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Saga

A Saga Companion

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DragonLance

A SAGA COMPANION

A Guide to Telling Tales of the Fifth Age

By William W. Connors

This book is humbly dedicated to all the people I've had the pleasure and honor of
working with at TSR since that brisk day in October of 1989 when I was shown to my
office and told that I was already late on my first assignment.
I don't think I ever got caught up after that.

The FIFTH AGE* authors gratefully acknowledge the original pioneers of Krynn:
Larry Elmore, Jeff Grubb, Harold Johnson, Douglas Niles, Carl Smith,
Michael Williams—and, of course, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman.

Author's Foreword

This book takes a slight departure from the normal DRAGONLANCE®: FIFTH AGE® dramatic adventure game line. All of the other products in this line, from the original release of the SAGA™ rules, through the *Dragons of a New Age* dramatic supplement series and the *Fate Deck* accessory, were products of our own design staff. Long before Sue, Skip, and I started to put words on paper describing the world of Krynn after the Second Cataclysm, we had a pretty good idea of where the line was going to go for the first ten or so products.

A Saga Companion was more or less designed by people outside TSR. Whenever one of us traveled to a convention, opened a fan letter, or browsed the Internet, the whole of the DRAGONLANCE team took notes on the things you wanted to know. In the end, we compiled quite a list of questions and comments, likes and dislikes, improvements and (dare I say it?) corrections.

It is the purpose of this book to respond to the most frequently made comments and answer the questions that we have heard the most. In a very real sense, *you* are the author of this book. It was designed to allow fans of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE universe and SAGA rules system to expand their campaigns and reach new heights of roleplaying.

This book is organized along the same lines as the *Book of the Fifth Age*, with chapters dedicated to the creation of heroes, the use of magic, and so on. Each section focuses on a handful of areas chosen because they will enhance the flavor of the game and promote roleplaying.

So what exactly will you find in here?

- A complete system for creating a hero's background, including surviving family and important turning points in the hero's life.
- A simple, but detailed skill system that allows heroes to show off their unique hidden talents, from blacksmithing to seamanship.
- Complete guidelines on the creation of new monsters, including a bestiary design form that makes the process a snap.
- A section on the creation of new hero roles that can be used for newly created heroes or those already in play.
- Guidelines on the design of new hero races that allow a Narrator to add diversity to any adventuring party.
- Rules for the creation of spellbooks and special mantras that allow sorcerers and mystics quicker access to a few of their favorite spells.
- Guidelines on the use of magic to create or animate creatures like golems, the walking dead, or extraplanar elementals.

With these additions, as well as the many others included in *A Saga Companion,* any DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game can take on a unique character, reflecting the tastes of the Narrator and players.

So enjoy this book—you worked hard on it.

Your Obedient Servant,

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Alternate Hero Creation

The following section includes some new guidelines and techniques for using ability scores and codes. Narrators should keep in mind the fact that these rules are entirely optional. In all cases, Narrators should feel free to ignore them and stick with the guidelines presented in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

The standard method of creating heroes for the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game involves the Fate Deck. It requires Narrators to deal out hands of twelve cards and allows players to assign these where they will. This system is very easy, and players generally pick it up very quickly. However, a few tricky points, like the determination of ability codes, can give a novice player some difficulty.

When creating heroes for those who have not played the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game before, the Narrator can use the following simplified hero generation system to get the game started quickly. Then, when the players have a better understanding of the system and wish to create heroes using the full rules, the Narrator can allow them to do so.

Step One: Hand of Fate

Narrators should complete the first step of hero creation exactly as described in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. The Narrator deals out twelve cards to each player. For ease of use, players should then sort these cards, first by suit and then by rank.

Step Two: Personality

After sorting her hand, the player should pull out the two lowest cards and assign them to the hero's nature and demeanor scores. Players should exclude cards from the Suit of Dragons from this process. If a tie causes more than two cards to be the lowest possible, the player can either select the cards she wishes to assign or shuffle the applicable cards together and draw two at

random. Once completed, the player removes the assigned cards from her hand.

Step Three: Quests and Reputation

Of the ten cards remaining in her hand, the player should assign the lowest to her hero's number of quests. The only restriction is that the card may not have a value of less than four. Thus, if a player has a one, a two, and a four in her hand, she would assign the four to indicate the number of quests completed. She should discard the assigned card.

Step Four: Wealth and Social Status

In order to determine the new hero's wealth rating (and thus her social status), the player should set aside her four highest cards and her four lowest cards. This leaves her with only one card, which is assigned to her wealth rating. The player removes the card from play.

Step Five: Ability Scores

At this point, the player has only eight cards left in her hand. She should assign these, one at a time, to the eight ability scores on the hero sheet. The player need not make note of the card's suit since she will assign ability codes to the ability scores in the sixth step. As the player assigns each card, she should discard it.

Step Six: Ability Codes

With all of the player's cards gone, the player should start the next step of the process: assigning ability codes. The player should select one ability, generally the one with the highest score, and assign it an "A" code. She should select two other abilities and assign them "B" codes. All but one of the remaining abilities then receives a "C" code, and the final ability becomes a "D"

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"Well, Brothers," he began, forcing himself to smile, "I'm always standing on the porch of the inn, waving good-bye to you two, going off to fight something or other. Looks like it's my turn now."

—Palin before leaving the Inn of the Last Home with Dalamar, "The Legacy"

At the heart of any epic adventure, whether it is drawn from the pages of fiction or spun for a roleplaying game, lie the heroes. These champions of light throw themselves in harm's way to protect the common man from the dangers of an often angry universe. They battle dragons, lead armies of liberation, and otherwise fight the Good fight.

In the majority of cases, heroes are to be admired and respected. Certainly this is true of heroes created for play with the SAGA™ rules system. They provide a sterling example of all that men and women might aspire to be. Even in the face of over- whelming Evil, heroes do not give in to either temptation or fear, although they may well feel both.

On the other side of the balance, of course, is the anti-hero. These individ- uals are darker and move

about in the shadows. The powerful Raist- lin Majere is perhaps the best known char- acter of this type on Krynn. He was motivated by personal gain, although he often found it in his best interest to oppose the forces of darkness and chaos.

Somewhere in the middle one finds the thrill-seeking hero. These characters, like Tasslehoff Burrfoot, concern themselves more with high adventure and excitement than with strict issues of Good or Evil. In most cases, though, these heroes tend to oppose the forces of Evil and often appear to be noble champions of justice. Thus, they still remain agents of Good.

The importance of heroes can be seen in the fact that they hold the place of honor in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. The chapter detailing heroes appears at the onset, before any discussion of the game itself or the world in which they live. The DRAGONLANCE® Saga is nothing without its heroes.

Over the course of this chapter, players and Narrators can read about a diverse number of interesting variations and addenda to the hero creation rules pre- sented in the original DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE rule book. The first uses an alternate system for creating heroes. Readers can also find a complete system for generating a hero's back- ground story and the major events which have shaped his or her life. An optional game system that allows Narrators and players to determine the special skills that each hero pos- sesses follows the events section. Rounding out this first chapter are guidelines for the creation of new hero roles and races.

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code. If the player wishes, she may reduce her hero's "D" code to an "X" and increase one of her hero's "C" codes to a "B." Note that the player cannot change one of her hero's "B" codes to an "A" code.

Step Seven:
Race

While the seventh step does not change from the format presented in the standard rules, Narrators may wish to rule that all new heroes be human. This allows the new player to enjoy the game without having to worry about the subtle roleplaying aspects associated with the demihuman races.

Step Eight:
Role

The player should select a one- or two-word description of her hero and record it as the hero's role. Possible examples include archer, heroic knight, thief, enigmatic sorcerer, wandering mystic, or thrill seeker. See the "Role Models" section later

in this chapter for tips on creating new roles. (Appendix One offers ideas for established hero roles.)

Step Nine:
Arms and Armor

Just as described in the *Book of the Fifth Age*, the player should choose appropriate weapons and armor for her hero. (Appendix Three offers an extensive list.)

Step Ten:
Final Touches

The tenth step does not change from the description presented in the standard rules. If both the Narrator and player desire, the background generation system presented later in this chapter can now be used to create a history for the new hero.

The Dreaded Malystryx

Narrators and players may note that the hero creation system detailed above makes

it possible for a hero to have an ability score of "10" with a code of better than "X." While this is not possible in the standard hero creation process, it does not create a "game-busting" problem.

Improving Abilities

The basic method by which a hero may improve his ability scores and codes is laid out in the standard DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE rules. The following optional methods augment those rules; they do not replace them.

Beyond the Best

As the current rules stand, the hero cannot raise any ability beyond "9A." Narrators should feel free to rule that the hero can increase any score of 9 or better if the card turned for improvement is the Ten of Dragons.

Revealing the Ten of Dragons does not raise the ability code, only the score. Once the hero passes a 9 score, however, the player cannot increase his hero's ability codes except through roleplaying (as described below). Thus, scores of 10C or 11D are possible.

Training

Normally, a player does not have to announce what ability a hero wishes to improve until the moment his hero's reputation increases. If the player wants to plan ahead, however, he can increase the chance that his hero will improve an ability score or code when the hero's reputation increases to the next category.

In order to do this, the player decides in advance exactly what type of training his hero is undertaking. He may select either a single ability score or a specific ability code. Unfortunately, a player cannot use the training rules to improve both his hero's score and code at the same time.

The player must make the decision to begin ability training either at the start of play (that is, right after he creates his hero) or immediately after the hero increases his reputation rating. Players and Narrators alike should work to incorporate this training into the roleplaying of the game.

Improving an Ability Score

A player may state that his hero is undertaking a systematic program of training in one ability score. A player might, for example, state that his hero is training to improve his raw Strength.

When the hero next increases his reputation, he turns a card to see if his ability score improves. In most other cases, an hero's score improves only if the card has a value *higher* than that of the ability score being checked. If the hero has been in training, however, the ability score increases whenever the card *equals or exceeds* the ability score.

For example, consider the case of Stann, an intrepid warrior. When the player created this hero, his player announced that Stann was training to improve upon his 8B Strength. When Stann increases his reputation, the Narrator turns a card and compares it to Stann's Strength ability score. Normally, the card would have to be a nine or ten to increase Stann's Strength score. Because Stann has been training, however, he would increase his score on an eight, nine, or ten. No matter what card turns up, however, Stann's Strength *code* will not change at this time.

Improving an Ability Code

Narrators can also use the training rule to allow a player to improve his hero's ability code. A hero who is training to improve a code cannot increase his ability score, however.

The procedure for training in a code is virtually identical to that used when attempting to improve an ability score. The player must declare the desired training program immediately after creating the hero or increasing his reputation. From that point on (until his next reputation increase), the hero is assumed to spend his free hours in study, training, and practice.

When the time comes to see whether the hero has managed to stick to his training regimen, however, things go a little differently. Heroes training in something that they have a lot of natural potential in (that is, a high ability score) are more likely to master their lessons than those with less raw talent. Thus, if the card turned *equals or is less than* the hero's ability score, his

code increases. Obviously, no code can rise beyond "A."

Returning to an earlier example, when the player of the valiant hero Stann decides to attempt a code increase in his hero's 8B Strength, he draws a card. If that card is an eight or less, Stann's Strength improves from an 8B to an 8A.

Strategy. By increasing ability scores first, a player can improve his hero's chances to increase ability codes.

Other Methods

Training and experience are not the only means by which a hero can improve his ability scores and codes. Narrators should keep in mind, however, that uncontrolled advancement of these issues can make the game unbalanced. If every hero has straight scores of 8 and 9 with codes of "B" and "A," the Narrator will have problems finding adventures to challenge them.

Spellcasting

It is, of course, possible for a mystic to use his powers to increase his own or another's ability scores. As a rule, however, these adjustments are temporary.

Magical Items

Magical items might also produce such beneficial effects. These effects fall primarily into the purview of the Narrator, however, and involve forces beyond the control of the heroes.

For example, the heroes find an ancient magical orb which has been infused with great wisdom. When one of the heroes touches it, it charges him with magical power and permanently increases his Reason score by one point.

Roleplaying

Narrator can also add other encounters to a game with the intent of having them result in an increased ability score or code. As with magical items, Narrators should carefully control these situations. As a rule, Narrators should use them only when they will promote roleplaying.

For example, the heroes stand in the presence of a centaur master archer. In exchange for a great service, the heroes receive archery lessons over the space of a month. The Narrator rules that this results in a one letter increase in their Dexterity codes. Another example of special training that provides an increase in ability scores or codes includes the training mystics receive at the Citadel of Light or the instruction that sorcerers receive at the Academy of Sorcery. (See the *Citadel of Light* and *Heroes of Sorcery* dramatic supplements for further details on mystic and sorcery training.)

Hero Backgrounds

All roleplaying games must, by definition, center on the actions of the heroes. No matter how detailed the Narrator's story is or how carefully the scenario is thought out, the actions of the heroes will shape its outcome.

Historical Information

Most players find the process of creating a history or background story for their hero

very entertaining. Sometimes, however, even the most imaginative person needs a bit of a push to start the ideas coming. The optional rules in this section provide that push.

Heroic Histories

Every person, whether real or fictional, is defined by his or her past. A warrior who has faced countless enemies may find his resolve hardened or his nerve broken. An imprisoned thief may learn his lesson and repent, or he may become a desperado hardened by his ordeal. Everyone is the sum of all his or her experiences. In the *Book of the Fifth Age*, this total is presented in four different ways: wealth, reputation, nature, and demeanor scores.

What follows here is a brief system by which a player can determine the basic events of his hero's background. These optional rules are presented for players who lack the time or desire to fully flesh out a history for their heroes. Further, they can be used as an aid to the imagination, providing a starting point from which a complete history can be crafted.

It takes only a few minutes for a player to create a hero's background. Like the actual hero creation, this process uses the Fate Deck. In this case, however, the player can draw six cards randomly (or less if he wants to figure out certain aspects for himself) to determine six different things about his character's background. To proceed, the player need only pick up a pencil and paper (or a copy of the hero History and Background Sheet provided in Appendix Four), shuffle the cards, and see what the Hand of Fate has in store for him.

These rules fall into two sections, each of which is described briefly below.

Family and Friends

The first part of these optional rules generates information about the hero's home life. The player draws cards to determine a number of things about the hero's parents, siblings, and important companions (like a spouse or pet). Once this process is concluded, the player will know a great deal about the conditions under which his hero grew to become one of Krynn's modern heroes.

Major Events

The second part of these rules allows a player to discover the most important events in his hero's past. A player can determine these by draws from the Fate Deck, then further develop them with the help of the Narrator.

The events drawn from the Fate Deck are not meant to be in any chronological sequence. The first card draw is not necessarily indicative of either the most recent or earliest event in the hero's life.

Once all of a hero's past events have been determined, the player can sort them and place them in his own chronological order. When this is done, a solid framework for the hero's past will emerge.

Mark My Words . . .

As a player goes through the process of creating a background for his hero, he should be constantly on the lookout for ways to link the various results culled from the tables that follow. If the Fate Deck indicates that the hero's parents are dead, he should keep this fact in mind and look for ways to link later draws to it. If the next card reveals that the hero's siblings are also deceased, for example, the player might consider the possibility that his hero's parents died at the same time. Perhaps this was the result of a plague, an accident, or a generations-long feud. The possibilities are endless.

The same holds true for determining events. Often, a chronological story can be established with these events simply by linking them together with phrases like "and then" or "which caused."

It is also frequently possible for a player to link the background generated for his hero with that of another party member. If both heroes are from families who fled to their current homeland due to war or disaster, there is no reason they cannot agree to have the same roots.

Family History

The first thing that the player can learn about his hero is the general condition of his upbringing and family. Is he an only child? Is he an orphan? Do his siblings respect him? All of these questions can be

answered by drawing a few cards. As the player finds these things out, he should write them down on the hero History and Background Sheet.

A General Note about Tense

Throughout the charts that follow, the player does not have to follow the verb tense that the chart uses. For example, if the statement is in the past tense, the player should feel free to use the present tense instead.

Step One: Parents

To determine information about the hero's parents, their health, and his relations with them, the player should draw the top card from the deck and consult the following table:

Card	Remarks
1	Both of the hero's parents are alive and well.
2	Both of the hero's parents are alive, but one is in poor health.
3	Both of the hero's parents are alive, but in poor health.
4	Only one of the hero's parents is alive.
5	Only one of the hero's parents is alive, and he or she is infirm.
6	Both of the hero's parents died after he reached maturity.
7	Both of the hero's parents died and he was raised by relatives.
8	Both of the hero's parents died and he was raised by friends.
9	Both of the hero's parents died, leaving the hero to fend for himself.
10	Draw again, but add an element of the supernatural or the fantastic (such as one of the parents becoming a spirit guide).

The suit of the card drawn determines how the hero feels about his parents (or whoever raised him).

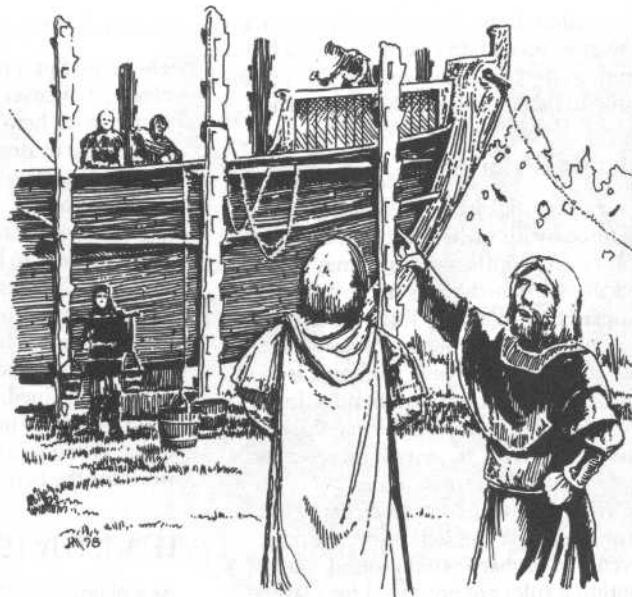| Suit	The hero ...
◆	idolizes his parents.
↗	idolizes one of his parents but dislikes the other.
⚘	is on good terms with his parents.
†	has lost contact with his parents or did so prior to their death.
☽	is considered a disgrace by his parents.
●	is embarrassed by his parents.
♥	dislikes his parents.
♔	fears his parents.
⟆	has great enmity for his parents.

Step Two:
Siblings

To determine information about the hero's siblings and his relations with them, the player should draw the top card of the deck. If the hero was raised by friends or such, the siblings indicated in the results below may be the children of either his original or adoptive parents.

Card   The hero . . .
1   is an only child.
2   has an older sibling.
3   has a younger sibling.
4   is the youngest member of a small family.*
5   is one of the middle children in a small family.*
6   is the oldest child of a small family.*
7   is the youngest child of a large family.**
8   is one of the middle children in a large family.**
9   is the oldest child of a large family.**
10   Draw again, but add a supernatural or fantastic aspect to the result, such as a sibling gifted with a wild mystic or sorcerous talent. (See the *Citadel of Light* supplement for further information.)

*   Three to five children
**   More than five children

Once the number of siblings and the hero's place in the pecking order has been established, the suit of the card drawn will determine some additional information about his family. If the hero was an only child, this step can be ignored.

Suit   The hero's siblings . . .
♠   tend to avoid him if possible.
⚔   are openly hostile to him.
⚑   pretend that he isn't there, if possible.
†   bully and harass him.
☽   feel protective toward him.
●   look at him as their protector and provider.
♥   love and admire him.
♛   respect and honor him.
⚡   are all deceased.

Step Three:
Family Status

To determine information about the hero's family history, the player should draw the top card from the deck and consult the following table:

Card   The hero's family . . .
1   is an old, established one and has never lived anywhere else as far as anyone can remember.
2   emigrated to their current home many generations ago.
3   emigrated one or two generations ago.
4   emigrated here recently. The hero is the first generation born in this area.
5   emigrated here by choice after the hero's birth.
6   were left behind by the hero, who came to this land.
7   are refugees forced to flee their home due to war or disaster.
8   are exiles forced to leave their homeland for political reasons.
9   are fugitives who fled their homeland to avoid jail.
10   Draw again, but add a supernatural or fantastic aspect to the result, such as a direct ancestor who rode dragons.

The suit of this card is used to determine the way in which the community reacts to the hero's family.

Suit   The hero's family is . . .
♠   considered the keystone of the community.
⚔   admired and beloved.
⚑   respected and trusted.
†   merely accepted.
☽   engaged in a quarrel or feud with one other family.
●   shunned by the community.
♥   the subject of dark tales.
♛   viewed with suspicion.
⚡   reviled and hated.

Step Four:
Enemies

Few people go through life without making both friends and enemies. Heroes in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game are no different.

Card	The hero has ...
1	a single important enemy.
2	two important enemies, perhaps working together.
3	a small group (about five people) who consider him an enemy.
4	a group of about ten people who hate him.
5	made an enemy of a large group (about twenty-five people).
6	angered a very large group (about one hundred people).
7	earned the hatred of a town or guild-like organization.
8	become hated by the inhabitants of an entire city or large institution (like a church or order of knighthood).
9	an entire nation or race that considers him an enemy.
10	Draw again and add an element of the supernatural or fantastic to the result (such as the enmity of ten ghosts).

The suit of this card reveals the type of tactics used by the hero's enemies. This can also provide insight as to the nature of the hero's enemies.

Suit	The hero's enemies ...
◈	strike at him by attacking his friends, family, and allies.
⤤	hire assassins to kill him.
⚡	want to capture and torture him before killing him.
†	hire mercenaries to kill him.
☽	use sorcery against him.
◉	spy on him constantly, providing information to rivals and other enemies.
♥	use mysticism against him.
♛	turn the local authorities against him.
⤴	employ monsters and other exotic creatures against him.

Step Five:
Friends

In addition to his traveling companions, the hero is assumed to have made a few good friends during his earlier adventures.

Card	The hero has ...
1	a single important friend.
2	two important friends.
3	a small group (about five people) who count him a true friend.
4	a group of about ten people who honor him.
5	won the respect of a large group (about twenty-five people).
6	befriended a very large group (about one hundred people).
7	earned the respect of a town or guild-like organization.
8	found favor with the people of an entire city or large institution (like a church or order of knighthood).
9	the love of an entire nation.
10	Draw again and add an element of the supernatural or fantastic to the result (such as the friendship of several pegasi).

The suit of this card reveals the type of support provided by the hero's allies, as well as adding an insight about their nature.

Suit	The hero's allies ...
◈	watch over his friends and family for him.
⤤	can supply funds in a crisis.
⚡	provide him with equipment.
†	offer him military training and support.
☽	can do scholarly research into ancient lore when needed.
◉	act as spies or informers.
♥	have access to magic (pick either sorcery or mysticism).
♛	provide legal or governmental leverage when needed.
⤴	are in league with a powerful monster, perhaps even one of the Great Dragons or Good dragons.

Step Six:
Companions

Companions are characters who travel with the hero. They range from pets or mounts to siblings and spouses. It is important to note that the random determination of companions is optional.

Players should make note of the advantages and disadvantages associated with companions before electing to draw for one. This decision must be made before the player draws the card to determine the nature of his hero's companions (if any). Guidelines for determining the companion's personality and game statistics follow the tables below.

Boons and Banes of Companions

Players with heroes who possess a companion have several advantages and disadvantages during game play. Most of these boons and banes occur when a companion attempts an action. When this happens, the player uses a card from his hand just as he would for his own hero. While this provides the hero with the advantage of an extra action every now and then, it also opens him up to several negative possibilities.

For example, if a hero allows his companion to be killed, his faith in himself and reputation both suffer. The instant that a hero's companion dies, the player must draw a card from the Fate Deck, then reduce his hero's Presence score by one-third of the card's value. If the hero draws a card from the Suit of Dragons, the hero's reputation (and thus the number of cards that the player holds in his hand) drops by one category.

For example, after his companion is killed, the player draws the Six of Dragons from the Fate Deck. Not only must he reduce his hero's Presence score by 2 points, but the hero's "adventurer" reputation becomes a "novice" reputation.

In time, a hero can rebuild his damaged reputation and overcome his own sorrow, thus regaining his previous stature. Of course, this is a long and difficult process. Although the Narrator should be the final judge on the length of time involved for the grief and guilt to subside, a fair guideline is that it takes two months to recover one quest. If the player roleplays the recovery from grief and guilt well, the Narrator should feel free to adjust this number.

Card	The hero has ...
1	no important companions.
2	a common pet like a house cat, small dog, or song bird.
3	an unusual pet, like a monkey or dolphin.
4	a guard/hunting animal like a war dog, panther, or falcon.
5	a common mount, like a horse or camel.
6	an uncommon mount, like an elephant or a worg.
7	a ward, child, or other young companion.
8	an apprentice, squire, servant, or similar underling.
9	a spouse, lover, sibling, or similar adult companion.
10	Draw again, adding an element of the supernatural or fantastic to the result (such as a spirit guide or guardian).

Even if they are not heroes themselves, the companions of a hero tend to be a bit above average. The suit of the card reveals what it is about a hero's companion that makes him or her special.

Suit	The hero's companion is...
🗡	nimble and acrobatic.
⟡	clever and skilled/trained.
♞	determined and spirited.
⚔	especially strong and fierce.
☾	unusually intelligent
●	very perceptive.
♥	kind-hearted and loving.
♛	loyal and devoted.
⚚	known to have dealings with monsters and other exotic creatures.

Companions need not be fully fleshed-out characters with their own record sheets. Space is provided on the History and Background Sheet to note the important information about a hero's companion. Exactly how a companion's game statistics are determined depends upon his or her exact nature.

Animal Companions

If the companion is an animal, the player and Narrator need only look up the animal's information in the Bestiary chapter of the *Book of the Fifth Age*. If statistics for the chosen animal are not presented, the player and Narrator can create new ones based upon its nearest relative. For example, a panther could be given the same statistics as a leopard.

Human Companions

Spouses, apprentices, and wards are assumed to be of the same race as the hero, although a player can waive this guideline with the approval of the Narrator. In the case of apprentices or spouses, the player should use the statistics for "common" members of the race. If the companion is a ward or minor, the player should lower the Coordination and Physique scores by 2 points.

The player may increase a single ability score of the companion by 1 point to reflect his unusual nature (as indicated by the suit of the card drawn earlier in this step). Thus, the player of a companion who is "nimble and acrobatic" could raise the companion's Coordination score.

Replacing Companions

If a hero's companion has been slain, the player may wish to acquire a new one. He may do so only after he increases his hero's reputation category. At that time, the player informs the Narrator that he would like a new companion for his hero.

For his part, the Narrator secretly draws a card and consults the table on the previous page. If the card indicates a companion, the Narrator should work his or her arrival into an upcoming game session.

Players who waived the right to check for a companion at the start of the game may attain one later. In order to do this, they need only ask the Narrator to check for a companion when their heroes increase in reputation.

Step Seven:
Important Events

The next step in scripting a hero's background centers around the most formative

events in his life. Each hero has a number of events equal to the total number of cards the player holds in his hand. Thus, an "adventurer" reputation allows four events, while a "champion" reputation allows five events.

To determine the hero's past, the Narrator simply deals out the correct number of cards. Then, the player or Narrator can consult the listings on the following pages to determine the exact meaning of each card drawn. The events described under each card's heading often match the character listed or mirror an event that occurred in the character's life.

Fleshing Things Out

During and after the event generation process, the player should try to look for ways to enrich the basic information presented in the descriptions. These extrapolations should be based upon the abilities already chosen for the hero.

For instance, assume that the player draws the Four of Arrows, indicating that the hero's inattention led to a tragic accident that burned his face badly. Knowing that his hero is a sorcerer with a knowledge of pyromancy, the player might note that the hero failed to tend a fire, which burned him as he slept. This disaster spurred the hero on in his desire to become the master of fire and flame that he is today.

The Tapestry of Life

The player can lay out the events of a hero's past as a series of snapshots, each adding to the history and back story without necessarily being connected in any way. He can, however, also link the events that sum up the hero's life. In playtests, the best way to do this often was simply to toss a conjunction (words like "and," "or," and "but") between each event.

The "Tale of Ironhawk" at the end of this section illustrates this concept more clearly.

Other Uses for the Events

Either before or during play, the Narrator can use the following listings to flesh out or even create adventures.

Before Play: At times during the adventure design process, a Narrator will hit a dead end or be at a loss for ideas. When-

ever this happens, the Narrator can flip a card and check the following pages to determine its meaning. In almost every case, an event chosen like this can be worked into the fabric of the adventure with a little imagination.

For example, a Narrator is trying to figure out how the heroes meet a necessary character. He flips over the One of Crowns and decides to incorporate a scene where one of the heroes is mistaken for a former Dark Knight. He builds the scene in such a way as to allow the heroes to prove the arrested hero innocent, as well as make contact with the necessary character.

During Play: When the heroes take a wrong turn during an adventure or the pace of events has slowed unexpectedly, the Narrator can often be caught unawares. When this happens, the Narrator should turn a card over and insert the event it suggests into the story line. In most cases, the event descriptions are vague enough to allow a Narrator lots of latitude in its use. If the drawn card doesn't fit the story line, then the Narrator can draw another.

For instance, the Narrator finds that the heroes missed their connection in Sanction and do not know where to go next. To help guide them, the Narrator decides to draw a card. By using the text under the Eight of Shields as a guideline, the Narrator reintroduces a past enemy who is trying to achieve the same goal that the heroes wish to achieve. After allowing the heroes to notice their nemesis performing some of the same actions they performed earlier (and discover the information they need to continue the adventure), the Narrator can bring the heroes back on track.

Suit of Shields

The Suit of Shields is tied to Agility and natural athleticism. Thus, the events described below may, at the player's or Narrator's discretion, take this connection into account. For example, in the case of the 1🛡, the hero may have seen his ghastly sight as a child while climbing the ivy trellises on the outside of the house.

1. Tika Waylan Majere

While poking his nose in where it didn't belong, the hero saw something that has made him dislike a certain type of monster or race.

When roleplaying a hero with this type of dislike, the player should keep in mind that his hero would probably avoid the monster or react emotionally while interacting with it. At the player's discretion, he could even have his hero leap into immediate combat upon seeing the chosen monster or race.

2. Usha Majere

As he wandered in an unknown neighborhood, the hero witnessed an act of kindness which forever endeared members of a certain race to him.

The player's hero can make it his goal to help as many of the chosen race as he can, or he can simply have him go out of his way to be nice to them.

3. Linsha Majere

The hero accidentally stumbled upon an important secret and has been sworn to silence. No one, not even his closest friends, is allowed to know what he saw.

With Narrator and player approval, this secret can cause the hero grief by coming between him and his fellow heroes. A good example is knowing that an ally is not what he or she appears to be.

4. Gilthanas

While young, the hero was befriended by a person who turned out to be an extreme snob. As a result, the person spurned the hero for some seemingly frivolous reason. After that, the hero had to deal with derision from the person's other friends.

Optimally, the hero should be inordinately sensitive to the jibes of others or, by contrast, have discovered his own sense of worth and become immune to most derisive comments.

5. Maquesta Kar-Thon

The hero spent time with a traveler or adventurer who helped him learn to overcome his childhood fears and become more mature.

The player should choose a specific fear that the traveler helped his hero overcome (not including fear auras generated by creatures). Examples include fear of the sea, the dark, closed spaces, open spaces, and so on.

6. Milgas Kadwar

Through the purest of motives, the hero helped a person in need only to discover later that the one he helped harmed another person dear to him.

One of the traits the player can add to his hero is a certain wariness in situations similar to the one that occurred above.

7. Ferilleeagh Dawnsprinter (Feril)

A carefully thought out plan made by the hero and an ally fell apart through unforeseen, chance happenings or by subterfuge on the part of the ally. The results were nearly disastrous and taught the hero that even the best plans can fail utterly.

One of the results of this past event can be that the hero must spend some extra time thinking of contingency plans—just in case.

8. Rig Mer-Krel

While learning his current profession or working together with someone, the hero made an enemy of another person. They have similar goals and interests, but are lifelong rivals.

If the player wishes, he can come up with a specific character and allow the Narrator to introduce him to the campaign every now and then.

9. Jendaron

The hero faced a situation where he had to choose between what he perceived as two Evils. Unfortunately, he chose the Evil that led to the destruction of something he loved.

If the player wants, the hero has learned either to think things through thoroughly or to use gut reactions to make decisions.

Suit of Arrows

The Suit of Arrows is that of the archer and craftsman, who depend upon manual dexterity to make their living. The player can decide that the hero experienced the event while performing a craft or learning something that involves hand-eye coordination.

1. Tasslehoff Burrfoot
When the hero learned that his family had some secret in its past, his extreme curiosity led him to root it out. What he discovered was so terrible that it made a lasting impression on him.

The player can have this event affect his hero in many different ways. Recurring nightmares, a lack of curiosity, and a secretive attitude are examples of approaches.

2. Tanis Half-Elven
One of the hero's parents abandoned him when he was little. As a result, the hero has always felt a great deal of guilt or pain about the whole matter.

If the player wants, he can roleplay his hero as determined to find his true father or mother.

3. Theros Ironfeld
The hero's early efforts at some manner of artistic endeavor were met with praise, resulting in an interest in that form of art that lasts to this day.

The player should choose a specific art form that matches his hero's skills (if that optional system is used). Examples of art forms include pottery, metalcrafting, painting, glassblowing, and so on.

4. Blister Nimblefingers
The hero suffered a serious accident due to his own carelessness. Although he has tried to put this mishap behind him, he has been scarred or disfigured in some way.

The scar or disfigurement acts as a constant reminder of that grim happening. It should have no negative effect on the hero's ability scores unless the player wishes it to.

5. Kith-Kanan
A close friend or relative gave his or her own life to save the hero during an accident or disaster. The hero has never forgotten this sacrifice.

The player should sit down with the Narrator and decide who the noble person was and how he or she was related to the hero.

6. Porthios
An angry confrontation over a small matter occurred between the hero and a friend just before the friend's death.

The player should have his hero carry an intense grief and sense of guilt, choosing to make him as morose or slow to anger as he wishes. For example, every time the hero would ordinarily get angry with someone, he decides to repress the anger.

7. Otik Sandath
The hero was offered a chance to help found a business, fund a venture, or otherwise participate in a risky undertaking. He turned down the chance and watched as it became even more successful than hoped.

If the player cannot come up with a good example of an appropriate undertaking, the Narrator should help him. Good examples include founding an inn, being a leader in a group of mercenaries that eventually becomes the core of Sanction's Guard, and so on.

8. Gildentongue
The hero was involved in a successful business or other venture. The illegal actions of an underhanded competitor decimated the undertaking, however, showing the hero just how cutthroat the real world can be.

Since the hero is likely to be wary while making business deals, the player could play the hero as rather savvy in business, or simply cautious to the point of distrust.

9. Bakaris
At one point in the hero's life, he found himself in a situation that made him so angry that he couldn't control his temper. The resulting display of uncontrolled rage caused him to alienate someone he loved or lose something very precious to him.

Because of the hero's earlier display of temper, the player can either roleplay him as a person with tightly controlled emotions or someone who still gives in to bouts of reckless anger sometimes.

Suit of Helms

The Suit of Helms is linked to great heroes who have stood their ground in the face of insurmountable odds. This suit speaks of self-sacrifice and unshaken determination.

When determining the circumstances around this event, the player can have his hero recovering from some illness or other event that requires good Endurance.

1. Caramon Majere

An aged friend or relative shared the wisdom of his years with the hero. These tales and lessons have stuck with the hero throughout the years.

Because of this exposure to wisdom, the hero can be played as someone with a story for every occasion.

2. Flint Fireforge

A close friend or relative of the hero gave his life to halt some looming Evil, saving the lives of countless people. This sacrifice has been an inspiration to the hero, giving him hope even in the darkest hour.

Despite any dark traits that the hero might have, the player should roleplay him as someone who gives his all when the stakes are high.

3. Kharas

The hero saved the life of a world-weary traveler and received a gift in exchange for his efforts. The hero leaves the traveler, but not before engendering hope in the traveler.

One of the hero's weapons (chosen by the player) is an item of distinction, giving it a +2 damage bonus and action bonus. This weapon has a special place in the hero's heart, and he will not forsake it for another without excellent cause.

4. Derkin Lawgiver

After almost losing family or friends to brigands or some other criminal element, the hero learned the value of laws and those who enforce them.

Because of this good exposure to peace-keeping efforts, the hero finds it hard to break the local laws (if the player wishes). Otherwise, the player can play his hero as having respect for Good local authorities.

5. Dougan Redhammer

A person that the hero always had fun with suddenly showed a more commanding aspect when the hero least expected it but most needed it.

The player can choose to have his hero watch others carefully and never underestimate them because of this past experience.

6. Silver Claw

The hero was traveling when his party was attacked by a monster. This attack knocked out several of those who would ordinarily take charge and defend, changing the hero's fear to determination to protect the downed ones. With the help of another, he brought down the monster.

This exposure to possible death left the hero very aware of most people's tenuous link to life. The player can roleplay his hero as being prepared for every eventuality or as determined to allow everyone have a chance to live.

7. Rennard the Oathbreaker

The hero was stricken with a grave illness that nearly cost him his life. After an extended period of convalescence, the hero recovered.

This brush with death has left the hero with a very real sense of his own mortality and the value of life. When roleplaying his hero, the player could also add an element of deep caring for others who are ill.

8. Bertrem the Aesthetic

A friend or relative of the hero introduced him to the joys of learning and reading. Since that time, he has been fascinated by all manner of tales.

The player could decide to have his hero keep a library of his own, never traveling without a useful book or two, or have him write down every story he hears.

9. Bupu

The hero was raised in an environment that taught him he was the best at a particular challenge or set of challenges (such as sprinting, painting, or other tasks). However, once he left that environment, he found out to his dismay that many other people are better than he is at that pursuit.

The player can roleplay the hero as a humbled man or as a sarcastic nay-sayer because of this past experience.

Suit of Swords

The Suit of Swords presents events of heroic courage and actions showing strength of body and character. Players should preface the events outlined below with some element of physical or mental might, such as having them occur during a contest, battle, or while in training.

1. Sturm Brightblade

A vailant stranger saved the hero from a nearly fatal accident. However, the circumstances of the accident have left a strong impression on the hero, causing him to fear lest these circumstances occur again.

The hero approaches certain situations with overwhelming caution, at times causing another problem to crop up.

2. Sir Liam Ehrling

The hero saved a traveling knight from certain death. Since then, the knight has appeared several times to help the hero make difficult decisions.

While not a mentor, the figure has certainly spurred the hero on in his search for adventure and honor. The Narrator and player should figure out exactly how the traveler has helped the hero recently.

3. Huma Dragonbane

The hero was exposed to many different races and creatures while growing up. As a result, he treats everyone with an equality that sometimes makes others uneasy.

The player should decide, with the Narrator's approval, who and what the hero was friends with while growing up.

4. Steel Brightblade

The hero has participated in events that could be considered both Evil and Good. As a result, others around him never know what to expect.

The player of a hero with a background like this could roleplay him as having a neutral viewpoint and, at times, interesting insights into problems. He tends to do things that can be seen as Evil, but turn out to be for the greater Good. Sometimes, his actions cause conflict within the party until he can explain himself.

5. Dhamon Grimwulf

Earlier in his adventuring career, the hero was something of a villain. In time, however, he realized he was a hero at heart. His Evil allies now consider him a traitor and occasionally show up to menace him.

If the player wishes, one of the most important things that the hero has learned is to take personal responsibility for everything that he does.

6. Kaz the Minotaur

After showing honor when dealing with a downed foe, the hero received a parting gift from him.

Either the hero's armor or shield (chosen by the player) is an item of distinction, giving it a +2 magical bonus to its defense rating and action rating.

7. Chot Es-Kalin

During a moment of bravado, the hero challenged an obviously superior foe to a contest of some sort. He was defeated easily and humiliated before his friends.

Whether he has learned his lesson or remains bitter is up to the player. In any event, the hero has the ability to see when the odds are against him now.

8. Kitiara uth Matar

The hero had a friend or family member that seemed to love and respect him. After a long trip away from the hero, the friend or family member came back. The hero learned the hard way that this person was no longer the same but had picked up an ambitious, self-centered attitude.

The player and Narrator can decide whether this person is still involved in the hero's life or not. If so, the person should occasionally show up and attempt to ruin the hero's plans.

9. Emperor Ariakas

During a fierce battle, the hero was wounded and captured by his enemies. However, the hero waited patiently, studying the enemy's weaknesses and taking advantage of them to escape.

If the player wishes, the hero can now have an appreciation for knowing when to fight and when not to. At times, the hero can counsel others to step away from a tough battle and use guile to win through it.

Suit of Moons

In the Fate Deck, the Suit of Moons represents the keen mind of the sage and the power of sorcery. In this catalogue of events, it often represents learning, knowledge, and information. As such, the player should couch his hero's events in terms of learning and a questing mind.

1. Palin Majere

The hero was present when a powerful magical spell was cast. In addition to its desired effect, this magic has changed him in some way.

The player should decide exactly what the change might be, but it must be pronounced. For example, perhaps the hero is utterly fascinated by magic and its effects, even if he cannot cast it.

2. Par-Salian

Someone in the hero's life pushed him to become a sorcerer. This either led him into sorcery or made him realize his limitations in that area.

If gifted, the hero could be grateful to the person. If not gifted, then the hero could have low self-esteem because he can't use sorcery, or he could simply dislike the person who couldn't accept the hero for who he was.

3. Fizban the Fabulous

The hero has a period in his life of several months which he simply cannot account for. He has no idea where he was during that time or what he did. His desire to learn these things is tempered by his fear of what he may discover.

So that a backstory is available when needed, the player and Narrator should figure out what happened during this "lost time."

4. Justarius

The hero was betrayed by a trusted ally at a critical moment, leaving him with a major wound. Aside from giving him a disfiguring scar or other persistent injury, he now has a deep suspicion of those who have not proven themselves trustworthy.

The player can have his hero be openly suspicious of others, or quiet around them.

5. The Shadow Sorcerer

The hero was presented with a very difficult puzzle or challenge which required a great deal of thought to solve. Since that time he has been fascinated with all manner of puzzles, enigmas, or riddles.

The amount of glee that the hero shows when presented with a new puzzle is up to the player.

6. Magius

While exploring an ancient ruin, the hero found a magical relic. Upon researching it, he discovered that it once belonged to one of his ancestors. It was this discovery that led him to become an adventurer.

The properties of the item are up to the Narrator. As a rule, it should have the ability to mimic a spell with a difficulty of 12 points once per day. For example, the relic might be a ring which allows the hero to fire a jet of flame. Such a ring might have an instant invocation time (5 points), reach out to melee range (2 points), have an instant duration (1 point), affect an individual (1 point), and have a damage rating of 9 (3 points).

7. Fistandantilus

The hero crossed an Evil magician and has been afflicted with a curse.

The exact nature of the curse must be determined by the player and Narrator. Possible game effects include the elimination of a trump bonus, the reduction of an ability score/code, or an increased difficulty on some actions.

8. Dalamar the Dark

A beloved friend, relative, or ally of the hero vanished under mysterious circumstances some time ago. The hero fears that the missing person may be dead, but hopes this is not the case.

If the player wants, the hero can dedicate himself to finding this person or, at the very least, discovering his or her fate.

9. Raistlin Majere

In order to prove his skills, master the power of magic, or otherwise claim his place as an adventurer, the hero underwent a tremendous ordeal.

Whether he triumphed at a great cost is up to the player. If he failed, then the hero constantly struggles to undo this shame.

Suit of Orbs

The Suit of Orbs marks a person of perception, judgment, and deductive mind. In the case of events, it often represents moments of rare insight and logic—or the lack thereof.

1. Alhana Starbreeze
The hero was forced from his home and now must wander the lands until certain conditions have been met. Once he meets these conditions, he can return to the place and people that are uppermost in his heart.

The player should figure out where the hero was forced from and what he has to do to return. If he and the Narrator wish, the conditions can be of medium or extreme difficulty.

2. Speaker Gilthas (Gil)
The hero has learned that once beloved members of his family oppose him in various ways (some are even Evil). He knows that though he wants to do Good, some family members see his actions as Evil.

Whether the hero wishes to oppose his relatives, for whom he still has strong feelings, is up to the player.

3. Sara Dunstan
The hero was entrusted with the care of a youngster, possibly a sibling or relative. As the child grew, it became clear that he or she was not the hero his or her protector was. This youth has become corrupt, perhaps even a true villain.

Although the hero probably blames himself for this tragedy, he still loves his ward very much. It is up to the player whether his hero still wishes to help the person onto the path of Good.

4. Astinus of Palanthas
The hero learned all kinds of useful facts while growing up. As a result, he can relate some obscure fact about almost every subject.

The player should feel free to roleplay the hero as a person eager to impart the information that he knows, or he can play him as someone who imparts his knowledge only when it is needed.

5. Riverwind
The hero played a critical role in helping prevent some tragic or deadly circumstances from becoming worse than they could have been. Although he didn't succeed in averting all deaths or calamities, his work has left those involved grateful to him.

The player and Narrator should decide who the hero helped and what tragedy occurred. Then the player can have his hero call upon the group's aid whenever the hero is in that vicinity.

6. Groller Dagmar
Prior to becoming an adventurer, the hero had a comfortable home and a very stable life. Some natural disaster ruined this happiness, however, leaving the hero alone.

Because the hero's home was destroyed, the player can play him as someone who feels he can't settle down anywhere. He can even have him be either somewhat jealous or supportive of others who seem to have the happiness that he seeks.

7. Ackal Ergot
The hero discovered extensive corruption in the government of his homeland. He now lives with strong shame of his heritage.

Whether or not he actively opposes the homeland is up to the player.

8. Verash
The hero is not what he appears to be, although it may be that only he believes this. The hero is actually an intelligent monster, humanoid, or other creature who has been transformed into this shape.

Exactly how this happened should be decided by the player and Narrator. Perhaps a spell affected him just before the Chaos War, morphing his shape into its current one.

9. Highbulp Phudge I
After living at a certain higher standard than his current status allows, the hero often wishes for things he can't afford.

The player can choose to have his hero continue to yearn fruitlessly for these luxuries or have him try to acquire them.

Suit of Hearts

The Suit of Hearts represents spirit, mysticism, and passion. When creating a background event, the player can frame it with circumstances dealing with emotion or even the power of the heart.

1. Crysania
Because of illness or injury, the hero had to deal with a health condition that took away his hearing or sight temporarily. As a result, he has a sense of compassion for others in the same situation.

Before play, the player should figure out which sense was affected and when his hero lost it.

2. Jasper Fireforge
After a savage attack that left him close to death, the hero is healed by a mystic. Occasionally, if the Narrator wishes, this same mystic makes an appearance in the hero's life to guide him or help him in any manner that he or she can.

The player and Narrator should decide the circumstances of the mystic's first appearance so that the Narrator can make him or her appear again in an appropriate manner.

3. Goldmoon
A mentor of the hero leaves for a long journey. When he or she comes back, the hero realizes that the mentor has changed profoundly. Not only is the mentor a mystic, but he or she also seems to have found a deep inner peace.

The player can roleplay his hero as so impressed that he wishes to follow the mystic mentor's path.

4. Vinas Solamnus
After living in an environment that is structured for the sake of structure (not for any relevant reason), the hero finds a way out of it. However, his experience in that environment has taught him that rules should have a purpose.

The player can have his hero dislike rules and regulations intensely, or he can realize that rules should have a reason and should become flexible when necessary.

5. Lorac Caladon
The hero witnessed a terrible magical accident. This taught him respect for the powers of sorcery and mysticism.

Depending on how bad the accident was, the player can have his hero respect magic or, taken to the extreme, fear it.

6. Gargath
One of the hero's acquaintances (past or present) has a closely-guarded item in his or her possession. The acquaintance occasionally does (or did) things that piqued the hero's curiosity.

The player and Narrator should decide if the acquaintance is still present. If so, the Narrator needs to decide what the item is and if the acquaintance ever joins the hero's group to tantalize the hero further.

7. Lord Soth
After being murdered, a close friend of the hero returned from the grave as a ghost or other undead creature. He tormented the hero's homeland until the hand of the hero himself sent the creature to oblivion.

The trauma of this event has given the hero a phobia of the undead. If the player wishes, his hero could take this phobia to an extreme, causing his hero to incinerate corpses, avoid graveyards, and so on.

8. Lord Ariakan
One of the most influential people in the hero's life taught him the meaning and use of discipline. However, as the hero learned more from the person, he realized that the mentor had no compassion for others who couldn't hold up under the discipline.

Although the hero most likely has a good sense of discipline, the player can add another dimension to this: He understands that everyone is different and can't necessarily follow the beat of the same drummer that he follows.

9. The Kingpriest
A close friend of the hero was arrested for a crime he or she did not commit. Despite evidence of his or her innocence presented by the hero, he or she was convicted and executed.

This bitter lesson about power and its abuse has stuck with the hero. As a result, the player can play his hero as having no liking for rules or leaders.

Suit of Crowns

The Suit of Crowns is that of kings and generals, despots and nobles. In determining events, it often deals with governments, legal affairs, and such.

1. Gunthar uth Wistan

The hero was once arrested for a crime he did not commit. Although his guilt seemed certain, the perceptive magistrate in the case sought out the truth before allowing a sentence to come down on the hero's head.

The hero's faith in courts and legal systems was shaped by this encounter.

2. Laurana

The hero has stepped down from a position of authority over others. Perhaps he has renounced his claim to the throne or simply given up on the idea of managing the family business.

The player could have his hero be very reluctant to accept the role of leader, even among his closest friends.

3. Moonsong

The hero is related to or associated with some major character in the DRAGONLANCE saga.

To determine which character the hero has an association with, the player should shuffle the Fate Deck and draw one card from it. This is the character his hero knows (or some ancestor knew). A second card is drawn and the value on it determines how closely the two are related or associated. A low score indicates very close ties, while a high value marks a distant relationship.

4. Severus Stonehand

The hero's religious faith was tested when he discovered high levels of corruption in the church. After speaking out against the wrongdoers, he found himself ostracized and forced to leave the area.

The player should have his hero doubt the integrity of any organized religion or its followers. The fact that the gods themselves have left Krynn could serve only to bolster his feelings. If the Narrator wants to take this one step further, the hero could occasionally have to face his former church-goers while adventuring.

5. Belladonna

A large number of the hero's friends and relatives died in a dragon attack.

The full extent of this disaster is up to the player, but it has left the hero with a great hatred for the overlords of Krynn.

6. Mirielle Abrena

The hero had extensive contact with the military, for Good or Evil, and puts great faith in the need for order and discipline.

If the player wishes, his hero's belief extends into his home life and his relationships, making him something of a controlling figure.

7. Seeker Hederick

The hero has experienced the oppression of a tyrannical military or theocratic state first hand. Perhaps he was a prisoner of war or an officer who saw inherent flaws in the plans of his superiors.

As a result, the player can roleplay his hero as having lost all respect for authority figures and believing that only the corrupt rise to positions of power.

8. Fewmaster Toede

The hero discovered that some authority figure he respected was actually corrupt. This may have been a personal betrayal or simply a failure to uphold the standards of his or her office. Before the hero could confront the villain, however, he or she vanished with a valuable treasure.

The player can roleplay his hero as stalking this criminal, determined to right the wrong that he or she has done.

9. Highlord Verminaard

The hero was once on the losing end of a battle. While he escaped with his life, countless others were not so fortunate. The victor in that battle is determined to complete his mission, however, which means that all survivors (including the hero) must be hunted down and destroyed.

The Narrator and player should determine who this enemy is so that the Narrator can add this element to the campaign if he wishes.

Suit of Dragons

While the world has perhaps as many Good dragons as it does Evil ones, these cards have come to be largely associated with chaos and disaster. The events that they reflect prove to be among the most traumatic in any hero's past. Because each of these events heavily affects the hero, the player applies only one Dragon Suit result to the hero. Any other cards drawn from this suit should allow the player to draw again.

1. Solomirathnius (Mirror)
During a long journey, the hero's expedition met with disaster, leaving him badly wounded. Although he did eventually recover, two of his senses have been badly impaired by the accident.

The hero has an automatic "X" code in Perception, and the player must make two random draws to determine the affected senses: 1 or 2 indicates sight, 3 or 4 indicates hearing, 5 or 6 indicates smell, 7 or 8 indicates touch, and 9 or 10 indicates taste. The nature of the hero's handicaps can be used to determine the type of disaster.

2. Suhnrysanti (Sunrise)
The hero was exposed to a virulent plague that decimated his village. This left the hero's physical health shattered.

The player must select one pair of abilities, either his hero's Coordination or Physique scores, and reduce these ratings to "1X" to reflect this weakness.

3. Shatraklangg (Clang)
The hero was exposed to some event so terrible that it threatened to drive him insane. Even though he survived, his mind is not what it once was.

The player must select one pair of abilities, either his hero's Intellect or Essence scores, and reduce these ratings to "1X" to reflect this weakness.

4. Teranyex (Terror)
The hero made an enemy of one of Ansalon's Great Dragons. Whether he ran afoul of the beast by stealing from it, thwarting one of its plans, or simply experiencing bad luck, the dragon has decided that this hero must die.

The Narrator and player should determine which dragon the hero has offended.

5. Iyesta (Splendor)
The hero has managed to become the enemy of an entire demihuman or humanoid race. Whatever his crime, all members of that race loathe the hero and seek to destroy him when they encounter him.

The player and Narrator should determine the race that hates the hero.

6. Onysablet (Sable)
The hero once owned some great item, perhaps an incredibly valuable gem or a magical item of glory. This object has been taken from him, leaving the hero with an insatiable desire to reclaim his treasure. This relic, however, has found its way into the hands of a creature far more powerful than the hero, perhaps even a Great Dragon. The hero will not rest until he reclaims the item or dies in the attempt.

The player and Narrator should determine what the item was and who currently has it.

7. Khellendros (Skie)
Through some mishap, the hero has some alter personality. Perhaps this personality is a spirit who simply possesses him, or it might be a second personality which surfaces in times of stress. When the hero's darker half comes to the surface, he behaves in ways unthinkable to his "normal" self.

To determine the nature and demeanor of this alternate self, the player should draw five cards from the deck. The card with the highest value indicates the hero's hidden nature and the card with the second highest score reveals his demeanor. In the case of a tie, the player may select which card to use.

Narrators should note that the actions of the hero's darker side may not be too heroic. As such, it may be impossible for the player to decide on his hero's actions fairly. If this happens, the Narrator can step in and decide what the hero will do while in the grip of his inner villainy. The Narrator must take care, however, to avoid overdoing this and taking away the player's fun.

8. Beryllinthranox (Beryl)
The hero has a seemingly imaginary enemy. This might be the spirit of a long-dead foe, an extra-planar being or untold Evil, or a delusion born of the hero's disturbed mind. The nature of this enemy should be decided by the player and Narrator.

When the imaginary villain attacks, it will be difficult for the hero to convince his friends and companions that he is in real danger. Before long, they may begin to doubt his sanity or sincerity, as they never find any evidence to support the hero's assertions that he has been menaced.

9. Gellidus (Frost)
The hero has frequent periods of missing time. The length of these blackouts varies, but they generally run about an hour. The hero has no memory at all of what happens during this time, but he has great feelings of anxiety associated with them.

Exactly what happens to the hero during these periods is up to the Narrator. With a little effort, however, this phenomenon can become the focus of several exciting adventures.

10. Malystryx (Malys)
The hero has survived the attack of a Great Dragon, which left his homeland in ruins. He has been badly scarred, both physically and emotionally, by this disaster. This has left the hero permanently vulnerable to dragon awe.

No card played when this hero attempts to resist dragon awe is ever trump. In addition, if the dragon involved is of the same color as the one that attacked him, the difficulty of the action is increased by one degree. Lastly, if the dragon involved is the very creature that the hero fears, failure at this action is automatic.

The Tale of Ironhawk

The following example illustrates the process of background creation. For the purpose of simplicity, this example assumes that the hero being created has the same game statistics as Ironhawk from the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set. However, this section ignores the background presented on that character card.

Step One: Parents

The player turns the Three of Dragons. This indicates that both of Ironhawk's parents are alive, but that their health is failing. The suit of the card indicates that the hero has great enmity for his parents. The player makes a mental note to look for the reason that Ironhawk's parents are infirm as he turns additional cards.

Step Two: Siblings

The player draws the Six of Orbs, revealing that Ironhawk is the oldest sibling in a small family with three to five children. His brothers and sisters look upon him as a protector and provider. Clearly, they share his animosity for their parents.

Step Three: Family Status

The next card turned is the Nine of Crowns. This tells us that Ironhawk's family are fugitives who were forced to flee their homeland to avoid being thrown in jail. Further, the suit of the card reveals that those around the family view them with suspicion.

The player decides that this explains Ironhawk's relationship with his parents. He is apparently ashamed of his parents and believes (rightly or wrongly) that they are nothing more than criminals.

Step Four: Enemies

The player draws the Seven of Arrows, indicating that the hero has managed to earn the hatred of a town or guild. Further, his enemies send assassins out to kill him. The player weaves this into the fabric of past events by deciding that Ironhawk's parents betrayed the thieves' guild in their native land, and that this group seeks to destroy him.

Step Five: Friends

The player turns another card, revealing the One of Swords. Ironhawk has a single major friend, someone who is clearly a warrior by trade since he can provide military training of some kind. As another member of the party is a sturdy knight, the player decides (with the approval of the knight's player) that those heroes are best friends.

Step Six: Companions

The player of Ironhawk decides to go ahead and take a companion. After drawing the Nine of Dragons, the Narrator and player decide to have the companion be one of Ironhawk's siblings. Since the suit indicates that the sibling has dealings with monsters or other exotic creatures, the Narrator allows for the sibling to know the dryads of Schallsea.

Step Seven: Important Events

As an "adventurer," Ironhawk's player is entitled to hold a hand of four cards as well as draw a like number of cards to determine how many major events make up the hero's past. As mentioned at the start of "Step Seven: Important Events," an effort has been made to link the past events together so that they form a complete story. In addition, the description of each card will indicate the event's long-lasting effect on shaping the hero and honing his skills.

The First Card

The first card drawn is the Two of Helms, indicating that Ironhawk had a relative who gave his life to stop a great Evil. Tales told around the dinner table by his uncle highlighted this relative's sacrifice. The player decides that this is what filled Ironhawk with wanderlust and led him to become an adventurer. Ironhawk clearly loved this old man, but . . .

The Second Card

The next card is the One of Arrows. The hero found out some secret so terrible that he can never forget it. Ironhawk's player decides that his hero's aunt plotted successfully to kill his uncle, eventually claiming

the life of the old man (see "The First Card") in a fire set by his pipe. This left Ironhawk determined to master fire and explains why he decided to study the arcane art of pyromancy. Thus, Ironhawk left his own people to travel the world in search of sorcerous knowledge, and . . .

The Third Card
The third event card drawn is the Three of Helms. This reveals that Ironhawk once saved the life of a traveler who rewarded him with a magical item of distinction. The player decides that his hero's magical treasure is a special long sword crafted by Silvanesti artisans. He also assumes that the traveler was a wandering mystic and credits that individual with helping him to master the mystical art of animism. While he was living with this mystic, however . . .

The Fourth Card
The last card drawn for Ironhawk is the Four of Swords. This indicates that the hero once participated in some ethically questionable events. The hero decides that he and his mentor were captured by agents of the thieves' guild (remember, they're hunting him because of his parents). They forced him to do their bidding for a time, holding the mystic prisoner to ensure his obedience.

The hero tried to break their hold over him by freeing the mystic, but failed and saw his mentor slain before his eyes. This trauma, mirroring as it does the death of the old man in card two, has left him filled with guilt.

Alternatives

All the decisions made to flesh out the historical events in Ironhawk's life should reflect the type of hero the player wishes to run. Obviously, the choices above would lead to a somewhat dour or somber character. If the player wanted a more upbeat hero, he would have made different choices to flesh out the background events indicated by the cards.

Hidden Talents

Nearly everyone has a number of skills that they use in daily life. The most important ones are obviously those used to earn a living, like the blacksmith's talent with iron or the jeweler's steady hand.

Of course, the abilities to swing a sword, cast a spell, or filch a purse hold far more importance to heroes than a knack for tailoring or skill at fishing. There will always be times, however, when a hero is called upon to make use of his hidden talents.

The next few pages present an optional skill system for players of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. Because of its simple and easy design, Narrators can add it to existing campaigns without any delay. These skills do not have any complicated tables associated with them, so players need not spend or accumulate skill points, and nothing limits the expandability of the system. In addition, Narrators can add a new skill to the game without much effort at all.

General Rules

Heroes begin the campaign with a set number of skills. As they travel and complete more quests, their experience garners them new ones.

A player can easily record and reference her hero's skills on her hero History and Background Sheet.

Starting Skills

Players select skills as a part of the normal hero generation process. If the Narrator uses the optional rules for generating background events, skill selection should be done after completing that process. In that way, the player can use her hero's background events to help choose which skills the hero would have been exposed to while growing up.

The number of skills a hero begins with equals the number of cards in the player's starting hand. Thus, a hero with a reputation of Adventurer (who holds a four-card hand) would have four skills, and a hero with a reputation of Champion (who holds a five-card hand) would have five skills.

Dragons and Trump

It is recommended that Narrators adopt a house rule that was used during our playtests but never actually incorporated into the SAGA rules system. This rule states simply that cards from the Suit of Dragons are *never* trump. This applies to normal actions, attempts to attack or defend, the casting of spells, and any other such topic. If something is resolved with the normal action sequence, this rule applies.

This rule does not affect the chance of a mishap inherent from playing a card from the Suit of Dragons. Thus, if someone with the armorer skill plays the Five of Dragons to repair a broken shield, he loses his trump bonus and cannot turn over another card. Further, if the action fails, the hero also suffers a mishap because the player played a card from the Suit of Dragons.

Additional Skills

As the hero adventures, she has the chance to acquire new talents and learn new skills. Immediately after selecting her hero's starting skills, the player should pick another skill and note it on the "Training in" line of her History and Background Sheet. The hero is now learning that skill while she is not adventuring. This has no actual game effect at this point, but it can be worked into stories and otherwise used to add roleplaying flavor to the campaign.

Before implementing the skill system, the Narrator should decide whether or not she wants the heroes to able to increase an ability score or code while training in a skill. In most cases, if the hero seems to have a lot of time to explore both possibilities, then the Narrator should not have a problem allowing synchronous ability and skill training.

When the hero completes enough quests to increase her reputation, from Adventurer to Champion for example, she is assumed to have mastered the skill that she is training in. At that time, the player selects a new training skill. When the hero again increases in reputation, she will master that new skill, and so on.

Using Skills

The use of skills during play is very simple. Whenever a player wishes to attempt an action pertaining to one of her hero's skills, the card she plays to resolve it is automatically considered trump.

The normal rules for trump bonuses apply. Thus, trump bonuses apply only to the actual card played, not those turned over from the top of the deck. In cases where a hero might have two skills that apply to an action, only one automatic trump bonus applies. There is no such thing as "double trump"; a card is either trump or not trump.

Skill Descriptions

The remainder of this section contains brief descriptions of the most common skills available to heroes and characters in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. This list is by no means exhaustive. Both Narrators and players (with the Narrator's approval) should feel free to add to it.

Each entry begins with the name of the skill. For some skills, a prerequisite skill is listed in the text. While most skills have no prerequisite, some require that the hero know another skill before selecting them. For example, a hero cannot have the *alchemist* skill unless she has first mastered the art of the *herbalist*.

Alchemist

After learning skills related to being an herbalist, an *alchemist* studies the properties of various chemicals and elements. Given time, resources, and the proper equipment, an alchemist can make poisons, acids, and other good or dangerous chemicals.

Architect

Once she has learned how to read and write (the scribner skill), an *architect* studies how to design buildings and other structures. The length of time required to build a structure depends upon size and complexity of the edifice. This skill could provide a hero with insights as to where certain types of rooms might be within a building, as well as giving her the ability to find anomalies in floor plans which could point to secret rooms, concealed passages, and so on.

Armorer

An *armorer* is a specially trained blacksmith (blacksmith skill required) who creates armor and shields. Making armor is a time-consuming task and requires certain materials and equipment. For shields, three days are required per point of defense (thus, a buckler takes three days to make). Armor takes longer, requiring one week per point of defense (so chain mail takes three weeks to make).

Artisan

The *artisan* skill is a very general skill that requires the player to select an area of expertise for her hero. Possible examples of artisans include painters, sculptors, poets, and musicians. Depending upon the choice, the Narrator may require prerequisites. For example, a poet would need the scribner talent.

Astrologer

After learning the scribner skill, an *astrologer* becomes familiar with the stars, their movements in the heavens, and the importance of such transits in the world. Use of this skill may allow the hero a glimpse of the future, but certainly is no replacement for divination magic. For example, an astrologer could indicate that certain actions could possibly lead to failure, but she cannot pinpoint the reasons why it would or wouldn't succeed.

Blacksmith

A *blacksmith* is skilled in creating common metal items like pots, pans, horseshoes, metal pieces on carts and wagons, and tools. A skilled blacksmith can generally find employment anywhere she travels and can make minor repairs quickly if she has the correct resources available.

Boatsman

A *boatsman* is primarily a freshwater mariner, skilled in the handling of small craft and rafts. Boatsmen work the barges

and rafts that ply the rivers of Ansalon, as well as the canoes and rowboats that fish the lakes and ponds. This skill also applies to small craft carried on larger ocean-going vessels, like launches and dinghies.

Bowyer

A *bowyer* is a talented individual skilled in the creation of straight bows (as opposed to cross-bows) and the arrows that they fire. Fashioning a bow takes two days per point of its damage rating. Thus, a great bow takes sixteen days to make.

Brewer

A *brewer* makes beer, ale, and other such beverages. For the purposes of this game, such a person may choose between being a brewer of ale and beers, a skilled vintner (or wine maker), or a distiller (a maker of spirits).

Carpenter

A *carpenter* has the ability to work with wood in many ways. She is skilled with a hammer and saw but is also a talented wood carver, stainer, and refinisher.

Cartographer

After learning to read and write (the scribner skill), a *cartographer* can create maps and, at least for the purposes of the game, other diagrams. This talent enables her to create her own maps and decipher those of others.

Cartwright

Once they learn the skill of carpentry, *cartwrights* can build and repair wagons, carts, and other conveyances. This ability does not, however, mean that they can operate such vehicles—a groom is needed for that.

Clerk

Once they learn how to read and write (the scribner skill), *clerks* study the skills necessary to become the mainstay of business and government. They possess skills in basic math and elementary writing, and they take orders excellently. A skilled clerk can run a store or office fairly well during the absence of the proprietor. As a result, clerks have the beginnings of good business sense.

Clockmaker

Experts in working with intricate mechanisms, *clockmakers* are noted for their attention to detail and the complex devices that they make or repair. Often, this detailed knowledge of mechanisms allows those with this skill to work with mechanized traps and any strange machinery that they might come across (such as gnomish experiments).

Cook

For each different type of food prepared in Ansalon, different types of *cooks* exist. In game terms, however, a cook has proficiency with just about any sort of food preparation, assuming a recipe is at hand.

Diplomat

As skilled negotiators, *diplomats* can be very valuable when the heroes are called upon to settle disputes between two factions (or even within their own ranks). After learning the scribner skill, a trained diplomat can attempt anything from halting a war to patching up a romance gone awry.

Engineer

After learning the scribner skill and studying the disciplines necessary to become an *engineer,* heroes possess skills in designing, constructing, and repairing large machines like windmills, catapults, and bridges. Their talent can be invaluable to an army which must maintain siege engines and similar artillery.

Farmer

In game terms, *farmers* possess knowledge of all manner of crops and agriculture. They can tend fields, care for ailing crops, and otherwise oversee the yield in anything from a garden to a sprawling plantation.

Fisherman

After learning the crafts necessary to be boatsmen, *fishermen* learn all manner of ways to catch fish. They can use a line, a net, and even a spear. Fishermen know which spots to visit, which time of the day to visit them, what bait to bring (if any), and other elements that produce the greatest harvest possible.

Gambler

A *gambler* plays games of chance and has better luck than most when attempting to beat the house. Some with this skill may even depend upon their good fortune to make a living. A skilled gambler may be able to cheat and get away with it or spot others who are not playing fairly, depending on her nature.

Gamesman

A *gamesman* is a master of chess, Khas, checkers, and other games that emphasize skill over chance. A talented, but unscrupu-

lous, gamesman can cheat with a minimal chance of being caught or spot others who are cheating, depending on her nature.

Groom

A *groom* is someone who has learned to care for horses, mules, elephants (in some cases), and other such animals. In addition, a groom can drive a team, operate a wagon or carriage, and ride different types of mounts.

Healer

After learning about herbs (the herbalist skill), a *healer* can gain a limited knowledge of the medical arts that makes her more skilled at first aid than other characters. Whenever a healer plays a card for a first aid action (see the Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*), that card is considered trump.

Herbalist

An *herbalist* is someone with a knowledge of the medicinal uses of plants, spices, and herbs. This allows her to treat the victims of poisons, disease, and other such maladies. Successful treatment by an herbalist can halt (but not reverse) the loss of cards due to poisoning and infections (as described in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*). The difficulty of the treatment action should be based on the nature of the ailment and the resources available to the herbalist.

Historian

An *historian* knows much about the past. In game terms, anyone selecting this skill should first learn the skill of scribner and then select one of Krynn's five ages or a region as her area of historical expertise. Thus, an historian might specialize in the Age of Starbirth or the region around Palanthas.

Hunter

A *hunter* can track and kill game in the wilderness. In game terms, a huntsman is able to set snares and other traps to secure prey.

Innkeeper

A skilled *innkeeper* can make her guests feel comfortable and pampered. This skill is similar to that of the valet/maid (which must be learned before the innkeeper skill is), but it can be applied to many people at once.

Jeweler

A *jeweler* can cut gems, fashion adornments, and determine the worth of jewelry and gems. An honest jeweler can be a valuable friend and skilled merchant, while a crooked one can be a fence or confidence man.

Lawyer

While law comes in many varieties, a hero with the skill of a *lawyer* is familiar with all but the most esoteric ones. A well-trained lawyer can help avoid trouble with the constabulary, draft enforceable contracts, and otherwise make sure that everything the heroes do is on the up-and-up. To learn the skills necessary to study the law, the hero must first possess the scribner's abilities.

Mason

Masons are to stone what carpenters are to wood. A skilled mason can build or repair structures, roads, or otherwise work with stone. For game purposes, a mason can also have knowledge of quarrying and other related fields.

Mathematician

The science of mathematics is a difficult and demanding one, requiring the skill of scribner before a hero can take it up. A talented *mathematician* can serve as an instructor, bookkeeper, or even a numerologist. In the latter case, the hero should be able to gain some basic information about the future from her talent, but not nearly as much as she might with magical divination. For example, the hero might know that something about his next day will cause great disappointment, but she won't know what it is until it happens.

Merchant

With the skill of clerk as a basis to work from, a *merchant* can appraise, purchase, and sell a wide variety of goods.

Miner

A *miner* is talented in digging new tunnels and exploring those that already exist. She is familiar with cave-ins, natural gas explosions, flooding, and other hazards of the underground world. A miner also possesses knowledge of rare minerals, basic geologic structures, and, in some cases, certain subterranean creatures.

Navigator

Using the scribner skill as a basis, a trained *navigator* knows how to keep a true course over land or sea by use of maps, compasses, and careful study of the stars and their positions. A skilled navigator can almost always find employment on oceangoing vessels or with scouting expeditions into unexplored places.

Philosopher

A *philosopher* studies the human heart and seeks true enlightenment. In game terms, these people can often provide useful insights into the actions or thoughts of others.

Physician

Once they gain the skill of healing, heroes interested in becoming *physicians* can learn skills in the medical arts, including surgery, bleeding, and amputation. As a rule of thumb, a wounded person under the care of a physician regains two lost cards every week instead of one (see Chapter Four of the *Book of the Fifth Age*). If the hero undertakes moderate activity (walking a leisurely mile), a player must make the normal action to see if her health improves. Even a physician cannot heal someone who undertakes major activity (such as running or practicing fighting skills) during recuperation.

Potter

A *potter's* knowledge includes not only making simple clay vessels, but also properly operating a kiln and manufacturing porcelain or ceramics. If combined with the artisan skill, the work of a potter can be nothing short of a masterpiece.

Rancher

A *rancher* oversees the raising of cattle, sheep, and other domesticated animals. In addition, a rancher is skilled at slaughtering animals for market and shearing wool away from sheep.

Scribner

Most DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE heroes and characters are assumed to be functionally literate. In order to pursue higher education and qualify for many of the more advanced skills, heroes must be a trained *scribner*. Those with this talent can write quickly and legibly, coherently expressing their ideas. Any card played for an attempt to write detailed instructions, understand complex texts (in the hero's chosen language), or otherwise use higher level reading and writing skills is trump for a trained scribner. Of course, the hero must choose a language to base this skill in. If the hero wishes to learn reading and writing skills in another language, she may choose to train in this skill again.

Sailor

Sailors work the great seacraft that travel the oceans of Ansalon. They are skilled in all aspects of seafaring, including tying complex knots, mending sails, and handling cargo. Before they can take on learning the knowledge required for the sailor skill, heroes must learn the boatsman skill.

Shipwright

A *shipwright* is a specially trained carpenter (carpenter skill required) whose talent allows her to build or repair boats and ships. Work is always available for these folk in ports or on ocean-going vessels.

Tailor

A skilled *tailor's* knowledge of needle and thread allows her to craft or repair any manner of clothing or fabric. Like blacksmiths, these folk can almost always find employment.

Tanner

The skill of *tanning* allows a person to make and work leather. It includes skinning animals, the act of tanning itself, and crafting goods from the resulting leather.

Valet/Maid

A *valet* or *maid* is a highly trained servant charged with making her master's life as comfortable as possible. A hero with this skill can become the steward of another hero, provided that her would-be master agrees and has a wealth score of at least 6 (that is, a social status of gentry). A valet or maid cannot have a higher wealth rating than her employer, unless the hero has a false identity in place.

New Hero Races

The standard DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game includes rules for creating heroes from more than half a dozen races. These range from the dour dwarves who mine the mountains of Krynn to the noble elves, whose affinity for growing things is legendary. In addition, many of these races have subdivisions, like the various breeds of elf, which allow for even greater diversity among newly created heroes.

Even with so many choices, however, there will almost certainly come a time in every campaign when the Narrator wants to add new options to this pool. The purpose of this section is to present guidelines which will make such additions easy to create and record.

Race Design Sheet

Appendix Four contains a special form intended to make race design quick and simple. When the time comes to create a new race, Narrators should begin with this form. Of course, a blank sheet of paper can suffice if no photocopier is at hand.

Designing the Race

Before filling out the Race Design Sheet, the Narrator (or player, with the Narrator's final approval) should take a few minutes to envision the race in his mind. If the race is being drawn from a specific source instead of being made up on the spot, the creator of the race should review the source information.

Once this is done, the Race Design Sheet can be completed. While filling in the sheet, however, the Narrator should always keep in mind the question of game balance. Once the sheet is finished, the Narrator should review it alongside existing hero races and see if they are basically equivalent. If the new race seems too strong or too weak in comparison, then the Narrator should go back and adjust the new race.

Race Name

Obviously, the first thing that needs to be recorded on the sheet is the name of the race itself. Simple as this may sound, however, the creator should keep a few things in mind so that the completed form can be organized with others of its kind.

If the race being created is a variant or subrace, the entry should begin with the name of the parent race. A sheet created for Krynn's deep sea elves would thus be headed: *Elf, Dargonesti* instead of just *Dargonesti*. While this may not make much of a difference early in the campaign, it can be a big help as more and more players ask to run unusual heroes and the number of such sheets grows.

If an even greater subdivision is indicated, it should be enclosed in parenthesis and follow the main part of the name. Suppose, for example, that the Narrator wanted to differentiate the sea-dwelling elves of the Courrain Ocean from their cousins in the Sirrion Sea. The former race would be properly designated as *Elf, Dargonesti (Courrain)* and the latter as *Elf, Dargonesti (Sirrion)*.

General Comments

In this section of the sheet, a Narrator can record a brief description of the race being created. This should be a simple statement,

no more than two or three sentences, which sums up the general concept behind the race. For example, if the bakali (a lost race of lizard people) were being defined for use by players, the description might read as the following:

Bakali are a distrustful, suspicious race of lizard men who shun civilized regions. They are fierce and aggressive, but honorable and loyal to friends and allies.

Basic Description

This section of the sheet provides the Narrator with space to record some of the most important information about the appearance of the race being recorded. These entries should be averages, with players allowed to deviate slightly from the given examples. Space is provided to record the following information:

Height

This entry should indicate the average height for an adult male and female of the indicated race. While exceptions exist, females should run a little bit shorter than males.

Weight

Like height, the entry on weight should be used to record the average rating for an adult male and female of the species. Again, females tend to weigh slightly less than males. Of course, there are exceptions.

Hair

The entry on hair should indicate the most common hair color for members of this race (if the race has hair, that is). While human hair color runs the spectrum from gray and white to black, fantastic races should be more limited. This serves to establish an image in the mind of the players. Tossing an adjective in with the color can make this entry very evocative.

For example, if the Narrator were creating a race of dwarves who dwell in volcanic vents, he might describe their hair as dusky orange or fiery red.

Eyes

As with the previous entry, the entry on eyes should indicate the most common

eye color for members of the race. Again, Narrators should be more restrictive in this case than appears in the world of humanity. Also, a bit of extra description and the use of synonyms can go a long way here.

In the case of the fire dwarves, the entry might read smoldering red or obsidian black.

Skin

The skin tone of a nonhuman race, like the color of hair and eyes, can go a long way toward giving players a good image of the heroes they create. Well chosen words can make a big difference here. This entry also should be a standard that is more restrictive than human diversity might indicate.

In the case of the fire dwarves, for example, the Narrator might record their skin tone as rich mahogany or charcoal gray.

Lifespan

The entry on lifespan should indicate the normal limit of a natural lifespan for creatures of this race. In truth, most folk do not live to reach this age because of the rigors of life in the Fifth Age.

For the sake of comparison, the lifespans of the standard hero races are as follows:

Hero Race	Maximum Lifespan
Centaur	100 years
Dwarf	300 years
Elf	500 years
Gnome	300 years
Half-elf	125 years
Human	75 years
Kender	100 years
Minotaur	100 years

It is worth noting that the numbers on the chart above reflect lifespans in the Fifth Age. In earlier times, when magic was more plentiful and the world was a more ordered place, people tended to live longer. Some tales are told of men and women who lived to be over one hundred years old in the Fourth Age.

As a rule of thumb, heroes of any given race begin their adventuring careers when they are between twenty to thirty percent of the way through their lives. Thus, a human usually begins his travels when he

is between fifteen and twenty-two years of age. An elf, on the other hand, doesn't begin to adventure until he is around one hundred years old.

In order to determine the actual starting age at which a given hero begins adventuring, simply add the value assigned to the "Quests" box on his hero sheet to the lowest age the hero can be to begin adventuring, according to racial guidelines. Thus, a human adventurer with six quests under his belt at the start of play is assumed to be twenty-one years old.

Notes
The last section in the race description block is for recording information which is both important and not covered by the above boxes. Exactly what gets recorded in here will change from race to race. If the race favors a certain style of dress or ornamentation, that can also be put in this section.

Looking back on an earlier example, the reptilian bakali, the following entry might be in order:

The bakali are stoop-shouldered creatures with long tails, lolling tongues, and teeth like those of an alligator. The bakali seldom wear clothing but often don harnesses to which they fasten their weapons and other gear.

Ability Scores and Codes

In order to qualify for a nonhuman race, a hero must meet the minimum and/or maximum ability scores and codes associated with it. This precedent has been established to reflect two important facts. The first is simply that humans are the most prevalent race on Krynn. The second reason, which is directly based on the first, is that humans are the standard by which all other races in the game are judged.

If we continue with the example of the bakali as a hero race, there would certainly need to be minimum scores and codes assigned to Strength and Endurance. At the same time, these folk do not have the same level of intelligence as humans do (average scores running in the range of 4 or 5), something that will drag down their Reason scores. They also tend to move slowly, which will limit the Agility rating of any

bakali hero.

In order to promote fairness during play, it is a good idea to counter any maximum requirement with a corresponding minimum. As a rule, there should be requirements placed on no more than four of the hero's eight ability scores.

The following table, which shows the maximum score that should be assigned to counter any minimum score, can help balance the requirements of any given role. Thus, if bakali heroes have a minimum Strength score of 7, they might have a maximum score of 5 assigned to their Agility. The same could be done to their Endurance and Reason scores. Most ability scores should be required to be more than 3.

Minimum Score	Maximum Score
9	3
8	4
7	5

The same general guidelines can apply to a hero's ability codes. The following table shows the maximum code that should be assigned to counter any minimum code (or vice versa). It can be used to help balance the requirements of any given race.

For example, if bakali heroes have a minimum Strength code of "B," they should have a maximum code of "C" assigned to another ability (probably Reason). The same might be done with their Perception and Presence codes, especially if the Narrator rules that the bakali should have at least one acute sense at the cost of their ability to lead.

Minimum Code	Maximum Code
A	D
B	C

The above tables should be taken as guidelines only. Players and Narrators should feel free to use their own judgment, especially in the case of very unusual races.

Natural Defense

As with the existing races, a new hero race's damage and defense ratings should be determined. If the Narrator or player wishes to make a creature from Chapter

Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* into a hero race, then the damage and defense ratings listed under the creature's heading in the appropriate creature chart should be used.

However, if the Narrator or player decides to create a new hero race, he can base its damage and defense ratings off of an equivalent creature. For example, if the Narrator decides to create some sort of feline humanoid, he can use the ratings under cheetah or lion as a base to start from. Then, after looking at the human descriptions, the Narrator can decide to bring down the damage rating a bit to reflect the human side of the race.

Special Abilities

When creating a new hero race, the Narrator should keep in mind that it might have some special abilities and weaknesses. If, for example, the Narrator decides to create a hero race from the thanoi, then the race's ability to ignore ice- and cold-based attacks should be noted in the appropriate slot on the Race Design Sheet.

When creating a hero race from scratch, the Narrator should still attempt to juggle the race's special abilities with game balance. A good rule of thumb is to limit the race to one special ability.

Additional Requirements

In some cases, the Narrator may wish to assign a special condition that heroes must meet in order to qualify for a given race. This would be in addition to any ability score or code restrictions designated for the race.

Examples of potential additional requirements might be minimum/ maximum wealth ratings or the selection of certain skills (if those optional rules are in play). The more unusual a race, the more exotic this requirement can be. The important thing to remember, though, is that the requirement should always enhance roleplaying and never hinder the play of the game.

Race Advantage

Every one of Krynn's many races has some special talent that sets it apart from all others. Elves, for example, are masterful bow wielders.

The majority of the hero races presented in the *Book of the Fifth Age* each have two advantages. Most newly created races, on the other hand, should have a single special ability assigned to them. This will help Narrators avoid the trap of creating a new race which is vastly superior to Krynn's dominant races. Such mishaps beg the question, if bakali are so tough, how come they don't rule the world?

Whenever the hero attempts an action of the type indicated as his race's special advantage, the card that he plays is always trump.

In the case of our bakali heroes, for example, the Narrator might rule that the savage nature of these creatures combines with their keen teeth and strong tails to make them especially fierce in unarmed combat. Thus, any card that such a hero plays when fighting without weapons is always assumed to be trump.

Race Disadvantage

Just as every race is assumed to be especially talented at something, so too does each have its handicaps or shortcomings. Whatever the race's drawback is, no card played for actions falling into this area can ever be trump.

In the case of the bakali, the Narrator considers the fact that they are cold blooded a weakness. No card that they play to resist cold or defend themselves from an ice-based attack (including cryomancy) is ever trump.

Roleplaying

The roleplaying section of the Race Design Sheet can be used to record a special trait or other characteristic that sets this type of hero apart from those he travels with. It might be an unusual speech pattern, a specific racial hatred of certain climates, or so on. The important thing to remember is that the characteristic should promote roleplaying without impeding game play.

For example, the player of a bakali hero might be encouraged to always slur his speech when pronouncing the letter "s," or his hero might have an affinity for basking in the sun on hot days. Either of these

would be good roleplaying traits. It might even be noted that bakali heroes are nervous and uncomfortable in cities. A flat statement that bakali cannot enter cities, however, would cross the line and become too restrictive.

Role Models

An important part of hero creation is designating a role for the hero. When deciding upon the role, a player should keep certain factors in mind.

Basic Roles

In products like *Heroes of Steel*, Narrators and players were presented with fully detailed roles. These complete descriptions of character archetypes include a great deal of background and rules material. When first mentioned in the original rules book, however, roles were much simpler in design. Both types of roles are perfectly workable in play, although those described in the *Book of the Fifth Age* may be better for those who are new to the game.

What is a Role?

In essence, a role is a very brief description of the hero and the type of adventuring he does. A good example of a role might be "knight."

The Role Design Sheet

A specially designed "Role Design Sheet" has been included with this book. When a player or Narrator wishes to create a new role for the campaign, he or she should begin with a photocopy of this form. Of course, should a player design a role, it is up to the Narrator to look it over and approve it.

Getting Started

The first step in filling out the Role Design Sheet is, obviously, to give the role a name. Players should always be on the lookout for ways to make the role name a bit more exciting. Often, the best way to do this is to add an adjective to the name of the role.

For example, instead of deciding that his hero is a "knight," a player might opt to add the word "fearless" or "crusading" to the role name. Either of these descriptions evokes more of an image than the simple title of "knight." When one thinks of a "crusading knight," for example, the picture of a warrior with unshakable devotion to his church or lord might come to mind. A "fearless knight," on the other hand, might be a lone adventurer who seeks only the glory of triumph over impossible odds.

Once the role has a name, the player or Narrator should record it on the Role Design Sheet.

The Description

The next step in this process is to jot down a simple one- or two-sentence description of the role. This need not be very specific, but it should give anyone who reads it an instant impression of exactly what type of hero the role is meant to suit.

An important thing to keep in mind here is the need for clarity and simplicity. If the role description can't be boiled down into one or two sentences, then the concept is a little too vague for easy play. Take a few seconds to think about exactly what it is that this role is meant to convey, possibly even making a change to the name. With that done, try again.

In the case of the crusading knight role, the player could state that this devoted knight goes forth to perform quests on behalf of his lord or church.

Roleplaying

The "Roleplaying" section of the Role Design Sheet can be used to record a special trait or other characteristic that sets this type of hero apart from those he travels with.

In the case of the crusading knight, it might be a tendency to evangelize about the superiority of his own faith and beliefs. As long as this is kept to a minimum during play, it can make for an enjoyable diversion that adds flavor to roleplaying encounters with other heroes or characters.

Appearance

The entry on appearance is similar to the entry on roleplaying, but it instead reflects the physical appearance of the hero. It might indicate a certain coat of arms, style of dress, or other unusual physical characteristic.

The crusading knight, for example, might be obvious to all because he proudly displays the icon of his faith or other cause. Whether this takes the form of a standard under which he rides or merely the symbol emblazoned on his shield is up to the hero and Narrator.

Races Allowed

Many roles are not open to members of every hero race. When a player or Narrator creates a role, he or she can circle all the hero races which can be used with it. In addition, the creator can note any unusual races that might be able to make use of this role by writing these in the blank spaces provided.

Ability Requirements

Most roles have minimum and/or maximum ability scores and codes associated with them. In the case of the crusading knight role, for example, there would certainly need to be minimum scores and codes assigned to Strength and Endurance.

In order to promote fairness during play, it is a good idea to counter any maximum requirement with a corresponding minimum. As a rule, the creator of the role should place requirements on no more than four of the hero's eight ability scores.

The following table, which shows maximum scores that should be assigned to counter any minimum scores, can be used to help balance the requirements of any given role. For example, if a crusading knight has a minimum Presence score of 7, he should have a maximum score of 5 assigned to another ability. No ability score should be required to be less than 3.

Minimum Score	Maximum Score
9	3
8	4
7	5

The following table, which shows the maximum code that should be assigned to counter any minimum code, can help balance the requirements of any given role. For example, if a crusading knight has a minimum Strength code of "A," he should have a maximum code of "D" assigned to another ability.

Minimum Code	Maximum Code
A	D
B	C

The above tables should be taken as guidelines only. Players and Narrators should feel free to use their own judgment, especially in the case of very unusual roles (such as ones featured in a novel). One thing to keep in mind when making ability score and code requirements is racial requirements. If the role creator marks that an elf can play a certain role, he or she should make sure that the ability score and code requirements do not exclude that race from taking the role.

Additional Requirement

Many roles have a single additional requirement assigned to them. This might be a required wealth level, a specific skill (if those optional rules are in play), or even a given nationality. The more unusual a role, the more exotic this requirement can be. The important thing to remember, though, is that the requirement should always enhance roleplaying and never hinder the play of the game.

Advantage

Each role should be given a special advantage which sets it apart from all other roles. Whenever the hero attempts an action described in this field, the card that he plays is always trump. In the case of the crusading knight, for example, the hero would always receive a trump bonus when using his sword. Other actions, like repairing the weapon, may or may not receive this bonus, as determined by the Narrator.

After deciding what the advantage should be, the Narrator or player should try to tie it into the roleplaying aspect of the role. For example, if a role allows an advantage when using a dagger, the roleplaying reason for this advantage emphasizes that the hero does not feel right using any weapon but the one that his order, organization, or mentor allows.

Narrators should make sure that the role's advantage does not repeat the benefit offered by a required skill.

somewhat unkempt and rustic, never wearing anything but the most basic, simple clothes.

Upon further consideration, the player decides that this type of hero is almost exclusively human, although the occasional half-elf might pursue this career as well. He circles "human" and "half-elf" in the "Races Allowed" section of the Role Design Sheet.

Next up is the matter of minimum and maximum ability scores and codes. In order to survive the harsh life of a hermit, the player decides that heroes made with this role must have a minimum Endurance score of 7. This is countered by a maximum Presence score of 5, to reflect the fact that hermits seldom have the ability to impress people with their interpersonal skills.

Of course, any role described as a "mystic" implies the ability to harness the magic of the heart. The player shows this by setting a minimum ability code of "B" for the hero's Spirit ability. The player then opts to balance this by imposing a maximum ability code of "C" on the hero's Reason score. The assumption behind this choice is simply that mystics embrace life and its power, shunning the magic of the inanimate world.

The player now moves on to fill out the rest of the Role Design Sheet. He records the following statements, which more or less sum up the role of the hermitic mystic.

Additional Requirement: In order to take this role, a hero must have a maximum wealth score of 5. If a hero has anything higher, the player can lower the score to 5. As a hermit, the hero does not wish to possess a huge amount of wealth.

Advantage: Any card is automatically trump for meditation or channeling spells. This reflects the fact that the hermit's pure meditative mental processes allow him to use these two spheres more easily.

Disadvantage

Just as every role carries a special talent, so too does each role have a particular handicap. No card played for actions falling into this area can ever be considered trump.

In the case of the aforementioned crusading knight role, the disadvantage might apply to missile combat. Thus, no card the hero uses to fight with a missile weapon will ever be trump. Narrators should ensure that the role's disadvantage does not conflict with the benefit offered by a required skill.

The Hermitic Mystic

As an example of the above steps, consider the creation of the hermitic mystic hero. The following text is a brief description of the role:

The hermitic mystic is a solitary hero who lives alone in the wilderness, attempting to find inner peace and communing with nature.

After reflecting on it, the player decides that heroes using this role should be played as quiet and contemplative loners with a love of nature and all living things. The player also decides that heroes using this role can be recognized because they look

Disadvantage: No card played is ever trump when trying to use necromancy or spiritualism spells. The hermit's close ties to nature do not allow him to contemplate much on the subject of using death to his advantage.

With this done, both the Narrator and player have an excellent idea of the hero's lot in life. This will make it easier to role-play the mystic during an adventure and gives him a few extra abilities (and limitations) to set him apart from the rest of the party.

Wealth Scores

Early in the design of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game, the designers made a decision to eliminate as much bookkeeping as possible. One of the places in which this appears most obvious is the use of a wealth rating. While many roleplaying games feature long lists of equipment with accompanying prices and weights, the SAGA rules are designed around stories and adventures. The need to keep detailed lists of equipment adds a great deal of complexity without providing much in return as far as storytelling goes.

For most players, this is not a problem. On occasion, however, the Narrator may find it useful to know a little bit more about the economics of life on Krynn. With that in mind, the following optional wealth system is presented.

A hero's wealth score is a reflection of many things. The most important of these is her place in society. The people of Krynn, like people anywhere, often judge others by the wealth that they have accumulated. While heroes might be able to overlook the differences between the haves and have nots, the average person cannot.

Also, Narrators can use the wealth rating like an ability score. Whenever the hero wishes to purchase something, the Narrator can call for a "wealth action" and assign a difficulty to it. In the *Heroes of Steel* and *Wings of Fury* dramatic supplements, this concept was taken even further, allowing the hero to gain a better service based upon how successful her action turned out.

Social Strata

Before the subject of wealth is examined in any great detail, it is important to establish the basic standard for the discussion. To that end, the following definitions clarify the social classes presented in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. The wealth rating for each social class is included parenthetically.

Slave (1)

Heroes who fall into the category of *slave* have no personal wealth and few belongings. Indeed, they are often the property of another. In the interest of game play, however, most slave heroes are assumed to be runaways, freed men or women, or the property of another member of the party. In this way, they can adventure fairly freely.

Slave heroes can afford only the most basic clothing and have no money left to spend on jewelry or other adornments. As a rule, slaves dress in rags, animal skins, or whatever else they can lay their hands upon. From time to time, a slave's master buys her nicer clothes, especially if she is working in proximity to her social betters.

The adventuring slave possesses only the most basic of items—and even these are considered the property of her master. If she has anything but the most primitive equipment, some rationale should be established for it. For example, the player of a slave hero who begins play with a broad sword might decide that her hero stole this weapon when she fled the reach of her master.

Peasant (2)

Peasants are the lowest social class of free people on Krynn. However, they represent the backbone of nearly every nation's agriculture. While the existing social structure in many countries forbids peasants to own land, they work most of the farms and tend to many of the herds upon the land.

The position of peasants in Krynnish society is most interesting. While they are technically free, they cannot own land and have so little money that traveling is not an option. As a class, they possess few skills but basic agricultural or homemaking abilities. They serve lords who allow them to

live on their land by tilling the soil, harvesting the crops, and otherwise supporting the estate.

In exchange, the land owners grant them the right to live on their property. Even more importantly, they accept responsibility for their safety. The land owners, generally at least members of the aristocracy, provide them with protection. If enemies attack, the peasants can count on the armies of their masters to defend them. Of course, despotic land owners are far from uncommon, so many peasants are not much better off than slaves.

While the average peasant has little or no money to spare, she can generally get enough to eat. She has some manner of home to call her own and is, at least in name, a free individual.

Commoner (3)

The next step on the social ladder contains those often called *commoners*. These are the laborers and other low-level workers who form the backbone of every metropolitan area. They carry burdens, dig ditches, wait on tables, and otherwise do all the things that make life in a city possible.

In many ways, commoners are the peasants of the city. They have the lowest stature, and everything rests upon their backs. As a class, however, commoners are generally somewhat better off. If they are not better educated, they are certainly more worldly. They have enough money to pay the bills, and sometimes even have a little left over at the end of the month.

Tradesman (4)

Tradesmen have learned a skill and use it to earn themselves a modest living. Commonly encountered tradesmen might include the keeper of a small inn, a scribner whose knowledge of letters has won her a job, or the cook at a restaurant.

If a tradesman's business succeeds enough, she can employ a commoner or two. These folks are usually charged with the less pleasant tasks.

Tradesmen can generally set aside some steel each month. They can usually spare the money to support a modest hobby or indulge themselves with an occasional luxury.

Guildsman (5)

The *guildsman* class contains wealthier merchants, craftsmen, and the like. Most guildsmen have a talent that has required a great deal of effort to study and master. As such, they can charge more for their services and hold a position of some respect.

Guildsmen are also assumed (in most cases) to belong to an association of their peers. While this is not always the case, it is these ties that give the class its name. A player whose hero is a guildsman should specify the group that her hero belongs to. If the optional skills rules presented in this book are being used, this choice should be reflected there as well.

For example, Sue's hero, Desdimona, is a guildsman. After determining her game statistics and background, Sue decides that her hero is a member of the Healer's Guild. Accordingly, she selects the herbalist and healer skills for Desdimona.

The final decision about whether or not a specific guild exists in the campaign rests with the Narrator. Common professions, like that of the armorer, carpenter, or miner should certainly be permitted. More unusual guilds, like an alliance of sorcerers, a thieves' guild, or the like, merit some additional thought.

Members of this class can generally count on the guild for a basic level of support. If times are tough, the guild can help with expenses. Guilds also supply training and apprentices. In return, the hero must support the organization and her fellow members. In many places, it is a crime to undertake a project without the permission of the guild that oversees it.

Gentry (6)

The *gentry* is the lowest level of what most people would consider the upper class. Members of this social order possess wealth and hold a lot of influence over local affairs. Especially important members of this class, such as the head of a large trade guild or the owner of a sprawling business, wield as much power and wealth as some of Krynn's lesser nobles.

Although they are not actually counted among the nobility, members of this class occasionally receive a title such as lord or baronet from their monarchs. To deter-

mine if a hero from this class has been so honored, the player should draw the top card from the Fate Deck. If it is from the Suit of Crowns, her hero has a title. If the card has a value of 6 or less, the hero earned the title of lord or lady. If the card is a 7 or better, the hero has become a baronet (or equivalent).

Members of the gentry possess enough wealth to keep a few slaves or servants if they choose to. Although they seem accustomed to living in luxury, they generally remember the hard work that has won them their place in society. A hero from this class may own another hero of the slave class (if that hero's player and the Narrator agree).

Aristocracy (7)

The *aristocracy* is the first social level considered part of the nobility (albeit its lowest part). All members of this class have a title and own (or are standing heir to) a parcel of land.

To determine the hero's title, the player should draw a card from the Fate Deck. If the card is a 6 or less, the hero is a baron or baroness (or equivalent); if the card is a 7 or better, the hero is a viscount or viscountess (or equivalent). In either case, the hero also has an ancestral estate. The keystone of this place is assumed to be a small keep (as defined in *Heroes of Steel*).

Nobility (8)

Members of the *nobility* are very powerful individuals to whom the aristocracy answer. They normally possess great wealth, control large amounts of land, and have some distant relationship to the leaders of a realm. Barring some sort of tremendous disaster, however, they never claim the crown, for the typical relationship is something like "second cousin, twice removed."

Naturally, all members of the nobility have titles. Further, they have long family trees and ancestral lines which they can generally recite without pause. To determine the title of a noble hero, the player should draw one card from the Fate Deck. If the card has a value of 6 or less, the hero

is a count or countess (or equivalent). If the card is a 7 or higher, the hero is a duke or duchess (or equivalent).

Whether a countess or a duchess, each member of the noble class owns a large piece of land. Further, she governs the estate from her ancestral home, a large keep or small castle (as defined in *Heroes of Steel*).

Royalty (9)

At the *royalty* social level, money ceases to be a concern for most heroes. After all, they live in a castle and have never known anything but wealth. Whether or not the heroes have become spoiled by this is up to their players.

All heroes with a wealth of 9 are members of the reigning royal family (or equivalent). While they may not be next in line to become the leader of their people, they certainly have close proximity to the crown. More than one member of the royal class has tried to win the throne by removing those with better claims than her own.

All members of royalty have titles and long family trees and ancestries that stretch back for generations seemingly without end. To determine the exact title of a hero from this social class, the player should draw one card from the Fate Deck. If the card has a value of 6 or less, the hero is a marquis or marquise (or equivalent). If the card is a 7 or higher, the hero is a prince or princess (or equivalent).

Each member of the royalty owns a large piece of land that she governs from an ancestral estate. The seat of the hero's power is a large castle (as defined in *Heroes of Steel*).

Monarchy (10)

The *monarchy* social status is a new category added to the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE setting. Narrators should consider it an optional addition and feel free to use only the nine social levels listed in the standard game rules if they desire.

Heroes who are members of the monarchy have tremendous amounts of wealth and power. They can be actual rulers, such as kings or queens and sometimes even emperors or empresses. As a rule, these folk have neither the interest or the ability to go

adventuring. As such, players should be dissuaded from assigning a score of 10 to their wealth rating. If the Narrator does wish to allow a player to have such a hero, however, some reason should be found to justify her exploits. It might be that the queen is traveling incognito or that she is the rightful ruler of a nation and has been dethroned by a rival. Perhaps the queen is attempting to rule her nation in exile following the coming of the Great Dragons.

Instead of acting as the sovereign lord of a geopolitical nation, a hero of monarch status could, instead, lead a powerful organization, such as a church or knighthood.

All monarchs rule from a great fortress and possess huge expanses of land. Their ancestral home has the same military characteristics as a fortified city in the *Heroes of Steel* rules.

Climbing the Ladder

In many ways, a Narrator or player can think of a hero's wealth score as another ability score. It can be used for actions (as described below) and as an indicator of the ease with which a hero blends into society's various strata.

In the SAGA game, a hero's place in the world is measured by her social status and wealth. At the start of play, these two values are related (as indicated in the *Book of the Fifth Age*). A hero with a given wealth rating belongs to a certain social class. For example, someone who uses a card with the value of four for her wealth score always begins play as a member of the tradesman class.

Later on, however, these two ratings may begin to drift apart. Since the wealth score and social status do not move up or down together automatically, the hero might manage to increase her wealth while her social status remains the same. The reverse is also true: A hero's social class might increase without any change to her wealth status.

Social Status

In most cases, a hero's social status stays more or less the same throughout her adventuring career. After all, medieval society (the model for much of life on Krynn) held a very rigid social structure in terms

of class, peerage, and station. The idea of rising from peasant to king was a fairly laughable one (outside of folk tales).

This is not to say, however, that such increases are impossible in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. After all, the SAGA rules should reflect a fictional universe, not life in the middle ages.

A hero may attempt to increase her social status in accordance with the training rules presented earlier. To do so, a player simply states that her hero is making an effort to improve her social standing. This is in lieu of other training efforts, however, so the hero cannot also attempt an increase to an ability score or code if she is trying to improve her social standing.

A hero who is making an effort to improve her social standing in this fashion must do a few unusual things. Most importantly, she tries to associate herself with the right people. She does what she can to be seen with her social betters and prove herself worthy of their company. Conversely, she could also turn something of a cold shoulder to those of her own (or lesser) social classes to prove that she doesn't associate with those of lower stature. While this doesn't really have any game effect, it can provide a great deal of fodder for good role-players.

When the hero's reputation next increases, the player turns the top card of the Fate Deck. If the card is equal to or less than the current wealth score associated with her hero, the hero increases her social status by one category. Thus, a hero who has managed to increase her wealth score beyond its starting value has a better chance of improving her social standing. Money has always been a great persuader in such issues.

The increase of a hero's social status does not automatically improve her wealth rating. These two characteristics hold independent positions after the initial hero creation stage.

Temporary Wealth Changes

From time to time, a hero comes into some extra money. Perhaps she receives a large reward for services rendered or finds a hidden cache of money while exploring an ogre's dwelling. Whenever this happens, the hero's wealth score increases temporar-

ily to reflect her new-found wealth. In time, the hero will exhaust this new wealth. When that happens, the hero's resources return to their former value again.

In most cases, a hero who has received a treasure of some sort increases her wealth rating by 1 point. Especially large treasures (such as dragon hoards) might increase this by 2 or 3 points, but that must be decided by the Narrator.

Exactly how long the increase remains in effect depends upon the size of the treasure trove and the luck of the hero. Any given treasure or reward possesses a *value* between 3 and 11 that the Narrator assigns to it (the values of 1 and 2 are automatically spent on the next wealth action required by the Narrator). Each time the player performs a successful wealth action for her hero, the Narrator should remember to perform an additional action to determine if the hero spends all of her temporary wealth. If the scene description does not contain any other instructions, the Narrator must turn over the top card on the Fate Deck. Should the number revealed equal or exceed the value of the treasure, it has been expended, and the hero's wealth rating returns to its former level.

Some typical types of treasures or rewards are as follows:

Treasure Amount	Treasure Value
Handful	3
Pouch	4
Bag	5
Sack	6
Box	7
Chest	8
Trunk	9
Cache	10
Hoard	11

The table above assumes that the treasure is composed of fairly standard (as treasure goes) precious metals and stones. Thus, it consists mainly of copper, gold, silver, and steel coins. There may also be some bronze, iron, or platinum coins as well as a few gemstones or jewels. If a treasure is more or less valuable than this, the Narrator can increase or decrease its value according to the following table:

If the treasure is mostly ...	Adjust its value as follows ...
Copper	−2
Gold	−1
Silver	No change
Iron or bronze	+1
Steel	+2
Platinum	+3
Gems and jewelry	+4

For example, Brim defeats a group of bandits and claims their chest of treasure as his own. The Narrator decides that this temporarily increases his wealth score by 1 point (since it is an average amount of treasure) and has a value of 8 (since it is a chest). If the bandits had preyed on poorer folk, this treasure might be primarily copper and have its value reduced by 2 points. If they had just raided a noble's carriage, however, it might be loaded with gems and jewelry, increasing its value to 12.

If the value of the treasure exceeds 11, the hero's wealth rating may be increased for the rest of the campaign. See "Permanent Increases" for more information on how heroes might be able to increase their wealth score in this fashion.

Each time a Narrator flips a card to see if the hero loses the extra wealth, the Narrator should also decrease the *value* of the wealth by 1 point. For example, Brim uses his wealth to see if he can purchase a horse and cart. After he performs the action successfully, with no loss of his newfound wealth, Brim's wealth *value* of 8 falls to 7. Once the value drops to 2, the added wealth vanishes upon the hero's next wealth action and the score reverts to normal.

Permanent Increases

In some cases, a Narrator can decide that a hero has come into so much treasure that her wealth rating permanently increases. This is generally the result of a long adventure, a mighty campaign, or victory over some dreadful enemy. Such changes should take into account the wealth score of the hero *before* the acquisition of the treasure and the size of the treasure hoard.

Whenever a hero comes into possession of a treasure with a wealth value of 12 or more (as indicated on the chart), her wealth rating could increase permanently.

When this happens, the hero's player simply flips over the top card of the Fate Deck. If the card is equal to or less than her current wealth *score*, she succeeds and the hero increases her wealth rating permanently.

In most cases, this increase raises the wealth rating by 1 point. The Narrator may rule, however, that greater increases accompany especially large treasures. Any hero, for example, who comes into possession of a dragon's hoard of rare gems will come out of the experience a very wealthy person.

Adventuring Equipment

As mentioned earlier, the rules governing traveling gear and such were purposefully streamlined in the SAGA rules system. This eliminates the need for "shopping expeditions" during play and gets rid of a great deal of paperwork for new players.

However, sometimes it can be difficult for a player or Narrator to decide exactly what type of equipment a hero has with her at a given moment. In the interests of fair play and common sense, the following suggestions are offered as optional rules.

Standard Equipment

Before undertaking an adventure, all heroes must outfit themselves with a few basic provisions. Narrators should assume that most heroes are carrying the following equipment at the start of every adventure:

Basic Equipment
Comfortable clothes
A backpack
Preserved food (for three days)
Water (for three days)
A bedroll
A lantern
Lamp oil (for three days)
Rope (a 25-foot coil)
A tinderbox

The hero also begins with any armor, shields, or weapons selected during hero creation. The quality of these items varies with the wealth of the hero, and the Narrator may wish to rule that certain items from the list above, like lanterns, are not available to especially poor heroes.

Most Narrators also allow their players' heroes to carry a secondary melee or missile weapon. As a rule, this must be lighter than the primary weapon. Thus, a hero might carry a long sword as a primary weapon and a dagger as a secondary one. She could not carry a great sword as a secondary weapon without permission from the Narrator. In combat, a hero always uses her primary weapon unless there is a specific reason to do otherwise. Heroes do not carry secondary armor or shields with them.

Unusual Equipment

As an adventure unfolds, a hero may decide that she needs something unusual. When confronted by a particularly unappetizing meal, for example, a player might ask if her hero is carrying any salt with her.

As long as the request is a reasonable one, the Narrator should have the hero attempt a wealth action. The Narrator should base the difficulty of this action upon the relative obscurity of the request.

The above request for salt might demand an *average* action. A request for pepper, on the other hand, might be *challenging* or even *daunting*. (After all, the high demand and low supply of spices like this formed the backbone of many medieval economies.)

Requests made by players when their heroes are on the road or at a campsite should require wealth actions using the following guidelines:

Availability	Difficulty
Plentiful	Easy (4)
Common	Average (8)
Uncommon	Challenging (12)
Rare	Daunting (16)
Very rare	Desperate (20)
Unique	Impossible (24)

If the hero attempts a wealth action in a large city, or if an especially wealthy hero tries a wealth action, the Narrator can reduce the difficulty by a degree or two. The reverse is also true. Such actions can be increased by a degree of difficulty (or more) if they are being made in an espe-

tially remote location, a location that the item is not normally found in, or by a very poor hero.

No player should be allowed to make more than one or two of these actions in any given game session. Otherwise, the adventure quickly grinds to a halt as heroes take to rooting around in their backpacks at every opportunity.

For example, assume that Ironhawk and Spinner need a set of fine tools for delicate adjustments to some clockwork mechanisms. If they are in a barbarian village, similar to the one Ironhawk grew up in, they have very little chance to find such things. The Narrator should claim that the tools are "very rare" in this setting (thus indicating a *desperate* difficulty) and then asks for a wealth action. Success probably indicates that the barbarians found such tools once, perhaps on the body of another adventurer, but have no idea what they are or how to use them.

On the other hand, if the companions are in Spinner's village of thinker gnomes, such items are commonplace. The wealth action required here should be much easier, probably no worse than *average* or, if there was something unusual about the tools, *challenging*.

Of course, if Spinner and Ironhawk decide to try to combine their wealth to make a combined wealth action, the Narrator can easily adjust the combined action listed in Appendix Two.

Special Equipment

Almost every player has a few other items that she wishes her hero to have with her during an adventure. For example, a sorcerer might want to bring her libram along, and a burglar might desire a set of lock picks.

The hero should treat these types of special equipment as very personal and valuable. Replacing a piece of unique equipment should be difficult at best, possibly requiring a special action on the part of the hero or even an adventure of its own.

The number of special items that a hero can have at any given time is equal to her wealth score. Thus, a peasant has only two such treasures while a tradesman could have four of them.

Players may select one or more special items (up to their maximum number) during hero creation. A player should feel free to select fewer than her hero's maximum number of items, leaving "slots" to fill later on. Of course, the Narrator has the right to refuse any special item that is inappropriate to the game. In lieu of a flat refusal, questionable items might be available only at the end of a specific adventure.

In most cases, new special items can be added to a hero's sheet only at the conclusion of an adventure or when the hero finds one during play. In many cases, a Narrator may rule that magical items, especially those more valuable than "trinkets," count toward this total.

Items that come into play as a result of a wealth action, such as the clockwork tools in the last example, can generally be added to a hero's unique items list during play. This assumes there is no reason why the hero cannot retain the item after using it.

I have traveled Ansalon, from Karthay of the minotaurs to Sancrist of the gnomes. I have led Ergoth's vast armies and slain men in their thousands. I have flown griffon-back and besieged cities and drunk from the chalice of the gods.

Such things may be entertaining for readers, but they are decidedly hazardous to heroes. For heroes—anyone who rises upon the face of Krynn to stand against evil—true greatness lies not in the adventures, but in honor.

—*Vinas Solamnus writes about his early deeds,*
Vinas Solamnus

The Narrator's most difficult job, writing an adventure, is also the most fun. To be sure, the task of a Narrator is almost identical to that of an author writing a story. She must create a setting against which the action of the adventure will unfold. She must populate that setting with interesting and imaginative characters. Her villains, even the minor ones, must drive the heroes on to greatness. Most importantly of all, her stories must be interesting, logical, and exciting for the players.

Finally, when everything comes together, the players and Narrator must have enjoyed the time they spent playing the game. That, above all else, is the most important aspect of play.

This chapter takes a look at a few things that the Narrator can do to add spice to her adventures. Some of them are meant to be used during play, while others will require a little bit of planning and maybe some research. In every case, however, they should reward both the players and Narrator with a greatly enhanced roleplaying experience.

Incidental Encounters

At times, actions in every storyline slow down. If the Narrator does not take care, this can bring the game to a halt resembling an uncomfortable pause in conversation at the dinner table.

Sometimes, these breaks in the action are intentional. If the heroes have just finished a big fight scene, they probably need to spend some time licking their wounds, recovering expended spell points, and considering their next steps.

On the other hand, unintentional slow points occur in just about every adventure. Books and movies generally gloss over them with creative fade outs and such. For example, consider the escape of the Companions from Tarsis in *Dragons of Winter Night*. At the close of one chapter, the Heroes of the Lance are leaving that city behind. The start of the next chapter begins with them reaching the borders of the Silvanesti Forest. Why was this done? Because nothing interesting happened between those two events.

While this technique works just fine in a novel, it can leave players with an empty feeling about the flow of the adventure. A statement similar to "Okay, your ship leaves the harbor and three days later you reach the island" seems a bit flat.

The next few pages present several dozen incidental encounters. Each of them keys into one of the cards in the Fate Deck. When the Narrator reaches a potentially slow point in the adventure, she can simply flip over the top card to determine which minor event to slip into the story.

For example, let's assume that Ironhawk, Roselenna, Spinner, and Firemane are setting out on a journey to explore some ruins near Palanthas. The Narrator knows that this trip should take a week or so, but has no specific encounters scheduled for the time. She flips over the top card of the Fate Deck and reveals the Two of Helms. Checking the key in this book, the Narrator sees that this result calls for the heroes to encounter an aged or retired adventurer. The Narrator decides to make this person a somewhat colorful and eccentric knight, rather like Don Quixote. The Narrator introduces this character with a light-hearted encounter, and before long the heroes have accepted him as something of a cross between a mentor and a sidekick. The Narrator also notes that this character will die during the climactic battle at the end of this adventure when he gives his life to save one of the heroes.

Important Considerations

Before using these incidental encounters during play, the Narrator should be aware of the following:

All of these encounters are worded in such a way as to fit an overland journey. If the heroes are making their way by sea or via an aerial conveyance, the nature of these encounters needs to change. This isn't usually a problem, however, as most can be reworded to apply to any form of travel. After all, a journey by sea (or air) often includes stops at one or more ports or encampments.

Another thing to keep in mind is the fact that these encounters or events are fairly generic in many ways. First and foremost, they are written as if they involved a certain gender or race. That is simply for ease of reading. There is no reason that any hero or character mentioned in an encounter couldn't be male or female, human or kender, and so on. Remember, diversity is the spice of life and the stuff of good adventures.

Finally, unlike the background generators in Chapter One, the events listed in this chapter are related to the ability represented by the suit. As a further option, the Narrator could choose another method using these incidental encounters: She could draw one card whose suit indicates the ability to highlight, then draw another to choose a specific encounter. For example, if the Narrator draws the Suit of Arrows and then the Nine of Orbs, the encounter would emphasize a Dexterity action ($\nearrow$) and involve an accident that changes a hero's nature and demeanor (9●).

Suit of Shields

When the Narrator draws a card from the Suit of Shields, several different options can result. Since the Suit of Shields determines a hero's reflexes and athletic ability, the events that fall under this heading deal with situations where Agility is the key action used to solve the problem.

For example, the Narrator draws the Seven of Shields to determine what happens while the heroes are traveling from Solace to Haven. Since their current enemy does not possess magic to provoke the storm described for that card, the Narrator decides that a freak hail storm crops up.

As they are passing beneath the trees on their way out of Solace, an overburdened, icy tree crashes to the ground. The Narrator calls for Agility actions from each of the heroes to see if they jump out of the way. If one of the heroes fails, the others must help their wounded compatriot make it to Haven or back to Solace. If all of them succeed and continue on to Haven, the Narrator can have them perform occasional Agility actions to see if they keep their feet on the slick path.

One of Shields

The heroes come upon an old, grouchy hermit who knows the area well. If the heroes befriend her, they learn about a hazard ahead. If they do not, however, they will be caught unawares by some mishap (see Book One, Chapter Three of *Heroes of Steel* for terrain mishaps).

Two of Shields

A youthful traveler encounters the heroes and attaches herself to the party. She is eager to find adventure, but quite obviously unprepared for a hero's life. If the heroes allow her to join them, her inexperience will open the group (and herself) up to some attack, which ultimately kills or maims the youth.

Three of Shields

The party comes upon an injured woman. If they restore her health, this hunter becomes their guide for a few days, greatly speeding their progress. If they don't help, she dies and haunts those who offered her no aid.

Four of Shields

The heroes encounter a person who challenges one of them to a contest. If the hero triumphs, the stranger reveals that she is something other than she appears and gives them information to bolster their defenses against the adventure's major villain.

Five of Shields

The heroes find themselves facing a terrain hazard that forces them to make Agility actions to cross it. Examples include an old rope bridge across a chasm or mossy stepping stones leading across a torrent of water.

Six of Shields

One of the heroes stumbles upon a valuable object. Although it appears to be a beneficial magical item which especially complements that hero's talents, it is actually a trap. Perhaps it needs to temporarily sap the hero's Agility score or code in order to perform its wondrous magic. The Narrator should keep this information from the player by adjusting the hero's difficulty number for Agility actions.

Seven of Shields

Nature turns on the heroes as a terrible storm hammers their party. They must work together to survive the furious battle with the elements. The Narrator should decide if this storm is natural or the product of a sinister force.

Eight of Shields

A clever thief steals something of great value (or believed to be valuable) from the heroes. To recover it, they must track her down. When they find her, they discover that she already sold the item. Retrieving it requires the ability to bypass various traps set around it. By the time the heroes get it back, every thief in town has heard the story and decided that he or she must claim this apparently priceless treasure.

Nine of Shields

A trusted companion of the heroes turns out to be allied with their enemies. She leads them into an ambush and then vanishes, leaving them for dead. By the time the heroes escape, their onetime friend is gone—perhaps with a few treasures as well.

Suit of Arrows

Since the Suit of Arrows relates to Dexterity, the Narrator should take care to resolve the events below with a Dexterity action.

For example, the Narrator draws a card to see what happens while the heroes pass through the Qualinesti Forest. Since the Two of Arrows shows up, the Narrator quickly comes up with an elf warrior who died while scouting the area that would become Kith-Kanan's Qualinesti nation. Kith decided to have a stone marker etched for the grave's site.

To introduce the grave, the Narrator decides that time has pushed the stone into a position where a hero must make a successful Dexterity action or break a wrist while stumbling over it. After that, the heroes must decipher what the broken, moss-encrusted stone says about the man. Once they decipher it, a spirit appears above the grave and requests that the heroes find and use a certain magical long bow to fight the Dark Knights currently plaguing the forest. Then, the Narrator decides to incorporate another Dexterity action, since the hero must carefully jiggle the long bow out from between some tree roots without breaking it.

One of Arrows
Sometime during the last day, the heroes lost some small articles important to them. Only by thinking through their past actions can they discover that someone must have picked their pockets to gain the items.

Two of Arrows
The heroes come upon a lonely tomb in the wilderness. It belongs to a forgotten hero whose tale has been lost. If they can discover her story (through magic or such), her spirit guides them to the location of an item of distinction.

Three of Arrows
The heroes come upon a wandering merchant who offers to sell them a long bow of renown. Buying the weapon requires a successful *challenging Wealth* action. Since the item was stolen, its true owner will soon arrive to claim her beloved possession.

Four of Arrows
The heroes stumble upon traveling merchants having a celebration and are asked to join in the fun. The music starts, and someone invites each hero to dance. Should the dancing heroes make successful Dexterity actions, they can attempt to avoid being surprised when these merchants—really illusion-masked shadows—attack.

Five of Arrows
While passing through some dense foliage, a hidden foe continually showers the heroes with missile attacks. Even though they may try to attack the hidden enemies, the heroes do not discover them until the heroes are in open terrain.

Six of Arrows
The heroes meet a thinker gnome who is busy working on a small device that should help make some process easier. If one of the heroes helps her (successful *average Dexterity* action), the gnome offers to give her the device if the hero helps her make another.

Seven of Arrows
A mystic is trying to reach some roots growing out of the side of a cliff. If the heroes help her grab some of the roots, the mystic gives them a small pottery jar full of paste that keeps infections out of wounds.

Eight of Arrows
Enemy agents (or some other powerful force) attack the heroes. The odds are against them, however, and defeat seems certain. When their escape is cut off, an ally from a previous adventure appears to aid them. With her help, they triumph. In the wake of this skirmish, the heroes learn something of the enemy's short-range plans. If they work quickly, they can arrange a preemptive action.

Nine of Arrows
Slave traders have set up an ambush that could capture the heroes. If they do not break free from it, ambushers take the heroes. The slavers recognize them and make plans to sell the heroes to an enemy from a past adventure.

Suit of Helms

The Suit of Helms deals with the Endurance ability. As a result, the Narrator should try to use Endurance actions to resolve the encounters listed below.

As an example, the Narrator draws a card to see what could occur while the heroes are on board a ship heading to Schallsea. Since the Six of Helms calls for tainted water, the Narrator tells the players that their heroes (and crew) need to make successful Endurance actions after their first day on the sea. Those that fail find themselves horribly sick (and lose a point of Endurance), while those that succeed simply feel queasy. The captain of the ship realizes that the water is tainted and empties the water rations. If she can't put into a port that day, the heroes and crew must make a successful Endurance action (badly sickened characters must succeed at a degree higher than the others) or lose 1 point of Strength and Endurance. This continues until the ship makes port.

One of Helms
After eating, the heroes learn that their rations are tainted. Whether this is an accident or an intentional attempt to poison them cannot be ascertained. In any case, all heroes must make a successful *challenging Endurance* action or become incapacitated with nausea and fever for one day.

Two of Helms
The heroes encounter an aged adventurer who wishes to relive the glories of her past. Although she is obviously well past her prime, her knowledge and experience helps to make up for her fading skills. After winning the heroes' respect, she dies in a pitched battle while sacrificing herself to save one of them.

Three of Helms
The heroes discover a cache of old equipment. Within is some old, tarnished armor. If taken to a city and repaired, the armor proves to be an item of distinction (at the Narrator's discretion). Enemy agents recognize the armor as a relic of a past hero and attempt to reclaim it.

Four of Helms
The heroes find themselves in trouble when they aid someone that the locals believe carries the plague. If the heroes succumb to the sickness (which should cause all actions to become *challenging*) by failing an *average Endurance* action, they will be quarantined. If not, they need to persuade the villagers to let them go.

Five of Helms
An engaging young fop challenges the heroes to an eating contest (or something similar). The winner (after one *average*, one *challenging*, and one *daunting Endurance* action) gains a bag of the fop's steel pieces and his respect.

Six of Helms
As the heroes refill their water skins, they discover that something completely tainted the water in the area. They can either make a quick march (see Appendix Two) out of the area or attempt to live through the lack of water. If the heroes fail either action, they lose a point of Strength and Endurance until they can find good water and rest for a day.

Seven of Helms
The heroes come upon a small town that is being attacked by the forces of Evil. If they do not come to the aid of the village, it will be overrun. This is an excellent chance for the Narrator to make use of the mass combat rules presented in Chapter Five of *Night and Day* in *Heroes of Steel.*

Eight of Helms
Each hero must attempt a *challenging Endurance* action to avoid contracting a dangerous magical plague which is sweeping the area. In order to save the affected members of the party (and countless others in the area), the heroes must find a cure for this illness quickly.

Nine of Helms
The heroes meet an enthusiastic, but clueless, woman who decides to become their best friend. Although she gets in the way most of the time, she occasionally helps the heroes through situations requiring great endurance.

Suit of Swords

Since the Suit of Swords relates to the Strength ability, Narrators should attempt to resolve the events described below with Strength actions.

As an example, the Narrator draws a Six of Swords when determining what happens while the heroes are heading to the City of Morning Dew. On the way there, the heroes discover a dead Legionnaire whose apprentice lies nearby, barely alive.

Unfortunately, the heroes must lift a huge swamp tree off the apprentice before they can heal her. After performing a successful Strength action, the heroes manage to drag the wounded young woman away from the downed tree and heal her. In a few hours, she chooses the hero closest to her former mentor in philosophy and occupation and asks for that person's help getting to the City of Morning Dew. Then she tells that hero something about their current enemy.

One of Swords

A romantic entanglement from one hero's past arises when a plea for help reaches her. If she is to aid her past lover, she will lose valuable time on the current quest. If she does not, however, her old flame will certainly suffer some terrible mishap.

Two of Swords

The heroes stumble upon a secret society performing a ceremony. The group offers the heroes a simple choice: Take an oath to join them or die to protect the group's secret. Although the society's goals seem compatible with the heroes's goals, the heroes discover that some Evil force is at work behind the scenes.

Three of Swords

The heroes receive word that a local champion is seeking an heir. She will pass her wealth on to whoever triumphs at a contest of arms. If the heroes attend, they must pit their skills against a number of other adventurers. An honorable victory improves the hero's social status by one category.

Four of Swords

The heroes come upon a star-crossed couple who are escaping their families' wrath. Only after the heroes help them escape pursuers do they discover that one of the two is an Evil sorcerer who plans to ransom the other back to the family.

Five of Swords

A former enemy of the heroes claims to have reformed and now offers to aid them on their quest. If legitimate, the onetime enemy could be a very valuable ally. However, she could betray them at the worst moment. The truth is up to the Narrator.

Six of Swords

The heroes come upon the bodies of a fallen knight and her wounded squire. If they save the squire's life, the youngster offers to serve the hero most similar to the fallen master. Since agents of the heroes' current enemy slew the knight, the squire can provide them with information about a special weakness.

Seven of Swords

The heroes encounter a man who believes the heroes are responsible for killing his family. The only way the heroes can clear themselves is to capture the real villains. By doing this, they deal a moderate blow to their enemy, who is counting on these agents for an important mission.

Eight of Swords

The heroes encounter another team of adventurers and discover that both parties have the same enemy. After working with these thrill-seekers for a time, the heroes discover that the other group tends toward cruel measures.

Nine of Swords

The heroes encounter a powerful noble who has been duped into serving the enemy they now oppose. She impedes their progress by force of arms, but the heroes can win her over to their side if they show her the truth. If converted, she becomes a powerful ally to the heroes.

Suit of Moons

The ability that relates to the Suit of Moons is Reason. As a result, events dealing with this suit should be resolved through some sort of Reason action or sorcerous solution.

For instance, the Narrator draws the Five of Moons to determine what happens when the heroes leave Palanthas for Vingaard Keep. She decides to use one of the heroes' early rivals to prod the group into avoiding the Keep.

Before the heroes leave the area immediately surrounding the city, a message requesting their presence arrives. The message hints that the person meeting them has the next clue leading to their objective. Once the heroes reach the meeting spot, the author tells the heroes that going to Vingaard Keep will lead to disaster. If the heroes ask the author (perhaps sorcery can help if the mysterious figure acts stubborn), the author gives them a clue that they need to know to reach their objective. The Narrator then asks for a successful Reason action to figure out the rest of the clue.

One of Moons
The heroes see a magical omen that warns them of coming danger—if they can decipher its meaning. The Narrator should create an omen which might be taken two different ways. Selecting the right meaning gives the heroes an advantage in their next battle; reading it wrong invites disaster.

Two of Moons
The heroes encounter a spellcasting scholar engaged in field research. If they lend her a hand in a brief but dangerous exploration, they learn a valuable secret about sorcery or mysticism.

Three of Moons
The heroes realize that they have traveled for some time, perhaps as long as a day, but now have no memory of what happened during that time. These missing memories can come back to help or hinder them later.

Four of Moons
The heroes stumble into an area protected by a magical curse or ward. The exact nature of the spell should give them reason to think it was laid especially for them by their current enemy. Whether this is actually the case is up to the Narrator.

Five of Moons
A mysterious figure appears before the heroes to offer them words of caution about an upcoming encounter. She may be a previously undiscovered ally, or she may be an agent of the enemy, setting the groundwork for a trap of some sort.

Six of Moons
Seeking shelter from a storm, the heroes stumble upon a small cave complex. Exploring it, they discover the remains of an abandoned shrine which dates back to the Fourth Age. This was the home of a gifted prognosticator, and a search of the chamber reveals a mysterious prophecy which clearly involves the heroes. Correctly discerning its meaning will save the day during an upcoming encounter.

Seven of Moons
A character the heroes rescued in a previous adventure appears with a warning: Someone has been poking around, trying to learn as much about them as possible. The next day, this good samaritan is found dead, and there is no sign of the killer.

Eight of Moons
A childhood rival confronts one of the heroes for wrongs that she believes were done to her. This individual has now attained enough power to menace the hero, perhaps through the auspices of the hero's other enemies.

Nine of Moons
A sorcerer decides to test the heroes by summoning a powerful monster (see Chapter Five). If the heroes defeat the menace, the wizard notes it and tosses another challenge their way. This continues until the heroes figure out they are being tested. Then, the wizard rewards them with a treasure appropriate to the skill they showed during the tests.

Suit of Orbs

The Suit of Orbs links to the Perception ability, so the Narrator should resolve the following events with Perception actions, if possible.

For example, the heroes have some travel time between Hylo and the Silvanesti, so the Narrator draws a card to see what could occur. Since the One of Orbs results, the Narrator draws another card to see who shows up.

The night before the heroes reach the Silvanesti Shield, the Narrator tells the heroes that they all dream about a strange, nightmare-driven elf. Then, just before they arrive, the ghostly image of a peaceful Lorac Caladon appears before them and warns them that someone seeks to twist their perception of a situation. Further, he describes for them a possession of the person who wishes to deceive them. Later, just outside the Silvanesti Shield, the heroes meet someone with this object who seeks to pass herself off as an ally when she is truly an enemy agent. However, to notice the giveaway object, the heroes need to make a successful Perception action.

One of Orbs
The heroes encounter a famous personage (or her agents, spirit, or the like). Whether this helps or hinders them depends upon the nature of the person they encounter. To determine who they encounter, the Narrator should shuffle this card back into the Fate Deck, then flip the top card.

Two of Orbs
Something valuable vanishes from the heroes' camp. Try as they might, they cannot determine what happened to the treasure, and no evidence can be found. If the Narrator wishes, the item may show up in an unusual place, making this an even more suspicious event.

Three of Orbs
An official contacts the heroes to ask them about a friend from a previous adventure. It appears that this person was not the ally she seemed to be. The agent tells them that she sold the heroes out to her enemies. The truth of this statement depends on the Narrator's wishes.

Four of Orbs
One of the heroes meets someone whose life story ties in closely to the events of the hero's past. Perhaps she blames the hero for the death of a loved one or feels indebted for a service done long ago. Depending upon the nature of their relationship, this encounter many be positive or negative.

Five of Orbs
The heroes become aware that something is stalking them as they travel. They catch fleeting glimpses of it, hear unexplained noises, and are otherwise threatened by a menace that never appears. Unfortunately, they cannot identify this creature until they perform a successful *impossible Perception* action.

Six of Orbs
The heroes witness an important sporting event or contest. One participant has long been an idol of one of the heroes. When the hero meets her, however, she discovers that her idol cheated during the competition.

Seven of Orbs
An unknown type of monster is menacing the area through which the heroes are passing, killing everything in its path. To defeat it, the heroes need to investigate and find a special weakness, since their normal attacks do not work.

Eight of Orbs
Wealthy nobles invite the heroes to join them in some high-stakes games of chance. While playing, one of the heroes notices a card sharp at the table. Unfortunately, denouncing the cheater risks angering the local nobility.

Nine of Orbs
One of the heroes suffers an accident (such as one that causes amnesia) that temporarily changes her nature and demeanor. To determine her new personality, the Narrator should turn two cards on the Fate Deck and refer to their inscriptions. Possible solutions to cure the hero include recreating the accident or using a spell from the mentalism sphere.

Suit of Hearts

The Suit of Hearts represents the Spirit ability and mysticism. Because of this tie, the Narrator should seek to resolve the events listed below with Spirit actions and mysticism.

For instance, as the heroes push their way through the forest on the Dragon Isle called Heart, the Narrator draws a card to see what occurs. Since the Two of Hearts shows up, the heroes come across what seems to be a cranky hermit with scars running across her face and hands.

After the heroes interact with the hermit in a friendly manner, the Narrator determines that the hermit is warming to them. Although the heroes have only minor wounds, they impress upon the hermit the fact that they need to get to another island somehow. When the hermit hints that she has a method of transport, the Narrator allows the heroes to make a Spirit action to see if they succeed in involving the hermit emotionally in their quest to get to the other island. Once they succeed, the hermit abruptly changes into her true dragon form and allows them to ride her to the next island.

One of Hearts

A natural disaster catches the heroes unaware. They escape, but one of them has lost one of her senses. Although mystical healing can restore it fully, conventional means improve it only enough to make it a diminished sense (see "Step Six: Ability Codes" in Chapter One of the *Book of the Fifth Age*).

Two of Hearts

The heroes come upon a hermit who is badly disfigured and has been driven out of society. Years of meditation have made her a powerful mystic. If the party befriends her, she heals their wounds. If they cross her, however, they find that the animals in this region defend the old woman.

Three of Hearts

In a dream, one or more of the heroes receives a mystical vision about the road ahead. This portent enables them to detect an ambush and avoid it easily. Indeed, with a little effort they can turn the tables on their attackers.

Four of Hearts

The heroes reach a location where they expect to run into an ally. To their horror, they learn that she has been killed and vital information is missing. When they investigate the crime, they learn that a third party stole the information. The thief offers to sell the heroes what they want in exchange for some distasteful service.

Five of Hearts

The heroes' journey takes them through an area which is said to be haunted. As they explore it, they are menaced by nightmarish undead. If the heroes can find a way to lift the curse over this area, they can move through it freely. Otherwise, they must fight their way through.

Six of Hearts

During bad weather, a kind-hearted elderly couple give the heroes shelter. If the heroes make some effort to repay their hospitality, they discover that the two are actually retired adventurers. They present the heroes with a small magical item that proves important at the adventure's climax.

Seven of Hearts

An agent of their enemies has been smitten with love for one of the heroes. She abandons her duties to profess her feelings. If her overtures are accepted, she can provide valuable information about the enemy. If she is scorned, she rejoins her master with a renewed hatred of the heroes, becoming an important villain in her own right.

Eight of Hearts

A wandering group of dwarf or elf refugees has been driven from their homes by goblins or other creatures. They ask the heroes for aid in reclaiming what was once theirs. If the heroes help them out, they are adored by the people of this village.

Nine of Hearts

The heroes encounter a group of dangerous fanatics who worship a Great Dragon. They wish to capture one or more of the heroes to appease their "god." If the heroes don't take care, they could end up as the dragon's meal.

Suit of Crowns

The Suit of Crowns is the suit of leadership and directly relates to the Presence ability. When attempting to resolve the encounters below, the heroes should succeed at a Presence action.

Once the players decide to have their heroes walk to Solanthus, the Narrator draws a card to see what happens during the trip. Since the Three of Crowns comes up, the Narrator tells the players that the party comes across a traveling bard. If the heroes allow the bard to travel with them, the benefits listed under the event can come into play once they conclude their adventure together.

During the adventure, the heroes discover that the bard's persona tends toward the "serious artist" side. While the bard has her moments of frivolity, she proves to be a rather argumentative, sarcastically sensitive person on the whole. After a serious tiff with the bard, the heroes drop her off in Palanthas and leave before she realizes they've gone. As a result, the heroes do not gain their benefit and the players never find out what they missed.

One of Crowns
The heroes find themselves caught between two rival armies ready to do battle. The sides represented in this conflict have traditionally been allies, however. An investigation reveals that both sides have been the victim of a third party's machinations. If the armies are allowed to do battle, this third party will emerge the real winner.

Two of Crowns
A distant relation visits one of the heroes with important news. She tells the hero that a member of the family has died and left her some valuable treasure. The exact nature of this gift is up to the Narrator, but it may well become the hero's most prized possession.

Three of Crowns
The heroes come upon a talented minstrel who wishes to travel with them for the rest of the current adventure. When they complete this mission, she sings songs about their glory. Because of this fame, each player can count this adventure as two quests instead of one.

Four of Crowns
The party encounters a group of religious pilgrims who serve the departed true gods. The leader of this group is nothing less than a fanatic. If the heroes challenge her faith, she calls upon her followers to attack the party. If the heroes respect her beliefs, she blesses them in the name of the ancient gods. This has no effect, but it may make the heroes feel safer.

Five of Crowns
The heroes come upon a young woman fleeing from the authorities. She has wrongly been convicted of a crime and is trying to escape the gallows. If the heroes prove her innocence, her father (a wealthy merchant) rewards them generously.

Six of Crowns
The heroes become entangled in a feud between two warring families over a generations-old agreement. If the heroes strike a compromise between the two sides, the locals treat them as if their social status were one rank higher than it is.

Seven of Crowns
A young noble seeks the heroes' aid in recovering a magical item. She does not reveal that she plans to use this prize to overthrow the rightful lord of the area and usurp the throne.

Eight of Crowns
The heroes have a chance to capture an enemy operative who has been spying on them for some time. If the heroes try to get information from her, she insists that she will never talk. In actuality, she folds instantly and gives them valuable information about her master's forces.

Nine of Crowns
The ruler of the nearest free realm requests the heroes' presence. If the heroes work on his or her behalf, the ruler rewards them for their effort. If they have been acting as outlaws, however, they are tried and sentenced to death. Although they can escape, the heroes' reputations are tarnished. As such, the resolution of this adventure does not count as a completed quest.

Suit of Dragons

Since the Suit of Dragons generally relates to mishaps, the events that follow tend to lean toward hostile encounters. Although most of them could end in combat, several have other possible outcomes, such as sorcery, mysticism, or an attempt at simple persuasion.

As an example, the heroes find themselves traveling through the Plains of Dust. The Narrator draws the Six of Dragons, which leads to a confrontation with some form of undead. Because frost-wights are a terrible problem along their route, the Narrator chooses to use them for the encounter.

The heroes have heard of the dreaded frost-wights because of some puzzling notes they have in their possession (from a companion killed by the frost-wights and removed from Ansalon's history except for the notes). However, they are not prepared in battle with the creatures to be faced with the one thing in the world they find most disturbing. This tactic and other evidence helps the survivors of this encounter figure out what has confronted them, and they can then take the battle to the wights.

One of Dragons

The heroes run afoul of a dangerous type of flora. This might be a mindless carnivorous plant or an intelligent botanical creature. It may be possible to avoid conflict through the use of animism.

Two of Dragons

A natural predator appropriate to the area attacks the heroes. This might be anything from killer whales to a hunting tiger. The sphere of animism might bring a quick end to this conflict.

Three of Dragons

The party finds itself under attack by a band of lesser evil humanoids (anything from goblins to bugbears). These are intelligent creatures, so the heroes may avoid combat through careful negotiation.

Four of Dragons

A powerful evil humanoid (such as a giant, ettin, or cyclops) attacks the heroes. The heroes may avoid combat through diplomatic means, but these brutal creatures probably won't pay attention to mere negotiations.

Five of Dragons

A group of adventurers in the service of the heroes' current enemies attacks. As these adventurers are very much a match for the heroes, this should be a pitched battle that requires everything in the heroes' arsenal to win.

Six of Dragons

A powerful undead creature stalks the adventurers. It chooses its time so as not to attack the heroes while they are all together. This insidious enemy is especially deadly because of its keen intelligence and natural cunning.

Seven of Dragons

The heroes stumble upon a dangerous, but not particularly intelligent monster. Possible examples include a behir, roc, or chimera. It is the nature of this creature to attack and hunt, so it is unlikely that the heroes can find any way to avoid battle.

Eight of Dragons

A powerful and intelligent monster, such as a naga, claims ownership of an area through which the heroes wish to pass. If they cannot appease this deadly creature, they need to defeat it in combat before they can press onward.

Nine of Dragons

A lesser dragon or dragonkin, such as a spawn, takes notice of the heroes. The Narrator should draw another card and use its aura to determine whether the dragon is Good or Evil. An Evil dragon attacks them (either directly or through agents) while a Good one may opt to aid them. A neutral aura results in a situation that the heroes can use diplomacy to sway.

Ten of Dragons

One of the Great Dragons interferes with the heroes. The Narrator should draw another card and use its aura to determine whether the dragon is Good or Evil. An Evil dragon attempts to foil their goals through agents while a Good one aids them. Should a red aura result, the heroes have a chance to negotiate with the dragon.

Elements of Narration

A skilled Narrator can take a weak story line and turn it into a gripping adventure. At the same time, she can also make an exciting story into a memorable game experience that will become a subject of conversation among players for years to come.

This section describes a number of techniques that can be used to enhance any DRAGONLANCE game. While most of these focus on the Narrator's style, clever players can also incorporate them into play.

Flowing Descriptions

The narratives presented in the "First Impressions" section of published DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE adventures are far more important than they may seem. To be sure, the information presented in that text is valuable because it tells the players exactly what is happening to their heroes. Without such knowledge, the adventure would become a confusing tangle of questions and answers.

A closer look reveals that these passages also go a long way toward establishing the mood of the scene. Carefully chosen words, especially adjectives and adverbs, help capture the feeling that the Narrator wants.

For example, consider the simple case of a candle burning in the night. If the candle were lighting a comfortable room at an inn, it might be described as follows:

A single candle stands proudly upon the dresser, throwing out a warm yellow light that beckons you toward the comfortable bed and a restful sleep.

Certainly, this tranquil scene promises the players a chance to catch up on their sleep and lick their wounds. However, suppose that the scene were slightly different. How does a good Narrator describe the light of a candle in an ancient mausoleum? Perhaps like the following:

The stub of a candle throws a flickering light around the tomb, creating myriad shadows in which any manner of nightmare might be hiding.

In both cases, the Narrator has used carefully chosen words to establish a distinct mood. Even without the mention of a monster or a single hazard, the players will certainly have a feeling that things in the crypt are not exactly safe.

The Narrator's descriptions do have limits, however. A Narrator must take care to avoid putting any thoughts in the heroes' minds or directing them to take any actions. For example, Narrators should not present either of the above descriptions with a beginning like this:

Opening the door, you look inside and see nothing but darkness. Thinking that this may be a dangerous place, you reach for a candle and set fire to the wick.

If the heroes are presented with a dark room, it must be the players' choice to light a candle. Similarly, the players might not feel that the place is dangerous. The Narrator's job is to set out the challenges and stories, not to resolve them for the players.

Another important thing to remember about narrative text is brevity. Even the most gripping description can wear thin if it drags on too long. Narrators should keep descriptions to a maximum of about three paragraphs or one hundred to one hundred fifty words. If a need for longer descriptions exists, of course, use them. But always keep this principle in mind and look for words to prune where possible.

Glorious Vistas

No matter how good a Narrator's descriptions are, sometimes a photograph, illustration, or other visual aid can't be beat. Combining such a reference with a good bit of descriptive text can yield a quite rewarding impression for players.

Using these types of props in a game is easy enough. If the heroes are traveling into the snow-covered peaks of the Kharolis Mountains, the Narrator need only produce a photo of the barren Himalayas or the frigid Alps. If they are exploring the Desolation, a photo of the Australian Outback or Badlands of North America can set the mood perfectly.

The trick to making good use of photographs is learning where to find them. Perhaps the best source for illustrations of impressive landscapes, exotic locations, and interesting animal life is *National Geographic* magazine. Other excellent sources include travel magazines or brochures. Most libraries also have a good selection of books featuring the works of Ansel Adams and other photographers.

For those with access to computers during roleplaying sessions, any decent CD-ROM encyclopedia will include a veritable gallery of photos to choose from. The same is true on a much grander scale for those with Internet connections. Every day, new resources become available which a clever and resourceful Narrator can use to make her games more exciting.

Stirring Scores

Hollywood learned long ago that a musical score could strengthen a movie or establish the desired mood for a TV series. The same holds true for gaming sessions, provided that the Narrator takes care to pick and choose her sounds carefully.

Mood music can be used in two especially effective ways. The first, and least intrusive, is to play an opening score at the beginning of the game. This piece should reflect the mood of the campaign in the same way that a television series' title music does.

Mood music can also come in during important scenes of the adventure, provided that it is kept in the background and doesn't interfere with play. A soft passage can accent a roleplaying encounter, for example, while a fast-moving score can add excitement to a chase scene.

Clashing Swords

In addition to mood music, a talented Narrator can make use of sound effects to enhance her adventures. Commercially available CDs offer a wide variety of sound effects for a reasonably low price.

Sound effects can do a great deal to enhance the mood of a scene. A little crowd noise, set to repeat endlessly, can add a wealth of feeling to an encounter in a tavern. The sounds of cheering crowds can make a tournament seem to come alive. And, of course, the occasional scream of terror in the dead of night can test the nerves of any hero.

Narrators must take care to avoid getting carried away with their sound effects, however. While frequent use of sound effects might start out very entertaining, such a barrage can quickly detract from the game itself. Think of sound effects as spice. Used judiciously, they add flavor and improve the meal. Thrown in with wild abandon, they ruin even the finest food.

Hands-On Experience

Narrators can add a great deal of fun to any game scenario through the use of props and the like. The types of props used will vary based on the nature of the adven-

ture. However, a few basic types work well in just about any roleplaying adventure.

Handouts

Perhaps the most common type of prop used by experienced Narrators is a handout. This is simply a piece of written information or the like given to the players when their heroes encounter it during the game. Prime examples of handouts include ransom notes, wanted posters, treasure maps, and communiqués from the king or other leader. Other handouts might include a detailed drawing of an important hieroglyph, a schematic showing the design of an unusual piece of gnomish machinery, or even a sketch of a newly-encountered monster.

Props

Props are like handouts, only three dimensional. They range from miniature figures and scale models to items of jewelry or clothing. Narrators can use props to show the players something that their heroes can see but which a simple description may not allow them to adequately envision.

For example, suppose the heroes have defeated an ogre and found an unusual ring tied on a leather cord around its neck. Instead of describing it to the players, the Narrator reaches into her pocket, pulls out a gaudy piece of jewelry she found at a local yard sale, and tosses it on the table. "You find this," she says, and then sits back to enjoy the fun as her players try to speculate on the nature of their treasure.

Words of Warning

Narrators and players alike should always remember that they should never use anything dangerous as a prop. This is especially true if the game is at a school, library, or other public place. Remember that not everyone understands exactly what a roleplaying game is or how it works. It's not hard for someone to get the wrong idea if inappropriate props show up.

There is a well-known story in the roleplaying game industry about a referee on his way to run a modern-day spy game. He was stopped by a traffic cop en route to the game for some minor offense.

Instead of a ticket, however, he wound up having to spend many hours at the police station explaining the ransom note and realistic model handgun on the seat beside him. Sometimes, props can be too effective.

Instant Ideas

One of the most challenging tasks that a novice Narrator faces is scripting adventures from scratch. The idea of sitting down with a blank piece of paper or computer screen in front of you can be quite intimidating. However, a few tricks can help Narrators script exciting adventures without getting hung up on the details.

One of the most important things to understand about adventure design is that it is really nothing more than telling stories. If a Narrator can come up with an interesting idea for a story, that's half the battle. And if she is having trouble coming up with an original idea, she should pattern the adventure after her favorite book, movie, or television show. Make a few changes to the setting, the characters, or the story line and, before the Narrator knows it, she'll have a masterpiece.

Consider the case of Dashel Hammet's *The Maltese Falcon*. Many people have seen the movie version with Humphrey Bogart. The lead character is a private detective in San Francisco. He can easily be replaced with a party of adventurers working out of whatever town fits into the campaign. The Maltese Falcon itself can become just about any manner of artifact which dates back to a past age. The assorted characters searching for the relic could be changed into monsters, nonhuman races, or the like, but left with almost identical roles.

With these minor changes done, the Narrator can simply outline the plot of the movie as detailed in Chapter Two of the *Book of the Fifth Age* in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set. Remembering that players are free willed and may not make the same choices that the characters in the film do, the Narrator should look for places where the story might get off track. With these points identified, a few quick scenes can be added to explore these possibilities and get things back in order if needed.

The Narrator might also look for a chance to introduce a few ties to past adventures to the story line. For example, the heroes might have to visit a sage who helped them in the past to learn the history of the Maltese Falcon (or whatever it has become in this story).

Further adjustments can tailor the story to the tastes of the players. If they have a fondness for combat, the Narrator need only add a few run-ins with criminals, thugs, or even the local authorities. If there isn't enough chance for roleplaying, then an extra encounter or two can be inserted.

After setting up a few adventures like this, the Narrator should become more familiar with how to create basic plots and how to flesh them out to include other paths that the players might wish for their heroes to follow. At that point, she can start using some of the source material in *Dusk or Dawn*, DRAGONLANCE dramatic supplements, and novels or magazine articles to come up with her own adventures.

Traditional Stories

In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, the mythologist Joseph Campbell outlined what he called the "monomyth." It is his assertion that several elements are central to any heroic story. By taking into account Campbell's guidelines, Narrators can quickly outline an epic adventure.

Narrators who have already tried their hand at modeling adventures after books and stories can use Campbell's guidelines to help them perform the second step of this process: creating their own adventures. Campbell's book will prove invaluable to any Narrator who wishes to master the art of storytelling.

A greatly condensed version of Campbell's monomyth outline follows. A few liberties have been taken to better fit this material to the DRAGONLANCE setting. Readers are encouraged to pause and think while reading this section, taking a moment to see how modern tales of adventure, especially the existing fiction associated with Ansalon and its heroes, fit this mold.

It is also important to keep in mind the fact that these guidelines were originally intended to apply to stories and mythology. In a gaming environment, Narrators should feel free to add an extra encounter, delete ones that don't fit a given world or premise, and otherwise alter concepts to fit their own desires. Think of the monomyth concept as a framework upon which to build.

Departure

Campbell divides the epic adventure story into three parts. The first of these is *departure*. In this section of the story, something tears the heroes away from their normal lives and shunts them onto the path that ultimately leads to their great adventure. The Narrator should work a few different elements into this part of the adventure, each of which is briefly described below.

The Call to Adventure

During this part of the story, the heroes find themselves drawn into the adventure that will follow. This can be an accidental encounter, an entreaty for help, or even an innocent voyage that somehow goes awry. The heroes may or may not be aware of the scope of their adventure at this point, but they should have received an indication of the goal that they will strive to attain and the direction in which it lies (or, at least, is believed to lie). Frodo, for example, had a pretty fair idea of the horrors that lay ahead when he accepted the dwarves' offer in *The Hobbit*, while the Companions had no idea what they were getting into in *Dragons of Autumn Twilight*.

Refusal of the Call

The next section of Campbell's monomyth deals with the possibility that the heroes might refuse the destiny thrust upon them by the call to adventure. In the case of a story, this changes the whole aspect of the tale from positive to negative. The same is true in gaming terms, but deserves a bit of explanation. A roleplaying adventure does not work as well in a negative context as a story does, so a skillful Narrator should be ready to turn the refusal into a positive aspect of the adventure.

Any Narrator must be ready to deal with the fact that her players do not "take the bait" offered in the first part of the adventure. When this happens, she must be ready to advance the story line in spite of their actions. The best way to do this, of course, is to make it appear that the heroes were expected to refuse the adventure all along.

To put things another way, one can look upon the call to adventure as a carrot—something to lure the heroes into the story. If that fails, the Narrator can resort to the other side of the equation: the stick. Perhaps Evil forces appear and force them to flee, or a looming threat appears that encourages them to change their initial refusal.

An excellent example of this technique appears in the film *Star Wars*. After Luke Skywalker has refused to follow Ben Kenobi on his quest, Luke's family is killed, which reverses his initial refusal. Indeed, the grounds for his refusal, that he could not leave his family during their time of need, becomes a driving force for the story, as he hopes to avenge himself upon those who caused their deaths.

Aid and Allies

Once the heroes move on their way, they have an encounter, often with a mysterious figure, who provides them with some sort of aid in their upcoming adventure. The nature of this aid, as well as that of the encounter, can take many forms. In Western cultures, the image that springs first to mind in this role is the fairy godmother. In the DRAGONLANCE Saga, it is nowhere better personified than in the guise of Fizban, avatar of the god Paladine. When all is dark or the heroes seem to be at a dead end, up pops this helpful character to set them the right path again. Other examples of helpful interlopers include the god Mercury, his counterpart Hermes, and the always-wise Egyptian deity Thoth.

Often, the benefactor gives the hero some boon. Occasionally this turns out to be a bit of information or valuable guidance. More often, however, it takes the shape of a magical item or spell that gives the hero an edge later on in the story.

Narrators should take care when handing out such treasures during play. They must not be so powerful as to overwhelm the game or dominate the adventure. Their purpose, although not always clear when they are presented to the hero, must

become obvious when the time is right to use them. Most important of all, however, is that the Narrator should make them an integral part of the story, if not the whole fabric of the campaign. The Narrator should take care to stress the importance of the items. After all, if the heroes lose the items, the quest might not continue.

An excellent example of such encounters is the meeting between the original Companions and Silvara, which resulted in them receiving the legendary dragonlances.

The First Threshold

Once all of this groundwork has been laid, the time comes for the heroes to leave their homeland (or the region of safety in which they began the adventure). The crossing of this threshold, from known into unknown and from safety into danger, marks a major turning point in the story. What was safe and comfortable has been left behind. What lies ahead is uncertain, potentially dangerous, and almost certainly life-changing. It could even affect the world.

The Belly of the Whale

Campbell terms the final stage of the monomyth's first portion the Belly of the Whale, bringing to mind images of Jonah and countless others who have been swallowed whole by some titanic beast. In many ways, this portion of the storyline can be considered an extension of the previous one, for it serves to mark the closing of the threshold behind the heroes. Up to this point, they may have thought it possible to turn back and seek the safe shelter of their home again.

While the title of this section implies passage through an area of confinement, that need not be the case. A sense of isolation is important here, but Narrators can engender this even when the heroes are never closed in at all. For example, a journey through the swirling miasma of a steaming swamp or the overgrown clutches of a jungle might serve this purpose just as well. The importance of this section is simply its ability to close off the past, separating heroes from their innocence, safety, or potential return to their starting point.

The Initiation

The second of the three sections, which Campbell termed the *initiation*, deals with the heart of the adventure. It is this third that most people think of when they consider a story and its plot. Here the heroes undertake their epic journey, confront their deadliest enemies, and otherwise resolves the dilemma set before them.

As a reminder, the Narrator should not feel obligated to use all of the variations or situations presented below. They are included for the sake of completeness. A short adventure, for example, might present only one or two of the following situations to the heroes. A good Narrator mixes and matches these elements, using those which fit her adventure best.

The Road of Trials

Having passed the first threshold, the heroes now begin their adventure in earnest. At this point in the saga, they face all manner of trials, both physical and spiritual. Encounters with monsters might test their steel while riddles and traps challenge their minds. In many cases, this section will make up the majority of the adventure.

A classic example of this sort of thing can be found in the pages of the *Dragons of a New Age* novels. As the Heroes of the Heart travel onward to Malys's ceremony of godhood, they encounter dragonspawn, Dark Knights, and many other hazards. They overcome some by force, while they make cunning plans or use magical powers on others. A similar statement might be made about *The Odyssey* and its many trials.

Whether the Narrator inserts one or a dozen trials for her players to counter, it is important that everyone feels involved. Remember, the object of the game is to have fun, and anyone who is left out certainly won't be having fun.

The Goddess

Despite the title, "the goddess" can as often involve an encounter with a powerful male figure as well. In this moment of the adventure, the heroes see their determination and effort rewarded. For the purposes of adventure design, it is a scene in which the heroes attain a great goal, one which

has been very difficult for them, and find themselves revitalized by their success.

It may well be that the reward is interspersed among the hazards of the journey or follows upon the completion of the journey. It might also be that this encounter precedes one or more additional trials. In the latter case, these subsequent encounters could be impossible to survive without the guidance given to the heroes by this powerful patron.

The Temptress

Again, the temptress implies a female antagonist. However, this need not be the case. Indeed, the role of the temptress need not be human or even a living thing. At this juncture in the story line, the heroes have an opportunity to embrace something other than the goal of their quest.

The heroes might be offered, directly or indirectly, any number of boons in exchange for the decision to turn away from the quest. This is a moment of personal conflict and soul searching. Such rewards, however, must also carry with them an inherent cost, whether or not the heroes are aware of this at the time.

Consider the case of Tanis Half-Elven toward the end of the War of the Lance. How much power would he have gained if he had chosen to join Dragon Highlord Kitiara as a general of the Dark Queen? In addition to this power, he would have attained the woman he loved and finally found a place in the world. In truth, however, he would have lost everything and become but another tool in the hands of Evil.

Atonement

Atonement is the moment in the story or adventure when the heroes come to terms with some aspect of the past that has troubled them. In Campbell's work, it is referred to as "Atonement with the Father," because of the fact that so many tales do indeed center on a parental figure. In adventure games, however, this definition can be greatly expanded.

Near the end of any great quest or heroic undertaking, the heroes should be given a chance to either correct, make amends for, or come to accept a past error or event. In stories, this is a purifying moment for the character. In roleplaying games, it rein-

forces the nature of the adventure and what it means to be a hero.

Apotheosis

The apotheosis resolves the hopes, goals, and dreams of the heroes. Having overcome their enemies and escaped the hazards of the road, they have attained final victory. This is the highest moment of spiritual victory and triumph.

The nature of this scene differs based on the heroes, the type of adventure they have just undertaken, and the general course of the campaign. In some cases, the apotheosis might be a great uplifting of their spirits or power. In others, it might be the simple satisfaction that comes with the knowledge that a great Evil has been overcome.

The Ultimate Boon

The final aspect of the initiation is the receipt of a physical reward which combines with the aforementioned apotheosis to fully complete this stage of the story. Because the apotheosis is a much less readily defined concept, many adventures focus solely on this as the final stage of the quest. Perhaps the heroes have now attained the Disks of Mishakal or now hold the Shield of Huma in their hands.

While the ultimate physical boon often proves a great treasure, its attainment does not always mark the conclusion of the adventure. As a rule, a quest using the ultimate treasures remains for the heroes. This is covered in the next section.

The Return

The final resolution of the adventure generally requires the heroes to *return* to the lands from which they originally set out. In many cases, the heroes may not be returning to the specific point from which they set out, but they will at least be leaving behind the lands of uncertainty and darkness in which they have been traveling.

Refusal of the Return

Just as the heroes had the chance to refuse the quest in the beginning or to embrace the temptress, adventures often present them with an opportunity to abandon things at this point. After all, they have attained both a spiritual boon and a physical one. Why should they not be satisfied with things as they are now?

Because they're heroes, of course, and that's part of the job. The Narrator should always be ready to counter any reluctance on the part of heroes to complete their mission. Exactly what form of persuasion might draw wandering heroes back into the story line will vary with the players and the types of heroes they are running.

Magical Flight

The return to the so-called normal world often takes one of two forms. Sometimes, the heroes have attained their initial goal and return home with the support of their patron. More often, at least in roleplaying games, the adventurers have torn their treasure from the clutches of some Evil master and their return home is a flight from pursuit.

In the former case, the Narrator can greatly compress the time spent on this transit. After all, if much of the Evil opposing them has been swept aside or the powers of Good are protecting them, it can be a pretty dull journey. A fantastic element added to the return, however, makes it memorable in its own right. Perhaps the heroes return to their own land on a magical carpet, mounted upon winged beasts, or by stepping through shadowy portals of darkness.

If the heroes are pursued by their enemies, then the return home is marked by dangerous encounters, potential traps, and looming uncertainty. It can become something of a Hollywood chase scene, with the same sorts of magical transportation described above being used. If the adventure has been lacking in humor up to this point, the pursuit can even have some comical aspects as well, with the heroes outwitting less cunning pursuers.

Rescue from Without

From time to time, the heroes must be drawn back into the world of humans after they have completed their adventure. Assume, for example, that they have entered a realm of dreams in order to discover a secret. Leaving someone else to watch over their slumbering bodies, they know they can return only when this agent wakes them.

Another good example of such situations is the case of an adventuring team that has entered enemy territory to recover some treasure or solve some mystery. After accomplishing this, the heroes might be cut off from their own lands. Only the sudden arrival of an allied army saves them from the clutches of their foes.

The Return Threshold
Once the heroes start their journey home, the quest concludes as it began with the crossing of the threshold. This may be the same one presented at the start of the adventure or it may be another. In either case, however, it marks the point at which the heroes are again in the safe and familiar lands from which they set out.

Masters of the Two Worlds
At the conclusion of the adventure, when all is said and done, the heroes have overcome all the hazards of the unknown and are truly triumphant. They have mastered their enemies and should, in some way, grow from that experience. In some cases, this growth might be an increase in personal or spiritual power. In others, simply noting that another quest has been completed holds enough importance to feel satisfying. As a rule, however, the players should be able to look back at each challenge their heroes mastered and beam with pride at the way in which it improved their positions in the game.

Freedom
At the close of the adventure, the heroes should feel that they have won some measure of freedom. Perhaps this is a personal or spiritual matter: Some looming menace has been cast aside. Just as often, however, they can see it in the lives of those they set out to protect. If the armies of the enemy have been routed, then the people of the land are once again free to live their lives in peace and contentment—at least until the next adventure, when this whole cycle begins again.

ﬁnal Thoughts

At first glance, Mr. Campbell's work appears to lend itself somewhat better to fiction and mythology than adventure design. With a little bit of effort, however, Narrators can use this framework to create stirring sagas with romance, adventure, and intrigue.

Narrators can also mold this framework to make the adventure fit the tastes of their players. A story might feature a lot of combat or a little, as the players prefer. Also, the Narrator can use the patron (or "goddess") to include more puzzles and bits of intrigue for those players who love to solve mysteries.

Of course, Narrators must be careful to avoid slavishly following the same exact pattern for every adventure they write. Even a classic story wears thin if it reappears in a new guise every week. A little innovation goes a long way here.

O aramon looked at him, his eyes bright and clear. "No, Tanis," he said. "Par-Salian told me, when he sent me back in time, that I was going back to 'save a soul. Nothing more. Nothing less.'" Caramon smiled sadly. "I thought he meant Raistlin's soul. I see now he didn't. He meant my own."

—Aboard the flying citadel,
Test of the Twins

Perhaps the most important thing that sets the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game apart from other roleplaying systems is the Fate Deck. It allows players to generate heroes quickly and have greater control over the outcome of their actions, and it leaves Narrators free to focus on the story instead of game mechanics.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at a few things that Narrators can do with the Fate Deck to make it an even more important part of the game. Primarily, this means enhancing roleplaying in the game.

Fate Deck Guidelines

Before moving forward on the subject of actions, a few considerations about the Fate Deck come to mind.

Keeping Secrets

One question that should be answered at this point concerns the confidentiality of a player's hand. Are players allowed to share information about the cards they hold? The answer to that is a definite maybe.

Narrators should make their own ruling in this matter. For the most part, it doesn't matter too much whether or not players keep their hands open. Indeed, it can even be a boon to novice players who may not know what card to play in a given situa-

tion. On the other hand, if the Narrator insists that cards be kept secret, players cannot use their knowledge of another's cards to their advantage during play.

Trading Cards

No matter what decision the Narrator makes on the previous topic, however, he should always enforce one rule. At no time can players trade cards from their hands. The hand that fate deals a hero should not be easily modified or thwarted.

Still, like all rules, the experienced Narrator can find or fabricate exceptions. For example, a hero might stumble into a place where he falls victim to a curse that makes his next few actions be the worst actions that another hero in the party is capable of. To reflect this curse, the Narrator might have the player trade the best card (or two) in his hand for the lowest two cards of another player's hand.

It might also be possible for a hero to fabricate a spell which, in the Narrator's opinion, allows him to change the composition of the player's hand temporarily. Such instances will have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, of course. As with all such situations, though, the Narrator has the final say in the matter.

Also, the Narrator should remember that the mechanics of the game should not be a part of the heroes' knowledge. In other words, a sorcerer hero could not fashion a spell that "takes the lowest card from my hand and replaces it with a card drawn from the Fate Deck." This example shows game mechanics entering the world the heroes live in!

Action Resolution

Of course, the main role of the Fate Deck during play lies in action resolution. While the *Book of the Fifth Age* dealt with that subject extensively, a few areas deserve a bit more discussion.

Character 'Actions'

During play, the characters involved in a situation (as opposed to heroes) may need to participate in actions sometimes. Often,

the Narrator can simply establish the result of the character's "action" with no card play. Other times, it's not that easy. The following optional rules should aid Narrators in resolving these types of actions.

One of the core philosophies of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game involved freeing up the Narrator to focus on stories and drama. Having to perform too many character actions can distract a Narrator and disrupt the flow of the game. Thus, every effort should be made to keep character actions to a minimum.

If the action involves a hero in any way, it should be resolved from the point of view of a hero attempting to resist the character's attempt, with the character's relevant ability score opposing the hero's action. This is similar to the fact that monsters never make attack actions against heroes; instead, heroes must attempt defensive actions to protect themselves.

The following table can help estimate the difficulty of the hero's "resist" action. Narrators should also remember that almost every action of this sort will be resisted by the applicable ability of the character.

Character's Skill	Action Difficulty
Novice	Easy (4)
Average	Average (8)
Expert	Challenging (12)

For example, if a thief is trying to steal Ironhawk's purse, the player running Ironhawk should attempt an *average* action (probably with Perception) to notice the attempt. The cutpurse's Dexterity (or Coordination) score resists the action. The resulting attempt for Ironhawk's player to prevent the theft is an *average Perception (Dexterity)* action.

Only if the Narrator has no obvious way to turn such a situation into a hero action—say, interaction between two characters—should a character action take place.

Associated Characters

If the character attempting the action is affiliated with one of the heroes, the Narrator should instruct the player of that hero to resolve the action with his own cards. This applies to wizards with apprentices, knights with squires, or even the animal companions (pets, mounts, and so on) of the party.

Consider the example of a Solamnic Knight hero with a character for a squire. If the warrior asked the squire to climb a tree, the player of the knight would use one of his own cards to resolve the action.

If more than one hero has a strong association with the character, the Narrator can choose which player selects and plays a given card. As a rule, this should always be the person whose instructions the character is acting on or the one in closest proximity to him. Narrators can also rotate the task of playing cards for a given character among all those players associated with him. However, the Narrator should not allow players to continually assign their lowest cards to the character's action.

Random Draws

As a last resort, the Narrator can use a random draw to determine the success or failure of an action by a character. Such actions are handled as if the Narrator were a player and the character his hero. All the normal rules for figuring action scores, trump, and mishap apply to this action. The only thing unusual about it is how the Narrator selects the card.

For most common folk, resolving an action through a random draw requires only the action of turning of the top card from the Fate Deck. More experienced characters have a better chance of success at difficult tasks than their untried kindred, however. As such, the Narrator can decide before the draw to turn more than one card when such folk are attempting an action. Once the correct number of cards are revealed, the Narrator decides which one to use to resolve the action and discards the others.

The number of cards turned when a character attempts an action is based on his reputation, just as the size of a hero's hand is. For every three cards that a character would have in his hand as a hero, one card is turned from the top of the deck (see the chart on the next page).

Character's Reputation	Cards Turned
Unknown	1
Rabble	1
Novice	1
Adventurer	2
Champion	2
Master	2
Hero	3
Legend	3
Archetype	3

For example, assume that the heroes have come seeking the aid of Goldmoon. They have found a scroll telling the tale of a holy event from the Fourth Age and have been unable to make anything of it. They present it to her in hopes that she will fare better. The Narrator decides that Goldmoon attempts to decipher the scroll using the random draw method and a Reason action. Because Goldmoon is a legendary character, the Narrator turns three cards from the top of the deck to resolve the action. The Narrator looks them over and picks one to play, keeping in mind potential trump bonuses and the like.

Aura Readings

The icon box of every card in the Fate Deck is color coded to reflect basic morals and principles. These principles are Good (white), Evil (black), and Neutrality (red)—concepts that were at the core of life in earlier ages. Just as the numeric value of a card can determine the results of an action, so too can the icon box color, or aura. While the basic principles of aura checks were presented in Chapter Three of the *Book of the Fifth Age*, this aspect of play deserves more attention.

Aura readings should almost always be based on randomly drawn cards rather than those chosen by a player. After all, when a Narrator announces that the time has come for an aura reading, every player will toss a white card knowing that this color indicates favorable results. This also allows Narrators to give the players a chance to get rid of lower numbered cards—a worthwhile exercise perhaps once a session at most.

When to Use Aura Readings

For most actions, the traditional numeric method of action resolution works well.

However, the Narrator might consider an aura reading more useful in certain instances.

As a rule, aura-based resolution best suits actions that are cloaked in mystery or that defy numeric classification. If the heroes are blindly firing arrows into a dark tunnel hoping to hit something, for example, they aren't really aiming at anything. As such, the normal action resolution system doesn't apply too well (although an alternate trump suit might be applied, as discussed later in this chapter). The Narrator could use an aura check to see if the blind fire found its mark.

Aura-based resolution can also be valuable in resolving actions that are really tests of luck instead of heroic effort and skill. If something happens that catches the heroes off guard, the Narrator can use an aura reading to determine the general effect. If a hero falls through a trap door, for example, the Narrator might use an aura check to see if he lands safely on his feet or crashes painfully onto his backside.

Following Up Actions

Often, an aura reading can work in conjunction with the normal action resolution system to determine the nature of subsequent events in the scene or adventure.

For example, assume that a hero has just managed to force open a locked door and is about to sneak into the back of a guild hall. If the Narrator was unprepared for this action, he could use an aura reading to determine if the door was trapped or alarmed. A white (favorable) result indicates that it was safe, a red (neutral) result indicates an alarm of some sort, and a black (negative) result indicates that the hero has set off a trap. The exact nature of the trap or alarm would be up to the Narrator.

Suit Readings

On the surface, most of the actions attempted by heroes in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game fall into this category. After all, the suit or color determines whether or not a card is trump. At times, however, a Narrator may wish to waive the normal numeric resolution of an action and base its success or failure on only the suit of a randomly turned card.

In the previous example of heroes firing arrows blindly into a dark cave, the Narrator could simply flip the top card from the Fate Deck, with any card from the Suit of Arrows indicating success.

This technique can also be combined with the aura-reading techniques described above. If the heroes were firing into a cave which held a band of ogres and several innocent prisoners, the Narrator could rule that any card from the Suit of Arrows indicated a hit and then use the aura of the card to determine if an ogre or a captive was hit by the successful shot.

Inscription Readings

Normally, only the Narrator can call for aura and suit readings. Another alternate method of action resolution is inscription reading, in which the characteristics on the card determine success or failure.

For example, assume that a hero is trying to resist an enemy's attempt to torture him for valuable information. When the Narrator calls for an action to see if the hero can avoid giving up any secrets, the player announces that he would like to make this an inscription reading. Although the Narrator doesn't have to, he agrees and the player employs the Flint Fireforge card ("Resolute and Stouthearted") for the action. The Narrator agrees that this card is especially well suited to the action and, as such, the hero has succeeded.

Roleplaying

The most important thing to remember about inscription readings is that they are meant to enhance roleplaying. If a player wishes to use one, he must take the time to explain what his hero is doing and demonstrate how the card applies to the situation. Using the Severus Stonehand card ("Charismatic and Demanding") to force a character to obey a hero is all well and good. Unless the player barks out his instructions in a loud, authoritative voice, however, the Narrator should rule that the action fails due to the player's inadequate roleplaying of the spirit of the inscription.

Success or Failure?

When a player calls for an inscription reading, the Narrator must make a judgment call about the success or failure of the action. Obviously, after the player successfully roleplays the situation, the most important factor in such matters are the two traits listed on the card. If both are well suited to the action at hand, the Narrator should call it a success.

If only one of the traits seems to apply, the Narrator may deem the action partially successful. Alternatively, he might call for an aura check with a randomly drawn card. A favorable result on that check indicates success and a negative one failure. A neutral response requires the hero to attempt the action again, this time using the normal resolution method.

If neither of the traits seems especially applicable to the situation, the Narrator should simply rule the action a failure. Of course, since it is usually the player who calls for an inscription reading, this will seldom be the case. Players who call for inscription readings and then have no applicable cards probably ought to have these rules explained to them a little better.

Preventing Abuse

It is possible for a clever player to take advantage of inscription readings to succeed at tasks that would normally be beyond the reach of his hero. After all, inscription readings are a good way to dump low cards (which are usually less useful in normal action resolution). A few of the most effective ways to curb such abuses are described here.

Limited Calls

Narrators can rule that each player is limited to a number of inscription readings in a given game session. A good rule of thumb is to say that a player can use inscription readings no more than three times per four-hour game session. Of course, longer sessions should allow more inscription readings and shorter ones fewer.

Unified Calls

In situations where more than one hero is being called upon to attempt an action, the Narrator should insist that all players make the same type of check. That is, either all of the players agree to request an inscription reading or else they use the normal system.

Restricted Calls

Inscription readings are meant as a role-playing tool. They should not replace the standard numeric action resolution system. As such, certain types of actions should not be made with trait resolution. Chief among these are combat and spellcasting actions. Narrators may wish to extend this prohibition to include other types of actions.

Of course, it is possible to find exceptions to this rule. If a hero is in a combat situation and his player wishes to do something especially dramatic, the Narrator may allow an inscription reading.

Alternate Trumps

In most cases, selecting a trump suit for an action is fairly easy. Just about any action a hero attempts aligns pretty cleanly with one of the eight abilities. If he wants to lift a heavy burden, the player makes a Strength action. If the hero is straining his ears to hear a faint sound, then Perception is the obvious choice.

Once in a while, however, the Narrator may rule that an unusual suit is trump for an action. All normal rules apply in this situation, except that the specified suit replaces the original for trump determination.

For example, continue the case of heroes firing into a dark cave mouth from the previous section. The Narrator could rule that this was a normal missile attack but that Perception replaces Dexterity as the action ability due to the darkened conditions.

Disaster Actions

Every so often something terrible happens to heroes. Perhaps they're walking down a tunnel when it collapses around them or maybe they're caught in the midst of a massive explosion. In some cases, disasters like this can be resolved using normal actions to dive out of the way. In situations where the survival of the heroes is more a matter of luck than anything else, however, the Narrator can use the following optional rules for disaster actions.

When the Narrator feels that the time has come for a disaster action, he turns over the top card from the Fate Deck. Each player must play a card from his or her hand, attempting to match the suit of the card

revealed. If a player can do this, then his hero has escaped the disaster unharmed.

The exact effects of a failed disaster action must be determined by the Narrator to fit the situation. Only in the most extreme cases should instant death result from such an accident, however. Players who have spent a great deal of time developing a history and personality for their heroes aren't going to like it too much when all that effort is swept aside instantly.

A Graduated Scale

In cases where it seems appropriate, the Narrator can also evaluate the success of a disaster action using a graduated scale. This is similar to the method used to determine ability codes under the standard hero creation rules, as it depends upon the relationship between the suit of the card being played and that turned by the Narrator.

If the card played from someone's hand exactly matches the suit of the card turned from the deck, then his hero escapes unharmed. This is exactly the same mechanic used in the normal disaster action.

The use of a graduated scale applies if the suit of the card played does not match the one turned by the Narrator. If it is from the related suit (say, a card from the Suit of Swords is played when one from the Suit of Helms was turned), the hero suffers some injury or effect from the disaster. For instance, the hero cannot use his right arm until it has been healed magically, or the player loses the lowest card in his hand.

If the suit of the card played represents the proper ability category—Physical or Mental—as the one turned (say, a card from the Suit of Swords is played when a card from either the Suit of Shields or Arrows was turned), the hero suffers a fairly major injury or effect from the disaster. For example, the hero's broken ribs won't allow him to walk without help until they have been bandaged tightly or magically healed, or the player loses the lowest two cards in his hand.

If the card played represents the wrong ability category (say, the player uses a card from the Suit of Swords when a card from the Suit of Crowns was turned), the hero takes the brunt of the disaster. As an example, the hero is knocked unconscious with a head injury, or the player loses the highest card in his hand.

If the card turned initially from the deck is from the Suit of Dragons, no card is related to it—not even another card from the Suit of Dragons. The Narrator should simply handle the disaster under the basic disaster action rules with heroes either escaping or suffering the full effect.

Heroic Characters

In the rules presented in the *Book of the Fifth Age*, a character can sustain a number of damage points equal to his Endurance (or Physique) score before falling unconscious. While this method works well for monsters and minor characters, heroes like Goldmoon or Palin deserve better.

Because of their experience in battle and determination, more accomplished characters can withstand more damage before collapsing. The number of points that a heroic character can withstand is determined by his Endurance score and the number of cards his player would hold if he were being used as a hero. The following chart indicates the increase in a heroic character's Endurance score.

Character's Reputation	Endurance Reputation
Unknown	1×
Rabble	2×
Novice	3×
Adventurer	4×
Champion	5×
Master	6×
Hero	7×
Legend	8×
Archetype	9×

For example, if Goldmoon were with the heroes when they were attacked, she would be able to withstand 40 damage points (multiply her Endurance score of 5 by her reputation of 8).

It is important to remember that this number is used only for resisting injuries. The character's Endurance score remains unchanged for the purposes of character actions, resisted actions, or the like.

However, an Endurance-raising spell allows the character to use the adjusted score as a multiplier. Once the spell ends, the character goes back down to his normal Endurance score.
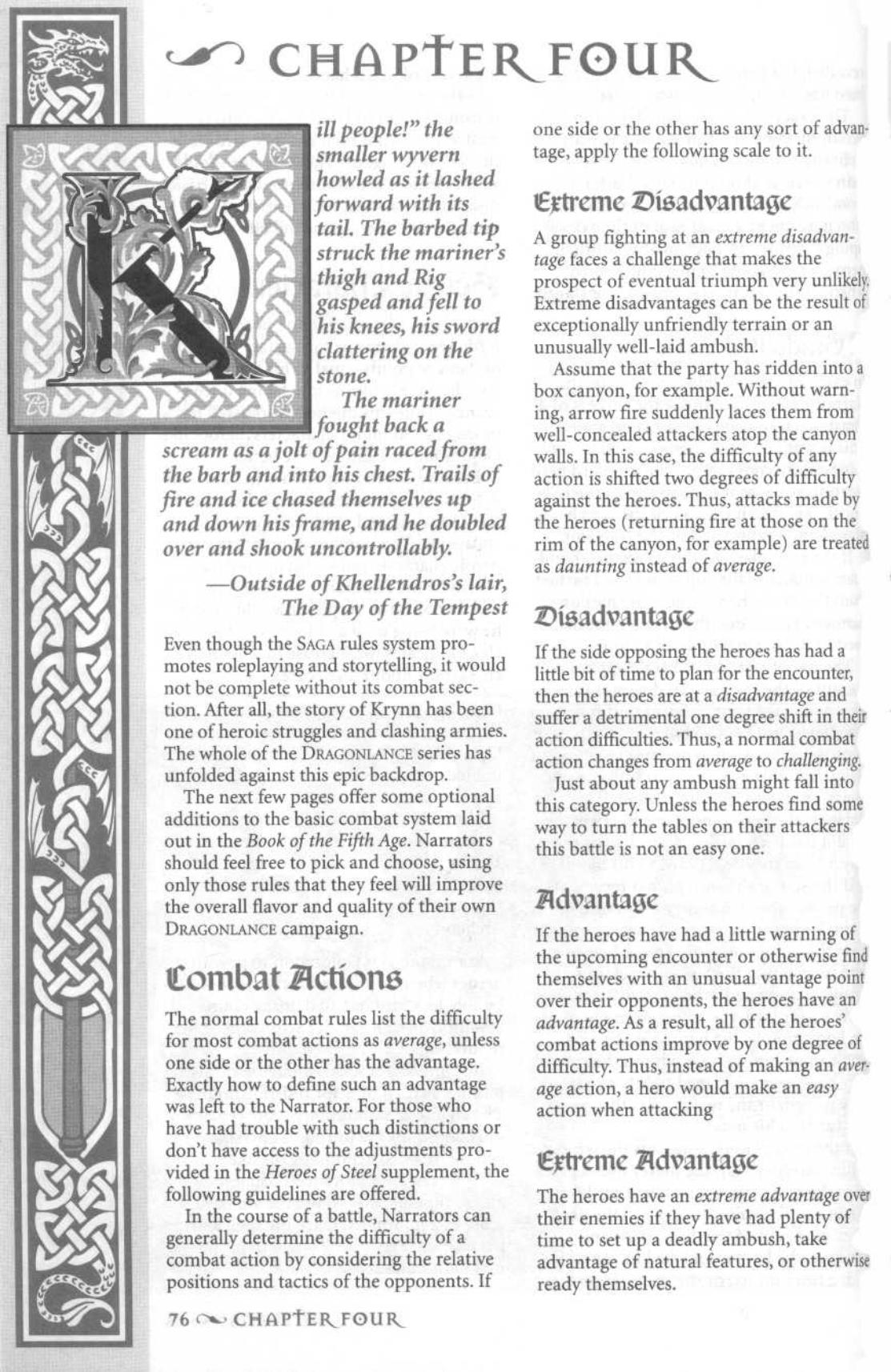
ill people!" the smaller wyvern howled as it lashed forward with its tail. The barbed tip struck the mariner's thigh and Rig gasped and fell to his knees, his sword clattering on the stone.

The mariner fought back a scream as a jolt of pain raced from the barb and into his chest. Trails of fire and ice chased themselves up and down his frame, and he doubled over and shook uncontrollably.

—Outside of Khellendros's lair, The Day of the Tempest

Even though the SAGA rules system promotes roleplaying and storytelling, it would not be complete without its combat section. After all, the story of Krynn has been one of heroic struggles and clashing armies. The whole of the DRAGONLANCE series has unfolded against this epic backdrop.

The next few pages offer some optional additions to the basic combat system laid out in the *Book of the Fifth Age*. Narrators should feel free to pick and choose, using only those rules that they feel will improve the overall flavor and quality of their own DRAGONLANCE campaign.

Combat Actions

The normal combat rules list the difficulty for most combat actions as *average*, unless one side or the other has the advantage. Exactly how to define such an advantage was left to the Narrator. For those who have had trouble with such distinctions or don't have access to the adjustments provided in the *Heroes of Steel* supplement, the following guidelines are offered.

In the course of a battle, Narrators can generally determine the difficulty of a combat action by considering the relative positions and tactics of the opponents. If one side or the other has any sort of advantage, apply the following scale to it.

Extreme Disadvantage

A group fighting at an *extreme disadvantage* faces a challenge that makes the prospect of eventual triumph very unlikely. Extreme disadvantages can be the result of exceptionally unfriendly terrain or an unusually well-laid ambush.

Assume that the party has ridden into a box canyon, for example. Without warning, arrow fire suddenly laces them from well-concealed attackers atop the canyon walls. In this case, the difficulty of any action is shifted two degrees of difficulty against the heroes. Thus, attacks made by the heroes (returning fire at those on the rim of the canyon, for example) are treated as *daunting* instead of *average*.

Disadvantage

If the side opposing the heroes has had a little bit of time to plan for the encounter, then the heroes are at a *disadvantage* and suffer a detrimental one degree shift in their action difficulties. Thus, a normal combat action changes from *average* to *challenging*.

Just about any ambush might fall into this category. Unless the heroes find some way to turn the tables on their attackers this battle is not an easy one.

Advantage

If the heroes have had a little warning of the upcoming encounter or otherwise find themselves with an unusual vantage point over their opponents, the heroes have an *advantage*. As a result, all of the heroes' combat actions improve by one degree of difficulty. Thus, instead of making an *average* action, a hero would make an *easy* action when attacking

Extreme Advantage

The heroes have an *extreme advantage* over their enemies if they have had plenty of time to set up a deadly ambush, take advantage of natural features, or otherwise ready themselves.

When the heroes have an extreme advantage, all of their combat actions have a base difficulty of "0" if they are at any range closer than artillery range. Should they be at artillery range or farther, the difficulty is *average*. This is then adjusted to account for the resistance of the creature they are fighting. Thus, if a hero with an extreme advantage fires his bow at a troll, the total difficulty of that action works out to be 6 (base difficulty of 0 plus the troll's Coordination score of 6).

final Considerations

Narrators should keep in mind that an advantage or disadvantage must be judged to be above and beyond that represented by normal combat functions like surprise. In all cases, these special conditions should apply only in cases where the heroes or their enemies have taken extra precautions.

Careful use of these rules can allow an ingenious group of heroes to defeat monsters that might normally be beyond their scope. A really powerful beast, like a wyvern, which might otherwise overwhelm the heroes, can be defeated if trapped beneath a net or disabled in some other way before the fighting begins.

Of course, the reverse is also true. A group of heroes riding out to clean up some rampaging goblins might look at the affair as little more than a training exercise. When the little beasties spring out in an ambush, however, the heroes may find themselves hard pressed to survive.

Weapons and Armor

As Narrators run their DRAGONLANCE campaigns, they or their players might wish to add new weapons or armor to their game beyond those offered in the *Book of the Fifth Age* and *Heroes of Steel*. These weapons could be ones they have found in other game systems, some they have seen in museums, or even ones in the DRAGONLANCE setting that haven't been described yet. Before illustrating the process Narrators and players can use when creating a new weapon or armor, one main point should be emphasized.

Narrators should not try to use the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® conver-

Combat Clarifications

After the introduction of the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE dramatic adventure game, the "Sage Advice" column written by Skip Williams for DRAGON® magazine received a few questions about combat. In the interest of making the answers available in one place, these questions and answers have been reprinted below.

Question: Is it just me or is there absolutely no way to kill (or be killed by) a foe outright? I've combed the rules and it looks like everybody and everything goes unconscious before dying—you have to then smack the body around or else you don't actually kill the foe.

Answer: The DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game *does* have an instant kill rule. Here it is:

Instant Death

Heroes and other major characters seldom get killed instantly. At the very least, the wounded character sticks around long enough to gasp out a few last words, utter a dying curse, or profess his innermost secret love.

Of course, sometimes this isn't how the world works. If Malystryx or one of her ilk lets loose with a torrent of flame on a single individual, the odds are that the target is incinerated instantly. No good-byes, no lingering death scenes—just a few ashes and maybe some smoke.

If the number of damage points left over from an attack that knocks out a hero or character (note that all monsters are "characters" in SAGA parlance) exceeds his Endurance score, the victim has been instantly slain.

Consider the following example. Ren has been badly beaten and his player has but a single card (the Five of Swords) left in his hand. Ren staggers boldly on, but finds himself confronted by a blue dragon who unleashes a stroke of lightning at him. Despite his armor and other protections, Ren suffers 12 damage points. Ren's player gives up his card, absorbing 5 damage points but leaving 8 damage points unaccounted for. If Ren's Endurance equals or exceeds this

"overkill," he's simply knocked out. If it does not, he's instantly slain.

As it is, his Endurance is a 7, so we won't be seeing Ren in any future examples.

Narrators should feel free to use this rule, as it puts some fear into heroes' lives—they really can be killed if they let themselves get caught in fights that they can't handle. It can relieve the Narrator of the difficult task of deciding when characters administer the *coup de grace* to heroes. The rule also grants heroes the occasional satisfaction of obliterating the villains without having to wrestle with their consciences. One caution: The Narrator is free to suspend the instant kill rule if needed to serve the story or to show mercy to novice players.

Question: In the SAGA game system, does a monster's Physique score fall to a lower number or stay the same when it suffers a wound? I think it should fall, because a monster couldn't fight as well with an arrow in its shoulder.

Answer: A creature or character's Physique score doesn't decrease with wounds any more than a hero's does. True, a hero loses cards, and therefore combat ability (indirectly), with every wound, but a creature or character doesn't get any cards at all.

If you want to give heroes a better chance to defeat monsters with very high Physique scores, make a random draw every time the monster suffers a wound. If the card drawn comes from the Suit of Dragons, the monster meets with a wounding mishap and suffers a −1 penalty to all ability scores for the duration of the combat scene. If the creature has one mishap and later suffers another, the effects accumulate. That is, a monster has a −2 penalty to all ability scores after suffering two mishaps, a −3 penalty after suffering three mishaps, and so on.

Question: Is there a SAGA game mechanic to reflect the skill of heroes when they start swinging frying pans or other improvised weapons at their enemies?

Answer: Yes. It's called attacking and defending at melee range (swinging frying pans) or attacking and defending at near missile range (throwing frying pans). The *Heroes of Steel* dramatic supplement and Appendix Three of this book contain game statistics for improvised weapons—including frying pans (made ever so popular by the fiery Tika Majere) and most other objects heroes might pick up at the spur of the moment and use in combat.

Question: If a centaur plays the role of an archer (gaining an automatic trump bonus when using his bow), what advantage does he receive? Is there some sort of a "double trump" rule to reflect a role and race that have the same bonus?

Answer: The hero gains no additional advantage from having two trump bonuses apply to the same play of a card. Only three possible conditions might apply:
1. The hero is automatically trump at the action, no matter what card he plays (unless it's from the Suit of Dragons, of course).
2. The action is resolved normally, with the card played being trump only if the suit matches that announced by the Narrator.
3. The card played by the hero cannot be trump, no matter what its suit happens to be.

Of course, the player can modify the role description to include a different and new trump bonus that would be appropriate to a centaur archer.

Question: The "Arms and Armor" table doesn't allow for multiple shots with missile weapons. The folks wielding crossbows must be very happy since the biggest argument for wielding regular bows under the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules (two shots a round) has been taken away. Shouldn't there be some game mechanic for reflecting the multiple shots an archer can fire?

Answer: Nope. It's one action per hero per combat round. If your hero has a Dexterity code of "A," and you're the type of player who wants to use the "best" weapon available, you should carry an arbalest as a missile weapon.

Of course, players should consider other factors in this matter. For example, a centaur hero might do a bit more damage with a crossbow, but he only gets his trump bonus with a straight bow.

sion rules included in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE dramatic adventure game to convert AD&D® weapons for use in their campaigns. This process works for converting monsters or characters over to the SAGA rules but doesn't preserve the game balance of weapons and armor. For example, when calculating the SAGA damage rating for an AD&D monster, the Narrator takes half of its maximum damage. Should the Narrator apply that concept to a two-handed sword, she would get a damage rating of +5. As it stands, to make the game balance, the sword's actual damage rating must be +8.

To begin, the best way to create a new weapon or armor is to compare it to existing SAGA weapons and assign it similar statistics. Currently, the weapon with the highest base damage rating in the system is the aerial lance (+11 damage rating), and it requires a steed with a Physique score of at least 20 to grant it the full rating. To help Narrators and players create *new* weapons and armor, the section below illustrates the creation of a weapon called a "katar sword."

Name

When creating a new weapon or type of armor, the Narrator should first come up with its name and general description. If the name includes the word "sword" or "mail," the Narrator has an easier job, since the existing weapon and armor lists have a plethora of "swords" and "mails" to serve as examples. At the same time, the Narrator should have a general idea of what the weapon or armor looks like and how it works.

In the example of the katar sword, the Narrator knows that minotaurs traditionally use this weapon. Since it is only six inches long, the minotaurs use it more like a dagger than a sword. The warrior holds the H-shaped hilt at its crossbar, while the two side hilts guard the warrior's hand and wrist. When wielding the katar, the warrior can either slash the foe or catch and turn the foe's weapon.

Type

Each weapon and some shields fall into one of the following categories: personal, melee, thrown, missile, or mounted. Several of these categories relate to the range in which a hero can use them, while the

category of "mounted" requires that the hero be astride a mount. For further information on range, the Narrator should review the beginning of Chapter Four in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

By looking at the description of the weapon, and comparing it to the list of existing weapons found in Appendix Three, the Narrator can come up with a good idea of what the weapon's type should be. In the case of the katar sword, since it is a short weapon, it falls into the "melee" category.

Since armor isn't normally used as a weapon, the Narrator need not assign a type category to it.

Class

The class of a weapon determines how much skill a hero or character must possess in a certain ability to use it. The categories that a weapon or armor could fall into include the following: VL (*very light*), L (*light*), M (*medium*), H (*heavy*), and VH (*very heavy*). For the most part, a Narrator assigns a class to a weapon or armor, but, in some cases, she might want to consider the damage or defense rating of the item in question at the same time that she determines its class.

Since the Narrator knows that the katar sword is similar to a dagger, she assigns it to the "very light" class.

Damage and Defense Ratings

Damage and defense ratings determine how much damage an item can cause or defend against. The class of an item strongly affects its damage or defense rating. Use the chart below to help assign damage and defense ratings.

Class	Dmg. Rating	Def. Rating
VL	+1 or +2	−1
L	+3 or +4	−2
M	+5	−3
H	+6 or +7	−4
VH	+8 or +9	−5

Another consideration is that no weapon a hero can wield unassisted (or without a separate action to pick it up) should have a damage rating higher than +9. Those weapons with a high damage rating tend to fall into the *very heavy* class.

Since the katar sword falls into the VL class, the Narrator determines its damage rating to be +2.

ven as Ulin finished the last arcane phrase and pointed his finger at Frost's head, the White opened its maw, and the sorcerer felt an icy blast of wind and saw ice crystals speeding toward him. At the same time, a ball of fire struck the ice missiles. Steam filled the air outside Huma's Tomb, and then the fireball struck its intended target and erupted inside the dragon's mouth.

—Fire meets ice at Huma's Tomb, The Day of the Tempest

The power of magic can be an incredible boon to adventurers who know how to wield it on their own behalf. Conversely, it can be a deadly weapon in the hands of their enemies. Magic possesses as much power as the imagination, for those who command it can use it to do virtually anything they desire.

In the Fifth Age, two major groups of spellcasters have emerged in Ansalon: sorcerers and mystics. The two groups have powers with very different qualities, and yet, many similarities. In fact, so much can be said about these different types of adventurers that each has been featured in its own dramatic supplement (*Heroes of Sorcery* and *Heroes of Hope*).

This section presents a few additional magic-related rules for the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. Individual Narrators should feel free to pick and choose which of them (if any) they add to their campaigns.

Animated Creatures

Several types of spellcasters in the Fifth Age can create magical creatures. The nature of these beings proves as diverse as the heroes or characters who manufacture them. Although different types of magic create these beings, sorcerer and mystic heroes can apply the information that follows to animated undead, summoned elementals, and even magically fueled automatons like golems.

Definitions

In game terms, the following rules can apply to almost any attempt by a hero or character to magically animate, create, or summon a lesser creature. Still, the various types of common magical servants each deserve a few words of discussion.

The Undead

The undead, the most commonly encountered magical creatures on Krynn, include both the incorporeal allies of the spiritualist and the reanimated servants of the necromancer.

Mystics can create lesser undead creatures, like zombies and skeletons, fairly easily. These lesser undead generally possess a very low intelligence level; as a result, most heroes find them suitable only as guardians or soldiers. Because of the creatures' low intelligence, necromancers or spiritualists can easily counter such creatures.

More intelligent and powerful undead occur much less commonly and fight attempts to control them, often causing the demise of the mystic who created them. They do, however, make excellent lieutenants and can be bargained with by those who lack the ability to mentally dominate them.

The animating force of an undead creature comes from the Negative Material Plane. The peoples of Ansalon often perceive this realm of "anti-life" as a cold, dark universe of nothingness. It serves as the antithesis of the heroes' own vibrant, living universe and the source of all entropy in their world.

Creating corporeal undead (like zombies and ghouls) requires skill at necromancy. A hero or character with skill at the mystic sphere of spiritualism can cause ghosts, shades and other incorporeal undead to manifest. The information provided in the *Heroes of Hope* sourcebook, *The Magic Within*, offers more detail on this subject.

Golems

Golems are magically animated creatures fashioned of more or less normal materials. An animated stone statue serves as a classic example of a golem. Generally, sorcerers and mystics must make a concerted effort to produce a golem of any variety. First, the sorcerer or mystic must carefully gather the materials to build his golem, then he must shape them with great precision.

Unlike the other creatures described in this section, golems do not automatically have a permanent life. The energies that bring them to life gradually deplete themselves. The sorcerer or mystic determines the length of time that a golem can remain "alive" when he chooses the duration of the animating sorcery.

Golems really are nothing more than humanoid (usually) magical items. If a sorcerer creates a golem from unliving material, like stone, iron, or long-dead wood, it can be given magical life through the auspices of magic from the enchantment school of sorcery.

If a mystic assembles the creature from wood, flesh, or other living material, the process becomes a little bit more difficult. In this case, the mystic gives the golem temporary life through the use of animism or necromancy.

In either of the above cases, a sorcerer or mystic can create a permanently active golem only through the use of the enchantment school and the rules for long-term durations presented later in this chapter.

Elementals

Through the auspices of very powerful magic, sorcerers can draw forth a native of the primordial Elemental Planes of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water.

These creatures find themselves brought into the hero's world by many different means. Sorcerers with skills in the various schools of elemental magic (pyromancy, hydromancy, geomancy, and aeromancy) can use their powers to create them. Of course, such creatures must reflect the nature of the spells used to summon them. For example, a pyromancer cannot whip up a water elemental.

Elementals created by elemental magic retain their form only as long as the sorcery's duration lasts. However, by using the long-term duration rules described later in this chapter, a sorcerer can create elementals that last for weeks or even years.

On the other hand, heroes with knowledge of the school of summoning, in addition to an elemental school, can attempt to call all types of elemental creatures from their home planes. In exchange for their versatility in this matter, however, they must work a little harder. The vast range of an elemental summoning spell always increases the cost of that spell by at least 10 spell points (as indicated on the "Summoning Spell Points" table in *Heroes of Sorcery* and further broken down in the section "Long-Range Spells" in this chapter).

Another drawback to the art of summoning an elemental (as opposed to conjuring one up with elemental magic) is that the summoner does not automatically control the newly-arrived creature. If the spellcaster cannot strike a bargain with it or dominate it via other means, like the sphere of mentalism, then the elemental can do whatever it pleases. As it will certainly wish to destroy the person who forced it away from its home, summoners should use a great deal of caution when employing their sorcerous powers in this fashion.

Animals and Monsters

The use of magic can provide the party with animals or other creatures to serve and defend it. Sorcerers and mystics may work such magic in a number of ways,

depending upon the desired effect and the subject of the spell.

For sorcerers, the most common means to this end is through the magic of summoning. When using the school of summoning, the sorcerer simply opens a hole in time and space around his target and pops him in where needed. The farther away the target is, the more difficult this spell becomes, with the Narrator determining the applicable spell range modifier. (Narrators can find the difficulty numbers for extended ranges in *Heroes of Sorcery* and in the "Long-Range Spells" section on the next page.) Thus, summoning an animal that is native to the region in which the hero finds himself costs fewer spell points than summoning one known to live several hundred miles away.

Normally, when summoning a creature, the hero finds that he calls something that will willingly help him. However, if the spellcaster manages to place the spell right on top of a creature, he can call it to him despite itself.

Mystics can also call animals and monsters from the surrounding area using the spheres of animism or mentalism. In either of these cases, however, it may take the beast a few minutes to reach the caster. A "called" animal moves toward the mystic at its best possible speed, arriving as quickly as it can. Once there, it immediately responds to the mystic's orders (if he has the ability to control it). If the mystic cannot dominate the called beast, it reacts as seems appropriate to its nature.

Spells of Creation

Two major aspects of spells must be considered when dealing with the creation (which includes summoning and calling) of any minion. These aspects apply more or less identically, no matter whether the creature in question is an animated zombie, a supernatural golem, a created or summoned elemental, or a mystically commanded animal.

Ability Scores and Ratings

The most important aspect of any summoned or created being is its ability scores. These determine what types of actions it

can perform both in combat and other game situations.

In game terms, animated monsters (whether they be golems or skeletons), possess the same four ability ratings as any other character. In addition, Narrators and players need to note a damage and defense rating for the creature. The player should give each of these six ratings a numeric score at the time of the monster's creation or summoning. By choosing higher numbers, the player's hero can summon or create a more powerful being. However, the player should also note that, when creating or summoning a more powerful creature, the hero must also pay the price in the increased action score difficulty and the number of spells points he must spend.

The caster must determine the four ability scores of a creature (Coordination, Physique, Intellect, and Essence) at the moment that he casts the animating or summoning magic. The same holds true of its damage and defense ratings. The total number of points assigned to these six ratings determines the general spell effect difficulty assigned to the spell (Table Va on the reference card in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set and expanded on the next page). The number assigned to the defense rating is not considered negative for the purposes of these calculations.

For example, a zombie (as described in the creature charts in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*) has a Coordination of 3, a Physique of 8, an Intellect of 1, and an Essence of 1. This gives it a total of 13 points assigned to its ability scores. In addition, it has a damage rating of +3 and a defense rating of −1. All told, this adds up to a general spell effect of 17 points. Consulting the table on the next page indicates a difficulty of 5 points for the effect portion of the spell.

Higher Scores

It is possible for heroes to create zombies or other automatons that have rating point totals exceeding 20 points, even though 20 points was the maximum on the original chart. Narrators and players can use the following expanded version of the general spell effect numeric adjustment table (Table Va) to handle such attempts:

Rating Point Totals	Effect Difficulty
1 to 2	1
3 to 5	2
6 to 9	3
10 to 14	4
15 to 20	5
21 to 27	6
28 to 35	7
36 to 44	8
45 to 54	9
55 to 65	10
66 to 77	11
78 to 90	12
91 to 104	13
105 to 119	14
120 to 135	15
136 to 152	16
153 to 170	17
171 to 189	18
190 to 209	19
210 to 230	20

The same progression continues for creatures with higher ability score totals.

Spells using this table quickly become very difficult (if not impossible) to cast. The *smallest* fire elemental described in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age*, for example, has an ability point total of 57 (6+24+3+8+12+4). The largest has a base total of 86. Narrators should recommend that the player use combined or coordinated castings to accomplish such a feat (see Appendix Two).

Ability Codes

A summoned or animated creature possesses an ability code of "C" in every category. Thus, the zombies from the previous example could be equipped with weapons and armor before being sent into battle.

Sorcerers and mystics can bestow higher ability codes, but these make the spell even more difficult to cast. Giving a creature a "B" code counts as one special ability (see next column), while raising that again to an "A" code counts as a second. Of course, this option exists only when the hero is creating a creature, not when summoning or commanding one! The following section contains more information on the topic of special abilities.

Special Abilities

A spellcaster can animate or summon a creature and imbue it with special abilities beyond those represented by the basic ability scores and ratings. These might include the ability to cast spells or use one of the special abilities detailed in either the basic rules or the *Bestiary*.

Summoning an animated creature with special abilities makes it more difficult to bring forth (or otherwise create). For each special ability that a sorcerer or mystic requires of a creature, its basic ability score total increases by half for the purposes of spellcasting difficulty.

For example, a necromancer wishes to create a 17-point skeleton with the ability to pounce on its enemies like a leopard. This special ability changes the skeleton from a 17-point creation to a 26-point animated skeleton ($17 \times 1.5 = 25.5$). Whenever a fraction results, the player should always round up. As a result, the total rounds up to 26 points. (This lowers, by a fraction, the amount of bookkeeping involved with the spell.) If the necromancer decided to make the skeleton immune to fire- and flame-based attacks, the point total increases by half again from 26 to 39.

Resistance

When a sorcerer or mystic brings a magical creature into existence, its own Intellect or Essence score (as assigned by the hero creating it) always resists the spell. Thus, a more or less mindless creature (like a zombie or animated scarecrow) applies only a 1- or 2-point penalty to the spell.

When a sorcerer or mystic attempts to capture more intelligent beings, on the other hand, he can find it quite difficult. Of course, this occurs only when the spellcaster places his spell right on top of the creature, giving it no choice but to come. (Normally, summoned beings have a tendency to help the caster or they won't show up at all unless drawn to him with mystic magic.) A ghost summoned by a spiritualist, for example, uses its Essence of 8 to resist the summoning. If the hero fails, the ghost does not appear to the mystic.

Long-Range Spells

As an expansion to the tables found in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set and *Heroes of Sorcery*, the following chart aids Narrators in determining the difficulty of attempts to summon or call animals and monsters from other places.

Range	Difficulty
Personal	1
Melee	2
Near missile	3
Far missile	4
Artillery	5
Visual	6
Horizon	7
500 miles	8
Cross-continental	9
Alternate worlds[1]	10
The Gray[2]	11
Elemental Planes[3]	12
The Abyss and other Outer Planes[4]	13

1. This includes alternate worlds and other campaign settings.
2. These are the Astral and Ethereal realms in which nightmares, ghosts, and other incorporeal creatures reside.
3. These include the Elemental Planes of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water.
4. These are the realms of the fiends and the gods. Mortals who deal with these beings place their lives in deadly peril.

Control

The spells used to summon or animate a magical being are permanent by their very nature, with a few exceptions (such as golems and created elementals). Like healing spells, then, they have a duration of "instant" when cast. On the surface, it appears to be a very simple matter for a necromancer to surround himself with an army of zombies. On the other hand, spells used to create magical beings are subject to the duration of the spell. For example, golems and elementals created by elemental magic fall into this category.

In truth, however, the act of animating a zombie or creating an elemental (including those of short duration) solves only half the problem. Sorcerers and mystics have found controlling such beings, especially those of high intelligence, notoriously difficult. If a

sorcerer wishes to keep them around, he must have a powerful enough personality to compel his creations to obey him.

Basic Limitations

To reflect the problem of controlling summoned or created beings, Narrators must impose a limit to the number of creatures a given hero or character can control. In order to *force* summoned or animated creatures to obey him without magic, a hero must have at least a "B" Presence code. Otherwise, follow the guidelines below.

The player and Narrator should use the following table to determine the base number of creatures a hero may control, either through force of personality ("B" or better Presence) or with a spell:

Presence	Number of Creatures
A	Large group (10 people)
B	Small group (5 people)
C	Couple (2 people)
D	Individual (1 person)
X	None

It should be noted that this total applies to all types of magical constructs or minions. Although a hero can attempt to create or summon more beings than he can control, the Narrator dictates the actions of these extraneous creatures. Most intelligent creatures will certainly resent the fact that they have been forced into the hero's presence and, if the chance presents itself, will desert or attack their creator.

Of course, a hero with mystic talents can weave a magical spell, perhaps from the sphere of mentalism, that will command a creature to do a given thing. This requires time and the use of a spell, however, where the power of a high Presence code does not.

Initial Control

Although the guidelines above deal with how many creatures a hero could possibly command, the hero must still gain initial control. Once the hero summons the creature, he must succeed at an initial *average Presence (Presence)* action to initially control the monster. If he succeeds, then the creature performs any basic commands that the

Long-Term Durations

As described in *Heroes of Sorcery*, sorcerers (and mystics) have the option of choosing to make the duration of their spells last longer than one hour. In the recent past, sorcerers of Ansalon discovered that they could make enchantments last longer. When rediscovering the ability to enchant golems, however, they figured out how to apply longer-duration magic to the creation of elementals as well.

First of all, the player must declare that his hero wants to cast a long-term duration spell, at the same time telling the Narrator how many spell points his hero expends. As a hint, the player should choose to assign enough spell points to equal his estimated action score or the spell might not work to the full capacity of the action score.

To determine the minimum action score, the Narrator should take the base difficulty of the spell (which equals the difficulty of the spell cast plus the duration of one hour—the highest duration provided on the reference sheet included in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set) and add a difficulty modifier. The difficulty modifier should reflect how hard the caster finds the spell to cast. The Narrator determines how hard the spellcaster works at this spell and assigns it the difficulty, or difficulty modifier. For example, an *easy* spell has a difficulty modifier of +4; a *daunting* spell has a modifier of +16; and an *impossible* spell has a modifier of 24 points.

> Base difficulty
> +Difficulty modifier
> Minimum action score

Once the Narrator determines the minimum action score, the player should play an action card. Should the action score exceed the minimum action score, then the spellcaster has succeeded at casting a long-term duration spell. The Narrator must now take the spell strength (either the action score generated or spell points spent—whichever is lower) and subtract the minimum action score from it.

> Spell strength
> -Minimum action score
> Duration score

The Narrator should compare this number, called the duration score, to the chart:

Duration Score	Length of Spell
1	1 day
5	1 week
10	1 month
20	1 year
50	100 years
75	1,000 years
100	Permanent

Narrators should feel free to interpret the chart above. For example, if a hero's spell garners a duration score of 95, then the spell lasts more than a thousand years, but is not permanent. Obviously, this might not matter to normal human heroes, since they have little chance of living for a millennium.

Unlike other long-term enchantments, however, a sorcerer who creates an elemental or golem does not permanently lose the number of spell points equalling the base difficulty of the spell. Instead, the sorcerer loses the use of all of the spell points tied up in the spell for as long as the monster he created exists. Once the golem or created elemental becomes inert or loses its form, the sorcerer regains all but one of the spell points. Spellcasters have recently discovered that the same holds true for any long-duration spell attached to a summoning or creation spell that also causes the creature to be compliant to the spellcaster's wishes. Should the monster be created from a group effort, all of those involved in the casting lose 1 spell point permanently.

hero makes. The moment that the hero orders the creature to perform an unusual order, however, the hero must successfully perform the Command a Magical Minion action described in the next section. Should the hero fail the initial Presence action, the creature immediately acts as it would in normal circumstances, which most often means that it attacks the hero.

Heroes with lower codes who usually fail at the initial action to control more intelligent creatures may instead attempt to negotiate with the creatures. Striking a bargain with one requires a successful *easy Presence (Presence)* action. Heroes who didn't succeed at controlling a creature can attempt to strike a bargain with it, but the difficulty becomes *average* or *challenging*, depending on the situation (Narrator's discretion, although insulting behavior by the hero usually results in a *challenging* difficulty). If a hero strikes a bargain with a creature, he cannot force the creature to obey him without question.

It is important to understand that the use of Presence to command magically animated or summoned beings is an option only for the sorcerer or mystic who created them. The magical link between the spellcaster and his underling allows this particular form of command to work.

Specific Instructions

The rules above cover the general control of magically created or summoned beings. Creatures under the influence of a hero generally do as he says, defending him if something attacks him and not turning on their master.

When the time comes for a hero to mandate that a specific creature obey a direct order that involves complicated instructions or could result in the destruction of the creature, however, the hero should exert his will directly over the subject. This requires the following resisted action:

➢ Command a Magical Minion

Difficulty: Average (8) or Challenging (12)
Action ability: Presence
Opposition ability: Presence or Reason
Comments: An *average* action allows a hero to force one of his magical minions to

Magic Clarifications

The questions in this section all involve the freeform magic system presented in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game. Although they were originally printed in DRAGON magazine's "Sage Advice" column by Skip Williams, their relevancy to *A Saga Companion* has allowed them to be included here.

Question: It's clear from the rules that the various elemental schools of sorcery (like pyromancy or geomancy) can create bits and pieces of their elements. For example, a hero can create a stone wall with a geomancy spell. Can a hero or character also use an elemental spell to destroy an element or protect against that element?

Answer: Most elemental spells can create, reshape, remove, or protect against their elements. One can, for example, duplicate such AD&D game spells as *lower water*, *create water*, and *part water* with hydromancy spells. One also could create a hydromancy spell that *keeps* things from getting wet. One could not, however, turn water to dust without a transmutation spell and knowledge of both geomancy and hydromancy.

The tricky part of protection/destruction spells is determining their difficulty. A spell that protects from fire is fairly easy: Just determine how many points of fire damage the spell blocks out and assign a value from the "Numeric Adjustments" table (Va) (see the reference card or Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age* in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set).

A geomancy spell that eliminates rock, however, could be harder. A small rock lying on the ground is easy to blow away, but if that rock is the keystone for a huge bridge, you need to increase the area of effect to account for the whole

Hybrid Spells

The discovery of hybrid spells, or the ability to combine certain schools of sorcery with mystic spheres, allows sorcerers and mystics to create all manner of magical effects. In fact, the use of the school of summoning with the sphere of animism allows mystic sorcerers to summon animals (see earlier in this chapter).

So far, however, only a few schools and spheres lend themselves to combination. The schools of divination, enchantment, summoning, and transmutation, also known as "utility" magic at various academies, work well with mysticism. By no means is this process easy, however. Heroes with "B" codes in Reason and Spirit cannot create hybrid effects. Only heroes who have an "A" code in one of these abilities and a "B" code in the other, can use sorcery and mysticism to make a hybrid spell. However, they must use the lower of the two ability scores to create the spell. Should a hero have an "A" code in both of these abilities, he can use the higher of the two scores to create an effect.

Once the hero has determined what type of hybrid spell he wishes to create, he divides the spell-point cost evenly between the two pools, rounding up when necessary. Of course, since it is harder to cast a hybrid spell, the Narrator should impose at least a –2 penalty to the spell action score. If the spell warrants it, the Narrator should feel free to assign a higher penalty to the spell.

See the *Heroes of Hope* dramatic supplement for more on hybrid spell-casting.

obey an order that uses complicated instructions or one that might destroy the creature. Examples of such instructions might include "Go forth and bring me that little girl and her pesky dog!"

Success at this action indicates that the creature must obey its master to the best of its ability. Failure indicates that the creature resists the order to some extent. It does as commanded, carrying out the letter of its orders, but it searches for a way in which to twist them around. If sent to bring back a certain hero, for example, the minion might not take enough care to return his victim alive.

If the task commanded of the creature is especially dangerous or distasteful to it, the difficulty of this action increases by one degree to *challenging*. In this case, failure results in the liberation of the minion as described for a mishap, below.

Mishap: A mishap at this action indicates that the creature has broken free of the hero's will. It almost certainly attacks its would-be master if it feels it has a chance to triumph in such an encounter. If the minion does not feel that it can defeat the hero, it makes every effort to flee.

Pyramid Schemes

From time to time, large numbers of undead or other magical creatures arise to serve a single dark master. This can be seen in the fact that *Heroes of Steel* mentions undead hordes in armies. The obvious question, of course, is "How is that possible?"

In order to extend their control of mystical creatures beyond the limits described above, very powerful heroes employ a multi-tiered structure. Take, for example, a powerful spiritualist who wishes to build an army of ghosts.

To begin with, the spiritualist must create his first tier of ghosts, which he designates as his generals. When he casts the spells to create these spectral generals, he gives each of them a special ability: spiritualism. In addition, they receive higher than normal Presence codes. While this makes the creation of these generals far more difficult, it enables them to create and command undead hosts of their own. Thus, the spiritualist might create seven generals, each of whom can create a number of lesser spirits (call them lieutenants). If these lieutenants also receive good Presence codes and the ability to work spiritual magic, they can create underlings of their own.

In a relatively short time, the spiritualist can create a fairly large force of spirits to do his bidding (either directly or by proxy).

The problem with such a structure, however, is that it tends to fragment. If one of the spectral generals in the army breaks

free of the spiritualist, all of the ghosts who answer to the renegade general (either directly or through the lieutenants) remain loyal to the general. The newly independent general will always act in a hostile manner to its former master.

As a result, the spiritualist could find himself facing an entire army of powerful enemies that he is responsible for creating.

Palin's Elemental Creation

Palin Majere recently attempted to use his knowledge of pyromancy to call into existence a fire elemental. He recorded his efforts at each stage of the process so that others could follow in his footsteps. Now others can perform what the sorcerers at the Academy of Sorcery have dubbed "Palin's Elemental Creation."

The first thing a sorcerer needs to do to create an elemental is determine how strong he wants it to be and how long he wants it to last. The player should begin by figuring out the ability scores and ratings that he wants it to have. For example, the sorcerer's player opts to define his hero's elemental as having the following characteristics: Co 6, Ph 10, In 3, Es 5, Dmg +9, Def –3. This gives the creature a total of 36 rating points. Although it doesn't meet the standards of a normal fire elemental (see the creature charts in the *Book of the Fifth Age*), the sorcerer doesn't need a huge fire minion. Thankfully, the act of creating a fire elemental allows the caster some control over what shows up!

As it stands now, the spell does not imbue the creature manifested by the sorcerer with any special abilities. He could just as easily hire a multitude of mercenaries or the like and get equally capable minions.

Knowing that this creature must attack a very dangerous foe, the sorcerer decides it must be more powerful than it currently is. He wants his minion to be able to fire jets of flame at its enemies (mimicking the lightning special ability) instead of giving it the abilities to use pyromancy or trampling attacks that normal fire elementals possess. This causes the effective ability score total to increase by half from 36 to 54 and increases the spell's difficulty from 17 to 18.

Finally, the sorcerer decides that the elemental's task should take about a day to perform. As a result, the player tells the Narrator that the spell needs to be of long-term duration. After looking over the total difficulty, the player decides to assign 30 sorcery points to the spell.

His spell looks like the following:

Fire Beast

Invocation (30 minutes)	1
Range (melee)	2
Duration (1 hour)	5
Area (individual)	1
Spell effect (54 points)	9
Total difficulty	18

Satisfied with the powers and abilities of his fire beast, the sorcerer casts the spell. His creature resists the spell with its Intellect of 3, which raises his required action score to a desperate 21 points. Knowing that the Narrator will assign a difficulty modifier to the casting process, the player realizes that the play of a trump card is in order here. Thankfully, the player's hero has had a lot of experience working with pyromancy, so the Narrator assigns the action an *easy* (4) modifier. This increased the total base difficulty to 25 points.

The sorcerer could also create a fire elemental strictly through the use of his summoning skills. To do so, however, he would have to take into account the range of summoning a creature from the Elemental Planes. By using his pyromancy, which taps directly into the elemental fire of the universe, he takes a magical shortcut of sorts.

Once the difficulty has been determined, the player plays a card to generate an action score. Since the player knows he needs a trump card to help make the difficulty number, he uses his Eight of Moons to augment his Reason score of 8 points. Thankfully, he draws a Two of Moons, which allows him to draw the next card: a Five of Shields. The action score totals up to 27 (8 + 8 + 4 + 7 = 27). Since he spent 30 spell points on the spell, the Narrator takes the lower score of 27, subtracts the minimum action score of 25 points and looks at the Long-Term Duration chart to find out the results of a duration score of 2 points. Just as the player wished, the sorcerer has the fire beast for a little more than one day before the duration expires. However, the player's hero can only guess

that the elemental will retain its form for about a day!

Thankfully, since the sorcerer has a Presence code of "B," he can command it without having to use magic at all.

Librams and Mantras

In the old days, when the night sky of Krynn still held a trinity of moons and the gods of magic still gave mankind the ability to work powerful spells, wizards relied upon spellbooks to record the spells they had learned. After each casting of a spell, the mage had to return to his library and effectively relearn it from scratch. This process consumed a lot of time, but it could not be circumvented easily.

While the priests of those days did not have the same problem, they had difficulties of their own. Their patron deities required of them long hours of prayer and devotion before granting the spells the priests desired.

In the Fifth Age, the rules have changed. Sorcerers and mystics no longer need to relearn or pray for their spells each day. Instead, they focus their own willpower to command forces within and without.

For one reason or another, however, many sorcerers and mystics found themselves reverting to their old ways. As they mastered or stumbled upon new spells which seemed especially useful, they would record them in special volumes called *librams*. While these books were not inherently magical, they did help a sorcerer to perfect the spells recorded in them. Over time, the casting of these spells became much easier. Another aspect of the new magic had been discovered.

Mystics attain much the same effect by creating a ritual, or *mantra*, which they used whenever casting their favorite spells. Use of a mantra makes a mystical spell easier to cast and reduces the number of spell points required to fuel it.

The next few pages describe these magical tools and how the adventuring heroes of Krynn can use them in their war against Evil.

Using the Libram/Mantra Spell Design Sheet

A spell design sheet using the Libram and Mantra creation rules described below appears in Appendix Four. After reading the relevant section, the player can use the sheet to help him keep track of what spells gain the benefits of using a libram or mantra. Each specific libram spell or mantra variation should have its own sheet.

Librams

Not long after the rediscovery of primordial magic and the harnessing of mystical energies, the sorcerers of Krynn began to put their newly acquired knowledge down on paper. To the outsider, the magical tomes created by the new sorcerers looked identical to those carried by their predecessors in bygone ages. However, the learned know that this is not the case.

Although this practice started as a way to remember and record the results of sorcery experiments, one sorcerer at the Academy of Sorcery discovered that casting some of his more unfamiliar spells became a bit easier while referring to his precisely scribed notes on the spell in question. When Palin Majere looked into this, he discovered that using the detailed, written notes while casting a spell that the sorcerer had only a passing familiarity with allowed the sorcerer to cast the spell as if he had been using it regularly. Now Palin has fashioned several new librams containing basic sorceries and sent them to some of the smaller academies of sorcery around Ansalon.

While making different librams, another sorcerer discovered that as his attention turned from one libram to another, his lack of constant familiarity with the first libram made him lose the benefits gained from working with it. As a result, Palin and other sorcerers will not allow their students to maintain more than one libram at a time. Just as with anything in life, the moment someone spreads himself too thin, something starts to give way.

bridge. That is, don't allow players to use wimpy 5-point spells to make whole structures fall.

Question: The rules in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age* say that the basic spell-point cost for a spell does not include any adjustments for resistance and says the caster should direct more spell points toward the casting than the spell's actual required total number of points to allow for resistance.

So, does the caster have any way of knowing how much resistance his spell faces?

Answer: A hero or character casting a resisted spell has no special ability to judge the level of resistance except by experience or by using a divination spell to evaluate the resistance (though such a spell would face resistance itself). When a hero casts a resisted spell, the player must make his best guess about how many extra spell points to spend—the player may not look in the rules to check a creature's Intellect or Essence scores.

Question: What happens when the spell-caster doesn't allocate enough points to cover the increased cost? Conversely, what happens when the caster allocates more points than are actually necessary to cover the spell's increased cost?

Answer: When a caster fails to allocate enough spell points to a spell, the spell automatically fails and all points the caster did allocate are lost. If a caster spends more spell points than necessary, the extra points are simply lost, though the spell works normally in all other respects.

For example, Palin casts his "Palin's Pyre" spell (with a base cost of 15 spell points) at a Sivak draconian (Intellect 7). The actual cost of the spell will be 22 spell points. If Palin allocates only 20 spell points to the spell, the spell fails—no matter what Palin's action score is—and Palin loses all 20 spell points. On the other hand, if Palin allocates 25 spell points to the spell, he loses all 25 spell points, but the spell will succeed if Palin's action score is 22 or higher.

Question: How do I determine how many points a character or monster allocates to a spell when casting it at the heroes?

Answer: When a character casts a resisted spell, the Narrator should consider the needs of the story. It would never do to let a scene go bust because a villain's spell fizzled without so much as some card play from the heroes.

When in doubt, the Narrator should make a Reason action using the character's Intellect score and a random draw. If the action succeeds, the caster spends slightly more spell points than necessary, say the difference between the action difficulty and the action score. If the action fails, the character spends a lot more points than necessary, say the base cost plus the action score total. If the random draw is a card from the Suit of Dragons and the action fails, the character spends too few points, say the base cost minus the card's face value. The Narrator can set the difficulty for the character's Reason action by how much experience the caster has with the spell's target (or with the spell itself) as follows:

Hybrid Librams and Mantras

As with casting spells mixing sorcery and mysticism, sorcerers and mystics may use a libram or mantra to gain a bonus to casting hybrid spells. First of all, the mystic sorcerer must decide which way she wishes to gain the bonus: by writing the spell in a libram or by creating a variation to her mantra. Either way will work for the hero.

Once that decision has been made, the hero must perform the appropriate action. As with casting hybrid spells, however, the action required of the hero is more difficult than if she were working with sorcery or mysticism alone. The Narrator should assign the same penalty the spell action gains to the recording or creating action. Since casting most hybrid spells earns a −2 penalty to the spell action score, the Narrator should apply at least this penalty to the action score. Should the action fail, the hero suffers the results listed under the appropriate action.

Although sorcerer mystics have tried, nobody has been able to gain any benefit from a mantra variation for a sorcery spell or from a mystic spell recorded in a libram. Evidently, the powers of the heart and the magic involved in sorcery are different enough that the processes cannot cross!

Fashioning a Libram

Most librams take the form of sturdy books. As often as not, the sorcerers design these heavy, leather-covered tomes to withstand the rigors of life on the road. Some sorcerers record their spells in a secret language that they have invented themselves. In the case of those who were wizards before the Second Cataclysm, this cryptic language often looks similar—or even identical to—the one that they used to record spells in their old spellbooks.

Librams possess the same vulnerabilities that normal books have. They can be burned, ruined by water, or even torn apart. Of course, many traveling sorcerers willingly weave permanent magical spells over these books to protect them from such mishaps.

A hero's Reason score determines how long it takes him to prepare his libram. Because heroes with higher Reason scores can record more spells in their librams, it takes them longer to create these books, since they tend to run longer than those sorcerers with less to write down. Thus, a libram requires a number of weeks equal to the Reason score of its owner to manufacture. This time need not be taken in lieu of adventuring, provided that the Narrator feels the hero would have some free time on his hands during the quest. Of course, if the hero is willing to pay someone else to make one, he can make a *challenging wealth* action to see if someone with the skills required is available to spend this much time on a libram for someone else.

The following action is required to successfully manufacture a blank libram.

➤ Make a Libram

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Reason
Opposition ability: None
Comments: This action requires a number of weeks equal to the Reason score of the person attempting it. Heroes crafting librams can still adventure during that time, provided that the Narrator feels they have enough "down time" on the quest to allow a few hours of work each day.
Mishap: A mishap indicates that the libram contains a tragic flaw in its design. Perhaps the binding is bad or the leather is partially rotten. As soon as the hero attempts to record his first spell, it becomes apparent that the book is no good.

Recording Spells in a Libram

Recording a spell in a libram requires a steady hand and a keen mind. Sorcerers also need a knowledge of letters and, as such, must possess the scribner skill (if the rules for skills are being used in the campaign).

Recording a spell in one's libram requires more than simply putting pen to paper. In order to properly convey all the information that the sorcerer needs to cast the sorcery, the writer must note important thoughts, states of mind, or other neces-

sary elements. If any one of these things is missed, the hero will gain no bonus from his magical libram. To that end, the following action must be made each time a hero wishes to inscribe a spell in his libram:

➢ Record a Spell

Difficulty: Average (8) or Challenging (12)
Action ability: Reason
Opposition ability: None
Comments: Only a hero who has a ready libram can make this action. The hero's Reason code determines the difficulty of the action. Sorcerers with an "A" code need only make an *average* action, while those with a "B" code find the task *challenging*.

Transcribing a spell into a libram is a lengthy and exhausting process, requiring a number of hours equal to the difficulty cost of the spell. Thus, a sorcery that uses 17 spell points takes 17 hours to record.
Mishap: In the event of a mishap, the hero has made an error in his transcription that is not apparent to him. The spell, if cast using the libram, fails automatically. If the card play at that time also indicates a failure, then an automatic mishap occurs. Correcting the transcription requires the hero to attempt this action anew.

The maximum number of sorceries that a hero may have in his libram at any one time equals his Reason score. Thus, Palin could record as many as ten sorceries in his libram. Heroes cannot gain the benefits of a libram if they refer to more than one libram at a time. Using two or three different volumes of sorcery interchangeably dilutes the necessary familiarity enough that heroes no longer gain bonuses from their librams.

Heroes can remove spells from their libram between adventures. When the hero removes a sorcery, he can replace it with a new one, provided that he successfully records it using the action outlined above. If the sorcerer later decides to return the earlier spell to his libram, however, he must repeat the inscription process.

Benefits of a Libram

Once a hero records a sorcery in his libram, it becomes easier for him to cast. This reflects the hero's familiarity with the spell. Sorcerers with a Reason code of "A" gain a +3 action bonus to their spellcasting action when using a libram. For sorcerers with a "B" code, their action bonus is 1 point.

Mantras

A *mantra* is a form of meditative chant used by mystics to harness and enhance their spellcasting abilities. In game terms, a mantra contains a combination of gestures and movements with singing and meditation. The scholars of the Citadel of Light believe that each and every person has his own harmony. This is the inner music of the mantra.

Establishing a Mantra

It takes some time for a mystic to explore the depths of his psyche and learn his particular mantra. Goldmoon and the other mystics at the Citadel of Light have determined that mystics at the Citadel should begin establishing a mantra before they ascend the Silver Stairs to conquer their greatest fear.

The player must successfully perform the following action for the hero to discover his mantra.

➤ Discovering a Mantra

Difficulty: Average (8)
Action ability: Spirit
Opposition ability: None
Comments: This action requires a number of weeks equal to the Spirit score of the person attempting it. During this time, the mystic meditates and explores the inner boundaries of his consciousness. Heroes learning their mantras can still adventure during that time, provided that the Narrator feels they have enough "down time" on the quest to allow a few hours of contemplation each day.
Mishap: A mishap indicates that the hero has failed to fully perfect his mantra, although he does not realize this at the time. Perhaps he hides some secret from himself or refuses to face a certain weakness. As soon as the hero begins to create the first variation on his mantra (as described below), it becomes apparent that he has failed to properly establish his original mantra and must begin the whole process again.

Mastering a Variation

Once a hero has discovered his own unique mantra, he can tap into its energies when casting spells. In order to do this, the mystic must learn the variations on his mantra that coincide with his favorite spells.

Discovering a mantra variation is a journey in self exploration and karmic harmonics that can take some time. Once a hero has mastered the variations that improve his ability to cast spells, however, he will benefit greatly from the knowledge.

The hero must make the following action each time he wishes to learn the mantra variation associated with a particular spell:

➤ Learning a Variation

Difficulty: Average (8) or Challenging (12)
Action ability: Spirit
Opposition ability: None
Comments: Only a hero who has already discovered his own mantra can attempt this action. The difficulty of the action is based on the hero's Spirit code. Sorcerers with an "A" code need only make an *average* action, while those with a "B" code find the task *challenging*.

Mastering a variation is a lengthy and exhausting process, requiring many hours of meditation. The hours spent in meditation equals the difficulty cost of the spell. Thus, a spell that uses 20 spell points would require 20 hours to master its variation.
Mishap: In the event of a mishap, the hero has suffered a lapse in his meditation which is not apparent to him. The spell will fail automatically when cast. If the card played at that time also indicates a failure, then an automatic mishap occurs. Correcting the mantra variation requires that the hero attempt this action anew.

The maximum number of spells for which a hero may have variations at any

Familiarity	Action Difficulty
Very familiar	Easy (4)
Somewhat familiar	Average (8)
Unfamiliar	Challenging (12)
Completely unknown	Daunting (16)

Note that heroes cannot use this table. It is offered it strictly as a means for Narrators to resolve character spells fairly. Note also that after tossing a few spells at a particular target, a character probably will become more familiar with the target. This should result in an easier action difficulty in the future.

Question: When calculating the cost of a spell's effect, it's not clear to me when you use the "Numeric Adjustments" table (Va), and when you use the "Other Spell Effects" table (Vc). Since the former gives you more bang for the buck, players would obviously prefer to use it, and I'm not sure when you have to use the other table instead.

Answer: Generally, use the "Numeric Adjustments" table whenever you can. Use the "Other Spell Effects" table only for effects that cannot readily be quantified. Players should never be allowed to play with the game mechanics to maximize the damage or other aspects of the spell effects tables.

For example, using a pyromancy spell to inflict 10 damage points on an ogre is easily handled numerically. Using a pyromancy spell to blind an ogre for a short time would require using the other table—a difficulty adjustment of 3 points should be made to the action difficulty for a hindering effect.

If the Narrator finds the players more interested in high damage spells over the creative use of the spellcasting system, he should feel free to surprise them by switching over the the "Other Spell Effects" table—or by throwing much tougher opponents at them!

Question: When a player wants to cast a spell that causes damage on multiple targets at once, which area of effect table should be used?

Answer: In every case where damage (or another spell effect) is being inflicted on more than one target, Narrators should mandate the use of Table IVa, for groups. Table IVb is intended for use only when dealing with large volumes or inanimate objects. If directly affecting individuals, the former table must be used.

For example, a pyromancer who attempts to annihilate a group of twenty-five goblins with a fire storm has a difficulty rating of 5 for the area of effect. It doesn't matter whether these creatures are pressed into an area which might be described as a large room or small house, there are still twenty-five goblins.

Question: How does the Narrator resolve the action when one hero casts a spell at another hero? If the first hero simply performs a cast sorcery (or mysticism) action, then the second hero doesn't get to play any cards to avoid the effect—which isn't fair. But if the second hero gets an avoid sorcery (or mysticism) action as well, then it's rather a case of double jeopardy for the first hero, isn't it? He's got two chances to have his spell fail, which isn't really fair to him either.

given time equals his Spirit score. Thus, Goldmoon could know as many as nine variations to her own unique mantra. As a result, she can use any of her nine mantras at any given moment, provided she meditates upon the relevant mantra variations each day. The moment that Goldmoon tried to learn a new variation, however, one of the old ones would fade perceptively her memory. After all, every being has limitations to the amount of material that can be recalled in times of trouble, or even meditation.

In order to keep the benefit of mantra variations operating, a hero must spend time in meditation each day. Because of the time required for this routine, heroes must abandon the practice of one variation before learning another. If the hero wishes to begin practicing the earlier mantra variation, he must successfully learn the variation again.

Heroes can master new mantra variations only between adventures. However, Narrators should feel free to make exceptions to this rule if the pacing of the story seems appropriate.

Benefits of a Mantra

The benefit of a mantra for a mystic is the same as that of a libram for a sorcerer. Once the hero has mastered the appropriate variation, a spell becomes easier to cast. The Narrator reduces the difficulty of any spell cast with a mantra variation by 3 points for mystics with an "A" Spirit code. For mystics with a "B" code, the difficulty drops by only 1 point.

Magic Made Easy

Magic can be a challenge for new players. It requires them to be creative and invent new and fantastic applications for their heroes' magical abilities. This process becomes even more of a challenge in the heat of battle.

In the beginning, the Narrator may need to help inexperienced players along, suggesting possible spells or helping them become familiar with the capabilities of the different schools and spheres. It might even be a good idea for the Narrator to appoint a more experienced player to help out a new one.

Sometimes, such a relationship can be worked into the game itself. The more experienced player might be a well-traveled wizard while the newer one could take on the role of his apprentice. As long as the mentor hero is patient and helps the new player along, this can be a wonderful role-playing experience.

If at first the players have a lot of problems with the original spell system, the Narrator might consider using the short-hand magic system described below. This method was first introduced in the SAGA *Fate Deck* and is included here because of its accessibility to new players. However, the spellcasting portion of the SAGA rules depends heavily on the imagination of the player. In no way do these simplified rules alter that.

Nearly every aspect of a spell is left to the imagination of players and the discretion of the Narrator. A hero can attempt to create any magical effect using the schools and spheres he knows. If a player can think of a way to do something with the spheres or schools his hero comprehends, then he can attempt the spell.

After a while, novice players will have a better feel for the magic system and become more innovative on their own. At this point, the Narrator can opt to switch over to the normal magic rules presented in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set.

Casting Spells

Under the shorthand magic rules, Narrators and players should treat the action of casting a spell the same as any other hero action. The player declares what effect his hero will try to create, then plays a card from his hand to determine the spell's success. Using sorcery requires a Reason action, while wielding mysticism calls for a Spirit action.

The Narrator assigns a difficulty rating to every spell. The more complex, intense, or long-lasting the spell effect, the harder it should be to cast. No spell should have a difficulty rating of less than 8.

For Example

Let's assume that the valiant adventurer Ironhawk is exploring a forgotten tomb when the floor gives way beneath him. He

Answer: When one hero casts a spell at another, the spell's recipient decides if he will resist the spell. If the hero offers no resistance, the spell is cast as a normal spell action. If the hero decides to resist (or the Narrator decides he must resist), then both heroes simultaneously attempt resisted actions. The hero casting the spell attempts his action normally, spending spell points and playing cards to account for the anticipated resistance value. The spell recipient does the same (though he spends no spell points).

If the spellcasting action fails, the spell has no effect even if the recipient fails his resistance action. If both actions succeed, the higher action score prevails. If both actions are trump, the spellcaster completes all his draws before the recipient draws any cards. In any case, keep all cards face down until everyone involved has played all their cards.

This is indeed "double jeopardy" for the spellcaster, but any action pitting two heroes against each other represents a clash of wills and requires card play for both heroes.

Question: Does anyone in the Fifth Age have the ability to turn undead (as priests in the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game do) or was this priestly ability lost when the gods departed? Does anyone currently on Krynn have power over the undead at all?

Answer: Undead turning is a granted priest ability; no one on Krynn currently has the ability because the gods aren't around to grant it anymore. On the other hand, one can "turn" incorporeal undead with a spiritualism spell. Necromancy can "turn" corporeal undead. Mentalism spells can affect any creature with a mind, which includes most undead except skeletons and zombies, so magic of this type might duplicate the effect of undead turning.

falls down a chute into an area of almost absolute darkness. Ironhawk's player decides that the time has come to weave some magic, but what exactly should he do?

Assuming that Ironhawk wants to see his surroundings, he might use his pyromancy skill to make the blade of his sword burn like a torch. If he intends to use this spell only to see with (but not to do any extra damage in combat), the Narrator might assign it a difficulty of *average* (8). As magic goes, that's very simple.

Ironhawk knows that he may be in danger of attack, however, so he decides to make the flame hot enough to double the damage rating of his sword. The Narrator considers the matter and increases the spell difficulty to *challenging* (12).

If Ironhawk finds himself knee-deep in water and wants to make sure that his magical fire will burn even under water, the Narrator might rule that the difficulty increases to a *daunting* (16) action.

In any of the above cases, the Narrator might decide that the flame will burn for ten minutes or so. If the player wishes the spell to last longer, perhaps up to half an hour, the Narrator could increase the difficulty of either spell by one degree of difficulty. Even longer durations should result in even more difficult spells.

Opposed Spells

Spells that target characters are always opposed actions unless the character willingly submits to the spell's effects or cannot resist the effects. Narrators should use the target's Perception to oppose sorcery, while a character's Presence resists mysticism spells.

Resolving Spells

Narrators should resolve spell actions like any other hero actions. If the action score equals or surpasses the difficulty rating (plus opposition ability score, where applicable), the spell succeeds. A failed action means the hero's spell simply doesn't work.

Spell Points

Heroes cannot use magic indefinitely. Spells need energy to power them. That power comes in the form of spell points. The player determines the base number of spell points that a hero begins an adventure with just as he does in the standard rules: His spell points equal the square of his Reason score (for sorcery) or Spirit score (for mysticism). Reason spell points can be spent only on sorcery and Spirit spell points should work only on mysticism.

Every time a hero attempts a spell action, he must spend a number of spell points equal to the difficulty rating of the spell. The caster must spend these spell points whether the spell succeeds or fails. If he doesn't have enough spell points to power a spell, it fails automatically, no matter how high an action score he may generate.

If the spell is opposed by a character, the hero should not spend any additional points. The only thing that determines the number of points expended is the base difficulty of the spell.

Heroes awake each day with a full complement of spell points. During their waking hours, they recover spent spell points at a rate of 1 point per hour. Heroes who know both sorcery and mysticism recover 2 spell points per hour—1 spell point for each discipline.

Resisting Magic

When a character tries to cast a spell upon a hero, the hero may attempt an *average Perception (Reason)* action to resist sorcery, or an *average Presence (Spirit)* action to avoid mysticism. If the hero does not wish to resist the spell, of course, he does not have to.

If the spell is especially powerful, the Narrator may opt to increase the difficulty of this action. This must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Dragon!" a draconian behind him croaked.

"It must be the mother of all gold dragons, then," Slith muttered. Up ahead, he could hear curses and shouts coming from the dwarves. Slith turned, motioned his troop to retreat. "We'll just sneak off while the dragon's munching on dwarf meat. Then we'll—"

Slith fell silent. He'd heard another voice, this one shouting loudly and defiantly—in Draconian.

"The commander!" Gloth cried. "It's got the commander!"

> —*A troop of draconians meet a fire dragon,* The Doom Brigade

Heroes often define themselves by the monsters they face in combat. Storytellers and bards commit the names of dragon slayers to legend and story, to be sung by others down through the ages. Those who face lesser beasts find themselves measured accordingly. After all, who would remember the name of Huma if he had faced nothing more dangerous than the occasional ogre?

The nature of the monsters presented by a Narrator can also go a long way toward setting the mood for an adventure. If the Narrator chooses them correctly, the monsters will build suspense and fear for later encounters.

The monsters that heroes meet early in an adventure should hint at what is to come. For example, if the major villain is a powerful necromancer, the heroes might encounter hordes of skeletons, zombies, ghouls, or other lesser undead. In the case of a dragon, the obvious choice would be other reptilian creatures like draconians,

spawn (in some cases), lizard men, and wyverns.

Usually, the monsters presented in the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE boxed set or the *Bestiary* supplement will fill the needs of the adventure. Sometimes, however, the Narrator needs to create new beasts to spice up her campaign.

New Monsters

Included in Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* is a collection of monsters for use in adventures. No matter how many foes a Narrator has available, though, she will certainly wish to create a new menace to loose on the world of Krynn at some point during her campaign.

In Appendix Four of this book is a form called the "Monster Design Sheet" that makes the process of monster creation very easy. Not only does it speed the creative end of things, but it can also serve as a permanent record of the creature.

Although creating new monsters for use in a campaign is not an exact science, Narrators should keep a few tips in mind.

Basic Concepts

When creating a new monster, the Narrator should first determine its most basic nature. This definition should briefly, but neatly, present the general nature of the creature. Looking up an animal like "moose" or "tiger" in the dictionary should give the Narrator an idea of the format such entries should take.

The example of a new type of sylph helps illustrate the process of creating a new monster:

The Desolation sylph is a peculiar, yet deadly subrace of the sylph. It drifts on the hot-air currents that move through Malys's region, occasionally preying on unsuspecting victims.

This synopsis, simple as it is, provides the Narrator with an excellent springboard for the rest of the monster creation process. Knowing the role that the creatures will play in the adventure, she can

decide exactly how tough to make her new monsters, whether they are simply savage brutes or cunning adversaries, and exactly what game statistics they might have.

Narrators should note that the basic concept is not recorded on the Monster Design Sheet. It serves instead as a mental starting point.

Filling Out the Sheet

The next few pages explain the use of the various sections of the Monster Design Sheet. Along the way, a new monster design further illustrates the process of creating new adversaries for heroes.

Naming the Monster

Once the Narrator has decided on a basic concept, she should record the name of her new creation on the top of the Monster Design Sheet. Simple as this may sound, however, the Narrator should keep a few things in mind so the completed form can be organized with others of its kind.

If the monster being created is a variant or subrace, the entry should begin with the name of the parent race. If the Narrator plans to create a series of related monsters along a similar theme, the name on the sheet should reflect that. For example, the sheet created for the Desolation sylph might be headed: *Sylph, Desolation* instead of just *Desolation Sylph*. While this may not make much of a difference early in the campaign, it can be a big help as the Narrator adds more and more monsters to her collection.

If an even greater subdivision could occur, it should follow the information in parenthesis above. Suppose, for example, that the Narrator wanted to differentiate Desolation sylphs from different terrains. She could create monster sheets with the heading *Sylph, Desolation (Mountain)* and *Sylph, Desolation (Hill)*.

Narrators should take care not to get too carried away with this concept. Too much organization can be as confusing as too little when it comes to sorting out monsters later.

Monster Description

After naming her creation, the Narrator should record a slightly more fleshed out version of her basic concept in the "Description" section. In the case of the Desolation sylph, for example, the entry might read as follows:

The Desolation sylph is a peculiar, yet deadly subrace of the sylph. Its airy nature allows it to drift on the hot-air currents that move through Malys's region, all the while preying on unsuspecting victims to gain water. These sylphs first appeared after Malystryx starting warping the land to her whims, no doubt causing the nature of the sylphs to warp at the same time. Now the creatures blend elements of fire and air, requiring only water to keep from burning themselves into nothingness.

Basic Overview

After jotting down the information above, the Narrator should move into the "Basic Description" section. By circling the appropriate items, the Narrator can create an initial writeup of the monster.

Size

The first aspect of a monster's description is its size. For most creatures, this refers to its height. In some cases, however, it might be length or diameter. The Narrator must use her best judgment in deciding exactly what dimension this entry represents.

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator circles "Tiny." She decides that the transformation of the terrain, along with the combination of fire and water in its nature, caused the sylphs to shrink from the size of their parent race.

Active Time

The next section indicates the times of day that the creature is likely to be active. The Narrator should circle any and all of the selections that apply to the creature she is creating. In most cases, a creature becomes active at any time if something disturbs or provokes it from its rest.

The Narrator considers this matter for a time. She then decides that the Desolation sylph is most active from dawn through dusk. During the evening, they settle down near volcanic vents. As such, she circles "Morning," "Noon," "Afternoon," and "Dusk."

Number Encountered

The next section the Narrator should consider indicates the number of these creatures that heroes generally encounter at any given time. The Narrator can utilize the space at the bottom of the list to indicate a new designation or the term describing a group of the creatures. If the entry described wolves, for example, the text would read "pack."

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator decides that these creatures travel in agitations of four to five sylphs. She circles the appropriate option and writes "agitation" in the space at the bottom of the column.

Diet

The next important aspect for the Narrator to consider is the creature's diet. In most

cases, a creature is a carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore. Another common entry is scavenger, indicating a creature that feeds on carrion, or photosynthesis, which is a process usually reserved for plants. Narrators can record more unique diets in the blank spaces at the bottom of the column.

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator jots the word "water" on one of the blank lines and circles it. The diet of water is necessary to balance the element of fire that Malys's terrain shaping induced in the sylphs.

Movement

The entries in this section allow the Narrator to indicate the various types of movement employed by the creature. A set of parentheses follows each type of movement. When the Narrator selects a given type of movement, she should note the creature's speed, in terms of human walking movement. Thus, if an animal moves twice as quickly as a human, it would have an entry of "2×". Slower animals can by given multipliers below one, like "1/2×".

The Narrator rules that Desolation sylphs can fly about, so she circles "fly" and notes their speed as 4×, indicating that they move much more quickly than a walking human. She does not note their ability to dive, however, as this will be detailed under "special attacks."

Senses

The last aspect of the creature's basic overview details the relative sharpness of its various senses. The column contains the five senses associated with normal creatures, leaving open two blank spaces for unusual possibilities.

Beside each sense are three boxes. The Narrator should check the one marked with a "+" when the creature has an exceptionally keen sense. If the creature has a sense equivalent to a normal human's senses, the Narrator should check off the blank middle box. Finally should the creature possess a deficient sense, the Narrator should check the third box, which is marked with a "−" sign. If the creature lacks one sense altogether, the Narrator should simply leave all three boxes blank or scratch out the sense entirely.

The Narrator notes that Desolation sylphs have very poor hearing by marking the "−" box next to this sense. Because she envisions Desolation sylphs as hunting by sight, she also notes that the creatures have excellent vision by marking the "+" box next to this entry.

Habitat

Narrators must also determine another important aspect about a creature: the environment it inhabits. After all, the types of monsters who haunt the overgrown forests of Qualinesti aren't generally encountered atop the mountain peaks around Sanction or at the bottom of the ocean around Dimernesti.

Terrain

The first thing a Narrator must determine about a creature's habitat is the terrain that it finds comfortable. The Monster Design Sheet lists twenty different terrain types, from aerial (for flying creatures) to urban (for animals that have become dependent

on mankind). Some blank spaces appear too, for entries that might not fit into any of the listed categories. The Narrator should circle any and all boxes that might apply to the creature being described.

Narrators should be careful not to select too many climates for a given creature. After all, very few animals are found in a large number of environments. A good rule of thumb is to limit the number of selections to no more than three or four. Of course, certain monsters (especially intelligent ones) have a wider range available to them.

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator decides that it generally makes its home in the air, only touching down in the mountains around the Desolation during the evening. As such, she circles "Aerial" and "Mountains."

The following definitions aid Narrators in selecting appropriate terrains for their newly created monsters. Some of the descriptions contain references to places on Earth to help the Narrator visualize the type of terrain. A location on Ansalon has been included as an example, as well.

Aerial
Creatures that seldom, if ever, come into contact with the ground fall under the aerial terrain category. It refers primarily to fantastic beings that live among the clouds and such.

Badlands
Badlands are arid stretches of broken stone and earth like those found in the southwestern United States. They generally remain dry to the point of being parched, and scrub often spots badland regions. The area near Malys's Desolation consists of this type of terrain.

Beaches
Different types of beaches exist along Ansalon's shoreline. Although sandy beaches are the most common, some beaches consist of smooth, rounded pebbles, some have larger and rougher stones, and others have sharp craggy rocks with some smaller scree rocks filling in the gaps between the rocks. Beaches can include tidal pools and the like.

Deserts

Desert terrain includes all manner of arid regions. Examples include sandy regions like the Sahara Desert in Africa or rough areas with sparse vegetation like the Australian Outback. In Ansalon, areas of Khellendros's terrain are reminiscent of a sandy desert region.

Forests

Forests consist of thick expanses of coniferous or deciduous trees. The undergrowth throughout the forest can be sparse in older, taller forests, or it can consist of many bushes and smaller trees in younger forests. In Ansalon, the Qualinesti and Silvanesti Forests provide excellent examples of this type of terrain.

Glaciers/Floes

This category includes any large expanse of ice like the polar caps or glacial ice sheets. The Icewall Glacier is a good example of this type of terrain.

Grasslands

Grasslands are expanses of broad, treeless terrain like the North American prairies or African savannas. Cultivated farmlands also fall into this category. Much of Abanasinia has the characteristics of a grasslands region.

Hills

Hilly regions include both areas of rolling terrain and more rugged foothills. In either case, the area is generally lightly forested. The region around the Garnet Mountains contains hills.

Jungles

Jungles usually feature dense vegetation and an abundance of wildlife. Examples include the Amazon rain forest or regions of deepest Africa. Parts of the Dragon Isles fall into this category.

Lakes/Ponds

This includes any large body of fresh water, from the countless lakes and ponds of Europe and Canada to the vast expanses of the Great Lakes. Crystalmir Lake in Abanasinia is included in this category.

Marshes, Salt

Salt marshes consist of swamplike regions inundated with salt water. Good examples on Earth can be found throughout New England. In Ansalon, parts of Sable's territory includes salt marshes.

Mountains

This includes any alpine region, including volcanic ones. On Earth, mountains include places like the Alps in Europe or the Rocky Mountains in North America. In Ansalon, the peaks around Sanction and in Malys's realm fall into this type of terrain.

Rivers

This refers to all moving fresh water like streams, rivers, or the like. Rivers can range from the raging rapids and white water of an African cascade to the wide, slow waters of the Mississippi. One of the many examples of a river in Ansalon is that of the Thon-Thalas River in Silvanesti.

Sea, Bottom

This terrain contains animals that move about on the sea floor. It can represent both coral reefs and deep ocean vents. The area around Dimernesti provides a good example of this type of terrain.

Sea, Depths

The deep sea refers to oceanic regions beyond the continental shelf. Animals who dwell here seldom if ever draw near the surface of the sea. Frequently, some of the more ancient leviathans rest in the depths of the sea, far beyond Ansalon's shore.

Sea, Shallow

The shallows of the sea includes all oceanic regions above the continental shelf and, thus, near the surface. It includes places like the cod banks near Canada. In Ansalon, some of the areas near the Dragon Isles contain shallows such as these.

Subterranean

Subterranean terrain includes all manner of caves and caverns, including the interior of volcanoes and the like. In some cases, monsters who live here never see the light of day. Thorbardin is a subterranean dwarven nation.

Swamps

A swamp is a region of bogs or marshes in which fresh water predominates. A prime example on Earth includes the Everglades in the United States. The area of Sable's terrain nearer to the Silvanesti Shield contains freshwater swamps.

Tundra

Tundra is a harsh area of scrub vegetation and permafrost found in arctic and subarctic climates. Much of Northern Canada and Russia falls into this category. The southern part of the Plains of Dust has become tundra.

Urban

This refers to any built-up area in which the natural landscape has given way almost entirely to manmade structures. Good examples in Ansalon include Palanthas and Sanction.

Climate

The other important aspect of a creature's habitat is the climate that it finds comfortable. Again, the Narrator should circle all choices that apply to the beast, while keeping in mind that few animals can thrive in more than one or two climates. If a creature makes its habitat in more than one climate, the choices should lie adjacent on the chart. Thus, the Narrator can choose arctic and subarctic climates or temperate and hot climates, but not temperate and arctic climates.

The Narrator pictures the Desolation as being hot, thus circling "Hot."

The following definitions should aid the Narrator in deciding exactly which climates her new creation might favor.

Arctic

Artic climates usually fall in the northern- and southernmost extremes of the world, almost always containing the polar caps or seas around them. The Icereach falls into the arctic category of climates.

Subarctic

The subarctic climate refers to regions bordering the poles like northern Canada or the tip of South America on Earth. In Ansalon, the realm of Gellidus consists of a subarctic climate.

Cold

Regions with a cold climate have short, cool summers and long, cold winters. Southern Canada and Scandinavia fall into this category on Earth. In Ansalon, parts of Southern Ergoth now fall into the cold category because of Gellidus's influence.

Temperate

Moderate winters and summers mark regions with a temperate climate. The northern United States and much of Europe falls into this category. Abanasinia in Ansalon also provides a good example of a temperate climate.

Hot

Areas with long, hot summers and short, moderate winters fall into the hot climate category. Much of the southern United States qualify for this type of climate label. In Ansalon, Khellendros's and Malys's realms definitely represent hot climates.

Subtropical

These areas border the equator and generally remain warm all year round, with almost nonexistent winters. The Caribbean and southern Mediterranean are examples of such climates on Earth. Ansalon's examples of subtropical climates include Kern.

Tropical

These equatorial regions remain hot all year round. Regions in Central Africa or the northern portions of South America fall into this category on Earth. In Ansalon, Nordmaar represents a tropical climate.

Statistics

The final, and perhaps most important, aspect of creature design occurs when the Narrator assigns ability scores and other game statistics to it. As simple as this process sounds, however, it can be a bit challenging.

Narrators should make certain that the creature they are designing is appropriate to their type of campaign. If the heroes have amassed a great deal of power, the campaign should feature tougher monsters. Newer heroes, with lower reputation scores and lesser arsenals, will be challenged by far less potent monsters.

Coordination

The first of the statistics on the Monster Design Sheet rates the creature's Coordination. As this is a combination of both Agility and Dexterity, it combines speed and acrobatic ability with fine motor skills and precision. The following provides Narrators with a scale upon which to base their judgments when assigning a Coordination score to the creature.

Score	Creature
1	Giant slug
3	Zombie
5	Human
10	Kender hero
15	Spectre or dolphin
18	Hippogriff or nightmare
24	Pegasus or giant eagle

After looking at the chart above, the Narrator opts to give Desolation sylphs a Coordination of 8. In her mind, they possess quite a bit of speed and can perform highly accurate dives.

Physique

Physique measures the creature's physical strength as well as its resistance to injury. As such, it combines the heroic abilities of Strength and Endurance. The following chart presents a scale that Narrators can use when designing their creatures.

Score	Creature
1	House cat
3	Domesticated dog
5	Average human
10	Bugbear
15	Pegasus
20	Tiger or killer whale
24	Troll or nightmare
30	Naga
35	Juvenile dragon
40	Sperm whale or adult dragon
50	Old dragon
60	Leviathan
70	Legendary wyrm or fire dragon

The Narrator feels that Desolation sylphs are not very tough, and their size is really quite small. She decides to give them a score of 3.

Intellect

Narrators should keep in mind that a creature's Intellect score does not always measure just its intelligence. The fact that it combines the ability scores of Reason and Perception means that a monster with a high Intellect rating may have exceptional perceptive abilities. The following chart provides a scale by which Narrators can rate their creations.

Score	Creature
1	Insects, reptiles, fish
2	Cats, dogs, horses
3	Apes, monkeys, cyclops
4	Bugbear or troll
5	Average human
8	Kender hero
10	Kraken
15	Very old dragon
20	Legendary wyrm

The Narrator figures that not many things possess less Reason than a Desolation sylph. They agitate about (hence the name of a group of them), riding the convection currents that wander around the Desolation. Occasionally, they drift down to rest near an open vent of a volcano, but even then, they merely rest until a strong hot-air current catches their attention. On the basis of their relatively high Perception, however, she gives them a rating of 3.

Essence

Without a doubt, Essence is the hardest of the four scores to quantify, just as Presence and Spirit are the hardest of the ability scores to really define.

Score	Creature
1	Insects, reptiles, fish
2	Cats, dogs, horses
3	Apes, monkeys, cyclops
4	Worg or hill giant
5	Average human
8	Ghost, huldrefolk, or sirine
10	Juvenile dragon
15	Very old dragon
20	Legendary wyrm

Essence combines mental resilience with the ability to awe or impress another. Thinking of it in terms of life force may help Narrators understand this ability. A

creature that has a greater will to live should have a higher Essence. The following chart provides guidance when assigning an Essence score.

After perusing this table, the Narrator decides that the airy and fiery nature of the Desolation sylph warrants a score of 7.

Damage

The next aspect of monster design concerns the creature's ability to inflict damage on others. Narrators should also remember that the damage a creature inflicts is based in part on its Physique score.

The following scale indicates the amount of damage that attacks should inflict based on their relative lethality. These run from attacks that cause a very minor wound right up to those that can kill an average human (if not a hero) in a single blow. These ratings can help estimate the damage rating appropriate to a newly designed monster or animal.

Lethality	Damage Rating
Nil	+1
Minor	+2
Light	+4
Moderate	+6
Heavy	+8
Deadly	+10

Monsters may have more than one form of attack. The Narrator should determine the lethality rating for each of an animal's attacks and then add them together to determine the final damage rating for the creature.

In the example of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator decides that the creature attacks by diving onto a target and then anchoring itself in the victim's hair with its hands. Once secured, it drains the water from the victim by mere touch. The Narrator rules that this attack qualifies the creature for a +1 damage rating.

The Narrator can refer to the following definitions if she has trouble assigning a lethality to one of the monster's attacks. In the following definitions, the lethality of these attacks is judged against how it affects normal men and women, not heroes. Obviously, heroes should weather attacks that would cripple or kill the average human with ease.

Nil
The most minor of attacks falls under the category of nil damage. Good examples might include the raking claws of a house cat or the punch of an untrained human. It is important to remember, though, that not all attacks of this type are so easily laughed off. The bite of an asp falls into this category, but the poison that it injects is the real threat in its attack.

Minor
A minor attack causes injuries that take some time to heal, but have no lasting effect. The skillfully thrown fist of a trained pugilist falls into this category, as might the bite of a dog.

Light
At this point, attacks begin to turn dangerous. While a light attack seldom proves fatal, it probably leaves a lasting scar. Numerous light attacks also quickly add up to a fatal combination.

Moderate
As a rule, a moderate attack kills the average human. Good examples of such assaults might include the claws or bite of a grizzly bear. Even if someone survives the first attack, a second or third will almost certainly finish him off. Anyone who survives such an attack most likely suffers bad scars or ends up maimed by the encounter.

Heavy
A heavy attack is one which generally kills an average human almost instantly. Good examples of such attacks include the terrible bite of a great white shark or the tail of a dragon. Survivors of such attacks will probably have some sort of handicap (a missing limb or the like) to remind them of their encounter.

Deadly
The most dangerous of attacks falls under the category of deadly. It includes assaults like a dragon's claws or the bite of a leviathan. An average human (not a hero, though) has no real chance of surviving such an attack. On those rare occasions where a normal human has actually survived such an attack, the attack often shatters his health and spirit in its aftermath.

Defense

Determining the defense rating for a creature also requires a little bit of judgment on the part of Narrators. They can use the following chart, however, to make the task a good deal easier.

Common Examples	Defense Rating
Fur or feathers	−1
Quills, thick hide, or soft scales	−2
Hard scales or light chitin	−3
Shell or heavy chitin	−4
Unusually thick shell	−5

The above chart helps assign defensive ratings to normal creatures. Narrators should note that the worst defense rating assigned to a dragon is the wyrmling's −4 rating. In very short order, the dragon's scales harden to a rating of −6 and continue to improve until they reach a staggering defense rating of −45. At that point, of course, about the only thing that can hurt a dragon is another dragon.

When the Narrator considers the Desolation sylph, she notes that it has no armor. As such, it deserves a defense rating of 0.

Special Abilities

While some creatures can be defined using only the game statistics presented above, others are not so easily quantified.

Special Attacks

The above statement proves especially true of creatures who have special or unusual attacks. Things that can't be completely defined using the ability scores or damage and defense ratings fall into the category of special attacks.

Perhaps the most common example is poison, which can make even a minor scratch deadly. Other frequently encountered special attacks include pouncing, paralysis, bear hugs, and various types of breath attacks. Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* presents a large number of such attacks.

When defining a special attack, Narrators should keep in mind the importance of simplicity. A monster with many special attacks is more difficult to run in a combat encounter because it has too many options.

Thus, most creatures should have only one or two special attacks.

On the same note, Narrators should keep the results of the special attack simple. For example, the "rake" special attack simply says that any creature with this ability can make two attacks when it has closed to personal range.

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator sees the creature as being able to dive onto its potential victims. As such, she decides to note that it has the "dive" special ability (as defined in the *Book of the Fifth Age*). Once the sylph lands on its victim, it begins to feed on his water. The Narrator decides to treat this as a "draining" attack (also defined in the *Book of the Fifth Age*). In this particular case, the water drain causes the hero to lose points from his Endurance score. She notes, however, that this loss is not permanent, as the rules state.

Special Defenses

Special defenses are the counterparts to special attacks. They indicate unique abilities to ward off certain types of attack. All the guidelines presented about special attacks apply to special defenses: Narrators should not give too many of them to a creature and also should make sure that they're easy to use.

Again, Chapter Six of the *Book of the Fifth Age* presents a great many special defenses. The most common variety of special defense is an immunity to a certain type of attack.

In the case of the Desolation sylph, the Narrator sees no reason for the creature to have any particular special defense. As such, she writes "none" in the special defenses section.

The following roles first appeared in the *Dragons of a New Age* series of dramatic supplements.

Academy Student

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Re 4 min.	Re "B" min.	By race.	Pr action to get Academy aid; +1 action bonus to spells from advice; can adopt role during play.	Must teach 10 and research 15 hours per week; no trump bonus for Pr actions with those unused to sorcerers.

Adventurous Warrior

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag *or* Dx 5 min. En *or* St 5 min. (other score in each pair is 4 min.)	Ag *or* Dx "A" St *or* En "A" (all Physical codes "C" min.)	Any race with acceptable scores and codes; wealth 7 max.	Trump bonus for dealings with common folk; can acquire role during play.	Unique quirk or cause.

Ambassador

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Pr "C" min.	Demeanor from red aura card; wealth 7 min.	Trump bonus for negotiation; action to discern thoughts; can adopt role during play.	No trump bonus for Re or Pr actions to deal with the lower classes.

Archer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Dx 5 min. Pe 5 min.	Ag "C" max. Dx "A" Re "C" max. Sp "C" max.	Human, centaur, elf, or half-elf.	Trump bonus for specialty weapon; can acquire role during play.	–3 action penalty for St attack actions at melee or personal range.

Barbarian Shaman

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
All Physical scores 4 min. *(aggressive tribes only)*; Sp 5 min.	Sp "B" min.	Must have a barbarian upbringing; spiritualism sphere required.	Trump bonus for spellcasting in trump sphere; trump bonus for outdoor actions in home terrain.	No trump bonus for for Pr actions to deal with "civilized" folk; must use tribal weapons; cannot adopt role during play.

Barbarian Warrior

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Physical scores all 5 min. Pe 5 min. Sp 5 min.	Dx "B" min. Re "D" max. Pe "B" min. Sp "B" min.	Human, Klar, Neidar, centaur, or Kagonesti; wealth 6 max.	Trump bonus for home terrain actions and attacks with tribal weapon.	–3 action penalty in city; no trump bonus to Pe or Pr actions in city; cannot acquire role during play.

Bard

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 4 min. Pr 5 min.	Any.	None.	Trump bonus to Re actions to recall details of a place; action to enthrall; can acquire role during play.	No trump bonus to Pr actions involving those of wealth 8 or higher (other than performances).

Barmaid

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	St "C" max. Pr "C" min.	Wealth 3 max.	Eavesdropping; trump bonus to put on false face; can acquire the role during play.	Re action to avoid being recognized outside of work.

Battle Mage

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
St 6 min. En 6 min.	St "C" min. En "C" min. Re "B" min.	By race.	+3 action bonus to org- anize attack or defense; trump bonus to Pr actions with own troops; can adopt role during play.	No action bonus to research new spells; no trump bonus for Pr actions involving other sorcerers (except other battle mages).

Cavalier

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
En 5 min. St 6 min. Sp 5 min. Pr 5 min.	Varies by race	Human, half-elf, Hylar, Qualinesti, or Silvanesti; demeanor 5 max.; wealth 5 min.	Trump bonus to close range; can acquire role during play.	No trump bonus to gain surprise; owes 40–60 days' service.

Centaur Shapechanger

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
En 7 min. St 7 min. Re 7 max. Pe 7 min. Sp 6 min.	Dx "A" En "X" Sp "B" min. (alteration skill based on code)	Centaurs only; quests 3 max.; alteration sphere required.	Trump bonus using bow; soothes horses; trump bonus for alteration magic used on self; mobility advantage.	No trump bonus for spellcasting (except alteration on self); assumed Dx code of "X" for any missile weapon but bow; no trump bonus for Pr actions with own clan; can adopt role during play only as first mystic role.

Citadel Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 4 min.	Ag "B" max. Dx "C" max. En "B" max. St "C" max. Sp "B" min.	Cannot derive Nature from a Hearts card with a black aura or a Dragons card; healing sphere required.	Trump bonus to Pr actions invol- ving peasants; random draw to gain aid from lords of free realms; can adopt role during play.	Necromancy forbidden; study of spiritualism limited to those with permission only.

Con Artist

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Pr "B" min.	Nature from black or red aura card.	Trump bonus for actions to convince a mark; can adopt role during play.	No trump bonus for Pr actions involving people wise to his scam (elves get a –3 action penalty).

Displaced Noble

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Any.	Wealth 6 max.	Sympathizers; trump bonus to imitate old status; can regain status.	Encounter enemy once per quest; difficult to acquire the role during play.

Dwarf Earth Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 8 max. DX 8 max. EN 6 min. ST 6 min. RE 5 min. SP 5 min.	RE "B" SP "B" min.	Dwarves only; geomancy school and sensitivity sphere required.	Trump bonus to resist poison or sorcery and for earth magic and earth-related PR actions; can adopt role during play.	No trump bonus for certain personality-related actions, using nonearth magic, or any PR actions.

Fop

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
All must be 5 min.	Four must be "B" min.	Wealth 7 min.	Others let information slip.	Lose advantage if hero's secret gets out; only newcomers can acquire role during play.

Guild Thief

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	"B" min. in DX or RE or PE	Nature 5 max.; wealth between 4 and 6.	Trump bonus for RE, PE, or DX thief actions; hand talk; can acquire the role during play.	*Challenging Reason* action to avoid rash behavior to oppose injustice or oppression.

Handler

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 8 min. DX 8 min. EN 6 max. ST 6 max. PE 6 min. or PR 6 min.	AG "D" max. EN "D" max. (true) or EN "C" max. (afflicted) PE "B" min.	Kender only; acute eyesight; others by subrace.	Effective wealth 8 and trump bonus to PR actions with kender who recognize him; handling; trump bonus for sleight-of-hand (true) or sneaky (afflicted) actions.	No trump bonus for PR actions, −2 action penalty, and effective wealth 2 with nonkender recognizing role; recognition among foes endangers friends; short concentration; "A" code allowed only for PE; cannot acquire role during play.

Healer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	ST "B" max. DX "B" max. RE "C" min. PE "C" min.	None.	Trump bonus to healing actions.	No trump bonus for attacks meant to injure; difficult to acquire the role during play.

ROLES ～

Independent Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 3 min.	Sp "B"min.	May not belong to any mystic organization.	"A" Sp code allows trump bonus for specialty sphere; can adopt role during play.	−3 penalty for Pr actions with strangers (doubles if caught in a lie about belonging to a mystic group).

Independent Sorcerer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
None	Re "B" min.	By race (and by former role).	Hermits can find food, shelter; those in town blend in, get trump bonus for Pr actions with locals; can adopt role during play.	Little contact with other sorcerers; no trump bonus for Pr actions involving members of sorcerous organizations.

Itinerant Mage*

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
En 6 min. *Re 5 min.*	Re "B" min.; *No Re min.*	Wealth 2 max.; *must be at least 50 years old.*	Trump bonus for actions to forage or find shelter outdoors; contacts; +3 action bonus to gain insight on artifacts, recall facts, etc; possessions; adopt role during play.	No access to luxuries or spell-casting aids; Sp action to resist wanderlust; *forbidden schools; no trump bonus to Mental actions requiring knowledge of current events; foible; cannot adopt role during play.*

* Notes in *italic type* apply only to heroes who were Wizards of High Sorcery in the Fourth Age.

Kagonesti Shaman

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 6 min. Dx 6 min. Re 4 min. *but 7 max.* Pe 6 min. Sp 5 min. Pr 6 min.	Ag "D" max. Dx "B" min. En "D" max. St "B" max. Re "B" Sp "B" min.	Kagonesti elves only; animism and one elemental school required.	Trump bonus in combat w/straight or recurved bow, when using Pe, moving silently, or hiding in the forest, and for animism;+3 bonus to Pr actions involving animals.	No trump bonus for Pr actions w/other races (except to resist mysticism); −6 Pr action penalty for dealing with Silvanesti and −3 penalty for Qualinesti; forbidden spheres and schools; cannot adopt role during play.

Kender Nightstalker

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 7 min. Dx 7 min. En 6 max. St 6 max. Sp 4 min. Pe 6 min. *or* Pr 6 min.	Ag "D"max. En "D"max. (true) *or* En "C"max. (afflicted) Sp "B" Pe "B" min.	Kender only; acute eyesight; sensitivity or spiritualism required; other requirements by subrace	Sp or Pe action to detect spirits; spirits attack only on a black aura draw; handling; trump bonus for sleight-of-hand (true) or sneaky (afflicted) actions; can adopt role during play.	Meets opposition from other heroes; short concentration; "A" code allowed only for Pe.

Knight of Solamnia

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	EN "A"	Human or	Trump bonus to	No trump bonus to gain
ST 6 min.	ST "A"	half-elf;	close range, in	surprise; PR falls 1 point
SP 6 min.	RE "C" max.	demeanor 4 max.;	melee attacks vs.	if fails to advance; must
PR 6 min.	SP "C" max.	nature 5 max.;	Dark Knights and	make an action to refuse
		wealth 3 min.	Legionnaires, and	a fight or retreat; owes
			for mounted melee	40–60 days' service;
			attacks; also by	donates wealth; cannot
			order; advancement.	assume role during play.

Knight of the Lily

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	EN "A"	Human or	Trump bonus to	Death if fails to advance;
ST 6 min.	ST "A"	half-elf;	close range, in	no trump bonus to resist
SP 5 min.	RE "C" max.	demeanor 5 max.;	melee attacks vs.	mysticism; owes 40–60
PR 5 min.	SP "C" max.	nature 4 min.	Legionnaires, and	days' service; cannot
			for mounted melee	acquire role during play.
			attacks; advancement.	

Knight of the Skull

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	EN "A"	Human or	Trump bonus to	Death for failure at a Test
ST 6 min.	ST "A"	half-elf only;	close range, for	of Takhisis or if found
SP 5 min.	SP "B" min.	demeanor 5	spell attacks vs.	guilty of violating the
PR 5 min.	PR "C" min.	max; nature	Legionnaires, for	Code; owes 40–60 days'
		4 min.;	mounted melee	service; difficult to
		quests 5 max.	attacks, and to	acquire role during play.
			resist mysticism;	
			+3 PR action bonus	
			in negotiations.	

Knight of the Sword or Rose*

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	EN "A"	Human or	Trump bonus to	No trump bonus to gain
ST 6 min.	ST "A"	half-elf only;	close range, in	surprise; PR falls 1 point
SP 6 min.	RE "C" max.	wealth 3 min.;	melee attacks vs.	if fails to advance;
PR 6 min.	SP "B" max.	nature 5 max.;	Dark Knights and	owes 40–60 days' service;
	SP "A" *max.*	demeanor	Legionnaires, for	donates wealth; *has a*
	PR "B" *min.*	4 max.;	mounted melee	*character flaw*; difficult
		necromancy	attacks, *and for*	to adopt role during play.
		forbidden,	*PR actions*	
		spiritualism	*involving locals*	
		discouraged.	*under Solamnic*	
			protection; can	
			access Order's trea-	
			sury; advancement.	

* Requirements, advantages, and disadvantages in *italic type* apply to Rose Knights in addition to the normal Sword Knight standards (or instead of them, if a conflict arises).

Knight of the Thorn

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
En 6 min.	En and St "A"	Human or	Trump bonus to close	Death if fails to advance; no
St 6 min.	Re "B" min.	half-elf; de-	range, for mounted	trump bonus to resist mysti-
Re 5 min.	("C" min. for	meanor 5 max.;	melee attacks, and for	cism; −1 action penalty for
Sp 5 min.	apprentices)	nature 4 min.	spells cast against Legion-	nondivination spells; hated;
Pr 5 min.	Sp "C" max.	quests 5 min.	naires; +1 action bonus	owes 40–60 days' service;
		divination	to divination spells;	difficult to leave Order
		encouraged.	the Vision.	or to adopt role during play.

Legionnaire Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 4 min.	Sp "B" min.	Wealth 5 max.;	Trump bonus for	Death if captured by a
		nature 6 max.;	mysticism against Dark	Dark Knight; extra
		demeanor	Knights and for mystic	brutal treatment while
		6 max.	defense against	a prisoner of Skull
			Solamnics; code	Knights; apprentices.
			improvement bonus;	
			apprentices; can	
			acquire roleduring play.	

Legionnaire Scout

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
All must	Pe "B" min.	Demeanor	Trump bonus to	No trump bonus for
be 3 min.	Pr "C" max.	6 max.;	hide and to track	Pr actions that involve
		nature from	in nature; no	leadership attempts;
		red aura card;	restrictions to false	death if captured by
		Adventurer	roles; apprentice;	a Dark Knight;
		or better;	can acquire role	apprentice.
		wealth 5 max.	during play.	

Legionnaire Sorcerer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Re 4 min.	Re "B" min.	Demeanor and	Trump bonus for sorcery	Death if captured by Dark
		nature 6 max.;	in combat vs. Dark	Knights; subject to interroga-
		wealth 5 max.;	Knights and to defend	tion by Thorn Knights prior
		apprentices.	vs. Solamnics; mentor;	to execution; apprentices.
			apprentices; can adopt	
			role during play.	

Legionnaire Warrior

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 5 min.	Ag "C" min.	Any race with	Trump bonus to	Death if captured by a
Dx 5 min.	Dx "C" min.	acceptable	deal with common	Dark Knight; no trump
En 6 min.	En "C" min.	scores and codes;	folk and in combat	bonus to deal with Dark
St 6 min.	St "C" min.	wealth 5 max.;	with Dark Knights;	Knights or Solamnics;
Pe 5 min.	Dx or St "A"	demeanor 6 max.;	use Pr to acquire	apprentices.
Sp 4 min.	Re "C" max.	nature 6 max.	goods in city; can	
Pr 5 min.	Pe "B" min.		assume role during	
	Sp "C" max.		play; apprentices.	

'Loyal Servant'

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Re 4 min.	Any.	Wealth 3 max.	Trump bonus for	Re action to
Sp 4 min.			eavesdropping;	convince others
			can acquire role	of sincerity.
			during play.	

Mariner

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 5 min.	Dx "B" min.	Human, half-elf,	Trump bonus for	−3 ST or AG action
EN 4 min.	EN "B" max.	elf, or minotaur;	actions at sea or	penalty in land combat;
RE 5 min.	ST "B" max.	demeanor and	related to ships.	cannot acquire role
PE 5 min.		nature may differ		during play without
		by no more than 2		sea background.

Mercenary Warrior

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
All Physical	All Physical	Any race with	Action to gain	No trump bonus
scores 4 min.	codes "C" min.	acceptable scores	trump bonus	for PR actions
Dx or ST 5 min.	Dx or ST "A"	and codes.	in battle; can	except to resist
EN 6 min.	RE "B" max.		acquire role	mysticism.
SP 6 max.	SP "C" max.		during play.	

Merchant

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
RE 3 min.	Any.	Nature 4 min.;	Owns a business;	No trump bonus
PE 3 min.		wealth	trump bonus for	to PR actions for
PR 3 min.		between	trade; can acquire	charitable or
		4 and 6.	role during play.	selfless goal.

Monk

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 6 min.	SP "B" min.	Human or	Trump bonus for	May use only VL or L
EN 6 min.		half-elf;	unarmed combat	weapons and only
RE 5 min.		spiritualism	or combat with	VL armor and shield;
PE 6 min.		and necro-	VL melee or	difficult to acquire role
SP 7 min.		mancy	thrown weapons.	during play.
PR 6 min.		forbidden.		

Mystic-Sorcerer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
RE 6 min.	RE "B" min.	By race.	Those with "A"	No Physical codes
SP 6 min.	SP "B" min.		RE and SP codes	higher than "C"
			can combine	(may lower them
			spheres with	voluntarily).
			schools; can adopt	
			role during play.	

Qualinesti Rebel

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages†	Disadvantages
AG 6 min.**	AG "C" max.*	Qualinesti	Secret signs and	Change in nature after
Dx 6 min.**	Dx "B" min.*	elves or	codes; resistance	two quests that involve
EN 8 max.**	EN "C" max.*	half-elves.	acquaintances;	fighting elves; full elves
ST 8 max.**	ST "B" min.*		can contact other	get no trump bonus for
PR 6 min.**			rebels; *trump*	non-elf-related PR
			bonus in sword	actions while half-elves
			combat and when	get no trump bonus for
			using PE in forest;	elf-related PR actions
			can acquire role	(except for resisting
			during play.	mystic magic).

** Listed scores reflect elf requirements. Half-elves take two minimums and one maximum.
* Listed codes reflect elf requirements. Half-elves take one minimum and neither maximum.
† Half-elves enjoy only one of the two advantages printed in *italic type*.

Rider

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 5 min.	DX *or* ST "A"	Barbarian	Trump bonus	–3 ST and AG penalty
DX 5 min.	(other code	human only;	for mounted	when fighting on foot;
EN 6 min.	in the pair	wealth 3 max.	maneuvers and	cannot acquire role
ST 6 min.	is "B" min.)		attacks; begins	during play.
PE 5 min.	EN "B" max.		play with light	
	RE "D" max		war horse.	
	SP "B" max.			

River Pirate

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Any.	Nature from	Trump bonus	No trump bonus to
		red aura card;	for actions	PR actions involving
		wealth between	involving river	other cultures;
		4 and 6.	travel.	outsiders can't adopt
				the role during play.

Rogue

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
AG 5 min.	PE "C" min.	By race.	Trump bonus for	No trump bonus to PR
DX 5 min.	SP "B" min.		PR actions invol-	actions with authorities;
PE 5 min.			ving criminals and	cannot use VH weapons.
SP 4 min.			for certain channel-	
			ing or meditation	
			spells; can adopt	
			role during play.	

Rogue Knight

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	EN "A"	Human	Trump bonus	No trump bonus to
ST 6 min.	ST "A"	or half-elf;	when fighting	resist mysticism; death
SP 5 min.	RE "C" max.	demeanor 5 max.;	Dark Knights,	if captured by Dark
PR 5 min. *but*	SP "C" max.	nature 5 max.;	for PR actions	Knights; must have been
PR 8 max.		wealth 3 max.	to impersonate a	a Dark Knight to acquire
			Dark Knight, and	role during play.
			for mounted melee	
			attacks; can acquire	
			role during play.	

Solamnic Auxiliary Sorcerer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
EN 6 min.	RE "B" min.	Nature 5 max.;	Prestige offers bonus	Owes 40 days' service
		demeanor	of 1 quest when	to the Order each year;
		4 max.	dealing with Solamnics	gains the foes of the
			and allies; support	Solamnics; Knight's Trial
			for missions.	to adopt role
				during play.
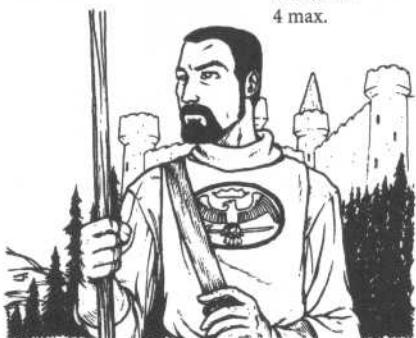
APPENDIX ONE

Spell Broker

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 6 max.	Re "B" max.	Few derive	Trump bonus to	No trump bonus for Pr
Pr 4 min.	Sp "C" max.	nature from	Pr actions for	actions to benefit other
	Pr "B" min.	a card with	self-promotion;	sorcerers; overcoming
		a white aura.	+3 action bonus for	greed requires point of
			signature spell; can	principle action.
			adopt role during play.	

Spellfilch

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Dx 4 min.	Re "B" min.	Unique thief	Trump bonus for	Enemy; must have had
	or	"signature."	spells involving	past roguish role to
	Sp "B" min.		thief activities.	acquire role in play.

'Staunch Supporter'

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Re 4 min.	Any.	Wealth of 7 min.	Trump bonus	*Challenging Reason*
Sp 4 min.			to deal with	*(Spirit)* action to con-
			lord's servants	vince others of true
			and minions.	sympathies; can adopt
				role during play only
				under a new regime.

Street Performer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 4 min.	Ag "C" min.	Wealth 3 max.	Can play/dance	No trump bonus to
Pr 4 min.	Pr "C" min.		automatically	Pr actions to deal
	Sp "C" min.		or with a trump	with middle or
			bonus; *easy*	upper classes.
			Presence action to	
			learn information;	
			heroes with musi-	
			cal skill can acquire	
			role during play.	

Street Urchin

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Must explain	Wealth 3 max.;	Can find hideout	Pr actions to deal
	any code	three quests	in home city;	with known foes
	beyond "C."	or less; child.	network of friends;	must be *daunting* or
			eavesdropping;	higher; cannot acquire
			trump bonus	role during play.
			to steal.	

Thug

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Any.	Any.	Demeanor 6 min.	*Easy Presence (Spirit)* action to intimidate foe foe with lower St (or Ph) score; proper personality types can acquire role during play.	Honorable characters will challenge bullying thugs to a duel.

True Believer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sp 4 min.	Sp "B" min. (for priests) *or* Sp "D" min. (for followers)	Must select a god to worship.	+3 action bonus for Pr actions involving other believers; trump bonus to any action once per quest; can adopt role during play.	Pr action penalty between −1 and −6 points when dealing with those who don't share beliefs.

Warrior-Mystic

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 5 min. En 5 min. St 7 min. Sp 7 min.	En "C" max. St "B" min. Re "C" max. Sp "B" min.	Human, half-elf, Kagonesti, Hylar, Klar, Neidar, or Daewar; 1 required sphere	Trump bonus for combat spells and unarmed attacks; can acquire role during play.	Forbidden spheres; no trump bonus for attacks at far missile range.

Warrior-Sorcerer

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 5 min. En 5 min. St 7 min. Re 7 min.	Dx "C" max. St "B" min. Re "B" min. Sp "C" max.	Human, half-elf, Silvanesti, or Qualinesti; 1 required school	Trump bonus for combat spells; can acquire role during play.	Forbidden schools; no trump bonus for thrown/missile weapons; no shield allowed.

Yeoman

Ability Scores	Ability Codes	Other Req's	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ag 5 min. Dx 5 min. En 6 min. St 6 min. Pe 5 min.	Dx *or* St "A" (other code is "B" min.) En "C" max. Re "B" max. Pe "B" min. Sp "B" max.	Human, Neidar, elf, or half-elf; nature 3 max.; wealth 5 max.	Trump bonus to gain or avoid surprise outdoors and for Re and Pe actions to follow a path or trail.	−3 action penalty when indoors or underground; cannot acquire role during play.

Action	Difficulty	Abil.	Opp.	Comments
Abandon/Refuse a fight	Varies	RE	PR	Solamnic Knights (Crown difficulty: avg (8); Sword difficulty: chal (12); Rose difficulty: daun (16))
Adjudication of the Code	Varies	PR	PR	Dark Knights (Trivial avg (8); Minor: chal (12); Major: daun (16); Egregious: desp (20))
Avoid being disarmed	Avg (8)	EN or AG	ST or DX	EN/ST for melee range; AG/DX for missile or artillery range
Avoid dragonawe	Avg (8)	SP	PR	Allows hero to overcome fear of dragon
Avoid falling debris	Avg (8)	AG	–	Failure results in loss of card
Avoid spray/spit attack	Avg (8)	AG	DX	Failure results in injury
Calm/Incite the crew	Avg (8)	PR	PR	Allows hero to stop mutinies or start them
Charge	Easy (4)	AG	AG	+3 bonus to melee attack but –3 penalty to next defense
Citadel interview	Varies	SP	SP	Allows hero to become an aspirant in the Citadel of Light; difficulty varies according to hero's nature (white aura: avg (8); red aura: chal (12); black aura: daun (16))
Climb into or out of a pit	Avg (8)	AG	–	Allows hero to climb walls of pit
Combined action	–	–	–	Leader performs the action but adds others' scores to action score
Combined casting	Varies	RE	–	For a group of sorcerers, difficulty is based on spell difficulty
Command a magical minion	Avg (8)/Chal (12)	PR	PR or RE	Average difficulty for normal orders; challenging difficulty if orders could lead to minion's death
Coordinated action	Avg (8)	PR	Varies	Leader attempts to organize a group for a complex action; success adds half the total of the others' scores to the next action.
Coordinated attack	Easy (4)	PR	PE	Success lets leader attack for the group, drawing an extra card for each attacker's score
Coordinated casting	Varies	RE	–	For a sorcerer with nonsorcerer assistants; difficulty is based on spell difficulty
Counter a grab	Avg (8)	ST	ST	Easier if the target object is small or dangerous
Cut or smash	Avg (8)	ST or DX	EN or AG	Opposed only if target item is held or guarded.
Defend one's honor	Varies	PR	PR	Solamnic Knights (Trivial: avg (8); Minor: chal (12); Transgression: daun (16); Major: desp (20))
Dig out of the avalanche	Easy (4)	ST	–	For larger cave-ins, several successful actions required
Disarm	Chal (12)	ST or DX	EN	Success by more than 5 points inflicts normal attack damage, too.
Discover a mantra	Avg (8)	SP	–	Mystic requires number of weeks equal to SP score
Drive off a swarm	Avg (8)	AG	PR	Requires ten successful actions
Endure overlord's climate	Varies	EN	–	To survive terrain climates (Beryl: avg (8); Gellidus: chal (12); Khellendros: avg (8); Malys: daun (16); Sable: avg (8))
Evade a coordinated attack	Chal (12)	PE	PR	Defense against a group attack
Evade a grapple	Avg (8)	ST	ST	Success allows a normal attack
Extinguish magical flame	Avg (8)	DX	–	To put out magical flame
Fast attack	–	–	–	Resolve attack immediately with no defense to the counterattack
Find shelter	Avg (8)	PE	–	To find a small cave or other shelter
Find safety (a pit)	Avg (8)/Chal (12)	PE	–	Avg difficulty if looking; chal difficulty if not looking

Actions

Action	Difficulty	Abil.	Opp.	Comments
Find underwater object	Avg (8)	Pe	–	To find lost object while underwater
Grab	Avg (8)	St	St	Must grapple first to grab small or dangerous things
Grapple	Chal (12)	St	St	Easy action to maintain a grapple
Great blow	–	–	–	Doubles Strength score for attack but with no counterattack defense
Hold or delay	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	Keep a foe from slipping past
Impress the crowd	Chal (12)	Spec	–	Hero's action determines ability used
Impress the elves	Chal (12)	Pr	Pe	To impress Qualinesti elves
Induction examination	Avg (8)	Pr	Pr	To join the Legion of Steel
Initial interview	Avg (8)	Re/Pr	Pr	To apply for the Legion of Steel
Investigate the campsite	Avg (8)	Pe	–	Thorough search requires time
Knight's trial	Avg (8)	Pr	Pr	To join the Knights of Solamnia
Learn a variation	Avg (8)/Chal (12)	Sp	–	Mystics with "A" Spirit have avg difficulty; mystics with "B" Spirit have chal difficulty
Look upon Goldmoon	Avg (8)	Sp	–	Hero sees Goldmoon's beauty
Make a libram	Avg (8)	Re	–	To make a blank libram; sorcerers only
Maintain the helm	Chal (12)	Ag	–	Maintain control of ship
Notice danger (ghouls)	Avg (8)	Pe	–	Heroes must be alert
Prevent a tackle	Avg (8)	St	St	Success allows a normal attack
Quick march	Varies	En	None	Difficulty depends on how much time the hero wants to save.
Reckless attack	–	–	–	Allows an extra attack but no defense to the counterattack
Record a spell	Avg (8)/Chal (12)	Re	–	Sorcerers with "A" Reason have avg difficulty; sorcerers with "B" Reason have chal difficulty
Rescue cave-in victim	Varies	Pe	None	Difficulty depends on rockfall size
Rush	Avg (8)	Ag	Ag	Slip past the enemy in combat
Scale the rubble	Chal (12)	Ag	–	Failure could result in loss of card
Scavenge shipwreck	Avg (8)	Pe	–	To find usable materials on shipwrecks
Scrutinize an area (caravan)	Avg (8)	Pe	–	To examine who and what is in a caravan
Search for another route	Easy (4)	Pe	–	Allows hero to find another way around or out of something, if such a thing exists
Search the artificial tunnel	Avg (8)	Pe	–	Allows hero to figure out craftsmanship
Search the natural tunnel	Avg (8)	Pe	–	Allows hero to spot unnatural substances
Shield slam	Avg (8)	St	En	Use shield as a weapon instead of using it to defend
Tackle	Chal (12)	St	St	Tackled foe gets no counterattack but foe gets a +3 Strength bonus in counterattack if the tackle fails
Take a shortcut	Varies	Re	None	Difficulty depends on how much time the hero wants to save.
Test of faith	Varies	Sp	Pe	To join a Holy Order (same aura: avg (8); one color removed aura: chal (12); opposed aura: daun (16))
Test of Takhisis	Avg (8)	Pr	Pr	To join the Dark Knights
Total defense	–	–	–	Sacrifice an attack to double Agility or Endurance for defense
Traverse overlord's terrain	Varies	Pe	–	To avoid terrain hazards (Beryl: avg (8); Gellidus: daun (16); Khellendros: chal (12); Malys: chal (12); Sable: avg (8))
Upholding the Legacy	Varies	Pr	Pr	Legionnaires (Trivial avg (8); Minor: chal (12); Major: daun (16); Egregious: desp (20))
Work the rigging	Avg (8)/Chal (12)	St	–	Used for any shipboard activity

Short Range Weapon	Type	Class	Dmg.	Special Race	Other
Swords					
Stiletto[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	None	6-inch needlelike blade
Dagger[1]	Melee*	VL	+2	None	8-inch blade
Short sword[1]	Melee*	L	+3	None	15-inch blade
Cutlass[1]	Melee*	L	+4	None	30-inch curved blade
Scimitar[1]	Melee*	M	+5	None	3-foot curved blade
Broad sword[1]	Melee*	H	+6	None	3-foot blade
Long sword[1]	Melee*	H	+7	None	3.5-foot blade
Two-handed sword[2]	Melee*	VH	+8	None	4-foot blade
Great sword[2]	Melee*	VH	+9	None	5-foot blade
Hammers					
Sap[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	None	A leather pouch of lead pellets
Baton[1]	Melee*	VL	+2	None	A slender wooden club
Bludgeon[1]	Melee*	L	+3	None	A short, weighted club
Cudgel[1]	Melee*	L	+4	None	A traditional club
Mitre[1]	Melee*	M	+5	None	A short, sturdy mace
Flail[1]	Melee*	H	+6	None	Two batons connected by a chain
Mace[2]	Melee*	H	+7	None	A heft with a heavy head
Morningstar[2]	Melee*	VH	+8	None	A heavy, spiked mace
War hammer[2]	Melee*	VH	+9	None	A hammer with a large spike
Axes					
Adze[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	None	A carpenter's tool
Hand axe[1]	Melee*	VL	+2	None	A carpenter's tool
Sickle[1]	Melee*	L	+3	None	A slender crescent blade
Scythe[1]	Melee*	L	+4	None	A sickle mounted on a staff
Pick[1]	Melee*	M	+5	None	A heavy spikelike mining tool
Battle axe[1]	Melee*	H	+6	None	A hefty axe with a spiked head
Broad axe[2]	Melee*	H	+7	None	A single-bladed headsman's axe
Great axe[2]	Melee*	VH	+8	None	A double-bladed broad axe
Poleax[2]	Melee*	VH	+9	None	A broad axe on a shaft
Polearms					
Quarterstaff[2]	Melee	VL	+1	None	A 6-foot iron-shod pole
Javelin[2]	Melee	VL	+2	None	A slender spear for throwing
Spears[2]	Melee*	L	+3	None	A traditional throwing weapon
Fork[2]	Melee*	L	+4	None	A long shaft with two pikes
Trident[2]	Melee*	M	+5	None	A three-pronged spear
Lance[2]	Melee	H	+6	None	A heavy spear (incl. dragonlances)
Billhook[2]	Melee	H	+7	None	A staff with a many-pronged tip
Pike[2]	Melee	VH	+8	None	A staff with a spiked tip
Halbard[2]	Melee	VH	+9	None	A staff with a spiked, bladed tip
Unusual					
Bear claws[1]	Personal	VL	+1	None	A pair of heavy gauntlets with iron spikes
Garrote[1]	Personal	VL	+1	None	A thin, strong cord or wire
Belaying pin[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	Sea barbarian	A short, thick wooden peg
Shuriken[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	None	An oriental throwing star
War dart[1]	Melee*	VL	+2	None	A heavy, barbed dart
Death's tooth kala[1]	Melee	VL	+2	None	A dagger with a short, wooden handle and flexible blade
Mallet[1]	Melee*	VL	+2	Kagonesti	A short-handled hammer
War pipe[1]	Melee	VL	+2	Mtn. barbarian	An iron weapon and smoking pipe
Weighted sash[1]	Melee	VL	+2	None	A band of silk with metal weights
Whippik[1]	Melee†	VL	+2	Kender	A thin wand of ironwood with catgut
Fang[1]	Melee	L	+2	Sea barbarian	A pointed iron rod with a hook below the point
Caff[1]	Melee	L	+3	Dwarf	A 3-foot long pick and gaff hook
Soris[1]	Melee	L	+3	Elf	A 2-part staff with a spiked tip and looped rope
Teeth chain[1]	Melee	L	+3	None	A length of barbed chain with a handle
Hookshaft[2]	Melee	M	+4	None	A wooden pole with a 3-pronged rake
Hoopak[1]	Melee†	M	+4	Kender	A 5-foot ironwood staff with a spiked tip and sling
War club[1]	Melee	M	+4	Kagonesti	A wooden club with stones
Gnome pick[1]	Melee	M	+5	Gnome	A hammer with a curved fluke to pierce armor and spike
Sabre[1]	Melee	M	+5	Sea barbarian	A short, curved sword
Crook blade[1]	Melee	H	+6	None	A machete-like melee weapon
Frostreaver[2]	Melee	VH	+8	Ice barbarian	An axe carved from ice
Tessto[1]	Melee	VH	+9	Minotaur	A six-foot spiked club

[1]Requires only one hand to use. [2]Requires two hands; no shield allowed. *Also can be thrown. **Also usable in melee combat. †Also can hurl missiles. ‡Suffers no damage when used against unarmored opponents.

WEAPONS ～

Weapon	Type	Class	Dmg.	Special Race	Other
Missile Range					
Prodd[2]	Missile	VL	+1	None	A pellet-firing crossbow
Bows					
Self bow[2]	Missile	VL	+2	None	A very light, simple bow
Light crossbow[2]	Missile	L	+3	None	A basic crossbow
Horse bow[2]	Missile	L	+4	None	A built and backed recurve bow
Crossbow[2]	Missile	M	+5	None	A stirrup-drawn crossbow
Long bow[2]	Missile	H	+6	None	A large, recurved bow
Heavy crossbow[2]	Missile	H	+7	None	A crank-drawn crossbow
Great bow[2]	Missile	VH	+8	None	A large, compound recurved bow
Arbalest[2]	Missile	VH	+9	None	A massive crossbow
Unusual					
Blowgun[2]	Missile	VL	+1	None	A long, hollow tube for firing darts
Lasso[1]	Thrown	VL	—	None	A simple length of rope
Ice flask[1]	Thrown	VL	+1	Ice barbarian	A missile weapon of hollow bone
Sling[1]	Missile	L	+2	None	A strap for hurling stones
Bolas[1]	Thrown**	L	+2	None	Three leather-covered stones attached to a stone ring
Throwing stick[1]	Thrown	L	+2	Plains barbarian	Also thrown at far missile range
Ice grenade[1]	Thrown	L	+2	Ice barbarian	A metal sphere filled with water
Throwing stone[1]	Thrown	L	+2	Ice barbarian	A specially shaped bit of stone
Throwing blades[1]	Thrown	L	+3	None	Three hinged blades folded
Oil flask[1]	Thrown	L	+3	None	A glass or ceramic container filled with flammable liquid
Pellet bow[2]	Missile	L	+2	Mtn. barbarian	A short length of wood fitted with a string
Chakrum[1]	Thrown**	M	+3	None	A sharp-edged throwing disc
Staff sling[2]	Missile**	M	+4	None	A sling on a long pole
Ice crossbow[2]	Missile	M	+4	Ice barbarian	A crossbow made of wood and bone
Dropnet	Thrown	H	—	None	A heavy net
Singing bow[2]	Missile	VH	+9	Centaur	A large, recurved bow
Mounted					
Light lance[1]	Mounted	H	+9	None	Required Physique is 10
Skymace[2]	Mounted	VH	+10	None	A haft with a heavy head and a tether
Heavy lance[1]	Mounted	VH	+10	None	Required Physique is 15
Aerial lance[1]	Mounted	VH	+11	None	Required Physique is 20
Abyssal lance[1]	Mounted	VH	+15	None	A lance with a barbed shaft and a cowl
Improvised					
Cup/Mug[1]	Melee*	VL	0 (+2)	None	Ph 5
Bottle[1]	Melee*	VL	+1	None	Ph 6
Lantern[1]	Thrown**	VL	+1	None	Ph 6
Torch[1]	Melee*	VL	+1 (+4)	None	Ph 8
Platter/Tray[1]	Melee*	L	+3	None	Ph 21‡‡
Tankard/Jug[1]	Melee*	L	+3	None	Ph 9
Poker/Candlestick[1]	Melee*	L	+4	None	Ph 36‡
Stool[1]	Melee*	M	+4	None	Ph 16
Skillet[1]	Melee*	M	+2	None	Ph 25‡
Table leg[1]	Melee*	M	+4	None	Ph 12
Chair[2]	Melee*	H	+5	None	Ph 15
Table[2]	Melee	H	+5	None	Ph 18
Bucket/Keg[2]	Melee	H	+5	None	Ph 20
Bench[2]	Melee	VH	+6	None	Ph 18
Small strongbox[2]	Melee	VH	+7	None	Ph 42
Chandelier[2]	Melee	—	+10	None	Ph 15
Bookcase[2]	Melee	—	+15	None	Ph 20
Shields					
Buckler[1]	Melee*	VL	−1/—	None	A very small, circular shield; attack bonus 1
Kite[1]	Melee*	L	−2/+1	None	A small triangular shield; attack bonus 2
Target[1]	Melee	M	−3/+2	None	A heavy circular shield; attack bonus 3
Horse[1]	Melee	H	−4/+3	None	A heavy triangular shield; attack bonus 4
Tower[1]	Melee	VH	−5/+4	None	A massive rectangular shield; attack bonus 5
Armor					
Padded silk	N/A	VL	−1	None	A quilted suit of silk and cotton
Leather	N/A	L	−2	None	A suit of stiffened, boiled leather
Chain mail	N/A	M	−3	None	A suit of fine, metal mesh
Scale	N/A	H	−4	None	A suit of small, overlapping plates
Dragonscale armor	N/A	H	−4/−11°	None	A suit of overlapping dragon scales
Plate	N/A	VH	−5	None	Traditional knight's armor

‡‡Suffers no damage when used as a weapon, breaks only when attacker suffers a mishap. ° Defense rating versus normal attack/defense rating versus same color (as scale) dragon breath.

History and Background Sheet

Parents and Siblings

Status of Parents	Card
Relationship with Parents	
Status of Siblings	Card
Relationship with Siblings	
Family Background	Card
Family's Place in Community	

Enemies, Allies, and Companions

Major Enemies					Card
Their Tactics					
Important Friends					Card
Their Resources					
Companion					Card
Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def
Notes					

Important Events

	Card
	Card
	Card
	Card
	Card

Skills

Skills	
Training in	

RACE DESIGN SHEET

Race Name _____

General Comments _____

Basic Description

Height _____

Weight _____

Hair _____

Eyes _____

Skin _____

Lifespan _____

Notes _____

Ability Scores/Codes

	Scores		Codes	
	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.
Agility				
Dexterity				
Endurance				
Strength				
Reason				
Perception*				
Spirit				
Essence				

*Acute/Diminished senses _____

Additional Requirements

To select this race, a hero must ...

Natural Defenses

Damage Rating _____

Defense Rating _____

Race Advantage

Any card is trump when the hero ...

Special Abilities

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Race Disadvantage

No card is trump when the hero ...

Roleplaying

Heroes of this race should be ...

ROLE DESIGN SHEET

Role Name

Description

Roleplaying

Heroes using this role should be portrayed as …

Appearance

Heroes using this role can be recognized because …

Races Allowed
(circle all that apply)

| Centaur | Elf | Half-elf | Kender |
| Dwarf | Gnome | Human | Minotaur |

Ability Requirements

	Scores Min.	Max.	Codes Min.	Max.		Scores Min.	Max.	Codes Min.	Max.
Agility					Reason				
Dexterity					Perception				
Endurance					Spirit				
Strength					Presence				

Additional Requirement

In order to take this role, a hero must …

Advantage

Any card used is automatically trump when trying to …

Disadvantage

Any card used is never trump when trying to …

Libram/Mantra Spell Design Sheet

Spell Name _____ Cost _____

Description _____
_____

Magic Type (circle one)	Spheres (circle all that apply)	Schools (circle all that apply)	Point Cost (from tables 1–5)
Sorcery	Alteration	Aeromancy	Invocation ____
Mysticism	Animism	Cryomancy	Range ____
Hybrid	Channeling	Divination	Duration ____
	Healing	Electromancy	Area ____
	Meditation	Enchantment	Effect ____
	Mentalism	Geomancy	Total points ____
	Necromancy	Hydromancy	Resisted ____
	Sensitivity	Pyromancy	
	Spiritualism	Spectramancy	
		Summoning	
		Transmutation	

1. Invocation

+1	30 minutes
+2	20 minutes
+3	10 minutes
+4	1 minute
+5	Instant

Action Bonus (circle one)

+3 ("A" code)
+1 ("B" code)

2. Range

+1	Personal
+2	Melee
+3	Near missile
+4	Far missile
+5	Artillery
+6	Visual
+7	Horizon
+8	500 miles
+9	Continent
+10	Alt. worlds
+11	The Gray
+12	Elemental
+13	The Abyss

3. Duration

+1	Instant
+2	1 minute
+3	15 minutes
+4	30 minutes
+5	1 hour

4. Area

	Groups	Places	Divining
+1	Individual	Individual	Minute
+2	Couple	Small room	Hour
+3	Small Group (5)	Large room	Day
+4	Large Group (10)	Small house	Week
+5	Crowd (25)	Large house	Month
+6	Platoon (50)	Keep or fort	Year
+7	Century (100)	Small castle	Decade
+8	Company (250)	Large castle	Century
+9	Regiment (500)	Fortress	Millennium

5. Effect

	Dmg./Def.	Healing	Other
+1	+/– 1 to 2	1 card/point	+/– 1 point
+2	+/– 3 to 5	2 cards/point	+/– 2 points
+3	+/– 6 to 9	3 cards/point	+/– 3 points
+4	+/– 10 to 14	4 cards/point	+/– 4 points
+5	+/– 15 to 20	5 cards/point	+/– 5 points
+6	+/– 21 to 27	6 cards/point	+/– 6 points
+7	+/– 28 to 35	7 cards/point	+/– 7 points
+8	+/– 36 to 44	8 cards/point	+/– 8 points
+9	+/– 45 to 54	9 cards/point	+/– 9 points

Monster Design Sheet

Monster Name _____

Description _____
_____

Basic Overview
(circle all that apply)

Size	Active Time	No. Encountered
Minute (<1 foot)	Pre-dawn	1
Tiny (1 foot)	Morning	2 or 3
Small (3 feet)	Noon	4 to 5
Medium (6 feet)	Afternoon	6 to 9
Large (12 feet)	Dusk	10 to 14
Huge (25 feet)	Evening	15 to 20
Giant (50 feet)	Night	21 to 27
Titanic (100 feet)	Late Night	28 to 35
_____	_____	_____

Diet	Movement*	Senses†
Carnivore	Walk ( )	Sight [+] [−]
Herbivore	Fly ( )	Hearing [+] [−]
Omnivore	Swim ( )	Smell [+] [−]
Scavenger	Climb ( )	Touch [+] [−]
Photosynthesis	Dig ( )	Taste [+] [−]
_____	_____	[+] [−]

*In terms of human walking speed. (Write "2×" for twice human speed, etc.)
†Check whether keen, average, or deficient.

Statistics

Abilities
Coordination _____
Physique _____
Intellect _____
Essence _____

Ratings
Damage _____
Defense _____

Special Abilities

Special Attacks

Special Defenses

Habitat
(circle all that apply)

Terrain

			Climate
Aerial	Hills	Sea, Shallow	Arctic
Badlands	Jungles	Sea, Depths	Subarctic
Beaches	Lakes/Ponds	Subterranean	Cold
Deserts	Marshes, Salt	Swamps	Temperate
Forests	Mountains	Tundra	Hot
Glaciers/Floes	Rivers	Urban	Subtropical
Grasslands	Sea, Bottom	_____	Tropical
_____	_____		_____

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BY

William W. Connors

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