

# EPYLLION

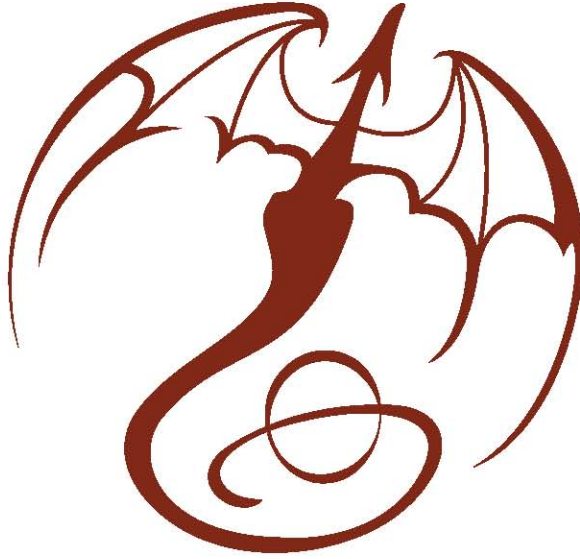
A DRAGON EPIC



A TABLETOP RPG BY MARISSA KELLY

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Long ago, the dragons of Dragonia drove back the Darkness, rescuing their way of life and protecting the land from a corrupting shadow. Dragonkin were victorious and thrived for thousands of sun cycles, yet the Darkness returned, creeping into places once thought of as safe and corrupting the hearts of dragons once more.

You are a new pilgrimage clutch of young drakes helping the Council to investigate rumors and discover the truth of the growing shadow in the land. Along with your fellow dragons, you must protect Dragonia, help both dragonkin and beasts of the wilderness overcome their troubles, and discover the true value of friendship.

## **Dedication**

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I dedicate this game to a new generation of roleplayers and to those among us who are brave enough to dream big and fight for the things that matter.

Thanks!  
-MK

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## Rules Inspired by...

*EPYLLION* is based on the Powered by the Apocalypse system used in *Apocalypse World*, *Dungeon World*, *Monsterhearts*, *Sagas of the Icelanders*, *Urban Shadows*, and more. This rules-light system gives *EPYLLION* simple mechanics that generate interesting stories with little-to-no prep time!

## Special Thanks To...

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## CHAPTER ZERO

# INTRODUCTION

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**I**n *EPYLLION*, you and your friends tell the tale of Dragonia and the noble dragons who live there. In fact, you get to play those dragons, and contribute directly to the story your group tells. *EPYLLION* is a tabletop roleplaying game where you and your friends play a clutch, a group of young drakes who lend a helping wing to other dragons and discover the true value of friendship.

## What Is Epyllion?

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The word epyllion refers to a short epic poem made in the style of the old epics like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. *EPYLLION* is a game about small heroes who bravely protect their world from a great danger while exploring a new and fantastic land, a small epic that your group will play out from start to finish!

When you play *EPYLLION*, you investigate rumors and discover the truth of a growing Darkness in Dragonia while dealing with the day-to-day problems of dragonkin. As you play, you talk to each other about what dragons do and how they live, building on each other's additions to the story, exploring the history of Dragonia, and shaping its destiny.

*EPYLLION* emphasizes working together as friends, exploring the challenge of growing up in a world where characters are not evil or good but complicated and redeemable. The fiction of *EPYLLION* echoes young adult stories like *Harry Potter* or *Percy Jackson*, making it fun for adults and ideal for families.

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# What Is Roleplaying?

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In a nutshell, roleplaying is a combination of improv acting and storytelling with rules. You and your group take on the role of characters in a world that one player, the Dragonmaster (DM) describes for you. The other players pretend to be brave dragons that work together to explore and protect their homeland, rolling dice when there is uncertainty about how characters overcome challenges in the world.

The player willing to take on the honor and responsibility of being the DM should know the rules and be able to confidently move the game along. But the DM isn't the only one responsible for creating the story: each player at the table is responsible for contributing their own unique twists that make the game interesting and fun! Roleplaying games are collaborative; a DM leans on the creativity of the players just as much as the players rely on the DM to describe the world.

If you are new to roleplaying and storytelling games, welcome! This rulebook is designed to help guide you and your friends through a fun and exciting game of *EPYLLION*. When I co-founded Magpie Games in 2011, I aimed to bring new people into the hobby of tabletop gaming, and I am happy to think that *EPYLLION* could be the first game in the hands of a new roleplayer.

There are few roleplaying games that allow you to actually play the dragons that drive and inspire so many stories. I am excited to introduce a dragon-centric game that empowers its players to bring their own unique visions of dragons to life!

Viva draconis!

## What You Need to Play

- ✧ **Players**—Epyllion needs one person to facilitate the game as the Dragonmaster and an additional two to five players to play the game as dragons.
- ✧ **Playbooks**—Each playbook is a two-sided sheet that describes a dragon the players can play. See page 36 for more on using playbooks to make dragons.
- ✧ **Map**—Your group will fill out Dragonia and its wonders as you play, so have a printout ready to draw on.
- ✧ **Dice**—You need a few six-sided dice. You can get by with two, but it's better to have enough for each player to have two dice of their own.
- ✧ **Pencils**—You will have to mark and erase on the playbooks during the game. Pencils make this a lot easier than pens.
- ✧ **Index cards**—Each player can fold an index card in half and make a name tent with their dragon's name and virtue written on it, for quick reference at the table. You can also use them to note new dragons that you encounter along your adventures.
- ✧ **Colorful gem sets**—Each player selects a set of gems to signify the color of their dragon when making characters. The players will pass the gems between them during the session, so it is important to have a full set of unique gems (around 10) per player. It helps to have a set of matching dice in the same color.
- ✧ **The X-Card**—This tool, designed by John Stavropoulos, makes playing together fun and comfortable. See page 107 for more on using the X-Card.
- ✧ **Time**—Try to set aside 3-4 hours to play, and think about scheduling multiple sessions. You can play just once, but your group will certainly end up wanting more!



If you've got the playbooks and DM materials, you probably won't need this book when you're actually playing the game, but it's nice to have it on hand for reference. I've put explanations and examples in throughout the book that can help you figure something out if you get stuck.

A few optional materials that you might want to have on hand are:

- ✧ **The *EPYLLION* Dragon Deck**—Coming up with a non-player character (NPC) on the fly can be difficult. The *EPYLLION* NPC Dragon Deck is full of cards featuring unique dragons with their own portraits, names, houses, occupations, demeanors, desires, and available moons! Everything a DM (Dragonmaster) needs to incorporate a new dragon into a session of *EPYLLION*.
- ✧ **The *Encyclopedia Draconica***—In addition to the core text of *EPYLLION*, the *Encyclopedia Draconica* is full of entries that add to the setting of Dragonia. Each entry reveals a new facet of dragon society, along with a **custom move** that you and your group can add to the game. (You can find more about moves on page 45 and custom moves on page 140.)

You get these extras as well as other custom *EPYLLION* materials from [www.magpiegames.com/epyllion](http://www.magpiegames.com/epyllion).



CHAPTER ONE: DRAGONIA

# WELCOME TO DRAGONIA

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**D**ragonia is a vast continent, filled shore to shore with draconic cities, strongholds, and ruins from sun cycles long past. The mega-continent and its northeastern archipelago—a sanctuary for drakes large and small—are surrounded by dangerous waters filled with kraken, aquatic beasts that can swallow an elder dragon whole in the blink of an eye.

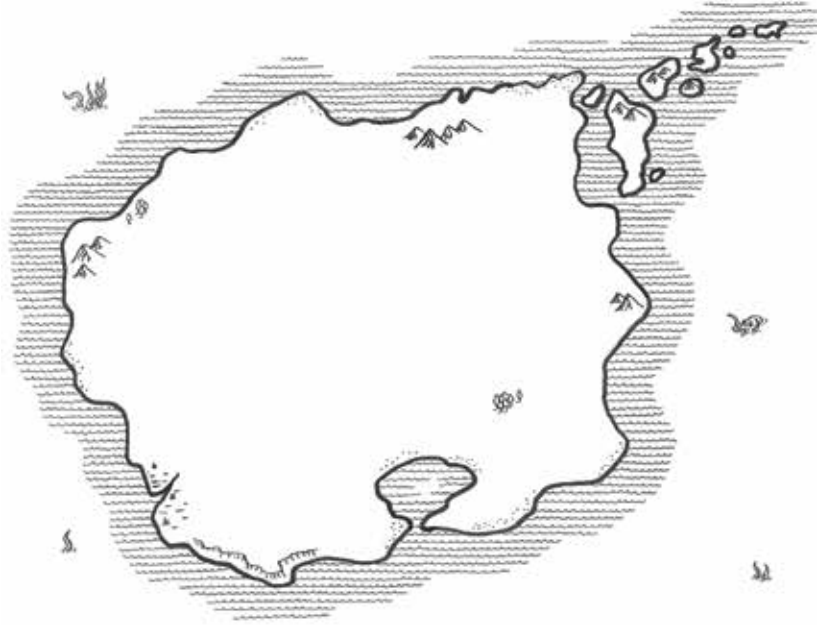
There are legends that speak of dragons who long ago built great vessels that could withstand attacks from kraken and journey to new lands, but no dragon has heard from them in ages—if such adventurous dragonkin ever existed at all.

## A Land of Dragons

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The kraken may hold the seas, but Dragonia is filled with every kind of terrain imaginable, more than any dragon can hope to explore in a lifetime. From the monstrous forbidden forests too thick to tame to the rolling dunes of sacred glass deserts, Dragonia is full of beauty and wonder growing and blossoming in every form imaginable.

Dragonia is not always kind or easy. Severe and demanding seasons often assault the landscape, shaping and changing whatever they touch: ice storms linger on far-off mountain peaks and unrelenting heat waves may turn a placid lake into a bubbling hotbed. Regardless, dragon society thrives wherever strongholds endure and drakes take wing.



## The Capital

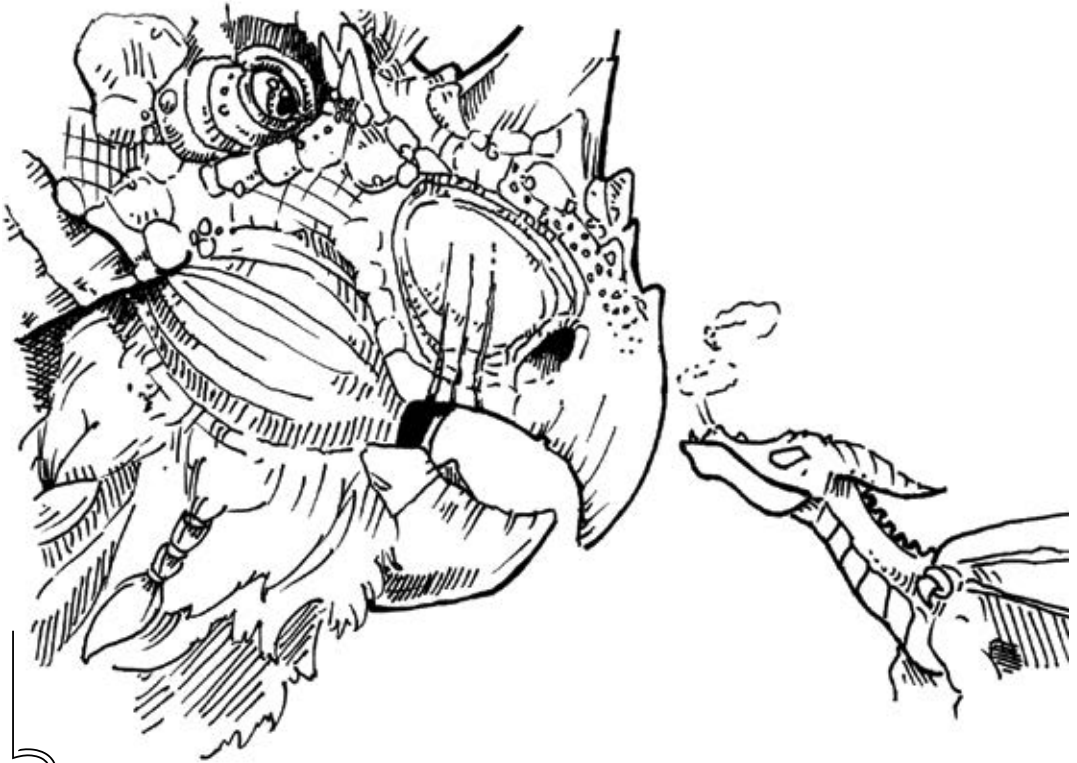
At the heart of that great civilization, the drums of the Capital beat a comforting rhythm that pulses throughout Dragonia. The Capital has stood as a symbol for all dragonkin for ages, a beacon of hope regardless of house, occupation, or age, a draconic masterpiece of massive architecture that seems to reach up to touch the moons themselves. All of Dragonia bands together around its spires and in its caverns to celebrate their traditions and way of life.

On any given day in the Capital, the skies and passages are full of dragons from all over Dragonia: some just flying through, others nesting for a bit longer. Trade-perches exhibit crafty carver craftsmanship or house Elder Wisewing's prophecies. The Swaying Gardens bustle with meetings and dragonkin sunbathing or smoking their colorful afternoon sugar sand. And the Basin Eating House's roof is always open to newcomers and regulars alike.

## The Council

One of Dragonia's proudest traditions is the Council and its appointees, a political body that roosts in the Capital. The beating of wings rarely ceases to echo throughout the tiered-dome Council chambers: dragons come and go bearing news of events in far-off provinces, and the Council addresses their concerns and celebrates their victories. All of the houses of Dragonia are represented in the Council, sharing power and responsibility for Dragonia. No one house can rule Dragonia alone.

Because of their unique disposition, young clutches are often tasked as intermediaries for the Council's business. After all, older dragons are busy; a clutch of young dragons should have plenty of time to see to whatever troubles come to the Council's attention...





## Dragon Society

Dragons—proud and majestic—hold deep traditions that took root in the foundations of Dragonia long ago. Their rich legacy stretches and spans the ages, taking wing in many amazing and fantastic ways.

## Gender in Dragonia

Dragons have no sex or gender. When they refer to each other, they use variations of the gender-neutral pronoun dre.

Nominative (subject)	Objective (object)	Possessive Determiner	Possessive Pronoun	Reflexive
<b>Traditional Pronouns</b>				
She/He snorted	I roared at her/him	Her/His scales shine bright	That perch is hers/his	She/He likes herself/himself
<b>Dragon Pronouns</b>				
Dre snorted	I roared at them	Dris scales shine bright	That perch is theirs	Dre likes dremself

In addition to these pronouns, dragons use a number of words that are more familiar to human ears: I, you, they, etc.

## Hatchery

A group of dragons (two or more) who are ready to bear offspring, must seek sponsorship from an elder dragon to form an affinity clutch. Affinity clutches are dedicated to caring for one another, and—if approved by their sponsor—they are granted the privilege of yielding eggs.



When the clutch is ready to produce a set of eggs, each dragon gathers a rare or precious object that they carefully weave into the nest that will hold the eggs. It is said that the eggs are soothed and comforted by the clutch's objects, allowing them to form a familial bond even when the affinity clutch is far away from the nest.

## Guardians

Guardians are plantlike creatures grown from ancient arcane seeds. They are charged with tending to dragon eggs and hatchlings, a responsibility they are honored to embrace. These beings insure that the affinity clutch is not forced to neglect any of their draconic obligations or responsibilities to look after their young before the young drakes are able to care for themselves.

Once the eggs have hatched, the guardians assign each drake to one of the houses to be brought up within its values and traditions. To this day, it remains a mystery just how the guardians sort hatchlings. Do the guardians know the hatchling's destiny? Do they create a destiny through their selection? Or do they simply see something dragonkin cannot? Whatever their method, the guardians are trusted partners who maintain a crucial balance of hatchlings among the Great Houses of Dragonia.

## Aging

Age is everything to dragonkin. Dragon society is an explicit hierarchy based on age; dragons who are older, wiser, and stronger no longer have to take seriously silly young drakes who don't know better. Every dragon knows their place, but drakes just setting off with their clutch for the first time are just discovering the role they will play in Dragonia.

As drakes age, they also grow substantially larger. Dragonia's structures are not built for small drakes: dining slats, racing pylons, and mossy sunning stones are all built for dragons far larger than a small drake. It's hard to be taken seriously when you can barely reach the perch for a meeting.

As dragons age, their magical connection to the five moons also changes and shifts, forcing them to dedicate themselves to one single moon and specialize in its magic. Older dragons are thus limited but powerful, focusing on one moon and losing their connection to the others.

There are five distinct stages of a dragon lifespan: Raw-Scaled Drake, Winged Drake, Long-Toothed Dragon, Bearded Dragon, and Elder Dragon.



### **Raw-Scaled Drake**

As a **Raw-Scaled Drake**, your scales are still soft, but your bite is fierce. Your wings are not yet tested, so you rely on gliding (and your paws and claws) to carry you on your journeys. Older dragons expect you to help them out and do what you are told. And for the most part, there isn't a lot else to do but follow their instructions.

Dragonica will take some growing into; its towering structures are not built for drakes of your size and your neck may feel strained as you struggle to navigate your way around dragon strongholds, but all of the moons watch over you and grant you strength should you call.

### **Winged Drake**

As a **Winged Drake**, your scales harden and your wings become strong enough to carry you, although you still have to stop and rest frequently. Dragonica still towers above you, but your increased size allows you to navigate massive structures much faster. Older dragons can carry more and fly higher than you, but you can demand raw-scaled drakes help you in your tasks, evening the score a bit with the older generations.

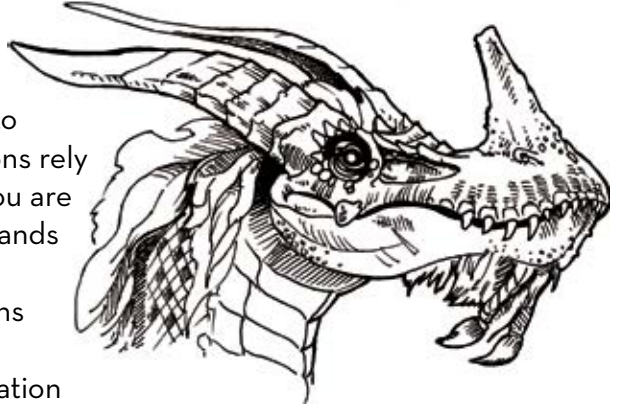
Finding your path as a drake can be fun, but you have lost your connection with one of the moons. You are closer to knowing what it is that older dragons have sacrificed for their power and strength.



## Long-Toothed Dragon

As a **Long-Toothed Dragon**, your teeth are longer and sharper than ever; beasts and dragons may think twice before tangling with you. At the peak of your physical abilities, you are strong, energetic, and able fly great distances without needing to rest. Dragonia's towering structures are familiar flying grounds and no longer intimidating obstacles.

Younger dragons want to be you, and older dragons rely on your prowess. But you are not immune to the demands of the moons. Your relationship to the moons continues to strengthen as you show your dedication to lunar powers by sacrificing your second moon. Many in Dragonia look to you for guidance, but you can still remember what it was to be very, very young.



## Bearded Dragon

As a **Bearded Dragon**, your scales are scarred and hard. Larger than life, you tower over most other dragons, and you are as big as you will ever be. The mighty structures of Dragonia were built for your massive frame. Your brawn and strength of mind reflect Dragonia's own heartbeat: steady, stable, and strong.

You have proven your dedication to the moons and have begun to master your lunar powers. You have given up three moons, but the connections you have left allow you to do amazing things. Most of Dragonia looks up to you, and it is your job to show dragonkin the path forward in uncertain times.

 **Elder Dragon**

As an **Elder Dragon**, your body is mightier than any weapon ever forged. You channel the favor of your moon with the fury of a hurricane. The whole of Dragonia is yours to command and influence, and little happens without some small drake reporting back to you on the events of the day.

Some dragons never live to see this golden age of being. Your enormous body requires a massive amount of energy to wield, and you require more time to rest than you did even as a drake. Sometimes you feel like you spend more time dreaming of adventure than actually adventuring!

You have chosen your path and the wind has carried you here. You have much to teach and share with Dragonia, and Dragonia puts you and your needs before all else. Yet you often think fondly of your younger days, when you had few responsibilities and so much freedom...

 **Ancients & Mystics**

If a dragon lives long enough to retire as an Elder Dragon, dre has the chance to **arise** and become an Ancient or a Mystic.

Dragonkin who arise to become **Ancients** give over their physical form to their moon to become avatars of lunar will. Ancients wander the earth unable to speak, intervening on behalf of their patron moon. These gigantic dragons wander through places that no dragon dares to enter—incorporeal and mute—leaving drakes to wonder at their motives and methods.

For the great sacrifice an Ancient has made, the moons grant them a sacred nesting place. Most dragonkin say that an Ancient's nesting place is a space that was significant to them in life before dre arose. The Feather Plains is said to be one such sacred spot where any drake small enough to hide in the tall grass could catch a glimpse of an Ancient at rest and perhaps even make a wish for the great Ancient to fulfill.

Dragons who arise and choose to become **Mystics** turn into giant sleeping moonstone statues that—when asked—provide guidance to dragonkin. Mystics are usually placed inside important strongholds or on sites of power and importance. Each Mystic grips a rare stone that symbolizes their grasp on the extraordinary knowledge that dre has dedicated dremself to preserving.

Clutches are often drawn to weatherworn ruins to seek out the wisdom of Mystics from sun cycles long past. Even in ancient ruins, Mystics who still clutch their gems are waiting to pass on their long-forgotten wisdom, in spite of any damage their physical form may have suffered in ages past.

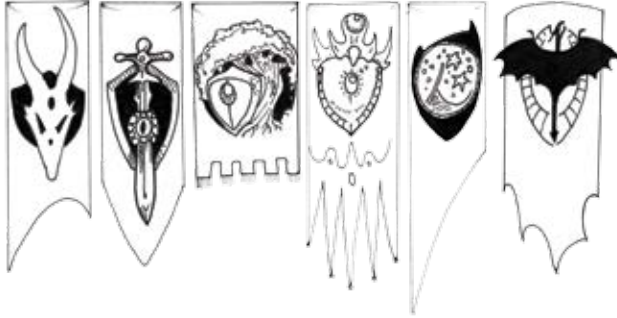


## Potential, Raw and Untested

Despite their small size, a raw-scaled drake's role in dragon society is full of potential. Dragons are never more connected to all of Dragonia's moons than when they are young, but drakes have yet to prove their worth to Dragonia and find their place among the beating wings of Dragonia's most powerful and knowledgeable dragons. A young dragon may become an excellent scout, a resilient warrior, or a thoughtful scholar who can see old disputes through a new lens.

There are many older dragonkin who can do one thing as no other dragon can, but all dragons know that only a clutch of young dragons can do *everything and anything*.





## The Great Dragon Houses

Dragonkin are diverse and capable rulers, but no one viewpoint can rule Dragonia alone. In order to see Dragonia flourish, dragons came together long ago to form the Great Houses: Brynback, Kebros, Myndoth, Rothscar, Semscale, and Tessith.

The Great Houses are charged with caring for the land and maintaining strongholds built in honor of older, influential dragonkin. The term “house” doesn’t refer to a physical territory, but rather an institution dedicated to using their resources to better Dragonia in a unique way. They also take charge of protecting and serving Dragonia, but each has unique perspectives and history that color how they might express that service.

Since each house has a role to play in Dragonia, dragonkin take their house’s traditions and responsibilities seriously, even when they find themselves rebelling against their elders. Older dragons often write of the day they realized that they were becoming their elders, the time in which they realized the value of ways that they once thought of as foolish and wasteful.

Yet, each house is deeply different. Often it can feel as if no two houses can see eye to eye, especially in times of crisis or trouble. But their histories are long and their commitment to Dragonia unparalleled. They are the beating heart of dragon society, alive and well!



## Brynback, the House of Steel

The House of Steel is often referred to as “the noble house” because of its dedication to Dragonia’s traditions and current political structures.

The House of Steel flies with their two-horned skull of honor emblem to symbolize that their commitment to dragonkin is not just scale deep; it cuts right to the bone. Brynback’s founders were the first to call for dragonkin to band together and restructure their resources in order to make Dragonia a better place to fly for dragons less fortunate. The dragonkin all over Dragonia answered that call and, eventually, the Great Houses were formed to help manage Dragonia’s holdings.

Brynback trains their own in the art of governing wisely and exercising leadership effectively. The House of Steel’s traditions have held strong for generations, and many of their champions continue to lead the charge for the betterment of Dragonia. Tradition is everything to Brynback—it is what keeps them strong for Dragonia, allowing them to help dragonkin who have the least.

Barge the Steel Champion is revered as one of Brynback’s finest such leaders. Long since arisen as an Ancient, Barge never thought much about philosophy, but if a drake from the House of Steel needs advice about a difficult obstacle, there is usually a fitting story of Barge the Steel Champion to guide the young dragon. These stories are held up as examples of Brynback’s values, even when they contradict each other; when questioned about the meaning of a story, elders will always say, “Steel is strong and resilient, but interpretations must change and shift with the times.”

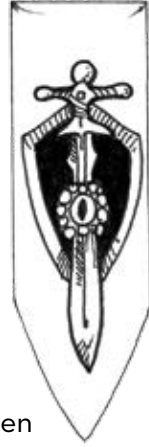
### **House saying:**

“True honor is bone deep.”

## Kebros, the House of Ruby

The House of Ruby is often referred to as “the fallen house” because of the role they played during the War of Shadow.

The House of Ruby bears the sigil of a blade piercing a precious stone. This imagery represents their dedication to serving and protecting Dragonia, no matter the cost. Members of House Kebros see clearly what threatens dragon society, and are the first to move to keep Dragonia safe, even if it is to come at great cost to their house.



This pragmatic nature was instilled in House Kebros by one of their founding elders, Keetsah the Chosen. Keetsah is praised throughout Dragonia for calling upon the moons to destroy a great hoard that divided the dragon clutches in a time of crisis. Keetsah’s hatchright claim to the hoard was substantial, but dre destroyed it completely rather than let dragons turn to war. As a result, the great dragon houses were formed to safeguard Dragonia’s resources and protect and rear the hatchlings of future generations.

Despite these fine accomplishments, many in House Kebros joined the forces of Darkness during the War of Shadow, taking corruption into their hearts. This betrayal tarnished their name as “defenders of dragonkin” and caused many to distrust the whole house. Even though dre is a powerful Mystic, Keetsah the Chosen was veiled in silk after the War, so dragonkin could no longer hear dris whispers of wisdom. Within the house, some dragons believe that they must do what they can to redeem House Kebros and atone—others seek to justify the betrayal as a sacrifice made to usher in a new future for all dragonkin.

### House saying:

“We are but blind until all is lost.”



## Myndoth, the House of Oak

The House of Oak is often referred to as “the house of secrets” because of their traditions of preserving knowledge and trading in secret rituals.

Myndoth’s emblem depicts an oaken tree and armament because, like growth rings of a tree, the most valuable of secrets guard themselves. The house has dedicated many magnificent strongholds to preserving artifacts and arcane knowledge for Dragonia. The House of Oak treats secrets as a garden that should be tended, nurtured, and respected. Secrets can be poisonous, beautiful, or medicinal; wisdom is knowing how to tend to each one in kind.

Olgz Gentlemind was one of Myndoth’s most influential founders: dre planted the first grove of guardians to look after Dragonia’s eggs. It is said that Olgz waited to reveal the well-guarded secret of the guardians until after the formation of the Council. Olgz never revealed how dre came upon the secret that has become so central to hatchlings in Dragonia... but Olgz—now an Ancient in the service of the Spirit Moon—always knew how to wait for the soil to be ready before planting seeds.

Some members of Myndoth pledge themselves to tending one type of secret, mastering its signs and applications and employing their expertise for the betterment of Dragonia. Others strive to collect and preserve seeds of mystery, secrets not yet tamed or understood, because, to the House of Oak, knowledge is power: a known unknown is better than an unknown unknown, after all.

### House saying:

“A secret known by many is no secret at all.”



## Rothscar, the House of Gold

The House of Gold is often referred to as “the architect house” because of their dedication (both physical and mental) to producing breathtaking draconic structures across Dragonia.

Rothscar’s insignia depicts a crown that symbolizes dominance over excellence. The tradition of recognizing elder dragons for their achievements came from the House of Gold. Moreover, the practice of dedicating strongholds to elder dragons was first enacted by the brilliant mind of Riptide the Hungry, Rothscar’s head founder. Dre saw Dragonia coming together under one banner, but refused to give up on the importance of individuality of dragonkin.



The House of Gold is the only house to have a “head founder” and thereafter “head-of-house.” This honorable title was first given to Riptide the Hungry for dris leadership and in recognition of dris perfectly attuned skills. Since Riptide the Hungry’s ascension to a Mystic, ambition and excellence have been rewarded in the House of Gold, the highest honor being the title of head-of-house.

Rothscar’s goals and values are diverse: the house supports dragons who perform amazing feats of architecture and engineering as well as those who work meticulously on finely detailed strategies involving puzzles and plans. Whatever their method, dragons of the House of Gold strive for perfection in all things. They leave greatness in their wake.

### House saying:

“Failure is temporary; excellence is eternal.”



## Semscale, the House of Jade

The House of Jade is often referred to as “the house of many paths” because they encourage all dragonkin to pursue enlightenment, no matter dris direction.

The House of Jade features a symbol that depicts a skycompass full of bright stars, to illuminate that there is no right way to find one’s path in Dragonia.

While the other houses all focus on one way of living—the right way, at least according to that house—

House Semscale instead encourages young drakes to their own paths forward in Dragonia.

Sish Wind Walker, one of the founders of the House of Jade, is remembered among all houses as “the trailblazer.” It was dre who guided dragonkin into the Great Houses for the first time. Sish Wind Walker’s own path led them to ascend as an Ancient. But legend has it that as young drakes, every Council member once crossed paths with the Ancient Sish Wind Walker. So drakes with their hopes set on councilship whisper to the moons, hopeful for Sish Wind Walker to help guide them there.

Semscale has a long-standing tradition of mentorships between elder dragons and drakes. They believe that there is much to be learned from cross-generational relationships and because of this, House Semscale has a high percentage of elder dragons who wait to ascend until their mentorships are complete and their drakes become their equals, both in age and in wisdom. The House of Jade knows that there are many paths to enlightenment and they offer many teachings to help young drakes find their path, place, and home in Dragonia.

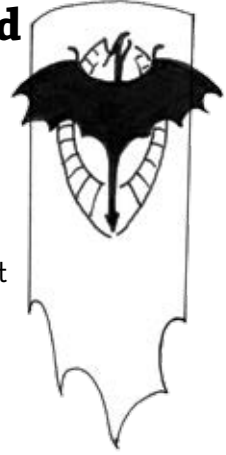
### House saying:

“A path walked once is walked enough.”

## Tessith, the House of Diamond

The House of Diamond is often referred to as “the house without a home” because of the loss of their holdings during the War of Shadow.

Tessith humbly presents the symbol of a dragon nesting on a diamond, a constant reminder of that which can be forged from constant pressure and little resources. While the other houses sit on hoards of gold and gems, the dragons of House Tessith know how to make do with little but their wings and scales, seizing victory from the jaws of defeat on more than one occasion.

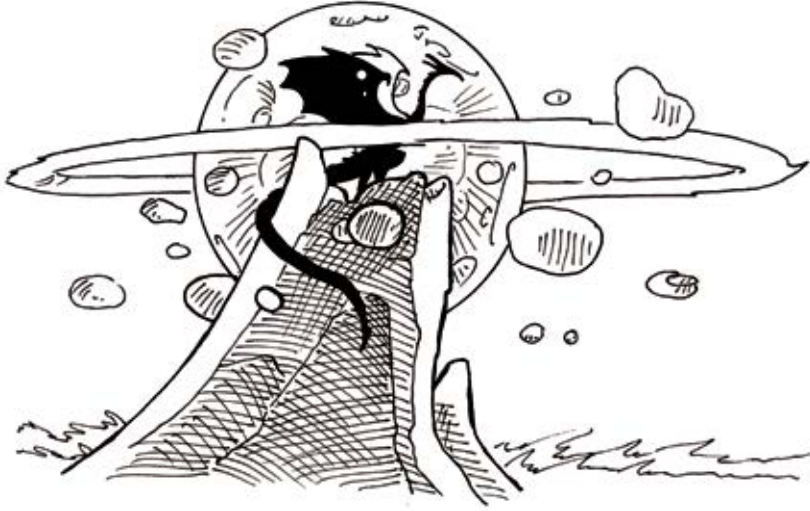


At the inception of the Great Houses, a young drake by the name of Hummsinger sang a moving song of celebration and future goodwill. Later that night, the moons shone brightly and Tash Broken Beak gathered all of the house founders together. At that fateful meeting, Tash Broken Beak spoke with every founder and found the common ground that formed the Dragon Council. Hummsinger’s song is credited with inspiring Tash Broken Beak, and it is still sung today in the Council chambers.

Tessith was truly tested during the War of Shadow. Their magnificent holdings were destroyed and humbled...but that pressure has made them hard like diamonds. Some drakes saw the loss of their holdings as an opportunity and led House Tessith to a nomadic existence, building wilderness outposts far away from the Capital and dedicating impermanent strongholds to their elders. However, a few of their members strive to restore the house without a home to its former glory, using their resources to keep greater hoards and build bigger and better strongholds than ever before.

### House saying:

“Many confuse need with comfort.”



## Magic of the Moons

It is said that the first dragon to wander the lands as an Ancient went by the name of Orvash the Voiceless One. Legend has it that the moons grew angry with the arrogance of dragonkin, rescinding their lunar gifts and sending forth a great tsunami to wash them all away. For one hundred sun cycles, Orvash stood against the stormy sea that threatened to wipe out all dragonkin, holding it at bay with the power of dris mighty will.

Many versions of the story exist, but they always end the same. Facing down a wave so great that it threatened to swallow the world whole, Orvash used the last of dris breath not to fight against the tidal forces but to thank the moons for *their* service to Dragonia, pledging to serve the moons with all of dris being. Orash's selfless sacrifice calmed the fury of the moons and the world was spared. The moons returned their magic to the dragons, moved by Orvash's humility in the face of great challenges.

Since those days, **moon magic** is granted to those who ask for the assistance of the great moons. Dragons who have served those moons have shaped Dragonia's traditions, crafting a strong reverence for the moons in all things draconic.



There are five moons that have a resident cycle around Dragonia:

- ✧ **Liberty Moon** whose power lies in the domain of purification and freedom;
- ✧ **Spirit Moon** whose vigor lies in the domain of growth and healing;
- ✧ **Stone Moon** whose strength lies in the domain of protection and resilience;
- ✧ **Storm Moon** whose fortitude lies in the domain of force and chaos;
- ✧ **Void Moon** whose energy lies in the domain of negation and deflection.

Moon magic is shaped by the desire and vision of the dragon that uses it; it is versatile and powerful, but it can also be unpredictable. Many drakes wish to summon forth the power of the moons but find themselves unable to control the lunar powers. Even the mightiest of elder dragons, though more experienced and wise to the ways of the moons, have trouble from time to time.

As a drake ages, dre needs less help from dris friends to access and wield the moons, but the drake has access to fewer and fewer moons to call upon for aid. Young drakes are granted access to all of the moons, and their gifts and the choices they make strengthen the bond with some moons and force them to sever the connection they have to others. Specialization and growth come at the cost of flexibility and youth.

## The Wilderness

The wilderness of Dragonia is a dangerous place for dragons, untamed and full of mystical creatures, forgotten ruins, and deadly monsters. Only the bravest dragons traverse the wilderness regularly, and they do so with caution and care, for there are many sinister secrets that have been lost to the deserts and jungles of the land.

The wildlife in Dragonia is diverse and exciting. The beasts have aspects of many different animals that would be familiar in our world. For example, a monbaba, a winged beast with a prehensile tail and a ferocious attitude, displays characteristic of a monkey (mon-), bat (ba-), and badger (ba). These beasts of the wild are as magical and enchanting as any dragon, with displays of beautiful colors, odd desires, and mystical habits.

But as intriguing as beasts are, there are few dragons who understand them. Beastology is a field of draconic study that draws dragons to study the beasts of the land and their natures, but only a few can have a conversation with a beast like they would with other dragonkin. Despite their mystical nature, beasts are unknowable to most of draconic society.



## Monsters

The wilderness holds other dangers—threats more frightening than an angry weredapuss—that might harm dragonkin when they travel the wilds. Creatures so foul, they display only one aspect of a beast. A giant spider: no hooves, no wolf snout, no feathers...just a creepy and monstrous spider. A beast so frightening that most drakes would flee in fear when they encounter it!

Monsters have long haunted Dragonia and they seem to thrive with every triumph made by the Darkness. These monsters are terrifying, vile, and (as any cloudcatcher will attest) extremely resilient. If one day the Darkness swallows the moons, these monsters will outlast the Darkness itself.

Dragonkin generally avoid monsters and it is almost unheard of to see one in a city or near a bustling stronghold. Monsters tend to stay close to the wilderness: hunting, feeding, and growing ever stronger and more dangerous. Few dragons are brave enough to face a monster and **monster stalkers** are honored for the time they spend protecting dragon nesting grounds from such terrible creatures; these horrors are formidable opponents and the life of a monster stalker can be quite dangerous.

The wilderness is full of wondrous beasts and arcane magic, but its fate is tied to Dragonia. If the Darkness corrupts the heart of Dragonia the age of dragons will fade, ushering in something new, and monsters will inherit the world.

## The Clutch

Clutches are formal family groups within Dragonia that help dragons forge relationships which enable them to accomplish their goals, ranging from compassionate and eternally-bonded affinity clutches to pilgrimages of growth and discovery designed to uncover where the drakes belong in Dragonia.

Dragons can only be in one clutch at a time and each clutch must be sponsored by an elder dragon; some clutches (like affinity clutches) are only sanctioned by an elder dragon once the members of the clutch have reached an appropriate age. Regardless of when a clutch is formed, drakes take their relationships with their clutchmates seriously.

The **pilgrimage clutch** is dedicated to helping young drakes find their place in Dragonia. Pilgrimage clutches fulfill missions sent to them by the Council and other older dragons, all the while exploring Dragonia and reporting back on what they learn along the way. Some drakes will grow with their pilgrimage clutch and ask to be sanctioned as another clutch with many of the same members.

Some other clutches to come out of pilgrimages are:

- ✧ **affinity clutches**; dedicated to care and compassion between clutchmates;
- ✧ **ceremony clutches**; dedicated to hosting events and festive celebrations great or small;
- ✧ **cultivation clutches**; dedicated to caring for nature and managing wildlife;
- ✧ **trade clutches**; dedicated to an artistry or gathering of talents that provide goods to Dragonia;
- ✧ **wellness clutches**; dedicated to physical and mental health of dragonkin;

... and many more.





## The War of Shadow

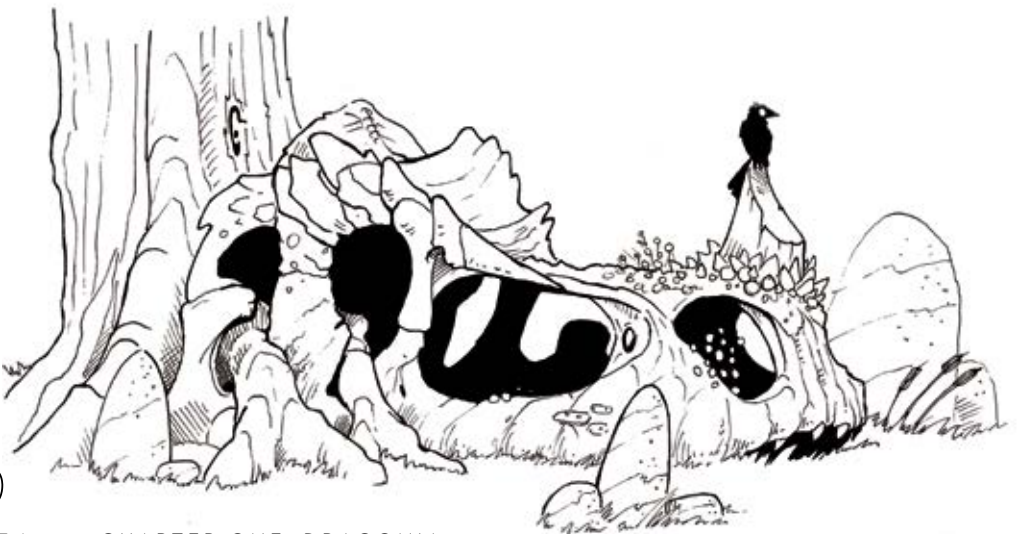
Only elder dragons can remember the events that led up to the War of Shadow, a war in which all dragons, regardless of house or age, were forced to take wing and fight to protect their world from a shadow so dark it could blot out the moons. They knew it only as “the Darkness,” and they saw it corrupt their friends, treasured possessions, and beasts of the land. It even pierced the hearts of elder dragons and turned them against Dragonia itself, forcing them to disregard long-held traditions and forsake their land and families.

Many dragons were lost to the War of Shadow when dragonkin turned against dragonkin. Tessith, the House of Diamond, lost nearly all their strongholds and warriors to the insidious corruption that had taken hold of Dragonia. But in the eleventh hour, dragonkin found a light that pierced the Darkness and drove corruption out of the soil, banishing it back to the netherwhere from whence it came.

The land was saved, peace was restored, and all who saw the costs of war vowed thereafter to live in harmony. Even Kebros, the House of Ruby, who had betrayed Dragonia by siding with the Darkness, were welcomed back to their perch in the Council.

The conflict was dubbed “The War of Shadow” in honor of Flyreign, the drake whose visions of the Darkness helped lead Dragonia out of shadow and onward to victory. Flyreign fought on the front lines against the Darkness and was struck down by his own corrupted clutchmate in the last moments of the final battle. With a last ash-filled breath, Flyreign forewarned that the Darkness would rise once more and consume the moons with shadow. But after the battle pyres cooled and the scars left on their hides began to fade, dragonkin found no sign of a lingering Darkness. Peace reigned...and Flyreign’s warning was forgotten.

Since then many dragons dismissed or have forgotten what Flyreign foretold that fateful battle...until now. Rumors have begun to surface of a shadow corrupting parts of Dragonia once more, a creeping evil that haunts the deepest wilderness and Council chamber alike.



## The Darkness Today

Within every dragonkin lurks the threat of Darkness. It comes in the form of selfishness or greed, revenge or self-righteous pride. And, just as long ago, agents of shadow once again take aim to penetrate the thick scales of dragonkin and corrupt the hearts of dragons everywhere. But not by force alone; power, wealth, and the promise of security are temptations that the Darkness uses to lure dragonkin close.

During the War of Shadow, many dragonkin selfishly allied with the Darkness, ignoring the importance of their obligations to Dragonia's deep-rooted traditions. These dragonkin carved out their own caves, filled their lairs with hoards to comfort themselves, and settled in to welcome a new world ruled by corruption. But it was not their time. The light won before the Darkness could take hold forever.

Despite the danger the Darkness poses to Dragonia... the Council is denying any reports that the Darkness has returned. After all, there are more pressing issues: vulnerable eggs, food shortages, and civil unrest in the distant provinces! It takes a very wise dragon to see the connection between everyday problems and the creeping Darkness that can corrupt a dragon's heart.

At this time, the Council will not jump to any conclusions regarding the Darkness and its *rumored* return; the investigation of these rumors is seen as a problem best left to a pilgrimage clutch to handle. After all, the Darkness hasn't appeared in Dragonia for ages!

However unpleasant, the Darkness is a part of nature's cycle and if left untended and unpruned it will flourish and thrive. No matter how small or daunting the task may seem, the threat can and must be quelled, for if it prevails it will mean the end of the age of dragons. If the Darkness wins, Dragonia will fade into legend.

## CHAPTER TWO

# CREATING CHARACTERS

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In *EPYLLION*, each player takes on the role of a young drake in Dragonia. To create that character, choose a playbook. The playbooks are designed to help you bring your drake to life—each one is a collection of abilities, limitations, and details that will help you realize your dragon.

## Choosing a Playbook

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Each playbook represents an archetype among dragonkin, and each of them has an important role to play in Dragonia. All the playbooks have different strengths and weaknesses, and there's no "right" one to pick. Choose the playbook that you will have the most fun playing!

Start by reading the archetype descriptions aloud; imagine yourself writing a story with the character you will be creating. If you still need help narrowing your choices, take a closer look at the archetype's **signature move** (the special move that is core to the playbook) and other details that appear on the playbooks. If the signature move of a playbook doesn't catch your interest, try a different playbook.

You can find digital copies of the playbooks at [www.magpiegames.com/epyllion](http://www.magpiegames.com/epyllion), and I've provided copies here in this book as well (pages 148-159).

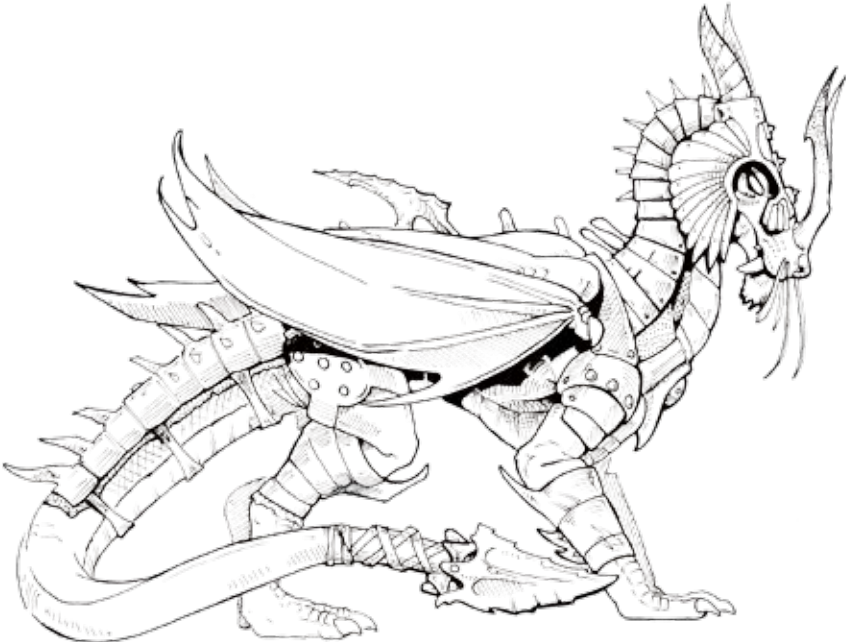
## Name

Every young drake needs a name, so your playbook suggests some traditional Dragonian names. Dragons don't have gender so don't worry about a name sounding gender-specific; just pick whichever one you like best. One day—if you grow up to be brave and strong—your drakes' names may be carved onto the wall of the Hall of Heroes in the Capital!

## Look

Once you've picked a name, think about what your dragon looks like physically. Dragonkin come in all different shapes and sizes, so don't worry about how other dragons look; your drake can look however *you* want them to look.

Decide what interesting aspects your drake has; do you have antennae or antlers? Maybe scales, fur, or feathers? Your playbook has some features listed that your archetype tends to possess. Circle characteristics from each list that best describe what your dragon looks like; feel free to add other details or draw a picture to share with your clutchmates!



## Color

Finally, choose a color for your drake. Your Dragonmaster (DM) has **friendship gems** for you (see page 49). These gems have a mechanical effect in the game, but they can also represent the main color of your dragon.

Describe your dragon's cool patterns or other colors mixed in, but when you pick your friendship gems, write down the color of them on your playbook (and on your name card) so everyone can remember which gems represent your drake. Put all your friendship gems in a pile in front of you; you'll use them often in the game to show how your dragon is connecting with your clutchmates.

## Houses

After selecting your color, choose a house for your drake. Each house is part of the larger society of Dragonia, and other dragons you interact with during your story all come from a house, just like you. Read more in depth about each of the houses on page 21.

Selecting a house also gives you a traditional path forward that will help you ward off the Darkness. Read over your **house obligation** and what it demands of you. If you are able to complete the house obligation listed on your playbook for your house, you loosen the grip the Darkness has over you, freeing yourself from the negative emotions that grow in the hearts of corrupted dragons.

Your house's traditions are vital to staying safe when fighting the Darkness. At the end of each session or episode, if you fulfilled your obligation during play you can keep the Darkness at bay and erase a Shadow. Make sure to pick a house with an obligation that sounds fun and interesting for your drake to play towards each session.

## Stats

Each drake has three statistics (attributes that help describe what your drake is good at): Charm, Courage, and Cunning. All stats are all equally important to a heroic dragon, but your drake will be better at overcoming some challenges than others.

- ☞ **Charm** allows you to figure out what makes other dragons tick...and determines how likely you are to persuade them or get them to see things your way. It is the most important stat because without it you cannot gather allies to fight the Darkness.
- ☞ **Courage** helps you to go forward in the face of dangers great and small. It is the most important stat because without it you cannot stand strong—or inspire others to stand strong—against the Darkness.
- ☞ **Cunning** lets you notice details others overlook and employ tricks or lies to get your way. It is the most important stat because without it you cannot stay two steps ahead of the Darkness.

When you create your character, your playbook will tell you your starting stats. Add an additional +1 to one of them. Choose carefully! You only get to add this +1 when you first make your character.

Keep an eye on the basic moves and the stats your playbook relies on most often as you add your +1. The Daredevil, for example, has a lot of moves that rely on Courage, making it an attractive stat for your starting bonus. That said, you can take actions that rely on your weaker stats and still succeed, so don't fret too much about your stats before you play.

## Virtues

The virtue you hold is a behavior that you admire and look for in your friends. You may not be very good at fulfilling that virtue yourself, but it is one that you like to see your clutchmates demonstrate. You have a couple of options in your playbook to choose from; circle the one that you're most interested in seeing from your clutchmates. Because of your life experiences and how you were raised, it is up to you how to interpret the exact meaning of your virtue.

*Hachiro possesses the virtue Curiosity. Dre generally interprets curiosity to mean dragonkin should sniff out any new or interesting things by physically poking their snouts around. Or Hachiro may think curiosity means that dragonkin should regularly engage one another and ask questions whenever possible.*

## Friendship Gems

**Friendship gems** represent the bonds you have between you and your clutchmates. Each friendship gem represents a moment when another character exemplified your virtue and earned your trust. Give friendship gems to another player when their character displays the virtue you hold, regardless of the distance between your characters.

During play you can return friendship gems to the character who gave them to you in order to activate moon magic. Your pool of friendship gems is for rewarding your clutchmates' actions; you cannot activate moon magic with your own friendship gems. Only gems that have been given to you by other drakes for exemplifying their virtue can be used. See Rolling +Friendship Gems Returned on page 50 for more information on using friendship gems in this way.



## Picking Moves

Every playbook has a signature move already selected, with abilities or responsibilities unique and core to that archetype. It would be impossible to play that character without that foundational move. The playbooks also allow you to choose what other moves you would like to start with; it is up to you to select which moves best fit your character. Feel free to go over the moves with your DM or the table. For more on understanding moves, check out page 45.

As you gain experience and age you will be able to choose more moves from your playbook, so don't worry too much if you end up wanting to take more than one to start. You can add more as your character ages, including moves from other playbooks.

## Your Fellowship

After each player has completed their character, have everyone in the clutch introduce themselves. Then you and your friends are ready to fill out the **Fellowship** section.

Fellowships represent important relationships that your archetype needs to establish before jumping into the action. These questions will determine the relationship you have with your clutchmates and give you a taste of what the group dynamics were like during past adventures, prior to the first session.

Each Fellowship has a blank space and directions on taking or giving a friendship gem. Fill in the blank space with the name of the player character with whom you want to have that relationship during the game. Read each Fellowship aloud. When you 'give a friendship gem,' hand that clutchmate one of your colored gems. When you 'take a friendship gem from them,' ask them to hand you one of their colored gems.

After you fill in a Fellowship slot, you'll know a bit more about your relationship with the other dragons in your clutch and some friendship gems will be exchanged. Continue around the table, fill in a blank with a clutchmate's name, and explain 'how' or 'why,' until everyone has filled in all of their Fellowship blanks.

Try to assign a different clutchmate to each slot, but if you still have blank spaces left over when you've added everyone, don't leave any spaces blank. Add your clutchmates' names until the Fellowship slots are all filled up.

*One of Flyreign the Seer's Fellowships reads:*

*"You dreamed of \_\_\_\_\_ long before you two met. Tell them what the dream was about and take a gem from them."*

*Flyreign writes Daygon in the blank space and explains that Flyreign dreamed that the two drakes would one day battle the Darkness together and asks Daygon to pass them a friendship gem.*

Once you've completed the Fellowship section, you're ready to play. Enjoy Dragonia!



## CHAPTER THREE

## PLAYING THE GAME



In this game, you and your friends tell a collaborative tale about your clutch's adventures across Dragonia. Your characters are all young dragons trying to find their way in dragon society by helping other dragons, and in turn, growing and changing together. This section is full of rules, tips, and tricks to help structure the story you tell together.

## The Conversation

*EPYLLION* isn't like playing a traditional board or card game. Instead of taking turns one at a time, your group will have a conversation between the Dragonmaster (DM), the players, and sometimes even the dice! Everyone shares the spotlight, creating the best story possible together. That's roleplaying: sometimes you talk and listen as your character, and sometimes you talk and listen as a member of the audience.

Just like any conversation, pay careful attention to your contributions; if you are talking too much **step back** and make room for others to speak. Likewise, if you aren't talking enough, **step up** and participate a bit more in the discussion.

When you're not speaking as your character, try to focus. Don't have side conversations; just be a good member of the audience and wait your turn. It's likely that you'll find some other drake's adventures and experiences to be interesting too. And call for a break every once in a while!

## Building the World

Through the conversation at the table (and guidance from the DM), the group not only decides how the clutch confronts problems, but also collectively fills in missing details about how things work in Dragonia. Want to know how dragons buy food at the market or where dragons get ore for their armaments? The DM might ask you to provide an answer, allowing you to directly contribute to the world!

Coming up with new setting details makes your game of *EPYLLION* a personal and vibrant environment for players to engage. And it's not just up to the DM: each person at the table is responsible for contributing to the fun by adding interesting elements to the story through their characters and their answers to DM questions.

This collaborative style continues when your characters take action and make decisions. Through your drakes, you pursue elements of the story that you find interesting. You speak as your dragon would speak and describe what actions your dragon takes. And all the while you stick together as friends on your grand adventure. Clutchmates may have conflicts or fall to the corrupting influence of the Darkness, but like the main characters of a Saturday morning cartoon, they are always drawn back together by the healing love of the clutch.



## The Moves

Sometimes, the things your drake does in the story will lead you to **trigger a move**, a bit of rules that helps to say what happens next in the story. When you trigger a move, read the move and follow the instructions it gives you to find out where the story goes. Sometimes you'll have to roll some dice or make a decision because a move tells you to do so!

Moves won't be triggered for every thing you do, though. You don't need a move to fly, unless your drake is flying over something dangerous and the outcome is uncertain. You probably don't need a move to eat dinner either...unless you're consuming a plate of tasty—yet dangerous—fire beetles! When a player character is facing an uncertain outcome in the story, look to the moves to help resolve it.

Each move has a **trigger**, a phrase that describes when it should be used during play. Pay close attention to the trigger because each time you trigger a move something interesting happens and the move tells you what happens next.

*Groundswal (an NPC) tells Veri (a PC) to follow him into a side room for a private conversation. Veri tells the DM that they are looking suspiciously at Groundswal to see if dris intentions are true. The DM recognizes that Veri triggered the move **study another dragon** to reveal what Groundswal might be hiding and asks Veri to roll +Charm to **study another dragon**.*

Moves are not meant to limit your creativity: instead think of them as a frame that supports your characters and your game, regardless of what interesting and amazing thing your dragons decide to do. A dragon who tries to fly through a volcano and a dragon who tries to overcome dris fear to address the Council are both **acting despite danger** even if they are doing radically different things in the story.

## Moves and Uncertainty

Moves are a way to manage uncertainty in the setting and signal what kinds of conflicts drive the story. You'll notice that there aren't any moves here for how dragons travel long distances or use breath weapons; *EPYLLION* assumes that you and your clutch will decide how your dragons travel, eat, live together, and so on—so there's no uncertainty there.

You'll only make moves when something is uncertain about the outcome, when you take risks that might lead to interesting results. What will happen when you call on the moons for strength against an avalanche of ice? How will standing up to a stubborn bearded dragon turn out? Moves help you and your clutch resolve the tension in those moments, when no one at your table—not even the DM!—knows what happens next.

Not everything interesting triggers a move. Sometimes you follow the fiction and no move is needed.

*Can this elder dragon really eat all of the food for the Fire Feast before the guests arrive?*

*Yes. Dre isn't called "Vinn the Insatiable" for nothing!*

Other times, the answer isn't so clear and the uncertainty calls for a move to help resolve the conflict.

*Is Veri's passionate speech enough to stand up to Vinn the Insatiable and convince them not to eat all of the food for the Fire Feast?*

*Maybe...maybe not. Time for a move!*



## Modifiers & Rolling Dice

When a move calls for you to roll, roll two six-sided dice (2d6). Not all moves ask you to roll dice, but when a move does ask you to roll, you always roll 2d6. Most of the moves ask you to roll +something, a modifier you add to the total that comes up on your dice.

*Veri is rolling to **study another dragon**. The move asks for them to roll +Charm and Veri has a +2 Charm, so dre rolls a 7 on 2d6 and then adds 2, giving them a total of 9.*

There are three kinds of outcomes you can encounter when rolling the dice:

- ☞ a 10+ is a hit
- ☞ a 7 to 9 is a partial hit
- ☞ a 6- is a miss

Note that a 10+ and a 7 to 9 are both considered hits—but a 10+ is a full hit, and a 7 to 9 is a partial hit.

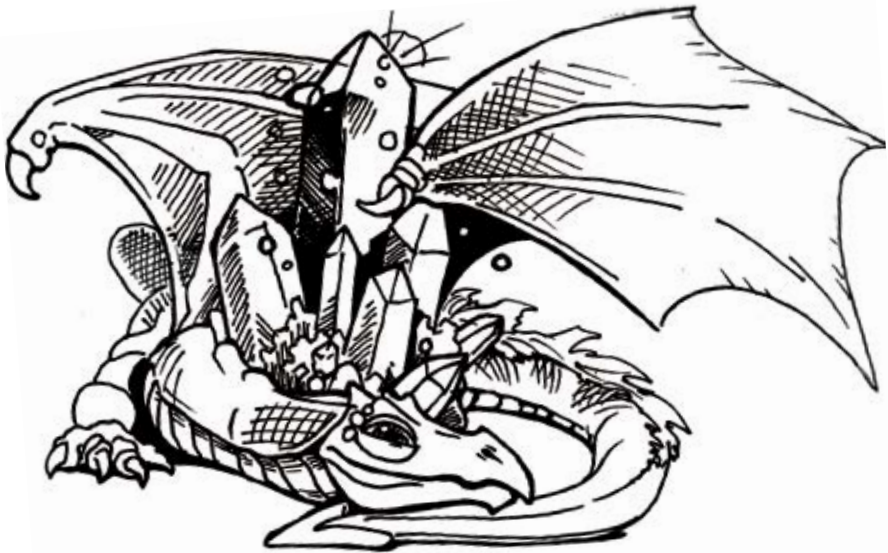
Some moves will explain what to do or give you choices for each of these outcomes, but higher rolls are better. If you roll a 10+, you get (most of) what you want and you have the most options available to your character. Rolling a 7-9 will get you what you want, but the story becomes more complicated or interesting. Either way, a hit means that you're in the best spot you could hope for, given the circumstances.

On a miss (6-), the story takes an unexpected twist; the DM will tell you what interesting thing happens next. A miss may mean that you accomplish what you were trying to do and something unexpected happens, or it could mean that you literally miss the target and fail at what you were doing. Either way, a miss means that the story takes a turn that isn't under your control.

But missing isn't all bad! When you miss a roll, you gain **experience (XP)** that helps you strengthen your stats and acquire new moves. Young dragons have to make mistakes to grow up and learn from their experiences. See page 72 for more on XP and Advancement.

The DM never rolls dice. Instead, the DM tells you what's happening and asks what you do. When you trigger moves with your responses, the DM looks to those die rolls to tell you what happens next, always finishing by asking you how you respond to the shifting events. Chances are, your response will in turn lead to triggering another move, and so on and so forth. This kind of snowball effect, of moves leading to more moves, is exactly what you are looking for in the conversation between the DM and the players.

And always remember—not responding, not doing anything or triggering a move, that's a kind of response all on its own. The DM still tells you what happens next! You can't avoid trouble by standing still! The monsters of the wilderness love to eat drakes that think they can keep themselves safe through inaction.





## Friendship Gems

Friendship gems are an out-of-character way to reward your clutchmates for acting in accordance to what your dragon finds virtuous. They are represented by the unique set of beautiful, colored gems that you selected when you made your character.

Clutchmates can give friendship gems to each other for exhibiting each other's virtues, use them (without returning them) to help or interfere with one another, or return them for bonuses to call upon the moons.

### Giving Friendship Gems

You give friendship gems to a clutchmate when their dragon displays the virtue your dragon holds (found on your playbook). Whether or not your dragon is physically close to theirs, you still give them a gem when they show your virtue to indicate approval of their actions. Clutchmates should be playing to one another's virtues to strengthen their friendships and ability to call upon the moons for strength.

*Luneth the Seer has been separated from the rest of the clutch in some abandoned ruins, and stumbles upon a group of drakes who are planning to steal a bunch of fire whirls meant for the Moonbeam Festival. Luneth misleads them by saying dre will help them with this even though dris plan is to ultimately stop them from succeeding. Luneth's clutchmate Morning thinks this is a **daring** thing for Luneth to do and hands Luneth one of their friendship gems, even though Morning is nowhere near Luneth in the ruins.*

When you give one of your clutchmates a Friendship Gem, your clutchmate holds on to that Gem until dre returns it, either to do moon magic or as the result of another move.

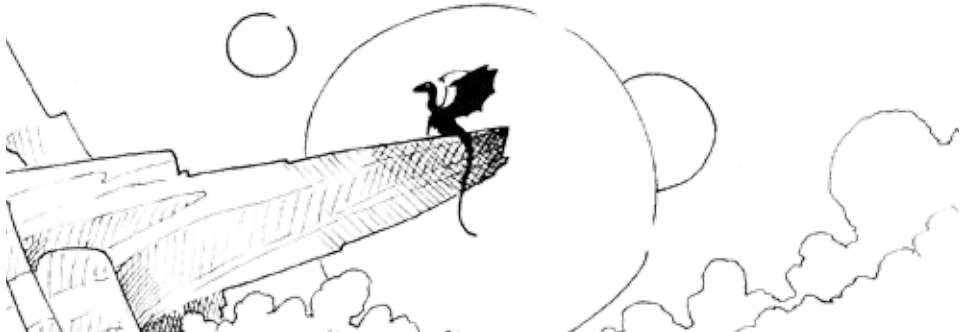
### **Rolling +Friendship Gems**

If a move calls for you to roll +Friendship Gems—usually when you're helping or interfering with another drake's action—count up the number of friendship gems you have from the clutchmate in question and add that to your roll. Do not return those gems; they represent your bond with your clutchmate!

The more gems you have with a dragon, the closer you are to them, the more you know them, and the more likely it is that your interactions with that dragon will work out. If you have a lot of gems from a clutchmate who's about to miss on a risky maneuver, you have a great chance at aiding. Likewise, if you know what makes your friend tick and dre is trying to do something you don't want them to do, you have a higher chance of stopping them.

### **Rolling +Friendship Gems Returned**

When you activate moon magic or other abilities that require you to roll +Friendship Gems Returned, choose a number of friendship gems to give back to the clutchmates who gave them to you and roll your 2d6 plus the number of friendship gems you just returned. You don't get these gems back. But don't worry about the lost gems: if you are doing something heroic with your moon magic it is likely to earn you some more friendship gems that you can use after your roll.



## Shadows and Darkness

While dragons are strengthened by their friendships with each other, the Darkness is selfishness and greed that festers beneath the scales of all dragonkin. When a dragon gets wounded, physically or emotionally, the pain can cast a shadow in dris heart where the Darkness can take hold.

### Shadows

There are many reasons dragons mark **Shadows**. You may have to mark a Shadow because you got physically hurt, or because you were corrupted by the Darkness, or because you refused to help a friend in need. Sometimes a move tells you to mark a Shadow; sometimes the DM tells you to mark one.

When you mark a Shadow, check a box on the Shadow Track to represent that a part of you is temporarily corrupted by the Darkness and you must act in selfish or destructive ways.

### Shadow Track

The **Shadow Track** represents how much hold the Darkness has on you. As you continue to fight the Darkness, you may find yourself drawn closer to a darker version of yourself.

You can mark Shadows in any order. When you mark a Shadow, you must immediately take one of the actions associated with the Shadow you marked:

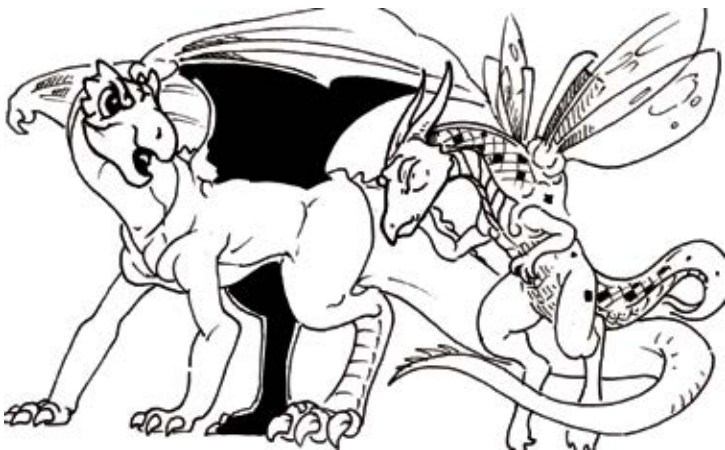
- ☞ **Anger:** Lash out at a friend, break something valuable, escalate a delicate situation.
- ☞ **Doubt:** Question a friend's loyalty, steal something valuable, reject a tradition of Dragonia.
- ☞ **Fear:** Hide something from your friends, avoid a difficult task, exaggerate the danger of the situation.
- ☞ **Shame:** Blame a friend for your mistakes, mock or belittle someone vulnerable, seek isolation.

Sometimes the DM tells you which Shadow to mark, but make sure you always mark a Shadow that best fits the situation. Let the DM know if you think it doesn't make sense for your dragon to mark Fear or Shame in a particular situation.

*Spirit and dris clutch bravely face down an elder dragon who has been corrupted by the Darkness. While trying to subdue the huge dragon, the elder swings dris tail and knocks Spirit into the sewers, separating them from the clutch.*

*The DM tells Spirit to mark a Shadow. Given that Spirit didn't want to confront the elder in the first place, dre marks "anger." When Spirit meets back up with the clutch and finds that the elder dragon escaped, dre scolds Talon: "It is all your fault that I got hurt AND that elder got away! None of this would have happened if YOU hadn't acted without thinking."*

You only need to take one action when you mark a Shadow, but when you fill in all of the Shadows on your Shadow Track you become your Shadowself. At that point, the Darkness has a hold on you so strong that you turn away from your friends and become selfish!



## Shadowself

When you mark the last condition on your Shadow Track, you lose yourself to the Darkness and become your **Shadowself**, a dark reflection of your true self that does not value friendship. Your heart and mind have been corrupted by the Darkness and everything you experience is twisted through a dark lens of pain, anger, and anxiety.

Each playbook has a unique Shadowself. You might be trapped as your Shadowself for one or more sessions, but until you escape, you cannot give or receive friendship gems. You may spend them to do moon magic as normal, but you cannot replace them once they are spent. Do not mark any further Shadows, even if a move asks you to do so.

You can return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to humble yourself and acknowledge what you have become. Each playbook contains specific actions that your friends must take to help you return. When you come back from your Shadowself, clear your Shadow Track completely.

*Hachiro—overcome by dris Shadowself—demands that the clutch follow dris leadership because it is “painfully obvious” that no dragon knows as much as Hachiro knows. The other drakes listen patiently for one full day, but as the sun rises on the second day Hachiro’s friend Morning asks Hachiro a simple question: “Do you know why I know the sun will rise?”*

*Hachiro recites volumes of solar astronomy, but Morning shakes dris head and says, “That is not why I know the sun will rise, Hachiro” and shares a sacred family story about why the sun rises and falls each day. Hachiro says, “I didn’t know such stories were still passed down through the House Tessith...”*

*When the rest of the clutch awakens, Hachiro bows before them and apologizes to dris friends, freeing dremself from the Darkness and clearing dris Shadow Track.*

## Basic Moves

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Throughout the story, every clutchmate will make use of basic moves. The playbooks have other moves that might also come into play (or alter the basic moves), but the majority of moves the clutch makes during a session are basic moves.

Remember that the basic moves are essentially narrative sparks that bring the rules into play, not chains that tell you what limited actions you can take. Anytime you're doing something that might be uncertain, one of the moves can usually fit the action you're taking.

Here are the basic moves for playing *EPYLLION*. I've included a brief explanation of each move as well as an example of play.

### Act Despite Danger

When you **act despite danger**, roll +Courage. On a 10+, you succeed despite the odds. On a 7-9, you fumble, stumble, or embarrass yourself. The DM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

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This move should be interpreted broadly. If you find yourself fighting a dragon high above the capital city, you are **acting despite danger** because, well...you are dragons and fighting is dangerous. Likewise, if you are trying to leap across a narrow cavern that your wings cannot span, you are also **acting despite danger** because your constrained wingspan and the terrible drop mean you're in danger of falling to your doom.

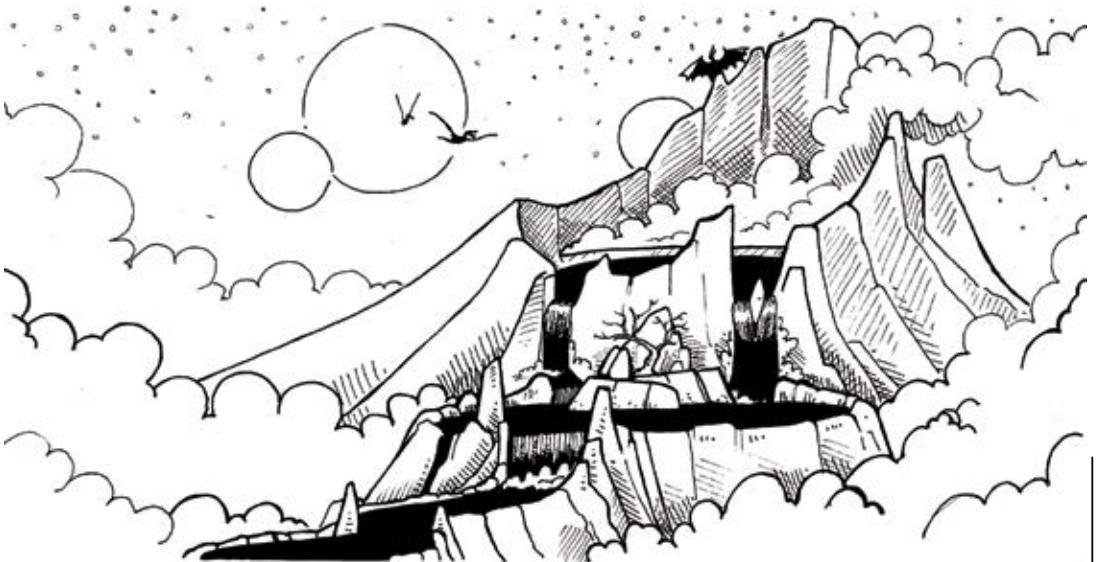
A lot of the cool things that you and your clutch do will be considered **acting despite danger**, so if you find yourself using this move more than some of the other basic moves, don't worry. It is a sort of catch-all or default move for the game and the adventurous things that adventurous drakes, such as yourselves, do.

*Spirit, the Daredevil, is trying to outfly the aggressive lavaflow of an erupting volcano while carrying dris exhausted beast companion, Tix the urchat (an adorably sticky urchin-bat beast). Dre rolls with a +2 Courage to get...*

*...a total of 10+: the DM describes Spirit's agile form outmaneuvering everything the volcano is spewing forth, flaming boulders and spitting lava alike. Spirit and Tix emerge unscathed from the eruption and Tix thanks Spirit with a big sticky hug!*

*...a total of 7-9: the DM describes Spirit zipping through the debris at top speed, but coming away from the smoldering volcano with a singed wing, rendering them unable to fly long distances without getting it patched up first.*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes Spirit zipping between the flaming boulders, but as Spirit is concentrating on getting away from the lava, Tix slips and gets snatched out of the air by Groundswal, a devious dragon whom Spirit despises.*



## Stand Up to an Older Dragon

When you **stand up to an older dragon** (NPC), roll +Courage. On a hit, they acknowledge your worth and address your concerns. Pick one from this list.

- ☞ You delight them; they give you a useful item or fancy gift.
- ☞ You impress them; they offer you a favor or accommodation.
- ☞ You intrigue them; they tell you something useful and interesting.

On a 7-9, also pick one from this list.

- ☞ You succumb to vanity. Mark a Shadow.
- ☞ You embarrass a friend. Return a friendship gem.
- ☞ You overstep social bounds. You incur an obligation.

Older dragons hold the highest status in dragon society—as a young dragon it takes a lot of guts to stand up to an elder ten times your size. This move allows you to stand up for yourself when you want your concerns addressed by an older dragon, and gives you rewards and benefits if you are successful.

If you *delight the older dragon*, dre might give you a fancy or useful item pertinent to your concerns or something you might have told them you wanted earlier. Even if dre is a bit grumpy about granting you this boon, you can always tell dre is delighted to see you stand up for yourself.

If you *impress the older dragon*, dre will offer you a favor or accommodation to aid you in your pilgrimage. It could be that dre tells the council to let you go on a mission or that dre is personally moved by your display and offers direct help.

If you *intrigue the older dragon*, dre will tell you something useful or interesting. This information usually reveals a new path that you can use to accomplish your goals, such as a rumor or a favorite story that points the way forward.



When you roll a 7-9, you still get to choose one of the 10+ options above, but you also succumb to vanity and mark a Shadow, embarrass a friend and return a friendship gem, or overstep social bounds and incur an obligation. It's up to you to choose which consequence you suffer, and the DM will tell you how that consequence manifests in the story.

*Talon, the Nature Adept, is standing up to Tass the Gigantic (an elder dragon) because Talon was denied aid to help them search the forbidden forest for dris missing friend. Talon bravely flies up to Tass the Gigantic's snout and tells them dre must send at least one older dragon who can fly above the treeline and aid in their search. Talon rolls with a -1 Courage to get...*

*...a total of 10+: Talon chooses "impress them" and gets a favor... The DM says "Tass grins and dris gigantic fangs gleam. 'Dragonia needs more brave drakes like you, Talon. The House of Diamond should be proud.' Tass holds out a paw and helps Talon to the ground, 'But you are very small... Very well, I will request that Lightwing help you search the forest for one sun cycle.'"*

*...a total of 7-9: Talon still impresses Tass, but Talon incurs an obligation: "...Tass grins. 'Dragonia needs more brave dragons like you, Talon, but you are still just a drake and your place is to help those older and wiser than you.' Tass unfurls dris coils and surrounds the clutch. 'I will send Lightwing to help you and your friend. In return, deliver this message from me to the Council petitioning for a ritual burn of the wilderness.'"*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes Tass snorting at the small drake: "Tass turns away and laughs at the young drake, 'You say you love the wilderness, go ask those beasts you call friends for help.' The shame of rejection washes over you. Mark a Shadow."*

This move is not triggered when you stand up to an older clutchmate. They are older, wiser, and more respected, and how they react is up to them...

## Convince a Dragon

When you **convince a dragon**, roll +Charm.

*For NPCs:* On a hit, they will do it if you offer them a favor, gift, or useful information. On a 7-9, they don't get it quite right or they don't tell you everything you need to know.

*For Clutchmates:* on a 10+, both. On a 7-9, pick one:

- ☞ if they do it, they mark experience.
  - ☞ if they don't do it, they mark a Shadow.
- 

Younger dragons are not backed by the social order of Dragonia the way that older dragons are—you have more power to convince them to do what you want. This move allows you to ask a younger dragon for help and assistance.

But because you are an older dragon, young drakes will expect favors, gifts, or information from you in return for their service...and they often enact your plans in a way you might find foolish or incomplete.

*Deep Eyes the Crafter is lost in the Capital library. None of the markings on the signs make any sense! Dre decides to ask a young page turner for help getting out of the library, hoping the younger dragon knows the library well enough to get them out. Dre rolls with a +0 Charm to get...*

*...a total of 10+: the DM describes the younger drake fluttering all around the room excitedly. "I would love a break from turning pages!" dre says in a high-pitched, enthusiastic tone, "but I need a bookmark to hold my place until I return." Deep Eyes finds a bookmark in dris **saddlebag of potential** (page 151), and the two head out to the exit.*

*...a total of 7-9: the DM describes the page turner excitedly taking the bookmark from Deep Eyes and guiding them to the exit, but through the restricted section of the library where the Grand Librarian is poring over a tablet and might spot them!*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes the young page turner eagerly agreeing to help without any regard for dris current responsibilities. The two drakes make it out of the library without incident, but when they emerge from the library they find a horrible storm ravaging the city outside. A gust of wind carries away the page turner!*

When you try to convince a clutchmate your age or younger to do what you want, tensions can be a bit higher. Clutchmates are supposed to help one another out, and even if they are reluctant, there are opportunities to learn valuable lessons by helping your friends. If a clutchmate refuses to help, they may have to mark a Shadow for being selfish, a reminder that requests from your clutchmates really matter.

*Talon doesn't want to leave the library to find the page turner until after the storm has passed, but Deep Eyes—much older and wiser than Talon—tries to convince Talon to help them find the page turner by saying “We will have a better chance at finding them if you help me now before dre is carried out to sea!” Talon thinks this is a dangerous plan, so Deep Eyes rolls with a +0 Charm to get...*

*...a total of 10+: The DM tells Talon that the decision is theirs, but if Talon helps, dre gets to mark one experience point; if Talon refuses to help, dre will have to mark a Shadow.*

*...a total of 7-9: The final choice to help or not is still up to Talon, but the DM asks Deep Eyes which dre would like to offer Talon: an experience point for helping or a Shadow for refusing. Deep Eyes chooses to offer the experience point.*

*...a total of 6-: The DM says “While the two of you argue about what to do, the library staff comes out of the library. ‘What happened to the page turner? Why was dre with you?’ they ask. What do you do?”*

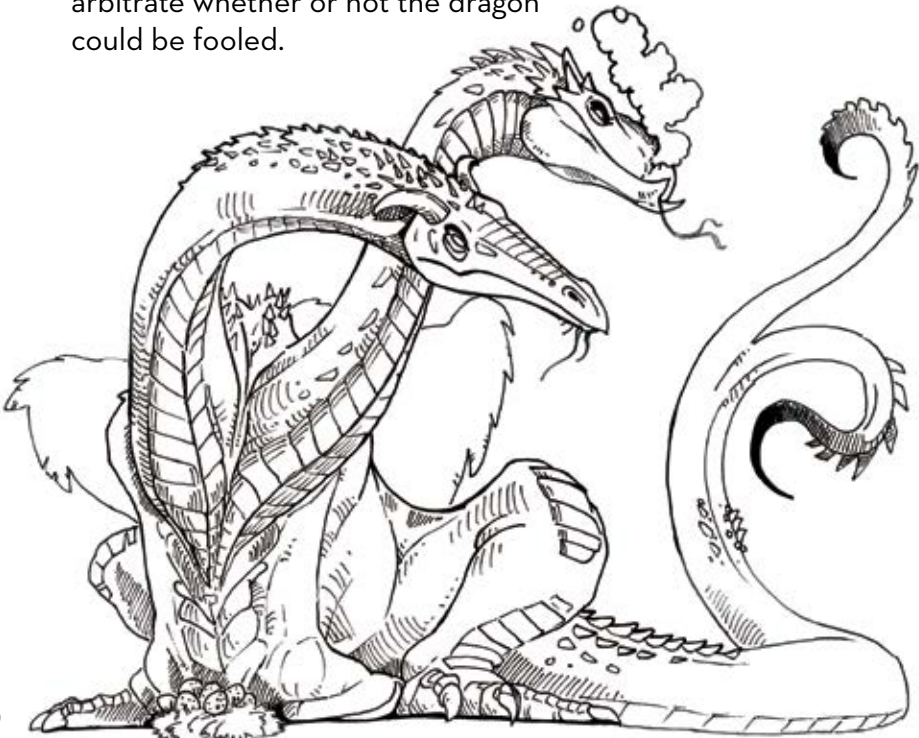
## Mislead or Trick

When you try to **mislead or trick** another dragon, roll +Cunning. On a hit, they are fooled for a moment; you learn a valuable secret or create an opportunity. On a 10+, you either get both benefits or you confuse them for some time.



Sometimes the best way to get past a suspicious dragon is to mislead or trick them, lying to them about your intentions or even just sneaking past them when they aren't looking. Some clever dragons rely on little white lies to create opportunities for their friends and confuse other dragons long enough for their clutch to get away from a sticky situation. Tricky dragons may also learn valuable secrets! The DM gets to say whether you learn a secret or create an opportunity on a hit.

You can mislead or trick a clutchmate who has plausible reasons for believing your story. If there is any doubt if the trick or misleading story is plausible, the DM will help arbitrate whether or not the dragon could be fooled.



*The clutch is trying to sneak into the catacombs underneath the famous Voidmoons Spire, but they must first get past the guided flight taking a tour of the historical site. To gain access to the spire's interior, Luneth the Seer pretends that their clutch wants to go on the flight tour as well. Dre rolls with a -1 Cunning to get...*

*...a hit (total of 7-9): the DM describes that the Flight Guide is overwhelmed by the volume of young drakes visiting from Semscale (an opportunity); dre waves them in with the rest of the crowd and amidst the commotion is forced to call for a second dragon to help herd the tiny drakes. Now the passageway leading underground is unguarded, allowing Luneth and dris clutch to reach the catacombs...although the Flight Guide might notice if the clutch disappears and the headcount for the tour is smaller than it should be.*

*...a total of 10+: the DM describes that the Flight Guides were unable to get a proper head count due to a twin hydra; they are "confused for some time" and won't know anything is amiss unless the clutch does something to alert the staff.*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes the Flight Guide ruffling dris feathers skeptically and asking what group they are a part of. Then the DM asks Luneth, "What is it that gives you away?" Luneth responds by saying "We are all MUCH too young and our wings don't meet the minimum wingspan allowed for flight tours!" The DM describes them being carefully ushered out of the tower. They have to find another way in!*

## Study Another Dragon

When you **study another dragon**, roll +Charm.

On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1.

- ↻ What is your character hoarding?
- ↻ Who are your dragon holding a grudge against?
- ↻ What could I learn from your dragon?
- ↻ What does your dragon wish I'd do for you?
- ↻ How could I get your dragon to \_\_\_\_\_?

This move allows you to understand the motivations of other dragons. You have to describe how you interact with them to trigger the move: you might ask a barrage of questions hoping they let something slip or observe them from a distance.

The DM will tell you what you learn, but it might be subtle. For example, you might pick up on enmity between two dragons by watching the shifty-eyed glances of one toward the other.

*Morning the Warrior is trying to figure out Hassun, a charismatic prankster. Morning narrows dris eyes and watches how Hassun speaks to the rest of the clutch. Dre rolls with a +0 Charm to get...*

*...a hit (total of 7-9): Morning asks a question off the list, out-of-character: "Who is Hassun holding a grudge against?" The DM describes Hassun's tone as defensive when interacting with two members of another clutch from Kebros and when the name of one of the House of Ruby's elders is mentioned, Hassun's scales shiver.*

*...a total of 10+: Morning also wants to know "What could I learn from Hassun?" The DM says that Hassun has political standing within the capital and that dre could learn who in the capital holds the most power or sway. Hassun is a dragon in the know!*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes Morning misreading Hassun's intentions as being pure and true and wanting to help! The DM says, "You're sure dre isn't hiding anything! Totally trustworthy!"*

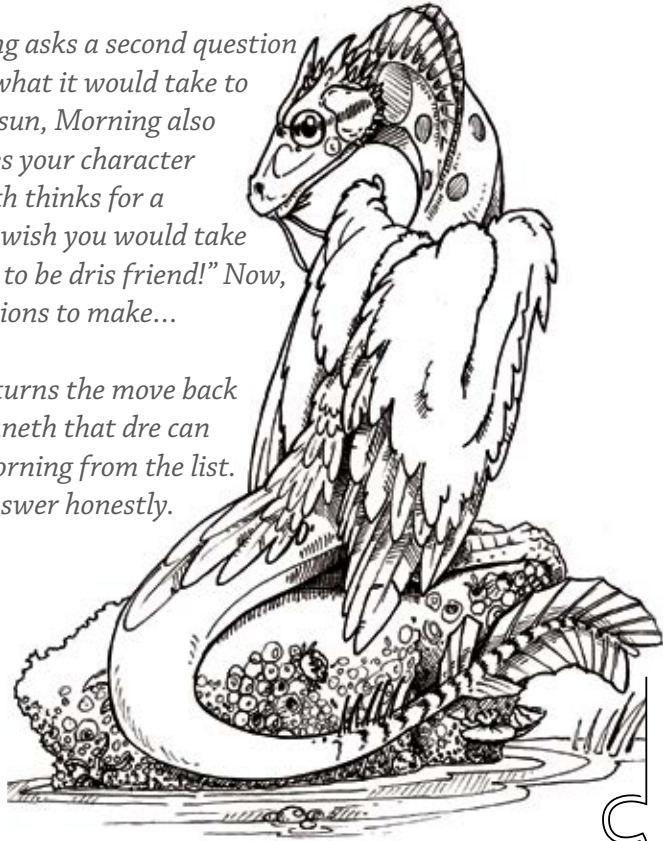
You can also study another clutchmate if you want to know what they are hiding from you in character or how to get them to go along with your risky schemes.

*Morning then wants to know how to get Luneth, a clutchmate, to go along with their plan to ditch Hassun and continue on to the Capital alone. Morning circles Luneth a few times looking them up and down, and rolls with a +2 Charm to get...*

*...a hit (total of 7-9): Morning asks "How can I get your character to ditch Hassun in the woods and continue our quest to the capital?" Luneth answers out of character, "By promising to come back to get them later." The DM then asks the follow-up question, "How does Luneth show that?" (The DM could also take the initiative and describe that the way Luneth insisted they take care of Hassun throughout their journeys gave them away.)*

*...a total of 10+: Morning asks a second question from the list. Knowing what it would take to get Luneth to leave Hassun, Morning also asks Luneth, "What does your character wish I would do?" Luneth thinks for a moment then replies, "I wish you would take Hassun with us and try to be dris friend!" Now, Morning has some decisions to make...*

*...a total of 6-: the DM turns the move back on Morning and tells Luneth that dre can ask a question about Morning from the list. Morning will have to answer honestly.*



## Survey an Ancient or Arcane Area

When you spend a moment to **survey an ancient or arcane area**, roll +Cunning.

On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7–9, ask 1.

- ✎ What resources does this place offer?
- ✎ How can I gain access to this place's secrets?
- ✎ What here harbors Darkness?
- ✎ Who else knows of this place?
- ✎ Are we alone?

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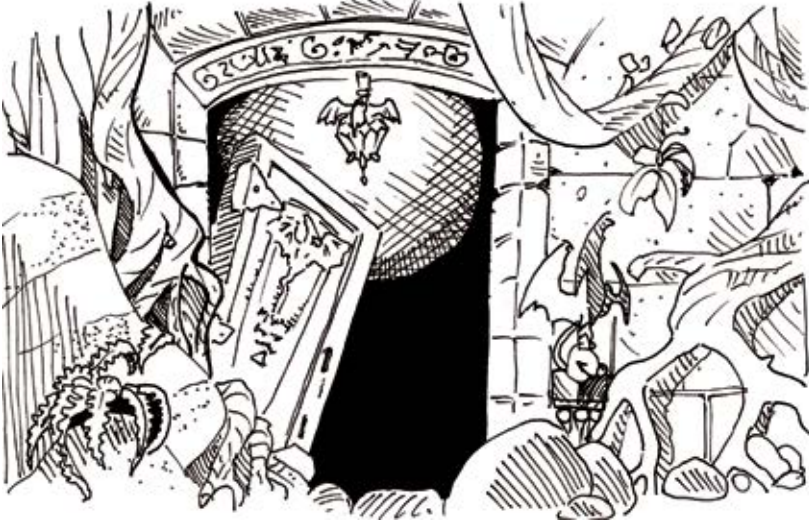
This move gives you the opportunity to assess any ancient or arcane areas that you come across during your adventures. Dragonia is full of forgotten ruins and magic rituals, special places you can find exploring forests in the wilderness, walking the streets of the Capital, or clawing your way through the ancient caverns beneath the earth.

Whenever your DM describes something mysterious or ancient, it is an opportunity for you to learn something special about the area. Dragonia is home to many secrets, new and old, just waiting to be discovered by curious and brave drakes.

How your dragon looks when she surveys is up to you, but this move is triggered when you describe your dragon looking for answers, information, or interesting features in the area. You might perform a minor ritual to call forward the secrets, ask nearby beasts if they have seen anything interesting, or simply look around with your sharp eyes and clever wits.

Keep in mind, this is only for ancient or arcane areas—this move isn't triggered if you're just rooting among another dragon's living quarters, for example.





*The DM describes the ruins of an old temple, overgrown with foliage and covered in spires long since fallen to the elements. Talon, the Nature Adept, takes a moment to poke around the area and asks a couple beasts from the nearby forest about the temple. Dre rolls with a +1 Cunning to get...*

*...a hit (total of 7-9): Talon asks one question from list, “Who else knows of this place?” The DM responds by saying, “You overhear some buzzlebunns (fuzzy bunny-bee beasts) humming about a group of angry dragons whose descriptions match those of a clutch of drakes that you had met previously.”*

*...a total of 10+: Talon asks another question from the list. Dre asks, “What here harbors darkness?” The DM says, “As you trot through the tall grass you find a broken stela with fresh scratch marks. As you sniff at the stone you can feel a shadowy aura of the Darkness in the scratch marks.”*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes a frightening roar that billows out from a chamber that Talon pokes dris snout into. Buzzlebunns bounce and fly around the ruins in a panic and –ZAP– Talon gets stung! The DM says, “Mark a Shadow!”*

## Moon Magic

When you **call upon the magic of the moons**, roll +Friendship Gems Returned. On a 10+, apply both. On a 7-9, pick 1.

☞ The magic is exceptionally powerful.

☞ The magic remains within your control.

On a miss, the moons act as they will, without your guidance.

Moon magic is flexible and freeform; you can call forth any number of effects based on which moon you call upon.

When you call upon the magic of the moons, choose which moon you are asking for help. For example: you may call upon the Spirit moon (growth/healing) to mend a broken wing, Liberty moon (purification/freedom) to banish the Darkness from an ancient relic, or Storm moon (force/chaos) to call forth a hurricane of wind and ice.

If you don't pick one of the options listed, it's assumed that it doesn't happen, i.e. not picking "the magic remains within your control" means that the magic is going to get out of your control quickly. A miss doesn't necessarily mean that the moons don't honor your request, but you may find the effects to be more than you bargained for when you called upon them.

*An earthquake from a bearded dragon's angry stomping threatens a Mystic as the ground beneath them begins to crumble and break away. Spirit, the Daredevil, calls upon the Stone moon for protection—as dre darts between the massive clubbed feet of the bearded dragon—and rushes towards the Mystic, hoping to save the massive statue as it tumbles to the ground.*

*The DM asks Spirit what it looks like when dre calls upon the moon and what dre is trying to do. Spirit says, "I fly into a barrel roll and time seems to slow down around me as moonlight envelops me and fills the chamber with blinding light. I then hurtle toward the Mystic and all anyone can see is a beautiful comet impacting the Mystic. I want to transfer my magical energy into the stone so if it hits the ground it will bounce back!" Spirit returns 4 friendship gems, and dre rolls with a +4 to get...*

*...a total of 10+: Spirit gets both options! "The magic is exceptionally powerful" and "the magic remains within your control," so the DM describes a brilliant flash of light that blinds everyone in the chamber as Spirit collides with the Mystic at high speed. As dris clutchmates' eyes adjust, a stillness falls over the chamber and tiny rocks and pebbles hang suspended in the air all around; the Mystic slowly hits the ground and bounces back until it fuses to the great pillar behind it by a layer of sparkling stone, never to be moved again. The bearded dragon who caused all the commotion looks on in awe and stops stomping to bow dris head apologetically.*

*...a total of 7-9: Spirit can only choose one option from the list and chooses to have the magic remain within dris control. The bearded dragon keeps stomping, oblivious to the magic that Spirit has done!*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes the Mystic toppling over as Spirit barrels into it, the glow of the stone moon enveloping both of them and filling every corner of the chamber with blinding light and deafening silence. As the light fades and their hearing returns the Mystic dragon is holding Spirit in dris tail, no longer made of stone. The Mystic stretches out dris wings, letting out a deep sigh full of dust and smoke that breaks the silence.*

## Shadow Magic

When you **give in to the Darkness**, mark a Shadow and roll +Shadows Marked. On a 10+, you harness the Darkness, casting powerful shadow magic. On a 7-9, you harness that same magic, but it's powerful—almost too powerful. On a miss, the Darkness chooses how the magic manifests, without your guidance.

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The Darkness can grant great power: a dragon can wield shadow magic with the fury of the moons and with the versatility of all five combined. And there is no need to rely on those around you to wield it; using shadow magic requires no friendship gems. Instead, make your roll and add however many Shadows you have marked on your playbook.

How you use the power of the Darkness is still up to you, but the risk still remains that the shadow magic can be released without the dragon's guidance. But if you give yourself over to the Darkness completely you can accomplish anything...

*Dragons from all over Dragonia make pilgrimages to visit the crystal chimes, a natural growth that produces pure musical tones found nowhere else. When a strong blizzard threatens to destroy the crystals, Morning tries to protect the site from damage... but the snow building up nearby is too heavy. Morning watches helplessly as a nearby snowbank gives way to an avalanche. As a long-toothed dragon, dre gave up access to the Stone moon that could protect this place, so Morning decides to give in to the Darkness and use Shadow magic.*

*The DM asks Morning what it looks like when dre gives in to the Darkness. Morning says, "I hear whispers from the Darkness through the wind. They whisper about how strong I am, how I could be the greatest dragon of our time... And I listen. I unfurl my wings and the blizzard catches me and launches me high into the air. Just as I am eye level with the avalanche rushing at me I beat my wings back against the blizzard and stop the avalanche."*

*Morning already has Fear and Anger marked, so dre marks Shame and rolls +3 Shadows to get...*

*...a total of 10+: The DM describes Morning's total control of the shadow magic as dre beats back the avalanche and howling winds with the hurricane force of dris beating wings. As Morning glides back down, the blue snow melts away and forms a beautiful trickling waterfall.*

*...a total of 7-9: The DM describes the shadow magic being a bit too powerful. The sun is blotted out by ice and snow swirling around Morning as dre repeats back the Darkness's whisperings of power and majesty. Just as the avalanche is upon them, a blast of wind explodes from Morning; when the snow settles a great dome of ice surrounds the crystal chimes. This new glittering ice auditorium will keep the crystal chimes safe, but their perfect tones will no longer ring throughout the surrounding lands.*

*...a total of 6-: The Darkness chooses how to manifest without Morning's guidance. The DM describes dark whispers that echo off of the crystal chimes so loud it drowns out the blizzard. Morning stands strong, wings outstretched against the impact. As the snow and ice crash into Morning the deluge turns to white smoke. The crystals are safe, but the DM reveals that one now echoes with the whispers of the Darkness.*

Unlike moon magic, the Darkness refuses to be bounded by categories or friendship gems. Many dragons may find themselves tempted to give into the Darkness as they get older and lose access to more of the moons. Using shadow magic may also cause you to more rapidly become the worst version of yourself—shadow magic incentivizes dragons to hold on to their Shadow and view it as an asset rather than a burden. Who needs friends when you have the Darkness?

## Help or Hinder

When you **help or hinder** a clutchmate after they have rolled, roll +Friendship Gems (max +3). On a hit, you add +1 or -2 to their roll. On a 7-9, you expose yourself to cost, complication, or harm. You cannot help or hinder your clutchmates while they are calling upon the moons.

This move allows you to help your clutchmate...if the bonus or penalty you give them matters to the outcome. You can't hinder someone on a 12 or help someone on a 4!

Helping or hindering requires you to roll +Friendship Gems (see page 50) because Friendship Gems represent how close you are to one another. One clutchmate can help and another can hinder, but no one can help or hinder a second time. If multiple drakes want to try to help or hinder a clutchmate at the same time, the DM decides who gets to go first.

*Hachiro the Academic is smoking out a hive of buzzlebunns to get at their cottonhoney. Hachiro rolls to **act despite danger** and gets...a 6; it looks like the buzzlebunns are getting upset! Luckily, Luneth—Hachiro's clutchmate—is there to help, fanning smoke into the hive and rolling with a +2 Friendship Gems to get...*

*...a total of 10+: the DM describes how the buzzlebunns are calmed by the smoke, hop out of the hive, and promptly fall asleep and start to snore ("bzzzzz bzzzzz bzzzz"), moving Hachiro's 6 to a 7. Hachiro suffers one sting from a groggy buzzlebunn (and marks a Shadow), but Luneth helps them get the cottonhoney!*

*...a total of 7-9: the DM describes the buzzlebunns falling asleep, but not before both Hachiro and Luneth get stung! When the smoke clears, the cottonhoney is ripe for the taking.*

*...a total of 6-: the DM describes how the smoke that Luneth is fanning at the hive makes the buzzlebunns form an angry swarm to chase the young drakes away. Quite a sticky situation!*

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## End of Session

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A typical session can run anywhere from 2 to 4 hours—unless you happen upon a great stopping point—and it’s always fun to come back for a second, third, or fourth session with the same clutch. When you finish a session, read aloud the **End of Session Move**. This final move helps to wrap up your clutch’s adventure for that session!

## End of Session Move

What your clutch accomplishes will vary from session to session, but there is one move to make when your group is ready to stop playing for the day or once you have finished a story arc. Your End of Session Move will give you experience and clear some Shadows, so don’t skip it!

When you **reach the end of a session or episode**, look at your house obligations. If you fulfilled that obligation at least once this session, erase one Shadow. By keeping up with Dragonia’s culture and traditions you fight against the hold the Darkness has over you.

Go around the table answering these questions individually:

- ☞ Did you learn a lesson from a friend?
- ☞ Did you help a friend solve a problem?

As a clutch, answer these two questions:

- ☞ Did your clutch hold back or expel the Darkness?
- ☞ Did your clutch move a dragon older than yourself to action?

For every question you answer “yes” to, mark an experience point and remind the group of when it happened.

Be as generous as you want with the situations that could fit. These are meant to help you recap what happened in your story and help your drakes learn, grow, and advance.

## Advancement

During a session, mark an experience point (XP) when you roll a miss (6-) or when a move tells you explicitly to do so. Missing can be a bummer, but growth comes from your mistakes and mishaps!

As you mark XP, your track will eventually fill. When it does, erase it, and take an advancement from your appropriate age bracket. You can take advancements in any order you wish, but make sure you keep re-filling the XP track until you have taken all of the advancements in your age bracket. Finally, when you have taken all of the advancements available for your bracket, take an **adult advancement**.





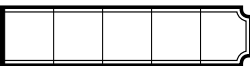
# Adult Advancement

There are five ages of a dragon lifespan. Each age bracket has special advancements that are only available to that age group. Don't rush ahead to the next age bracket until you have taken all of the cool advancements available for your age.

As you grow, your connection to the moons changes and shifts. Every time you take an adult advancement, cross off one moon. Your moon magic will become stronger, but you can no longer call on that moon for strength; as you age you begin to determine what moon you will finally specialize in and dedicate yourself to.

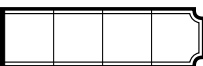
When you take an Adult Advancement, make sure you describe what that looks like to your clutch. Do you shed your scales? Do you glow with radiant moonlight and emerge changed? Do you make a ritual cocoon? What is different about you now? What is the same?

**1. RAW SCALED DRAKE** ..... *Moons +0*

XP: 

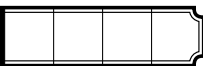
- take another move from your playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

**2. WINGED DRAKE** ..... *Moons +0*

XP: 


- take another move from your playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

**3. LONG-TOOTHED DRAGON** ... *Moons +1*

XP: 

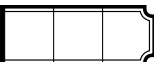
- take another move from another playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

**4. BEARDED DRAGON** ..... *Moons +2*

XP: 

- take a ritual of your House
- advance your signature move

**5. ELDER DRAGON** ..... *Moons +3*

XP: 

- your House dedicates a stronghold to you
- retire your character; arise as a Mystic or Ancient

## **Raw-Scaled Drake**

### 1. RAW SCALED DRAKE ..... Moons +0

XP: 

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- take another move from your playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

As a **Raw-Scaled Drake** your scales are still soft, but your bite is fierce. You start with a +0 to call upon the moons for strength, but as you grow into your scales you will be able to take a new move from your playbook, add a +1 to any stat, and advance your signature move.

## **Winged Drake**

### 2. WINGED DRAKE ..... Moons +0

XP: 

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- take another move from your playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

As a **Winged Drake** your scales begin to harden; you have lost your connection to one of the moons, but your relationship to them strengthens as you show your dedication to lunar powers. As a **Winged Drake** you still roll with a +0 to call upon the moons for strength, but as you grow into your new wingspan, you will be able to take another move from your playbook, add a +1 to any stat, and advance your signature move.

## **Long-Toothed Dragon**

### 3. LONG-TOOTHED DRAGON ... Moons +1

XP: 

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- take another move from another playbook
- take +1 to any stat (max +3)
- advance your signature move

As a **Long-Toothed Dragon** your teeth are longer and sharper than ever; you have severed your connection to two of the moons, and your relationship with the remaining moons continues to strengthen; you now add a +1 to your attempts to call upon the moons for strength. As a **Long-Toothed Dragon** you are at the peak of a dragon's physical abilities and now you can diversify your talents and take a move from another playbook, add a +1 to any stat, and advance your signature move.



## Bearded Dragon

### 4. BEARDED DRAGON ..... Moons +2

XP:			
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- take a ritual of your House
- advance your signature move

As a **Bearded Dragon** your scales are scarred and hard. You have sacrificed your connection to three of the moons and begun to master your lunar powers; add a +2 to call upon the moons for strength. You are as large as you will ever be (advance your signature move for the last time) and Dragonia will honor you by allowing you to take a ritual of your House:

**Brynback, the House of Steel, bestows upon you...**

**The Thunder of Dragonia:** When you roar to the heavens with the primal force of House Brynback, any dragon within 100 miles knows where you are and what aid you need to protect Dragonia. If they are needed, they will rally to your side.

**Kebros, the House of Ruby, bestows upon you...**

**The Veil of Ignorance:** When you draw a circle in the dirt and mark it with House Kebros's sigil, your conversation is shrouded from the outside world. None outside the circle shall overhear your secret whispers, and nothing from the outside world will disturb your conversation.

**Myndoth, the House of Oak, bestows upon you...**

**The Light of Truth:** When you light a candle bearing the mark of House Myndoth, the light from the candle pierces all deceptions. No magic can stand against it, and any lie told in the presence of the flame will be instantly recognizable as falsehood.

**Rothscar, the House of Gold, bestows upon you...**

**The Sound of Perfection:** When you create a new puzzle in silence, the rhythm of your heartbeat syncs with Dragonia's quiet drumming; you may ask the DM to reveal the true interworkings of something you find puzzling or interesting.

**Semscale, the House of Jade, bestows upon you...**

**The Breath of Time:** When you whisper the name of House Semscale into the ears of the dead, you can reach a dragon who has already flown through the valley of death. You may ask them three questions; they will answer honestly.

**Tessith, the House of Diamond, bestows upon you...**

**The Avatar of Nature:** When you make an offering to the Wild in the name of House Tessith, the weather of Dragonia itself rises to protect you, creating a powerful avatar that will rise and serve you for one day.

 **Elder Dragon**

**5. ELDER DRAGON** ..... *Moons +3*

XP: 

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- your House dedicates a stronghold to you
- retire your character; arise as a Mystic or Ancient

As an **Elder Dragon** your body is as mightier than any weapon ever forged. And with only one moon remaining, you channel the favor of that moon with the fury of a hurricane; take +3 to call upon the moons for strength. Some dragons never live to see this golden age of being, but Dragonia puts you and your needs before all else. Your house will often dedicate a stronghold to you; if they do, tell the DM what it is used for and where it is located.

When you **retire** as an Elder Dragon you can arise to become either an Ancient or a Mystic. Both are revered in highest honor. When you have fulfilled all that Dragonia has asked of you, you must choose your destiny.

 **Ancient**

**Ancients** become avatars of their moon and wander the earth unable to speak; they can only intervene on behalf of their moon, leaving drakes to wonder at their motives and methods. If you choose to become an Ancient, tell the DM where the ceremony takes place and what it looks like when you turn into an avatar of your moon. After the ceremony has completed, tell the DM where you roam, what it looks like, and why your moon asks you to reside there.

 **Mystic**

**Mystics** turn to moonstone and sleep as gigantic statues that, when asked, provide guidance to dragonkin. If you choose to become a Mystic, tell the DM where the ceremony takes place and what it looks like when you turn to moonstone. After the ceremony has completed, tell the DM what phrase, warning, or words of encouragement are etched into the base of your statue.

Whether you choose to ascend and become a guardian Ancient or a wise Mystic, your dragon's name will live on, but as a non-player character. If you would like to keep playing, pick up a new playbook and create a fresh drake! Maybe one day that drake will ask your Mystic for guidance, or be visited by your Ancient. Either way, the Ancient and Mystic's days have passed and their story has been carved on the great wall of heroes. Be proud and remember their accomplishments!



## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE DRAGONMASTER

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As Dragonmaster (DM), your job is to balance your **agendas** and **principles** to provide a rich draconic world that your players can explore. This job can seem intimidating, but is actually a really fun way to guide a story that you and your friends will remember for years to come. This chapter is all about the tools I've built to help you tell your story!

## Agendas

Agendas are your overarching goals for the game. As DM, try to keep them in mind throughout the story that you and your group tell. In fact, balancing agendas—choosing which one matters at this moment—is probably your biggest job as DM.

The three *EPYLLION* agendas are:

- ↪ Make Dragonia feel draconic
- ↪ Make the clutch's choices meaningful
- ↪ Play to find out what happens

### **Make Dragonia feel draconic**

Be creative in your descriptions and watch out for common “human” language or perspectives. Every opportunity to describe something commonplace (eating, entering someone's home, fashion) is an opportunity to expand on what it means to be a *dragon*. A restaurant table becomes a stone basin between two large perches or a huge dining slab in a roofless great hall; a game of basketball becomes a swooping sport involving boulders and lakes; a cloak becomes wing silks!



### **Make the clutch's choices meaningful**

The players want to impact the world and see their actions shape the future. Don't be afraid of letting your players change big things about the setting like relationships, traditions, or even the landscape itself. And when the clutch grabs an opportunity, remind them—using the world and NPCs—that their decisions mattered. They may be small dragons to start, but they are important drakes whose choices will change the future of Dragonia!

### **Play to find out what happens**

The players will surprise you with their actions: allow the story to flow naturally from whatever they throw at you. Use your moves when it makes sense for the fiction that your table has created together and let whatever happens happen. The story is big and epic. It doesn't follow a simple path from here to there, laid out in advance. Don't try to control where things go or what happens to the adventurous drakes of your group!

## The Principles

Principles are rules (not goals) for how to run the game. They highlight what to do as well as what not to do; as the DM, you're responsible for sticking to them.

- ❧ Fill Dragonia with adventure, mystery, and wonder
- ❧ Address the dragons, not the players
- ❧ Make your move, but root it in the fiction
- ❧ Make the history and traditions of Dragonia matter
- ❧ Present the houses as dynamic and evolving, but grounded in the past
- ❧ Ask provocative questions and build on the answers
- ❧ Exaggerate the hierarchy of size and age across Dragonia
- ❧ Name each dragon, give them a description and desire
- ❧ Challenge the clutch's preconceptions and prejudices
- ❧ Be a fan of the players' characters
- ❧ Remind them of the creeping Darkness





 **Fill Dragonia with adventure, mystery, and wonder**

Dragonia isn't a monotonous slog of dragon happenings, and neither is your story! Dragonia is a vibrant and magical place. Look for opportunities to showcase wondrous landscapes, mysterious objects, and important adventures. Even the most mundane item or plot in Dragonia can be corrupted by the Darkness or blessed by the moons to create an exciting environment for your clutch.

 **Address the dragons, not the players**

Your players aren't the ones standing up to Tass the Gigantic; their drakes are! Set a draconic tone while DMing by addressing your players as if they were their drakes. Say "Luneth, what do you do?" instead of "Tasha, what does Luneth do?" Addressing them as their dragons' names encourages the players to think, talk, and act like their drakes.

 **Make your move, but root it in the fiction**

When you make your DM moves (page 85), don't say the name of your move out loud to the players; just describe what happens. Rather than say "I'm waking something better left sleeping..." tell them what they see and hear: "the ground beneath your paws, claws, talons, and hooves trembles, and a great screech erupts from deep in the ruins..." Work a little magic into the description to bring your moves to life for your players without ruining the illusion by showing what's up your sleeve.

 **Make the history and traditions of Dragonia matter**

Dragonia's traditions and history are what make it a vibrant and living culture. Create a deep history together and respond accordingly when your clutch acts in accordance with or flouts those established traditions. Make the history of the world important to the events of today by surfacing old rivalries and ancient curses, and grant your clutch the power to influence new traditions.

 **Present the houses as dynamic and evolving, but root them in the past**

The Great Houses are pillars that hold up Dragonia's society. Run all of Dragonia's traditions, obligations, and politics through the filter of the great dragon houses. Show how dynamic and different two dragons from the same house can be, but unite them in loyalty when they hail from the same traditions. The dragons of Dragonia care what houses dragons hail from, and treat them differently because of it.

 **Ask provocative questions and build on the answers**

When you need to expand the landscape, traditions, or dragons of Dragonia, turn to your clutch for answers. Be bold with your questions: "Why did the Council banish this elder dragon to the archipelagoes?" or "What has the Darkness already corrupted in the capital of Dragonia?" Ask them about old rivalries, hidden dangers, and ancient history, and then build on the answers they give you. Let a member of the clutch plant seeds of inspiration for you; turn their answers into a full color description presented to the clutch with meaningful avenues of engagement.

 **Exaggerate the hierarchy of size and age across Dragonia**

Dragonia is built on hierarchy; officially (and unofficially), it is a world built for elder dragons. When the spotlight falls on a particular NPC, location, or feature, ask yourself, “who goes here, who was this intended for, and how do others see it?” Describe the grandeur and detail of structures, but don’t forget that some dragon had to make it so. The young drakes are setting out in the world to find their way because they do not yet fit in Dragonia. As drakes, Dragonia is full of obstacles to navigate through and around, but as they grow older the architecture around them begins to feel more comfortable and accommodating.

 **Name each dragon, give them a description and desire**

Dragonia has endless stories and tales to be told, but your clutch only cares about the NPCs that they meet. The fastest way to bring those NPCs to life is to give them all names and descriptions. There is a list of some typical Dragonian names and descriptions for you to choose from and keep track of on your DM Worksheet, but feel free to make up your own. Names and descriptions help your clutch connect to the NPCs, while desires will help you guide how interactions with your clutch go. It’s not just “a dragon who comes to deliver a message from the Council,” it’s “Salmek, the weary lion-faced elder dragon from the capital who wants a seat on the Council.”

 **Challenge the clutch's preconceptions and prejudices**

Give your adventuring clutch obvious expressions of the corrupting force of the Darkness, but challenge how they think about what is “evil” and worthy of destruction. Show them how a dragon who is holding a Council member hostage is vulnerable and desperate for supplies or how a beast that is terrorizing the Moonbeam Festival has been wronged by the local drakes. Explore the ways the Darkness can manifest in good intentions, and show how cruelty and evil deeds can be enacted without corruption.

 **Be a fan of the players' characters**

Making things interesting for your clutch doesn't mean you should make them suffer needlessly. No one wants to see the drakes' lives getting worse at every turn. Not only is it depressing, but it is also predictable and boring. Being a fan means you want to see them be heroes and also face opposition and distress so they can really shine.

It is also important to build trust with your players. Do not trick them or lie to them. The players need to know that they can trust the information you give them, even if they can't trust a particular NPC or dire prophecy.

 **Remind them of the creeping Darkness**

Dragonica is not safe from the resurgence of the Darkness, but dragonkin need more than rumors to take the threat seriously. The potential for giving in to Darkness is inside each and every dragon, so don't be shy about confronting your clutch with corruption. They will face personal, communal, and existential shadows grasping for power and control for the Darkness. So even though the problems the clutch faces may seem small at first, small conflicts are all the Darkness really needs to get involved in your story.

## Dragonmaster Moves

**DM moves** are actions you take during the game to make the game interesting, concrete bits of fiction you offer in response to the player's actions (or inaction). Make a move when you need to push the story forward, when a player rolls a miss, or when you think the fiction demands it. If there is a lull in the action and no one knows what to do, make a move.

For example, when your clutch seems to be getting along with Fayright Thunderbelly and the encounter seems a bit boring, make the move “reveal an unpleasant truth” and say “Veri, you notice a bead of sweat run down Fayright Thunderbelly's broad scales. Dre looks nervous, like dre is hiding something from you.” If your players are bored, it's because there is nothing to do, so push them snout first into the thick of things and give them opportunities to respond.



## Hard & Soft Moves

When the game calls for you to make a move, you have to decide on how hard a move to make. **Softer moves** focus on setting characters up for future moves—threats, opportunities, and foreshadowing—while **harder moves** focus on irrevocable changes in the fiction that force the characters to react to keep the situation from escalating further. Moves lie on a spectrum, from softest to hardest:

- ☞ **Softest:** You hear your mentor has an old conflict with a dangerous adversary.
- ☞ **Softer:** You hear that your mentor is in danger right now.
- ☞ **Harder:** You discover your mentor has been kidnapped.
- ☞ **Hardest:** You find out your mentor has been corrupted and turned against you.

Always remember your principles and agendas. You aren't **being a fan of the players' characters** when you make crippling hard moves every time they roll a miss; you aren't **reminding them of the creeping Darkness** if you let them walk away from golden opportunities without having to make some tough choices. There's got to be a balance, one that you manage scene by scene, move by move.



## Make a Move when...

You can make as hard or as soft a move as you like when:

- ☞ ...there is a lull in the action.
- ☞ ...a player misses a roll.
- ☞ ...a player presents you with a golden opportunity.

**It's your job to keep the story moving.** If the action ever stalls out, gets boring, or drags, it's time for you to make a move. Generally, moves you make when there's a lull in the action are softer moves, designed to get the characters moving and push the story forward, but you might need harder moves to get the characters to actually rise up and take action.

**It's your job to interpret misses.** If a player misses a roll, it's time for you to make a move. The moves you make in response to misses should always flow from the fiction—a fictional result rooted in a fictional cause—such that the player can understand the fictional source of the outcome. If the move tells you what to do on a miss, then follow through on that promise, but otherwise make a move that makes sense to you, as hard or as soft as you like.

**It's your job to represent Dragonia.** If a player gives you a golden opportunity—ignoring an immediate problem, opening up to a dangerous foe, or generally acting without regard to the consequences—it's time for you to make a move. Golden opportunities usually demand hard moves: if the characters ignore the dangers of Dragonia, then the wilderness or the Darkness gets to act upon them with impunity.

Keep your heroic story soaring to epic heights. Don't be afraid to make a harder move! If you never introduce dangerous challenges, your clutch won't have a chance to be heroes.

## Wilderness Moves

- ∞ Put someone in a high-stakes situation
- ∞ Reveal a new and fantastic creature
- ∞ Awaken something better left sleeping
- ∞ Take away one of the clutch's *Things*
- ∞ Obfuscate the way home
- ∞ Unleash chaos, disruptive and unmanageable
- ∞ Tempt a dragon with mysteries and ruins
- ∞ Present a path or structure for exploration
- ∞ Show the roots of Darkness taking hold

## Culture Moves

- ∞ Announce off-screen challenges and conflicts
- ∞ Pressure them with competing ideologies
- ∞ Turn their move back on them
- ∞ Reveal an unpleasant truth
- ∞ Charge them with a task or obligation
- ∞ Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
- ∞ Tell the consequences and ask
- ∞ Lock down an important place
- ∞ Show the Darkness feeding on a dragon's pain

## Darkness Moves

- ∞ Corrupt them with Shadows
- ∞ Announce the coming Darkness
- ∞ Confront them with corruption
- ∞ Reveal the Darkness's hold on Dragonia
- ∞ Demand a meaningful sacrifice
- ∞ Bind someone or something to an object
- ∞ Put someone in direct and immediate danger
- ∞ Activate the clutch's stuff's downsides
- ∞ Tempt them with power and promises



## Wilderness Move Examples

Wilderness moves occur whenever drakes are out in the Wilds, exploring lost ruins or searching for pathways to new places. Use these moves when you want the Wild to feel real!

### **Put someone in a high-stakes situation**

You can put the clutch in danger directly or threaten NPCs they care about on or off screen. The wilderness is a dangerous place; bring that danger to bear directly and give the drakes a chance to react accordingly.

*You sneak up on the sleeping spider, but three of her monstrous children descend from the trees above you: “We’ve caught you, we’ve got you, and now we’re gonna eat you.” What do you do to protect your sweet dragony insides?*

### **Obfuscate the way home**

Use this move to remind the drakes that the wilderness is not their home. To get back to the rest of their dragonkin, the clutch must first confront the wilderness.

*You come to the top of a great silver sand dune and look out towards the legendary stronghold of Moonrun the Misthaven. You are so close you can smell it, but you catch the scent of something else in the air along with it...two strongholds of Moonrun the Misthaven stand where there should only be one! What do you do?*

### **Present a path or structure for exploration**

Use this move to change the tone of the wilderness from dangerous to mysterious. What has been lost, forgotten, or born in the wilderness is definitely a trail worth following.

*You finally made it out of the Golddust caverns, but it is different than you remember it. A small stream of jade-colored water trickles across your path, whispering in a language you don’t understand. The stream beckons for you to follow. What do you do?*

## Culture Move Examples

Culture moves can be used whenever drakes are in any metropolis full of dragons. Trading with merchants, politicking with Council members, or just exploring a town—all are great opportunities for culture moves! Use these moves when you want the dragon culture to feel real!

### Pressure them with competing ideologies

Dragons are complex individuals from different backgrounds; use this move to disrupt the status quo around NPCs and their instructions for the clutch. Prompt the clutch to decide what they think is right and manage the consequences.

*Your meeting with Tass the Gigantic concludes. You and your clutch are ready to go and question Tailsong and bring your findings back to the Council, but as you are leaving, Wrex beckons for you to come closer. “You must not tell Tass what you learn from Tailsong without consulting me first. I do not trust the Council, and Tailsong could be in danger.” What do you do?*





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** Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost**

If the players seem stuck or frustrated by a problem, swoop in with NPCs that promise to solve the problem at a cost. Be honest and direct with your offers: don't wait for the clutch to exhaust themselves when you've got dragonkin ready and willing to make a deal to get something done. Same goes for other opportunities—tell the players what they see or hear in a scene, and allow them to take advantage of those courses of action while being clear about what costs they will bear.

*The mesmerizing long-toothed dragon circles you gracefully and says, with a silky smooth timbre, “I can get you the stone of Liberty from Glyph Kindclaw...just take me with you to the Stellar Mirror.” What do you do?*

** Lock down an important place**

Use this move to change the status quo of a place that matters to the clutch. Locking down an important place makes entry to it more difficult: added security flights, reinforced entry points, political pressure to stay out, etc.

*You arrive at the shore of Wrelex Isle and see the sigil of Kath carved deep into the welcome stone. Kath the Tyrant has resurfaced and laid claimed to this stronghold as dris own. You and your clutch are not welcome in this land. What do you do?*

## Darkness Move Examples

Darkness moves can be used when the drakes are confronted with the Darkness. You might feature corrupted dragons, infected trees, ancient runes, or some dark shadow ritual! Use these moves when you want the Darkness to feel real.

### **Corrupt them with Shadows**

Shadows are a versatile tool for raising the stakes. You can inflict a Shadow on dragons who are close to your clutch— allies, loved ones, enemies—or directly on the clutchmates themselves. The amount of Shadow you inflict is completely up to you, but the situation should provide guidance.

*You shield your new friend Tailsong from the attack, but your scales are badly burned in the process. Mark a Shadow as anger fills your heart. What do you do?*

### **Reveal the Darkness's hold on Dragonia**

The Darkness has crept back into Dragonia, striking deals and gaining influence. Think about what your corrupted NPCs are doing off-screen sometimes, and look for opportunities to relay to the clutch that they face active opposition from the Darkness. Make it obvious; it's a great moment when an ally reveals a betrayal or a villain monologues about their plans. Remember that if your players don't know that a deal has been struck, it's like the deal was never struck at all.

*You finish making sure the dirt spirits are feeling comfortable in their new home and Tailsong calls you over to take a look at an odd sapling dre found. When you take a closer look at it, you notice the mark of the Darkness on its leaves. The soil around it has turned to ash. In the distance you can just make out a field of these saplings that will one day grow into a forest of Darkness where monsters may reign supreme. "Who knows how many of these forests have already blossomed throughout Dragonia..." says Tailsong wearily. What do you do?*



### **Activate the clutch's stuff's downsides**

Each drake gives you an infinite number of opportunities to turn their own bodies, powers, relationships, and resources against the clutch. Whether it's the limitation of a magical item, the cost of being in charge, or an ally's selfish desire, turning something the players see as useful into a problem or complication drives home how vulnerable the clutch is to the Darkness.

*Your tattooing skills are renowned throughout Dragonia, and you always use a signature mark to show your work: a distinctive red scale on the neck. Unfortunately, not every dragon brandishing your artwork is as virtuous as you...*

*"Hey! You, stop there," growls the largest dragon from atop the Black Water Gate. Dre lands in front of you with a thud. "I recognize that mark you have on your neck. It's the same mark that belonged to the dragon who destroyed my hoard and stole my hatchling. Where is my kin! Answer me or you will not pass through this gate alive!" What do you do?*

## Igniting the Moves

Both your moves and the player's moves should ignite like a wildfire, setting off an unstoppable chain of events; exciting fiction should lead to the moves, and fiction that comes from resolving moves should lead back into more moves. A miss on a **survey an arcane area** roll leads to the introduction of a dangerous and corrupted beast which leads to the clutch **acting despite danger** which leads to a mysterious artifact uncovered in the aftermath of the battle which leads to...

Never make a move that cuts off the fiction, like “you charge the beast and miss; you bump into it, and it doesn't notice you.” Remember, a miss isn't a failure, so if it is more interesting to have them take the beast off guard, you can use a move to give your drakes what they want while introducing a new fun plot twist to another aspect of the story.



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## Using NPCs in Play

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The clutch will encounter many different dragons of all shapes and sizes throughout their adventures. Here are some tips on how to keep track of all of the NPCs you introduce.

### Managing Dragons

- ✧ Make index cards with a dragon name on each card. If you have trouble coming up with names on the fly, try preparing some beforehand and when you introduce them write a brief description on the index card.
- ✧ Create a two-columned list. When you introduce an NPC add dris name and age to one side and a brief description to the other. Add new information about dris holdings to the left and new information about their personality to the right.
- ✧ To create a truly dynamic NPC that your players will remember, give them a desire, demeanor, and occupation. Even if your PCs are talking with a very helpful drake who wants to help them find their way in the woods, take a moment to figure out *why* that drake might have wanted to help, where they came from, and what kind of mannerisms they have.
- ✧ When the clutch meets a new dragon, ask the PCs provocative questions about the NPC. If you want your players to have a past relationship with an NPC, ask a member of the clutch how dre knows the NPC. If you want to know why the NPC you just introduced is sneaking around the nest, ask one of the clutch what item the NPC needs to complete a secret ritual.

## Orchestrating the Darkness

The Darkness corrupts (or is welcomed into) the hearts of dragons and beasts of Dragonia. When you portray a corrupted NPC, remind the clutch that dre is still a creature of Dragonia, not just an evil monster to be slain on sight. Corrupted dragons may still make honest requests of younger drakes and corrupted beasts still have redeeming qualities. Because the danger of a fearsome elder dragon who has given in to the Darkness is so great, reward your clutch for being brave and creative when dealing with that threat.

At the start of play, introduce foes and challenges that are small enough for a young drake to tackle. Raw-scaled drakes cannot fight off the worst manifestations of the Darkness yet, so give them problems that they can overcome, like restoring the heart of the sage tree, helping two elders resolve an old grudge, or interrupting a shadow ritual.





# Beneath the Scales

When you start the game, explain each playbook and what makes the different drakes unique and fun to play. Players will each choose an archetype and starting moves that signal what situations they want to encounter in their story. Make sure you introduce NPCs, fiction, and challenges that highlight what makes each drake interesting and unique and remind the drakes to use their moves if they forget or to trigger them.

### FELLOWSHIP

EVERYONE INTRODUCES THEIR DRAKES by name, look, and color. Then list your Clutchmate's names in the blanks below and go around again to read aloud your fellowship ties.

\_\_\_\_\_ asked you to craft something useful for your Clutch. Explain what it is, and take a Friendship Gem from them.

\_\_\_\_\_ inspired you to leave your workshop to fight against the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ has your back when your tinkering gets you into trouble. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.


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### ADULT ADVANCEMENT


THERE ARE FIVE AGES of a dragon lifespan. Each time your XP track fills, select an advancement from the list and erase your XP track. When you have taken all three advancements, you grow into your next age.


As you grow your connection to the Moons changes and shifts. Every time you take an Adult advancement, cross off one moon. You can no longer call on that moon for strength.


- RAW SCALED DRAKE** ..... Moons +0
  - take another move from your playbook
  - take +1 to any stat (max +3)
  - advance your signature move
- WINGED DRAKE** ..... Moons +0
  - take another move from your playbook
  - take +1 to any stat (max +3)
  - advance your signature move
- LONG-TOOTHED DRAGON** ... Moons +1
  - take another move from another playbook
  - take +1 to any stat (max +3)
  - advance your signature move
- BEARDED DRAGON** ..... Moons +2
  - take a ritual of your House
  - advance your signature move
- ELDER DRAGON** ..... Moons +3
  - your House dedicates a stronghold to you
  - retire your character; arise as a Mystic or Ancient

VOID  



LIBERTY  


STONE  


SPIRIT  


STORM  


THE CRAFTER



## THE CRAFTER

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YOU UNDERSTAND THAT beauty goes beyond a flashy new look, and you know how much hard work and dedication it takes to make great art. But it is important for all great crafters to remember that your trade is a dangerous practice: many like you have fallen to their obsessions. Your friendships will keep you grounded while you pursue perfection.

**NAME** (circle one)

Deep Eyes      Bolograth  
Neo              Angus  
Azrael          Samsmit

**LOOK** (circle one in each)

- Antennae, Charred horns, Curling horns, Tusks
- Baggy hide, painted scales, Bumpy skin, Shelled
- Boney skull, Scarred snout, Short snout, Underbite
- Barbed tail, Club tail, No tail, Prehensile tail
- Boney digits, Claws, Splayed fingers, Webbed feet
- Angular body, Bloated body, Sleek body, Twisty body

**COLORS**

EPYLLION PLAYBOOKS

It's important that you give each drake many chances to shine. For example, when the Crafter takes the move **Crafty Claw**, they are signaling that they want to fix things that are broken; make sure to give them broken things to fix, and make sure that those things will help them accomplish their clutch's goals and learn more about Dragonia.

Here are some things to highlight when running the game for the different playbooks:

## The Academic

The Academic is dedicated to learning about Dragonia's history, geography, and famous dragons, as well as knowing things that others don't know. Dre really shines when etiquette and tradition are involved because the Academic knows just how to act to get ahead!

The Academic's special move, **Field of Expertise**, allows them to share some authorship of the world. And because it is the playbook's signature move, it is important to make sure something exciting happens if the Academic misses the roll: twist whatever addition the young drake made into something new and fun, but don't betray the spirit of what dre added by making it totally inaccurate.

When Hachiro says dre read about how Glyph Kindclaw was a well-respected dragon for the heroic role dre played in the War of Shadow and rolls a miss, for example, make sure that Glyph Kindclaw was important, but not for the reasons that were stated in *Daygon's History of the War of Shadow*.

Take note of what other moves the Academic has selected and present them opportunities to be an expert for the clutch. If your Academic picks the geography tome, for example, take an extra moment to describe the clutch's surroundings during your sessions. And if they have **an Ear for the Arcane**, make sure to add magic rituals and chants to your story.

## The Crafter

The Crafter is an artist with an urge to create. Dre really shines when presented with materials and challenges that require the perfect piece.

Present the Crafter with opportunities to show off their special move, **Dragon Trade**. Ask questions to get at the heart of why the player chose their mediums and how they see their dragon being cool while crafting. Guiding questions like “Who is your mentor?”, “What is your studio like?”, and “How do you make the art?” are great for starting that conversation.

If they have **an Eye for Detail**, take a bit of extra time to describe what dragons may be adorned with and what kinds of rare materials can be found on their outings, so dre can compliment them and roll their higher stat when **studying another dragon**.

If they can create **a Monument to the Moons**, that effectively gives them the ability to make a moon magic bomb that will go off at a later time. If a player isn't using this move very much, give them evidence of an off-screen problem that no one has solved. For example, if the Crafter wants to know who has been sneaking around the library at night and stealing restricted tomes, dre can make a monument to the moons that will mark the dragon who tries to steal the next book.

Overall, ask the Crafter to describe dris work whenever possible; after all, no one knows the craft better than dre does. What does it look like when the Crafter makes it and what is dris favorite detail about it?

## The Daredevil

The Daredevil wants to charge ahead into dangerous situations. Dre really shines when you give them opportunities to race forward to help a friend.

The Daredevil's special move is dris **Beast Companion**, so when you portray the companion give it a memorable quirk and a cute personality. The companion loves the Daredevil more than anything else in all of Dragonia, but it also serves as a conscience and guiding voice if the Daredevil is pushing others to do something dangerous or scary.

The companion also travels with the Daredevil even when the clutch cannot keep up, so use the companion to rein in the Daredevil and remind them of their impact on others. The companion should make it clear that they can't fly any faster or that they don't want to go down that path by blocking the way, but don't separate them. If the companion blocks the way and the Daredevil bursts through, the companion should always follow.

Because the Daredevil is regularly diving into trouble ahead of others and might use **Share the Load** to take on other clutchmate's Shadows, the Daredevil is prone to becoming dris Shadowself more often. When the Daredevil is dris Shadowself, dre tends to zoom off and leave behind the clutchmates who can help. Put obstacles in the way that require help—the beast companion gets stuck, an NPC dragon thinks dre is a threat, etc.—and if those don't work, physically wrap them up in conflicts so dris friends can catch up—a spider web, ancient catacombs, or a magical trap. Each of these obstacles will allow dris friends an opportunity to release the Daredevil from dris Shadowself.

## The Nature Adept

The Nature Adept is trying to find a balance between dragonkin's rich traditions and the many wonders of the wilderness. Dre really shines when you introduce beasts and creatures of the wilderness with which dre can interact.

The Nature Adept's special move is **Wild Speech**: dre is the only drake who can understand beasts of the wild. When you have a Nature Adept in your clutch, describe the kinds of beasts flying overhead, wriggling under claw, or swinging in the trees. Remind the Nature Adept that dre can understand the beasts by describing what the creatures are saying.

Give each kind of beast you introduce a different set of limitations. For example, Lionkeycaws (rambunctious lion-monkey-macaws) can only yell when they speak, or that humming foxes (tiny hummingbird-fox beasts) can only speak in hummed fragment sentences, or a schooling of wolfish (vicious fuzzy wolf-fish beasts) only hold a few words in their mind at a time before forgetting. Show the Nature Adept how diverse and dynamic the wilderness is through these creatures.

If the Nature Adept takes a spirit guide, ask what it looks like and help differentiate it from the beasts of the wild by how it communicates and how it looks. Maybe it can only speak in mime or maybe it only whispers in the ear of the Nature Adept and is suspicious of all other dragonkin. It is easy for the Nature Adept to get caught up in how great the wilderness is, but the spirit guide can push them to interact with other dragons and get involved in politics when it's the right thing to do. The spirit guide is not concerned about nature's triumph, but rather who has been wronged and what the Nature Adept can do about it, from a small comforting nuzzle, to an outright intervention.

## The Seer

The Seer is haunted by the Darkness. Dre really shines when interacting socially with NPCs and when the Darkness manifests physically.

When you have a Seer in your clutch remind them how dre is different and let the Darkness comfort them. The Seer's signature move is **Haunting Visions** of the Darkness. Ask them what other dragons in their house think of the visions, and act upon the answers. Your Seer will be looking for the Darkness, seeking it out, so describe how it smells on others and what it feels like under dris scales. And present them with opportunities to talk to those NPCs who have similar or contrasting views about the Darkness.

If you don't bring up the Darkness in a session the Seer can feel left out, but their visions can always be incorporated into your story. Let them pick up on a smell or feeling that dre remembers from the visions and give them something to take and investigate later.

Don't play coy! Give them direct information to act on: a dire warning from a mysterious merchant or obvious carvings in the bark of an old tree. Show them hints of the Darkness even if it is not there for an adventure. When there isn't any direct action against the Darkness, bring the Seer into social situations and then put them on the spot, so dre can uncover thickening plots about the Darkness and how the clutch can stop it.

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## The Warrior

The Warrior is born to protect Dragonia. Dre really shines when dre has a foe to stand up to, politically or physically.

The Warriors' special move is their **Scales of Honor**, boons that tie them more closely to Dragonia's traditions by making the Warrior an important figure in Dragonia's history. The Warrior is famous and dragons—both young and old—should be excited, impressed, or even angered when confronted with the Warrior's importance to Dragonia's politics. Describe how NPCs react to first meeting the Warrior and remind the Warrior that dre can always mark a Shadow to hide or conceal their boons if dre would like to avoid someone recognizing them.

The Warrior is noble and dedicated to Dragonia, so have NPCs seek out the Warrior for help dealing with a problem. Entrust political secrets to the Warrior, both to give them the information dre needs to act, and to indicate trust. If Dragonia's citizens or traditions are never threatened, the Warrior cannot rise to the challenge and impact society.

Likewise, if the Warrior chooses the move **Battle Plan**, include scenes in your story that include crowds of dragons and allies willing to start a physical fight over something important; for example, let a rival clutch come to blows with the main clutch over the possession of a dragon egg.

## The First Session

Starting your *EPYLLION* campaign can seem daunting, but you aren't responsible for carrying the story alone. The players are also responsible for helping you advance the story too! Ask leading questions and fly with things that you, as the Dragonmaster, find interesting.

### Before You Start

1. Explain Dragonia and introduce the map
2. Choose playbooks and fill them out
3. Introduce the drakes and add to the map
4. Fill out the fellowship
5. Take a short break and create a hazard

#### Explain Dragonia and Introduce the Map

Give your table an overview of Dragonia. Show them the map and briefly touch on the setting material:

- ↪ Introduce Dragonia's dynamic terrain and explain that you will all fill in details of the map together. Also, tell the clutch to beware of kraken in the sea!
- ↪ Explain dragon society: gender, aging, the great dragon houses, clutches, etc.
- ↪ Describe how the clutch fits into this big wide world.

Feel free to explain some of this while the playbooks are being filled out, but don't be too distracting.

#### Choose Playbooks and Fill Them Out

Explain each playbook by reading its front description and mentioning what its special move is. Ask your players to choose which they would like and fill out the first page (name, color, look). Next have them all open their playbook and fill out the next bit (stats, house, virtue, and their moves).





## **Introduce the Drakes and Add to the Map**

As the DM, you get to draw in where the capital city of Dragonia is on the map! Then take some time to go around to each player and ask them to introduce their drake. What does dre look like, what House does dre hail from, what is dris virtue, what moves did dre choose, etc. Take notes on your Dragonmaster sheet so you can easily reference what special moves and house obligations they have.

As the drakes are introduced, ask them to add something to the map. Dragonia is a mega-continent full of endless possibilities, so tie your drakes' stories directly into the landscape as they introduce themselves, and use leading questions to get them involved.

For example, you may ask the Nature Adept, "Can you show me on the map where the Forbidden Forest is and tell us why you were warned to stay away from it?" Or you might ask the Warrior, "Where is your house's main stronghold on the map? Can you draw it and tell us what chore you hate being assigned to there?"

## **Fill Out the Fellowship**

Now that everyone knows who everyone else is, it is time to fill out your fellowship! Have your players take a moment to fill in the blanks with names of their clutchmates, then go around in a circle and have them read each fellowship move aloud one at a time and follow the instructions. Make sure everyone hands out gems per the instructions in each move.

## **Take a Short Break and Create a Hazard**

Take a short break to gather your thoughts and create a hazard for today's game. (See page 129 for information on hazards.) Set up is a lot of fun, but it is also a lot of work, so taking a break can be helpful for players too! Get some snacks and relax a bit before setting out on your adventure.

## Going on an Adventure

Based on your fellowship, the clutch has been together for a while, but this is the first time they will set out together. The best way to start the first session is with a formal request from an older dragon (maybe attached to the Council) to confirm rumors of the Darkness' return.

Dragonia is not yet ready to believe that the Darkness is seeping back into the world, but someone is pulling for your clutch to investigate some event or anomaly that may be connected to the Darkness. The adventure can be the investigation of a delayed shipment, a missing mentor, or some other interesting reconnaissance mission that came up during character creation.

It is your job as the Dragonmaster to give them a clear mission to fulfill. To keep things moving, tie in what they face with a hazard and mark its effects as a phase of the moon (see page 129 for more on hazards and moon phases). Good luck!



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# Keeping the Game Fun

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Everyone at your table is there to play together, so here are some tips and tricks to make sure everyone is having a good time when you play *EPYLLION*.

## The X-Card

The X-Card, designed by John Stavropoulos, is a tool that helps groups manage difficult content:

*The X-Card is an optional tool that allows anyone in your game (including you) to edit out any content anyone is uncomfortable with as you play. Since most RPGs are improvisational and we won't know what will happen till it happens, it's possible the game will go in a direction people don't want. An X-Card is a simple tool to x problems as they arise.*

To use, at the start of your game, simply say:

*"I'd like your help. Your help to make this game fun for everyone. If anything makes anyone uncomfortable in any way...[ draw X on an index card ]...just lift this card up, or simply tap it[ place card at the center of the table ]. You don't have to explain why. It doesn't matter why. When we lift or tap this card, we simply edit out anything X-Carded. And if there is ever an issue, anyone can call for a break and we can talk privately. I know it sounds funny but it will help us play amazing games together and usually I'm the one who uses the X-Card to protect myself from all of you! Thank you!"*

*We've found that anything that gets X-Carded during play can be replaced by something equally dark, mysterious, or compelling that doesn't push our group to bad places. We trust your imagination to do the same! Don't let yourself be bound by something so mundane as the first thing you thought of for that scene.*

Learn more about the X-Card at <http://tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg>.

## Using the X-Card in Epyllion

The X-Card can also be used for the tone of the story you are all telling together. For example, if a player says that the dragon they just met is a professional clown, then a player or even the DM can X-Card that dragons can be clowns because they don't think that is appropriate for the kind of story they are telling together.

*Jonathan (the DM) describes millions of tiny spiders pouring down from the ceiling and beginning to surround the clutch of young drakes. One of his players, Tyson, has a problem with spiders and isn't comfortable with where Jonathan has just taken the story.*

*Tyson picks up the X-Card and lets Jonathan know that he's X-Carding spiders. Jonathan nods and narrates a new scene where dark purple ooze is pouring from the ceiling and beginning to surround the young drakes. The group acts as if the spiders were never there and continues on with the story.*

To create an X-Card you can mark a big X on an index card or, if you would like the original version made by John, the X-Card is also available at <http://tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg>.

## Other Safety Tools

There are a variety of other safety tools that you might use at your table when playing *EPYLLION*. Feel free to use whatever makes your group feel comfortable, but make sure the players know how to use the tools before you sit down to play.

## Roses and Thorns

**Roses and thorns** is an out-of-character way to get feedback and make sure every person has a chance to voice concerns and praise. Feedback generally happens naturally after a game, but the structure makes sure everyone gets a chance to talk and nothing gets left out.

Go around the table and ask each person (including yourself) to share one thing they liked/thought worked well during the session (the rose) and one thing they didn't like (the thorn). Don't try to argue about your player's thorns; just listen to what they're saying and think about what you might try to do differently next time. Roses and thorns is also an opportunity to get some feedback on your DMing skills and make the next game even more fun!



## Light After the Darkness

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Like any good epic, your *EPYLLION* game should have a beginning, middle, and most importantly, an amazing finale. Watching the clutch grow and change into heroes is thrilling and fun, so finishing the story of this brave clutch can be hard. But nevertheless, the end of your campaign is sparked when the Darkness has been vanquished from Dragonia. You'll have to follow your own fiction to see how best to represent the final stand against the Darkness, but it could be a great battle, a flurry of moon magic, or a heroic sacrifice; whatever you choose, make it count!

## Defeating the Darkness

When it is clear that the clutch has defeated the Darkness and saved Dragonia (by whatever fiction has evolved from your story) describe what it looks like when the sun rises and golden light shines over all they have accomplished. Tell them what impact the clutch had on their immediate surroundings. What happens to the remaining agents of Darkness? Do they retreat into hiding, try to turn over a new leaf and ask for forgiveness or are they banished by the Council?

Describe what kind of physical impact the clutch had on Dragonia's landscape. Does the sun begin to rise, symbolizing a new beginning? Does the clutch have to wait for the dust to settle over the rubble to see if their friend made it out? How do the heroes make a lasting change to Dragonia?

Whatever fantastic outcome you choose to describe, refrain from telling the clutch what their characters do or do not do during this time; they'll have a chance to explain what they do once you're done. After you have finished describing the final scene, the end of your encounter can still feel like a cliffhanger, so go around the table and get some input from the dragons about what they each do in a short epilogue.

## Epilogues

Before your group finishes their *EPYLLION* tale and parts ways, go around the table and give each of the players the spotlight to share a short summary of what their character does in the world following the conflict. This can be about what immediate actions are taken, like tracking down Rith'nix for an unfinished cloud duel, or an event that happens to the dragon later in dris life, such as retiring as a Mystic or Ancient. If the scene described involves another clutchmate, like the sanctioning of an affinity clutch, have the player telling the epilogue ask for their clutchmate's permission to include them. Epilogues help your group tell a satisfying end to your epic tale with a beautiful montage of character stories!



## A Long-Toothed Example

What follows is an extended example of play. It calls out DM moves and principles throughout, as well as noting how I, as the DM, think about the emerging story while the group plays to find out what happens.

The session I'm running begins in Dragonia's archipelago and features three PCs in their third session:

**The Academic:** Hachiro—a wingless, deep purple drake with a pointy snout, antlers, a maned tail, and talons.

**The Daredevil:** Spirit—a muscular drake with iridescent fiery red feathers, a prehensile tail, strong paws, a short snout, and two broken horns.

**The Nature Adept:** Talon—a shiny copper drake with a beak and small tusks protruding from the corners, a small furry body, clubbed feet, and a stinger.

Earlier in the session, the clutch was asked by the Council to go to one of the desert islands on the archipelago and investigate why the shipment of cottonhoney from the buzzlebunn hive has been delayed. Seshly, the organizer of the second day of the Moonbeam Festival, is very concerned about getting the delivery as soon as possible...

*Talon says, "I am really excited to meet the buzzlebunns!" Dre's been trying to find a buzzlebunn on the main island for years now!*

*Spirit pipes up too, "Yeah and if we get to taste some fresh cottonhoney this trip is well worth the time! And Tix the urchat (Spirit's beast companion; an adorably sticky urchin-bat beast) has never had any!"*

*I say, "As you make your way to the top of the dune, the sand beneath your talons and paws is mixed in with a lovely-smelling sugar. As you finally reach the top, you look down and see a valley of buzzlebunn holes leading down into their hive."*



*“What else do we see? Are the buzzlebunns happy?” asks Talon.*

*This sounds like the perfect opportunity for Talon to **survey an ancient or arcane area**, so I smile and say, “Well, this hive has been the source of cottonhoney for the Moonbeam Festival for as long as the festival has been a tradition, so it is very old. Would you like to survey this ancient area?”*

*Talon reads over the questions associated with the move and replies with an enthusiastic “Yes!” and picks up the dice. “I will glide along the tops of the surrounding sand dunes to get a good look of this area from all angles.” Since this is the first time we have made the move, I ask Talon to read it aloud for the clutch before rolling. Talon has a Cunning +0 and rolls a total of 11. A hit!*

*“Awesome! You get to ask two questions off the list.”*

*Talon already knows the first one she wants to ask. “I want to know, how can I gain access to this place’s secrets?” Because the clutch is in the wilderness, I look to my Wilderness Moves for inspiration on how to make the scene exciting, and I choose to **present a path or structure for exploration**. I’m going to give them a path into the hive.*

*“While doing your rounds along top the sand dunes, you notice the buzzlebunns seem scared and frantic.” I want to get some input on the scene from the Nature Adept, so I just ask Talon what it looks like when buzzlebunns are scared and frantic—Talon says, “They bounce and buzz and bump into each other as they try to fly/ bounce in and out of their holes.”*

*“Yes! And because you have **Wild Speech** you can hear all the drone buzzlebunns saying in unison ‘zzzzsave the queen! zzzove! zzzove! zzzove! scary noizzzzzz!’ You see the buzzlebunns filling in holes and moving to abandon the hive. If you want to know their secrets, you know you’ll have to venture underground and meet the queen underground. What else would you like to ask from the list?”*

Talon reads down the list for a moment and asks dris clutchmates what they think. After a moment of deliberation, dre follows up with, "What here harbors Darkness?"

Excellent, this is a great opportunity for me to direct them to the source of the Darkness on the island. "Ah, yes. As you slide down, or in the case of Hachiro, roll down the dunes, you see the buzzlebunn's fur has small purple crystals stuck to it. Before you have time to grab one, you hear a rumble growing in the distance and an earth-shaking roar echoes across the entire island.

"A shock wave wipes across the entry to the hive and the tiny crystals pop and you can smell the familiar wet stench of the Darkness releasing. The buzzlebunns bounce into an angry frenzy for a few moments before returning to work... You can tell that the Darkness is in the hive and that whatever made that roar is spreading the effects."

Spirit and Talon say they are interested in visiting the queen, but at this point, I haven't heard much from Hachiro, so I ask them directly, "Hachiro, what do you do?"

Hachiro thinks for a moment then says, "I would really like to find out what made that noise...so I guess I'll scout ahead while they go talk to the queen?"

"Yeah! That's a great idea." Now I look to Talon, because I see the **virtue: independence** on dris name plate, "Does what Hachiro's doing seem to fit your definition of independence, Talon?" Talon nods and passes one of dris copper friendship gems to Hachiro.

To avoid any confusion, I set the scene and confirm what every drake's plan is before moving on. Talon and Spirit listen attentively as I focus on Hachiro's part of the story for a while.

Hachiro follows the direction the roar came from and finds a mouth of a huge cave with sand continuously falling in front of it, like a waterfall. Since this scene is all about Hachiro I want to give

them a chance to show off. “Just behind the soothing noises of the sandfall, you can just make out a song being sung by a couple of dragons. You are listening to a magic ritual!” Hachiro’s eyes light up, “Would you mind reading your move **an ear for the arcane** aloud for all of us?” When playbook moves come up, I have the drakes read them aloud so I only have to remember their triggers.

Hachiro reads it aloud and rolls with Cunning +2, getting a total of 7. “Whoo, just barely made it, nice! You get to ask one question and take a +1 forward to your next roll that has to do with the answer.” Hachiro makes a note of the +1 so dre doesn’t forget, and asks, “What arcane effects does the ritual have?”

“Yeah, you can’t understand the words, but you feel the melody. Its phrases are constricted and confined. As it continues, the notes solidify in a feeling of being trapped. You can tell that this ritual is to cage whatever is in the cave and hold it there. Now, let’s switch over to your other clutchmates for a moment and I’ll be right back to see what you want to do with that information.”

Hachiro smiles and nods, and I shift my attention to the other two back at the hive.

I double-check what the plan is with the other two to make sure we are all on the same page after coming back to their part of the scene. “So, you two are planning on talking to the queen and convincing her to stay?”

Spirit shifts excitedly in dris seat, “Yep! And Talon is going to be the interpreter, because I don’t understand these buzzlebunn beasts. I just want to get closer to that sweet sweet cottonhoney.”

This has my gears turning. I already introduced the explosive crystals full of Darkness, so if Spirit isn’t cautious dre might end up eating a piece of the Darkness! That would be a great way to use my DM wilderness move **show the roots of Darkness taking hold**.

*“Yeah,” I say, “so what do you two do?” I’ll just keep that idea in my back pocket for now... I’m **playing to find out what happens**, and I haven’t been given a good opportunity to make a move yet. Spirit says, “I zoom past all the buzzlebunns and dive into the largest opening I can find and search for the cottonhoney!”*

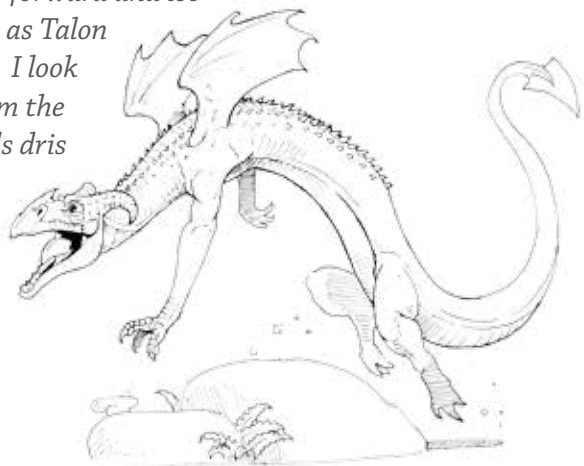
*I think this is a perfect time to interject the Daredevil’s beast companion’s lovable personality, so I say, “Right before you take off, Tix taps her wing impatiently on your head, Spirit, and frowns.”*

*“Yeah...Spirit, do you mean, search for the queen?” Talon adds patiently.*

*“Er, yeah. Find the queen. That’s what I meant,” Spirit replies.*

*I love moments like this! It’s really great to see the drakes talk as their characters. But I wonder if they know how dangerous it would be to do this plan, so I make sure they know the stakes before having them roll anything. “That seems awfully dangerous, considering the frazzled state of the buzzlebunns. You are likely to get zapped. You still wanna charge ahead, Daredevil?” I say with a smirk. I use their playbook name to reinforce their character concept and remind them that it’s okay take risks because they are The Daredevil!*

*“Oh yeah! I just charge forward and let my snout lead the way as Talon flies along behind me.” I look over at Talon to confirm the plan; Talon smiles, rolls dris eyes, and nods, so off they go!*



*“Let’s see how well you do, roll **act despite danger!**” I know that Spirit didn’t yet take any of the moves on dris playbook that would apply here, so dre rolls the basic move with a Courage of +2 and gets a total of 6!*

*“Ouch! On your highest stat, no less. Talon, you see Spirit get zapped by a nervous buzzlebunn and is headed into more trouble, would you like to help them?”*

*“Yes! Ouch!” Spirit mimes getting stung by a fat buzzlebunn “Help, Talon help!” The table laughs, and I remind Talon that helping exposes them to the same dangers as dris clutchmate.*

*“Yeah, since I am so much smaller than Spirit I will fly through the buzzlebunns and use my own stinger to fend off the ones who are about to swarm them.” Talon counts up the number of iridescent red Friendship gems dre has collected from Spirit—four—and rolls to **help** with a +3 (the maximum bonus), but dre rolls snake eyes for a total of 5!*

*This dice spread can seem like really bad luck, so I remind them both to **mark an experience point** for rolling a miss. “You are gonna remember this and be wiser for it!” I say as we all laugh, and Spirit and Talon mark their sheets.*

*Now I am going to give them a little of what they wanted, but I am going to **put them in a high-stakes situation**. I don’t quite know how I want to introduce that yet, so I say, “I’m going to leave you with that cliffhanger and shift the spotlight back over to Hachiro at the cave.”*

*“Hachiro, you are close enough to make out the intricate details of the ritual song, but that also means you are close enough to be spotted! A small drake, younger than you, peaks dris snout through the sand fall and narrows dris buggy eyes at you. What do you do?”*

*Hachiro’s eyes widen and dre looks down at the moves sheet. “I **mislead or trick** them!”*

*That's not quite enough information to trigger that move, so I ask for a bit more. "Okay, what do you do to mislead or trick them?" I need to know what the move looks like in the fiction.*

*I give Hachiro time and space to think of a plan that dre likes; Hachiro ultimately comes back with a plan: "I shake my tail back and forth at them (because I don't have wings and that's how I have to wave), and yell through the sand 'That sounds great! Seems like you have everything under control, I'll just go report back to the rest of the dragons that your ritual is going beautifully and that you don't need any help.'" That's the kind of trigger I wanted! Hachiro picks up the dice and rolls; carrying dris +1 forward to go tell dris friends about the ritual from the last roll (and Cunning +2) and gets a total of 13!*

*Hachiro chooses to **confuse them for some time** so dre can get away without being followed, so I get to describe the success. I will totally make the young bug-eyed drake confused for some time; that sounds like fun!*

*"Whaaaaat?" the young drake stutters for a moment, 'Well, good!' The drake looks as though dre is thinking really hard, as dre scampers back into the mouth of the cave. You have time to fly back to your clutchmates, Hachiro! Let's switch back to your friends and see what kind of state they are in before you get there."*

*Now that I have had some time to think about what to do with these two misses, I look to my wilderness moves and decide to **put them both in a high-stakes situation** by having their entrance into the hive offend and dishonor the queen. This way, the fiction keeps going forward and they don't have to try to get into the hive again the exact same way (which would be boring).*

*"Talon and Spirit, you both do your best to protect each other as you soar through the minefield of distraught buzzlebunns bouncing in and out of their holes with you dodging, missing, and occasionally getting zapped by their stingers." I am not going to inflict a Shadow here for them getting physically injured yet.*

*“You two find yourselves on the defensive as a warrior buzzlebunn is hot on your tails. You dive into the nearest hive entrance you can find. The hole is slick and slippery as you slide through the tube at high speed, and before you know it you are launched out into a honey-filled moat and the nearby queen screeches at both of you!”*

*The drakes are excited, but I want to hear what they have to contribute to the flavor of Dragonia. I ask them to fill in some details: “Hachiro, what does a queen buzzlebunn look like?” I ask Hachiro, because even though Talon is the Nature Adept, I want to share the spotlight and I know Spirit is about to have a big part of the action.*

*“She’s as big as an elder dragon, but her wings are too tiny to carry her, so she pulls herself along like a worm with her huge clear abdomen full of liquid sugar. She sits upright with two fuzzy feet, small, like a t-rex, dangling in front and her two giant bee eyes are so large, you might miss the tiny pink bunny snout poking out. Her antennae look just like bunny ears.”*

*Talon squeaks with glee, “That sounds terrifyingly cute!”*

*Now that we have that awesome description, I finish setting the scene, “Talon, you can hear that her screeching is of surprise and horror. You have just desecrated the honey by contaminating it with...well, with yourselves.”*

*I smile, and Spirit mimes being covered in honey and mutters “Oh, she’s the one upset? It’s gonna take me weeks to get this out of my feathers.”*

*Great scene so far, but I haven’t made it explicit how dire their situation is yet, so I describe a little bit more, “Dezzzztroy it all! Zzzztart anew!” The queen begins to give orders that will ensure none of the cottonhoney makes it to the festival! What do you do?”*

Talon says, “I tread honey to keep my neck above the surface, looking very serious I bark up to the queen in a language she understands, hopefully surprising her enough to capture her attention. ‘Don’t destroy anything! We are very sorry for contaminating your honey, but we are here to help you. Give us time to make things right before you destroy all of the lovely honey you have made.’”

Normally, this wouldn’t trigger any moves, but because of Talon’s wild speech, dre can **stand up to the queen** as if she were an older dragon, so I say, “Great, she is many many sun cycles older than you, but it sounds to me like you are standing up to her.” Talon nods. “Let’s have you roll +Courage.” Talon gets a total of 8. (It’s not a nine or a six, so Spirit can’t help).

Talon chooses to **impress** her, **earning a favor or accommodation**, from the first list; and from the second list for 7-9 results, dre chooses to **succumb to vanity** and mark one Shadow. Talon marks Doubt (Question a Friend’s Loyalty) and turns to Spirit who is trying to shake off the honey, and says, “While the queen thinks, I ask Spirit if dre even cares what happens to the buzzlebunns or if this is all just a big joke?!”

Spirit trudges through the honey over to Talon and lifts them out of it. “Of course I do...I just can’t understand what they say like you do.” Talon hugs Spirit back and apologizes for doubting dris loyalty. Hachiro silently passes Spirit a friendship gem for acting out the virtue of Honesty.

“The queen looks you over, Talon, and—after a tense moment—her antennae wiggle in approval and acceptance. She says she will wait one day for the drakes to cleanse the moat and get rid of the scary bad thing to the north. ‘But not a zzzzoment longer!’”



*Hachiro arrives at the hive as the other two drakes are crawling out of the hole. Dre hurriedly tells the clutch about the dragons in the cave performing a ritual to keep something locked up.*

*They decide to head out to investigate, and—just to drive home the immediacy of the problem—I describe the roar echoing out over the island again as the three of them fly up to the mouth of the cave. I tell them that they see a long-toothed dragon coiled up next to the smaller dragon Hachiro saw earlier.*

*Hachiro leaps into action: “I want to see if I can tell anything about what the older dragon is up to without being seen, so I guess I’ll **study another dragon?**”*

*Spirit slides over one of dris iridescent red friendship gems for the virtue Discretion and says, “Great idea, Hachiro! I wish I was better at being **discreet.**”*

*Hachiro rolls with Charm +0 to get a total of 10. Dre first asks, “Who are you holding a grudge against?”*

*I think about introducing a new NPC, but instead I want to make an existing NPC more important. “As you crouch by the mouth of the cave and peer through the falling sand, you overhear two dragons talking for a moment:*

*‘You take over the ritual, Finn, I’m tired of singing. We’ll be able to take this nargasus out of here soon.’*

*The little bug-eyed drake picks the melody back up:*

*‘You know,’ says the long-toothed dragon, ‘I can’t believe Seshly got to organize the Moonbeam Festival this year. I was the clear choice for promotion... It was supposed to be my job!’*

*The drake stops singing for a moment then continues meekly. What would you like to know with your second question, Hachiro?”*

Hachiro asks, “What is dre hoarding?” This is a great opportunity for me to bring in the tainted cottonhoney Spirit has been after, so I describe the long-toothed dragon, a beautiful sterling silver serpent with a sparkly white frill around dris neck, lying on top of a huge mound of cottonhoney, all bound up and ready to go to the festival. “The dragon is lounging around and snacking on it, licking every last bit off dris claws, lapping up the purple crystals, and letting out a burp of shadowy Darkness. They are hoarding some of the cottonhoney that Seshly needs for the festival! What do you do, Spirit?”

I want to get Spirit all riled up so dre can do something fun; I’m being a **fan of the character** by putting such a jerk dragon right in front of the clutch. Dre totally takes the bait: “My tummy grumbles angrily as I see this long-toothed dragon feasting on dris stolen spoils, so I puff up my chest and tackle them!”

Hachiro looks shocked (and Talon facepalms) as Spirit picks up the dice. “I know this is dangerous, but I am hoping that my ambush will give me the edge I need to scare away this long-toothed dragon.” Dre rolls **act despite danger** with Courage +2 to attack the dragon, and gets an 8. “Boom!” yells Spirit. “To victory!”

Now I get to describe Spirit fumbling, stumbling, or embarrassing dremself while still succeeding. “This was a very risky plan, but somehow you pulled it off! The long-toothed dragon was already exhausted from singing all day, so you easily take them by surprise, tackling the silver dragon off the heap of cottonhoney. You tussle with them on the floor! And for a moment, every dragon in the cave is sure you are sure you are going to lose! The long-toothed dragon has you wrapped up tightly in dris coils and you let out a little squeak, but what cool maneuver do you do to scare them off, Spirit?” I don’t know how Spirit envisions dris fighting, so I would rather ask than make something up that isn’t satisfying.

Spirit mimes dris wings flapping vigorously, bursting out, “I start to fly while dris coils are still all around me and we burst out of the cave and roll down the dune.”

*“Awesome! Yeah, you land in a heap, but the edge of dris sharp, glittering frill catches you across your short snout, cutting you deeply.” And now I want to use a wilderness move: **reveal a fantastic creature**. “The other dragon slithers away from you, hissing, ‘Without me you’ll never be able to handle the nargasus.” I don’t have to provide any further details to make that move—just so long as I’m revealing that the creature is nearby.*

*Spirit retorts, “My clutch and I can do anything, now get lost before I have the rest of them finish you off!”*

*I want Spirit to mark a Shadow, but I need to tie it to the fiction. I look at dris sheet and see that dre only has one empty box left, so this will make Spirit turn into dris Shadowself. “As the silver dragon flies off into the distance, you feel the burn on your snout and a fear creeps into your mind. What if you really did just chase off your only hope of handling what is inside that cave? What if your clutch can’t handle it? **Mark fear on your Shadow Track**. I believe that fills you up, right, Spirit?”*

*Spirit says, “Yep! Looks like I am now my Shadowself. So what do I do next?”*

*I ask Spirit to read aloud dris Shadowself text, so everyone knows that dre will be acting grumpy and selfish and how they can help them come back from it. I tell them that it could last a scene or a whole session, but it’s really up to the clutch to help their friend come back to the light. “So Spirit, what does it look like when you become your Shadowself? Does it show physically?”*

*Spirit answers, “The iridescent sheen on my feathers dull and my feathers flatten, so I look smaller than usual. And because I marked fear, when I make my way back up the dune to the mouth of the cave I will hide the fact that the silver dragon said that we wouldn’t be able to handle the nargasus (the mythical and elusive six-legged narwhal-horned-pegasus beast). If Tix says anything, I snap at her and she crawls behind my broken horn and sulks.”*

*Now, I ask what the other two are going to do with this chanting drake now that Spirit has chased off the long-toothed dragon. Hachiro says, "I want them to stop chanting and help us!" and Talon nods.*

*"I cautiously approach the drake, showing that I am not a threat, and I bow slightly as I get closer. 'Finn, is it?'"*

*"F-f-innerighous, actually.' Dre spits it out then continues to sing the confining spell and glancing nervously out the cave and back at you."*

*Talon continues, "We aren't going to hurt you, we just want to get past your spell so we can help whatever is in there."*

*"A deafening roar fills the cave," I add for dramatics, and give a little more information to help Talon out. "Now that you are close enough you can make out a beastly dialect that you can't quite understand fully. It's almost as if the beast were speaking Latin to your English. What you can make out is 'pain.' The beast is in pain."*

*"We could really use your help Finnerighous, whatever is down there is in a lot of pain and it's scaring away all of the buzzlebunns. Please stop your chanting so we can go and help it. I promise we will make sure the Council goes easy on you if you help us." Talon looks to Hachiro who nods and Talon triggers **convince a dragon to help you**. Dre rolls with Charm +2 and gets a total of 10.*

*"Finnerighous licks a bead of sweat off of dris scales with a quick flick of dris tongue and says 'I can help you, but I want your friend to teach me how to fight like that.' Just then, Spirit, you make your way back into the cave." I have just used a move from the Culture list and **charged them with a task or obligation**, but I want to leave the decision up to Talon. "So, what do you say, Talon? Will you agree to let Finnerighous follow you all around trying to learn from Spirit?"*



*“Heck yeah I do!” Talon says and everyone laughs as I describe Finn’s response: “The small bug-eyed drake’s eyes water, and then dre rushes over to Spirit and slides in front of them, belly first and clapping dris wings together in excitement. ‘Oh thank you thank you thank you! I have never seen flying like that in my LIFE. Silverwing has always been so mean to me, but I never dreamed I could stand up to them! You are just the coolest. I am going to be the best student you have ever had I promise, oh thank you, thank you, thank you!’” I make Finnerighous speak quickly and draw huge breaths to finish it all in one go. This star-struck drake will give Spirit someone else to play off and a responsibility to think about that might help them get out of dris Shadowself.*

*Spirit takes the cue and, playing to dris Shadowself, says, “I lean in close. ‘I think you are too small to ever be as fast as me. I am the fastest dragon we have ever met!’”*

Hachiro's eyes narrow, "Dris size can be an asset for being quick!", interjecting to help Finnerighous out.

Now I want the drake's reaction to **challenge the clutch's prejudices**. Finnerighous isn't evil; he's just overeager to help. I say, "Finnerighous isn't fazed for a moment, dre just whizzes off with another dizzying monologue about how dre isn't done growing yet, unless Spirit thinks dre should be."

I turn to the other drakes: "But Talon, you notice a stillness setting in, the beast isn't speaking anymore; Hachiro, the oppressive feeling you got from the song has finally lifted..." At this point I shift my tone, talking slowly and looking at each drake as if to say something big is coming.

Because the clutch spent their time talking to Finnerighous, I am **putting them in a high-stakes situation** by bringing the conflict to them. The nargasus won't just wait around for some drakes to save it. I describe it to them: "The creature from inside the cave now towers over you with all its magical and majestic might. Six legs, huge bat wings, and a beautiful curved horn."

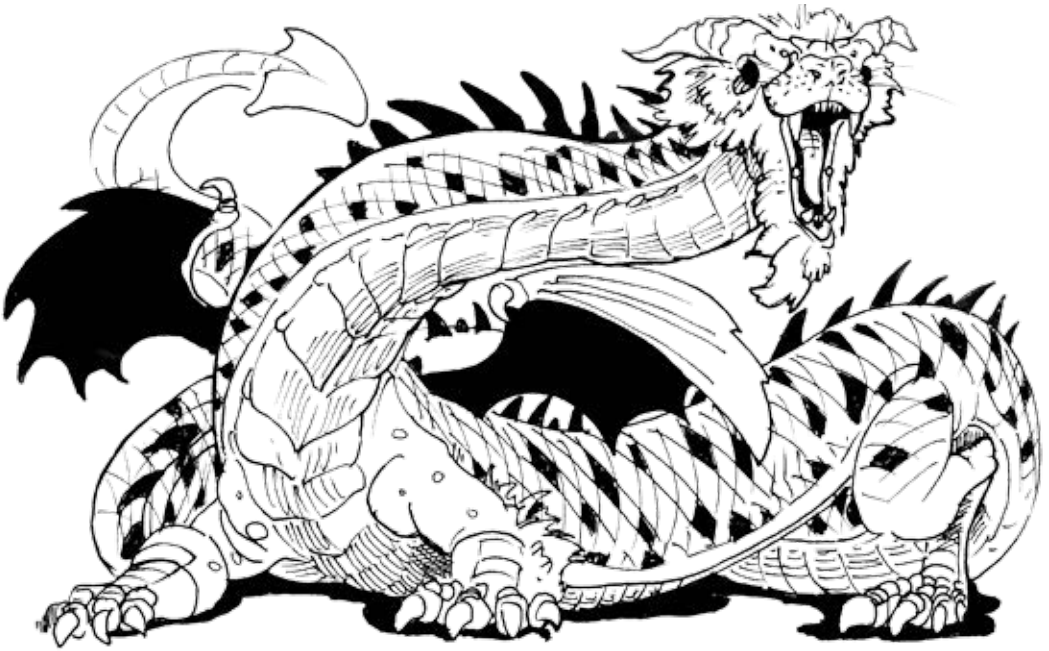
Now that I have shaken things up again, I need to make sure my clutch understands the conflict. I turn to Talon: "You can see that the nargasus has green blood running down its wing. If it escapes this cave hurt and angry it will likely go after the hive... What do you do?"

Talon quickly tells the clutch: "Oh, no! This nargasus has been badly injured. We need to do something!"

Following Talon's lead, Hachiro sits straight up and yells, "I heal it! I call upon the magic of the Spirit moon to heal the nargasus."

"Finnerighous and I will attack it if that doesn't work," adds Spirit.

"I want to make sure my friends are out of the way of being trampled!" squeaks Talon.



*I love that everyone is excited about the scene, but I want to honor that Hachiro has a solution; moon magic will be a great way to wrap things up. “Okay, Hachiro, let’s start with you, what does it look like when you **call upon the magic of the moons?**”*

*Hachiro says, “My deep purple scales glow as I bow before the mighty nargasus. Since I have no wings, my gossamer bat wings burst from my back, filling the cave with twinkling starlight.”*

*Hachiro returns five friendship gems to get a +5 (there is no cap to the bonus on a moon magic move) to the moon magic roll. Dre rolls and gets a total of 13.*

*On a 13, Hachiro gets both options from the move, so I describe how the magic is exceptionally powerful and how it remains within dris control. “The nargasus unfurls her own wings as you fold your wings of starlight around her and the cave is full of stars as the healing warmth of the Spirit Moon shines through you, Hachiro.”*

*Now I address the whole group because this is not just a personal experience for Hachiro, and I want to honor what the other two wanted to get done in the scene. "Spirit, you and Finnerighous charge forward as the nargasus rears back, but you find yourself weightless as you pass into the reach of Hachiro's astral-wings. Talon, you push off the bottom of a bale of cottonhoney and easily collect Spirit and Finnerighous, moving them out of harm's way."*

*I think the healing is pretty straightforward, so I decide to **be a fan** of Hachiro and let them cleanse the whole cave with dris exceptionally powerful magic: "Hachiro, under the blanket of starlight you have wrapped around the cave you feel the Darkness melting away. The cottonhoney crystals pop and fizzle under your healing touch and the nargasus's wing scars over leaving a pearly reminder of the burn made by the Darkness, but no pain."*

*"The nargasus trots up to you, her many hooves echoing through the starlit cave, to touch her horn to your head. It burns with a blinding white-hot fire for a moment as she lives your memory of the day, and her voice is your own as speaks to your mind. 'I will carry forward your kindness, young drake. I will cleanse the buzzlebunn hive and restore its balance.' And as if carried by the wind itself, the nargasus leaves the cave and gallops off into the sunset, towards the hive..."*

*Now that they've freed the nargasus, the clutch can deliver the cottonhoney, try to get Spirit back from the Darkness, and report back to Seshly about dris rival, Silverwing, trying to sabotage dris new appointment as festival organizer....*





## CHAPTER FIVE

## HAZARDS



After the first session, you will have some great plot threads to build on and follow as the Dragonmaster. Your clutch might want to recover a lost relic for the Council or track down a deviant dragon who tried to ruin the moonbeam festival or pursue any of the other threads that you hinted at while building characters and playing your first set of scenes.

Resist the urge to construct plot—a series of events you know will happen from session to session. Dragonia is far too big to be bottled up in one person’s head. If you think too hard about how to get the drakes into a particular scene, it can feel contrived or like they are being railroaded into a story they aren’t really interested in at all.

## Using Hazards

One way to keep your story fresh and evolving is to use **hazards**, a simple tool that helps you track conflicts in Dragonia without plotting everything out. Hazards help you keep the world moving around the clutch without sacrificing the principle that you are all *playing to find out what happens*. Your clutch will unify and focus on the hazards you create for your story, bringing them together without worrying about keeping full plots and twists in your head.

## Creating Hazards

Each hazard is a unique challenge for the drakes in your clutch. If no one addresses a hazard, it will escalate along its natural course, but the clutch has the power to influence the outcome if they choose to get involved. Hazards come in different types and range from addressing a single drake on a personal level to an environmental obstruction that affects everyone in a region.

In general, your clutch should be able to resolve any single hazard within one session. Some can go on longer, but the feel should be episodic and accomplishable. As the clutch first begins to adventure, their hazards should be small (just like them!) and reflect the kinds of problems that drakes can overcome. As they age, the types of hazards they encounter should stay relevant to their interests and place in Dragonia. If they are looking after smaller drakes, for example, that responsibility should play into the kinds of hazards they encounter.

Creating your own hazards is easy! Hazards can be made on the fly during a short break or in between sessions if you need more time. You might make one before your first session—it can be useful to have a conflict ready to go—and you'll almost certainly need one after you play for a bit as well.

When you're ready to create a hazard, follow the steps below. Create a hazard that interests you, as a DM. If you are excited to run a hazard, your players are likely to feel that enthusiasm and really take off with it.

When you create a new hazard follow these four steps:

1. Choose a hazard type and subtype
2. Create an NPC cast with desires
3. Assign stakes to the phases of the moon (optional)
4. Design any necessary custom moves (optional)

## Choosing a Hazard Type

There are many different kinds of hazards that could befall Dragonia, but they all fall under the wing of one of the following categories. When creating a hazard, choose one:

- ✧ Family
- ✧ Friendship
- ✧ Tradition
- ✧ Nature

The type defines the themes and tropes you add to fuel the hazard, not its specific form. Hazards come in many forms; a fellow dragon, a ritual, or even a beast of the Wilderness! The hazard type describes the kind of conflict the clutch will be facing, but not where they find it or how to resolve it; all of that is up to you and the clutch.

Once you have chosen your hazard type—a frame for an episodic conflict—choose a subtype. Each hazard has a subtype that provides a set of DM moves to use during the session. For example, if you want to focus a plot around an NPC dragon that your clutch is friends with, you can choose the Friendship hazard and the “jealousy” subtype to guide how the relationship will evolve.

Each subtype also comes with an instinct, an impulse for the hazard that is similar to the desires an NPC might have (see page 83 for more on NPC desires). Dragons associated with the hazard still keep their individual desires, but your job is to help the hazard, as a whole, act out its instinct through the DM moves and the hazard moves. Whenever the hazard shows up in your story, showcase its core by drawing attention to conflicts, dangers, and mysteries that match the hazard’s instinct.

 **Hazard Type: Family**

Family hazards focus on challenges and tensions that come up between affinity clutches, their drakes, and extended house relations. Sometimes a family hazard is about a painful separation or a loss, but it can also be about the dark side of a tight family bond or how dragons react to a drake growing up.

**Subtypes:**

- ✧ Separation (instinct: split a hoard or other resource)
- ✧ Estrangement (instinct: keep everyone at wing's length)
- ✧ Grief (instinct: avoid reconciliation at all costs)
- ✧ Control (instinct: let nothing grow or change)

**DM Moves:**

- ✧ Ruin something purposefully or stupidly
- ✧ Openly proclaim a hidden emotion
- ✧ Refuse aid
- ✧ Ask for aid
- ✧ Offer, but with personal strings attached
- ✧ Gossip about a clutchmate
- ✧ Force a choice between two dragons
- ✧ Lean on a close relationship

 **Hazard Type: Friendship**

Friendship hazards focus on the difficult relationships between friends and clutchmates. Making friends is easy, but sometimes you have to fight to keep them. The things that keep friendships together, like time spent listening, laughing, and connecting, will help to undo any damage done by jealousy or other insecurities.

**Subtypes:**

- ✧ Jealousy (instinct: destroy another's holdings)
- ✧ Rivalry (instinct: ruthlessly compete for victory)
- ✧ Scarcity (instinct: hoard a limited resource)
- ✧ Insecurity (instinct: act out to prove others wrong)

**DM Moves:**

- ✧ Escalate a small conflict into something larger
- ✧ Showcase a strength or insecurity to an audience
- ✧ Insist on helping with a problem
- ✧ Stubbornly try, try again
- ✧ Read things as charitably as possible
- ✧ Misinterpret plans and schemes
- ✧ Challenge someone to a competition
- ✧ Demand someone choose between friends

 **Hazard Type: Tradition**

Tradition hazards focus on Dragonia's rituals, traditions, and political processes. Young drakes often run afoul of traditions that seem outdated or old-fashioned, but changing the way things are done is harder than it looks.

**Subtypes:**

- ✧ Hierarchy (instinct: put everything in its proper place)
- ✧ Legacy (instinct: reject change)
- ✧ Restriction (instinct: instill fear of the unknown)
- ✧ Rituals (instinct: obey without thinking)

**DM Moves:**

- ✧ Cling to reason or tradition
- ✧ Break with tradition, messily and publicly
- ✧ Remind someone of their place
- ✧ Demand reparations for wrongs or slights
- ✧ Offer an alliance, temporary or lasting
- ✧ Surface an old or forgotten conflict
- ✧ Introduce new ideas or rituals
- ✧ Invite a dragon to a major ritual or event

 **Hazard Type: Nature**

Nature threats focus on the tensions between the wilderness and the dragons of Dragonia. Dragons are reliant on nature's landscape, but it can be a mysterious and dangerous place that does not want to be tamed. And while some dragons can find a way to bridge the gap between the wilderness and Dragonia, others wish to see the land conquered or exploited for personal gain.

**Subtypes:**

- ↪ Development (instinct: exploit valuable resources)
- ↪ Havoc (instinct: disrupt the status quo)
- ↪ Mystery (instinct: offer tantalizing clues)
- ↪ Sanctuary (instinct: protect a sacred space)

**DM Moves:**

- ↪ Wastefully exhaust a resource
- ↪ Beg for help with a dangerous problem
- ↪ Destroy a public landmark
- ↪ Shift, move, or rearrange a place
- ↪ Disrupt everyday life with an infestation or stampede
- ↪ Summon something new and mysterious
- ↪ Release an unwanted secret
- ↪ Take something and hide it away

## Making Hazard Moves

The moves associated with each hazard type are there for you to make in pursuit of a hazard's instinct. Make one of these moves anytime you have an opportunity to make a DM move and want to emphasize the hazard's influence on the story. If you need a refresher, page 87 goes over opportunities to make DM moves in more depth.

Don't say what hazard move you're making either! Just make the move, and let the clutch react to the fiction that's happening in the story.

## Hazard Cast

Once you've picked a type and subtype, add dragons, new and old, to the mix! Hazards aren't just anonymous plots to run the clutch through each session. Each hazard is a rich environment that allows your clutch to explore Dragonia and discover who they are along the way. Fill your hazards with casts of interesting characters with their own plans, schemes, and desires.

Add a cast of dragons to each of your hazards when you create them. See the NPC section on page 97 for tips on how to prepare a vivid dragon of Dragonia with an occupation, demeanor, and desire. You can leave some things to be filled in as the clutch meets the associated dragons, but occupations and desires that complicate a hazard can open up more avenues for the clutch to explore Dragonia.

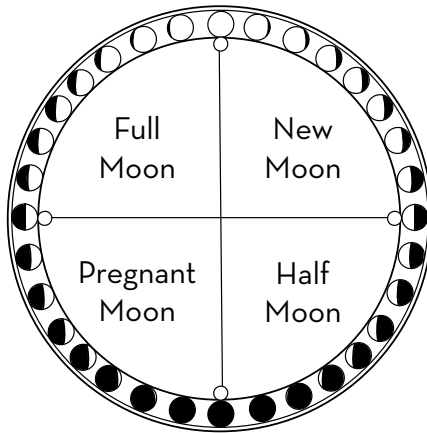
For example, the drake racing a Daredevil in a cloud-climbing contest might be the resident cloud-climbing champ, but if dre is the Swinging Garden caretaker instead, the clutch is exposed to more fantastic elements of Dragonia.



## Countdown Moons

If a hazard's drive has forward momentum—if it plans to change something rather than defend what is already established—create a countdown moon for it. The phases of the moon are to help remind you that the hazard wants to move forward and to assist you in tracking its progress.

There are four phases of the moon:



- ☞ New Moon (Rising action)
- ☞ Half Moon (The shift is coming)
- ☞ Pregnant Moon (Irrevocable change)
- ☞ Full Moon (Destiny)

Countdown phases help you track what should happen if the clutch ignores the hazard, or even makes it worse. When you create the phases, decide that hazard's destiny. What could happen? What is at stake? How might Dragonia change?

## Moving the Moons Forward

You can move the moon forward as a DM move or you can move the moon forward when the fiction demands it, i.e. when what you wrote next to the hazard moon comes to pass. Sometimes you might even skip phases if something in the fiction jumps ahead faster than you thought it might.

Around the hazard moon, note the obvious changes your clutch is sure to notice as the hazard worsens. Every time the moon advances, show the clutch the change in the fiction:

- ☞ **New Moon** – The hazard is building, but still reversible.
- ☞ **Half Moon** – The signs are distinct and unmistakable. The hazard could still be interrupted, but the cost to stop it is mounting.
- ☞ **Pregnant Moon** – The hazard impacts Dragonia in an irreversible way.
- ☞ **Full Moon** – The hazard's threat or outcome comes to pass. Dragonia is forever changed by this hazard, if only in a small way.

The phases should be events or things out of the clutch's control. Don't try to predict the clutch's actions or put them in specific scenes. Each phase expresses an action that would occur if the clutch didn't exist or refused to get involved.

*I have a countdown moon (hazard type: nature, subtype: havoc) about a group of wormolluscs (rolling worm-mollusk beasts) that threaten to destroy an important Rothscar stronghold. So far, the clutch hasn't found any way to satiate their enormous appetites. I've already marked off my new moon phase—"The wormollusc larvae move their nests to the trees outside the quarry"—but the clutch hasn't found any allies to help them deal with the wormolluscs without killing them!*

My half moon phase is “The wormolluscs eat away the stone quarried to build the stronghold.” When the clutch misses on **standing up to an older dragon**, Fayright Thunderbelly, I decide to make a hazard move—**wastefully exhaust a resource**. The wormolluscs devour all the stone and start to move toward the Rothscar stronghold! Since the fiction changed in accordance with my moon countdown, I mark off the half moon phase and start thinking about the pregnant moon phase I planned: “The wormolluscs eat away the stone foundation of the west wing of the stronghold!”

*Fayright Thunderbelly is furious; the wormolluscs are now threatening to undo all dris work. Whose side will the drakes take in this nature hazard? Can they stop the countdown before it gets worse? Can they do it without hurting the wormolluscs?*

Always feel free to rewrite and adjust your phases according to what fits best for your story! If a phase is no longer relevant change it to something more interesting, but let your clutch have their victories if they succeeded at stopping the hazard. Don't change the moon phases just to keep the heroes from winning.



## Custom Moves

To further embellish your hazards and make them feel real and relevant, you might also add a custom move or two.

Note that these moves aren't for you; you already have the DM moves associated with the hazard you chose.

Instead these are for your clutch, giving them new options and ways to engage with the hazard. Generally, moves have the following parts:

- ↪ a spark: "When X happens..."
- ↪ a flame: "...then Y." Sometimes it's a roll, other times it's just an outcome.
- ↪ stakes: if it has a roll, define 10+, 7-9, and 6-.

If a move involves a roll, 10+ means things generally work out for the clutch, 7-9 means they pay some costs or endure some complications, and a 6- means that something interesting—and less than ideal—occurs instead.

*When you **make a promise to a worm spirit**, roll +Charm. On a 10+ they gift you a bag of sacred dirt that gives you a +1 ongoing to make good on your promise; mark XP when you fulfill it. On a 7-9, they gift you a mud pie that grants +1 forward when consumed. On a miss, the spirits have their doubts about you; they rub clay on your snout and curse you with a -1 ongoing to actions that would break your promise.*

*When you **read runes from the book Tales of the Unknown Agent**, roll +Cunning. On a hit, the words reveal the location of what you desire most in Dragonia. On a 10+, mark a Shadow to ask the GM one follow-up question. On a miss, the words reveal your fate in the terrible events to come.*

## More on Custom Moves

Moves can be simple—“When you try to stand up to Fayright Thunderbelly, roll Charm instead of Courage”—or complex like the examples above. Either way, they should make engaging the hazard different and fun. Try not to create custom moves that are about keeping your clutch from doing something interesting!

If you're interested in reading more about crafting custom moves, check out Chapter 10: The Shadows in **Urban Shadows** by Andrew Medeiros and Mark Diaz Truman. They've compiled a whole bunch of information about creating custom moves using the Apocalypse World engine. Be wary, though! **Urban Shadows** isn't a book for small drakes. It's filled with adult language and mature themes.

## Hazards & the Darkness

Note that there are no Darkness hazards. Instead, each and every threat in Dragonia can have an element of Darkness to it, a place where the Darkness creeps into the hearts and souls of dragons large and small...

Ultimately, the Darkness is not an evil entity that can be fought by tooth or talon alone, but rather a manifestation of hardships and burdens that have become too powerful to overcome alone. The challenges in *EPYLLION* are not outlandish evil, but instead hazards that could beset, test, and try any dragonkin.

If the threat of Darkness becomes too overpowering in your game it can eclipse the clutch! Don't rely on the Darkness as a “bad guy.” Play up interpersonal drama and everyday challenges that reveal where the Darkness hides in all of us.

## Example: Festive Grudges

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Tomorrow is the Festival of Flight and two elder dragons are being honored at the opening and closing ceremonies. Unfortunately these two elders, once part of an affinity clutch, are now enemies and refuse to participate unless the other gives up the half of the hoard they inherited after the death of their third clutchmate. The entire festival will be ruined if these two don't put aside their grudge and come to terms!

**Type:** Family (Separation)

**Instinct:** Split a hoard or other resource

### Cast

**Swift Star** passed through the valley of death years ago, leaving dris hoard to dris clutchmates, Vita and Tarscale.

**Age:** Died as a Bearded dragon

**House:** Semscale, House of Jade

**Vita the Fierce** has a long thin body that could wrap around an entire stronghold if ever dre unfurled.

**Age:** Elder

**House:** Tessith, House of Diamond

**Moons:** Storm

**Demeanor:** Jovial and loud, but protective of dris holdings

**Occupation:** Council member

**Desire:** To protect the hoard from threats.

**Tarscale the Warm** has smoke that billows from dris nostrils and a tummy that burns deep black.

**Age:** Elder

**House:** Rothscar, House of Gold

**Moons:** Void

**Demeanor:** Excited by puzzles, but easily distracted

**Occupation:** Hoard actuary

**Desire:** To restore the hoard to its former glory.

## Phases of the Moon

- ☞ **New Moon** – Tarscale says dre won't participate in the festival, unless dre gets Vita's half of the hoard.
- ☞ **Half Moon** – Merchant dragons, seeing the dispute unlikely to be solved, decide to leave and save on costs—their departure further dooms the festival.
- ☞ **Pregnant Moon** – Vita sends young drakes to steal Tarscale's hoard the night before the festival. Upon discovery of the theft, Tarscale flies into a rage and cancels the festival.
- ☞ **Full Moon** – Vita and Tarscale fight, ending with each one giving the other scars, and the memory of Swift Star being forever tarnished by their dishonorable fight.

## Custom Moves

Vita the Fierce is intimidating and larger than life. When you **study Vita the Fierce**, roll +Courage instead of +Charm.

When you **take wing during the Festival of Flight**, roll +Charm. On a 10+ you display skills beyond your years and the Elders honor you with a gift. On a 7-9, you impress an Elder; say who it is and take +1 forward to stand up to them. On a miss, your acrobatics get you into trouble and you are left with a big mess to clean up.

## Hazard Note

This hazard has the potential to undermine a tradition of Dragonia, but that doesn't mean that the clutch has to take any particular side. There are lots of creative ways for your clutch to explore this hazard, including siding with one dragon over another.

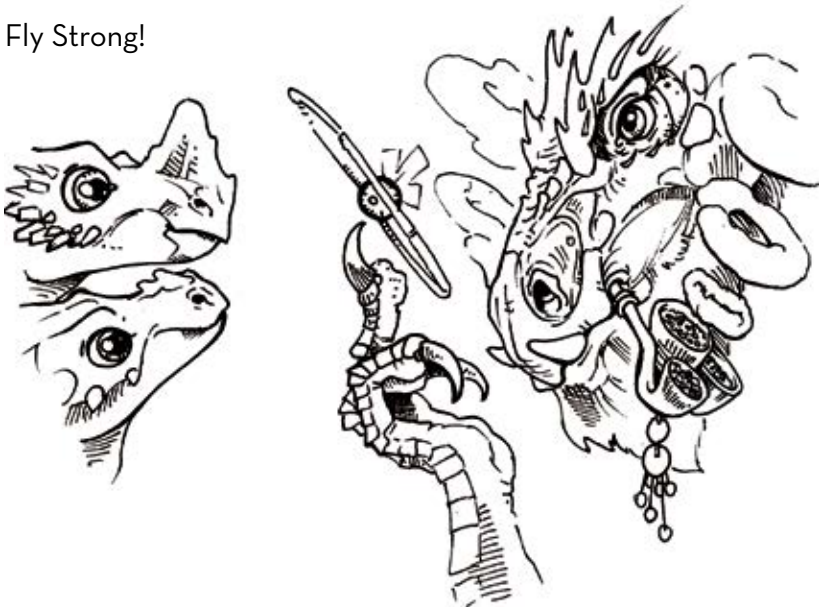
# AFTERWORD

*EPYLLION* was born of my love of epic fantasy stories, like **THE HOBBIT**, complex and rich settings that inspired my imagination. These tales were a rabbit hole I always wanted to follow, leading to lands I wanted to be lost in. And out of all the tales to tell, I really wanted to know more about the dragons in these stories and where they came from.

Now, *EPYLLION*'s publication has brought me to an amazing place where I can finally share the world of Dragonia with excited roleplayers, experienced and new, who want to tell those stories about dragons and where they came from. Not just as greedy fire-breathing monsters, but as complex and mystical creatures with rich and vibrant traditions.

Bringing this game to you has been an epic journey all its own and I owe it all to my amazing group of Kickstarter backers and my dream team of editors, artists, friends, and supporters...thank you.

Fly Strong!





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# MEDIOGRAPHY

## **Books/Movies**

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The Avengers  
Dragonheart  
Harry Potter  
The Hobbit  
The Lord of the Rings Trilogy  
Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind  
Princess Mononoke  
Percy Jackson

## **Games**

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7th Sea  
Apocalypse World  
Blood and Honor  
Dungeon World  
Houses of the Blooded  
Monsterhearts  
Mouse Guard  
Urban Shadows

## **Television**

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My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic  
Sailor Moon

## **Video Games**

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The Legend of Spyro  
Mass Effect  
Skies of Arcadia

## APPENDIX:

# PLAY MATERIALS

### **The Drakes**

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Below is a list of all of the available playbooks for *EPYLLION*. The *Encyclopedia Draconica* contains additional playbooks, but these six are core. Each is listed with information about the playbook and its high and low stats.

### **The Academic (page 148-149)**

Studious, thoughtful, relentless. The Academic has dedicated dris life to pursuing, preserving, and mastering dragon culture's histories, mysteries, and lore.

**High Stat:** Cunning

**Low Stat:** Courage

### **The Crafter (page 150-151)**

Clever, patient, and determined. A master of their medium, the Crafter is a dedicated creative committed to forging objects of beauty, power, and strength. Dre understands and wields dris creations with precision and grace.

**High Stat:** Cunning

**Low Stat:** Charm

### **The Daredevil (page 152-153)**

Adventurous, bold, and loyal. The Daredevil's courage is unwavering when it comes to dris friendships. No one cares as much about protecting dris loved ones.

**High Stat:** Courage

**Low Stat:** Charm



## **The Nature Adept (page 154-155)**

Curious, graceful, and conflicted. The Nature Adept finds dremself drawn away from dragon society by the call of the wild, pulled away from dris friends by the beasts and elements.

**High Stat:** Charm

**Low Stat:** Courage

## **The Seer (page 156-157)**

Haunted, passionate, and charismatic. For better or worse, the Seer is linked to the Darkness. Dre learns what dre can from it in order to protect others from what dre has seen.

**High Stat:** Charm

**Low Stat:** Cunning

## **The Warrior (page 158-159)**

Brave, hardworking, and honest. The Warrior uses dris physique and dedication to Dragonia to inspire others, to accomplish dris goals, and to protect the weak.

**High Stats:** Courage

**Low Stat:** Cunning



## THE ACADEMIC

YOU WORK HARD to learn as much as you can. Knowledge is power, and you fight to pursue and protect it. Sometimes it is hard to balance your passions for the past with living in the present, but you don't want to miss out on any adventures...or friendships. After all, the heroes you read about had to put down their parchment and get their scales dirty eventually.

**NAME:** (circle one) Stars, Ludvizk, Hachiro, Weneth, Zandy, Stevarath

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Antennae, Antlers, Curling horns, Many horns  
 Baggy hide, Feathered, Furry, Scaled  
 Long snout, Overbite, Pointy skull, Short snout  
 Maned tail, No tail, Prehensile tail, Stinger  
 Adhesive toes, Boney digits, Splayed fingers, Talons  
 Bloated body, Graceful body, Thin, Wingless

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**MYNDOTH, The House of Oak**  
 Discover something important about an ancient mystery.

**SEMSCALE, The House of Jade**  
 Defuse a tense situation between dragons from different houses.

**STATS:**  
 ADD 1 TO one of these.

**Charm** +0  
**Courage** -1  
**Cunning** +1

**VIRTUE**  
 (choose one)

*Curiosity*  
*Honesty*

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ guided your Clutch when you were lost in the capital. Explain how they exemplified your virtue & give them a Friendship Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ doesn't understand dragon history and the importance of the old ways; you will teach them all you can. Take a Friendship Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ showed you the threat the Darkness posed by getting your snout out of a book. Give them a Friendship Gem.

## ACADEMIC MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE ∨

**FIELD OF EXPERTISE:** You carry one of the Great Tomes of Dragon Knowledge. Mark which one you keep with you always:

- Dagon's *History of the War with Darkness*
- Lung-Kwan's *Famous Dragons and What They Did*
- Fafnir von Grimtooth's *Famous Moments in Dragon History*
- Dewlash De Golderin's *Guide to the Creatures of Dragonia*
- Amelia Drakovich's *Geographical Primer on Dragonia's Rivers, Mountains, and Major Islands*

When you consult the tomes you carry for information, tell the DM what you find and roll +tomes consulted. On a 10+, the information is accurate and complete; take +1 forward to act on the answers. On a 7–9, something is missing or mythic, useful but not everything you need. On a miss, you've got something terribly wrong; the DM will let you know what you got wrong when you need to know.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark a new tome of knowledge. Tell the DM which dragon gave you this new source of wisdom.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

- OLD DEBTS:** When you *stand up to an older dragon* by reminding them of debts and obligations long forgotten, roll +Cunning instead of +Courage.
- AN EAR FOR THE ARCANE:** When you listen closely to a magic ritual, roll +Cunning. On a 10+ ask 2. On a 7–9, ask 1. Take +1 forward to acting on the answers. On a miss, the ritual ensnares you, the DM will tell you how.
  - What arcane effects does the ritual have?
  - Who is the intended target?
  - How can I disrupt the ritual?
  - How could I reproduce this ritual?
- PEER REVIEW:** When you go to your friends for advice about a specific problem, give them a Friendship Gem and hear what they have to say. If you follow their advice, tell them to mark experience; you get a +1 ongoing to see it through. If you ignore their advice, mark a Shadow.
- FAMILIAR WITH THE OLD WAYS:** When you study a Bearded or Elder Dragon, add these questions to the move *study another dragon*:
  - What is whispered about you within your House?
  - How are you vulnerable to the Darkness?
  - Who in Dragonia opposes your goals and machinations?

## SHADOWSELF

YOU'VE HELD YOUR tongue for too long. You have the best plans to move your Clutch forward and no one knows the history of Dragonia better than you do. Make sure your clutch knows how smart you truly are. You are The Academic. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to admit that you don't have all the answers.



## THE CRAFTER

YOU UNDERSTAND THAT beauty goes beyond a flashy new look, and you know how much hard work and dedication it takes to make great art. But it is important for all great crafters to remember that your trade is a dangerous practice: many like you have fallen to their obsessions. Your friendships will keep you grounded while you pursue perfection.

**NAME:** (circle one) Deep Eyes, Neo, Azrael, Bolograth, Angus, Samsmit

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Antennae, Charred horns, Curling horns, Tusks  
 Buggy hide, painted scales, Bumpy skin, Shelled  
 Boney skull, Scarred snout, Short snout, Underbite  
 Barbed tail, Club tail, No tail, Prehensile tail  
 Boney digits, Claws, Splayed fingers, Webbed feet  
 Angular body, Bloated body, Sleek body, Twisty body

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**KEBROS, The House of Ruby**

Put yourself in danger to obtain rare materials or treasures.

**ROTHSCAR, The House of Gold**

Design something to help a friend solve a tricky problem.

**STATS:**  
 ADD ONE TO one of these.

**Charm** -1  
**Courage** +0  
**Cunning** +1

**VIRTUE**

(choose one)

***Ambition***  
***Tradition***

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ asked you to craft something useful for your Clutch. Explain what it is, and take a Friendship Gem from them.

\_\_\_\_\_ inspired you to leave your workshop to fight against the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ has your back when your tinkering gets you into trouble. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

## CRAFTER MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE

**DRAGON TRADE:** You are known for your gifts in the draconic arts.

Mark two mediums you have dedicated yourself to from the list below:

<input type="checkbox"/> paints	<input type="checkbox"/> metal	<input type="checkbox"/> gardening	<input type="checkbox"/> precious metals	<input type="checkbox"/> beads
<input type="checkbox"/> wood	<input type="checkbox"/> tattoos	<input type="checkbox"/> cloth		<input type="checkbox"/> wire
<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> piercing	<input type="checkbox"/> paper	<input type="checkbox"/> ice	<input type="checkbox"/> sound
<input type="checkbox"/> pen and ink	<input type="checkbox"/> acting	<input type="checkbox"/> plastics	<input type="checkbox"/> wax	<input type="checkbox"/> instruments
<input type="checkbox"/> mortar	<input type="checkbox"/> directing	<input type="checkbox"/> engraving	<input type="checkbox"/> clay	
<input type="checkbox"/> glass	<input type="checkbox"/> writing	<input type="checkbox"/> jewels	<input type="checkbox"/> sand	

When you create something in your medium, roll +Cunning. On a 10+, pick 2. On a 7-9, pick one.

Your creation is durable       Your creation is attractive

Your creation is functional

On a miss the work is fundamentally flawed. The DM will reveal how at a later time.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark two new mediums. Tell the DM which dragon helped you to master these new materials.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

- AN EYE FOR DETAIL:** When you *study another dragon* after complimenting them on a unique feature or object they possess, roll +Cunning instead of +Charm.
- CRAFTY CLAW:** When you repair broken equipment or machinery, roll +Cunning. On a 10+, you do it, no problem. On a 7-9, it's possible to get it moving again, but only at a cost. The DM will tell you what you have to do to fix it up. On a miss, something vital is missing or permanently broken.
- MONUMENT TO THE MOONS:** When you create (and describe) a work of art, you can *call upon the Moons* and store the effects inside your piece. Name an event that will activate the item, and the magic will be released when it is triggered.
- SADDLEBAG OF POTENTIAL:** You collect odds and ends, including bits of armament and ancient artifacts, just in case the inspiration strikes. When you search your saddlebag for something small enough to be carried with you, roll +Cunning. On a 10+, you have just the thing, or close enough. On a 7-9, you have something similar, but it's incomplete or flawed. On a miss, you've used it recently, but you might be able to get it back.

## SHADOWSELF

MORE THAN AN artist, you are a machinist. You see dragons as tools to be wielded, manipulated, and forced to see their true potential. Make sure your clutch sees your vision for Dragonia. You are The Crafter. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to admit that you care more about dragons than objects.



## THE DAREDEVIL

THE SKY IS no limit for you. When you shoot for the stars, you achieve great things you never thought possible. Sometimes the rush can make you lose your head; don't fly so high that you forget about those who look up to you. Your friendships will give you reasons to fly and all you could ever need to keep your wings and heart busy.

**NAME:** (circle one) Quoloth, Vol, Onyx, Honedstar, Spirit, Sirat

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Broken horns, Head frill, Pointed horns, Tusks  
 Bumpy skin, Feathered, Iridescent, Spiney  
 Beak, Long snout, Overbite, Short snout  
 Barbed tail, No tail, Prehensile tail, Whip tail  
 Adhesive toes, Claws, Paws, Webbed feet  
 Angular body, Boney body, Muscular body, Twisty body

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**BRYNBAK, The House of Steel**  
 Convince a member of your Clutch to undertake a dangerous task.

**ROTHSCAR, The House of Gold**  
 Put yourself in between danger and a Clutchmate.

**STATS:**  
 ADD ONE TO one of these.

**Charm** -1  
**Courage** +1  
**Cunning** +0

**VIRTUE**  
 (choose one)

**Cooperation**  
**Discretion**

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ made you feel welcome in the Clutch when your beast companion fell ill. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ taught you not to underestimate the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Friendship Gem.

You saved \_\_\_\_\_ from a dangerous monster. Take a Friendship Gem from them.



## DAREDEVIL MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE ∨

**BEAST COMPANION:** You find yourself in precarious situations that other dragonkin avoid, but your beast companion will follow you anywhere. Just like other wildlife in Dragonia, your beast companion has aspects of many different animals. Choose up to three. If you only circle one, other creatures of Dragonia will view your companion as a monster, but somehow you two manage.

parrot  lion  wolf  salamander  frog  bat  
 rhino  turtle  horse  badger  ram  armadillo  
 rat  insect  alligator  bear  squid  urchin  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**ABILITIES** (choose one):

**Large:** your beast is large enough to ride long distances.  
 **Tracking:** your beast can track down a nearby creature.  
 **Burrowing:** your beast can dig through solid earth.  
 **Messenger:** your beast can carry messages far and wide.  
 **Camouflage:** your beast can blend in with its surroundings at will.  
 **Perform:** your beast can entertain dragonkin and other wildlife.  
 **Labor:** your beast can haul and move heavy objects.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark a new ability for your beast companion. Tell us how your beast companion discovered (or grew into) their newfound talents.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

**DANGER IS MY MIDDLE NAME:** Take +1 ongoing to *acting despite danger* to overcome physical obstacles.

**CLEAR HEADED:** When you charge headfirst into a dangerous situation, roll +Courage. On a hit, ask the DM one or more questions from the following list. Take +1 forward to act on the answers. On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1:

- Where's my best escape route/way in/way past?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- Who's in control here?

On a miss, someone gets the jump on you before you can get your bearings, putting you in a tough spot and separating you from your friends.

**SLIPPERY SCALES:** When you attempt to escape any form of physical entrapment, roll +Courage. On a 10+, you escape. On a 7-9, you slip away, but you leave something important behind or attract unwanted attention; the DM will tell you which. On a miss, you still get away, but the costs are great: mark a Shadow.

**SHARE THE LOAD:** When a fellow dragon is about to mark a Shadow, you can mark off a Shadow on your Shadow Track instead. You don't have to act on the Shadow, but it stays marked until you clear your Shadow Track.

## SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE FAST, furious, and unstoppable. No danger is too great for you to face, and you don't need a Clutch to slow you down. Make sure your clutch always sees you out in front. You are The Daredevil. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to admit that you need your Clutch.



## THE NATURE ADEPT

YOU KNOW THE true splendor of the wilds. Creatures of the land sing a familiar song that reminds you of home, and they hear your roar as they would hear one of their own. But what is Dragonia to you? Can it be your home as well? Only your friendships can help you see the value of dragon culture and realize the promise of living in two worlds.

**NAME:** (circle one) Lionell, Hunter, Talon, Ahna, Toverinn, Kemoth

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Antlers, Bone crest, Curling horns, Tusks  
 Bumpy skin, Feathered, Furry, Spiney  
 Beak, Broad snout, Bulbous skull, Short snout  
 Club tail, Maned tail, Prehensile tail, Stinger  
 Clubbed feet, Hooves, Talons, Webbed feet  
 Flat body, Graceful body, Knobby body, Small body

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**MYNDOTH, The House of Oak**  
 Avoid detection or infiltrate a location.

**TESSITH, The House of Diamond**  
 Restore a symbol or sanctuary of the wild.

**STATS:**  
 ADD ONE TO one of these.

**Charm** +1  
**Courage** -1  
**Cunning** +0

**VIRTUE**  
 (choose one)  
**Honor**  
**Independence**

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ was a voice of reason in your Clutch when dealing with older dragons. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ helped you defend a sacred space against the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue, and give them a Gem.

You have taught \_\_\_\_\_ to listen to an animal of the wilds. Tell them which wild creature. Take a Gem from them.

## NATURE ADEPT MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE

**WILD SPEECH:** You share this world with beasts and creatures of the wild. The calls of these creatures are a second language to you. You can understand and communicate with animals in a basic tongue of the land, allowing you to *study them*, *insist they accept your help*, and *mislead or trick them* as if they were dragons.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark one of the following as an additional native tongue: stone, water, earth, fire, wind, ice, wood, or metal. Tell the DM how you mastered a new language of the elements.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

- MASTER OF TWO WORLDS:** When you *act despite danger* while traveling through the wild, roll +Charm instead of +Courage.
- SPIRIT GUIDE:** You have attracted the attention of the land itself. A small spirit guide follows you wherever you go, offering aid and counsel. When you ask your spirit guide for advice, roll +Charm. On a 10+, mark experience and take +1 forward if you follow its guidance. On a 7-9, take a +1 forward if you do as it says and mark a Shadow if you don't. On a miss, the spirit is insistent; if you ignore its advice, it leaves your side until you are able to make amends.
- SMOKESCREEN:** When you keep still in natural surroundings, you blend in and are nearly invisible. Enemies cannot spot you until you move or speak.
- BEAST OF THE LAND:** When you *commune with the spirits native to the land*, roll +Charm. On a 10+, they impart their wisdom upon you; ask two of the following questions. On a 7-9, ask 1. On a miss, the spirits are in trouble and need help with a ritual of their own.
- How can I nurture this place?
  - What does this place want from us?
  - What last visited this place?
  - What spirits dance here?

## SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE PURE and one with nature. Dragonia is a distant memory, a false artifice obscuring the true destiny of the land. Make sure your clutch knows how much you value the wild over Dragonia. You are The Nature Adept. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to acknowledge the value of dragon culture.



## THE SEER

THE DARKNESS SPOKE to you at an early age. You see the approaching horror and work to fight against it, yet others don't always trust or believe you. You have grown close to the Darkness to learn its secrets, but do not forget your true allies. Your friendships are the light that keeps you from falling to the Darkness.

**NAME:** (circle one) Ren, Veri, Ryoko, Luneth, Draven, Hamundil

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Curling horns, Head fins, Many horns, Tusks  
 Broad scales, Iridescent, Scaled, Smooth skin  
 Beak, Hardened skull, Overbite, Pointy snout  
 Maned tail, No tail, Stinger, Whip tail  
 Hooves, Splayed fingers, Talons, Webbed feet  
 Boney body, Elegant Body, Flat body, Thin body

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**KEBROS, The House of Ruby**  
 Mark a Shadow while engaging the Darkness.

**SEMSCALE, The House of Jade**  
 Use secret knowledge of the Darkness to aid another.

**STATS:**  
 ADD ONE TO one of these.

**Charm** +1  
**Courage** +0  
**Cunning** -1

**VIRTUE**  
 (choose one)

**Honor**  
**Independence**

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ 's knowledge is unparalleled within the Clutch, but they do not see the danger ahead. Take a Gem from them.

\_\_\_\_\_ helped save you from the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue. Give them a Gem.

You dreamed of \_\_\_\_\_ long before you two met. Tell them what the dream was about and take a Gem from them.

SEER MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE 

**HAUNTING VISIONS:** You are haunted by visions of the Darkness. At the start of the session, roll +Charm. On a hit, you've seen a vision of the Darkness that will aid your Clutch's efforts; learn something useful and interesting about the tasks at hand. On a 10+, you've seen the true face of the Darkness; ask the DM a followup question as well. On a miss, your vision is too dark to aid you; the future it foretells is grim and painful.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark a new feature for your visions. When you roll *Haunting Vision*, you may:

- share your vision with a Clutchmate; take +1 forward to your *Haunting Vision* roll.
- prepare your mind; ask an additional question (even on a miss).
- guide your vision; tell the DM what aspect of Dragonia your vision will concern.
- defy your future; offer a +1 forward to a Clutchmate to alter what you have seen.

Tell the DM which dragons helped you gain the strength to master your visions.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:



**ONE OF THEM:** When you *mislead or trick* a dragon corrupted by the Darkness, roll +Charm instead of +Cunning.



**WYRM TONGUE:** Return a Gem and ask the Darkness for something you need. The DM will tell you what it costs. If you pay the price, the Darkness will deliver it.



**SECRET CATCHER:** Add the following options to *study another dragon* before they have seen you:

- What secrets is your character hiding?
- What has the Darkness offered to you in your moments of weakness?
- How do you think we are alike?



**TOUCH THE DARKNESS:** When you consume a piece of the Darkness, roll +Charm. On a hit, the Darkness gives you a vision and answers your questions.

On a hit, choose one from the list below. On a 10+, choose two. The visions...

- ... are lucid and detailed; clear a Shadow.
- ... show you what you need to do; take +1 forward to do it.
- ... reveal the role a dragon will play in the events to come; give +1 forward to a Clutchmate.

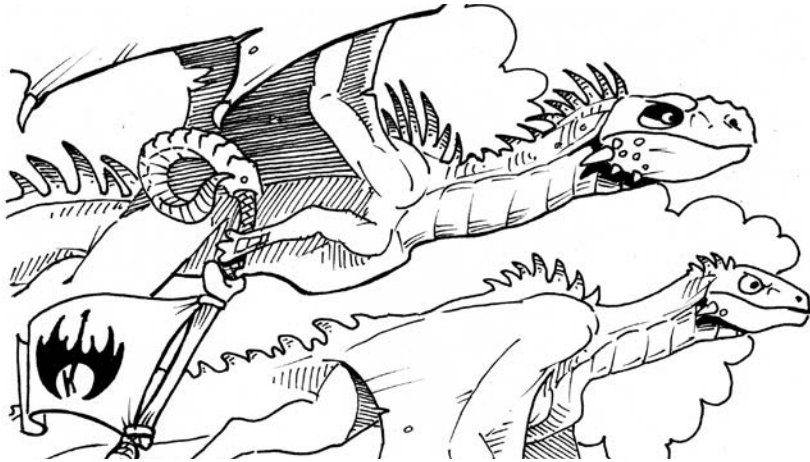
On a 7-9, choose one from the list below as well. The visions...

- ... corrupt your soul; mark a Shadow.
- ... distance you from others; return a Gem.
- ... attack your weakened body, take -1 forward.

On a miss, you attract the attention of the Darkness itself.

## SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE MAGNETIC and persuasive. You know dragonkin cannot be trusted any more than the Darkness can; you may have to traffic in lies and backroom deals to get things done. Make sure your clutch knows you are willing to sacrifice their feelings to get the job done. You are the Seer. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to trust a dragon you do not know.



## THE WARRIOR

YOU ARE NOBLE and strong. Dragonia is your home and you fight to defend it. You are an inspiration to your fellow dragons, but don't try to take on too much by yourself. Your friends are strong and capable; give them a chance and they will surprise you.

**NAME:** (circle one) Morning, Buck, Vera, Kimrath, Ax, Gracks

**LOOK** (circle one in each row)  
 Curling horns, Feathered crest, Many horns, Tusks  
 Broad scales, Shelled, Spiney, Tough hide  
 Broad skull, Long snout, Scarred snout, Underbite  
 Barbed tail, Club tail, Stubby tail, Whip tail  
 Claws, Clubbed feet, Hooves, Paws  
 Barrel-chested, Elegant body, Huge body, Muscular body

**HOUSE & OBLIGATION** (choose one)

**BRYNBAK, The House of Steel**

Destroy an unnatural menace born of Darkness.

**TESSITH, The House of Diamond**

Defend someone weaker than you from the Darkness.

**STATS:**  
 ADD ONE TO one of these.

**Charm** +0

**Courage** +1

**Cunning** -1

**VIRTUE**

(choose one)

*Daring*

*Humor*

## FELLOWSHIP

\_\_\_\_\_ has recently joined your Clutch and you are training them in the art of capital politics. Take a Gem from them.

\_\_\_\_\_ has stood by your side in a fight against a monster of the Darkness. Explain how they exemplified your virtue. Give them a Gem.

\_\_\_\_\_ was there when you were most vulnerable. Give them a Gem.

## WARRIOR MOVES: YOU GET THIS ONE

**SCALES OF HONOR:** You have dedicated your life to the betterment of Dragonia. Choose one boon:

- A mark of lunar authority; take +1 ongoing to *call upon the Moons*.
- A voice that penetrates the Darkness; take +1 ongoing to *act despite danger* in the face of the Darkness.
- A lineage that commands respect; take +1 Charm (max +3).
- An heirloom from the War of Shadow; take +1 ongoing to *stand up to an older dragon*.
- A large and valuable hoard; take +1 ongoing to *give into the Darkness*.

Mark a Shadow each time you conceal or hide one or more of your boons.

**Signature Move Advancement:** Mark a new boon. Tell the DM which of your adventures has earned you such an honor.

AND CHOOSE ONE MORE:

- BATTLE PLAN:** When you face an enemy in combat, roll +Courage. On a hit, you can ask the DM questions. Whenever you act on one of the DM's answers, take +1. On a 10+, ask 2. On a 7-9, ask 1:
- Which enemy is most vulnerable to me? • Which enemy is the biggest threat?
  - What's my enemy's true position? • What's my enemy's mission or objective?
- On a miss, they catch you off guard. Take a -1 ongoing until you can assert your dominance or rally your allies.
- DRAGONHEART:** You are a true friend to your Clutchmates; you may give Gems to characters that act according to either of your virtues (Daring or Humor).
- ALL FIRED UP:** Once per session, you can return a Friendship Gem to *act despite danger* with a 10+.
- LIES DO NOT BECOME US:** When you speak frankly with a character, you can ask their player a question from the list below. If they answer it truthfully, they may then ask you a question from the list. You must answer truthfully.
- Whom do you really serve? • What do you most regret?
  - What do you most desire? • Who have you truly wronged?

## SHADOWSELF

YOU ARE UNSTOPPABLE, a hurricane whose might will singlehandedly shatter the Darkness. Dragonia must be protected and no one else is strong enough to help you. Make sure the clutch knows you are the only one who can save Dragonia. You are The Warrior. Return from your Shadowself when a friend convinces you to ask your Clutch for help.



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