

Player's Handbook Like A Fucking Boss



Venger As'Nas Satanis

Player's Handbook Like A Fucking Boss

This is not a roleplaying game, campaign setting, or adventure.

Rather, this is a collection of odds and ends that will hopefully improve whatever fantasy RPG you decide to play. I don't expect everyone to adhere to all these optional rules and idiosyncratic suggestions, but give some of these a chance... I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

WIN LIKE A FUCKING BOSS

Originally, that was going to be the title. Provocative (if not exactly true), I believe this little PDF will increase your enjoyment of the game. It will do this by helping you to win: survive and conquer until there are no more worlds to explore (that means infinity and beyond).

But then I realized that many, many gamers would come out of the woodwork to explain to me how fantasy roleplaying isn't about winning, that there are no "winners" in D&D. While courting controversy is pretty much the only way I can remain afloat in this dwindling industry of minor renown, I'd rather not drown in discussions with uncharitable cries of how Venger's doing it wrong.

To win at a roleplaying game is to have fun, immersing ourselves in characters, cultures, labyrinths and loot... and generally being awesome. But isn't there another kind of winning? Don't we feel a certain amount of satisfaction from overcoming the

slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? The slimes, death traps, and regenerating trolls perpetrated upon us by the sadistic GM? Sure, we do.

Triumph is the goal. That is accomplished by continuing to live, and the stakes couldn't be higher - they're quite literally life and death. To simply play the game without caring about what happens to our character misses the point. You've heard of strength through joy? Well, this is fun through winning. The more you win - cheat death, amass wealth, save the princess, hear thousands chant your name while holding your laser chain-sword high in the air - the more fun you'll have.

I'm not saying that fairness, good sportsmanship, inclusiveness, creativity, teamwork, and all that other stuff aren't important - very much so! But don't forget about good, old fashioned determination to win. That will serve you well.

SOMETHING MAGICAL HAPPENED

Though I grew up on Basic D&D in the mid-eighties, my old school tastes have straddled the dark, mist-laden past, as well as, the contemporary conventions of today.

My own fantasy heartbreaker, *Crimson Dragon Slayer*, had done away with the more cumbersome elements of the game. To me, the old school renaissance is about taking the essence and philosophy of the past and then making innovation after innovation until everything that seemed inordinate, clunky, and weird is made smooth - sanded by decades of theory, practice, common sense, and talking to other gamers with a shared passion for RPGs. But sometimes we can go too far, innovating ourselves right off the map.

This past summer, I decided to re-read the many fantastic posts at Groggardia. That inspired me to go back to basics, or Basic D&D. I kept all the funky stuff that I usually threw out - rolling for initiative, racial access to certain classes and level limits, different tables for saving throws and experience points... pretty much everything except descending Armor Class, one spell per day magic-users, and

worrying about circumstantial modifiers (just used Advantage/Disadvantage).

To my surprise, I really got into it. The minutia which, for many years, I assumed to be awkward relics that stood in the way of progress actually turned out to be absorbing and a whole lot of fun. When every point of experience is counted (fighting monsters, looting treasure, exploring, making the game world your own, etc.), then every experience (point) counts. It matters if the PCs wait in ambush for the ogre to walk by or if they charge into the next room. A couple dozen XP might be the difference between going up to level 2 and staying level 1. It's amazing what simple pleasures you forget about after the game's been streamlined.

In my desire to maximize our enjoyment of the macro-game - the story, overall battles, interacting with NPCs, and exploration - I had neglected the micro-game that takes into account precious resources and their management. Not only arrows, torches, and rations but also gold and kills before having to rest. Even silver pieces are cherished when they can be spent on training!

So, even though I'll continue to run and primarily write for *Crimson Dragon Slayer*, that recent mini-campaign reminded me just how awesome old school retro-clones can be. For all of our renaissance, innovation and renovation, there's something about the original iterations of the game that can't be beat... even with a ten-foot pole.

MOSTLY SYSTEM NEUTRAL

This booklet is generally for O5R fantasy roleplaying games. Those systems which are derivative of D&D should use the +2 bonus where applicable. Those playing quasi-OSR systems like *Crimson Dragon Slayer* or similar d6 dice pool RPGs should use the +1d6 bonus where applicable.

If you're playing another fantasy RPG with an alternative system, just use whatever small bonus seems appropriate.

Additionally, the bonuses contained herein stack with advantage/disadvantage.

FANTASY SOUNDING NAMES

Chances are, you already have a dozen name tables or helpful PC naming guides available. Well, here's another one. There's no excuse for naming your character Bob, damn it!

| Roll | Result |
|------|----------------|
| 1 | Murqesst |
| 2 | Danaven |
| 3 | Abtryll |
| 4 | Peshtygough |
| 5 | Zoray |
| 6 | Wren-Kasto |
| 7 | Porgetto |
| 8 | Sanyen |
| 9 | Drimm |
| 10 | Kaizen |
| 11 | Thoraak |
| 12 | Yashago |
| 13 | Cyralleth |
| 14 | Mavroll |
| 15 | Akoll |
| 16 | Kornyrr |
| 17 | Tanniv-Brok |
| 18 | Barrandel |
| 19 | Toalihan |
| 20 | Narnesska (F) |
| 21 | Hebek |
| 22 | Thaniss |
| 23 | Duntry |
| 24 | Vank |
| 25 | Resborros |
| 26 | Winklevoss |
| 27 | Lantry |
| 28 | Rozzick |
| 29 | Thel'kanna (F) |
| 30 | Lyssella (F) |



FANTASY CALENDAR

Roll on the following random table to determine what month you were born. Additionally, roll the stated die to find out the exact day of the month.

Those born on the cusp are truly blessed, receiving gifts from the month they were born in and the month they are closest to. Characters born on the first and last day of the month can decide (still only once per session) which of the two bonuses they want to use in their moment of need.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | <p>Festus: Sign of the Wild Boar. It is represented by the color brown. The first month and the shortest, a time for feasts, celebration, and all manner of joyous occasions.</p> <p>Those born in Festus receive advantage when carousing (usable only once per session). This month is only 14 days long (d14). Use a d12 if you don't have a d14 on hand.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Iar'tan: Sign of the Serpent's Foe. It is represented by the color green. This month is known for slaying draconic, eldritch, and infernal creatures that stray too far from their Hellish underworld home.</p> <p>Those born in Iar'tan receive advantage when battling anything serpentine, demonic, or tentacled (usable once per session). This month is 20 days long (d20).</p> |
| 3 | <p>Mazock: Sign of Bountiful Harvests. It is represented by the color yellow. Spring is in the air and it is time for farmers to reap what they have sown.</p> <p>Those born in Mazock are naturally lucky and receive advantage as they choose (usable only once per session). This month is 20 days long (d20).</p> |

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 4 | <p>Quesson: Sign of the Willing Lady. It is represented by the color silver. Quesson is for love and lovers; solidifying relationships, engagements, and weddings frequent this month.</p> <p>Those born in Quesson receive advantage at both courting and consummating acts of love (usable only once per session). This month is 20 days long (d20).</p> |
| 5 | <p>Aarzite: Sign of the Benevolent Hand and Punishing Fist. It is represented by the colors white and black. Aarzite is the month where the Gods fight amongst themselves and even their divine battles spill over into mortal life. It is said that more wars have been fought in this month than any other.</p> <p>Those born in Aarzite receive advantage when helping the deserving or hindering the wicked (useable once per session). This month is 30 days long (d30).</p> |
| 6 | <p>Tholt: Sign of the Frozen Worm. It is represented by the color blue. Tholt is winter-time for all but the southernmost Kingdoms. The land becomes cold and hard, frost descends, and snow falls like a blanketing shroud of death over all. It is the longest and most brutal month of the year.</p> <p>Those born in Tholt receive advantage when attempting to survive some kind of physical, mental, or emotional ordeal (useable once per session). This month is 100 days long (d100)</p> |
| 7 | <p>Kaavred: Sign of Blood Spilled. It is represented by the color red. Kaavred warms the land by spilling the blood of deviants, traitors, heathens, and evil folk. This month is usually spent in pilgrimage, hunting down all the creatures who dare close the distance between underworld entrances and the towns, villages, and cities of man.</p> <p>Those born in Kaavred receive advantage when in combat (useable once per session). This month is 20 days long (d20).</p> |

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 8 | <p>Shazrizaa: Sign of the Wizard's Obscene Gesture. It is represented by the color purple. Shazrizaa is the month of enigma, strangeness, weird happenings, odd occurrences, and sorcery. This is the month where wizards meet and decide the fate of the seven realms. Wizards are dressed in purple robes that symbolize supernatural power... just as the Goddess of Arcana, Nycta Essovra, depicted within the Great Temple of Thebes.</p> <p>Those born in Shazrizaa receive advantage when either casting or protecting oneself from sorcery (useable once per session). This month is 24 days long (d24). Use a d20 if you don't have a d24 on hand.</p> |

STRANGER THINGS

This d100 table is a list of items, abilities, and weirdness to start your adventuring life. Not only will randomly rolling for one of these strange things give your character another layer of personhood, each thing could potentially be used in some clever way during one or more sessions.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Purple velvet with gold starred wizard's hat given to you by your "uncle." |
| 2 | Pink with red and green-spotted magic beans. |
| 3 | Mysterious birthmark resembling a demon holding a pitchfork. |
| 4 | Necklace with silver locket containing a picture of an elf woman with red-gold hair. |
| 5 | Small lavender puppet. |
| 6 | Ivory horn. |
| 7 | Candy cane that never loses its size, stripes, or flavor. |
| 8 | Copper piece with future date and unfamiliar face. |
| 9 | Unbreakable piece of string (6' long). |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 10 | Phoenix feather. |
| 11 | Kilt (1 in 12 chance of turning the wearer into a Scotsman... or a leprechaun). |
| 12 | Hat stand (1-3 wood, 4-6 iron). |
| 13 | Iridescent dragon scale. |
| 14 | Glass that yields no reflection. |
| 15 | Diamond so flawed that it's almost worthless (cloudy, badly cut, discolored, etc.). |
| 16 | Gilded cage. |
| 17 | Iron spike said to have been used in a past crucifixion. |
| 18 | Purple shard of crystal that glows in places where it's touched. |
| 19 | Serpentine dagger that never fails to draw blood. |
| 20 | Book with blank pages - strange sigils visible when moonlight hits them. |
| 21 | Jack-in-the-box with a murderous-looking jester inside. |
| 22 | Tattoo of a flaming eye that you don't remember getting. |
| 23 | Turtle that walks in the direction of gold. |
| 24 | Skull that speaks in the presence of demons. |
| 25 | Bronze bracer decorated with humanoid squid with tentacles. |
| 26 | Silver piece that always lands "heads." |
| 27 | Draconic ring with eyes of either garnet or jade. |
| 28 | Signet ring of long dead Duke or Baron. |
| 29 | Caltrop that never fails to be stepped on. |
| 30 | Broken fragments of a dragon's egg. |
| 31 | Vase that kills flowers within 2d4 minutes. |
| 32 | Luminous marbles (2d6). |
| 33 | Spectacles that make everything out of focus. |
| 34 | Gold timepiece that never gives the correct time (not even twice a day). |
| 35 | Canteen that turns water into wine. |
| 36 | Test tube that makes everything poured into it acidic. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 37 | Tumbler-style drinking glass that allows you to look at people through the bottom and see them naked. |
| 38 | Exotic steel hilt without any blade. |
| 39 | Gold hoop earring once worn by an infamous sorcerer and gypsy. |
| 40 | Dried blue lizard tongue fashioned into a bracelet. |
| 41 | Abstract shape of marble, heavy and cool to the touch. |
| 42 | Circuit-board; shiny green with black squares and tiny silver lines going every which way. |
| 43 | Square wheel. |
| 44 | Cloak made from some kind of humanoid skin. |
| 45 | Glass eye allowing one to clearly see into murky water. |
| 46 | Monkey's paw. |
| 47 | Obsidian statuette of some monstrous spider-god. |
| 48 | Scroll written in some unknown arcane language. |
| 49 | Letter of introduction from a dark elf noble named Drentreatise. |
| 50 | The petrified hand of some warrior who was turned to stone. |
| 51 | An elder oak wand exhausted of its magic. |
| 52 | Crystal ball containing a hairline fracture. |
| 53 | Ventriloquist dummy with one eye missing. |
| 54 | Invisible saxophone, when played it looks like the character is playing an "air sax." |
| 55 | Jar of pickles that can talk to each other. |
| 56 | Blade without a hilt - rumored to be from the sunless sword. |
| 57 | Handful of foreign coins from a distant land. |
| 58 | A crimson snakeskin glove. |
| 59 | Helmet with a single horn - the other broke off long ago. |
| 60 | Bloodstained shirt of a mighty hero who died in battle. |
| 61 | Carved and painted wooden toy soldiers. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 62 | Strange holy symbol from a bygone age, the details shrouded in mystery. |
| 63 | Fishnet stockings - when worn, they make a woman feel extremely sexual. |
| 64 | Your hair turns bright orange when it gets wet. |
| 65 | You have a pair of lucky six-sided dice. |
| 66 | A conch shell allows you to hear what's going on around the nearest body of water. |
| 67 | Black velvet bag that seems to hold double what it should. |
| 68 | Veil that hides small imperfections. |
| 69 | Oil on canvas portrait of self that absorbs all the corruption incurred by hardcore carousing. Legend states that if the portrait is destroyed, the subject feels every corrupting moment of the past three-fold. |
| 70 | Stupid gnome hat that your grandfather acquired when he was an adventurer. |
| 71 | Pan-flute that calls upon the creatures of the forest, only usable once a day. |
| 72 | You have a small ceramic pumpkin that gives you an affinity with them. Jack-o-lanterns smile when you walk by. |
| 73 | You carry a scroll everywhere you go, it contains your grandmother's secret recipe for shosh-kraeble! |
| 74 | A medal for outstanding bravery in battle; must have been from the last great war 20 or 30 years ago. |
| 75 | Writ of execution signed by Queen Illyria herself. |
| 76 | You feel at one with winter and can usually make it snow or conjure a light flurry if desirous. |
| 77 | Your name is etched upon the great stone head where those who worship the Old Gods give thanks and call upon the dark forces in nature. |
| 78 | In your pocket is a black sphere of dancing, colored lights - remnants of another universe. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 79 | You spent your formative years living next door to a brothel and know the ins and outs of a woman. |
| 80 | At least once a month you vividly dream of a female humanoid - an aquatic goddess who is as evil as she is beautiful. |
| 81 | Spyglass taken from the body of a dead pirate at Bishop's Bay. |
| 82 | A glow-in-the-dark yo-yo. |
| 83 | Fist-sized nugget of fool's gold. |
| 84 | Steel bracelet fashioned from an old set of prisoner shackles. |
| 85 | Halfling-head sized deposit of luminous blue skringe stone. |
| 86 | Cuckoo clock, and the wood-carved bird pops out at inappropriate times. |
| 87 | Half of a treasure map. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 88 | Shard of colorless crystal allows one to see with true sight when looking through it. |
| 89 | Born with an innate knowledge of the universe. |
| 90 | Leather sheath for a dagger. Once the blade has been sheathed for 24 hours, the withdrawn dagger never fails to draw blood when used to strike a deserving opponent. |
| 91 | Peacock feather that makes the wearer stand out. |
| 92 | One dark night a stranger gave you a pocket-sized gelatinous cube that can devour table scraps in minutes. |
| 93 | If you concentrate for about 20 minutes, you can glean a single piece of information from another's mind (must be within sight). |



| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 94 | A distant relative was given a talisman by an elf. Supposedly, the talisman wards off beggars and vagrants. |
| 95 | When you touch water, it turns blue-green. |
| 96 | Shiny bauble used for many years by a well-known hypnotist. |
| 97 | Spiked club - the wood and spikes taken from a criminal's crucifixion before you were born. |
| 98 | Hourglass that ages everything within 10' of the hourglass a single year, once the last grain of sand falls. |
| 99 | Bronze decorative serving plate that survived the last great empire's fall. |
| 100 | Gnarled, ebony walking stick that silences the tongue of gossips and braggarts. |

SECOND CHANCES

I was talking with my friend Joseph Hines about *Death Race: Fury Road*.

Basically, he was saying that it's fairly lethal and surviving depends on pure luck rather than any kind of strategy, tactic, or advantage based on character traits. And he's totally right. It is and it does.

That got me thinking about all the things PCs encounter that don't take strategy, tactics, and advantages into account. There has to be millions of little systems, sub-systems, and game mechanic conflicts (like save or die) that ignore PC actions because of one reason or another.

The following random table gives PCs a second chance to succeed... or merely survive. Allow players to roll when they've provided the GM with a sufficient reason for cheating either death or catastrophic failure.

Warning: this should be used sparingly! Applying this table more than, say, once per player per session could turn the GM's compassion into a crutch.

If you want to make a called-shot, your attack is at a disadvantage. But if you succeed, you hit what you were aiming for.

THIS IS YOUR SECOND CHANCE

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 1 | Accept your terrible fate. (Dead) |
| 2 | It's still pretty fucking bad, but at least you're alive and/or not totally screwed. (Unconscious) |
| 3 | Through sheer willpower and resourcefulness, you minimize the fallout. (1d6 x level of Health/HP remaining) |
| 4 | Safe! Clearly, you're destined for greater things. (No damage or ill effects) |

HONOR & FAME

Ever since reading the *Knights of the Dinner Table* comic book, I've wanted to introduce some kind of honor system into my fantasy gaming. The following is my latest and (hopefully) most successful attempt...

A character's honor and fame depend on 4 aspects: Deeds, Associates, Reputation, and Bonds.

Deeds: What great or lowly things have you done?

Associates: Who do you spend time with, travel with, and adventure with?

Reputation: Do people know your name? If so, what's their impression of you?

Bonds: Where do your allegiances lie? What Gods do you actively worship? Who are your allies? Who are your sworn enemies?

For each honorable (read: famous, mighty, chivalrous, virtuous, self-sacrificing, or otherwise

noteworthy) deed, associate, handling of a situation, and ally/enemy, that character gains 1 point.

When a character wishes to exert influence in or around his "home turf," roll a d20. When a character wishes to exert influence in the outlands, border territories, or an adjacent realm or country, roll a d30. If the character is in the underworld, a different continent, another planet or plane of existence, roll a d100. If the result is equal to or less than the character's Honor & Fame, he is known and respected among one or more intelligent humanoids present. This grants him advantage in all matters of state, diplomacy, negotiation, and hospitality.

Those benefits last until the character is no longer in the presence of those who know and respect him. If his Honor lessens either in or near their company, a new Honor check must be made.

Without resorting to dice-rolling, here's a handy little guide for Honor, Fame, and what the numbers indicate...

| Honor & Fame | Meaning |
|--------------|---|
| 5 | You're probably not covered in shit. |
| 10 | The toothless, flat-chested, old crones won't even bother asking if you want a roll in the hay. They know you're too good for them. |
| 15 | The local tavern believes you'll make good on your bar tab, eventually. And drinks are on the house for you and your companions during special occasions. |
| 20 | You have friends in high places. |
| 25 | Peasants remove their hats, avert their eyes, and call you sir when communicating with you. |
| 30 | The King frequently calls upon you for favors. |

'What great or lowly things have you done?'

DISHONOR & INFAMY

Similar to Honor, this is a system for determining how immoral, ruthless, backstabbing, traitorous, treacherous, and wicked a character is. Dishonor uses the same 4 aspects.

When a character does something particularly vile, he gets a point of Dishonor & Infamy. Honor and Dishonor cancel each other out before any roll is made.

When a character wishes to dominate, subjugate, or otherwise exert his influence in an underhanded or diabolical way, the player rolls a d20, d30, or d100 depending on his familiarity with the area and its people (similar to Honor & Fame). If the result is equal to or less than the character's Dishonor, he is known and feared among one or more intelligent humanoids present. This grants him advantage in all matters of state, diplomacy, negotiation, and hospitality.

Those benefits last until the character is no longer in the presence of those who know and fear him. If his Dishonor lessens either in or near their company, a new Dishonor check must be made.

The following is a handy guide to what the numbers mean...

| Dishonor & Infamy | Meaning |
|-------------------|---|
| 5 | Those suffering from dungeon PTSD will cross the street rather than walk next to you. |
| 10 | Mothers will lock up their daughters upon hearing of your arrival. |
| 15 | Those daughters will find a way to sneak out and meet you at night. |
| 20 | Crime lords want you on the payroll. |
| 25 | No illicit activity happens in your territory without your express approval. |
| 30 | Demons come to you for advice. |

NAMED ITEMS

Every magical item should have a name - especially, major items like artifacts and relics. But sometimes stuff like that falls through the cracks. The GM has a lot on his mind or perhaps he's satisfied with the usual "book name" the item usually goes by.

That doesn't mean you have to keep calling your ice sword "frostbrand" or "frosty" for short. You can name or re-name your magical item whatever the heck you want!

Roll on the following random tables to determine your item's new name. Those who bestow their magic item with a name receive an attunement bonus - if in danger of being destroyed, the named item gets advantage on its saving throw.

| Roll | Prefix | Root | Suffix |
|------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1 | Eth | Kith | Tenz |
| 2 | Mac | Ill | Zeb |
| 3 | Zen | Sath | Kal |
| 4 | Vok | Fen | Thrax |
| 5 | Dren | Ryv | Dred |
| 6 | Kas | Glynn | Bjorn |
| 7 | Blek | Gax | Jolnir |
| 8 | Zod | Dar | K'thul |
| 9 | Kal | Beeble | Kane |
| 10 | Korr | Q'uor | Z'rno |
| 11 | D'zok | Sith | Moldvay |
| 12 | A'az | Malk | Holm |

| Roll | Result |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | The Destructor |
| 2 | The Coward Killer |
| 3 | The Snake-Hearted or The Serpentine |
| 4 | The Crimson (or Obsidian) Adder |
| 5 | The Most Vicious |
| 6 | The Hated Blade |
| 7 | Imperious |
| 8 | The Fabulous |
| 9 | Halcyon Heracy |
| 10 | The Ruiner |
| 11 | Corruption of the Nine Hells |
| 12 | Bather in Blood |
| 13 | The Crippler |
| 14 | Wyrn Swallower |
| 15 | The Marrow Cleanser |
| 16 | Excelsior |
| 17 | Crushing Blow |
| 18 | Death from the Darkness |
| 19 | The Nearly Nameless One |
| 20 | Evisceration Complete |

**'Mac Glynn K'thul, The Marrow
Cleanser.**

That has a nice ring to it!



HE WHO LIVES BY THE SWORD...

Such advantages may not be much... odds are these illustrious warriors will die horrible deaths, but at least their extraordinary blades give them a chance of survival in this dark and inhospitable world. When the end does come, women shall weep, bards shall perform ballads in their honor, and their names shall become legend!

The enchanted sword of a fallen hero invariably grows more potent, more legendary. Consult the following table to see by what measure the blade has intensified (reprinted and updated from *Three Swordsmen*).

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Increased enchantment: ... 1) extra +1 versus whatever type of "monster" killed the hero, 2) +2 versus monster type, 3) +3 versus monster type, or 4) +3 versus monster type and additional +1 to everything else. |
| 2 | Bane: ... 1) lesser bane, additional 1d4 damage to whatever type of "monster" killed the hero; 2) bane, additional 1d6 damage; 3) greater bane, additional 1d8 damage; or 4) ancestral foe, additional 1d12 damage. |
| 3 | Protection: ... 1) +1 protection versus whatever "monster" type killed the hero, +2) protection versus monster type, 3) +3 versus monster type, or 4) +1 protection versus everything. |
| 4 | Weakness: (disadvantage to creature's saving throw) for whatever "monster" type killed the hero. |
| 5 | Sensitivity: sword is able to sense proximity for whatever "monster" type killed the hero. |
| 6 | Spell storing: sword is able to hold a single spell within itself, discharging it at the wielder's command. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 7 | Invisibility: sword allows wielder to become invisible until combat commences (if rolled twice, this becomes greater invisibility that doesn't go away when the wielder enters the fray). |
| 8 | Jealousy: sword only allows the rightful owner to use any of the blade's magical abilities. |
| 9 | Flame: sword is wreathed in magical flame upon command; victims take an additional 1d6 fire damage when hit (3d6 when critical). |
| 10 | Frost: sword is coated with magical ice upon command; victims take an additional 1d6 cold damage when hit (3d6 when critical). |
| 11 | Thunder: sword reverberates with intense force knocking victims 10' back when damaged by the blade (30' when critical). |
| 12 | Lightning: sword crackles with electricity upon command; victims take an additional electric damage when hit (3d6 when critical). |
| 13 | Magic resistance: sword allows wielder a saving throw when targeted by all potentially harmful spells. If a saving throw is allowed normally, the wielder gets advantage on his saving throw. |
| 14 | Summoning: sword allows wielder to summon 1d4 lesser creatures to fight alongside him (usable once per day). |
| 15 | Alignment: sword demands the wielder match the sword's alignment, and does an additional 1d4 damage to those of differing alignment. |
| 16 | Razor edge: sword crits on a natural 19 or 20 (for <i>Crimson Dragon Slayer</i> , if your attack dice pool result is a "5," roll percentile - you have a 32% chance of dishing out a critical hit). |
| 17 | Vorpal: sword decapitates victim when it crits. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 18 | Soul stealing: sword steals victim's soul when it deals a critical hit. |
| 19 | Silent: upon command, sword creates an area of silence (10' radius) around the wielder. |
| 20 | Light: upon command, the sword illuminates (15' radius) (1-3) or darkness, destroying the light (15' radius) (4-6). |
| 21 | Locating: sword can hone-in on a particular substance or creature type. |
| 22 | Poisonous: sword is always considered poisonous... 1) sleep, 2) paralysis, 3) weakened, or 4) death. |
| 23 | Deflection: once per day, sword will deflect damage up to wielder's level. |
| 24 | Petrifying: when sword deals a critical hit, victim is turned to stone (1-4) or slime (5-6). |
| 25 | Restoration: when held, sword restores one point of Health per hour. |
| 26 | Infernal: once per day, the sword will release Hell's fury (3d6 damage) upon those of a non-evil, non-chaotic alignment. |
| 27 | Illusion: upon command, the sword will disguise the wielder with an illusion (1-3) or can create a minor illusion between 5' and 20' from the sword (4-6). |
| 28 | Leadership: upon command, the sword imbues its wielder with a heroic (or villainous) aura that makes humanoids want to please and follow him. |
| 29 | Soothsayer: upon command, the sword immediately reveals the unvarnished truth about a particular person (usable once per day). |
| 30 | Correspondence: upon command, the sword can borrow the magical power or supernatural ability of another item within 50' of it. If this is rolled again, the sword can borrow powers / abilities of items and individuals. |

DID YOU BRING IT?

Many are the times a group of adventurers makes a plan, carries it out, and then wonders aloud if they brought the necessary piece of equipment, device, or whatever it is that's rather essential to pulling off the caper.

If it wasn't specified, then perhaps it was assumed... at which point it falls into a gray area. The following random table should help clear up those potentially frustrating moments.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Nope, you definitely didn't bring it with you. |
| 2 | You delegated that responsibility to another member of the party (or perhaps a child who looked like he was listening), but they either forgot or misunderstood what you wanted. |
| 3 | You had it, but then it somehow got lost or damaged on the way. |
| 4 | You thought you'd forgotten it, but luckily it's with you, after all. |
| 5 | Yes, of course you have it. |
| 6 | Not only do you have it, but you brought a spare or backup... just in case. |

'Between the velvet lies, there's a truth that's hard as steel. The vision never dies. Life's a never-ending wheel.'
- Dio





SIGNIFICANT PERSONAL GROWTH

Character development is something many gamers strive for. The way a character begins is usually different than how he ends. Of course, any kind of character development is up to the player. No one wants to rob players of their agency. However, that doesn't mean we can't create an incentive for significant personal growth.

- **Level 1:** You are what you are (naively assuming you truly know yourself) - core values and belief system must be firmly established. Character receives a one-time +1d6 or +2 bonus for laying his philosophical foundation.
- **Level 2:** Gradual shift in core values and/or belief system yields a one-time +1d6 or +2 bonus.
- **Level 4:** Greater shift in core values and/or belief system yields a one-time +1d6 or +2 bonus.
- **Level 6:** Transition complete! You arrive at your true self, either utterly opposing your former core values and belief system or confirming that you were, indeed, right all along, yielding a one-time +3d6 or +6 bonus.

Development should be roleplayed at least once per session. As long as the player can justify his character's transformation (that it happened and why it happened), he will have fulfilled the requirement.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEF SYSTEM

Roll thrice on the following random table in order to determine your character's personal philosophy. It may seem counter-intuitive, but disparate values and beliefs are perfectly reasonable - realistic, actually. Nearly irreconcilable differences lurk within the vast majority of people.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | People are generally good. |
| 2 | The world is a kind, loving, and charitable place. |
| 3 | Most people belong in cages. |
| 4 | This world is out to get you. |
| 5 | No one is truly evil – only misunderstood. |
| 6 | The Gods are benevolent and merciful. |
| 7 | The King is wise, generous, and strong. |
| 8 | The myths and legends about a fabulous underworld are just that – myths and legends. |
| 9 | You have a special plan for this world. |
| 10 | You don't matter in the grand scheme of things. |
| 11 | Hopes and dreams are meaningless. |
| 12 | No one will ever get close to you, so you'll never feel betrayed. |
| 13 | The Gods help those who help themselves. |
| 14 | There's no such thing as luck or coincidence. |
| 15 | One man cannot change the world. |
| 16 | Love is the only thing that really matters. |
| 17 | You should neither be a borrower nor a lender. |
| 18 | Family is most important. |
| 19 | A day without sex is like a day without good food and wine. |
| 20 | Everything is easier and better when you're rich. |
| 21 | The world has enough heroes already. |
| 22 | Moderation in all things. |
| 23 | Seize the day! |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 24 | Better safe than sorry. |
| 25 | By Crom, I'll tell you what is best in life! |
| 26 | A thing of beauty is a joy forever. |
| 27 | Take what you can, when you can. |
| 28 | There must be another way... a better way. |
| 29 | Get the world by its throat and make it give you what you desire. |
| 30 | Compared to the Gods, we are all filthy worms crawling around in the mud. |

No matter how much I admire and respect old school fantasy gaming, I just can't let beginning magic-users live or die with one spell per day. So, when a magic-user casts a spell, there's only a 1 in 4 chance of him losing that spell until he can rest and memorize it.

VORPAL SHADE OF CRIMSON

I was inspired by the recently released *50 Shades of Vorpal* enough to write this review and create the following d30 random table.

Once per combat, a warrior (or any fighter-type character class) can choose to roll on the Vorpal Shade of Crimson table instead of making his usual attack. Low-level sissy campaigns may want to wait until PCs are at least 3rd level before bestowing such power unto them.

Assuming the melee weapon is magical or technologically advanced (laser sword, baby!) and has some kind of sharp edge, decapitation might possibly follow. That means the guy being attacked loses his head if the vorpal is successful. Generally speaking, when you lose your head, you die.

| Roll | Vorpal Shade of Crimson |
|------|---|
| 1 | Self-inflicted vorpal (ouch)! |
| 2 | You vorpal an ally. |
| 3 | You miss and fall into a pile of manure. |
| 4 | You miss and all your women leave - you can't find sex for 1d3 days. |
| 5 | You just miss. |
| 6 | You miss, but get +1 vorpal to your next roll on this table. |
| 7 | Opponent forced into an honor dual with you, either roll on this table again or roll your normal attack. |
| 8 | Instead of decapitation, you sever 1d4 of your opponent's limbs (still hurts). |
| 9 | You miss, but The Deth God strikes down a random participant in the combat (possibly you or one of your allies). |
| 10 | You vorpal your opponent. |
| 11 | You vorpal your opponent. |
| 12 | You vorpal your opponent, all bards must roll saving throws versus crimson deth! |
| 13 | You vorpal your opponent, a fair maiden witnesses your awesomeness - she will become your girlfriend for the night if you so wish it. |
| 14 | You vorpal your opponent, and the cleric must heal you next. |
| 15 | You vorpal your opponent, and you get first pick of the treasure. |
| 16 | You vorpal your opponent, and a pack of wild dogs comes to your aid. |
| 17 | You vorpal your opponent, and you successfully block the next attack directed at you. |
| 18 | You vorpal your opponent, and an assassin-wizard owes you a favor. |
| 19 | You vorpal your opponent, and gain the companionship of either a formidable badger or an intrepid torchbearer. |
| 20 | You vorpal your opponent, and you hath awakened ye Olde Gods! |
| 21 | You vorpal your opponent, and there's a mysterious scroll tucked away inside his neck. |

| Roll | Vorpal Shade of Crimson |
|------|---|
| 22 | You vorpal your opponent, and no thieves dare pick your pocket for 1d4 days. |
| 23 | You vorpal your opponent. Additionally, your blade grows an inch longer while your penis elongates by half-an-inch! |
| 24 | You vorpal your opponent, and you become a Deth Knight (who always gets a +1 to vorpal, always save vs. poison, and is utterly evil)! |
| 25 | You vorpal your opponent, and several comely wenches notice your heroic/villainous deed and want to become your sex slaves for the evening! |
| 26 | You vorpal your opponent, and 1d3 demons shall serve you for the next 24 hours. |
| 27 | You vorpal your opponent, and either a crimson or obsidian dragon agrees to become your personal mount for the week. |
| 28 | You vorpal your opponent, and you may immediately attack another opponent - rolling again on this table, if you so wish! |
| 29 | You vorpal your opponent, and 2d6 peasants start worshipping you! |
| 30 | You vorpal all of your remaining opponents in one fell swoop! |

FYI, this could also work for a thief attempting to backstab someone or an assassin plying his trade. If you have any questions, ask your GM.

CRIMSON PHASIC DETH WYZARD VORPAL

"Probably your best table yet! Awesomeness!!!" ~ Forrest Aguirre

The mystical phase-artistry of the robed classes shan't be denied!

Those warrior types think they're so frickin' cool. Well, battle wizards are not to be outdone! Behold...

Once per combat, magic-users may forgo their usual spellcasting in favor of shooting vorpal, crimson laser demon-fire out of their fingers, eyes, and mouth. Roll on the following d30 table to determine what in the Nine Hells just happened?!?

| Roll | Crimson Phasic Deth Wizard Vorpal |
|------|--|
| 1 | Self-immolation as your molten ashes disperse to the Four Winds! |
| 2 | 1d4 of your comrades are severely burned - taking 3d6 damage! |
| 3 | Your body is scarred with singe marks like you've been flame broiled - you take 2d6 exploding damage! |
| 4 | You miss; nothing happens. |
| 5 | You strike one opponent with a lick of ordinary flame that does 1d6 damage. |
| 6 | You flame strike 1d4 opponents with regular flame that does 1d6 damage each. |
| 7 | You douse a single opponent in greenish flame for 3d6 exploding damage! |
| 8 | Same as above, but this time the flame is purple and slimy! There's a 2 in 6 chance that the purple slime hardens instantaneously, making movement impossible. |
| 9 | Your vorpal laser flames hit 1d4 opponents who each take 2d6 exploding damage! |
| 10 | Your flames hit 1d4 opponents who each take 3d6 exploding damage! |
| 11 | Your flame of eerie jade illumination hits 1d6 opponents who each take 3d6 exploding damage while 1d4 peasants weep at your sorcerous majesty! |

| | |
|----|---|
| 12 | The flames are magenta this time - 1d4+1 opponents take 4d6 exploding damage and time shifts 1d4 seconds either backwards or forwards! |
| 13 | All magic items in a 50' circle are instantly identified and go off at the same time. Everyone in the area rolls a d6, if you rolled a "1," then you die horribly as your body is rent asunder by devastating chartreuse lightning inferno! |
| 14 | Your flames are amethyst and crystalline in nature - burning 1d12 opponents for 3d6 exploding damage and lacerating another 1d4 opponents with crystal cuts, for an additional 1d6 exploding damage! |
| 15 | Your violet flames do 4d6 exploding damage to all your opponents within a 50' area that pleases the Deth Gods - the next time you roll on this table, you get +1 vorpal. |
| 16 | Your black hellfire flames do 5d6 exploding damage to 2d4 opponents. Additionally, the earth below your feet opens up and 1d4 demons crawl out of the chasm to serve you for the next hour! |
| 17 | Invisible fire strikes 2d6 opponents for 3d6 exploding damage, as well as, affixing them to the floor and walls as if they were caught in a spider's web. |
| 18 | Your vorpal laser beams of crimson annihilation disintegrates a single opponent. |
| 19 | Your vorpal laser beams of crimson annihilation disintegrate 1d4 opponents chosen at random! |
| 20 | The wyzard's spell does his choice of either selections 10 or 11 and the wyzard becomes a true Deth Wyzard, making him unrepentantly evil and giving him a permanent +1 vorpal. |
| 21 | Your spell turns the ground into emerald molten acid. All enemies must roll a d6. If they roll anything except a "5" or "6," they instantly melt into raw nothingness! |
| 22 | Same as above, except opponents must roll a "6" only to survive. Also, all bards within 50' shit their pants. |

| | |
|----|---|
| 23 | The wyzard has the power of flight and rains down 6d6 exploding crimson laser flames upon his enemies. |
| 24 | The wyzard does 6d6 exploding laser damage to all his enemies within 50'. Additionally, the wyzard frees a nearby ice princess who has been frozen in the frost lord's tomb for untold aeons. |
| 25 | 8d6 damage to all his enemies within 50' |
| 26 | A single flaming sphere of annihilation is summoned and slams into 2d4 of your enemies, annihilating them! |
| 27 | An azure inferno envelopes 2d12 of your enemies, doing 4d6 exploding damage to each one. Additionally, 1d4 fair maidens swoon over your vorpal wyzardry! |
| 28 | You become invisible for 2d4 rounds as indigo lightning strikes 1d12 opponents, doing 6d6 exploding damage! Additionally, your wyzard beard grows an inch longer!!! |
| 29 | Three flaming spheres of annihilation are summoned and slam into 3d6 of your enemies, annihilating them! Additionally, your penis grows half-an-inch longer!!! |
| 30 | All your enemies within a 100' area are instantaneously decapitated! Also, a dragon (either crimson or obsidian - your choice) offers you a ride, anywhere you want to go! |



THE ART OF BARDING

What's good about being a bard? High fantasy bards can weave songs and spells that amaze and enchant. Low fantasy bards are little more than con-men in tights wielding musical instruments when the jig is up. Those are the bards we'll be talking about here.

At each level, bards can take one of the following abilities. Once selected, that skill is in the bard's repertoire and he has advantage when using it.

- Convince enemies not to attack him (taken twice, he can convince enemies not to attack his entire party).
- Convince friends and acquaintances to loan you their gear/items.
- Convince NPCs to join the adventuring party.
- Convince someone to divulge their secrets.
- Make friends with strangers.
- Get invited to fancy parties.
- Start a business (taken twice, a bard can convince friends and acquaintances to invest in his business).
- Can exchange lupins (or any exotic goods and services) for gold, jewels, or swag.
- Convince guards to look the other way.
- Entertain people into buying you food and drink.
- Convince comely strangers to have sex with him.
- Has trained to use his instrument as a deadly weapon. (Extra 1d6 damage)

Clerics can heal at 1d8 + their level. Once a particular character is healed with a "1" result, that character can't be supernaturally healed again until the cleric has rested for 8 hours and prayed.

BE THE BEST CLERIC YOU CAN BE TO CLERIC LIKE A FUCKING BOSS

When not banishing demons and blowing-up undead, what's a cleric for? As you can see, there are remarkable similarities between the bard and cleric. The following list is for low fantasy clerics.

At each level, clerics can take one of the following abilities. Once selected, that skill is in the cleric's vocation and he has advantage when using it.

- Convince friends and acquaintances to give him money as religious donations for the church (taken twice, he can convince complete strangers to give to the church - through him, of course - as well).
- Instill guilt and shame in those he comes in contact with.
- Convince enemies that it's bad luck to kill a priest.
- Create strife, discord, and suffering through one-true-way-ism.
- Radiate an aura of piety and benevolence.
- Appeal to an individual's lower nature.
- Attract sycophants (taken twice, he can induce zealotry).
- Convince nobility, royalty, and prosperous merchants to give you the best accommodations for free.
- Convince someone to confess their sins.
- Convince someone in authority to forgive your trespasses.
- Forgive the trespasses of others and absolve them of guilt and shame.
- Fool others into thinking you have the authority to go anywhere and do anything.
- Confuse the simple minded with ecclesiastic riddles and esoteric conundrums.
- Make the best tasting and strongest wine.
- Convince comely strangers that having sex with him is no different than pleasuring the divine made flesh.

DEFINING PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC

Roll thrice on the following random table to help determine what your character looks like.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Eyes... 1) lavender-gray, 2) sea-green, 3) sky-blue, 4) hazel with flecks of gold. |
| 2 | Freckles (1 in 6 chance of having large dark-colored splotches). |
| 3 | Nose... (1-3) big or (4-6) small. |
| 4 | Hair... 1) red, 2) black, 3) brown, 4) blonde, 5) dark with white streak, 6) bald. |
| 5 | Nordic tribal tattoos all over body (2 in 6 chance tattoos include face and head). |
| 6 | Sixth toe on each foot (1-2), sixth finger on each hand (3-4), or vestigial tail (5-6). |
| 7 | Clothing of garish hues (1-2) or skin is weird non-human color (3-6). |
| 8 | Strong chin (1-3) or wild beard (4-6). |
| 9 | Tremors (1-3) or stands eerily still for long periods of time (4-6) |
| 10 | Goatee or VanDyke beard (1-4) or suspicious calves (5-6). |
| 11 | You can see pronounced blue veins under the skin (1-4) or layers of baby-fat all over (5-6). |
| 12 | Hands... 1) rough, 2) small, 3) big, or 4) extra smooth. |
| 13 | Long tongue (1 in 6 chance he has no tongue). |
| 14 | Teeth... 1) discolored, 2) crooked, 3) perfectly straight, 4) large, 5) small, or 6) mostly missing. |
| 15 | Size... 1) tall and lanky, 2) short and stout, 3) big and tall, or 4) short and slender. |
| 16 | Scarred (1 in 6 chance he looks like a victim of severe burns). |
| 17 | Deep voice (1-3) or high-pitched voice (4-6). |
| 18 | Silly walk (1-3) or speech impediment (4-6). |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 19 | Skin tone... 1) pale, 2) swarthy, 3) dark brown, 4) yellowish, 5) reddish, or 6) black. |
| 20 | Unusually "sexy" physical attribute... butt, breasts, curves, muscular arms, penis, etc. |
| 21 | Left-handed (1 in 6 chance of only having one hand). |
| 22 | Ears stick out (1 in 6 chance of only having one ear). |
| 23 | Poor eyesight – glasses (1-2), missing eye (3-4), one eye is larger than the other (5-6). |
| 24 | Hairy knuckles and feet (1-4) or scaly flesh (5-6). |
| 25 | No neck (1-3) or disturbingly huge goiter on neck (4-6). |
| 26 | Bushy eyebrows (1-3) thin and sinister eyebrows (4-6). |
| 27 | Mouth... 1) never smiles, 2) always smiling, 3) frequently sneering, or 4) cleft palate. |
| 28 | Hunchback (1-2), club foot (3-4), or leprosy (5-6). |
| 29 | Rosy cheeks (1-2) or hollow, sunken cheeks (3-4), or dimples (5-6). |
| 30 | Head... 1) narrow, 2) round, 3) small, 4) big, 5) oval, or 6) misshapen. |

DEFINING MOMENT

What was the inciting incident, the defining moment that catapulted your character into life as a murder-hobo? The following backgrounds crystallized your character's fate, sending him on a specific path... a destiny of bloodshed and loot and yet more bloodshed!

Occasionally, memories come to the surface. Once per session, you can reference your background, via roleplaying, to get advantage on your next roll. The situation presenting itself should be applicable to the character's past.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Your family was slaughtered by pig-faced orcs raiding the borderlands while you were miles away, tending to the sheep. |
| 2 | Your family was slaughtered by demons when a nearby wizard's binding spell failed. You were fetching water when it happened. By the time you got back, everyone was dead and the demons vanished into thin air. |
| 3 | The King's soldiers were drunk and using you for target practice. Your father shot his bow and an arrow went right through a guard's eye. You ran away, but never found out what happened to your father. |
| 4 | For generations, your family has lived near the Shatterscale Cavern – rumored to be an entrance to the underworld. Dark elves used their sinister fairy magic to charm your sister into the subterranean depths. |
| 5 | You realized you're not good at doing anything else after being fired from every other job you've ever had. |
| 6 | You promised your mother that you'd make something of yourself. A notice at the local tavern put you on the path to fame, gold, and adventure! |
| 7 | You formed a demonic pact with other ambitious wastrels loitering in the city's sewers. |
| 8 | You were grabbed in the night, held prisoner, and tortured. Upon escaping, you swore an oath to protect the realm and its people from dark forces. |
| 9 | You needed the money or else you were going to lose the house. |
| 10 | You've always had an abiding hatred of monsters, ever since you were young and a monster pleased itself in front of you without your consent. |
| 11 | There's something dark within your soul. After murdering your uncle for cheating at cards, you discovered that you have no problem taking life. Especially, if it stands between you and a substantial payday. |
| 12 | You're intrigued by the supernatural. A sorcerer once experimented upon you, and he might have kept you as a toad forever – except some shadowy thing broke into this tower and killed him, returning you to normal. |
| 13 | You've always craved power – ever since the entire village publicly mocked and jeered at you for... 1) having sex with that sheep, 2) being sexually rejected by your own sister, 3) nearly being killed by a solitary goblin, or 4) your mother being forced into prostitution because she was a witch. |
| 14 | You were seduced into the murder-hobo lifestyle by an evil sword that tricked you into licking blood from its blade. Once you'd done the deed, the sword vanished... but forever left you with a taste for chaos. |
| 15 | The stargazer in your village claimed it was your destiny to delve into dank dungeons and lightless caves in search of gold and glory. When the stargazer was beheaded for talking to wood sprites on Saint Irig's Day, you were saddened – and swore to see his prophecy come true! |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 16 | Warlords in black armor raided your village, killing many and enslaving those who survived. You were young, but still strong enough to fight with the warriors. Within minutes you were struck down, not dead but unconscious. You awoke hours later, surrounded by devastation and desirous of revenge. |
| 17 | You sold the family cow for a handful of magic beans. Those beans sprouted tentacles that entered your fragile mind, corrupted it, and prepared you for a lifetime of mayhem and destruction. |
| 18 | You grew up an orphan, never knowing where you belonged or what your purpose was. A rough and tumble crew of adventurers brought you into the fold, treating you like the family you never had. They soon died horribly... however, by then you had learned the trade and decided to earn a living as an adventurer for hire. |
| 19 | Your siblings decided to stay home and run the family business, pushing you out of your birthright and any future inheritance. You decided to show them all by taking your life in your hands and exploring the legendary underworld. |
| 20 | You had been a merchant in the city. You were well liked, everyone knew your name and enjoyed your generous deals. However, standing up to the local thieves' guild got you black-balled. Soon after, your shop was burned to the ground and you were stabbed in the gut. You would have died, too, but for the kindness of a priest who saw you bleeding in the alleyway. From that moment on, you could think of little else but taking from those who took from you. |
| 21 | You were sold into slavery and purchased by a depraved sorcerer who specialized in necromancy. While serving him you saw no shortage of bizarre and terrifying things. A pack of ghouls devoured the sorcerer before your very eyes! Such unnatural experiences ruined you for ordinary toil. Your former master dead, you made your way to the nearest tavern and became a murder-hobo. |
| 22 | For your crimes, you were shipped off to the purple islands. The penal colony was all but destroyed by something purple and awful in the sky. You narrowly escaped its blasphemous clutches, found a raft on the beach, and drifted back to the mainland. |
| 23 | Your spouse turned out to be evil and tricked you into releasing a demon lord imprisoned within the famed Ruby of Razira. That devil continues to haunt your dreams – even seeing him in your waking moments, gazing into the unquiet void, waiting for something hideous to come through and engulf the world. Your guilty conscience demanded you take action! |
| 24 | Your parents enrolled you in a sorcerous academy years ago. You took part in an unsanctioned mid-semester wizard's duel. Your opponent nearly killed you, but you survived by encasing him in the blue crystalline fungus that grows at the planet's core. For all you know he's still stuck down there. You only knew the spell because the night before the duel you studied a forbidden book of magic, and for that transgression you were exiled from the academy. |
| 25 | Your village was devastated by a deadly plague. One of the priests sent to give aid turned out to be a worshiper of some evil god that brought the plague down on your village. The priest summoned slithering black shadows from Hell. A great battle ensued, a number of men died to bring down the dark priest. Though you did not land the killing-blow, you wounded the priest and were one of the few villagers standing when the fight was over. From that moment onward, thwarting evil has been your unquenchable passion. |
| 26 | It has long been said that unwholesome rituals take place on the eastern plateau known as K'darath, under the full moon. Being a curious type, you set about to investigate the next morning. There, you stumbled across a crude stone altar, the scent of incense pervasive. Upon the altar was a single scroll. A curious symbol was drawn upon the parchment in black ink... along with seven names; yours was among them. |

| Roll | Result |
|------|---|
| 27 | Your uncle hired a couple of new servants. While preparing them for tomorrow's work in the field, one of the servants mentioned a secret message he was supposed to deliver to a wizard rumored to live around these parts. As the three moons rose, you went searching for the wizard along with the new farm hands. The servant with the secret message had lied; both of them attempted to murder you and stole your belongings. They cut your throat and left you for dead. Thankfully, the slice was shallow and you lived. As far as the authorities know, those men were never captured. |
| 28 | Your father racked up a staggering debt with all his gambling, drinking, and whoring over the years. He named you as the beneficiary of his will before he died. Now that he's gone, there's nothing but debt-collectors hounding you for money. Threats have already been made upon your life. |
| 29 | You married young and foolishly – your wife is a raging shrew, never having anything good to say about you and disrespecting you in public. What little money you had she's taken and left you with nothing. |
| 30 | You dreamt of a glowing green sphere that came down last winter near the north mountain. The sphere spoke of great treasure and forbidden knowledge entombed within the mythical underworld below the kingdoms of men. Though it was only a dream, you've never been more sure of anything in your life. |

END BOSS BATTLE BONUSES

This idea came to me just before arriving at Game Hole Con Saturday where I ran a couple games. The night before, I was watching the 1989 post-apocalypse movie *Cyborg*. An idea occurred...

Have a list of modifiers that would improve PC chances for victory at the session's end - during the big boss battle. The list would be handed out to players ahead of time and if they incorporated X, Y, and Z into their character's journey, they'd receive whatever bonuses they qualified for.

Why do this? Because it would be fun to watch the PCs dig deep into the vintage clichés of genre action movies in order to get an edge and possibly win the day. Using an incentive like this is key!

All these bonuses are one-time only and can only be cashed-in during the final conflict.

END BOSS BATTLE BONUSES

- +1d6 or +2 for trash talk.
- +1d6 or +2 for releasing pent-up sexual frustration.
- +1d6 or +2 for tragic backstory.
- +1d6 or +2 for this being an old enemy or nemesis.
- +1d6 or +2 for fighting shirtless at night in the rain.
- +1d6 or +2 if you swore revenge prior to battle.
- +1d6 or +2 for super cool and creative combat maneuver.
- +1d6 or +2 if you took the time to train for this fight.
- +1d6 or +2 if you say your catchphrase (must have established catchphrase).
- +1d6 or +2 if you were knocked unconscious and/or almost killed earlier in the session.
- +1d6 or +2 if your best friend got killed.
- +1d6 or +2 if your love interest got either kidnapped or sacrificed.

REFLECTION

Once per session, a character can reflect upon his life and the situation at hand. Reflection is sort of like prayer, meditation, embracing the magical forces all around us, and stirring up the will in preparation for battle.

Characters who take the time to roleplay their moment of reflection either gain advantage on a pivotal roll occurring within the next hour, or they can choose to replenish their vitality with an additional 1d6 of Health/level.

THE SWARM

Let's say the PCs stumble upon a nest of some loathsome, winged vermin... and there's a shit load of them. For the sake of argument, let's also say that even a fast-paced battle will take about 45 minutes, there's only an hour left of game time (maybe less!) and the last three rooms have yet to be explored. Those final chambers are the "good ones," the really interesting encounters you worked super hard on and really wanted to showcase.

If this adventure was a one-shot and the PCs want to fight the swarm because of one reason or another, there goes your awesome ending down the dungeon latrine. The previous example may never happen to you, but nevertheless you may want to hand-wave large scale combat.

The following chart will help determine the battle's outcome. Assume the enemy is eventually vanquished, but at what cost? Have every PC and NPC in the adventuring party roll a d12 to see how they fared. If the PCs are either outnumbered or outgunned, have each of them roll a d10 (instead of a d12). If the PCs are both outnumbered and outgunned, have them each roll a d8.

After that, roll a d4 for the entire side in order to determine how many resources were expended.

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | You die! |
| 2 | Save or die! |
| 3 | You're knocked unconscious. |
| 4 | You're knocked unconscious. |
| 5 | You're dwindling at single-digit Health/HP. |
| 6 | You've sustained moderate wounds (subtract Xd6 Health/HP, where X equals PC's level). |
| 7 | You've sustained a few superficial wounds (-1d6). |
| 8 | You remain unscathed. |
| 9 | You remain unscathed. |
| 10 | You remain unscathed. |
| 11 | You remain unscathed. |
| 12 | Invigorated by the battle, you drink deeply of this glorious victory! (+1d6 to your Health). |

RESOURCE EXPENDITURE

| Roll | Result |
|------|--|
| 1 | Approximately 50% of your resources were expended. |
| 2 | Approximately 25% of your resources were expended. |
| 3 | Approximately 10% of your resources were expended. |
| 4 | None of your resources were expended. |

At the end of the session, determine the "favorite" quote of the day. Whoever said it gets a 10% experience point bonus. Favorite is subjective, of course, so whatever the group thinks is the funniest, coolest, or most appropriate line spoken during the game is the winner. All runners-up should be awarded with a 5% XP bonus.

DESCRIBING YOUR ATTACK

Players like getting the upper hand. GMs like it when players put forth the effort, assisting with the shared storytelling that is the roleplaying game experience. I believe the following will satisfy both parties...

When players take the time to fully describe their character's attack, they get advantage. Such as, "Since he's so big, I tumble towards his left flank into a crouch-position, attempting to slice his foot off at the ankle with my bastard sword."

It can't be, "I hit it with the pointy end of my sword." Similarly, the player can't say the exact same words over and over again in order to get the bonus. These have to be original maneuvers that are particular to the character, environment, and circumstances, narrated by the player. For instance, what's he wielding and how is he wielding it?

What's the terrain like? Is this creature from the lightless underworld? Did the GM mentioned the dragon's long neck - what about chopping that off?

Sound like you're giving advantage away too easily? Here are a few solutions... Just pick one!

- Give the player's description a 3 in 6 chance of gaining advantage. That means for every combat embellishment your players utter, there's only a 33% chance of receiving the substantial mechanical benefit. Remember when I wrote about the power of intermittent rewards in *How to Game Master Like A Fucking Boss?* Well, this is an example of that.
- Limit this to once per combat per character.
- Limit this to once per day per level (a 3rd level character can do this 3 times a day, 4th level character 4 times, etc).





CHARACTER

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There are a lot of RPG players - way more than Game Masters. So, it was high time that I wrote a little something for those on the other side of the screen. A while ago, I came out with a short PDF called *Play Your Character like a Fucking Boss*. It was a follow-up to the wildly successful *How to Game Master like a Fucking Boss*.

This is a fun list of possible character actions, words, and accomplishments in order to gauge your raw quotient of awesome in a given adventure. When you've done, said, or experienced an item on the list, simply put a checkmark by it. After the scenario has ended (assuming a 3 - 5 hour session), total up the point values next to each item and see how you did.

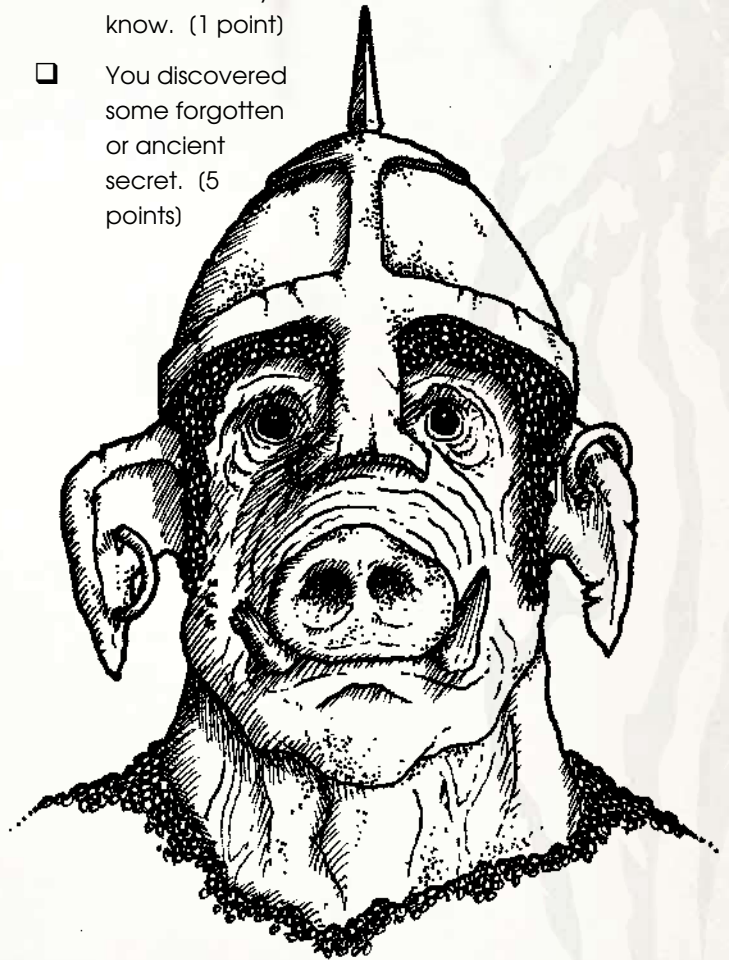
Lesser refers to someone of the same or lower level/HD than the PC. Greater refers to someone of a higher level/HD than the PC.

Generous GMs will allow players to multiply their total point value by 10, multiply that number by the character's level, and use that as additional experience points. Stingy GMs will only allow the point value to be multiplied by the character's level in order to calculate XP bonuses.

PLAYER-CHARACTER CHECKLIST

- Took down an opponent with the party's assistance. (1 point)
- Took down an opponent single-handed. (3 points)
- Took down an arch-nemesis with the party's assistance. (5 points)
- Took down an arch-nemesis single-handed. (10 points)
- Got in a surprise attack. (1 point)
- Successfully made a called-shot. (2 points)
- Killed an opponent with a surprise attack. (4 points)
- Sneaked around, hid, or did something stealthy without being seen. (2 points)
- Obtained a powerful and coveted item. (7 points)
- Obtained an item of limited power that at least one other person desires. (2 points)
- Negotiated with an NPC using either diplomacy or intimidation. (3 points)
- Tricked a PC into doing something he otherwise wouldn't do. (4 points)
- Tricked an NPC into doing something he otherwise wouldn't do. (2 points)
- Showed off with impressive maneuver during combat. (3 points for a new maneuver, but only 1 point if we've seen it before)
- Rolled a critical success. (3 points)
- Rolled a critical failure. (1 point)
- Invented a small detail during play. (2 points)
- Creatively dealt with a situation. (1 point)
- Stole something minor (like a pouch full of gold coins). (3 points)
- Stole something major (like a starship). (8 points)
- Slayed a legendary beast, creature, or entity. (12 points)
- Sampled the local cuisine. (1 point)
- Freed people from slavery, servitude, or bondage. (2 points per character)
- Helped one or more NPCs out of a jam. (5 points)
- Shamelessly flirted with an NPC. (3 points)
- Had sex. (3 points)
- Had out-of-the-ordinary sex (like a threesome or something involving a space princess with tentacles and several gallons of Purple Prizm jello). (7 points)
- Solved a puzzle, riddle, or mystery. (2 points)
- Didn't take any sass from a lesser NPC. (1 point)
- Didn't take any sass from a greater NPC. (3 points)

- Researched, studied, and/or experimented with some kind of magic, technology, or supernatural agency. (4 points)
- You were unbelievably courageous, valorous, or brave. (5 points)
- Said or did something that made one or more PCs laugh. (3 points)
- Said or did something that made one or more NPCs laugh. (2 points)
- Humiliated a lesser enemy. (1 point)
- Humiliated a greater enemy. (3 points)
- Played a practical joke. (1 point per NPC; 3 points per PC)
- Tortured, mutilated, or brutalized an enemy. (2 points)
- Made some kind of prayer, sacrament, or religious offering. (3 points)
- Caroused at a local tavern, bar, nightclub, etc. (4 points)
- Embellished the atrocities of battle. (1 point)
- Explored an area that hasn't been seen by the eyes of man for a thousand years. (3 points)
- Went temporarily insane. (2 points)
- Killed a member of the party on purpose. (4 points per PC)
- Killed a member of the party on accident. (1 point per PC)
- Got a member of the party killed on purpose. (2 points per PC)
- Got a member of the party killed on accident. (1 point per PC)
- Betrayed the party's trust. (2 points per PC, but make it a negative value if it ended in PC death)
- Found something out about your past. (1 point)
- Incurred a new debt. (1 point)
- Paid back a debt that you owed. (3 points)
- One or more NPCs start worshipping you. (1 point / worshiper)
- Engaged in a high-speed chase. (3 points)
- You used some crazy mode of transportation (like riding on the back of a dragon or rocketing to the nearest moon using a jetpack). (3 points)
- You learned something that not many know. (1 point)
- You discovered some forgotten or ancient secret. (5 points)



‘Your family was slaughtered by pig-faced orcs raiding the borderlands while you were miles away, tending to the sheep.’

- Desecrated an enemy god's temple, shrine, or holy place. (3 points)
- You observed some culturally significant practice. (2 points)
- Escaped from some highly dangerous location or environment. (5 points)
- Choosing not to hide, flee, or surrender in the face of certain death. (9 points)
- Eating a new species of sentient creature. (2 points)
- Doing research. (1 point)
- Successfully creating a new spell or magic item. (4 points)
- Learning a new language. (3 points)
- You made your saving throw. (1 point)
- You failed your saving throw. (2 points)
- You got knocked unconscious. (1 point)
- You died like a miserable coward. (-4 points)
- You died with a modicum of dignity and grace. (2 points)
- You died a hero's death. (5 points)
- You were resurrected. (3 points)
- Not whining, bitching, or complaining when something incredibly bad happens to you. (2 points)
- Doing something especially nice for the poor, feeble, or downtrodden. (2 points)
- Coin a new word or phrase or name something. (1 point)
- Wiped out an entire faction or settlement (at least 15 people). (5 points)
- Befriended an animal, machine, or benign creature. (2 points, but you get an additional 3 points if it willingly travels with you)
- Come up with your own unique way of doing things based upon your class, race, cultural background, and recent experiences. (2 points)
- Inventing a personal quirk, mannerism, saying, or idiosyncrasy. (2 points)
- Writing and performing a song, ballad, or epic poem. (10 points)
- Disarming or avoiding a trap. (3 points)
- Succumbing to a trap or poison. (1 point)
- Attuning a new magic item. (2 points)
- As a player, you pointed out an obscure rule that improved the game. (3 points)
- As a player, you pointed out an unnecessary and tiresome rule that made the game less fun. (-3 points)
- As a player, you were involved in a heated argument that almost broke out into physical violence. (-5 points)
- As a player, you brought snacks, beverages, or refreshments of some kind. (2 points)
- As a player, you ate more than 2 slices of pizza without paying. (-1 point per slice eaten)
- As a player, your phone or device went off (and it wasn't an emergency). (-2 points per occurrence)

CALCULATING VALUES OF AWESOME

1 - 9 points: You did the bare minimum... perhaps you were asleep for most of the adventure?

10 - 19 points: You barely made a dent in the world. Were you playing Bunnies & Burrows on safe-mode?

20 - 31 points: You accomplished a few things and made your mark upon the world. Good job.

32 - 49 points: Holy shit, dude! You owned this game!

50+ points: There is none greater!!!

CREDITS

Player's Handbook Like A Fucking Boss created by Venger As'Nas Satanis, © 2017

Layout by Glynn Seal of MonkeyBlood Design

Cover Art by Lucas Graciano

Interior Art by Bojan Sucevic, Fuzz Big, Denis McCarthy, Zaron, Glynn Seal,
and Richard Luong (Tentacles and Teeth),

Proofread by Martin Teply

Special Thanks to everyone who offered suggestions, enthusiasm, and positivity!

Visit my RPG websites:

<http://vengersatanis.blogspot.com/> and

<http://draconicmagazine.com/>

If you enjoyed this PDF, check out
Crimson Dragon Slayer,
Alpha Blue,
The Outer Presence,
Blood Dark Thirst,
Gamma Turquoise: Santa Fe Starport,
Trinity of Awesome +1,
Trinity of Awesome Returns +1,
Play Your Character Like A Fucking Boss, and
Adventure Writing Like A Fucking Boss.

