

Dragon Storm Rules

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Sheet #1: Player's rules. Read this first.

Author's note: I switch between the pronouns he and she in these rules. When either word is used, it's meant to include both genders.

There are two rules sheets. Sheet #1 should be read by players and gamemasters. Only gamemasters need to read sheet #2.

1.0 Life in the Stormlands

Dragon Storm is a role-playing game about shape shifters: Human werewolves, dwarven gargoyles, human dragons and elven unicorns. These characters live in an area known as the stormlands. They use supernatural powers to battle powerful enemies, and to save the world from Dragon Storms.

Most Stormlanders live like peasants of the European Middle Ages. They are ruled by nobles, who spend their time fighting for control of Stormland city-states. These struggles mean little to most people, who live in isolated villages scattered throughout the land.

Magic is more important to stormlanders. They respect *Od*, the force of pure magic, used by wizards, witches and shamans to heal and protect. They fear *Warp*, corrupt magic used by necromancers to debase and destroy. Warp can blight a land, poisoning water and tainting the soil. It twists living things into warpspawn and plague beasts, insane monsters who kill for pleasure.

Stormlanders are superstitious, tough and resigned to their fate. They take consolation in the worship of Elethay, goddess of the earth. Few peasants dare hope for better times ahead. Only the elders talk about Valarian Champions, legendary heroes who will save the people from the storms.

The stormlands got its name from dragon storms, tempests of wild magic that ruin crops, level homes, and cause the tox, a horrible disease which twists body and soul. It's little wonder that Stormlanders who suffer misfortune are called storm-struck.

When caught in the open by a dragon storm, young adults sometimes transform into shape shifters. Elves become unicorns, dwarves become gargoyles and a human might turn into a werewolf or a dragon. After the storm passes, these shape shifters return to their mortal form, and are able to control their ability to change shape.

No one understands why some people change, but it is a fearful thing. Shape shifters are magical beings with strange and disturbing powers: Gargoyles can reach through solid stone, unicorns can heal with a touch of their horns, werewolves fight with terrifying fury and dragons can breath fire. These abilities unsettle most Stormlanders, but they are even more frightened of necromancers, evil wizards who hunt shape shifters. Necromancers can drain shape shifters of their natural magics, using the power to fuel toxic spells. Feared by their families and hunted by necromancers, these young shape shifters usually flee their homes before anyone discovers what they have become.

In Dragon Storm you role play a shape shifter or an orc. Your character's opponents are necromancers, warpspawn and adventurers; your allies are Elethay worshippers and Prismatic Wizards, who oppose necromancers and all their works.

If you're smart, lucky and pick your fights carefully, your character may live long enough to meet a mentor. These veteran spell casters and warriors are dedicated to the destruction of necromancers and Warp. Characters befriended by mentors can become Valarians Champions, and join the fight against the evil poisoning the world.

2.0 What is role-playing? Imagine you are watching a movie being made. A director guides the action, and an actor plays a role. Together, the actor and director are creating the story of the movie. They are role-playing.

Dragon Storm is a role-playing game. One person, the gamemaster, acts as director. All other players take the roles of characters. Together they create a story as exciting as any movie, using pencils, paper, six-sided dice and Dragon Storm cards.

3.0 Getting Started: Sort your blue-backed gamemaster cards and your orange-backed player cards into two piles. Next, look at the fronts of the player cards, and sort them by type. Card type is printed just below the illustration. Sort your cards by the first card type word, printed in bold letters. Each type of card also has a different color background.

3.1 Player card types: *Channel, Dragon, Gargoyle, Human, Item, Orc, Shaman, Unicorn, Universal, Valarian, Werewolf, Witch, and Wizard.*

Now sort your player cards by the second, non-capitalized words of card type. These second words are: *Ace, Anchor, Boon, anchor Background, Anchor Flaw and Magic (item cards only).* It is most important to sort your universal cards by the uncapitalized words. Most other cards are aces.

There will be more types of player cards in future expansions of Dragon Storm.

3.2 Gamemaster card types: Cast, feature, scene and terrain. it is not necessary to sort these cards unless you are gamemaster.

3.3 Rules priority: When rules on cards conflict with the rules book, follow card rules.



3.4 Gamemaster's rule: When any rule conflicts with a gamemaster's decision, the gamemaster is right.

4.0 What is a character? In Dragon Storm, you invent the role of your character. By choosing how he acts during the game, you role play his personality. Other aspects of a character, such as his skills and abilities, are created by choosing cards. If your character is a wizard you can select a card that allows him to throw a spell. For a scout you might want a card which helps him find tracks. How your character acts, and which cards he uses, is up to you.

5.0 How to create a character: Designing a Dragon Storm character is as easy as adding and subtracting. Player cards (the ones with orange backs) have a card value printed in the upper right-hand corners. These numbers mean different things on different cards. If a '+' is printed in front of the number, the card value is starting points. If the number is followed by the letters 'GP', card value is gold piece cost. When no symbol or letters appear with the number, card value is how many starting points it costs to buy the card.

Use the following steps to create your character.

5.1. Pick a Character card: There's a lot of information on a character card. Here's what it means.

5.1.1 Card Title: This is the character's race. If a title has two words, the character is a shape shifter: A Human Dragon is a human who can shape shift into a dragon, an Elven Unicorn is an elf who can change into a unicorn and so on. To change shape your character must use form cards (explained in section 5.4.2).

5.1.2 Card Value: On a character card, the card value is starting points which are used to buy ace and anchor cards. You must spend all starting points.

5.1.3 Stats: These numbers show the basic abilities of a character. They are added as modifiers to contest rolls (explained in section 6.1).

STR (strength): Physical brawn.

COR (coordination): Hand-to-eye coordination

DEF (defense): Physical toughness

SPD (speed): Quickness and reflexes

WIS (wisdom): The ability to learn and reason

HP (health points): The ability to withstand damage

CAP (carrying capacity): How much a character can carry

5.1.4 Taint DEF: This is a special kind of DEF listed in the card rules. In places where magic is strong, a person can be hurt (tainted) simply by being in the area. Taint DEF is a character's ability to tolerate this kind of damage.

5.2 Pick a Background: A universal anchor background is the first card you should spend starting points to buy. A background has details about a character's past, and provides her with important skills at a low cost. Only starting characters can buy backgrounds, and a character is allowed just one.

The following backgrounds allow characters to use spells. Remorseful Apprentice (allows a character to use wizard spells), Witch (allows a character to use witchcraft spells) and Spirit Speaker (allows a character to use Shaman spells). Some 'type expansion' cards also allow a character to use spells. These are explained below.

Once you have a background, it's time to set aside some cards. Carefully read the rules on your character and background cards:

Your character may only use the types of cards listed in the card rules. All other types should be placed to one side. The exceptions to this rule are witchcraft, shaman or wizard cards, which you may want to leave out for the moment. You may be able to use these cards if you decide to buy a 'type expansion' card (explained in section 5.4.1).

Example: Mary is creating a Human Dragon character, and has picked a Peasant background. Reading the character card, she sees that her character may only use dragon, human, universal and item cards. The Peasant background gives her no extra card types. She sets aside all of her channel, gargoyle, unicorn, werewolf, orc and Valarian cards. She has two shaman cards, which she leaves out for now. If she buys the right type expansion card, she might be able to use these.

5.3 Pick flaws (Optional): A flaw is an anchor card that gives a character additional starting points. Flaws also give a character a physical handicap (such as being Clumsy) or a mental problem (like Fear of Rats). A flaw remains until, through role-playing, you convince the gamemaster your character has overcome his weakness. This can take a long time.

5.4 Pick ace and anchor cards: To give your character skills and abilities, you spend starting points to buy ace and anchor cards. The card value of ace and anchor cards is their cost. Anchors are expensive; they represent abilities a character can always use. Aces are relatively cheap; they represent temporary efforts.

5.4.1 Type expansion cards: Some anchors allow the use of card types not listed on character cards. For example, a character with a Shamanism anchor may use shaman spells. The rules on type expansion cards list what new type of cards characters may use.

5.4.2 Ace forms: These cards show how a character's stats and appearance change when he shifts shape. These changes remain as long as the form card is in play. Some racial cards may only be used while a character is 'in form'. For instance, Dragon Claws is only useable by a character with Dragon Form in play. When card rules state that a racial card is 'usable in any form' if it may be used by a character without a form card in play. The relative size of shape shifters is shown in the illustration at the bottom of the next page.

5.4.3 Boons: If the word *boon* appears in the card value button, the card cannot be purchased. A boon is a reward, given to characters by special cast members called mentors. The awarding of boons is controlled by the gamemaster, and explained in section 15.7.2.

5.5 Buy Stuff: After you have spent your starting points on ace and anchor cards, your character gets 100 gold pieces (abbreviated GP) to buy food and items. The card value of items is their GP cost. Food costs 1 GP per ration, and it is not on cards. Players keep track of food with pocket change and the resource sheet (explained in section 5.6.7). A Tunic, Sack, Waterskin (containing 5 free water rations) and 10 food rations should be bought for a character. Everything else is up to you.

5.5.1 Capacity: As you're buying stuff, keep in mind that your character can only carry so much. The weight of items is shown as a CAP stat on item cards. Each food item and water ration has a CAP of 1/5 (five of them equal 1 CAP). One gold piece has a CAP of 1/20 (twenty of them equal 1 CAP). If the combined CAP of carried items and supplies comes to more than a character's CAP stat, he is overloaded. He will suffer whatever penalties the gamemaster chooses.

5.6 Fill out the character sheet: On the back of rules sheet #2, you will find the character sheet and resource sheet. You may photocopy these, or write character information on a separate sheet of paper.

5.6.1 Name: It can be whatever you choose.

5.6.2 Player: Write your name.

5.6.3 Race: Write down the character card title.

5.6.4 Gender: This is up to you. Your character doesn't have to be the same sex as the person shown on the character card.

5.6.5 Age: Choose an age between 16 and 20.

5.6.6 Role Playing Points: For now, this is 0. Role playing points are explained in section 14.7.

5.6.7 Card Points: A character's card points represent skill and experience. To get card points, add up the value of the cards you have bought for your character that do not have 'GP', '+', or the word 'Boon' in the card value button. Write this number on the character sheet.

5.6.8 Gold, Food and Water: On these lines, write how much food and water your character has when each game ends. To keep track of these resources during the game, use the resource sheet. Place pennies, nickels and dimes in the boxes for gold, food and water to show how much of each of these your character has. Remove coins as resources are used. For example, if your character eats 2 food, remove 2 pennies from the food box. The gamemaster will tell

you when your character consumes food and water.

5.6.9 The stats row (optional): Some anchor cards modify a character's stats. You may write the modified stats here, in pencil. For example, if your character has a SPD of 1, and she has taken the Clumsy Flaw (it subtracts -2 SPD) you may want to write -1 under SPD on your character sheet.

5.7 Lay out your cards It will be easier to play if you lay out your character's cards as shown below.

Some cards have been placed under the character card so that the stats rows and card numbers show. This is called stacking. Anchors and items should be stacked. By reading across the stat rows, you can add up your character's stat modifiers at a glance. Place all of your ace cards face up, in a pile to the left of the stacked cards. Drained ace cards are placed in a pile, face down, to the right of the stacked cards.

6.0 Playing Dragon Storm: Dragon Storm is about storytelling. The gamemaster describes places, people and situations your character encounters. You tell the gamemaster what your character does in response. There will be times in the game, however, when the story calls for more than talking. In these cases, you will use contest rolls, cards, and combat.

6.1 Contest rolls Your gamemaster will ask you to make a contest roll whenever your character tries to do something that might fail. For instance, no roll is needed if your character walks down a forest path, but you will have to roll if she tries to scale a cliff.

6.1.1 2D6: When a contest roll is called for, you and the gamemaster each roll 2 six sided dice (abbreviated 2D6), then add up the numbers on the dice. If you have the higher 2D6 roll, your character succeeds at what she is trying to do. If the gamemaster's 2D6 sum is higher, your character fails. Ties are re-rolled.

6.1.2 Modifiers: Modifiers are numbers added to, or subtracted from, contest rolls. Anytime a character tries to do something especially difficult, the gamemaster may add a modifier to her roll. For example, when a character tries to climb a cliff with plenty of hand holds, the gamemaster adds no modifier. If the cliff is smooth, the gamemaster may add +2, or more, to the roll. The tougher it is to climb the cliff, the higher the modifier.

6.1.3 Modifier formulas: Many player cards give modifiers to contest rolls. Sometimes this modifier appears as a number (+2, -1 and so on). Other times the modifier is given as a formula, such as 'Success at +1+WIS'. The word 'Success' is short for 'A successful contest roll', which is what the character must win before she can use the ability described on the card. 'At +1+WIS' means that 1 plus the Character's WIS (or whatever other stat appears in the formula) is added to the player's roll as a modifier.

6.2 Using cards Cards can be played to increase your character's chance of succeeding at something she is trying to do. A character can attempt to do most things without playing a card: She doesn't need a Spot Hidden card to look for concealed enemies. However, some actions do require cards. For example, she needs a spell card to throw a spell.

6.2.1 Timing: Cards take time to play and, in time, they expire. This is shown in timing, which is a number and a letter in the card type line (for instance, 1 / F). The number represents activation: How many actions it takes to put a card into play. Actions are explained in the combat rules. The letter indicates duration: How long an activated card stays in play. The different timing letters shown below each represent a different duration.

F (flash): The card stays in play for an instant.

R (round): The card stays in play for 10 seconds, or 1 combat round.

C (combat): The card stays in play for 5 minutes, or 30 combat rounds.

V (Variable): The card stays in play for as long as the player chooses.

P (Permanent): The card is always in play.

6.2.2 Draining cards: After an ace card's duration expires, it is drained and placed face down to the right of your character stack. Your gamemaster will tell you when your character has a chance to recharge drained ace cards. If an item card has timing, it is used up when its duration expires. Remove the card from your character. She may not use it again until she finds, or purchases, another item like the one that was drained. Anchors cards are never drained.

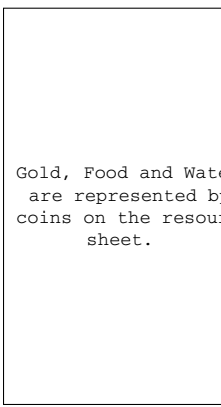
6.2.3 Combining cards: Cards with the same modifiers may be combined to modify a single roll (for instance, a +1 STR card and a +2 STR card may be combined to give a +3 STR modifier to one roll). Cards with different modifiers may be combined if the gamemaster decides it is reasonable. For example, a gamemaster may allow you to add the modifiers from Scouting, Perception and Ancient Lore to one roll when your character is searching an area for ruins.

6.2.4 Form cards: Forms are very important cards used by shape shifters. When a form is played, it is stacked on top of the character card so that the bottom card's stat row shows. The form stats are added to the character's stats to get the stats for the changed character. For instance, let's say a human dragon with a STR of 0 and a DEF of 3 plays a dragon form card. The form has +6 STR and +4 DEF, so the character has 6 STR and 7 DEF while this card is in play. All form cards have a timing of 1 / V, so they stay in play until the player chooses to drain the card.

7.0 Combat: Sometimes a character has to fight to survive or defeat an enemy. In Dragon Storm,

Character card with Items and Anchors stacked as below.

Resource Sheet



← Ready Ace cards stacked face up.

Drained Ace cards stacked face down →

combat is deadly and death is permanent. Choose your fights carefully.

7.0.1 The combat zone: The place where a fight occurs is called a combat zone. This area is described by the gamemaster, or shown with model scenery and miniatures.

7.0.2 Combat rounds: Time in the combat zone is measured in combat rounds: Each round represents 10 seconds of a fight. During a combat round, the following things happen in this order.

1. Roll for initiative.
2. Play independent cards any time after initiative.
3. Each combatant gets 1 movement and 1 action when her initiative number is called.
4. Any combatant may react when acted on.
5. When all combatants have moved and acted, repeat the sequence until the fight is over.

Combat is explained in more detail below.

7.1 Roll for initiative This roll tells who acts first during combat. When the gamemaster calls for an initiative roll, all players roll 2D6 and adds their characters' SPD to this roll to get initiative numbers. The gamemaster does the same for each cast member. Next, the gamemaster counts backwards, starting with the highest initiative number and going to the lowest. Each combatant moves and acts when her initiative number is called. Combatants with the same number move and act at the same time.

Characters with negative SPD modifiers subtract them from their initiative rolls. Because of this, it's possible to get an initiative number of 0 or less. If this happens to your character, she may not move, act, or play cards this round.

7.2 Play independent cards Any card with the word 'independent' as the first word of card rules is an independent card. These 'fast acting' cards may be played any time after initiative is rolled. Unless card rules prevent it, you may play any number of independent cards at the same time.

When more than one independent card is played at the same time, their effects all happen at once. If one independent card is played to block the effects of another, the blocking must be resolved before the blocked card can take effect. For instance, if Fire Finger is played and then blocked by Dispel Magic, Fire Fingers has no effect until the player and gamemaster roll to see if it's dispelled. If more than one blocking card is played, then the effects of the cards are resolved in reverse order.

7.3 Movement When her initiative number is called, a character is allowed one movement. Your character may make one of the following moves.

7.3.1 Regular movement: When a combatant moves and no one tries to block or avoid her, she is making a regular movement. A character using regular movement may move up to 60 feet.

7.3.2 Blocking: A combatant blocks by putting herself in the path of an opponent who is making a regular movement. Both the blocker and opponent must make a contest roll and add STR and SPD. The STR and SPD of weapons and played cards are added to this roll. If the opponent wins, she moves past the blocker. If the blocker wins, the opponent uses up her movement, and is stopped face to face with the blocker. A combatant may attempt to block any

opponent within 60 feet.

7.3.3 Dodging: A combatant may try to dodge away from a melee attack. A dodge may be made as soon as an attack is declared against the dodger. The attacker must choose to catch the dodger, or let her escape. If she lets her go, the dodger makes a regular movement away from the attacker. The attacker may not engage her in melee combat for the rest of the round. A dodger automatically escapes from an attacker who has already used up movement.

When the attacker chooses to catch the dodger, both roll 2D6 and add SPD. If the attacker wins, the dodger does not escape and the attack takes place as normal. If the dodger wins, she makes a regular movement away from the attacker. The attacker uses up her movement trying to catch the dodger. You will find examples of dodging in section 11.0.

7.3.4 Running away: To flee, a combatant uses both her move and her action (actions are explained in rules section 7.4). Everyone within 40 feet of the runner may use their movement to try to catch her: The runner and all pursuers roll 2D6 and add SPD. Pursuers who roll less than the runner are left behind. Pursuers who beat the runner's roll may immediately move to the runner, and use their actions to make melee attacks against her. After all attacks are resolved, the runner moves 120 feet. The pursuers may use the remainder of their regular movement to follow.

7.3.7 Movement modifier: All combatants add 10 feet to movement for every point of SPD, or they subtract 10 feet of movement for every point of negative SPD. For example, a combatant with 2 SPD moves 140 feet when running away.

7.3.5 Drawing weapons: In most cases, drawing a weapon does not use up movement. However, if a character attempts a complicated move when drawing weapons, the gamemaster may rule that she uses her movement. For example, dropping a bow to pull out a cudgel does not use up movement. Putting away a bow, drawing a sword and strapping on a buckler does use up movement.

7.3.6 Miscellaneous movement: When a character tries to do something other than regular movement, dodging, running away, or drawing a weapon, the gamemaster decides if what she is attempting requires a movement. Any move that requires a character's full attention uses up a movement. For instance, turning around to face an enemy does not use up movement. Climbing a tree does.

7.4 Actions In addition to a movement, your character gets to make one of the following actions.

7.4.1 Attack an opponent: An attack is a special kind of contest roll made when your character strikes an enemy. You may attack with a ranged weapon (like a sling) or a melee weapon (like a cudgel).

7.4.1.1 Melee attacks: When your character attacks with a melee weapon, roll 2D6 and add the following modifiers: Your character's STR, the STR of her weapon (she only uses one at a time) and the STR of any item, anchor or ace cards in play which effects STR. The roll and modifiers are added up to get your character's attack number.

Next, add up the following modifiers for the

opponent your character is attacking: The opponent's natural DEF, the DEF of his armor (he can only wear one suit of armor at a time), the DEF of his shield (again, just one at a time), and the DEF of any item, anchor or ace cards in play which effect DEF. These modifiers are added up to give you the opponent's DEF number.

By the way, the gamemaster usually doesn't have to add up these modifiers. The STR, COR and DEF shown on cast cards include all the modifiers given by their weapons, armor and shields.

Subtract the defense number from your character's attack number. The result is lethal damage. If damage is more than zero, your opponent loses HP equal to damage. For example, if your character has an attack number of 10, and her opponent has a defense number of 6, the opponent loses 4 HP. Anyone who loses all HP dies. Damage and healing are explained in section 8.0.

7.4.2 Subdual Damage: It's possible to make a melee attack to knock out an opponent rather than kill him. This kind of attack does subdual damage, which is explained in section 8.2. An attacker must declare the use of subdual damage before attacking.

7.4.3 Ranged attacks work like melee attacks, except that you roll 2D6 and add the following modifiers: Your character's COR, the COR of his ranged weapon (he only uses one of these at a time) and the COR of any items, anchors or ace cards in play that effect COR.

Your character may not make a ranged attack the same round she makes a melee attack. She may not make a ranged attack against an opponent within 10 feet, unless the gamemaster makes an exception.

The ranges of bows, crossbows, slings and javelins are given in card rules.

7.4.4 Defending: Your character may use her action to defend herself, concentrating on parrying an opponent's blow rather than delivering one herself. A defending character rolls 2D6 and adds the result to her defense number. This boosted defense number is used against one melee attack made by an opponent.

7.4.5 Throwing spells: Most spell cards require one action to use. Unless card rules state otherwise, all magic has a line of sight range; a magic user can cast a spell at anything he can see. This rule also applies to magical abilities, like Horn of Death and Firebreath. If a target is hard to see, the gamemaster may ask the spell caster to win a contest roll in order to spot his target. Note that Natural DEF and the DEF of armor and shields are useless against magical damage. Only magical DEF, provided by some spells and items, protects against it.

7.4.6 Using cards: Many cards are useful in combat. You can play as many cards as you like, as long as timing allows it. For instance, a character could throw Fire Fingers (0/F timing), play Dual Strike (it has 1/F timing, and it gives the character 2 melee attack actions), attack twice with a Carved Cudgel, and play two Vigorous Strike cards (0/F timing) to boost her STR on each attack. Playing all of these cards only uses just one action.

7.4.7 Miscellaneous actions: When a character tries to do something other than attack, defend, throw a spell or use cards, the gamemaster decides if what



Dwarf

Elf / Human

Orc

Werewolf

Gargoyle

Unicorn

Dragon

she is attempting requires an action. Anything that takes a character's full attention uses an action. For example, breaking down a door is an action, yelling out a warning is not.

7.5 Reactions Sometimes your character does not have to wait until his initiative number is called to move and act. When an enemy does one of the following things, your character may immediately react as shown. Remember that reactions use up movements and actions.

When an opponent attacks, the defender may react by dodging (uses 1 movement) and/or defending (uses 1 action).

When an enemy makes a regular movement within 60 feet of an opponent, that opponent may block him (uses 1 movement).

When an enemy runs away, any opponent within 40 feet may pursue him (uses movement).

8.0 Damage and healing: As a result of actions, characters may be hurt. Damage can be healed with spells, items and special abilities. A character also heals naturally, regaining 1 HP of damage for every 8 hours rest. There are different types of damage which can be healed in various ways.

8.1 Lethal damage is done by normal means, such as melee attacks. Lethal damage can be healed by magic, items or natural healing,

8.2 Subdual damage is the same as lethal damage, except that it knocks out a victim instead of killing him. A combatant who goes to 0 HP because of subdual damage falls unconscious instead of dying. Subdual damage heals at a rate 10 times faster than lethal damage. For example, a spell which heals 2 HP of lethal damage will heal 20 HP of subdual damage.

8.3 Magical damage is done by spells and special abilities, like Firebreath. Natural DEF and the DEF of armor and shields are useless against magical damage. Only magical DEF, provided by some spells and magic items, protects against it. Magical damage can be healed by the same methods as lethal damage.

8.4 Taint damage is inflicted by strong magic (Od or Warp) or the lack of magic (Waste). Only Taint DEF and some magic items protect against this damage. When characters rest in an area that does taint damage, their natural healing stops. Otherwise, taint damage can be healed like lethal damage.

8.5 Poison damage is difficult to heal. Most healing spells cannot cure this kind of damage. Special spells, items and abilities can heal a poisoned victim. Natural healing also heals poison.

8.6 Disease damage works like poison. A few spells, items and abilities cure diseases and disease damage. Natural healing heals disease damage.

9.0 Miniatures rules 25 mm fantasy miniatures can help you to visualize combat and movement. When you're using miniatures, 1 inch equals 10 feet of movement. Two legged characters may move up to 6 inches plus SPD for regular movement. Four legged characters may move twice their two legged rate. Flying creatures move three times their rate of movement while on the ground. For instance, a gargoyle with a SPD of -1 moves 5 inches per round on two legs and 15 inches per round when she flies. A human dragon with a SPD of 1 may move 7 inches while in human form (two legs), 14 inches while in dragon form (four legs) and 42 inches when flying.

10.0 After the game When the game is finished, the gamemaster awards role playing points, which you can spend to buy more cards for your character. Role playing points may be traded in for cards at a rate of 20 to one: For example, a character who gets 45 role playing points may trade 40 points in for two 1 point ace cards. The 5 left over role playing points are recorded on the character sheet.

If you spend points to buy more cards, your card points will increase. Be sure you record any change in card points on your character sheet.

You may trade in your character's ace cards for different ace cards between games, as long as the card points come out the same. For instance, you can trade in a 3 point and a 2 point ace card to get a 5 point ace card. Anchor cards cannot be traded in, but ace cards may be traded for new anchors.

11.0 Example of play

Jerrud Smithson travels along a wooded trail, peering nervously into the forest. Because he is a shape shifter, Jerrud worries about being discovered by a necromancer. He hasn't been near a village in weeks. Nights spent sleeping on cold ground have made him reconsider his solitary life. He is heading for a village where he hopes to find a hot meal and a warm bed.

The gamemaster decides that an adventurer, Gregor, is hidden in some bushes beside the trail. Gregor has banditry in mind, and Jerrud looks like an easy mark. Since Jerrud might see Gregor before he springs his ambush, the gamemaster asks the player to make a contest roll. The player rolls 7 and the gamemaster rolls 5: Jerrud spots Gregor and stops.

Realizing he's been seen, Gregor attacks. The gamemaster calls for an initiative roll. She rolls 8 and adds Gregor's SPD (1) to get an initiative number of 9. The player rolls 6. Jerrud's SPD is 0, so his initiative number is 6. Gregor moves and acts first.

Gregor makes a regular movement towards Jerrud. The gamemaster decides Gregor was nearby when Jerrud spotted him (within 70 feet) so he is able to get close enough to attack. For his action, the adventurer attacks Jerrud with his longsword. His STR of 3 includes the +1 STR of the sword, so the gamemaster rolls 10 and adds 3 to get an attack number of 13. Jerrud decides not to react, saving his action until his initiative number is called. Instead, he relies on his natural DEF (3) and his buckler (Which has a DEF of +1) to get a defense number of 4. He takes 9 points of damage to HP, and is badly hurt.

Now it is Jerrud's turn to move and act. He makes a regular movement away from his opponent. Gregor would like to stop him, but he used his movement getting close enough to attack, so he has to let him go. For his action, Jerrud wants to stop bleeding. The player uses Dragon Self-Healing, a card with a timing of 1/F : It takes 1 action to use and it only stays in play for an instant. However, that's long enough to heal 3 HP of Jerrud's damage.

The gamemaster calls for an initiative roll for the second round. Gregor gets a 5 (+1 SPD) for an initiative number of 6. Jerrud is lucky; his player rolls 8, and he gets to go first. The player decides Jerrud will make another regular movement away from Gregor. The adventurer responds with a reaction, immediately moving to block Jerrud's escape. The gamemaster makes a roll (7) and adds Gregor's STR (3) and his SPD (1) for a number of 11. The player rolls a 7. His SPD and STR are 0, but he gets +1 STR from the dagger he carries, so his number is 8. Gregor wins the roll. Jerrud has used up his movement, only to find himself face to face with his enemy.

Realizing that he's in deep trouble, Jerrud decides to save his action to defend himself. Sure enough, for his action Gregor attacks. Jerrud reacts by defending. The gamemaster rolls 9 and adds Gregor's STR to get an attack number of 12. The player rolls 4 and adds Jerrud's natural DEF (3) and Buckler (DEF +1) to get a boosted defense number of 8. Despite his parry, he loses another 5 HP. Jerrud is getting desperate.

When initiative is rolled for the third round, Jerrud wins. The player believes it is time to get serious, and he using playing cards. The first card played is Dual Action: With a timing of 1/R, it uses up Jerrud's action, but gives him 2 actions this round.

One action is used to play Dragon Form. In a single movement, Jerrud throws off his tunic and

changes shape. His battle cry turns into a terrifying roar; Gregor finds himself gawking up at a dragon bigger than a horse. By laying the Dragon Form on top the character card, the player has changed more than Jerrud's appearance: His STR is now 6, and his DEF 7. Jerrud roars again, and uses his second action to attack.

Gregor reacts by trying to dodge, and the gamemaster asks the player if Jerrud is going to try to catch his enemy. The answer is yes, so the gamemaster rolls (7) and adds Gregor's SPD (1) for a number of 8. The player rolls 12. Jerrud is not about to let his opponent escape!

Since he can't get away, Gregor reacts again, using his action to defend himself. The gamemaster rolls a 4 then adds Gregor's STR (5) to get a boosted defense number of 9. The player rolls 11 and adds his STR of 6 to get an attack number of 17. Gregor howls in pain as he loses 8 HP.

Although he has used his action and movement, there is more Jerrud can do. The player pulls out two independent cards, Fire Breath and Fire Fingers. These take no actions or movement to use. The gamemaster responds by playing Dispel Magic, an independent card Gregor has as a feature. He wants to dispel Jerrud's Fire Fingers. However, the player also has a Dispel Magic card, which he plays to dispel Gregor's dispel!

No more independent cards are played, so the card effects are resolved, starting with the last blocking card played. This is Jerrud's Dispel Magic. The card says 'Success at + 2 + WIS', so the player rolls (8), then adds +2 and Jerrud's WIS (1) for a number of 11. Gregor gets to make a resistance roll, adding +1 for every card value point of his spell. The gamemaster rolls (7) and adds +2 (for the card value) to come up with a 9. Jerrud wins; Gregor's dispel fizzles.

Fire Fingers is no longer blocked. Following the rules on the card, the player rolls 1D6 and does 6 HP of magical damage to Gregor. His armor, shield and DEF give no protection from this damage. Then the dragon breathes fire. The Fire Breath ability allows him to do 2D6 HP magical damage. Gregor loses another 6 HP. He only has 2 HP left.

When Gregor wins the next initiative roll, he uses his movement and action to run away. Jerrud reacts by pursuing, but loses the roll. Gregor flees in terror.

The fight is over. Jerrud could try to track Gregor, but he decides to let him go. He changes back to human (by draining the Dragon Form card and setting it aside), puts on his tunic and picks up his items (all dropped when he changed into a dragon). Then he considers his options.

Should he go on to the village or turn back? What if Gregor gets there first, and tells the villagers he was attacked by a dragon? Will a necromancer be waiting to ambush him when he arrives?

Then Jerrud's gaze falls on a patch of burnt grass scorched by his Fire Breath. He remembers how strong he felt as a dragon, and how Gregor fled in fear. For the first time, a new idea occurs to him. Perhaps it's a good thing to be a dragon.

Jerrud hoists his sack on his back and continues down the trail towards the village. If there are hunters waiting for him, perhaps he will hunt them.

Gamemaster Rules

Sheet #2. Read this second

12.0 What is a gamemaster?

In role playing, players take the role of characters, and the gamemaster plays everything else in the world: Friends, enemies, shopkeepers, warp squirrels, magic, places and the weather. Gamemasters tell players what's going on and who is doing it. They set up the beginning of a story then work with players to role-play the ending.

If you can tell a story, you can be a Dragon Storm gamemaster. It's fun, and we've designed the game to make it easy for you. All you'll need are pencils, paper, six-sided dice and blue-backed Dragon Storm cards.

13.0 Setting up a game: As the gamemaster, it's your job to set up the game. This is done by combining the four types of gamemaster cards to create stories. Each type of blue-backed card represents a different story element.

Terrain cards show places where stories happen.

Scene cards give one or more story plotlines.

Cast cards represent the people and creatures in your story.

Feature cards give your cast members special skills and abilities.

A short story created with cards is called an encounter. You can have one encounter in your game, or many. It all depends on how long you want your game to last. With practice, you will be able to play a single encounter quickly (say, over a lunch break). For a longer game, you can include multiple encounters that take an evening to play out.

Cards for each encounter are placed in a pile called an encounter stack. Encounter stacks are set out to create an adventure map. To create encounter stacks and an adventure map, follow the steps below.

13.1 Determine the challenge number: If you make encounters too dangerous, characters will never survive them. Encounters that are too easy will bore players. To make your encounters just tough enough, use the *challenge number* as a guide.

Add up the card points for all the characters in the game (you will find card points on the character sheets). The sum of the characters card points is the challenge number. As you are picking out cards for an encounter, add up the card value of all the cards you choose. When the combined card value equals the challenge number, the encounter is quite tough. An encounter with less card value will be easier. As characters gain more card points, you will find that encounters which equal their challenge number will become even tougher. Vary the card value of encounters as you see fit. The challenge number is only meant as a guideline.

Example: Sandy is designing an encounter for two characters whose card points are 16 and 17. She adds up their points to get a challenge number of 33.

13.2 Pick a terrain card: An encounter stack has only one terrain card, and it is always the top card of the stack. Place this card face up when it represents an area the characters have explored, and face down to show an area where they have never been.

13.3 Pick scene cards: Each scene card has one or more storylines. You will want to choose a storyline before you go on to the next step, because different stories use different cast members.

Each scene card represents a separate encounter in the encounter stack. You can put as many scenes in an encounter as you like. You may also create random scenes, which are encounter stacks without a terrain card. These random scenes are set to one side, and may be played anytime you choose.

The stories on scene cards are meant to be flexible. Feel free to modify a storyline any way you like. You can even create your own scene card by jotting down a story line on a small piece of paper.

13.4 Pick cast cards: Cast members are characters

played by the gamemaster. The same rules that apply to characters apply to cast members, with one important exception: Cast members do not need item cards for the equipment listed on their cards. The modifiers for these items are included in their stats.

Each scene card in the encounter stack will need to have its own cast members. Pick cast members that match the storyline you have chosen.

Spirits are an unusual type of cast member with special powers. They can manifest, taking on the physical form they had while alive, or disembodiment, becoming invisible. A manifested spirit can look like a living being or choose to appear transparent and ghostly. It can speak, fight, cast magic and otherwise appear to be alive. At any time, a manifested spirit may disembodiment, becoming invisible and formless. While disembodied, a spirit can do nothing to directly effect the physical world, but it can see the physical plane and inspire dreams in the living. Disembodied spirits are also very mobile. They can move through 3 terrain areas in a day.

13.5 Pick feature cards: A cast member can have as few or as many features as you choose. If a feature card has a duration of P (permanent) in its timing, it stays in play all the time (like an anchor card). Features with any other duration are drained and recharged, the same as ace cards.

When the word 'Warp' appears in the card type line of a feature card, it is a warp feature. Any sentient cast member with a warp feature becomes a warpspawn. Any animal with a warp feature is a plague beast.

When the word necromancy appears in the card type line, only a necromancer may use this kind of feature. Necromancers may also use player wizard cards as features.

Player cards may be used as features. If you do this, try to choose player cards that match the cast member. For instance, Howling Frenzy makes a great feature for a wolf-like wakana, but Dragon Claws works better with a terra raptor. Any cast member with the word witch, wizard or shaman as part of card type may use that type of card as a feature.

Example: Sandy decides to beef up an elfen fighter cast member with some feature cards. She chooses Bat Wings, Fire Breather and the player cards Nightvision and Dual Shot. Bat Wings and Fire Breather are warp cards, so the elf becomes a warp elf. Dual Shot will be drained after it's used; the elf will be able to reuse it after she has rested. Nightvision, Fire Breather and Bat Wings are all P (permanent) duration cards, so the elf will always be able to use them.

13.6 Create an adventure map: Once you've designed encounter stacks, you can use them to make an adventure map. This map is a group of encounter stacks laid out in a line, a grid, or as a blind map.

13.6.1 Line maps: A line map works well for beginning gamemasters. Lay out 3 or more encounter stacks in a row. The first and last stacks contain village scenes. Characters have to travel from one village to the other, perhaps to escape a pursuing necromancer.

13.6.2 Grid maps: Grid maps allow more freedom of movement. Lay out encounter stacks in a grid. Characters may travel, one stack at a time, to any encounter stack on the map. When characters reach the edge of the grid, the gamemaster may set up a new grid adjacent to the first one, or rule that travel is blocked by an impassable barrier, such as towering mountains.

13.6.3 Blind maps: A blind map begins with one stack laid out. This is the characters' starting point. The gamemaster has designed other encounter stacks and set them aside. When players choose what direction their characters are travelling, lay out one of your encounter stacks in that direction. Once the

characters have dealt with this stack, players choose direction again, and you lay out another encounter stack. By repeating this process, you can slowly build an elaborate adventure map.

13.6.4 Reusing maps: If you want to reuse an adventure map, record the layout of your terrain cards on a piece of paper. The rest of the cards in the encounter stacks may change between adventures. Creating permanent maps is explained in section 16.3.

14.0 Running the Game:

You've designed encounter stacks and created an adventure map; now it's time to play. Run the game by following the order of play described below. This order is repeated for every encounter stack the characters travel to. If there is more than one scene in a stack, repeat steps 4 through 6 for each scene after the first.

Example: Sandy has set up a game for two players, The player's characters, Genna and Praxius, have heard that a shape shifter has been imprisoned in a Ruined Elethay Temple. They've set out to rescue the captive.

From Sandy's point of view, she has set up a grid map with 6 encounter stacks. The Ruined Elethay Temple is somewhere on the map, hidden under a turned down terrain card. Sandy knows where the temple is, but the players do not. Their characters will have to search for it.

14.0.1 The order of play

1. Terrain movement
2. Exploration
3. Daily upkeep
4. Running encounters
5. Acquire loot
6. Repeat the order of play

14.1 Terrain movement: Players choose which direction their characters move on the adventure map. Characters can move one stack at a time in any direction, including diagonally.

If they're on foot or horseback, characters must travel for one day and rest for one night to move through a terrain card. If characters force march, moving both day and night, they will double their rate of movement. However, they will not recharge any drained ace cards until they rest. After they've been on forced march for one day and one night, characters drain one random ace card every 2 hours they keep moving. Once a character on forced march has drained all ace cards, he collapses in exhaustion. He will not be able to travel until he has regained four ace cards (or all of his ace cards, if he has less than four).

Example: Genna and Praxius start in the southwest (lower left) corner of Sandy's adventure map. They decide to travel northeast (travelling diagonally, and to the right). The top card of the encounter stack they are moving into is turned down, so the are entering unexplored territory.

14.2 Exploration: After movement, pick up the encounter stack for the area characters have entered, being careful that the players can't see your cards. If the terrain card of the stack is face up, the characters are in familiar territory: No exploration roll is needed. If the card is turned down, the characters are exploring unfamiliar territory. One of them must win an exploration roll, or they will lose their way.

A player whose character has the Scout Background or Scouting anchor is the best choice to make this roll, because these cards give a bonus to exploration rolls. When you roll against the player, add the card value of the terrain the characters are exploring. For example, if characters are exploring stormland mountains, add +3 to your roll.

When a player loses an exploration roll, the gamemaster gets to decide what happens next. Lost

characters may go the wrong way on their next terrain movement (for instance, going east when they meant to go north) or they could be trapped in an encounter stack, unable to find their way out until you allow them to make another exploration roll.

Example: Picking up the encounter stack, Sandy sees a Stormland Forest terrain card. She calls for an exploration roll. Genna has a Scout Background, so her player makes the roll, getting a 7. The card allows her to add +1+WIS (the character's WIS is 1) resulting in a roll of 9. Sandy rolls a 5 and adds +2 for the Stormland Forest, to end up with a 7. The player wins, and Genna finds a path through the forest.

14.3 Daily upkeep Characters have to eat and drink. They must rest to recharge drained ace cards. Characters passing through an area where magic is strong, may take taint damage. All these things happen every day, as part of daily upkeep.

Look at the terrain card for the area characters have entered. Two or more of the following lines appear in bold type in the card rules. Here is what they mean.

14.3.1 Supply use: This is how much food and water a character consumes each day he is in a terrain area. During daily upkeep, players remove coins from their resource sheets equal to the supply use of the terrain. Characters who run out of supplies take damage equal to the amount of food and water they lack. For example, if a terrain card has a supply use of 1 food and 1 water, an out of supply character loses 2 HP.

14.3.2 Recharge: This is the rate at which characters regain drained ace cards when they sleep. For example, '1 per 4 hours' means that a character regains 1 ace card every 4 hours he sleeps. Recharged cards are regained randomly; the player shuffles her drained cards, places them face down and draws her recharged cards from the pile. The recharged cards may now be reused.

Although it's part of daily upkeep, recharge does not happen until characters sleep. Keep in mind that the recharge rate is for peaceful rest. You may rule that fewer cards are recharged if sleep is uncomfortable or interrupted.

14.3.3 Warp recharge: Cast members recharge drained cards too. Warp recharge is the rate at which warped creatures, such as plague beasts, warpspawn and necromancers, regain cards.

14.3.4 Taint damage: In some places, magic is so strong that it can hurt living things, inflicting damage called taint. The different kinds of taint damage are explained below.

14.3.5 Od damage: When the word 'pristine' appears as the second word of the card type, characters have entered a place where magic is strong and pure. Pristine areas are supernaturally beautiful, but they are also dangerous. Characters and cast take the Od damage listed on the card during daily upkeep. If they have taint DEF against Od, it is subtracted from the damage. For example, a character whose taint DEF is 3 Od only takes 1 HP damage in a terrain with taint damage of 4 Od.

14.3.6 Warp damage: If the word 'Warp' appears as the second word of the card type, the terrain is ugly, diseased and unnatural. The magic in a Warped area is twisted and powerful: Characters and cast take the Warp damage listed on the card. If they have taint DEF against Warp, it is subtracted from this damage.

14.3.7 Waste damage: When 'Waste' appears as the second word of the card type, the terrain has been drained of magic. The land is barren, and the soil grey and dusty. Characters and cast take the Waste damage listed on the card. If they have taint DEF against Waste, it is subtracted from this damage. All cast members with no taint DEF have a taint DEF of

4 Waste.

14.3.7 Normal terrain: If the word 'Normal' appears as the second word of card type, the terrain inflicts no taint damage.

Example: Looking at the Stormlands Forest card, Sandy finds the information for daily upkeep. Supply use for the forest is 1 food and 0 water. Sandy tells the players that they each eat 1 ration of food, so the players each remove a penny from the coins which represent food. Because the forest is normal terrain, it inflicts no taint damage.

Recharge for the forest is 1 per 4 hours. This means each character regains 1 drained ace card for every 4 hours of sleep. Since the characters entered the forest during the day, Sandy will not let them recharge cards until they have slept.

14.4 Running encounters Once upkeep is taken care of, you can start telling players the story of the encounter. There is a kind of storytelling which works well for Dragon Storm. It is called Description, question and response (abbreviated DQR).

Description: Look over the cards you've picked for the encounter and start describing what the characters see. Begin by describing the art on the terrain card. For example, "You see blue and gray rocky mountains, shrouded in clouds." Tell the players what their characters smell, feel and hear. Is a cold wind howling through the trees? Does a gentle spring breeze carry the sound of bird songs and the smell of flowers? Players who understand what their characters are experiencing do a better job of role playing and have more fun while they're at it.

Question: To find out how the players are going to react to what you've described, you'll need to ask questions. When players first enter a terrain area, ask them "What are your characters doing here?" If they are slow to answer, ask leading questions. "Are you hunting? Searching for something? Just passing through?" Encourage the players to give you specific answers instead of general ones. The answer "my character is looking around," is not as good as, "my character is looking for bandits."

Response: When players answer your questions, they have begun to role-play. You have set up a situation, and they are imagining what their characters would do in response. This is a good time to encourage players to use cards to support their characters' actions. For instance, a character looking for bandits may combine a Perception anchor with a Spot Hidden ace to increase her chances of seeing concealed enemies.

While responding, the players will start questioning you in return, looking for details about what is happening to their characters. For answers, refer back to your cards and describe the next element in the story, repeating the DQR cycle. DQR continues until the encounter is over.

Example: In the encounter she is running, Sandy has combined a Stormlands Forest terrain, a Stormlands Hunters scene, and the cast cards Dwarf Fighter and Vermite Fighter. She begins the DQR cycle, starting with the terrain card.

Description: Sandy describes a thick, overgrown forest on a hot, muggy day. The trees are full of life: Birds sing, squirrels chitter and small animals rustle through the undergrowth as characters walk by.

Question: Sandy asks the players what their characters are doing in the forest. She wants to know if they are trying to pass through this place, or carefully searching the area.

Response: Genna wants to attempt to find the ruined temple the characters are looking for, and her player uses a Spot Hidden card to support her action. Praxius is low on food, so he decides to hunt. The player refers to his Sling card, which gives a +1 COR bonus to ranged attacks, and tells Sandy that Praxius

will try to bring down some squirrels with his sling.

Now Sandy refers to her scene card, Stormland Hunters. She has chosen one of the possible scenes from the card: Prosperous hunters have claimed hunting rights to this area. She continues the DQR cycle with the scene card.

Description: The temple ruins are not in this encounter, so Sandy has to improvise when Genna's player wins the roll for her search. She tells the player that Genna finds several snare traps, one of which contains a live rabbit. Genna also spots runic markings carved into some trees. Next, Sandy makes a contest roll against the other player to see if Praxius can bring down a squirrel. She allows +1 to his roll for his sling, but adds +2 to her roll because the forest undergrowth makes it hard to spot prey. She rolls 6 (+2) to get 8. The player rolls 11 (+1) for a 12. Sandy decides that Praxius has bagged two fat squirrels.

Question: Sandy asks both players what they are going to do next.

Response: Genna decides to free the trapped rabbit. Praxius starts building a fire to cook his squirrels.

The encounter has played out the way Sandy wants. She looks at her cast cards, Dwarf Fighter and Vermite Fighter, and continues the DQR cycle.

Description: Sandy asks the players to make perception contest rolls for their characters. They both fail their rolls, so they don't realize anything has happened until someone clears his throat behind them. Turning, they see a short, stout dwarf glowering at them. He is wearing scuffed taur armor and carrying a buckler. A sling and carved cudgel hang from his belt. Beside him, a rat-like vermite eyes the characters nervously. The dwarf points at the runic markings on a nearby tree. "This is my territory," he says. "Clear off."

Question: Sandy wants to know what the characters are going to do now.

Response: Genna's player reaches for her Unicorn Form card, and tells Sandy that Genna is glaring back at the dwarf. Praxius' player is not so eager to fight; he tells Sandy that Praxius is stepping between Genna and the dwarf, smiling and holding up his hands. Praxius speaks to the dwarf, promising that the characters will do no more hunting in the area. He offers to share his squirrels. The player uses his Charm ace card and asks for a contest roll. Sandy rolls a 7. The player rolls 9, then adds his character's WIS to get a number of 10. The dwarf frowns, looks at the cooking squirrels and says, "They need salt."

Genna, Praxius, Garus the dwarf and Serval the vermite (both names Sandy made up on the spur of the moment) end up sharing the meat and talking for hours. From Garus, the characters learn that the ruined earth temple is west of their current location. Sandy allows the players to return 1 penny each to the coins that represent their food. The meal they've eaten will prevent them from having to consume rations.

Stormland Hunters is the only scene in the encounter stack, so after the hunters leave, the rest of the day and night are peaceful. The characters take turns standing shifts during the night, so each gets four hours sleep. This allows them to each recharge one random ace card. The next morning they decide to travel west, and the order of play begins again.

14.5 Acquire loot Characters who defeat cast members may be able to loot items, money and supplies from fallen foes. Intelligent enemies may carry 1D6 food rations and 1D6 water rations, if the gamemaster allows. Cast members have items listed on their cards. You may allow the items to be looted by characters. However, in combat, weapons break, armor is damaged and magic items fail. To simulate this, a character may only loot an item if his player

has a card for that item in his unused cards. If no player has a card for an item, it was broken during the fight.

When two or more players have an unused card for a single item, and they can't decide between themselves who gets it, all players who want the item make a contest roll. The player with the highest roll picks up the item. A player who owns an item card he is interested in looting may let the gamemaster know that his character is looking for it. You can choose if you want to include the item in a scenario.

14.6 Repeat the order of play Once all of the scenes in an encounter stack have been resolved, players decide where to go next and the order of play is repeated. This process continues until the players have dealt with all of the encounters in the game.

14.7 Rewarding players As each encounter is resolved, set aside the cards for the encounter (except for the terrain card, which remains part of the map). When the game ends, add up the card value of all the set aside cards, then add the card value of the terrain cards characters have travelled. These combined card values are role playing points. Role playing points are divided between the players in the game, who can use them to buy more cards for their characters.

Example: Sandy combined the following cards to create her encounter: Stormland Forest (card value 3), Stormland Hunters (card value 4), Vermite Fighter (card value 5), Dwarven Fighter (card value 9). Two Vigorous Strike cards were used as features for the dwarf, but he never used them, so Sandy doesn't add them to the total. The encounter yields 19 role playing points, which will be divided between Praxius and Genna at the end of the game.

You may also reward players with individual bonuses, boon cards and by removing flaws.

14.7.1 Individual bonus: If a player has done a particularly good job of role playing, you may give him 5 to 20 extra role playing points. How many points to give is up to you.

14.7.2 Boon cards: Mentors are special cast members who recruit characters into the Valarian Champions, a secret society founded to oppose necromancer. Mentors also award boons. A character may use an unused boon card if a mentor awards it to him: For example, if the player has the Valarian Champion Boon card in his unused cards, he may use it for his character if a mentor asks his character to become a Valarian Champion. Mentors give boons to people who do things to further the cause of Valarian Champions, such as destroying a powerful necromancer, restoring a stolen temple stone, or protecting an earth village from a dragon storm.

14.7.3 Removing Flaws: If characters have flaws, you may allow players to remove them as a reward for exceptional role-playing. This role-playing should be related to the flaw. For example, the Fear of Rats flaw may be removed if the character does exceptional things to confront his fear (such as becoming a rat catcher).

15.0 Improvised role-playing: In the example of running an encounter, the gamemaster used improvised role-playing. Instead of pre-planning the encounter, she jotted down a few notes beforehand and made up everything else during the game. Cards in the encounter stack provided some answers to the players' questions, but most of the answers weren't on cards. Sandy came up with them on the spot.

Improvisational role-playing gives a gamemaster freedom and flexibility. Suppose you create an encounter involving a nasty vermite spy who's planning to betray characters to a necromancer. Unexpectedly, the characters try to befriend this scoundrel. If you pre-planned the encounter, you may have put in a lot of work ahead of time designing a detailed story dependent on the vermite being an enemy. The friendly characters will ruin all your

plans, so it's likely that you'll have the spy betray them no matter how kind they are. On the other hand, if you improvise this encounter, you can be flexible. Since you haven't invested a lot of time creating the spy storyline it's easy for you to change course. Perhaps the vermite turns out to be a reluctant tool of the necromancer, eager to sell him out at the first opportunity. Now the story can be about characters trying to recruit the vermite as a double agent, and the plotline becomes a collaboration between the players and the gamemaster.

Another advantage of this method is how little time it takes to prepare. Because you're not pre-planning, preparing to play is just a matter of laying out cards and reviewing your campaign notebook (explained in section 16.3). If you enjoy role-playing but haven't had the time to pre-plan a campaign, you may find improvisation works well for you.

You can also combine pre-planning with improvisation. For instance, you might pre-plan one encounter stack in a game, and improvise the rest. This gives you the best features of both methods.

The following tips may help you master improvisational role-playing.

15.1 Make up the answers: If you're accustomed to having everything planned out, making up answers as you go along may take some getting used to. Snap decisions can be made easier by using dice.

When a player asks a question and you can't immediately think of an answer, make a contest roll. If the player wins, the answer to the question is favorable to her. For instance, say a character asks an innkeeper about local rumors and information. If the player wins a contest roll, the innkeeper might tell her about a disguised necromancer living nearby. If she loses the roll, the innkeeper may complain about taxes and the weather.

15.2 Make your own rules: When you run into a situation not covered in the rules, you can either resolve it with a contest roll (the situation is resolved in favor of whoever wins the roll) or make up your own rule on the spot. For example, when a character sneaks up on an enemy, you may decide to allow him to add a +3 STR modifier to his attack, or ignore the opponent's DEF.

Once you're familiar with the rules, you may decide to vary the order of play (for instance, performing daily upkeep after running encounters). This is fine, as long as all the steps are completed.

15.3 Take notes: By jotting down a few notes about things that happen to characters during a game, you can keep track of what's going on, and come up with ideas for future adventures.

16.0 Running a campaign: In role-playing, the stories of the characters are continued from one game to the next. These continuing adventures are called campaigns. The following rules can help you link adventures together within a campaign.

16.1 Returning cast members: When characters make friends or enemies, these people may return to help or hinder them. Mentors make excellent friends. A campaign needs at least one returning mentor to aid characters and grant boons. Necromancers can be persistent enemies. A dead necromancer may see him turn up again, fortified by a Risen Necromancer card.

16.2 Goals: It might take more than one adventure for characters to achieve an important goal, such as killing an ancient necromancer or rebuilding a ruined Elethay temple. Long term goals can give characters a sense of purpose.

16.3 Campaign notebook: A campaign notebook is an excellent tool for keeping track of returning characters and long term goals. It's also a good place to record permanent adventure maps. Graph paper works best for drawing maps, and clear plastic card sleeves can hold cards for returning cast members.

17.0 The history of the Stormlands

The Stormlands were not always as they are now. Instead of warring city states ravaged by dragon storms, the stormlands were once part of ancient empires that dominated the world. Five hundred years ago, people of all races lived in the shining cities of the mortal kingdoms. They traded wealth and knowledge freely. It was a golden age.

During this magical era, dragons came down from their isolated clanholds and formed alliances with mortals. They gave their allies protection and magic items in return for the food, goods and labor they lacked. Dragons sometimes even took mortal form and married into mortal families, producing children with dragon's blood.

At the time, this was considered a blessing. Mortals with dragon's blood sometimes grew up to be dragons themselves. Other times the blend of mortal and immortal blood created different kinds of shape shifters: Unicorns, werewolves, gargoyles and others. All of these beings were respected by mortals.

Then, for reasons lost to history, dragons again became distant and complacent. At the time, mortals didn't understand why this had happened. Few realized that a terrible evil had taken root.

Wizards, witches and shamans had long used Od, the force of pure magic, to power their spells. There was also another kind of magic, twisted and corrupt. It was Warp: Pure magic turned toxic and poisonous.

For a long time, Warp existed only in small pockets, more a curiosity than a threat. Very rarely, enough Warp accumulated in one place to create a Warp storm, a destructive tempest of wild magic. No one paid attention to Warp for a long time, until it suddenly started growing strong and spreading to poison and corrupt the land. As Warp spread, the storms followed: The Age of Storms had begun.

When Warp storms started to overwhelm the kingdoms, mortals appealed to dragons for help, but they got no answer. Eventually, some bold mortals travelled to the dragon clanholds to find out what had happened to their old allies. They found the holds empty, or full of Warp. The dragons were gone.

The mortal kingdoms tried to struggle on without their allies, but they were doomed. The storms grew stronger every year. Warpspawn and plague beasts raided constantly. The tox, a terrible disease caused by Warp, depopulated whole countries. Eventually, all that was left of the Mortal Kingdoms were crumbling ruins and half-remembered legends.

This was when the necromancers took power. They had been hiding in places where Warp was strong, and practicing their foul death magics for centuries. Most people ignored them, believing them mad. Now they came out of hiding, wielding great magical power and claiming they knew what had destroyed the Mortal Kingdoms. According to necromancers, dragons had created the Warp, and dragons were controlling the Warp storms. The mortals' vanished allies were their enemies.

Terrified and starving, many mortals were ready to believe anyone who promised salvation. They made necromancers their leaders, and helped them hunt down anyone with dragon's blood. Mortals even started calling Warp storms dragon storms.

People with dragon's blood never believed the necromancers' stories. Eventually, they discovered the truth: By using secret magics and recruiting spies, and with the help of mysterious allies, necromancers had managed to kill most dragons. They drained the dragons' natural magics, growing powerful enough to escape death for centuries; however, the same spells that increased their strength produced huge quantities of Warp. The Warp fueled the dragon storms, which destroyed the Mortal Kingdoms.

Now the descendants of the dragons are fighting back. Shape shifters and their allies have banded together and have formed the Valarian Champions.

They are struggling to take the Stormlands back from necromancers, and purge the world of Warp.

18.0 Running Necromancers

Necromancers are the main villains of Dragon Storm. Here are some tips to help you understand their motives and behavior.

Necromancy is about the selfish pursuit of power. Each necromancer is trying to gain enough magical power to become immortal, and will do anything to achieve this goal: Drain shape shifters, destroy temples, or poison the land with Warp.

Because draining shape shifters create Warp, any place a necromancer drains a victim will start to become tainted. If this goes on long enough, the Warp will build up and create a dragon storm. The necromancer will then tell any local people that dragons sent the storm, and encourage them to hunt shape shifters. This deadly cycle can keep a necromancer stocked with victims for years.

Powerful necromancers spend most of their time in strongholds, guarded by warpspawn servants. They send apprentices to gather more victims, and employ many spies to hunt shape shifters. Any shape shifter who advertises her identity will soon be reported. Although they are powerful and feared, necromancers have a weakness. They are too selfish to co-operate, and spend as much time fighting with each other as hunting shape shifters. Clever characters will learn to use this to their advantage.

19.0 Shape Shifters' Journey

A Dragon Storm Adventure

This is an adventure for beginning Dragon Storm characters. The story is designed for shape shifters, but non-shifting characters, such as orcs, can be included as allies.

The characters grew up in a Warp village controlled by a necromancer. It was a hard life, but they managed to scrape by. Then a powerful dragon storm hit the village, and all of the shape shifter characters changed for the first time. They escaped before the village necromancer caught them, but he has sent one of his apprentices after them. The apprentice's orders are to bring the characters back to the village, alive if possible, dead if necessary.

The following encounter stacks describe the area where the characters have fled. They have heard that there is a village somewhere around here. There have also been rumors about a mysterious stranger who aids shape shifters.

These stacks may be laid out in a line map, a grid map, or a blind map. The stack numbers are for

reference, not for any particular placement order. The card value of each stack can be increased or decreased to match the characters' challenge number

Encounter stack #1

Terrain: Stormland Forest

Scene: Stormland Hunters

Cast: One to five Human fighters

The characters first encounter a single hunter acting as scout. His friends are hiding nearby. These fellows are skilled hunters who will sell food to friendly characters for 1/2 GP per ration.

Encounter stack #2

Terrain: Blasted Forest

Scene: Freelance Necromancer

Cast: Apprentice Necromancer, Wakana Fighter

Features (for the apprentice): Stun Blast, Detect Shape Shifter

This apprentice has been sent to hunt shape shifters. He is brash and eager to prove himself.

Encounter stack #3

Terrain: Stormland Plains

Scene: Trade Village

Cast: Vermite Fighter, Dwarf Fighter, Wakana Fighter

Features: Gamemaster's choice

There is a trading post, an inn and the houses of a few craftsmen in this village. The vermite is a merchant who pretends to be friendly, but is actually a spy for the apprentice necromancer. The inn is run by a dwarf, who despises the vermite and may help shape shifters to spite him. A meal and a room in the inn costs 2 GP per night. The wakana is a go between for the apprentice and the vermite. When not working, drink and gossip with local hunters at the inn.

Encounter stack #4

Terrain: Stormland Forest

Scene: Warpspawn Marauders, Nighttime Encounter

Cast: Madspawn

Features: Bat Wings, Tentacles, Nightvision

This monstrous warpspawn will attack at night. It hates shape shifters, and will target any character who has a Form card in play.

Encounter stack #5

Terrain: Stormland Plains

Scene: Stormland Hunters

Cast: One to five Dwarven Fighters

Features: One or more Tentacles cards

At least one of these dwarves has tentacles, which he is careful to keep hidden under his tunic. The tentacles sprouted when he got sick with the tox. He has been to see the necromancer, who has promised to cure the tox and remove the tentacles if the dwarf will

bring him a shape shifter.

Encounter stack #6

Terrain: Stormland Forest

Scene: Wandering Mentor

Cast: Vladus

Features: Vladus may have any Dragon, Shaman, Wizard, Valarian or Universal cards the gamemaster chooses.

Vladus is a dragon mentor who will try to help shape shifters and their allies. He will appear in human form, and will not immediately reveal his identity. Although reluctant to directly fight necromancers, Vladus may aid characters with healing and supplies. Vladus will award the Valarian Champion boon to any character who agrees to become a champion.

STORMRIDER NEWSLETTER

The Stormrider newsletter includes scenarios, stories of the Stormlands, Artist spotlights, and the Stormlands Trading Post where you can redeem the Grandilar Gold pieces on each deck, booster and display box for of Dragon Storm products. To receive an issue, send 9 Grandilar gold and a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to: Stormrider Newsletter, C/O Black Dragon Press, G-3117 Corunna Rd. Suite 178, Flint, MI. 48532.

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Brown and Bill Cicero.

| Character Sheet | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Name _____ | STR _____ |
| Player _____ | COR _____ |
| Race _____ | DEF _____ |
| Gender _____ | SPD _____ |
| Age _____ | WIS _____ |
| Role-Playing Points _____ | HP _____ |
| Card Points _____ | CAP _____ |
| Gold _____ | Character Sheet ↑ Total Stats Resource Sheet |
| Food _____ | |
| Water _____ | |

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| Resource Sheet | |
|----------------|--|
| Gold: | |
| Food: | |
| Water: | |

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| 14.0.1 The order of play |
|--|
| 1. Terrain movement |
| 2. Exploration |
| 3. Daily upkeep |
| 4. Running encounters |
| 5. Acquire loot |
| 6. Repeat the order of play |
| 7.0.2 Combat rounds: |
| Time in the combat zone is measured in combat rounds: Each round represents 10 seconds of a fight. During a combat round, the following things happen in this order. |
| 1. Roll for initiative. |
| 2. Play independent cards any time after initiative. |
| 3. Each combatant gets 1 movement and 1 action when her initiative number is called. |
| 4. Any combatant may react when acted on. |
| 5. When all combatants have moved and acted, repeat the sequence until the fight is over. |

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