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BAR

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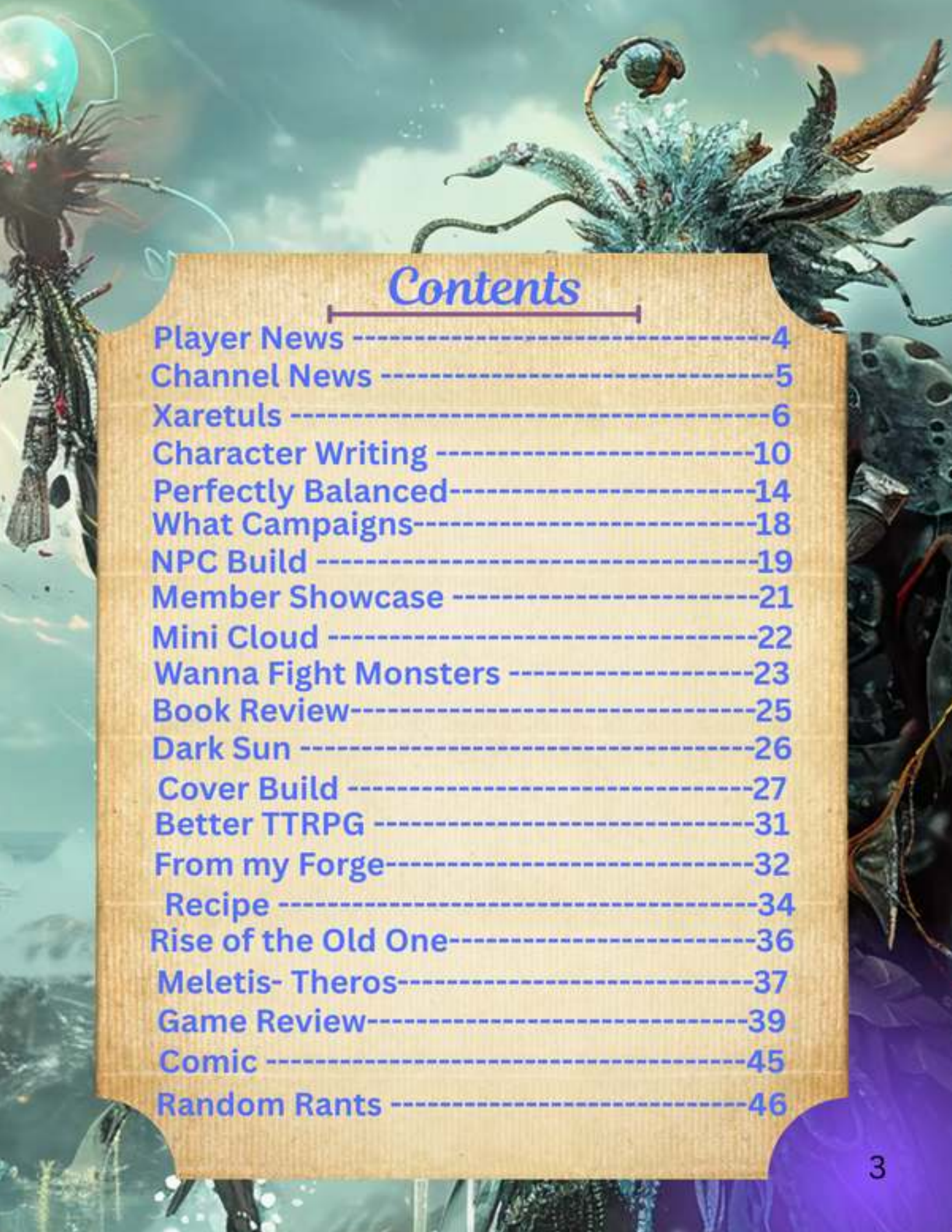
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Summer Break in July

For those that are newer we are going into our summer break! That means we will be taking 2 weeks off and I hope you are all excited. This is a great chance for us to get into some good reading, family visits, or some much needed rest.

Our break runs from July 3rd - 18th

We will be returning on Sunday July 19th with the Mandelvers at 5 pm cst. we are already almost fully booked up for our sessions in July so that is so amazing.

Please feel free to post all your summer fun in the server!

Our Charity Table

June: We had a guest, Nick from K9s for Warriors! It was so great having him with us, and together we raised \$612.00!

Charity Night this month is on July 22nd at 8 pm CST.

We will also have another set of auctions for the event and another Giveaway!

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

Owlbear

Ingredients

- 2 oz Vodka
- 1 oz Coffee Liqueur (like Kahlúa)

Directions

- Fill a short glass with ice cubes.
- Pour in 2 oz of vodka.
- Add 1 oz of coffee liqueur.
- Gently stir the mixture.
- Serve immediately and enjoy.



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

In the channel, we have an all-new base set of emotes and this cute purple bunny. We have all the rights to the art. We can also use the art for more than just emote, so I will be putting them in more things in the channel. I hope you enjoy this cute lil bunny!

Also, big thanks to Pixel Grip, San Antonio for the art.



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The Collectors Series has been such a hit. In any stream, once we reach 5 subs (any kind), we unlock a limited edition card, with a higher level and power.

Emotes: Happy 250th Birthday USA we added some emotes for the month of July!



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Xaretul: The Forgotten Flame

Chapter 12: The Waiting

By EndYourStreamTV

The days passed slowly as Kira, Arian, and the others returned to their camp. The fire had burned low when they arrived, the once-bright embers now just glowing remnants of their former warmth. Kira stood at the edge of the camp, gazing into the distance, her heart filled with both anticipation and a deep, quiet fear.

The journey they had taken to the nearby villages had been difficult. They had encountered children in need, some afraid, some too broken to believe in anything. But they had also found hope, and with it, a sense of purpose. They had given their word to these children: they would protect them, guide them, and teach them. The faith had spread, and with it, the weight of leadership had grown heavier on Kira's shoulders.

But now, they waited.

"Do you think he's coming back soon?" Arian asked as he approached Kira, his voice soft but filled with a childlike hope.

Kira turned to him, her eyes a little sad. "I don't know. I hope so. We've done all we can for now. We've gathered as many as we could. They're all counting on us, on him."

"I know," Arian said, a small frown on his face. "But I miss him. I miss Mr. Xar."

Kira smiled faintly, but there was something in her heart that felt incomplete without him. Without his guidance. Without his presence. The last time they had seen Xaretul, he had left to test his powers, to ensure he could protect them. But it had been days since he'd gone, and though she knew he would return, she couldn't help but feel the absence of his powerful yet gentle presence.

"The faith has grown so much since he left," Kira continued, looking out at the others. "We have new children now, and we have to keep them safe. They need us."

Arian's hand found hers, squeezing it tightly. "We'll be okay, Kira. We've got each other. And we've got our faith."

Kira nodded, feeling the comfort in his words, even as her own doubts swirled in her chest. She had come a long way from the scared girl she had been. But there was still so much to do. So many lives to change. So many people to protect.

The Waiting Continues

The sun dipped lower, casting long shadows across the camp. The other children had gathered around the fire, speaking in hushed tones, their faces full of quiet uncertainty. They had heard stories of the great god who had once been known as Xaretul, the god of shadows and secrets. They had heard of his power, his might, his presence. And now, they waited for him to return to them, to see if he could truly live up to the stories they had been told.

Sandra, the youngest, sat beside Garuth, her small form barely visible in the flickering light. She didn't speak much, but she had been watching Kira and Arian closely, learning from them, taking in every word of the stories they shared. Despite the silence that often surrounded her, there was an understanding in her eyes that said more than words could.

Nicholas, sitting near the edge of the group, stared into the night, his brow furrowed. "I hope he's okay," he murmured, barely above a whisper.
(cont on page 9)



MINI ON
RIVALS!



GROW
DINO



JURASSIC
PARK
BUILDER



JAZZY
&
GRIMM



VENDING
MACHINE



THE
LAND
SHARK



POST YOUR PICTURES IN OUR
DISCORD GAME SCREENSHOTS
CHANNEL TO MAKE
THE NEXT ISSUE OF REALMS



One Shot Recap



By Dragon Teacup

The Subs arrive at the Fire Weave Bazaar! They tentatively step inside (despite Vult's dust allergy), and get attacked by a Rug of Smothering! After it is dispatched, Animated Brooms begin to try and sweep them up - but the brooms make more of a mess than anything! Stepping into the Dragonhorde Antiques, a magic mouth spell, annoyingly says hello every few seconds, and an exasperated Pseudragon named Nimble introduces himself. Vult loses his mind a little bit at all the amazing tomes, and Zephy even lends him her bag of holding, which he fills. After convincing Nimble that he can run his own library with Vult as his archivist, he joins the party! The group ventures deeper into the Bazaar!

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

Or hop in watch it live!

*Join the SideBar
Discord!*



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



Xaretul: The Forgotten Flame (cont)

By EndYouStreamTV

"We all do," Caelel replied, his voice soft but steady. "He's testing his powers. He's doing what he has to do. We just have to trust him."

But the night grew darker, and the children grew restless. Their eyes constantly flickered toward the treeline, searching for the familiar shadow of their god. But there was nothing. Just the sound of the wind, the rustling of the leaves.

Kira's Resolve

As the night deepened, Kira stood up. The others noticed her movement and watched her closely. She hadn't said anything about her own fears, but they all knew her well enough to see the quiet storm in her eyes. She was carrying the weight of more than her own doubts. She was carrying the hopes of everyone who had placed their faith in her, and in Xaretul.

She moved away from the campfire, walking toward the edge of the clearing. She closed her eyes for a moment, allowing the night air to cool her heated skin. She felt the weight of the responsibility on her shoulders, but she also felt the quiet, steady hum of her faith. The band on her arm, the symbol of Xaretul's power, glowed faintly, its warmth a reminder of the bond between them.

"I won't let them down," she whispered to herself. "I won't let him down."

Behind her, Arian had followed her steps. He placed a hand on her shoulder, his voice quiet. "You won't, Kira. We're doing this together. All of us."

Kira nodded but didn't say anything else. She turned back to face the camp. It wasn't just about her. It was about all of them. They were a family now, bound together by their faith. And they would carry that faith, even if it meant facing the unknown without the god who had promised to protect them.

The Return of Xaretul

The children were sitting in silence when the first ripple of power brushed against the air. At first, it was subtle, just a shift in the wind, a momentary flicker of warmth in the night. But then, the shadows around them seemed to deepen. The temperature dropped, the air thickening as if something ancient was stirring.

Kira's heart leapt in her chest, and without a word, she turned, her eyes wide. The others followed, rising to their feet as the darkness in the trees began to take shape. There, at the edge of the clearing, Xaretul emerged.

His form was no longer as solid as before. He seemed to flicker, barely holding himself together. The shadows and flame that had once been so strong now appeared more fragile, like the embers of a fire that had burned too brightly and was now struggling to stay alight. His mask of shadow was still in place, but it was cracked, the flame that burned beneath it flickering weakly.

He stood tall, but his posture was weary, as if the journey had drained him more than he had anticipated.

"I'm here," Xaretul's voice, though powerful, was softer than usual, his words heavy with exhaustion. "I have returned. You've all done well. I'm proud of you." (cont on page 11)



Chill Vibes
for
Campaign Prep

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on
YouTube



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Brakka Ironbelly



Character Writing

By SexySlothh

Race: Mountain Dwarf

Class: Barbarian

Brakka Ironbelly was never meant to be a warrior.

Born beneath the granite peaks of the Ironspine Mountains, he spent his youth learning the family trade: brewing. The Ironbelly clan had crafted ales for generations, and Brakka took to it with enthusiasm. He loved the smell of malt and yeast, the crackle of the furnace, and the laughter that filled the tavern attached to the brewery. While other young dwarves trained with axes and hammers, Brakka perfected recipes and entered brewing competitions. For years, life was beautiful.

Then came the Night of Broken Stone.

Without warning, a monstrous creature burst from deep beneath the mountain. Witnesses described a beast larger than a wagon, covered in jagged rock-like scales. It tore through tunnels and support pillars as it climbed toward the surface. By the time it reached the Ironbelly Brewery, panic had spread throughout the district.

Brakka fought alongside his clan with whatever he could grab, mostly barrels and tools. It wasn't enough. The beast demolished the brewery, buried generations of family work beneath rubble, and disappeared back into the darkness before the city guard could bring it down. The clan survived, but their livelihood did not.

In the months that followed, Brakka helped clear debris and rebuild homes. Yet he could not shake the memory of the creature escaping. Every shattered stone felt like a reminder that the monster was still out there.

One morning, he packed his tools, slung his father's old battle axe to his back, and left the mountain, with anger and determination flowing through his blood.



His plan was simple: find the beast, learn where it came from, and make sure it could never destroy another home.

The road changed him. He traveled farther than any Ironbelly before him, crossing forests, deserts, and kingdoms. Along the way, he learned that strength wasn't only found in stone walls and mountain fortresses. He wrestled river giants for ferry passage, shared campfires with wandering nomads, and earned free drinks in countless taverns by telling increasingly exaggerated stories of his adventures.

Though he now carries an axe and fights with the fury of a storm, Brakka still considers himself a brewer first and a warrior second. Whenever he reaches a new town, he seeks out the local tavern before anything else.

Most people know Brakka as a boisterous dwarf with an endless appetite and a laugh that can fill a room. Few see the determination beneath the cheerful exterior.

Every clue, every rumor of strange creatures beneath the earth, and every ancient map is another step toward the answer he seeks.

Somewhere in the dark places of the world, the beast that destroyed the Ironbelly Brewery still lives. Brakka intends to find it.

When that day comes, he'll grip his axe with both hands and finish the story that began on the Night of Broken Stone.



Xaretul: The Forgotten Flame (cont)

By EndYouStreamTV

Kira ran to him, her heart swelling with relief. She didn't speak at first, just reaching out to touch his arm, feeling the warmth of his presence, even though he seemed so worn.

"I knew you'd come back," she whispered, her voice trembling with emotion.

Arian, his face lit with joy, stepped forward, his eyes shining. "Mr. Xar! We've spread the word! We've helped others! They believe in you, just like we do!"

Xaretul nodded, his eyes soft as he looked over the children who had gathered around him. He could see the weariness in their eyes, but also the strength they had gained. "I see you've all grown. And you have made me proud."

But even as he spoke, the toll of his journey was evident in the way he stood, the way he faltered slightly as he took a step forward. The power he had tested was still there, but it was fleeting, unstable.

"I've tested my power, but it's not enough. Not yet," Xaretul confessed, his voice low. "I pushed myself to the edge. And now... I need to rest."

The children stood in quiet understanding, knowing that their god, though powerful, was not invincible. He was like them, vulnerable in his own way.

Kira took a step forward, her voice filled with determination. "You've done more than enough. We're here for you. You don't have to do it all alone."

Xaretul smiled, though it was faint. "I know. And for that, I thank you."

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes, allowing the shadows to settle around him as he finally allowed himself to rest, knowing that the journey was far from over, but that he no longer had to walk it alone.



LIVE SESSION

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The Gilded Kettle Journal Entry #1



By Skyline



My name is Citrine Draessa, and last night was our first service of the Gilded Kettle. By ours, I mean my newly formed friends and colleagues, Mara Stormpetal, a firbolg druid with a fabulous talent for food, and Juniper Gleamsong, a bright fawn bard with a love and care for people and literature.

We ended up in this lovely town, full of hard-working people who seem to have a predicament on their hands, a flour shortage for their upcoming harvest festival. It was the perfect place to host our first service; of course, we did it at no cost to them because frankly, they deserved a nice meal and a night of relaxation.

Overall, the service was smooth, smoother than I thought it would be. Only minor things I noticed, which I put into a secondary journal specifically for service management, feedback, and improvement. I feel this journal is for something different, however.

I don't know all the answers; it's too soon for me to be able to. And I don't know if I'll be able to get them for all the questions I have. I just hope I'm making him proud.

I sense him in the hearth, the caring warmth that she provides to me constantly in my time here. I hope she can provide a sign, even if it's not a full answer, not just for me but for my companions as well.

In the meantime, I will continue with this mission, this duty to continue the fire. Provide for people all across the realms, and hopefully, along the way, we'll find something even better than we were hoping for.

Here's to a better tomorrow.

More than yesterday,
Citrine.



Riven the Blade of Reckoning

New Gods of Ravnica
By GrimmGrixis

Summary:

Lawful Neutral - white/red

The god who demanded the first warring clans settle things fairly. Riven doesn't stop conflict, Riven makes sure it has meaning and a measured cost. Claimed by both Boros and Azorius, and probably amused by both.

Myth: The First Verdict

In days long since past two tribes were locked in a brutal and bloody feud, and on the final days of their conflict, tired, run ragged, and dying of thirst, they found themselves staring each other down across the site of an old well. Ready to spill blood for a single drop the clans poised to strike the other down, but then they paused. A woman they had never seen sat down on the well's lip, drew a sword, and laid it across her knees.

She said: "You may both drink. First, each of you tell me, in front of the other, what you would actually lose if you fought for this water."

They spoke for an hour. They drank. They went home. And in that time understanding was brought to each tribe and the feud was ended.

The well still stands. It is the foundation of the First Two-Witness Hall.



Perfectly Balanced, as All Things Should Be



By W. Adam Clarke

Good Afterwhenever, everyone. Your friendly neighborhood Game Dev, AP Runner, Streamer, and Author you've never read W. Adam Clarke again. This month, let's have some fun with a game mechanic, shall we? This idea for a GM is best used for a short run in a long campaign, a quick trip to a Plane of Order or other setting where randomness may be structured differently, or specifically for monsters native to those planes such as Modrons. As a PC (with GM permission) there's a chance this could be your whole schtick. A Clockwork Soul Sorcerer, a Warlock with a Patron from the Plane of Order, or any order-based or mechanically-based character concepts could flourish with this mechanical change.

The exercise is replacing a common form of randomness (your dice rolls, which would be considered Random Sampling) with a different form of randomness (Stratified Sampling). Don't sweat the nerd stuff if you're not a statistician or mathematician, this is easy. All you need is a deck of cards.

Assuming you're playing a d20 based system, remove the face cards, leaving Ace through Ten. Black suits are single digits, red suits are double digits,



giving you a range of one through twenty. If you're playing in a D12 system also keep the jacks and queens to give you one through twelve, and the suits no longer matter. You get the idea. Now... shuffle your deck. Once a card is drawn, it's out of play until you get all the way through the deck. This means that while the number you draw will still be random, you will in fact draw every possible number within your range twice before repeating more than twice in a d20 system, or a max of four times before going through the whole range four times in any other system.

(cont on page 17)

I am Myrddin
on
Twitch



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PROGRAM SCHEDULE
ALL TIMES EASTERN

Sun 7pm Spinespur
Blades in the Dark

Mon off
(Watch us on Sparkles Mandy)

Tues 8pm Neonheart
Daggerheart

Wed 8pm Indie Spotlight
Stoneburner

Thurs 8pm Throwback Thursday
All Humans Must Be Entertained

Fri 7pm TBD
D&D 5E

Sat off



Kraghul, the Roar of the Untamed

New Gods of Ravnica

By GrimmGrixis

Summary:

Chaotic Neutral - red/green

The thunder that answered the first time someone paved over wild ground. Kraghul doesn't hate the city; the god just won't let it forget what it's built on, tearing down whatever has grown too proud or stagnant.

Revered by the Gruul clans.

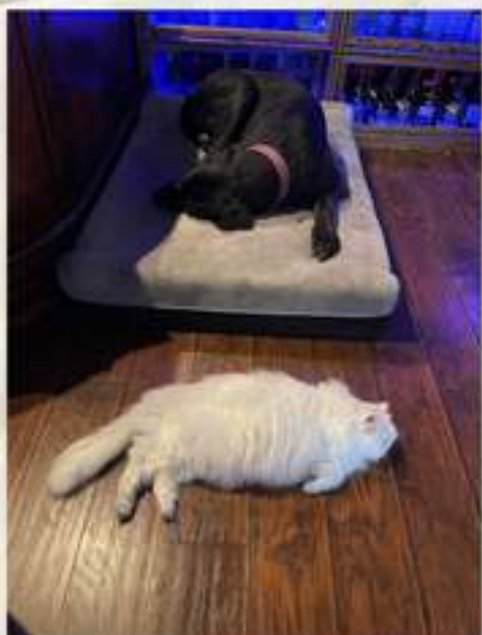
Myth: The Courthouse and the Storm

Centuries ago, an Azorius district court ruled that a specific stretch of the rubblebelt was no longer "wilderness" and was therefore subject to property law and reclamation. The courthouse was built atop the site, pristine and white, three judges stayed in residence with a permanent guard.

Three days after the verdict, a storm came in low and wide, far too low and brimming far too wide to be natural. It struck only the courthouse. When the wind died down, the building was gone, and that "wilderness" remained. The judges and their guards were unharmed, sitting in a polite circle in the open field, holding their notes.

The verdict has since been on permanent stay.





Send in yours by July 20th
in the SideBar pets channel!



Perfectly Balanced, as All Things Should Be

(cont.)

by W. Adam Clarke



While I wouldn't suggest this for a long-term campaign, it is a nice way to make something like an Outer Plane or an altered form of existence feel mechanically different, giving it a unique immersion. It also gives you a new appreciation for "trends" in dice that seem to roll high or low. Little changes like these can keep the game environment exciting and keep players on their toes. Also, with the only requirement being a deck of cards, it's not an expensive mechanical switch to test out.

Anyway, there's your jumping-off point for this month. Any thoughts or ideas on it? Come talk to Mandy or me in our streams about it! Until next time, friends.



W. Adam Clarke
Can be found on
SingleStepGaming





Live session

Mondays 8pm CST

twitch.tv/sparkles_mandy





Saturday Squad Night 8pm CST

*GrimGrixis
on Twitch*



What Campaigns I'd Play in 5E vs 5.5



By Skyline

Dungeons and Dragons is an incredibly flexible game that you can simply build and use your imagination to create the story you want!

In this article, I will give my insights, suggestions, and thoughts on which of these campaigns I would run and play with in 5th edition and 5.5. Now obviously, I don't know everything, but I do have experience in playing both editions with three of the campaign modes. And while I have played two out of the three, I'd be interested in experiencing and experimenting with each one, as I'm sure other people would!

Now I have been over differences in both versions in previous articles, so if you're someone who wants to learn and balance your games, study up and come right back! For now, let's get into my thoughts.

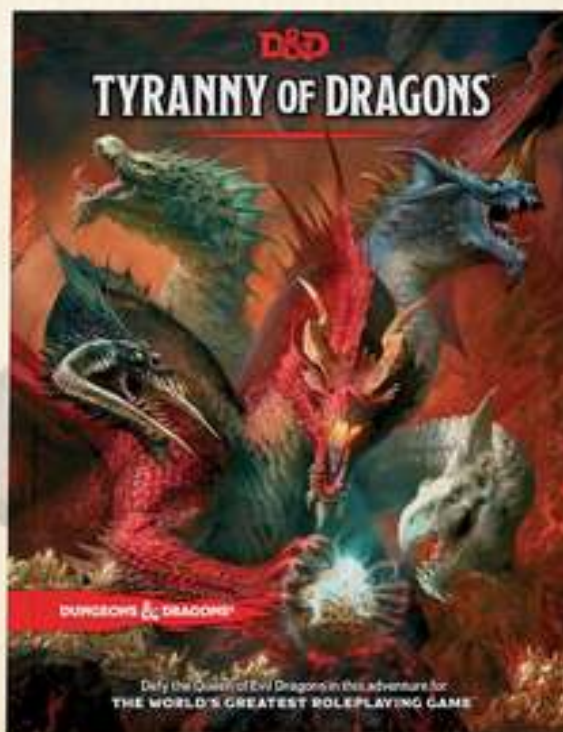
Tyranny of Dragons

I'd recommend playing and running this one in 5E as I'm currently playing it with the updated version, I'd be interested in playing it in a previous version to see the differences in classes and the dragons! D&D dragons are obviously very tough, and newer versions of the game decreased their power which can lead to some homebrewing or usages of older dragon stat blocks. 5E has more stability in terms of the classes and what to choose from and it can still follow the story without going

overboard and making your players and monsters overpowered.

Wild Beyond the Witchlight

I would recommend running this one in 5.5E and 5E. First, 5.5, because of the changes with magic and how it is used in classes, it would go perfectly with the chaos that is the Feywild. However, if you are someone who wants more stability in your game to balance out the Feywild and its mechanics, or lack thereof, I'd recommend running this in 5E. Now this campaign is more story-based, which is why I can recommend both versions to play in so you can build your combat and battles as you see fit. When I ran this, I kept the combat very minimal, but any good Dungeon Master can balance out the story and fighting.



Hyman Crandel



Overview

Hyman Crandel is the bloated, arrogant tax assessor of the Southern Dominion, infamous for his petty, tyrannical ways. Tasked with assessing and levying taxes on local merchants, landowners, and tradespeople, Crandel enjoys exerting what little power he has, attempting to make life as difficult as possible for anyone who crosses him. Though his position technically limits his power, his unscrupulous methods allow him to bankrupt or penalize those who can't pay or refuse to comply with his excessive demands.

Appearance

Hyman is a heavyset man with a penchant for gaudy, ill-fitting clothes and a constant sheen of sweat on his brow. His fingers are adorned with rings, and he carries a silk handkerchief, often used to dab at his face as he sneers or scowls at others. He is unkempt, with a slight stubble and a lazy eye, giving him a permanently disdainful expression.

Personality

Crandel exudes an overinflated sense of self-importance and believes his position grants him absolute power over his jurisdiction. His rude, brutish nature is offset by a conniving mind; he's quick to exploit any opportunity to squeeze extra coin from his targets. Though he lacks any real strength or combat ability, Crandel's confidence in his ability to ruin others' finances makes him act more

NPC Build

by Brad Harris



powerful than he is. He's as greedy as he is vindictive and takes pleasure in the misery of others, especially those he can financially torment.

Duties & Influence

Hyman's primary responsibility is to evaluate properties and impose taxes on behalf of the Dominion's treasury. His lack of scruples means he routinely invents reasons to raise taxes or levy fines, forcing many into hardship. Despite his low station, Hyman has a reputation for being untouchable, protected by the wealth he extorts and the officials he's bribed.

Plot Hooks

- Rumors circulate that Hyman's lavish lifestyle far exceeds what a tax assessor's salary should allow. Some believe he is simply corrupt, while others suspect he is accepting payments from a far more dangerous patron.
- Several tax records have mysteriously disappeared from Hyman's office. He is desperate to recover them before anyone learns whose debts—or crimes—they concealed. *mystery*

HYMAN CRANDEL

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 27 (4d8 +4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 10 (+0)

DEX 10 (+0)

CON 12 (+1)

INT 14 (+2)

WIS 12 (+1)

CHA 14 (+2)

Saving Throws INT +4, WIS +3

Skills Deception +4, Investigation +4, Intimidation +4

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Call the Guards (Recharge 5–6). Hyman bellows for help. One allied humanoid within 30 feet that can hear him may immediately use its reaction to move up to its speed toward Hyman. If no allies are present, Hyman instead has advantage on his next Intimidation or Persuasion check made before the end of his next turn.



What Campaigns I'd Play in 5E vs 5.5 (Cont)



By Skyline

Strixhaven

A Curriculum of Chaos: Now, I haven't played this book yet, I am planning to run a campaign with it in the future. And I believe it would be fun to try running this in the recent edition, as it had changes mostly in the magic classes. At this point, I have read the book for Strixhaven extensively, already coming up with ideas of my own to add or replace certain aspects of the game. And without spoiling too much, I will say I am going to run this in 5.5, but you absolutely can in 5E as well.

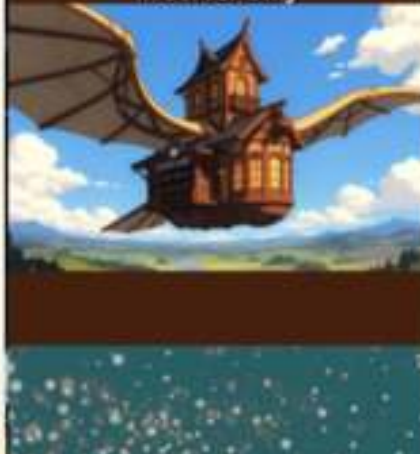
Similar to Wild Beyond the Witchlight, because of how innate magic is implemented in this campaign, I think it will be interesting to challenge the idea of the magic classes and what it means to have magic, arcana versus divine, etc. Especially because this does take place in a school setting it can perfectly set up a party and a well-written villain, whether you use the one in the book or the one you make!

And that's it for this article! I hope you enjoyed the insights and ideas that I have with each campaign and maybe inspire some of you!

Until next time...



Wednesdays 6pm CST
in Server Only



Live session

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





Member Showcase!

DM Oto

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

Favorite color?

Purple

Tell us about your hobbies?

For a long time, I was a bit of a "closet" D&D enthusiast, blessed with an amazing circle of friends to roll dice with briefly both before and after my time in the military. Eventually, I fell hard for the MMO scene, spending years lost in Everquest while the rest of the world was obsessed with Halo.

Do you have any Pets?

At one point, the house was ruled by three cats: Drizzt, Mr. Soph, and Hancock. Drizzt passed away shortly after turning an incredible 20 years old, taking a huge piece of my heart with him. About a year after that loss, I decided it was time to welcome my very first dog into the mix, which is how Copper joined the family. Sadly, we later lost Mr. Soph to cancer. These days, Hancock holds down the fort outside, while Copper and I run the inside operations and command center. As for the future?

I'm thinking maybe, just maybe, we will add another puppy to the crew in another year

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

My absolute favorite style of game is the MMO. I am drawn to the grand scale of the worlds, the deep lore, and the unpredictable nature of the environments where absolutely anything can happen at any moment—honestly, a lot like real life.

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

If you want the peak MMO experience, World of Warcraft is still the undisputed winner in my book for scale and community. But if you aren't in the mood for a massive world and instead just want high-quality, pure graphic carnage and mass digital slaughter, you can't go wrong with the Diablo series.



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

I ended up DMing on a server for the next three years, going through the motions until I had a total epiphany and woke up one day determined to take my life back.

Anything Else?

I fell hard for the MMO scene, spending years lost in Everquest while the rest of the world was obsessed with Halo.





Hello, so I recently started reading about the all-famous realms of DnD! And I have grown a love for it, and the one I've been playing is Humblewood! and so far, it has been great, and I'm having so much fun playing it. So, if you are interested, I am working on classes, so I hope you enjoy.

Bird Folk

Raptors

Ok, if you want to be a Hunter or a Ranger and you want to be a bird, Bird folk imagine Raptors. And Raptors are usually Eagles, Falcons and Hawks, like any bird of prey they have SHARP talons, and swift builds so you can fly easily across the trees, no prob! They can turn the tables when being hunted, so watch your back! While having super spy senses, Raptors are sometimes distracted and in super deep thought BUT HEY!!!! In fairness, they have the gift of sensory info- they get from their super eyes and ears when woodland animals can only hear and see what's around them. Fun fact: Raptors are used to living off the land and are masters of hunting. But also, they are sorta like Nomads, never real staying in one place, and also known to constantly move to seek out new adventures and challenges. Their adaptability makes them excellent companions in any quest, as they can quickly adjust to different environments and circumstances.

♥ thank you



A note from the editor

For those who are new, Mini-Cloud is the 11-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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email_rpgsidebar@gmail.com





So, adventurers, I heard ye brave souls wish to fight a monster. Well, let's cover something new and something grand... something... Ravnic!

This month, coming in hot and heavy, I want to delve into the monsters of the Simic Combine. The Krasis! As you well know, the Simic are a guild focused on pushing evolution past natural barriers and boundaries. These biomancers go above and beyond to try and create the perfect lifeform. Now, most of these lifeforms that play in Ravnic may run into those that hail from Simic, and are, well, you guessed it, Krasis. These "Monstrosities" of a sort are a mish-mash amalgamation of, if I take some of a bear, splice it with a shark, then give it wings, ideology. So with that in mind, the true revelation and fear behind a Krasis is that they can be truly anything, and any there in combination of anything... if that makes sense. So how the blazes do you fight something that is going to be slightly different each time. Well, good thing for you is that the Simic don't really hide their adaptations; they give these Krasis, most krasis, and their features are very obvious. One Krasis has two heavy claws meant to rend flesh, while another boasts a thick chitinous hide that reflects even the sharpest of blades. The key to fighting a Krasis is understanding the purpose for which it was made to do. Once you learn the adaptations a Krasis has been given well, then the fight starts to become a little clearer. If the aforementioned Krasis with huge claws bears down upon your party, keep the squishes away, and keep at least one tank alive.... as long as those claws don't rend armor as well as flesh. Facing the bulky Krasis, well then it becomes a matter of either burning past it's resistances with spells or brute force beat down and praying it dies before you. Maybe the Krasis is adapted to stalk in the night, utilizing shadows for camouflage well make the area bright, take away what it was meant to utilize. But a forewarning to any of those braving the streets, Simic is an ever evolving ever changing guild, and so are their monsters, with Krasis in particular, be ready for change, and be ready to adapt.

From one DM to the players,
GrimGrix





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Lindsay Lou's Book Review

Weyward by Emilia Hart



Genre: Fiction/Historical Fiction

Page Count: 392 | Publication Date: February 2, 2023

Overview: 'Weaving together the stories of three extraordinary women across five centuries, Emilia Hart's *Weyward* is an enthralling novel of female resilience and the transformative power of the natural world.' (goodreads.com)

Topics or potential triggers to know before reading:

- Physical and sexual domestic abuse, including non-consensual sex, emotional abuse, isolation/neglect, pregnancy from abuser(s), and parental abuse (mentioned).
- Description of abortion and death during pregnancy/childbirth, self-harm.
- Detailed description of death and dying, suicidal thoughts.
- Animal abuse (mentioned).

Lindsay Lou's Review

For full transparency, I bought this book because of the cool cover (birds!) and its allusions to witchcraft and the handing-down of magical abilities. I typically don't read a lot of fiction that doesn't veer into full fantasy, romance, horror, or sci-fi, so this was an unexpected but enticing story for me to consider. Though the plotlines and interweaving stories do touch upon witchcraft - as a social taboo or as a scapegoat for the powers-that-be to ostracize, jail, or even commit someone to death - the actual occurrences of 'witchcraft' being used by the characters are quite vague and up for interpretation. Does someone who studies herbology and is able to administer other natural remedies have latent magical abilities? If someone has the inherent ability to peacefully interact with animals and feels empathy towards all creatures, does that make them a heretic or witch? It depends on the time, place, and cultural or scientific understandings of that community.

This story of the Weyward women is 2 parts mystery and 8 parts women being badass across multiple generations. It explores the ingrained patriarchal treatment of women at large from the 1600s to the present time; that women have their place in polite society, and to challenge that structure is not only deemed blasphemous, but is often punished severely (i.e. witch trials, forced marriages, excommunication, etc.).

The storytelling is quite rich and captivating; the author's use of time-hopping each chapter is engaging and creates a feeling of urgency for all characters. As you simultaneously read each woman's experiences, you can see the throughline - that regardless of the time period, the experience and treatment of women by their communities and their own families can be unbearably cruel. But, through it all, they persist and survive. Handing down their knowledge and strength to each new Weyward girl gives them their own community - a lifeline they can depend on in the direst situations.

• Un-put-down-able-ness: 5/10

I enjoyed the story, but I didn't feel like I HAD to keep reading. Though, once I reached the mid-point, I finished it the next day. It's medium-paced, so you could absolutely finish it over a weekend if you have the time.

• Character and plot likability: 7/10

The time-hopping chapters were enjoyable, as I mentioned before. You don't get burnt out on one person's narrative and are eager to see how the stories intertwine. The secondary characters are what drive the plots, but they are just as well-described as the main characters. Lots of antagonists and protagonists to fuel the dynamics for each time-period.

- **Final Opinions:** If you're looking for action-packed, hocus-pocus, Sabrina and Salem go time-travelling, this is not the book for you (probably). As my mom so eloquently stated, "It's too hippie woo-woo for me. No one wants to read about sad women."

Well, I do want to, mom! It's beautifully written, and I will be seeking other works by this author. If you have read this, or want to read it, I would be THRILLED to discuss it with you - lots of metaphors and underlying meanings to analyze. Happy reading!

A Lethal World in a Heroic Edition

By ChaseStreet



5E D&D assumes durability. Characters are resilient. Healing is plentiful. Death is reversible. By level five, most parties feel powerful. Dark Sun assumes fragility. Water is scarce. Metal is rare. Weapons break. Resurrection is a myth. The desert kills without malice or mercy. Porting Athas into 5E means reckoning with four areas where the editions pull in opposite directions: survival, faith, biology, and tone.

In 2E AD&D, this lethality fit the rules system. In 5E, it runs counter to player expectations. Spells like Goodberry, Create Water, and Tiny Hut trivialize survival mechanics that were once central to Athas.

To bring Dark Sun forward, a Dungeon Master would need to make intentional mechanical adjustments. Not to punish players, but to preserve the tension that defines the setting. Without that tension, Athas becomes aesthetic rather than existential.

Scarcity strips away the body's safety net. The absence of gods strips away the soul's. Clerics in 5E are strongly tied to divine domains and pantheons. Faith is visible. Deities are active. Athas has none. Divine magic comes from elemental forces or strange pacts. There is no benevolent sky-father waiting to intervene. The Sorcerer-Kings monopolize both arcane power and religious authority.

For players accustomed to choosing a god and a temple, this absence can feel disorienting. But that disorientation is intentional. Dark Sun removes cosmic safety nets. There is no holy rescue, only survival.

(cont on page 26)



ONE
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EYLANDRA STORMCHANT

Medium humanoid (merfolk), neutral

Armor Class 17 (coral armor)

Hit Points 195 (23d8 + 92)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft., (hover, see Riding the Spout), swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +9, Wis +10, Cha +9

Skills Nature +6, Perception +10

Damage Resistances cold, lightning, thunder

Senses passive Perception 20

Languages Aquan, Common, Primordial

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Amphibious. Eylandra can breathe air and water.

Tidal Body. While Eylandra is in contact with a body of water (including rain-soaked ground during a storm), she can't be grappled or restrained, and she has advantage on Dexterity saving throws.

Riding the Spout. A churning column of seawater bears Eylandra aloft, giving her a flying speed of 40 feet (hover). If she ends her turn airborne while no body of water, rain, or storm is within 60 feet of her, the spout collapses and she falls.

Charged Waters. The water clinging to Eylandra crackles with restless lightning. A creature that touches her or hits her with a melee attack while she is in contact with water takes 5 (1d10) lightning damage. A creature can take this damage only once per turn.

Innate Spellcasting. Eylandra's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: create or destroy water, fog cloud, gust of wind

3/day each: call lightning, sleet storm

1/day each: control water, chain lightning

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Eylandra makes two Tempest Lash attacks.

Tempest Lash. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) lightning damage.

Thunderhead Volley (Recharge 4–6). Eylandra hurls up to three crackling bolts at three different creatures she can see within 120 feet. Each target must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

Maelstrom (Recharge 5–6). A vortex of storm-charged seawater erupts in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on a point Eylandra can see within 120 feet. Each creature in that area makes a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 22 (5d8) lightning damage plus 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage, is pulled 15 feet toward the center, and is knocked prone. On a success, it takes half as much damage and isn't pulled or knocked prone.

Wrath of the Tempest (1/Day). Eylandra throws back her head and the sky answers. A roaring tempest of



shrieking wind and lashing rain springs into being in a 40-foot-radius, 60-foot-high cylinder centered on her. The storm moves with her and lasts for 1 minute or until she is incapacitated. While it persists:

- The area is lightly obscured and is difficult terrain for every creature except Eylandra.
- Ranged attacks made into or through the storm from outside it have disadvantage.
- At the start of each of Eylandra's turns, every other creature in the area must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) thunder damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Surge of the Tide (Bonus Action, 3/Day). If Eylandra is in contact with water, she regains 30 hit points as the sea knits her wounds closed.

REACTIONS

Backlash of the Deep. When a creature within 30 feet of Eylandra hits her with an attack, she lashes back with a whip of seawater. That creature must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet. If it's pushed into another creature or a solid surface, it takes 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage.

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.

Stormstep (Costs 1). Eylandra teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space in or within 5 feet of water. Each creature within 5 feet of the space she left must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) thunder damage.

Crackling Bolt (Costs 1). One creature Eylandra can see within 60 feet makes a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) lightning damage on a failure, or half as much damage on a success.

Riptide (Costs 2). Each creature within 20 feet of Eylandra must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pulled 10 feet toward her and knocked prone.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), you may take a lair action to trigger one of the following effects. You can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

Wave Surge. A rogue wave surges in a 30-foot-long, 10-foot-wide line. Each creature in it makes a DC 18 Dexterity save or is pushed 15 feet (toward deeper water if possible) and knocked prone.

Charged Skies. Lightning forks from the roiling sky at one creature she can see; that creature makes a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) lightning damage on a failure, taking half as much damage on a success.

Wrathful Mists. A stinging squall fills a 20-foot-radius area within 120 feet; it becomes lightly obscured and difficult terrain until initiative count 20 on the next round.





A Lethal World in a Heroic Edition

(cont.)

By ChaseStreet

If no god-shaped Athas, something else did. Dark Sun was built on harsh biological logic. Muls were bred for labor. Half-Giants were magically engineered. Halflings were apex predators rather than pastoral hobbits.

Thri-Kreen were alien and fundamentally inhuman. Modern 5E design emphasizes individual choice over biological determinism. Species are no longer defined by moral alignment or fixed ability penalties.

Dark Sun, by contrast, embraces the idea that biology and magical engineering shape culture and capability. That isn't inherently incompatible with modern design, but it requires careful framing. The setting isn't saying people are born evil. It's saying the world itself is broken, and people adapt to survive within it.

Adaptation, not aspiration, is the engine of Athas, and that reframes what a campaign is even for. Modern D&D leans into empowerment. Players are heroes. The story arcs toward triumph. Dark Sun arcs toward endurance. Hope in Athas is rare. Victory is costly. Even overthrowing a Sorcerer-King does not restore the oceans.

This tonal difference is perhaps the greatest hurdle. Athas is not escapism in the traditional sense. It is confrontation, ecological collapse, tyranny, and scarcity. For some tables, that is compelling. For others, it may feel exhausting.

Mandelver

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Here are some of our past winners!

Best of Luck!



The Players Are the Story: Writing Better TTRPG Adventures

By Tiffany Rose Nickel

One of the biggest mistakes new Game Masters make is treating a tabletop roleplaying game like a novel. It is an easy trap to fall into. After all, most GMs are creative people. We imagine incredible villains, dramatic twists, sprawling kingdoms, and epic story arcs. We spend hours building plots and planning scenes. We want our players to experience the story we have crafted, but the problem is that tabletop role-playing games are not meant to be so linear.

When you sit behind the GM screen, you are not the sole storyteller. In fact, you are not even the main storyteller. The players are. Your role is not to tell a story to your players, but to create a world where their story can happen. Have all the description and narration that sets the tone and vibe, but leave the story open for it to be a collaborative effort.

The GM is the Setting

Think of a TTRPG like a vehicle. Some Game Masters believe they are the drivers. They create the route, determine the destination, and expect the players to sit back and enjoy the ride. In reality, the players should be the ones behind the wheel.

The GM is the vehicle itself. You provide the roads, the terrain, the obstacles, the weather, and the opportunities. You establish the rules of the world and portray the people who inhabit it. You create the situations that demand action, but the players decide where to go. They choose which roads to follow. They determine what matters. The story emerges from THEIR decisions.

When a GM forgets this, adventures become railroads. Players stop feeling like protagonists and start feeling like passengers. They become spectators in what should have been their own story. A good adventure gives players meaningful choices. A great adventure makes those choices matter and add a new layer to the tale unfolding.

Every NPC Wants Something

Many adventures fall short of being super engaging because NPCs exist solely to deliver information. The innkeeper gives the quest. Ms. Mayor explains the problem. The fishermen give them the thing they were needing...Then, once the NPC serves their purpose, they just disappear.

Real people do not work that way, and neither should the characters that are supposed to fill out your world.

(cont on page 00)

NIGHTFELL



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The Forge Rests

by EndYourStreamTV

After exploring setting, rule set, rarity, and power scaling, one truth should stand out above the rest: homebrewing magic items is not about creating perfect mechanics. It is about creating meaningful experiences. Balance matters. Clear rules matter. Rarity and progression matter. But at the heart of every unforgettable magic item is a simple question: will this make the table remember the moment?



That is the hope of homebrewing. You are not limited to what already exists in a book. You can craft items that belong to your world, speak to your players, and grow alongside the story you are building together. A well-designed item can become more than equipment. It can become a symbol of a character's journey, a reminder of a hard-earned victory, or a dangerous promise waiting to be fulfilled.

The setting gives your item a home. It reminds you that magic should feel connected to the world around it. A blade pulled from the tomb of a forgotten saint should feel different from a sword purchased at a city market. A charm gifted by a fey queen should carry a different flavor than a shield forged by a dwarven war-smith. When an item reflects the setting, players feel like they are holding a piece of the world in their hands. That connection turns loot into lore.

The rule set gives your item structure. It keeps creativity from becoming confusion. A great item should be exciting to use, but it should also be easy to understand and fair to the rest of the table. When you respect actions, resources, class features, and existing mechanics, your players can enjoy the item without arguing over how it works. Clear design lets the story keep moving, and momentum is often what turns a good session into a great one.



The Players Are the Story: Writing Better TTRPG Adventures (cont)

By Tiffany Rose Nickel

Every significant NPC should have wants, fears, motives, etc., to give them more depth and connection. The mayor might want to protect her reputation, the innkeeper might be secretly funding smugglers, the captain of the guard may be exhausted and considering resignation from the overtime they are putting in, and the villain may genuinely believe they are saving the world through their actions.

When these characters have goals, the world starts to open in a wider direction and gives the players something to grasp onto that isn't just the plot. The adventure no longer depends on players following clues in the "correct" order because now their own motivations can be moved by those of these NPCs.

Create Problems, Not Solutions

Many GMs accidentally design adventures around a single solution. The door must be unlocked. The clue must be found. The villain must be defeated. This approach inevitably can lead to frustration for the GM who is now unprepared for the players to go down a completely different route.

Players are creative. They will think of solutions you never imagined. Often, those solutions will be better than your own because they are seeing it from an outside view, so don't let your ego get in the way. Your job is not to determine how problems are solved, but to create interesting problems.

Imagine a village plagued by disappearances. You might know that a hag living in the swamp is responsible. What you should not decide is how the players deal with her. Maybe they'll kill her. Maybe they negotiate. Maybe they'll expose a larger conspiracy. Maybe they accidentally become her allies. The moment you start planning solutions, you begin limiting player agency. Design challenges. Let the players create the answers.

Failure Is Still Story

Another common mistake is protecting the adventure from failure. Many GMs fear that if the players lose, the campaign ends or that means no one will have a good time. In reality, failure is often where the most memorable stories begin.

What happens if the cult succeeds? What happens if the villain escapes? What happens if the city falls? These outcomes should not end the narrative, but change it.

A failed rescue becomes a prison break. A lost battle becomes a rebellion. A conquered kingdom becomes a resistance movement. When failure remains meaningful, players don't have to feel bad about "winning" the game and can focus on how to get out of the situation they got themselves into. Their decisions gain weight because success and failure both have outcomes that progress things forward. (cont on page 00)



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New items...



Fluffy Banana Pancakes

By Leigh Harris



Fluffy banana pancakes made from scratch with ripe bananas and buttermilk are soft, tender, and packed with real banana flavor. This easy banana pancake recipe uses whipped egg whites for extra lift, giving you thick, fluffy pancakes every time.

Whether you've got overripe bananas sitting on the counter or just want to upgrade your weekend breakfast, this recipe is simple, reliable, and downright delicious.



This banana pancake recipe is made from scratch with buttermilk and whipped egg whites for the best texture and flavor. This method creates thick, fluffy banana pancakes that cook up evenly with golden edges and soft centers every time.

I promise it is worth the extra step of whipping the egg whites for these homemade banana pancakes. This technique adds extra lift and delivers fluffy, tall pancakes!

Ingredients Needed

- **All-Purpose Flour** – Provides structure and body for the pancakes.
- **Sugar** – Adds a touch of sweetness and helps with browning.
- **Baking Powder** – Gives the pancakes lift and helps them rise.
- **Baking Soda** – Reacts with the buttermilk for extra fluffiness and better browning.
- **Kosher Salt** – Enhances flavor and balances the sweetness.
- **Eggs** – The yolks add richness, moisture, and help bind the batter. The whites are whipped to create a light and airy texture.
- **Ripe Banana** – Adds moisture, natural sweetness, and banana flavor.
- **Buttermilk** – Brings a slight tang, helps tenderize the pancakes, and activates the baking soda.
- **Melted Butter** – Adds richness and keeps the pancakes tender and moist



(cont on pg 36)



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The Players Are the Story: Writing Better TTRPG Adventures (cont)

By Tiffany Rose Nickel

Direction Is Not Railroading

Whenever people hear advice about player agency, there is often a misunderstanding...Allowing players to shape the story does not mean letting them wander aimlessly through a world with no goals, no structure, and no purpose.

Players need direction. They need problems to solve, mysteries to investigate, villains to stop, treasures to find, and objectives to pursue. Without those things, many groups end up staring at one another, waiting for someone to decide what happens next.

The difference between direction and railroading is simple. Direction tells players what the problem is. Railroading tells players how they must solve it.

Imagine a village has been attacked by goblins. A GM providing direction might say: "Several villagers have been taken into the mountains. If nobody acts, they'll likely be sacrificed during the next full moon."

The players now have a clear objective and a reason to care. They know what is happening and understand the stakes.

A railroading GM might decide that the players must:

- Speak to a specific villager.
- Discover a specific clue.
- Follow a specific trail.
- Enter a specific cave.
- Fight a specific battle.
- Rescue the prisoners in a specific way.

The moment players attempt something outside that sequence, the adventure begins pushing them back onto the "correct" path.

Good adventure design instead asks:

- Perhaps they negotiate with the goblins.
- Perhaps they hire mercenaries.
- Perhaps they infiltrate the camp in disguise.
- Perhaps they discover the goblins are fleeing a larger threat and decide to help them instead.

The goal, the stakes, and the situation remain the same. Only the players' approach changes.

As a Game Master, you should absolutely know where the adventure is headed. You should understand what the villain wants, what happens if nobody intervenes, and what consequences are looming on the horizon.



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A New Era of RPG



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8.11.26



The Rise of the Old One: A History of luz (Up to 579 C.Y.)

By GetOffMacCloud

In this present year of 579 C.Y., the demigod known as luz the Old, the Lord of Pain, surveys a sprawling dominion of terror from his blighted seat at Dorakaa, his influence creeping outward across the Flanaess. Yet little more than a single lifetime ago, the land he commands was no kingdom at all: only a scatter of feuding warbands quarreling over barren and worthless ground.

As of 479 C.Y., what would later become known as the Land of luz was merely a chaotic collection of petty fiefs. Bandit warbands and minor clans fought one another endlessly for control of small swathes of barren land. In that year, a minor despot died, and his supposed son, a man called luz, seized control of a few hundred vicious bandits. The claim of kinship was likely a convenient fiction, for luz was no ordinary warlord's heir.



He was a cambion: the offspring of the human necromancer Iggwilv and the great demon lord Graz'zt, ruler of several Abyssal planes.

Realizing his small band could never triumph by brute force, the young cambion turned to manipulation. He allied his warriors with other minor clan leaders to beat off stronger enemies, and, with grim regularity, those allies always suffered the heaviest casualties, their leaders falling in battle while luz absorbed the survivors. Bolstered by the formidable magical support of his mother, luz forged the entire region into a single kingdom in little over a decade. Refugees fled south into Furyondy carrying tales of the abominations taking shape in his new capital, Dorakaa, already a charnel house, where a road of skulls was being raised toward the Howling Hills.



In 491 C.Y., luz's swift ascent drew the alarm of neighboring powers. King Avras of Furyondy grew deeply concerned about the rise of evil to his north, and the elves, rangers, and good folk of the Vesve Forest began fighting in earnest to protect their homelands from luz's increasingly well-marshaled humanoid armies.



Charity Night

3rd Wednesday of the month

\$15 per spot

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



Meletis – The Philosopher-Led Republic

By: JimKBones



This month, I thought I would start focusing on the histories and key points of the cities born after the fall of the Archons. I hope that you all enjoy as I attempt to immerse you all even deeper into the Plane of Theros. I will start things off with the Athens-based Philosopher-Led City-States of Meletis, which draws its powers from the white and blue mana.

The white marble towers of Meletis gleam proudly against the shimmering waters of the Siren Sea, standing today as a monument to mortal civilization built upon the ashes of absolute oppression. Long before this coastal paradise became the undisputed intellectual and magical heart of Theros, the region bled under the iron fist of Agnomakhos. This immortal archon tyrant had aggressively expanded a brutal empire from the rugged northern mountains to the dense eastern forests, ruthlessly forcing conquered mortals into his legions.

Humanity's dawn finally broke when the legendary heroes Kynaïos and Tiro rose against his cruelty. Armed with an unyielding passion for freedom and blessed by Ephara, the Goddess of the Polis, the companion-lovers shattered Agnomakhos's immortal rule. From the smoking ruins of that tyrannical empire, they founded Meletis, a revolutionary sanctuary explicitly devoted to learning, magic, and progressive ideals.

Though Kynaïos and Tiro initially ruled as beloved kings, they feared that concentrated power would eventually breed a new tyranny. Guided by the highest ethical principles, they made a historic democratic sacrifice: they voluntarily relinquished their absolute monarchical authority to establish an academic, philosopher-led republic.

Following their deaths, governance transitioned to the Twelve. This supreme council of scholars is democratically elected by the citizenry to serve fixed four-year terms. It includes both men and women of diverse backgrounds, proving that merit and logic rule Meletis rather than elite lineage or brute strength. While the early council's stability was shaped by the immense wisdom of the senior sage Elpidios, modern Meletis is guided by Perisophia. As the council's most senior member, she is a master of potent mind magic and is widely revered as the premier logician on the plane.

To protect this progressive democracy from wild monsters and hostile neighboring states, Meletis relies on the Reverent Army. Unlike the brutal war-culture of Akros, the Meletian military views warfare as a necessary discipline guided by logic, piety, and tactical geometry. The military structure is heavily decentralized, comprised of self-contained units known as lochoi. Each lochos operates independently, allowing for fluid adaptability on the battlefield. The army is defined by two unique, specialized branches:

- The Alseid Cavalry: Elite scouts and flanking units who ride magical, swift-footed golden stags to navigate difficult terrain.
- The Thaumaturgical Corps: Battle-mages and "stonewise" sorcerers who march alongside the hoplites, using magic to erect instant fortifications or conjure protective barriers.

Every soldier is profoundly pious, treating combat maneuvers as a form of worship to the gods, particularly Ephara, Heliad, and Iroas. Backed by an unparalleled naval fleet that commands the Siren Sea, the Reverent Army ensures that free thought forever triumphs over tyranny.

I hope that you all enjoyed this month's edition of the Histories of Theros. Thank you all for reading and I hope to bring you more next month as we enter the next city, Akros.



The Rise of the Old One: A History of luz (Up to 579 C.Y.)

By GetOffMacCloud

His court was not spared its own upheavals. Around 491 C.Y., though no chronicle fixes the year with certainty, his mother Iggwilv offended Graz'zt, who drew her down into the Abyss and imprisoned her there. Left without her counsel, luz pressed ahead with his designs, nurturing a budding alliance with Zuggtmoy, the demon Lady of Fungi, with whom he had begun developing a citadel of elemental evil. That partnership, however, would never grow to fruition.



In 505 C.Y., luz vanished entirely from the Flanaess. He had been lured into the deep dungeons beneath Castle Greyhawk by the mad and mirthful archmage Zagyg, then known as Zagig Yragerne, and there he was bound and banished. The mage did not act alone: he was joined by St. Cuthbert and four quasi-deities: Heward the bard-mage, Murlynd the paladin-wizard, Keoghtom, and Kelanen, the Prince of Swords. Why these six powers allied to imprison the Old One remains unknown; in all likelihood, each had his own purpose.

During the sixty-five years of luz's absence, his homeland fell into fractured quietude. While his loyal clergy struggled to maintain a strict theocracy around Dorakaa, splinter groups and petty warlords broke away, and many of them openly impersonated the missing tyrant to lend themselves legitimacy. Most consequentially, a cabal known as the Horned Society seized the southern portion of his empire, including the city of Molag, by most reckonings around 513 C.Y.

In 570 C.Y., a strange alliance of adventurers cracked the prison beneath Castle Greyhawk. They had come intending to slay the Old One; instead, they triggered his release.



Live session

Mondays 8pm CST

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



**Chill Vibes
for
Campaign Prep**

**@TheCafeDM
on
YouTube**





I remember... I was working B-Shift over at Station 10. That was a great, old station. Know why? It had a pole. A fire station just isn't a fire station without a pole.



By OldManGeras



Title: 911 Operator

Publisher: Games Operators

Released: 2017

Amount of time played thus far:

Estimated time to finish: 20-22hours

tl/dr: -=[4.7/10]=-Repetitive audio, minimalist UI, slow & repetitive (didn't I just say that) gameplay. Bonus TL/DR: 112 Operator is the same thing, but adds weather and traffic. Get it before this one.

From the publisher: Game about the difficult work of people that manage emergency lines and services. Answer incoming calls and react properly - give first-aid instructions, advise, dispatch the correct number of firemen/police/ambulances, or sometimes - just ignore the call. Play on ANY CITY in the world!

Story: When you think of a story, you usually expect more than 1 dimension to a game. You know, something like 'you're a 911 (or 112) operator dispatching emergency services out, and can go out on some of those missions or have to send multiple services to a single event'. Yeah, not happening here. We're defibrillating the victim, Rampart. You sit behind a 'map' and just send them to whatever mission randomly shows up. 1 per emergency. To make it exciting, you get to listen in and make choices on inbound calls from fixed options. Oooo, super exciting, right?

Art Style: Clean, functional, and minimalist. The game uses a top-down city map with simple icons for units and incidents, paired with a realistic call interface. Patient is in V-fib! Rampart, we have lost the victim's pulse, beginning CPR. It looks like a professional dispatch software from the late 2010s - nothing flashy, but clear and readable during high-stress moments. No fancy effects, just pure information delivery.

Gameplay: You answer incoming calls, calm callers, give first-aid instructions, and then dispatch police/fire/ambulance units on a map while managing limited resources. Multiple emergencies can hit at once, forcing you to prioritize who goes where. Get outta here, you hosejockey! But wait, there's more! Squad 51, informant reports toxic chemicals in the tanker, use caution. Each campaign chapter drops you into a new location with escalating emergencies and a loose narrative of improving your skills and reputation. That's right, you have skills and a reputation for how good you are. Because, well, I don't know. It honestly just doesn't make sense. I guess you're really good at sending the Fire Department to get that cat out of the tree before sending them to the house fire?

Steam Deck: Officially unsupported, but it plays well enough using a community layout. Runs at a locked 60 FPS with a decent amount of battery life. I can get along with just about anybody. Just might have to bust him in the mouth to do it. Small text can be an issue as usual but overall a good experience.

(cont on pg 35)



The Rise of the Old One: A History of luz (Up to 579 C.Y.)

By GetOffMacCloud



The being that returned to Dorakaa was no longer merely a powerful fiend; he was a fully realized demigod. How a cambion crossed that threshold into true divinity is a mystery no sage will answer plainly. Some suspect that the wild and unpredictable magics Zagyg unleashed within Castle Greyhawk may have wrought the transformation, perhaps even unwittingly, over the long decades of his captivity. Whatever its cause, luz emerged a deity of immense and unquenchable will, and he set at once to executing plans laid across decades of confinement. He crushed the lesser imposters of his northern homeland with

staggering cruelty and forged the Boneheart, a Greater and a Lesser circle, six powerful spellcasters in each, to serve as his high command.

By 579 C.Y., luz tolerates, for now, the Horned Society's grip on his southern border while he pursues a grander and more insidious strategy. His agents scour the Flanaess for ancient relics and arcane evils, his temples overflow with foul sacrifice, and thousands of orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins mass in the Howling Hills. The Old One is patient, his grip is iron, and his armies stand ready to plunge the central kingdoms into total war.



NIGHT FELL



Mandelver

LIVE SESSION

Sundays 5pm CST

twitch.tv/sparkles_mandy



Fluffy Banana Pancakes

By Leigh Harris

Step 1 – In a small bowl, mash the ripe banana until mostly smooth. A few small lumps are perfectly fine and add texture. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.



Step 4 – Scoop about 1/3 cup of pancake batter onto the preheated skillet. Cook until bubbles form across the surface and the edges look set and slightly dry, then flip and cook until golden brown and cooked through, about 3-4 minutes each side.



Step 2 – Add the buttermilk, melted butter, egg yolks, and mashed banana to the dry ingredients. Mix just until combined. Don't overmix, or your pancakes can turn dense.



Step 3 – In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. This step is key to achieving that light, fluffy texture. Gently fold the whipped egg whites into the batter until incorporated. Be careful not to deflate the mixture. Let the batter rest for about 3-5 minutes while you heat your griddle or skillet over medium-low heat.



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911 Operator (cont)

By OldManGaras

Audio: One of the game's strongest parts when it comes to sound effects (but read to the end for the gotcha). Very strong voice acting for the callers (panicked, angry, confused, ridiculous) and clear radio chatter in the background. Start an IV, 51.. D5W TKO! The soundtrack goes for full atmospheric and works pretty well. Headphones are recommended though as some of the audio is in the background - you'll catch subtle details that help you make better decisions. Sounds great until you actual think about what I just said. You have to really listen as they try to trick you in some scenarios. Don't turn the volume up on your TV, you don't need sirens and alerts blasting to your neighbors, trust me.

Achievements: 18 achievements in total, ranging from easy (finish training, save a few lives) to grind (work in 15 cities, reach high reputation, complete Expert difficulty). Most are tied directly to gameplay. Completion takes 20-23 hours depending on how hardcore you go.

Value: Normally this is a \$15/USD but it frequently goes on sale for around \$3/USD. Is it worth the full price? Meh, I'd say no. Though the challenge goes up, it's very repetitive in the actions that you can do. Is it worth the \$3? Yeah, you'll get a few hours out of it before you get tired. Secondary markets have this for around \$1.50/USD year round, so even if you don't want to wait for every sale, you can always get it at a heavy discount elsewhere.

Movie: Today's quotes come from the TV Show called Emergency! which ran from 1972 through 1979. With actors like Randolph Mantooth, Mike Stoker and Robert Fuller in the series, you'll probably recognize Kevin Tighe the most from his numerous appearances in shows like Lost, Law & Order, The 4400 and many more.

(cont on page 37)



ONE
SHOTS

Frídáys

Join the
Discord to
sign up!



Live session

Mondays 8pm CST

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



The Forge Rests
(cont)
By EndYourStreamTV



Rarity gives your item weight. Not every magic item needs to be legendary, and not every legendary item needs to be world-ending. A simple, uncommon item can become beloved if it solves a problem at the perfect time or reflects a character's personality. A rare item can become a badge of honor. A legendary item can reshape a campaign. Rarity helps you decide how often wonders appear and how much impact they should have when they do.

Power scaling gives your item a future. Some items are meant to shine once and fade into memory. Others are meant to grow. An awakening relic, a weapon that unlocks new abilities after acts of courage, or a cloak that changes as its wearer changes can make players feel like their choices matter. Scaling allows an item to remain part of the story without overpowering it.

When these four pillars work together, magic items become tools for unforgettable storytelling. They can rescue heroes from impossible odds, tempt them toward dangerous choices, or remind them of who they once were. They can create laughter, fear, triumph, sacrifice, and surprise.

As you build your own campaign, do not be afraid to experiment. You will occasionally make something too strong, too narrow, or too strange. That is part of the craft. Listen to your table, adjust when needed, and remember that the goal is not flawless design. The goal is shared wonder.

Give your players items that challenge them, reward them, and reveal something about the world. Let the sword have a name. Let the ring have a cost. Let the staff whisper when the moon is full. Let magic feel magical.

Above all, never forget why we homebrew in the first place: to create moments no one else's table could have made. Build carefully, dream boldly, and give your players experiences they will never forget.

May your forges stay hot, your items shine bright, and your players many legendary moments... Until next time... Happy crafting.

-EndYourStreamTV



Live session

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



Charity Night

3rd Wednesday of the month

\$15 per spot

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





911 Operator Game Review CONT.

Let's break it down:

==[4.7/10]==

==[Gameplay]==

- ☐ My name.. is Neo
- ☐ Good
- ☒ Decent
- ☐ Get an etch-a-sketch

==[Story]==

- ☐ There is no life other than this game
- ☐ Great
- ☐ Decent
- ☒ Tetris has more story

==[Graphics]==

- ☐ You are in heaven
- ☐ Good
- ☒ Decent
- ☐ A 2-year-old made them 30 years ago

==[Audio]==

- ☐ Is it live or Memorex
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Decent
- ☒ What? I can't hear you

==[PC Requirements]==

- ☐ Potato Potatoe
- ☒ Decent
- ☐ Expensive
- ☐ Frontier or Fugaku are needed

==[Audience]==

- ☐ Everyone
- ☐ Adults
- ☒ Teens and above
- ☐ Nappy time!

==[Difficulty]==

- ☐ 3X + 1
- ☐ Challenging
- ☐ Moderate
- ☒ Can you color within the lines?

==[Replayability]==

- ☐ And nothing else matters
- ☐ Every 6-ish months, I play it again
- ☐ I played, I conquered, I uninstalled
- ☒ There can be only 1

==[Game Time]==

- ☐ Time has no meaning, only this game exists
- ☐ 40+ hours
- ☒ 20-40 hours
- ☐ Press start and you're almost finished

==[Price]==

- ☐ Worth the price
- ☐ If it's on sale
- ☒ If you have extra money
- ☐ Just throw your money in the trash

==[Bugs]==

- ☒ Smooth as silk
- ☐ It's annoying but playable
- ☐ Early Access game-level bugs
- ☐ Starship Trooper has less bugs

LAST DUTY
GENERAL

DUTY SUMMARY

Total Cases resolved: 14

- In prison: 4
- Billed: 6
- Hospitalized: 2
- Dead: 0
- Healed / Assisted: 6
- Reputation: 17
- Efficiency: 63%

Finances:

- Base Income: \$5000
- Rewards: \$17000
- Fines: \$3752
- Salaries: -\$3564
- Vehicles Maintenance: -\$4900
- Total profit: \$17288

Team Members:

Stella Morales was injured





"I had to get it out of my head"

By Haavok_RPG

Some amazing art from our amazing friend:
Addie and Symantek



Random Rants w/Mandur

Lets Talk Time!



So this month I was working on putting together this wonderful thing we call Realms magazine; hours and hours of work go into each issue. Now, I do truly hope it is enjoyed. This has been a passion project of mine for some time.

Oddly enough, it struck me this week, how long have I been doing this? Laughable, I am sure, but in looking back, it was right there! This project, how long have I been at it, and the number I got was 2.5 years. Realms started as just a simple newsletter for our players to see what was going on in our group. It has become so much more, and I could not be prouder. The dream was to come together and make a fun and interesting place to talk TTRPGs and all the other things we love in life.

So with that in mind, I ask a simple question: how long have you been working on a passion project? I know I am not the only one. I welcome you to join the Discord and share those projects! I personally would love to cheer you on. Some days are a struggle to stay on track and find reasons to keep on the path so let's talk! Let's encourage!

Thank you you all for helping me to get this amazing idea going for 2.5 years. I can not wait to see what we build going forward! I will share a few images of the old issues that made me smile today.





Charity Night

Every 3rd Wednesday
of the month

8pm CST
twitch.tv/sparkles_mandy

