

Coal & Parchment



a Quill setting supplement

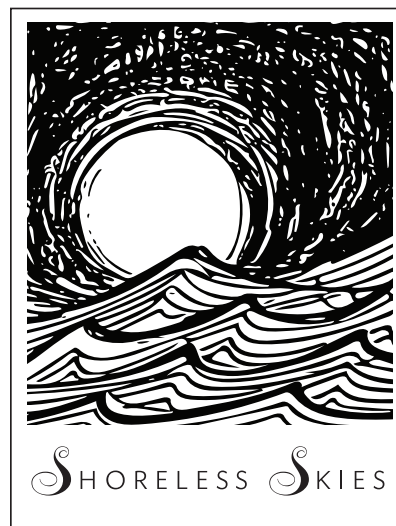
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CREDITS

Written By
Derek A. Kamal

Cover by
Jacob Hunt

A setting supplement based on
Quill by Scott Malthouse



WELCOME




Quill is a game about writing letters created by Trollish Delves. In it the player takes on the role of a character and writes a letter as that character would. The writer must take into account the personality and skills of their character, as well as the context of the scenario. It really is a lot of fun. This book is a supplement to *Quill*, a setting adaptation. In it are six new characters, three new skills, and five scenarios for you to enjoy. *Quill* is set in a general medieval world; *Coal & Parchment* is set in the Homes, a fanciful, underground civilization of dwarves.

To begin *Coal & Parchment* you will need to learn to play by reading *Quill*. Once you've learned the game, proceed and start your letter writing campaign in the Homes!



Coal & Parchment is about dwarves writing letters to one another. In the Homes, quills and ink are rather rare commodities. However, paper isn't too widely used and so stores remain generally well-stocked. Your average dwarf is too busy working or drinking or eating or chatting to write much -- dwarves would just as soon go and visit their auntie as write her. The Keepers always write and have always written and will always write. It is the only way to keep down those many notions that parade through their minds all day long.

But some dwarves have taken to the hobby (or 'craft' as they would call it) of letter writing. This is especially true of the upper echelons of society, where keeping up appearances and connexions are very important. Others have always enjoyed hand lettering, a pastime of their Houses and families for ages. Still some, in more recent days, have used it to communicate beyond the Homes. Unthinkable in the past, the world aboveground has



opened up to many dwarves. They have friends and acquaintances in man-towns like Ironvale or other dwarf-homes like Blueburg.

Dwarves of means are fond of using ornate quills and inkpots. Average dwarves, though, will use the writing implement of choice for generations beyond counting: charcoal. Sometimes even the noblest of nobles defer to charcoal, having been raised to scratch and strike and scribble with the dusty rock from an early age. Each dwarf is different, though, with their own styles of penmanship and passion for the work. Some, huddled by a candle at the end of the working day, scrawl out their correspondences with haste, eager for sleep and the completion of work. Others take their time, strolling to a local drinkery to sink into the noise and scribe their pose. Others still will sit in their towers and scribble away to their mother's cousin's sister's grand-niece's old drinking companion.

What kind of Letter Writer will you be?

For more on the setting, read *The Dig: A Roleplaying Game* or *Homes*, available from ShorelessSkies.com

CHARACTERS

The Gardener

Many dwarves belong to Cogs, guild-like organizations serving to benefit various artisans and laborers. But most dwarves are their own masters, handling their own affairs, and that includes food. The Gardener is a common dwarf, content to till little mushroom fields and grow nettles and keep house and mind their own.

Their letters are for each other, or for their homegrown businesses. They prefer plain, straightforward language but put a good amount of energy into their correspondences.

Penmanship: Average [][]

Language: Poor []

Heart: Good [][][]

The Noble

Nobility takes different forms in the Homes: from Ladies who control Houses, to Cog-bosses who manage crafting Cogs, to just plain wealthy dwarves. These are the movers and shakers of the Homes, though there isn't all that much to move and shake. Mostly they run in their own circles and host extravagant parties.

Nobles spend their time practicing spectacular hand lettering, usually just to be showy. This effort could wear out the best of us, and the nobles are often the most prolific letter writers, so sometimes their enthusiasm for the art wanes.

Penmanship: Good [][][]

Language: Average [][]

Heart: Poor []

The Keeper

The Keeper spends day in and day out studying. Their hasty scrawl leaves much to be desired, but their letters are always full of interesting facts and bizarre musings. Sometimes their erudition and haste get in the way of proper penmanship and many have claimed their letters are unreadable. To these the Keeper replies, 'Well, read a little harder!'

The Keeper corresponds with all citizens of the Homes: nobility in need of advice, pub owners hoping for a new ingredient to give their brew the edge it needs. This feeling of importance can be seen in their writing.

Penmanship: Poor 📄📄

Language: Good 📄📄📄

Heart: Average 📄📄

The Fargoer

Dark caves and chasms need charting, and the world aboveground needs scouting. Who else could be bothered to complete such uncomfortable work but a Fargoer? These spies are the eyes and ears of the Homes. Their communications must be crisp and clear, per the expectations of their Spy-master Aevi. But the work gets tiring. Nobody really wants to write a detailed report at the end of a long day traversing the underworld, and so their hearts are not often in their letters. Though they write quite well!

Penmanship: Average 📄📄

Language: Good 📄📄📄

Heart: Poor 📄

The Hoarder

A Hoarder keeps track of all the many items that flow throughout the Homes. They have a passion for writing and record keeping, as befits their position, but their penmanship is rough. Too used to the odd stenography employed for rapid tallying, their lettering is almost as cryptic. But the care they put into their letters is enjoyed by all their recipients. Even a dwarf receiving a letter of repossession has been known to smile kindly at the detail and care flowing from the missive...until she realizes she's losing her still.

Penmanship: Poor 📄📄

Language: Average 📄📄

Heart: Good 📄📄📄

The Setter

None take more care in their work than the Setter. These jewelers, like the pieces they forge and adorn, have wonderful, floral lettering...and not much else. Oftentimes they spend so much time on a single illustrated letter that the intent of the correspondence is lost. But there is something to be said when form supercedes content, and the Setter is the case-in-point. Whether it is a receipt, an order for a new bangle, or a simple note to a friend, it's going to look great.

Penmanship: Good 📄📄📄

Language: Poor 📄

Heart: Average 📄📄

NEW SKILLS



Quill starts characters with three basic skills to choose from: Inspiration, Illumination, and Augmentation. When creating your dwarf for *Coal & Parchment*, you may use one of those three skills or choose from one of these three new skills. The same rules apply for using a skill, that is once per letter.

Each of these new skills have an 'exploding' function that activates upon rolling a 6. Only one bonus per roll (and not per 6) may be invoked.



Wordsmith: When you make a Language Test and roll at least one 6, roll another die to add another word from the inkpot for +1 points on a success.

Craftsmanship: When you make a Penmanship Test and roll at least one 6, roll another die and add +1 Points on a success.

Fervency: When you roll your Heart skill for a **Flourish** before rolling Language, and roll at least one 6, roll another die for another flourish. Add +1 Points on a success.

SCENARIOS

Gunr's Story

Profile

- ★ Gunr is a Fargoer, one of the scouts of the Homes. He has served with Aevi and the rest for most of his life. But lately the dwarf has become depressed and stooped as low as drinking on the job, or sleeping through his duty.
- ★ You are an old acquaintance of Gunr's and Aevi, the Spy-master, has asked you write him a letter in the hopes of cheering him up.
- ★ You will include some of your history with Gunr and conclude with the preemption of a visit.

Rules of Correspondence

- ★ *Kindly Prose*: Gunr, though gruff and a little docile on the outside, has a soft heart. Appeal to his kindheartedness with emotional Flourishes (Flourishes for **Inferior** words are worth 0, rather -1 points).
- ★ *Brothers in Going*: He would surely be more encouraged to hear from a fellow Fargoer. The Fargoer gains a free **Inspiration** skill for this scenario.

Ink Pot

Tunnel / Causeway

Peering / Scouting

Trip / Adventure

Scrape / Mortal Wound

Exciting / Phenomenal

Together / United

Famous / Renowned

Spot / Mountaintop Temple

Wall-rock / Gleaming Copper

Boar / Screaming Troll



Consequences

<5 Points: You've done nothing to help Gunr and he slips deeper into depression, even so far as to take up knitting.

5-7 Points: Gunr is encouraged but the effect quickly wears off. You'd better go and buy him a drink.

8-10 Points: The Fargoer is revived and returns to the job, though he still finds it tempting to slack off and miss his shift.

11+ Points: This spectacular letter has given Gunr a fresh outlook on life. He resumes his duties with vigor and even buys you a present for your help.

The Setters

Profile

- ★ Everyone knows that the Setters, the jewelers of the Homes, are the least organized and most lackadaisical bunch of crafts-dwarves of any Cog...ever.
- ★ A recent commission to them (of your choosing) came back all wrong -- they took a fair bit of creative freedom and botched the job rather well. The Cog-boss has chalked it up to 'artistic license', but seriously...
- ★ You are writing a letter of complaint, demanding that the commission be redone correctly and speedily.

Rules of Correspondence

- ★ *Righteous Anger*: You are justifiably enraged at this lack of professionalism and overt artsiness. Choose one attribute and raise its rating by 1 for this scenario.

Ink Pot

Angry / Livid

Heirloom / Weirgild

Jewel / Familial Emerald

Customer / Patron

Complaint / Boycott

Troubling / Unacceptable

Try Again / Begin from scratch

Shame / Disgust

Nickel / Gold

Careless / Incompetent



Consequences

<5 Points: You get no response from the Setters. In fact they tossed your letter into the furnace after reading the first paragraph.

5-7 Points: The letter has ruffled a few feathers, but you will not be getting a new piece.

8-10 Points: You swiftly receive a new piece that is mostly to your specifications. You can still nitpick a few mistakes, though.

11+ Points: Not only have you got the jewelry you requested, but there is talk around the neighborhood of the Setters adopting some more efficient policies.

To Ironvale

Profile

- ★ Ironvale is a man-town a few days' journey east of the Homes, near the Sea. Previously not much interaction happened between the two people groups but this poor habit is changing.
- ★ You are writing a letter to a business associate at Ironvale about a venture of your choosing, explaining clearly how it will proceed and inquiring about your partner's abiding interest.

Rules of Correspondence

- ★ *Cross Cultural Understanding*: While Men and Dwarves speak the same language they apply that language differently. Suffer a -1 penalty to Language Tests, but get a free bonus point for successful Penmanship Tests. After all, everyone appreciates good handwriting.

Ink Pot

Business / Enterprise

Money / Wealth

Timely / Punctual

Well-made / Priceless

Service / Luxury

Profitable / Entrepreneurial

Region / Continent

Appeal / Mania

Good / Best

Wool / Silk



Consequences

<5 Points: Your 'partner' has dropped out of the arrangement, citing other opportunities. Probably, though, it was your badly written letter.

5-7 Points: The associate responds with a litany of questions, doubting your business acumen and the quality of the product.

8-10 Points: You are invited to Ironvale by an excited and encouraging response. You will sit in person to discuss the final arrangements of your venture.

11+ Points: Besides a personal invitation to Ironvale, the business partner has forwarded an advance (a small chest of coin in Kingdom currency) on your first orders. Great things are expected in the future!

The Chef

Profile

- ★ A typical meal for a dwarf of the Homes is some kind of vegetable (usually mushroom), crusty bread, some dried meat, and a bit of wine. With new trade coming and going from the Blueburg, an older and more refined dwarf-home, more are becoming interested in expanding their culinary palette.
- ★ You have found out that a renowned chef in the Blueburg may be related to you! You are writing a letter to this chef informing her of your connexion, your arrival in the city next week, and how much you would enjoy a lesson or two in her kitchen.

Rules of Correspondence

- ★ *Nervous Hand*: You feel a little shaky and intimidated by this correspondence. Reroll all Language Tests and take the second result.
- ★ *The Great Home Cook*: If you are playing as the Gardener, get +1 to your Language Tests as you share common ground with the chef.

Ink Pot

Family / Kinship
Ties / Heritage
Cook / Culinary Master
Food / Cuisine
Spoon / Golden Ladle
Skill / Mastery
Game / Cornish Hen
Vegetable / Colorful Oca
Seasoning / Truffle
Visit / Arrival



Consequences

<5 Points: The reply is a not a letter but a box with a spoiled beetroot in it. The Chef, being an eccentric, is incensed by your poorly written letter and denies any possibility of kinship.

5-7 Points: Out of the kindness of her heart, the Chef has offered you a small table on a busy night. Not much else.

8-10 Points: You are invited to join the Chef for a meal at table to discuss the evidence you found of your relationship. Cooking demonstration to follow.

11+ Points: You must come at once, cousin! says the response. You are to be received at the head table, after a full tour of the facility, and enjoy a 5 course meal hand crafted by the Chef herself.

The Great Lady

Profile

- ★ The Great Lady sits atop the loose authority structure of the Homes. She is, at once, the godmother and Queen of her people. But she remains accessible and eager to help!
- ★ You are writing a letter to the Great Lady requesting an intervention with a family member or coworker.
- ★ You will describe the person in question, the issue between you, and explain why this is dire enough to require the assistance of the Great Lady herself.

Rules of Correspondence

- ★ *Actual Ink*: You have set the charcoal aside and are using your best (and only) ink pot for this letter. Raise your Penmanship attribute by 1 for this letter.
- ★ *Inner Circle*: The Great Lady, though a ruler of the people, still must interact very often with the nobility. The Noble may reroll any failed test for this letter one time.

Ink pot

Lady / Ladyship

Royalty / Highnessness

Trouble / Affair

Person / Roustabout

Right / Indisputable

Offense / Transgression

Help / Guidance

Strike / Fisticuff

Misunderstanding / Brannigan

Respectfully / Abjectly



Consequences

<5 Points: You receive a brief, but kind, letter suggesting you try to make amends yourself.

5-7 Points: The Great Lady has allowed one of her counselors to write a short missive to the dwarf in question, asking for them to try and repair the relationship.

8-10 Points: A counselor will be sent in person, bearing the seal of the Great Lady, for personal mediation between you and the party in question. They even brought cake!

11+ Points: The Great Lady herself has invited you and your relation to a brief retreat at her Palace. There you will receive counseling from her masterful staff, and spend time with the Lady. Now to convince your relation to come...

CLOSING

My friend, Gram--

No, that's not it. Gecy tapped her finger against the shaped bit of coal in her hand, then she put her hand to her mouth to stroke the veil that covered her thin beard. Now there was coal on her veil.

'Oh, drat it!' she said aloud. 'Drub!' she cried and Drub came. Tray in hand, quill on tray, he already knew what his Lady's request would be. He presented the long, black, feathered thing quietly and without ceremony and she snatched it up without looking. Drub padded off, quiet footman that he was.

Dearest Gram--

Gecy roared deep in her throat, dropped the quill, and put her head in her formidable hands. The valuable ink seeped out of the quill and onto her stone table like a wound. She slid her hands from forehead to mouth, causing the last bit of coal to smear darker on face and veil. Then her wide, hazel eyes shot open and her finger pointed upwards in a clear gesture of inspiration. Smiling with satisfaction she plucked the quill up from the table and got to it at last.

My dear friend Gram,

I trust all is well out in the world of Men. I've no idea if these ruddy Traders will actually deliver my letter to you, but I hope that the notion and good feeling reaches you somehow. Things are slipping from 'unwell' to 'terribly unwell' here in the Homes. That buffoon Barne is at it his worst and even more buffoons are falling in with his buffoonery. It will pass, though. Such silliness always does.

I have thought much about our last meeting, when we discussed the unfairness of your predicament. I still agree, but I've had a further thought: perhaps this is all as it is intended to be? Such ideas are not so comforting to the ones caught in them, I fear. It may turn out for the best in spite of our discomforts. I have not known her very long but the Great Lady has my utmost trust and should have yours. She would not allow this to happen were it not for some reason, far off as its fruition may appear.

If Men are able to write and have such stuff as will allow you to do so, please reply. It will be good to know you're well and that you found some place to ease your exile. I look forward to your return earnestly.

*Confidently and sincerely,
your friend and head of House,
the esteemed,*

ecy

Her satisfied smile lingered while she read over what she had written. That would do nicely. Now to see about having it delivered. 'Drub!' she roared again. 'Find those stinky Traders and get one of them here, please. See to it that she or he is appropriately perfumed before being brought in. Can't stand the smell of grass and...whatever else it is that they get themselves into.'

Drub nodded like the professional he was and set off. Hopefully the letter would find its way to Gram. If not, there were other things to occupy one's time.