certain weapon can do something extra. That something extra includes-

- **Cleave:** Once a turn, on a hit, the attacker does a follow-on attack on another target within 5 feet of the first and within reach. Damage on that second attack does not include the Ability modifier (unless negative). [Greataxe, Halberd]

(cont on Page 17)



# Red Pell Marrow

NPC Build

by Brad Harris



## Overview

Red Pel Marrow is a dockside fence in Crimmor with a specialty in luxury foodstuffs that skirt Guild restrictions. Her pride and joy are the candied Crimmor pears - a sticky, golden delicacy banned from large-scale transport due to lucrative regional tariffs. Pel is a fixer, broker, and opportunist. She keeps one foot in legitimate trade, operating a cramped but aromatic confectioner's stall along the docks, while the other foot is firmly planted in the underworld. With a web of smugglers, caravan masters, and "accidental" warehouse clerks, she can move product without ever being seen moving it.

## Appearance

Pel is a short, stocky woman in her late forties with a shock of copper-red hair streaked with gray. She wears a long, patched leather apron over a faded green tunic, always smelling faintly of caramelized sugar and smoke. Her hands are calloused from years of boiling kettles and lifting crates, and her eyes are quick, sharp, and always appraising. A thin scar runs from her left temple to her jawline, a reminder of a deal gone bad on the docks.

## Personality

- Warm but Calculated. Friendly enough to draw you in, but always measuring the profit



- Shrewd Negotiator. Won't flinch at a hard bargain, especially if she smells desperation
- Cautiously Loyal. Once you're in her circle, she protects the relationship – but only so long as you don't cross her.
- Dockside Pragmatism. Knows the value of silence and the danger of names

## Duties & Influence

- Supplier of Contraband Candied Pears. Controls a small but valuable pipeline for the luxury sweet.
- Dockside Fixer. Can arrange for goods to be "misplaced" or "redirected" for the right price.
- Guild-Adjoining Contact. Not a Guild member, but has ties to minor clerks who keep paperwork "flexible."

## Plot Hooks

- The Missing Shipment. A crate of pears vanished en route to Purskul – and Pel suspects sabotage.
- The Buyer's Betrayal. A trusted client tries to undercut Pel by going to her source directly.
- Old Debts. Pel owes a favor to a dangerous smuggler; now they're calling it in

## RED PELL MARROW

Medium humanoid (human), true neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 11 (+0)	DEX 14 (+2)	CON 10 (+1)
INT 13 (+1)	WIS 12 (+1)	CHA 15 (+2)

Saving Throws DEX +4, CHA +4

Skills Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Insight +3, Sleight of Hand +1

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

## ACTIONS

**Dagger, Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., 1d4+2 piercing damage.

**Confectioner's Distraction (1/day).** Throws hot caramel or sugar dust in a foe's eyes; DC 12 CON save or blinded until the end of their next turn.



## 5E to 5.5: Surprise! Let's Fight! (Cont)



By Skyline

- **Graze:** If the attack misses, it still does damage equal to the attacker's Ability modifier. [Glaive, Greatsword]
- **Nick:** When the attacker make an extra attack because the weapon is Light, they can do it as part of your Attack action, not using up their Bonus Action. [Scimitar, Dagger]
- **Push:** On a hit, the attacker can push the target 10 feet away if size Large or smaller. [War Hammer, Heavy Crossbow]
- **Sap:** On a hit, the target has Disadvantage on its next attack roll. [Longsword, Morning Star]
- **Slow:** On a hit with damage, the target's Speed is reduced by 10 feet until your next turn (no stacking). [Club, Light Crossbow, Longbow]
- **Topple:** On a hit, the target makes a CON Save vs DC (8 + attacker's Ability Modifier + attacker's Proficiency Bonus) or go Prone. [Maul, Quarterstaff]
- **Vex:** On a hit with damage, the attacker has Advantage on the next roll against that creature before the end of their next turn. [Short Bow, Rapier]

As a pro, this sets apart martial arts a bit more; it allows additional tactical elements in combat; it improves flavor by keeping flails and longswords and morning stars from all being the same. And also allowing people to RP whilst in the middle of combat, and could help people who struggle with it.

As a con, however, it slows down combat while tactical decisions are made and questions/hypotheticals may include: do I want to use the push-back? What path do I take? Does that mean it would be better to attack this other opponent? The mapping between the Masteries and the actual weapon is a bit sketchy, so the plausibility is a little bit strained but could work in practice.

Now me personally, I haven't been able to try these as I normally don't play melee based characters. However I am a glut for trying out new things and the next opportunity I get, I will definitely try these mechanics (if the DM allows of course).

Overall, I know some people may not enjoy some aspects of the new edition, but I do feel like people should at least look into it and maybe play a oneshot with these rules just to say you tried it! But hey, what do I know?

Until next time...

I am Myrddin  
on  
Twitch



STORM  
KING'S  
THUNDER

Live session

Every Other  
Thursday 8pm CST  
[twitch.tv/sparkles\\_mandy](https://www.twitch.tv/sparkles_mandy)





## Member Showcase!

### SexySloth

We asked a few questions to get to know Lex just a little better!

#### **Favorite color?**

Light Blue

#### **Tell us about your hobbies?**

I love to read, play video games, and camp! I haven't been camping in a while but as much as I love to stay inside being in nature is my favorite thing.

#### **Do you have any Pets?**

Yes! I have one cat and his name is Zuko. He's my baby

#### **What is your favorite style of game, and what got you into it?**

I play a lot of first person shooters and I got into them because of my dad. We would play Halo and Battlefield together when I was a kid and I loved that time and I came to enjoy the games almost more then he did.



#### **If you would recommend a game to someone in that style, what would you recommend?**

A game I played a bunch of was Bioshock. A little bit of creepy mixed with a fps, and the style, even for its time, in my opinion, was very cool. I haven't played it in a while but I might have to now!

#### **What's something interesting that people wouldn't guess about you?**

Well I don't know how interesting it is but I really love watching hockey. Probably one of my favorite sports (Go Kraken! Go Torrent!) because of that I got really into ice skating in middle-high school and would go with my friend Trevor a lot. He played ice hockey so him and his dad taught me to skate! I was not good at all but it was fun!



#### **Anything Else?**

I'm very happy to have met this group and even luckier that they taught and helped me learn this amazing game of D&D!! Thank you!!





# Humblewood



By Mini Cloud



So I recently started reading about Humblewood. And, yes I am also just starting to learn about DnD and I think it is a great way to open up your imagination freely. And also thanks to the one the only GetOffMacCloud for letting me play in April or something, I don't know so don't ask me. Also I am using my own opinions so I am not used to this. So... Yeah, lets get started!

I have only read to page 32 so I'm doing the first part

## Birdfolk

The first bird is a Corvum and for me a Corvum is kinda like a crow or a raven. If you look in the book, it has all the features of a crow. It says in the book their reputation is nothing short of villainous and, if I were a Luma (I will talk about that later) and I see dark feathers, dark beaks, like dark everything and most of them are villainous, I'd be like, "Your totally good let me give you all of my gold cause you are trustful." And thats just looks. But it might be different if you were on quest or adventure. If you want to play a Corvum it all has to, HAS TO!, be all about you or for your personal gain because in general Corvums are very selfish but some times I wonder if they have to be selfish. I think they would be a good rogue, but you don't have to be. They are smart and crafty. One of the smartest of bird folk. Also, they are very keen observers Corvums are commonly accepted to be among the smarts of the bird world. They like to trade information as if it were goods. They do so because they are thirsty for knowledge as well as leverage. A cool thing is that they live one of the shortest bird lives dying regularly at 70.



Thank you for reading my article!

## A note from the editor

For those who are new, Mini-Cloud is the 10-year-old daughter of our DM Cloud and she has been wonderful to work with. Every month I get so excited to see what she will come up with next!

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# SO YOU WANNA FIGHT A MONSTER

By GrimGrix

So you want to fight a monster? Well, you're in luck, because this week we are going to continue our delving into monsters of mythology and legends! Let's take a quick nice ole peek at the Erinyes. Originally from Greek mythology these creatures are known by a much more common name, the Furies. In the original Greek myths, they are known as the deities of vengeance and retribution, ceaseless and precise warrior goddesses. If you find yourself the target of their ire... well, good luck.

Translating that into D&D 5e, these creatures are described as the most beautiful of all lesser and greater devils. They come into being from angels who fell to temptation or misdeeds. Consequently, they are cruel, tactical, and merciless soldiers. Directly serving Asmodeus, these devils are precise and deadly, boasting the power of flight and weapons that deal debilitating poison damage. Like any other devil, they can and will use all their abilities to manipulate and sway the fight in their favor. They often lead other devils into battle, resulting in large-scale encounters that can be fatal to any party.

When it comes to fighting these monsters, what advice do I have for players? First and foremost: have a way to counter—or at least gain advantage against—poison. I would also ensure you have ways to deal magical damage to bypass their innate resistances. Additionally, keep your squishy players safe; since these are smart, tactical creatures, they will either target the backline themselves or order their minions to take down those weaker than your frontline fighters.

Ensure that you are ready to fight tooth and nail! As a DM, if you want a truly terrifying encounter, throw one or two of these in with a Narzugon and watch the party tremble at the "mini-boss" fight on their hands. All in all, keep your wits about you and stay ready for whatever is thrown your way.

From one DM to the players,  
**GrimGrix**





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# Lindsay Lou's



## Part 1 - A Goblin Awakens

Picture it: You're 39 years old, married, no kids, steadily employed and (probably) living with undiagnosed ADHD. You enjoy watching other people play various role-playing games online, but you think you'd never actually play. It's too involved, too complicated, too nerdy...Plus the folks you watch all seem way cooler than you. There's so much jargon and graphics and system and protocol - it feels very daunting to you, the elder-millennial weirdo. Best to just watch from the comfort of your laptop and accept your status as a closeted nerd.

Then, it happens.

You're scrolling through Etsy looking for new baubles and trinkets to add to your shining hoard, hoping some new, pretty thing will jump out at you. Rings? Nah, plenty of those already. Miniatures? They're cute, but also fragile and you have a tendency to break things. Ooo, a sparkly rock! That would be a good addition, but you don't really have anywhere to display it.

But what's this?

A set of dice, all different shapes, in the most perfect neon, Eldritch green you've ever had the pleasure of viewing. As you wipe the drool from your chin, you click on 'Find Similar' - your pupils dilate and your breath catches. There are hundreds, nay, thousands of listings for dice in every color combination and design esthetic.



"Rut roh" you say to yourself as you keep looking and looking, mesmerized by the shimmer and shine, the glitter and gold. There are solid ones, clear ones, wooden, metal, resin, sparkly, matte, even some that look suspiciously like bone.

As you continue your browsing, you think, "What would I even do with these? They'd just sit at your desk, taking up space, because you don't play any games that use these." Your brain makes a good point. But, they are small, even if you don't use them, they still look really cool. Surely one set would be cool to have, just in case.

You go back to the first one that caught your eye, the Slurm™-hued set with bright fuchsia numbers. It was love at first sight, no need to search further. Without any hesitation, you add to cart and buy your very first dice set.

*And so it begins.*

Come back next month for **Part 2 - So you're a Goblin, now what?**

# Guide to Dark Sun

## By ChaseStreet



To understand Athas, you have to understand that it wasn't designed to be a "fun" place to visit; it was designed to be a crucible.

### 1. The Design Logic: Why so Bleak?

In the late 80s and early 90s, the "Grimdark" movement was starting to bubble up in media (think Mad Max, Dune, and Fist of the North Star). Timothy Brown and Troy Denning felt that D&D had become too "safe." If you have plenty of water, gold, and a Cleric who can resurrect you, the stakes of the game naturally drop.

They wanted to create a high-stakes pressure cooker. By removing the basics of life (water, shade, metal), every single choice a player made became life-or-death. The bleakness wasn't just flavor; it was a mechanical engine to drive the game's tension.

### 2. Slavery as a Narrative Engine

Slavery in Dark Sun was the "Ultimate Evil" that gave the players a moral compass in a world that otherwise had no "Good" or "Evil" gods. The creators used slavery to illustrate the absolute corruption of the Sorcerer-Kings. It wasn't just "flavor text", it was the core of the economy. By making the players start as slaves (as in the first adventure, DS1: Freedom), it gave them an immediate, visceral goal: Break the chains.



(cont on page 25)



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## DORUKAI THUNDERCLUB

Large giant, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 16 (chain mail)

**Hit Points** 152 (16d10 + 64)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +9, Wis +6, Cha +8

**Skills** Arcana +7, Deception +8, Perception +6, Persuasion +8

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned, prone

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common, Giant, Infernal

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** Dorukai's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The oni can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *gust of wind*, *invisibility*, *thunderwave*, *shatter*

2/day: *call lightning*, *lightning bolt*

1/day: *banish*, *chain lightning*

**Magic Weapons.** Dorukai's weapon attacks are magical.

**Regeneration.** Dorukai regenerates 15 hit points at the start of his turn as long as he has 1 hit point.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Dorukai makes three attacks, either with his claws or great hammer; he may replace one attack with a thunder slam.

**Shocking Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8 + 5) lightning damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw or be paralyzed until the end of their next turn.

**Great Hammer of the Thunder Lord.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10ft., one target. Hit: 15 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) thunder damage. The target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed back 10 ft., and knocked prone.

**Thunder Slam (Recharge 5-6).** Dorukai slams his great hammer into the ground and causes all creatures within 30 ft to make a strength saving throw, on a failed save the target takes 6d6 thunder damage and is stunned, on a successful save they take half as much damage and are not stunned. At the end of a stunned creatures turn they can make a DC 15 Constitution Saving throw to end the stunned condition.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

You can take 3 legendary action(s), choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. You regain spent legendary actions at the start of your turn.

**Move.** Dorukai may move up to his movement speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Great Hammer Attack (2 Actions).** Dorukai makes an attack with his Great Hammer of the Thunder Lord.

**Spell Casting (2 Actions).** Dorukai casts one of his innately known spells.



# Guide to Dark Sun (cont.) By ChaseStreet



In a world where "Good" is almost extinct, the act of freeing a slave or sharing water becomes a revolutionary act. The "ickiness" was the point, it was there to make the player feel disgusted by the world's status quo so they would feel like true heroes for trying to change it.

### 3. The Origins of the Sorcerer-Kings

The Sorcerer-Kings were born from a desire to combine the two most powerful (and often conflicting) classes in D&D: The Magic-User and the Cleric. The creators asked, "What if one person owned all the magic AND all the religion?"

They decided that these kings didn't just study magic; they stole it from the life force of the planet. Every time they cast a spell, the grass turned to ash.

The idea that these kings were all at different stages of "transforming" into horrific, singular Dragons (via a 10th-level spell process) was a stroke of genius. It gave the world "Boss Monsters" who were also political figureheads. They were inspired by the "God-Emperor" archetypes found in Dune and the ancient, brutal god-kings of Sumerian and Babylonian history.



(cont on page 27)

**Mandelver**

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# JOIN THE QUEST

The beacon has been lit! On the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month we have our clips drawing!

All you need to do is take a clip to be entered in our give away! Clips can be taken in live sessions or from the VODs whatever works for you!

For every 5 people who take a clip in the month we will draw a name! Those names get Mandur mail!

Here are some of our past winners!

Best of Luck!



## Guide to Dark Sun(cont.)

By ChaseStreet



### 4. When did D&D "Sanitize" the Villains?

The shift away from "Problematic Evil" wasn't a single moment, but a gradual evolution that peaked around 2020.

Modern Wizards of the Coast (WotC) moved toward a philosophy that fantasy should be an escape for everyone. Their argument is that certain real-world traumas (like slavery or systemic racism) are so painful for some players that having them as "game mechanics" or even "villainous traits" can make the table feel unsafe or unwelcome.

D&D also moved away from "Always Evil" races (like Orcs or Drow). They wanted to emphasize that character choice, not biology, determines morality. This creates a "Villain Vacuum." In modern 5e, villains are often "misunderstood," "corrupted by an artifact," or "cosmic horrors" from the Far Realm. The "Punch in the Face" villain, the one who is just a cruel, oppressive tyrant, has become rarer because WotC is wary of depicting realistic human suffering too closely.

### 5. Dark Sun as the "Forbidden Setting"

This is exactly why Dark Sun is in "purgatory." To make Dark Sun "safe" for 5e, you would have to:

- Remove the slavery.
- Soften the survival mechanics.
- Make the Sorcerer-Kings less "problematic."

But if you do those things, you don't have Dark Sun anymore. You just have a desert-themed Forgotten Realms. The creators, and many fans, argue that the "problematic" elements are the very things that make the victories in Athas feel earned. When you finally topple Kalak in Tyr, it feels meaningful because of how much he oppressed the people.

The bleakness was the canvas, and the "problematic" villains were the paint. Dark Sun can exist in 5E, but only through a collaborative effort between DMs and players willing to engage with its darkness rather than erase it. Remove those elements, and Athas stops being a crucible—it becomes just another scorching sandbox, memorable only for the heat.

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## Rule Set

by *EndYourStreamTV*

Rule set is the “physics engine” your magic item lives inside, and most balance problems come from breaking, or accidentally bypassing, those laws. When you design an item, you’re not just writing a cool effect. You’re inserting a new rule into a game that already has assumptions about action economy, resource limits, and how often powerful abilities should appear. A homebrew item that ignores those assumptions can outshine class features, invalidate encounter design, or create repetitive “best move” turns that flatten play.

Start with the single biggest lever in most tabletop systems: action economy. Ask what it costs to use the item. Is it an action, bonus action, reaction, or “free” effect? Effects that require no meaningful action often become invisible power boosts, always on, always optimal, and hard to challenge. If an item delivers strong value as a bonus action every round, it competes with (or replaces) a character’s core kit: a rogue’s Cunning Action,



a paladin’s smites, a cleric’s healing word, a monk’s Martial Arts, and so on. Reactions are just as sensitive because they fire during enemies’ turns and can reduce threats without consuming the user’s turn. When in doubt, pay attention to frequency: once per round is dramatically stronger than once per combat, and once per combat is dramatically stronger than once per day. Next, consider resource structure. Most games keep high-impact magic behind some combination of limited uses, recharge conditions, or opportunity costs. Charges, spell slots, per-rest limits, attunement, or consumable components aren’t “nerfs”, they’re pacing tools. If your item replicates a spell effect, a reliable first step is to mirror that spell’s limitations. For example: if the effect resembles a concentration spell, ask whether your item should require concentration too. Removing concentration is often the hidden source of imbalance, because it allows the user to stack multiple powerful effects at once. Similarly, if your item grants flight, invisibility, crowd control, or reliable defensive boosts, an unlimited version can reshape every encounter, not just the one you intended it for.

A useful habit is to measure an item against class features at the same level. Characters earn their signature capabilities over time, and those features are part of each class’s identity. If an item hands out what a class is “supposed” to be good at, especially without tradeoffs, you can accidentally erase someone’s niche.

{cont on page



## Lemon Ricotta Pasta

By Brad Harris



Pasta doesn't have to be complicated to taste like a million bucks. This Lemon Ricotta Pasta comes together fast but tastes like something off a fancy Italian menu—bright, creamy, and absolutely packed with flavor.

### Ingredients Needed

Here's what goes into this dreamy Lemon Ricotta Pasta:

- Pasta (we use bucatini)
- Whole milk ricotta
- Fresh lemon (zest and juice)
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Butter
- Grated Parmesan or Romano (I recommend Pecorino Romano)
- Reserved pasta water
- Salt & black pepper
- Fresh basil and red pepper flakes

### Cook the pasta:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, following the package instructions.



### Make the sauce:

While the pasta cooks, combine the ricotta, Romano (or Parmesan), olive oil, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a medium bowl. Whisk until smooth and creamy. Taste, then season with kosher salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes to your liking.



### Toss it all together:

Once the pasta is done, reserve 1 cup of pasta water, then drain the noodles. Return the pasta to the pot and add the ricotta mixture, butter, and about 1/4 cup of the reserved pasta water.



(cont on pg 36)

Sexyy Slothh



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**Rule Set**  
**(cont)**  
*By EndYourStreamTV*



A cloak that grants constant stealth superiority can step on a ranger or rogue. A ring that grants strong save boosts can blunt the paladin's aura moment. A weapon that adds extra damage riders every hit can overshadow the fighter who invested in consistent offense. This doesn't mean you can't grant those effects, it means you should be deliberate about who gets them, how often, and at what cost.



Then look for stacking and loopholes. Rules systems often assume that certain bonuses are rare, don't stack, or come with natural limits. Your item should respect those assumptions unless breaking them is the point, and if it is, then the item needs a story-sized price tag. Watch especially for: advantage-granting effects, rerolls, flat bonuses to attack or AC, automatic conditions (stun, paralyze, restraint), and effects that trigger "on every hit." These mechanics scale aggressively because they interact with multiattack, critical hits, and existing optimizations. A small rider becomes huge in practice when it triggers six times a round.

Also, be careful with information and exploration effects. Combat balance is obvious; out-of-combat balance sneaks up on you. An item that solves navigation, translation, tracking, lockpicking, or social leverage at-will can erase entire pillars of play. If your campaign thrives on mystery or survival, then easy answers should have limits: charges, risks, imperfect information, or narrative complications. The goal is not to forbid clever tools, it's to preserve meaningful choices and the joy of problem-solving.

Finally, build items with the rule set's existing language and structure. Use familiar wording (conditions, spell names, defined ranges) so players and DMs can adjudicate quickly. Avoid "GM may decide" clauses when you can anchor an effect to a known mechanic. Clear language is balanced, because ambiguity becomes power at the table.

A good homebrew item feels like it was always part of the game, because it obeys the same rules that make the game fun. When you treat the rule set as a partner instead of an obstacle, your items become easier to run, easier to balance, and far more satisfying to earn.



### Live session

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### Charity Night

*3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month*

*\$15 per spot*

*\$10 of every spot*  
*goes to the Charity*  
*Message Mandy*  
*for a spot!*



## Lemon Ricotta Pasta

By Brad Harris

### Finish the sauce:

Toss everything together over low heat until the sauce coats the pasta—about 2 to 3 minutes. Add more pasta water as needed until it's glossy and creamy. Taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.



Plate the pasta and top with extra Romano, a few cracks of black pepper, and some fresh basil. Then dig in.



### Tips

#### Salt your pasta water like you mean it.

It's your one shot to season the pasta itself, so be generous. The water should taste like the sea.

#### Don't skip the basil.

It adds freshness and rounds everything out. A little sprinkle on top makes it look (and taste) restaurant-level. Basil and lemon pair exceptionally well together, which is what truly makes this dish.

### Control the heat with red pepper flakes.

Start light if you're not into spice—just a pinch goes a long way. Want it to bite a little? Add more to taste.

### Save more pasta water than you think you need.

It's your secret weapon for thinning the sauce without losing flavor. Start with 1/4 cup, then add more a splash at a time.

### All long pastas work.

We prefer bucatini, but this lemon ricotta sauce clings beautifully to any long pasta. If you've got spaghetti, linguine, or fettuccine in the pantry, you're good to go.



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"I had to get it out of my head"

By Haavok\_RPG

Some amazing art from our amazing friend

You just HAD to Push the button?!



# Random Rants w/Mandur

## Lets Talk Next Chapters!

I was lucky enough to make it to Gary Con 2026 this year and I wanted to share some of the great moments. I will be adding more conventions to my 2026 event list. I was able to meet some friends in person and make new ones.



Jay Scott  
Being a Legend!



Luke Gyax!



TJ storms



Legends and  
lore in person



Chuck  
Troll Lord Games



Ed Greenwood



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