



# The Pirates of Dark Water Role-playing Game

by Vin Diakuw



## Publishing and Copyright

1. This Pirates of Dark Water Role-playing Game is © Vincent Diakuw 2002.
2. This game was written for and is dedicated to Molly and Matthew.
3. This text of this role-playing game was developed by Vincent Diakuw to introduce young people to role-playing games through the animated TV show The Pirates of Dark Water.
4. This work is offered free of charge to all interested parties and is not to be sold in any form.
5. The Pirates of Dark Water is © 1991-1992 Hanna-Barbera/Warner Bros.
6. Vincent Diakuw is not affiliated with Hanna-Barbera/Warner Bros.
7. This work was not authorized by Hanna-Barbera/Warner Bros and makes no challenge to their intellectual property. All images in this document are the property of Hanna-Barbera/Warner Bros and are used without permission. Most were acquired from <http://www.ecomancer.net/podw/index.html>.
8. If you have any questions or comments please contact me at [vin\\_diakuw@fastmail.fm](mailto:vin_diakuw@fastmail.fm).

**"Always the quest!"**



# Table of Contents

**PUBLISHING AND COPYRIGHT .....2**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS .....3**

**INTRODUCTION .....4**

    WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME? .....5

    WHAT IS A CHARACTER? .....5

    ROLLING THE DICE .....5

    TESTS .....5

    SUMMARY .....8

**CHARACTERS .....9**

    BACKGROUND .....9

    ATTRIBUTES .....11

    TALENTS .....11

    GIFTS .....12

    COMPLICATIONS .....14

**CHARACTER SHEETS .....15**

    PRINCE REN .....15

    NIDDLER .....16

    IOZ .....17

    TULA .....18

    BLOTH .....19

    MANTUS .....20

    KONK .....21

    ZOLIE .....22

**APPENDIX ONE: OTHER GIFTS.....23**

**APPENDIX TWO: OTHER COMPLICATIONS .....24**

**APPENDIX THREE: OTHER TALENTS.....25**

**APPENDIX FOUR: GETTING INTO CHARACTER.....26**

**APPENDIX FIVE: WHIMSY CARDS.....27**

**SOURCES .....30**



## Introduction

Thirteen Treasures of ancient time,  
thirteen lessons of Rul in rhyme.  
To find the jewels in secret places,  
follow where the compass faces.  
If returned from the shore beyond,  
a new day dawns for Octopon.  
But if they fall into evil hands,  
darkness descends on all the lands.

For these riches, two shall vie  
in the realm of dark water where the treasures lie.

-The glyphs of Galdebar, Epsiode 1 "The Quest"

"The alien world of Mer is being devoured by dark water. Only Ren, a young prince, can stop it - by finding the lost thirteen treasures of rule. At his side is an unlikely, but loyal, crew of misfits. At his back, the evil pirate lord Bloth, who will stop at nothing to get the treasures for himself. It's high adventure with the Pirates of Dark Water."

-Opening narration "The Pirates of Dark Water: The Saga Begins"



**Dark Water devours an island**

**The Pirates of Dark Water Role-playing Game**

**2002**



## What is a role-playing game?

A role-playing game is a game of pretending. It needs at least two people. One person is the **Guide**. The Guide makes up an interesting or exciting situation. For example, such a situation might be “A ship sails into a severe storm and is in danger.” Each other person in the group is a **Storyteller**. A Storyteller describes how an imaginary **character** responds to the situation created by the Guide. For example, Molly might say “Prince Ren climbs below decks to make sure the ship isn’t sinking.” Matthew might say “Toz puts away his sword and tries to steer the ship away from the storm.”

The game proceeds, with the Guide describing what is happening and the Storytellers saying what their characters do. The Guide and Storytellers will play through a number of interesting situations, building them into an amazing story. An afternoon or evening of play is called a **session**.

## What is a Character?

A character is the imaginary person that experiences the events described by the Guide. Each Storyteller is in charge of a single character, and gets to decide what the character thinks, says, and does. Sometimes the Storyteller wants her character to do something simple like start a camp fire, or climb a hill to survey the island. These kinds of things are quite simple and happen just as you describe them. If Storyteller wants her character to do something difficult or dangerous, you must roll dice to see if you succeed.

## Rolling the Dice

The Pirates of Dark Water Role-playing Game uses ordinary six-sided dice, such as are used in Monopoly™, Yahtzee™, and virtually every other family game you might have played. When you throw the dice you are only interested in the highest value that is showing. If the highest you rolled is a **4**, **5**, or **6** then you succeed.

*Let us say that you roll three dice and the numbers are a 2, a 4, and a 6. This would mean you had succeeded.*

## Tests

A test occurs whenever you want your character to do something difficult or dangerous. The Storytellers decide what their characters will do, but the Guide decides if dice need to be rolled. If you roll at least **4**, you get to describe the task being completed successfully.

For example, a young boy has stolen a pouch of pearls that Prince Ren was going to trade for food and supplies for the Wraith. Molly wants Prince Ren to search the marketplace to find the thief. The Guide thinks that finding a small boy hiding in a crowded market would be a test of Prince Ren’s observation and intelligence. He says Molly must test against **Insight**. Molly takes one die and rolls a **5**! She says “Prince Ren walks slowly through the market, carefully looking into likely hiding places. He spots the boy hiding crouched behind an apple cart and decides to try to sneak up on him and catch him by surprise.”

The Guide tells Molly to test Prince Ren’s **Daring**. Molly rolls a **2**. Oops! She must now describe the failure. She says “Prince Ren tries to sneak up on the boy, but is



paying such close attention to him that he doesn't notice that his sword has snagged a merchant's long robe. Just as Ren reaches the thief he is jerked off his feet by the robe and sprawls in the mud, knocking over the apple cart! The thief runs away and Ren is left to face the owner of the apple cart and the angry merchant."

Sometimes you might get a bonus or penalty to the result of your roll. The Guide might grant a **bonus** of +1 to your result for a significant advantage you have. Similarly you might have a -1 result **penalty** if you suffer a significant disadvantage. You might also have a bonus or penalty due to a Talent or Complication.

**Bonuses and penalties can cancel each other, but no matter what the situation never modify a roll by more than 1 point!**

For example, if Prince Ren were hunting for the boy in the market and had used his **Charm** attribute to get two City Guardsmen to help him, the Guide might grant a bonus to the roll, because the extra people looking would make finding the boy easier. If Molly rolled a **3** it would be counted as a **4**.

- ☉ If a penalty reduces your roll to **0** you lose a Quest Point. If you do not have a Quest Point to pay you cannot use that attribute for the rest of the session!
- ☉ If a bonus raises your result to **7**, you gain a Quest Point!

## Quest Points

If you have any Quest Points you can spend some before you roll. Each Quest Point allows you to roll **one** extra die. You use the highest die as your result. This means that if you spend 2 Quest Points you roll 3 dice.

You gain Quest points three ways.

1. If you are using your highest ranked attribute and roll a **6** on the die you gain 1 Quest Point.
2. If you roll **7** on a test you get 1 Quest Point.
3. At the end of the session the Guide will give you 1, 2 or 3 Quest Points depending on how exciting your adventures were.

You lose Quest Points three ways.

1. If you are using your lowest ranked attribute and you roll a **1** you lose 1 Quest Point.
2. If you roll **0** on a test you lose 1 Quest Point.
3. If your character dies you may restore it to life by spending all of your remaining Quest Points. The Guide decides how you were saved.

Keep track of your Quest Points on your character sheet. You might want to use pennies or poker chips during the session, because Quest Points change frequently.

**You can never gain or lose Quest Points on a roll if you spent Quest Points to get extra dice!**



## Opposed Rolls

Sometimes it is more appropriate to have another character test his attribute against yours. For example, let us say that Ioz and Zoolie are arguing about who is stronger. Matthew is in charge of Ioz and James is in charge of Zoolie. Matthew and James decide that an arm wrestling match will decide who is stronger. Who should roll and what kinds of bonuses and penalties might apply?

In this case, the Guide should let **both** Matthew and James roll **Vitality** dice for their characters. Whoever gets the highest die showing would win, even if it was not higher than **3**.

If there is a tie, the character that has the attribute ranked **highest** wins. If both characters ranked the attribute equally the character who initiated the contest loses. So if it James and Matthew both rolled a **5** for their highest die, Zoolie would win because his Vitality is ranked higher than Ioz'. James would describe the arm wrestling match in an interesting and amusing way, ending with Zoolie winning.



## Summary

### Choose or create a character

1. Choose one of the characters from the TV show **or**
2. Create a character, name and background that fit into the realm of Dark Water.
3. Place the four Attributes in order starting with the one that is most important to the character and ending with the one that is least important.
4. Choose a Talent or create one of your own.
5. Choose a Gift or create one of your own.
6. Choose a Complication or create one of your own.
7. Record Quest Points. Brand new characters have 1 point. Characters carry over their Quest Points from previous sessions. Storyteller characters never have more than 6 Quest Points.

### Sequence of Play

1. The Guide describes the situation and events. The Storyteller describes the response of his character to what is happening. This goes back and forth until the Guide decides something is in doubt.
2. The Guide picks an Attribute and the Storyteller rolls a die, or several dice if she spends Quest points. If the highest die is equal to or greater than **4**, the character succeeds. Otherwise she fails. Use the following chart to see how successful she was:

<b>Roll</b>	<b>Result</b>
0 or 1	Ouch! Not only did the action fail, but things take a turn for the worse.
2 or 3	The action fails, but otherwise nothing special happens.
4 or 5	The action succeeds, but it isn't especially impressive.
6 or 7	Wow! Not only did the action succeed, but it has extra beneficial effects.

3. The Storyteller describes what happened to the character. Storytellers should consider what they said the character was doing, as well as what would be exciting, fun, and interesting to have happen. The Guide may make suggestions to keep the description consistent with the roll.





## Characters

Characters are composed of background, Attributes, talents, gifts, and complications. Not every character has gifts or complications, but all have a background, Attributes and talents.

### **Background**

The background of the character is what he or she really is. Try to make the background interesting. Here are some things to consider when making up a new character.

1. An important part of your character is what he does in **daily life**. Here are some suggestions to get you started.

- Ⓢ Prince
- Ⓢ City guardsman
- Ⓢ Wandering Guide
- Ⓢ Aged scholar
- Ⓢ Enthusiastic apprentice
- Ⓢ Pirate raider
- Ⓢ Island hermit
- Ⓢ Runaway slave
- Ⓢ Crafty merchant
- Ⓢ Travelling healer
- Ⓢ Alchemist.

2. Your character's background might include where she is from. The following places make good **homelands**.

- Ⓢ Jundatown - a cesspool of vice and danger.
- Ⓢ Octopon - the ruined kingdom of Prince Ren.
- Ⓢ Pandowa - island of the monkey-birds.
- Ⓢ Or you can make up your own. There are hundreds of island kingdoms on Mer.

3. Part of a character's background is her **family situation**. Jot down a few notes about your character's mother and father. What about brothers and sisters? In what kind of place did she grow up and why did she leave?

4. Your character will certainly have **strong feelings** about many things in the realm of Dark Water. What does she know about, and how does she feel about, the following?

- Ⓢ Piracy in general
- Ⓢ Lord Bloth in particular
- Ⓢ The Thirteen Treasures of Rul
- Ⓢ Ecomancers
- Ⓢ Slavery
- Ⓢ Life aboard ship
- Ⓢ Beggars
- Ⓢ War
- Ⓢ Ghosts
- Ⓢ Leviathans



5. Your character will need a **name**. Sometimes coming up with names that sound exotic without seeming silly can be tough. Here is a selection of names from the television series.

Try altering one to suit your taste. For example, you could change Konk to Kronk, Jargus to Jarga, or combine Teron and Orbik into Terbik.

- Ⓢ Alomar
- Ⓢ Dhelo
- Ⓢ Jargus
- Ⓢ Jenna
- Ⓢ Keron
- Ⓢ Konk
- Ⓢ Kray
- Ⓢ Mantus
- Ⓢ Onda
- Ⓢ Orbik
- Ⓢ Teron
- Ⓢ Tula



## Attributes

Attributes describe how able your character is to do certain types of things. The attributes are Vitality, Insight, Daring, and Charm. When designing a character you list the four attributes in order from most important to least important.

### Vitality

Vitality is an overall measure of the power and toughness of the character. Feats of strength such as bashing down a door, lifting a heavy iron gate, or pushing your way through an angry crowd are all tested against Vitality.

Vitality is the also ability to resist forces that act on the character's body. Use Vitality to resist sleeping gas, swim through icy water, or maintain a vigil through the night.

*List Ren, Ioz, and Tula in order from highest Vitality to lowest. Does your list look something like this one?*

- q Ioz
- q Ren
- q Tula

### Insight

Insight is the perceptiveness, creativity and intelligence of the character. It includes her understanding of how things are connected. Insight tests are used to predict an opponent's next move, create a work of art, or notice a concealed passageway. Tasks such as remembering an obscure fact, deciphering ancient writings, or finding your way through a maze are also tested against Insight.

*List Ren, Ioz, and Tula in order from highest Insight to lowest. Does your list look something like this one?*

- q Tula
- q Ioz

q Ren

### Daring

Daring is the grace, speed, and precision with which the character can move her body. Daring governs tests such as firing a bow, dancing at a tavern, or leaping over a dangerous pit.

*List Ren, Ioz, and Tula in order from highest Daring to lowest. Does your list look something like this one?*

- q Ren
- q Tula
- q Ioz

### Charm

Charm is the ability of the character to control a social situation. Charm measures animal magnetism, sense of humor, and sincerity, among many qualities. Use Charm to talk your way past a guard, get the best price on a new cloak at the market, or convince the king that you should be in charge of the rescue mission.

*List Ren, Ioz, and Tula in order from highest Charm to lowest. Does your list look something like this one?*

- q Tula
- q Ren
- q Ioz

## Talents

Talents are skills or aptitudes that give a character a bonus to some tests. Each Talent grants a bonus of +1 to the outcome of your roll. As you read the following three Talents, try to decide whether Ren, Ioz, or Tula would possess it.



## Gifts

### Seafaring

The character has a keen understanding of the weather, conditions at sea, and sailing. He gains a bonus on any action taken aboard ship or in the sea. Such actions include navigation, swimming, climbing in the ship's rigging, and fighting on the deck.

### Manipulation

The character has some combination of smooth talk and insight into human nature that allows her to convince people to go along with what she wants. She gains a bonus to any action where she is trying to convince someone to do something for her. Such actions include haggling for a good price, convincing someone to betray a trust, or getting someone to let down their guard.

### Athletic

The character possesses a mix of flexibility, strength, and balance that allows him to perform great feats of acrobatics and agility. He gains a bonus die on any athletic action. Examples include climbing a wall, swimming, or running through a crowd. This bonus never applies to fighting, but it may be used to escape from a fight.



The Wraith on a blood-dark sea...

Gifts are special properties that characters have that give them an advantage under certain situations. Here are three Gifts, one for each of the main human characters from the *Pirates of Dark Water: The Saga Begins*. See if you can decide which gift belongs to Ren, which to Ioz, and which to Tula.

### Reputation

A character with a reputation is known across the world for certain attitudes and behaviors. The reputation may be positive or negative. A reputation affects Charm tests where the people involved know the identity of the character. A character with the Reputation Gift can expect respect and hospitality any time he reveals his identity. Of course, people have to believe that he is who he says he is. If a test is required it is against **Charm**.

*Which of the characters from the show has a reputation attached to him? Is it a good reputation or a bad one?*



## Magic

The character can create a magical effect such as causing vines to rise up and entangle a creature, suck the wind out of a ship's sails, or cause a small group of people to become temporarily invisible. If a test is required it is against **Insight**. Using Magic is tiring. Every time you use it you must make a Vitality test. If you have cast **2** or more spells today you suffer a -1 penalty. If you fail the Vitality test the spell works, but your character becomes very tired and must rest for at least a day.

*Can any of the characters use magical powers? Which one?*



Ecomancy soothes the savage beasts...

## Contacts

The character has a friend or business associate in every port. He can always find someone to provide information or assistance if he looks hard enough. If a test is required it is against **Charm**.

*One of the characters seems to run into friends or enemies everywhere that he goes. Do you know which character it is?*



## Complications

Complications are elements of a character's personality or background that can make his or her life... complicated. Here are some Complications. Each character from the show suffers from at least one complication. Try to match Tula, Ren, and Ioz to their complication.

### Code of Honor

The character is governed by a strict moral code. He will never break his word, cheat, or steal. Characters that violate their Code of Honor have a -1 penalty on any **Charm** tests until they have atoned for their actions.

*Which character has a Code of Honor? How does this make his or her life complicated?*

### Treasure Hungry

The character will do anything to obtain treasure, and is always willing to take a chance to steal from a stranger. She respects no law other than friendship and has a habit of burning her bridges behind her. The character must make an **Insight** test to avoid succumbing to the temptation to steal whenever confronted by treasure. The Storyteller can choose to spend a Quest

Point instead of rolling, but she must say so before she rolls.

A really big treasure might call for a penalty on the **Insight** test. If it does, you must spend **two** Quest points to avoid the test.

*The quest for the Thirteen Treasures of Rul is about saving Mer from the Dark Water. Which one of the characters is more interested in obtaining treasure for selfish reasons?*

### Curiosity

The character is full of wanderlust and the adventurous spirit. She must make an **Insight** test to resist the impulse to take off for parts unknown, explore the hazardous ruins, and generally snoop around. Curious characters are always getting in over their heads. The Storyteller can choose to spend a Quest Point instead of rolling, but she must say so before she rolls.

A really exciting mystery might call for a penalty on the **Insight** test. If it does, you must spend **two** Quest points to avoid the test.

*Which character do you think is more interested in exciting adventures than saving Mer?*

## Character Sheets

### *Prince Ren*



Daring  
Charm  
Vitality  
Insight

Talent: Athletic  
Gifts: Reputation (Prince of Octopon)  
Complication: Code of Honor  
Gear: Compass of Rul, Saber

Ren is an orphan who begins the series unaware of his heritage. When fate thrusts him into the search for the scattered Treasures of Rul, he takes over his father's role as leader with pride.

Ren is a young man of action, honesty, and integrity.

Ren is only 17 years old, but his youthful exuberance and natural charm serve him well, even when his inexperience shines through.



## **Niddler**



Insight

Vitality

Charm

Daring

Talents:           Dialects

Gift:               Flight

Complications: Insatiable (food), Cowardly

Gear:               none

Niddler is a monkey-bird, a race of winged humanoids native to the island of Pandowa. He is a rather unwilling adventurer, and values food, shelter, and a place to sleep more than any treasure. He is quite immature and child-like. Having escaped slavery on his native island, he immediately fell in with Bloth's pirates. Because of this he is not a very social creature, and has no trust in anyone but his closest friends.

Niddler is a good friend to Prince Ren and has rescued him from many situations using his Gift of Flight. He will risk his life for Ren, Tula or Ioz but may need time to talk himself into it.



## Ioz



Daring

Vitality

Charm

Insight

Talent: Seafaring

Gifts: Contacts (mercenary past)

Complication: Treasure Hungry

Gear: Cutlass

Ioz is a loner and a mercenary. Although he will go to great lengths to fill his pockets with gold, he values loyalty and friendship far more. You will never hear him admit to it though.

He is weathered and brave, and served under Bloth for a time. He saw many battles and sacked more than one ship during his brief stint aboard the Maelstrom.

Ioz has friends and enemies in every port. Sometimes it can be hard to tell which is which!

## Tula



Insight

Charm

Vitality

Daring

Talent: Manipulation  
Gift: Magic (Ecomancer)  
Complication: Curiosity  
Gear: Cutlass

Tula was a young tavern wench when she heard Ren and Ioz talking of treasure and adventure. She stowed-away aboard the Wraith. Although she was an unwelcome guest, she has many times proven her worth on the quest.

Tula is a natural warrior and an Ecomancer – a druid like magician who draws on the living planet of Mer. She can become one with the elements and command them through mental discipline.

Tula can do any number of feats of Ecomancy, but here are some that she has used in the past.

### **Calm Beast**

Apply a penalty of 1 die for a group of beasts, and 1 die if any of the beasts are magical. The beasts become calm and unafraid and remain that way as long as Tula is present.

### **Sense Energies**

Apply a penalty of 1 die for ghostly energies, and 2 dice for energies that someone has tried to conceal. Tula can determine the source of the energy and its general purpose (protects, harms, kills, conceals, or whatever.)

### **Tame Beast**

Calm beasts may be temporarily tamed. Apply a penalty of 1 die for magical beasts. Only one beast may be tamed at a time. The beast remains tame and obedient to Tula for the duration of a single task or a single day, whichever is shorter.

## **Bloth**

**NOTE: Bloth is not intended for a Storyteller to play. Bloth is meant to be a Guide character, and is the main antagonist for the players.**



Vitality

Daring

Insight

Charm

Talents: Fighting, Manipulation

Gifts: Monstrous Vitality

Complication: Hideous Appearance (ogre-like)

Gear: Sabre

Bloth is a vicious and greedy pirate. He will stop at nothing to rule the seas of Mer with an iron fist. Once he discovered the legend of the Thirteen Treasures of Rul he vowed to control them.

With his bloodthirsty crew and indestructible ship, Bloth will destroy anything and anyone who stands in his way. During the course of his quest he imprisoned King Primus and brought about the fall of Octopon.

Bloth rules through fear and intimidation. Although he is a cunning strategist and manipulator he prefers actions to words. More than one stubborn crewman has found himself thrown to the Constrictus by this temperamental pirate.

## **Mantus**

Vitality

Daring

Insight

Charm

Talent: Gambling  
Gifts: Jumping and Climbing  
Complication: Hideous Appearance (insectoid)  
Gear: Cutlass

Mantus is the chief strategist for Bloth. He is always cool in battle. Mantus knows that knowledge is power. He always seeks to understand his enemies so he can use their own weaknesses against them.

Mantus is tall and thin, but his elongated limbs conceal the strength of steel beams. Is quite capable in a fight and uses his Gift of Jumping and Climbing to surprise his foes.

Mantus enjoys gambling. Since he is the paymaster of Bloth's crew he is always ready and able to snare the pirates in a wager that keeps them in debt to he and Bloth for another voyage.

## Konk



Vitality

Daring

Charm

Insight

Talent: Seafaring

Gifts: Escape

Complication: Small

Gear: Cutlass

Konk is a peg-legged pirate who carries out missions for Bloth on the many islands of Mer. There is nothing Konk will not do to serve his captain. Some say his belly has more dirt than his boots.

Konk is more talk than action. Although he is constantly bragging about his exploits, he generally has to lie to cover up his many mistakes.

Konk is generally accompanied by two very stupid thugs who carry him when he has to run away or swim. These dolts are incapable of thinking for themselves, but are still dangerous if they get their hands on you!

## Zoolie



Daring

Vitality

Charm

Insight

Talent: Fighting  
Gifts: Lucky Pockets  
Complication: Dependent (his tavern)  
Gear: varies

Zoolie is a hulking red-haired warrior whose belly alone is more massive than many of his opponents. He has a ready laugh and a keen eye.

Zoolie keeps a combination tavern and gambling house in Janda Town. That he can stay in business in this city of thieves and brigands tells us much. Zoolie was once a pirate on the Maelstrom. He is an accomplished warrior who enjoys a good brawl. In fact, if Zoolie isn't outnumbered he doesn't consider it a fair fight.

Zoolie met and befriended Ioz when they were both serving under Bloth. Zoolie is even less scrupulous than Ioz, but will go anywhere and challenge anyone to help his friend.

## Appendix One: Other Gifts

### Escape

The character can automatically escape from bonds, locked rooms, and being pinned under things. If someone is holding you this gift will not work.

### Flight

The character can fly. He can carry all of his possessions, plus anything he could normally carry in both arms while walking. Flight is about twice as fast as running. All monkey-birds possess this Gift.

### Jumping or Climbing

The character can make great leaps. The character can easily jump ten times his height horizontally, or three times his height vertically. A character 6 feet tall could spring forward 60 feet or jump to the roof of a building 18 feet (2 stories) high.

or

The character can climb like a spider. She never needs to make a test to climb unless the surface is so tough that a normal person would find it impossible. For example, the character could automatically climb a smooth tree, but would have to roll to climb a glass wall or a greased pole.

### Lucky Pockets

The character always seems to have just the item needed for any situation. If the item is fairly normal, like a rope or a piece of chalk, no roll is needed. For obscure or expensive items a test might be needed. If the item is too big to fit into a knapsack, it cannot be acquired with Lucky Pockets. Lucky Pockets can never contain valuables like coins, magical items, precious gems, or items that are unique (like a specific painting). If the item leaves your possession it will become permanently lost or broken at the first opportunity.

### Monstrous Vitality

The character is much stronger than a normal person. It can automatically succeed at Vitality tests that a normal person could roll, and only needs to roll for tasks that no normal person could ever do. For example, the character can automatically smash down a door. The player would have to roll to have the character lift a cart over his head. A character without Monstrous Vitality could never lift a cart over his head.

## Appendix Two: Other Complications

### Cowardly

The character has an unusual fear of danger. While he may be motivated to heroism by the plight of friends, when it comes to his own skin he runs first and asks questions later. Characters that are cowardly must make an **Insight** test to remain in a dangerous situation. A small benefit is that the character gets a +1 bonus to any action that helps him escape immediate danger.

### Dependent

The character has a person or place that is dependent on her for survival. This dependent will require the attention of the character at least once per game and may cost a great deal of money and effort.

### Horrible Appearance

The character is hideous and frightening. He suffers a penalty on any **Charm** test where a pleasant appearance is a factor. He gains a to any attempts to frighten or intimidate someone.

### Small

The character is about half the size of the average person. She will need weapons and vehicles specially designed for her, and will find it difficult to reach things that other people take for granted. Some people may not take her seriously. Small characters move half as fast as average sized ones.



## **Appendix Three: Other Talents**

### **Dialects**

The character has a gift for tongues. She can use her Insight to understand the gist of any conversation, even in an obscure language or code. The level of understanding depends on the result of the Insight test.

### **Fighting**

The character has training in hand to hand combat and may have a killer instinct. He gets a bonus to any task involving combat. Such tasks include dueling, wrestling, and martial arts.

### **Gambling**

The character has great skill with games of chance, and with estimating odds. If the character can place a bet on the outcome of a contest, the person on whom she bets receives a free surge on her roll. Also the character only loses half as much as she bet when she loses, but receives the full amount if she wins.

## Appendix Four: Getting Into Character

Basing the behavior of your character on an animal is an easy and fun way to move away from the idea of your characters as just “you in a funny suit.” James V West says “it’s about wearing a mask. Animals have an innocent and natural manner that is easy to understand. Children are drawn to animals for that reason.” His role-playing game ‘The Questing Beast’ is a model of brave new storytelling, and I encourage you to check it out at <http://www.randomordercreations.com/tqb.html>.

Here is the table given by West. Choose an animal to represent the nature of your character and keep that animal firmly in your mind’s eye when deciding how the character will react to various situations.

Antelope/Deer-	moon, fleet, sleek, graceful, love, kindness, hunted
Bandicoot-	small, familial, humble, quick
Bat-	dark, blind, fast, mysterious, wickedness, revenge
Bear-	strong, serene, earthy, wisdom, patience, instinct, big
Boar-	quest, fertility, gluttony, lust, mystic
Bull-	potency, lust, strength, destruction, force, leadership
Cat-	nimble, sly, aloof, sensual, stealthy, free, clever, curious
Cheetah-	speed, power, grace, hunter, freedom
Coyote-	prankster, transformation, insight, cunning
Crocodile/Alligator-	adaptable, cunning, deceptive, sly, consumer, earth, water
Crow-	messenger, death, mystic, magic, fear,
Dog-	loyal, brave, true, lust, gluttony, hunter, guide, protection, boundaries
Elephant-	fidelity, patience, wisdom, intelligence, power, memory.
Fox-	sly, sleek, mystic, wit, taste, manners, sensual
Frog-	water, power, squander, healing
Goat/Ram-	strength, sure-footed, magic, mystic, survival
Gorilla-	power, wisdom, forest, mystic, primal
Horse-	strength, grace, speed, love, passion, devotion, beauty, stamina
Jackal-	cunning, humor, insanity, fear, wickedness, magic
Jaguar/Puma/Panther-	mystic, forest, grace, power, awareness, spirits, primal
Leopard-	sleek, grace, strength, pride, speed, awareness, ferocity
Lion-	leadership, power, aggression, pride, hunter, ownership
Lizard-	earth, sun, patience, dreams
Monkey/Chimpanzee-	clever, agility, family, tribe, tools, learning, humor, indiscretion
Mouse-	small, brave, quick, underdog, humble
Rabbit/Hare-	prolific, fast, nervous, lust, rebirth, providence, sensual
Rat-	sly, aggressive, death, disease, clever
Snake-	earth, power, magic, poison, deception, stealth, patience
Spider-	nimble, creator, deception, devourer, magic, patience, poison, beauty
Squirrel-	agility, caution, preparation, survival, forest, stealth
Tiger-	strength, beauty, determination, cunning, mystic
Turtle-	protection, humility, fear, wisdom, water, sluggish, earth, self-reliance
Wolf-	loyal, wisdom, instinct, hunter, runner, mystic, earth, boundaries

## Appendix Five: Whimsy Cards

In the 1980s Lion Rampant came out with Whimsy Cards. Players used Whimsy Cards to influence the flow of the game. Here is a list of the Whimsy Cards to help you inject “story-like” elements into the game. I recommend that you print up a set of slips or cards and give the players one to three each. The Storytellers can play the cards at any time, but only one at a time each, to change the flow of the story.

**Abrupt Change of Events** Suddenly things are not happening the way they were a moment ago. Alliances switch, secrets are revealed, and new information surfaces.

**Added Animosity** The ill-will between characters grows past current levels. This animosity can be openly expressed or harbored secretly in the heart.

**Bad Tidings** Someone gets bad news. It might affect play or it might be news of distant and still important events.

**Bizarre Coincidence** Two or more things come together against incredible odds. Old friends (and enemies) run into you in the supermarket, you just happen to have the rare item you need in your closet, etc.

**Change of Heart** A character's feelings change and alter a decision. Pirates spare prisoners and hassled innkeepers decide to make room for you after all.

**Double Jeopardy** Failure carries a double penalty. It could mean the normal penalty doubled, but it could also mean a penalty in addition to the normal one.

**Draw a Blank** Make up your own card.

**Emotional Release** Strong emotions are let out. What are the emotions, and what triggers their sudden eruption? Is it a healthy release or a wild tempest?

**Envy** Someone covets something that another person has. The envy could be expressed as an outright attempt to get the object of desire or something more subtle.

**Erratic Behavior** Someone or something exhibits wild, unexpected behavior. Could be party members, enemies, mounts, spells, or equipment.

**Error of Judgment** Someone's better judgment fails. The trouble that ensues depends on the specific error that is made.

**Extreme Caution** Someone exercises extreme caution. Is the caution necessary, or is it exaggerated? What is the disadvantage from using so much caution?

**Greed** Desire for wealth diverts a character from normal activity. The object of this desire can be specific (e.g. a certain necklace) or general (e.g. gold!).

**Horrible Failure** What was a simple failure becomes a disaster. Attempts to persuade people backfire, arrows strike the wrong targets, and the wrong demons get conjured.

**Inopportune Arrival** Someone or something shows up to the chagrin or disadvantage of someone. Unwelcome relatives and hated enemies are possibilities.

**Internal Conflict** Conflicts arise within a person or within a group. How did these conflicts come about? How can they be resolved? Are they hidden? Poorly hidden?

**Jealousy** The green-eyed monster rears its ugly head. How does the jealousy show itself?

**Joy** Delight floods a character, making the world seem beautiful. What brings about this wonderful feeling?

**Lasting Impression** An impression is made, or an old one is reborn. Emotional experiences return to a character affecting actions or something happens that will leave an impression for years (e.g. a scar).

**Malice** Wrath rises in a character toward someone or something. Even if the anger can be held in check, it will affect the person's behavior.

**Misguided Love** Love affects a character in ways others fail to approve of. The character seems out of control. (To the lover of course, the love is true and wonderful; to others, it is misguided.)

**Misplaced Trust** Undeserved trust is or has been placed in someone or something. "Faithful" hirelings desert, "sturdy" ropes break, and politicians are believed.

**Moral Dilemma** A character is faced with a moral question. What should the character do? What are the personality traits or personal values that make the decision to difficult?

**New Role** You take over another character, either of a player or of the GM. The original owner can ask for it back and veto your actions while you have the new role.

**Ominous Omen** Something suggests future evil, an event that portends calamity, misfortune, or death. The players might not understand the significance of the omen.

**Parting of Ways** People or things go their separate ways. The parting can be happy or sorrowful, anticipated or sudden. Depending on the circumstances, those who part might meet again.

**Personality Clash** The personalities of two characters come into conflict. The cause of the clash and the gravity are up to you. How could the conflict be resolved?

**Pity** Sympathetic sorrow for another person affects a character's actions. This pity might provoke action or merely set a mood.

**Pivotal Decision** Someone is faced with a decision that will affect something dramatically. A potential ally chooses sides, or a leader chooses a plan of action.

**Second Chance** Someone gets a second chance. Maybe that bullet missed the heart after all, or maybe the character realizes something that allows a second skill attempt. You must give the reason.

**Sloth** Someone is very lazy. Guards become lax, squires neglect their duties, and bartenders give you slow service.

**Something Missing** Something that should be here is not. The seriousness of the lack depends on what is missing. It could be your sword or a friend you were supposed to meet.

**Special Circumstances** Unusual conditions change the normal course of events for good or ill. The circumstances can be personal, such as character's mood, impersonal, such as the weather.

**Spectacular Success** What was a normal success becomes spectacular. Those rare, unexplainable feats are now possible. The GM must watch this card because it is easy to abuse.

**Sudden Reversion** Suddenly someone or something reverts to the way it used to be. People revert to earlier patterns of behavior and problems go back to the way they were at the beginning.

**Tables Turn** Something in the situation reverses, an advantage turns in to a disadvantage, a disadvantage turns into an advantage. It is a surprise to all.

**Things Are Not As They Seem** Characters have been deceived, perhaps without malicious intent. The truth need not be known now. A good card for a secret note to the GM.

**Trade Places** You take over the role of another character and the player who was running that character takes yours. Either of you can end the trade at any time.

**Turn for the Worse** Things were going well, but suddenly something comes up that changes things for the worse. What is the change? How can those affected overcome the new problem?

**Ulterior Motive** A character has motives besides those that are already known, and the ulterior motive can conflict with the surface motive. A good Whimsy for a secret note to the GM.

**Unexpected Aid** Much to your surprise, aid shows up. Aid could be anything from fog that helps you sneak into an enemy camp to the arrival of the cavalry. But does this aid have a price?

**Unexplained Consequence** Someone's actions have results that were not, perhaps could not have been, foreseen. The result can be good or bad, minor or extreme.

**Unexplained Event** Something happens. You don't know why.

**Vivid Detail** Break into the storyline to describe something in detail so the whole group can share the image. You cannot directly change the course of events, but you might inspire the GM.

# Sources

*The Pirates of Dark Water: The Saga Begins*. Performers George Newburn, Jodi Benson, Hector Elizondo, Frank Welker. Image Entertainment, Inc., Nova Entertainment, Inc., Turner Home Entertainment, 1991.

Lion Rampant. "Whimsy Cards." Publication date unknown. Description retrieved Friday, January 17, 2003 from the World Wide Web:  
<http://www.darkshire.org/~jhkim/rpg/styles/whimsycards.html>.

Prasadh, Smitha. "Andorus's Pirates of Dark Water Page" Rev 15/01/03. Retrieved Thursday, September 19, 2002 from the World Wide Web:  
<http://www.ecomancer.net/podw/index.html>.

Roche, Sean. "Dark Water: The Series Bible." Rev 27/03/91. Retrieved Friday, September 20, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.ecomancer.net/podw/misc-seriesbible.html>.

West, James. "The Questing Beast." Retrieved Thursday, January 16, 2003 from the World Wide Web <http://www.randomordercreations.com/tqb.html>.