

Alliance

Live Action Role-Playing

Player's

Guide

version 2.1

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Dedication

John Finnegan's first encounter with LARPing was eventful; he gathered his supplies, walked out into the night and saw some other players walking towards him.

"Good eve, fellow travelers! How are you?"

The other players were from the court of Capulus in Ravenholt, and they immediately struck this new player down for his twelve coppers, showing no remorse.

John soon afterwards struck a friendship with Baroness Aurora Blakeney, from the "good guy" barony of Westmarch, who took him in and saw his potential. Aurora Blakeney was played by my wife, Heidi Hooper, who introduced me to her new court member. I'm sure his experience with both baronies influenced his attitude toward what the game should and could be like.

This was in the very early days of the game, of which Heidi and I were founders. Around this time, I was running weekend modules at a site in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and John submitted a module to run which was full of great puzzles and encounters. I immediately saw his skills and imagination, and we sat down and worked on the module together. "Why are all these puzzles here?" I asked. "Who made them, and why? You have to explain those things." Together we rewrote it so that the crazy dragon mage known as the Chessmaster was behind them. It proved to be one of the most popular modules we ran at that site.

In 1992, Heidi and I moved to New York to start the Alliance. John helped us move and helped form the Ashbury game, writing much of the background of the lands, later getting involved on the Plot Committee, and creating memorable plotlines and characters that kept the players entertained.

John had one of the greatest senses of humor of anyone I knew, and a massive knowledge of show music, which he would sing at a moment's notice.

One time at the module site we ran in Brooklyn, a local reporter came by to interview us for an article. I had the reporter speak to John, one of the nicest and most eloquent members we had, who laughed and told her that he hoped to meet a nice girl through the game. That very same day, he met Colleen, and their subsequent marriage ceremony was filled with joyous players wishing them both well.

John's Baron later became the Duke, and we both learned something important at that time: You need to have your most powerful noble in game be an NPC. As a PC, it just wasn't fair for me to give him extra money or armies that other PCs didn't get, but it also didn't make sense in-game either. He was constantly frustrated that the bad guys could get away with stuff because he didn't have the in-game power to challenge them like he should.

So John decided that the best thing for the game would be for him to step down, run Plot exclusively, and name an NPC Duke, which proved to be the right decision, and one we have followed since and which I encourage all my chapters to follow as well.

He also later became my General Manager, and that unfortunately caused some problems down the line when we argued over the direction we wanted the game to go. John, for all his great talents, still liked to play while wearing shorts and tennis shoes. He also tended to be a lot more "forgiving" to players who mess up or played bad





guys. I wanted to raise the bar for costuming and role-playing, and wanted there to be real consequences for players who made mistakes. After some debate, I asked him to step down as General Manager (but not Head of Plot) and John instead resigned from both.

This hurt me a lot, but I am happy to report that we did settle our differences soon thereafter. I told him that if he ever wanted to come back to the Plot Committee, the invitation was always open, and I asked John to serve as General Manager of the Alliance, which he accepted.

As General Manager of the Alliance, he helped me soothe many angry chapter owners and work out problems, and had a way of talking to them that I just don't have to get things done. As a member of the Alliance Rule Committee, he brought his years of experience to bear and helped to bring about exciting changes and improvements to the game.

I cannot overstate the importance John brought to the Alliance game.

He was indeed there from before the start, had more influence over it than anyone else (even me sometimes), and made his mark on the world in that way.

On St. Patrick's Day 2008, John was found dead in his bed, from a heart attack. He was only 37 years old.

Friends he had not seen for years heard the news and expressed their sorrows on the Alliance Bulletin Board. His funeral was so well attended that there was no room to sit, and people were forced to listen from the hallways. He had touched so many who remembered him fondly and who wanted everyone to know what he meant to them.

I still find myself thinking "I need to talk to John about this problem" or "John would know the best plot solution for this," and then catching myself a second later. John had been my friend for so long. When I moved to New York, he did too. When I moved to Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, he did too. We talked by phone about once a week, and often through e-mail.

The game would not be where it is today were it not for John Finnegan. Everyone who has said that is correct. No one is exaggerating.

Perhaps the best way to remember him is through the quote from St. Augustine he used on his profile on the Alliance Bulletin Board, which proved so appropriate:

"The key to immortality is not having a life worth living, but living a life worth remembering."

John Finnegan is immortal.



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Introduction

by Michael A. Ventrella

Little did I know 30 years ago that the little roleplaying game I helped to create up in Massachusetts would still be around in the far-off future of 2019, with chapters all over the United States and Canada.

So much has happened since then. For our early games, all the logistics were done on paper, because we couldn't afford one of those new-fangled computers (even though for only \$1200 in 1989 dollars they had over 512K of memory!). Now, more people download the Alliance Rule Books than buy a paperback edition. And who could predict that they would be able to access it on their phones to check a rule while in a Hold? It's like magic!

With that in mind, we have now separated the advice sections of the Rule Book into this separate book to reduce the often intimidating size of the Rule Book and to make it easier to search the Rule Book for what you want.

We've also increased the font size and eliminated the columns in both books because, let's face it, it's hard enough trying to read the small type on a phone or iPad—why make things worse?

Don't think that you don't need this book, however. There are things in here that will greatly increase your enjoyment of a game. There are also provisions in here concerning what we expect from you that hold the power of rules even though they're not in the Rule Book.

Happy LARPing!



Alliance Players Guide

version 2.0

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Welcome to the Alliance!



“Stop, thief!”

The thick fog rolling off the lake made the dirty and uneven cobblestones slippery and treacherous that evening as I dashed past the Manor Hall. All the years of training with the Thieves’ Guild were being tested at this point, and as I slipped from shadow to shadow, my feet made little sound.

I darted past the Mages’ Guild hall and tried to ignore the misty and mysterious scents calling me in. Next door, the weaponsmith peered through his window so I flashed my cloak his way, covering my face in the process.

Behind me, I could hear the sounds of pursuit as the Town Guard gathered in force. It seemed that a crowd of the local townsfolk, eager for excitement and the possibility of reward, had also joined in the chase much to the annoyance of the Captain of the Guard.

“He went that way!”

“Is there a reward for his capture?”

“What happened?”

“He’s stolen the Dagger of Morganna!”

“It was one of the Circle!”

So far, all was going to plan. The Circle of Aln would be implicated, and we of the Thieves’ Guild would finally have the Dagger of Morganna—the magic item rivaled in power only by the Amulet of Xylar. I was to meet The Black Fox behind the Alchemist’s Shop where he would take the Circle’s tabard from me and provide me with a new disguise and an alibi.

Behind me, I could hear the assembled mob becoming most unruly and arguing with the guards about which path I had chosen for my escape. I recognized the voices of many of my fellow guild members causing a majority of the distractions.

I smiled as I turned the corner. This was going to be easy!

“Ah, here he is now!”

A trio of nasty looking longswords surrounded me as I wisely skidded to a halt. Before I could react, I heard a spell being cast and I felt the impact as my arms and legs refused to move. A *Web*!

The red tabards of my captors told me that they were some of the local knights. Were they going to arrest me? Their smiles held no clue.

The Baroness raised an eyebrow slyly as she advanced. I knew I had no chance to fight. I felt someone dig through my cloak and pull out the dagger. “Here it is, My liege.”

I knew that voice. It was the Black Fox! That double-crosser!

“Thank you,” the Baroness said to me as she took the weapon. “Now let’s see if it works.”

I screamed in pain as I felt the dagger enter my side. My life was being sucked out of me! There was no escape!

Unless...

“Hold!” I yelled. “I need a rules marshal.”

My captors blinked and looked around. Sometimes it takes a second or two to reorient yourself after being your character for so long. “I know where Bob is,” said Dame Perisa—or rather Barbara, now. She ran off as we smiled at each other and waited.

Bob arrived and came to me. He’s one of the marshals who can make interpretations of rules and can resolve disputes.

“Bob,” I softly whispered, “Does the Dagger of Morganna actually drain my life if it didn’t get through my armor points?”

Bob smiled. “No, the dagger will only drain you if it gets to your Body Points.”

I turned back to my captors, and as the marshal said “Lay on!” I laughed at their ineffectiveness and taunted them with some information I knew could grab their attention to try to bargain my way out of this mess...



Be All That You Can't Be!

In Alliance games, you create a character concept for a fantasy story and actually play the character. It is much like improvisational theater in that you have a framework created by the props and supporting characters and must develop your part as you progress through the story line. Your character’s attitudes, ambitions, and history are yours to define.

If the adventurous life is your calling, you may play the part of a wanderer, meeting with some friends in the tavern. Your party could get hired by a farmer in desperate straits, and spend the afternoon slaying a foul necromancer and his undead abominations.

If the epic life is not your style, then you can play the part of a town merchant. You can make your money selling your wares—and information—for the right price.

Or perhaps you wish to be one who investigates the magical arts, selling your scrolls and potions to earn the money you need to continue your studies.

Or would you rather try and become leader of the Mages’ Guild? Maybe you want to become a ritual caster and control the elements? The choice is yours.

We are dedicated to the legendary days of high fantasy, while running a fun and safe game.

We have fierce warriors, crafty scouts, powerful mages, loyal knights, and benevolent healers. There are smelly goblins, blood-chilling spectres, evil necromancers, villainous spies to fight ... and your very own legends to create.

How It Works

In Alliance games, a cast of non-player characters (NPCs) are used to set the tone and provide background for the player characters (PCs). They often serve important town functions (such as guild leaders or nobility) and otherwise help to propel the plot and action. Much of what happens on an event, however, is completely decided by the players and the actions they take.

We use padded weapons to simulate actual combat, and a magic system that uses “packets” made of fabric and bird seed to represent the hurling of spells. Medieval costuming and armor enhance the atmosphere.

There is nothing to compare with the feeling of playing for an entire weekend, 24 hours a day, along with possibly hundreds of other players, each with their own desires, fears, and aspirations.

As your character continues to be successful, you gain abilities and influence, and may one day gain a noble title or great fame and wealth. Tales of your adventures may some day be sung by bards, or retold time and again by storytellers sitting by the fire with a cup of spiced cider.

What your character does is entirely up to you. You decide what you want and where you want to be. The future is yours to define and create.

An Overview

A lot of what you will read in the Rule Book may be confusing; there seems to be a lot of rules, and they all rely on each other to a degree that understanding one makes no sense until you understand the other—but how can you do both at the same time?

Don’t be discouraged. It’s really a lot easier than it seems. Here is a *very* basic overview to get you started:

You, the *player*, will be portraying a *character* for the duration of the event. Your character has certain skills. Some of these are usable constantly (such as your skill in a specific weapon) and some are usable only once a day (like the ability to cast a spell). In order to learn more skills, you will have to gain experience.

You will receive *Experience Points* (XP) for attending each event. These XP are what you use to “build” your character and buy new skills. As your character accumulates XP, you will gain levels.

Your character also has a specific *class* (such as fighter, rogue, or scholar) which determines how much BP has to be spent for each skill. This way, you can choose to be a specialist or a jack-of-all-trades.

Your character also is of a specific race, such as human, elf, or dwarf. Each race has its advantages and disadvantages.

Your character will start off with 10 *Body Points*. These are the amount of points of damage you can take before your character is dead or unconscious. As you earn more experience, you will gain more Body Points (based upon your class and race). You will also get *Armor Points* based on what type of armor you are wearing.

Sometimes you will get into battles. When swinging a weapon, you will call out the amount of damage your weapon will do. A standard long sword does 2 points of damage. When you get hit, you will subtract your Armor Points and your Body Points until you are at zero or below. Your opponent will do the same.



Spells may be cast during battles, and they can affect the battle in many ways. You need to know the spells in order to get the most out of your gaming experience.

Spells are represented by small beanbags filled with birdseed. You must say the special words associated with the spell (such as “With Binding Force I Web you!”) and hit your target with the beanbag for the spell to work.

You have a sheet which lists all your skills and spells and you are required to keep track of what you have used up for the day. There are tags for potions, scrolls, and magic items. Everything is documented, and we rely strongly on an honor system to make it all work.

Your First Weekend

You have created your character and picked your starting skills online, so when you arrive at the Logistics desk, you can check in and get all the tags and coins you need.

A character card which lists your current skills and other pertinent information is provided. You will get a new card for every event in order to keep this information accurate and up to date. This allows you, other characters, and the game marshals to keep track of your abilities should any disputes arise.

You should have a pen with you to keep track of what skills and spells you have used.

A marshal will evaluate the costume you are wearing and will assign Armor Points. The more armor you wear (and the better made it is) the more points of protection you will have. You have only a basic medieval shirt and pants which are not worth any Armor Points, but you do have on a nice medieval hat and boots, so the marshal assigns you two Armor Points for being “in genre.”

You then get your weapon checked. Even players who go to every event have to get their weapons checked; weapons do break down and become unsafe. You are given a safety tag to show that the weapon has been checked.

When you first start a character, you’re given a set of points to spend with which you can purchase starting gear like your armor, weapons, or potions. You need to decide what equipment to start with. In this case, you want a small Armor Tag to be able to use your two Armor Points. You also want a Dagger tag, so you can use your weapon. (All of your possessions—armor, weapons, potions, scrolls—will be represented by tags you must keep with you to be able to use in the game.)

You decide that you’d like to purchase a basic Healing potion in case of emergencies, and simply “cash out” the rest of your starting allotment. The marshal hands you a 2 point Armor Tag, a Dagger Tag, a Healing Potion tag, and a few silvers and coppers. It’s not a lot of wealth, but you don’t feel too bad because every other character starting the game gets the same amount of starting equipment.

The game begins. You make sure you’re carrying all your tags, and then you step out into the night.

It’s Friday night and the town is buzzing. Guilds are having meetings, adventuring groups are planning strategy, the elves are having a ceremony, and the tavern is packed.

Rumors of a zombie attack are floating about and the political situation doesn’t look too secure either. Life could be easier—but it could also be boring.

You adjust your boots, make sure your dagger is handy, and start walking at a leisurely pace over to the tavern, but only get a few steps before something jumps out at you. It’s a goblin! You can tell by the ugly green face.

Goblins and other monsters are some of the Non-Player Characters you may meet. Members who want to play monsters get special benefits for that event but must do what the “Monster Marshal” tells them to do. The makeup or masks are sometimes uncomfortable, but not having to worry about your character dying is a relief.

The goblin advances and swings his sword. You pull out your trusty dagger.

Weapons are soft “boffer” weapons. No one has ever been seriously injured using these things—a game of touch football is more dangerous than our combat.

A dagger only does one point of damage while a long sword (which the goblin has) does two. The goblin knows this and smiles (or at least you think he does behind his mask). What the goblin doesn’t know is that one of the skills you bought with your Experience Points is a *Critical Attack* which allows you to do an extra point of damage for a battle.



The battle begins. Each of you calls out what damage you are doing so the other player can keep track. “Two Normal!” yells the goblin. “Two Normal!” you reply, using your *Critical Attack* in the hopes of finishing off the goblin before he finishes you!

The goblin lunges at your chest, but you jump aside just at the last moment! As he passes by, you jab at his back with your dagger.

“Ow!” screams the goblin. “Dat hurt! Me no like you!”

You grin and swing out again, just to tease and torment the creature. He advances. “Me now teach you lesson!”

With a lightning quick thrust, he swings at your chest. You try to block with your dagger, but it’s just too short. Your now ruined shirt tells you that it might be a good idea to be a bit more careful with this foe. You make a mental note to find someone to teach you how to fight with a long sword as soon as possible.

You now have both taken two points of damage. Since you’ve never fought a goblin before, you don’t know how many total points he has. Will the next hit bring him down?

“Give up, smelly human?”

“Never!” you reply, jumping in and taking the foul creature by surprise. His yelp of pain as your dagger slices his chest is very satisfying. . .but he’s still up!

Perhaps running away might be a good option.

The goblin senses your apprehension and follows with a flurry of attacks. You are able to block most of them, but two land their target, cutting through your torn shirt and releasing a spray of blood. The goblin laughs triumphantly.

That does it! This really sparks your anger and you lunge in like a mad man, hacking away at the green-skinned creature. This is more than he can take, and he falls to the ground.

You stand there breathing heavily for a minute, and then you lean over him and search him.

"I search you," you say. He hands you three copper pieces and a strange locked box.

You then have to adjust your card. You show the NPC that you are crossing off your *Critical Attack* skill since you have used that skill for the day. You took six points of damage total, so your armor needs to be refit. You will need to find someone with the skill *Blacksmith* to do that for you. You also lost four of your Body Points.

You only have six Body Points left! Better find a healer and get a *Cure Wounds* spell.

If you die either in battle or by execution, your character can then be resurrected by the Healers' Guild. If you have died more than twice, then you will have to pick from the Bag of Chance. The more deaths you have suffered, the more likely it is that you will pick a black stone from that Bag and then your character will be permanently dead.

You walk into the tavern which is busy as usual. Some local bards are playing quietly in a corner and look over there! It's the local Baron himself, sitting with the Magistrate and the Sheriff! They seem to be arguing over something and it must be important given how many other people are sitting nearby trying to pretend they're not listening.

You find a spot and sit. The selunari tavernkeeper dances over to you and brings you an ale for two coppers. (It's actually a soft drink, of course; alcohol is not allowed.)

A woman sits nearby and pulls out a book and begins reading. By the glow of her hands, you can tell that she is a spellcaster. You walk over.

"Good evening," you say. "Might you be a healer?"

"Yes I am," she replies. "I am Darlissa. Are you in need of help?"

You smile in what you hope is a disarming way and tell her about your encounter with the goblin and ask if she can spare a Cure Wounds spell. She states that such a spell would cost five copper pieces.

Coins come in four denominations. A platinum piece is worth ten gold pieces which is worth ten silver pieces which in turn is worth ten copper pieces. Thus a copper piece is 1/100 of a gold piece and 1/1000 of a platinum piece. The coins are metal tokens, properly colored, and with their value embossed on one side. They jingle nicely in your pouch.



"I can't afford that much," you reply sadly.

She glances at you and sighs. "Very well," she says. "I have to make a living, but I took an oath to help those in need. I will cure you, but you will owe me a favor in the future!"

"Agreed," you reply. *She calls up her power and touches your shoulder.*

"I call upon Earth to grant 5 healing," she says. A burst of warmth fills your body and you can feel the wound healing itself.

She marks her card to show that she has used that spell for the day, and you mark yours to show that you are now back to your maximum Body Points.

A venerable mage then comes up to both of you. With him is a huge warrior in chain mail and a rather shifty-looking hobling.

"Pardon me," says the mage. "My name is Belthivis, and this is Ena and Finther. We were just wondering if you've heard anything about a goblin treasure map. We'd be willing to—Finther! Put that back!—We'd be willing to pay for information that proves to be true."

You try not to show any reaction as he speaks about a rumor he had heard involving a map kept in a small box. Better find out more about these people before making any commitments.



After spending some time discussing your pasts and talking about other rumors and bits of information you have heard, you finally decide that they can be trusted. “I have some information that may be useful,” you admit. “Is there somewhere private around where no one can overhear?”

You travel to Belthivis’ cabin where you show the box to Finther, who happens to be a “locksmith.” He smiles at the challenge and pulls out his tools.

In the world of Alliance games, real locks are used. Buying the required *Create Trap* skill does not guarantee success—it only allows you to make the attempt. Likewise, boxes are really trapped with electronic buzzers or other noisemakers. To “check for traps” you must actually do just that by opening it slightly, seeing where any wires or devices may be inside, and somehow “defusing” the trap before opening the box.

Finther picks the lock. He knows the box is not trapped because you told him the goblin had been carrying it, and traps cannot be moved more than five feet without being set off. Inside the box he finds an unusual amulet, some coins, and a map written in a strange language. He looks at the amulet for a few minutes and declares that he thinks it is worth at least five silver pieces. That’s 50 coppers! Half a gold!

Later you will go to the Mages’ Guild and have it checked to see if it’s magic. However, you and your new companions decide that a current priority is to decode the map, and you begin that arduous task. While this is going on, Finther, who has the skill *Blacksmith*, adjusts your armor so that it is back up to its maximum level.

Suddenly outside, the sounds of battle echo through the hills. Peeking out the window, you cower as you discover that an evil liche has called forth his undead to destroy as much of the town as possible. You consider the situation for a while and then decide that perhaps you had better help—after all, if there is no town left in the morning, everything else is rather meaningless.

Later, after the town is saved (thanks to your assistance), you finish decoding the map. At the bottom is a small note which says “See a marshal when you’re ready to go on this adventure.” You decide to rest for the night to start in the morning and you head to bed with visions of treasure and adventure in your dreams!

This is one way that a group may get into a weekend “module.” Some modules are repeating in that more than one group can go through it at different times, and others are one-time-only. The one-time-only events are usually major affairs, and can affect the whole story line.

So welcome to the Alliance role-playing game, where you can be all that you *can*’t be!

About the Alliance



The Alliance is a group of LARP (Live Action Role Playing) chapters that have joined together to provide the service of the best LARP games possible. These chapters are located around the United States and Canada (so far!).

Within these chapters, there may be individual campaigns. For instance, the “Fortannis” campaign is the main campaign for the Alliance, named for the in-game world in which the game takes place.

If you play in a chapter’s Fortannis campaign, then your character can transfer to any other chapter’s Fortannis campaign, meeting new people and having new adventures, without having to worry about learning any new rules. You can even take your treasure with you and earn experience in this new chapter and bring that back with you to your original chapter.

The Rule Book and this Players Guide contain the rules for the Alliance Fortannis campaign. Any chapter that runs a game in the Fortannis campaign will follow these rules, without any variances.

Chapters may also run other campaigns, taking place in other worlds, which will use the basic rules in this book but may have some variances (for instance, different magic systems or provisions for guns, or a range of new skills and spells). You will *not* be able to transfer characters, experience, or items from one campaign into a different campaign.

While each Fortannis game abides by the rules listed in this book, this does not necessarily mean that every single spell or elixir or magic item is available in every chapter. For instance, you may discover upon entering a specific Fortannis chapter that your *Hallucinate* elixirs are useless there. This allows each game to provide variations that can affect their local plotlines.

When you start a new character, you must list that character’s home chapter. This is the only place where you

can have certain things done for your character such as buying back deaths with your Goblin Points. (We're getting to that, just be patient!)

Each Fortannis campaign is also limited in the amount and type of treasure they are allowed to put into game at each event. This is to provide a consistent economy from game to game.

Each game also has the right to create "Local Chapter Only" items (or "LCO" items). These items are intended for use only in the chapter which is named on the tag of the item, and are usually plot-related items. Coins and Production Point items can never be LCO.

Traveling Between Chapters

If you plan on playing your character in another compatible campaign, you must first contact that other chapter. Each chapter reserves the right to set limits on character levels and in-game items.

You must abide by that chapter's rules and policies when visiting.

In-game, Fortannis is a huge planet and each campaign in Fortannis is situated on its own continent, far from the other campaigns. Players can travel between campaigns through magical mists which teleport them to their destination (sometimes against their characters' wills). These mists prevent large groups from traveling through, thus preventing one campaign from declaring war on another or sending in large amounts of "off camera" NPCs to influence another campaign's plotlines.

This also explains why some items do not transfer from campaign to campaign, because the magical mists do not allow them to.

To find out where the closest Alliance game is to you, or to start an Alliance chapter in your area, visit our web page at www.AllianceLARP.com. Your local chapter will also have its own web page, and there are a number of Facebook pages and other social media pages created by these chapters as well as players.

Chapter Level Caps

Some Chapters may implement a Level Cap. This is a way by which they can run a particular type of game where characters can only reach a certain level of power. If a Chapter is enforcing a Level Cap, they must note this clearly and consistently and state the specific amount of XP they are limiting characters to.

Players attending such a chapter must determine a legal set of skills for their character using any combination of skills their character already knows. They must arrange these skills in such a way as to not exceed the Chapter's declared Level Cap.

This must be done in advance of the event. You are required to adhere to the Chapter's preregistration deadline and guidelines if the Chapter publishes them. You should not expect to be able to show up unannounced and change your Character to fit under a level cap without warning. You must send over a specific Character build which is both (a) legal as per the Alliance rules and (b) contains only skills on the Character's full character sheet.

Example: George's character Belthivis, a Scholar, has 35 XP and the following skills: Small Weapon (2 XP), Educated (3 XP), First Aid (2 XP), Healing Arts (2 XP), 4 1st-level Earth spells (4 XP), 4 2nd-level Earth spells (4 XP), 4 3rd-level Earth spells (8 XP), 3 4th-level Earth spells (6 XP), and 1 5th-level Earth spell (3 XP). George wants to play Belthivis in another Chapter, which has a 25 XP Level Cap. Before the game, George sends an email to that Chapter's Logistics team and says he wants to play Belthivis without the 5th level Earth spell, and with only 1 4th level Earth spell and 3 3rd level Earth spells. He cannot keep the 5th level Earth spell instead of several lower spells, as he would then break the Spell Pyramid rules.

In-game, the Mists of Fortannis which allow travel between various realms has long been known to have mysterious temporary effects on those who use them. It is not uncommon for characters to suddenly lose the ability to perform tasks that seemed simple to them in their own realm.

If a Character's home chapter enforces a Level Cap, the Character continues accruing and spending XP normally, but chooses which skills to use at each event as described above.

Playing under a Chapter Level Cap does not permanently alter the Character's card or skills in any way.

A Character will automatically Fluid Class to the most appropriate Class of their cut-down card, unless the player specifically requests that another Class is used (with appropriate XP costs calculated).

Camping Advice

Keep in mind that Alliance games are not played in a fancy hotel; you will be at a campsite, and should prepare accordingly.

Although some Alliance chapters have their own site in which to play their games, most chapters rent camps for their events, and may be limited in what they can provide because of it.

In any event, no matter which chapter you attend, you should first check to find out what you will need to bring. Some sites have mattresses and some don't; some require you to bring a tent and others provide cabins; some provide a food service and some ask you to bring your own. Some have electricity available for electric blankets, and some do not even have lighting so you have to bring flashlights. Some have limited space, and you may have to timely preregister in order to get a bed.

Food: Some games provide meals, either as part of the admission fee or for an extra fee.

Even if your site provides meals, you may want to bring snack food on your own. If so, bring energy food (trail mix and fruit are good). Junk food like twinkies and potato chips will only weigh you down.

Much of the game is physically intensive, like a sport. Eat and drink accordingly, like an athlete would.

A bit of advice is to not imbibe soft drinks, despite the caffeine rush. Believe it or not, these drinks can dehydrate you and will not aid you in any way. The best things to drink are water, juices and sports drinks like Gatorade.

Packing: Always pack as if it is going to be colder than it is. Bring extra blankets and long johns, because even in the summer, it can get chilly at night. It's always better to have more than enough clothing and blankets for those occasions. Remember: "Players Need Layers." Lots of layers of clothing (and blankets at night) will keep you warmer. When making your bed, put half of your blankets under you as well as on top of you, because heat escapes in both directions. Change your underclothes before going to bed, because otherwise the sweat in your clothing may freeze and make you uncomfortable.



Sample Packing Checklist:

Sleeping bag / bedding / pillows / air mattress

Lantern / light sticks / flashlight

Toiletries

Toothbrush / toothpaste

Soap / shampoo

Face cloth / towels

Toilet paper (just in case we run out)

Prescription medicine

Tampons / feminine hygiene

Bug spray / sun block

Garbage bags (also to keep things dry)

Emergency and repair items

Duct tape / weapon making supplies

Batteries

Matches / lighter

Spare shoelaces

First aid kit / band aids

Game items

Tags / spell books / alchemy books

Game money / Game items / jewelry

Spell packets and alchemy packets

Weapons

Costume

Armor / Shield / Helmet

Jewelry

Make up

Spare Clothes

Socks

Shoes / boots

Pants

Shirts

Underwear / long johns

Jacket / cloak

Gloves

Raincoat

Paper / pen / pencil

Scotch tape (for taping tags to weapons)

Deck of cards / dice



Keeping clean: Running around and playing our game can get you all sweaty and smelly, even in the winter.

You may not think that you need to shower during an event, but you will very likely be completely wrong.

The problem is that you can't tell when you smell most of the time, because you get accustomed to your body odor. However, everyone else can tell.

Please, if you're one of those people who says "I never need deodorant!" or "I just spray myself with lysol and I'm good as new!" then you are probably fooling yourself. Even if you are not sure if this section is referring to you, isn't it better to be safe than sorry?

After a long day, shower before you go to bed so that you don't just transfer your smell into your sleeping bag to linger all day.

For the consideration of your fellow players, please help clean up at the events ... and we mean *you*!

A Guide to Role-Playing

Alliance games are all about role-playing, and we're going to be reemphasizing this all throughout this book and the Rule Book.

Role-playing requires you to create a new persona, acting and reacting as your character would.

It is up to you to decide how your character would react to certain situations that he or she will encounter during the game. You should imagine yourself in a fantasy medieval world full of magic, monsters, and adventure and act accordingly.

When hit with a magical spell, react properly. When hacked at with a weapon, act hurt. This is a live action game, and the more you put into it to make it more believable, the more you will get out of it.

If you take enough damage that your character is dying or unconscious, then fall down and look it! Kneeling down and saying "Well, I guess I'm dead now" adds nothing to the game and is not what Alliance games are all about.

Remember, the purpose of our game is to tell a story. You are a character in that story and the more real you make that character, the better the story will be.

Consider NPCing

No amount of advice can guarantee that your first try as a PC will end you up with exactly what you want. Try being an NPC first.

If you NPC, you might end up as a zombie, a sorcerer's apprentice, a bodyguard, a death rogue, a winemaker, a veterinarian, an ogre, a mercenary spy, a spider, a walnut farmer, or even a statue. Every part you play will give you experience in spellcasting, fighting, disarming and setting traps, or solid generic role-playing.

We encourage players to NPC their first event as a way to experience the rules and styles quicker. You'll have seasoned players at your side to help you learn the rules, you'll get to try different fighting and casting styles, and you'll discover how the game is organized. You'll be doing a lot more as an NPC than as a starting PC, so it's a great way to get that experience you need to help you when you start playing your character.

Also, you will be rewarded with Goblin Points, which you can then use to buy experience for your character so your first game as a PC won't be too low level of an adventurer!

Creating a Character

My name is Deathbringer Bloodblade Darkshadow. My father was a Count and my mother was the heir to the throne of the Elven Kingdom.

When I was but a baby, my parents were killed by a marauding band of bandits who left me and my twin brother to die. They captured my beautiful sister and sold her to Eastern barbarians where she now serves in the harem of their evil leader Konad. Konad's priests used her in their religious ceremonies.

My brother was later kidnapped by gnolls and I had to fend for myself. I proved my worth and strength at an early age when I killed an armed troll with my bare hands.

I taught myself to be the best swordsman in the kingdom. However, I keep my abilities secret as I do not wish for my enemies to find me.

I now travel mysteriously from town to town, dressed all in black. I appear without a sound and disappear as a mere shadow flicking through the night. When I enter the tavern, the crowd grows silent as I sit alone in the corner with my back to the wall.

I do not have many friends but I do have the respect of all. Although I do not seek permanent female companionship, I secretly enjoy the lavish attention that the women give me.

I search for my long-lost brother who I know can help me regain my birthright, rescue my sister and wreak my vengeance against all barbarians. I will be able to recognize him and my sister by our distinctive family birthmark—a scarlet rose on our left elbow.



Oh yeah, I am also searching for my father's sword Doomblade which will only work for members of my family. This sword was created by the finest dwarven craftsmen specifically for my father after he single-handedly saved the dwarven kingdom from the attacking hordes of mountain trolls and death elementals who once plagued the peaceful people. This sword allows me to double any proficiencies I may already have (Plot Committee: Can I have this?).

Although I have often been asked to join with other adventuring groups, I keep to myself and to mine own self I am true. I do adventure from time to time when the cause is worthy.

Thus reads a character history that is lacking in creativity and originality. Who would name their kid “Deathbringer Bloodblade Darkshadow,” anyway? And more importantly, if this person has done all these great heroic things, then why in the world is he entering the game at such a low level? Further, it mentions races that don’t exist in our game, a sexual assault, as well as religion, all of which are prohibited by our rules. Clearly the writer did not take the time to read the rules before writing this.

Creating a believable and fun character history is a significant key to enjoying an Alliance event. Knowing your character’s persona can give you wide ranging role-playing possibilities and can provide the Plot Committee with many ideas.

Understand that the Plot Committee has the right to overrule your character history if it would violate game rules or give your character too much of an advantage in the game. After all, you can’t just say you’re the son of a god with superhuman abilities with a million gold pieces and expect us to allow it. Every new character starts out the same, with basic provisions and a few copper pieces. You cannot have any ritual effects upon you (such as race changes, spirit forges, or marks) nor can you have a noble title or a claim to a noble title. You can’t belong to an elite organization or guild, and you can’t be the leader of a clan or an army. All of these things you can eventually do as your character, but they must be done in-game once you are playing.

Start with a creative name. It doesn’t have to sound all mystical and fantastic. There is nothing wrong with being “Eric the Wanderer.” Pulling out a map of the world is a good way to find interesting names, or just play with some letters and try to make a name from an anagram. Don’t use names from popular books and films. Remember, you’ll be playing in a game where many of the other players like the same literature you do, so if you go naming yourself Rand al’Thor or Frodo Baggins, you’re going to see a lot of rolling eyes.

Note that a well fleshed-out and detailed character history need not be filled with adventure and excitement. Its primary purpose should be to establish your character’s personality—why does your character act and feel the way he or she does?

Think about your own life as a guideline. What is it in your past that has made you what you are today? What is your family like? Your schooling? Your friends? The type of places you have lived? Your jobs? After all, every experience you have shapes your personality.

Know your limitations. Many of the things you will do in our game require real life skills that, to be honest, some players just do not have. You don't roll dice in our game to see if you have the charisma necessary to pull a great con, the dexterity to hide in shadows, or the intelligence to figure out the secret code. You have to actually do it.

Don't create a character who is the world's greatest bard if you can't carry a tune. Don't decide to be the duchy's sneakiest thief if you constantly trip over your own two feet. Don't write about how you outran a powerful troll if you get winded after a 50 yard dash. Don't tell how you gave a great speech and roused the town to battle if in real life you freeze and clam up with nerves whenever you have to speak in public.

Sometimes you have to be humble and realize your own personal limitations when writing your character history, especially since you may be called upon during the game to do the very same things you mentioned in your history.

Know the rules. You couldn't have escaped from the dragon by using your magic invisibility ring because there is no invisibility in our game. You can't be a half-elf/half-goblin because there are no such things. You can't be an apprentice cleric to a long-forgotten god because there are no clerics or gods. Know the rules and save yourself and the Plot Committee some time, because otherwise the history is sure to be rejected.

Keep in mind the skills with which your character will start. Don't have your character history mention how you studied the Ancient Texts of Noonah if you didn't buy the skill *Educated*.

If your character is older, you may have to think of a reason why your character is low level. Perhaps you have been a farmer or a trapper for many years and now you have been kicked out of the family / mistreated by an evil bad guy / stirred into action by some injustice and have decided to become an adventurer. Or maybe you just never liked to study.

Don't forget that this is a fantasy world in which we are living—one in which people can resurrect after death. A common mistake people have in their character histories is to have their entire family killed off or a loved one murdered; however, in our game, they would most likely have resurrected and remembered how they died.

Along these same lines, remember that our fantasy world contains many races, and unless you were raised in a racial enclave, your history should contain people from many different races and backgrounds. We also have a game where women hold power the same as men in most of the in-game cultures (maybe not in the "bad guy" areas), so don't make all the important people in your history men.

Find out about the world. The lands can help determine your character history and concept. Read the campaign's newsletters and in-game history and new ideas may spring from there.

You may not have your character be a person already established in the in-game history. All names you may read in your chapter's in-game history or newsletters are either NPCs controlled by the Plot Committee or other actual players who did something on past events and got themselves mentioned.

The in-game history will contain countries and lands for your character to be from. Don't create your own country. The reason for this is to prevent a multitude of countries all out there somewhere and to prevent conflicts among character histories. If you have a great idea for a new country, you may submit your idea to the campaign's Plot Committee, and after they approve it, you may submit a character history from there. All such countries become intellectual property of the Alliance, and may be used as the Plot Committee sees fit. You have to capture the Plot Committee's imagination for them to place you on the map—because these places will be forever.



How to Get Your History Rejected: The Plot

Committee reserves the right to reject character histories that violate their conception of any personae of an NPC that you may include in your personal history. Don't write a character history that has the NPC Duke killing your father, because that may go completely against what the Plot Committee has established for the Duke's personality, and may even contradict other facts that you may not be aware of. In other words, if you write that the Duke killed your father in the year 597 but we have already established that the Duke was stuck in the realm of the fey that entire year, then obviously something's wrong.

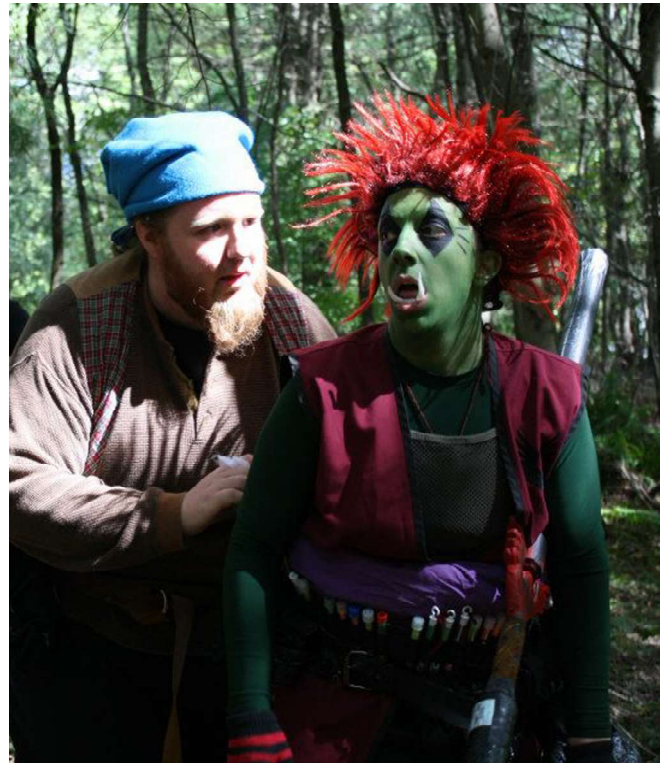
This is not to say that you can't write a character history where you *believe* that the Duke killed your father, even when he didn't.

A common theme in fantasy literature involves mom getting taken advantage of by bad guys in one of their summer raids and the character is the result. We reject *all* character histories involving rape. It's a fantasy game, but frankly this is beyond the realm of good taste and it's not something we want to write plot about. This includes "My mother was a slave dancer and concubine against her will" and anything of that nature. We don't want to see it, and if it falls under the heading of "rape or sexual assault" even vaguely, it will get rejected. *Avoid this topic as if it didn't exist.* It happens to people in real life and there is no need for them to be reminded of it when they play our game. It's one thing to read about it in a fantasy novel and another to have it confront you personally in a live action game.

One of the quickest ways to get your character history rejected is to draw too heavily on religion or religious themes. Many people decide to name their characters after obscure pagan gods or lightly gild a myth for their character histories. This is not appreciated, and sometimes it can be offensive.

The Alliance attempts to remain religion free as much as possible, and we do not wish to add elements that would offend anyone. This is especially problematic, for many people consider much of folklore to be fair game, but unknowingly and ignorantly trod over religions that are actively practiced (in particular paganism) because they mirror fantasy gaming. While it's less likely to cause a problem in a tabletop game, with more people playing in a LARP you have to keep in mind there are more things that can be offensive to a larger number of players.

Remember: the local Plot team will be more than happy to help you if you have any questions or need any assistance in creating your character. Don't be shy or afraid to ask!



Getting Plot

So given all of this, what is the best way to write a character history that will get the best plot follow-ups?

First of all, when writing a character history, simple is better than elaborate. If you fill in *all* the details about the people in your life, the Plot Committee will have very little open space to work with. When writing about your past, leave some mysteries and some unexplored areas that the Plot Committee can make use of to give you more entertainment.

Write about how as a child you encountered something strange in the woods that you could never explain and give us some details. Or describe a dream you had that was vivid yet obtuse. We can take these loose ends in your history and tie them into our plots.

For example, take this excerpt from a character history:

One day while traveling with my father, we happened to encounter a man standing on a forest trail, holding a blood covered axe. My father screamed for me to run as the man charged towards us. I escaped



but my father resurrected and refused to speak about it for years. On his death bed, he finally told me to beware of the man with the red axe, for he will come for me someday.

This loose end allows us to include you in another plot (which just happens to have an axe wielding lunatic in it) or write a new plot for you.

Note that a loose end could be just about any simple little mystery—a strange arrow with iridescent feathers shooting through your window; seeing a unicorn crying over the corpse of a horrid monster; encountering a ghost ship that appeared mysteriously in your village; having a blind beggar speaking ominously of your part in a prophecy.

Do *not* explain these things in your character history! You should be as clueless about what this means as your character. It will make it all the more fun for you if you have no idea what it means, because then you can find out at the same time your character does.

Here is what we do *not* want: *My father and I were attacked on a road when I was younger by a man with a bloody axe. The man's name was Lukas Buck and he was a servant of the Black Mastiffs, a group of mercenaries that hired out to necromancers and other nasty guys. My dad fell on hard times in his youth and served three years as a cook for the Black Mastiffs, where he saw many bad things including the killing of a nobleman and his family. He fled and hid, working in a tavern. Lukas tracked him down and killed him and he resurrected successfully. . . (etc.)*

You have just solved the mystery yourself and left the Plot Committee little to work with. Don't be surprised if there is no follow-up to this character history.

Include a dozen or so little unexplained events or major family mysteries and you are likely in for a lot of fun stuff in your future.

But even then, the next thing you have to do is preregister for events and let us know you are coming! The Plot Committee will not waste a lot of time preparing a great encounter for you if they have no idea whether you will be attending the event.

A Sample History

Here is an example of a good character history:

My name is Trin Hallison. I am the eldest son of Lorin and Frinda Hallison. I have two younger brothers and two older sisters. The boys are named Wellis and Horik and the girls are named Elysa and Shon.

I was born in the mining city of Descante in the barony of Trellheim in the duchy of Ashbury. My father was a gemcutter in one of the mines in the area and my mother worked for the exchequer. They held different shifts so that at different times I was raised by both my father and my mother.

My father had served in the army under Powell Songbringer as a short-swordsman. I have many fine memories of afternoons spent with my father practicing sparring—I never could beat him! (I could, however, beat my brothers and sisters, and I gained even more experience playing with them). He also learned very basic smithing techniques which any fighter in the army should know, and he taught me how to make my own simple leather vest, which I proudly wore all the time.

My mother knew a few healing spells which came in useful when we kids hurt ourselves in our games. She tried to teach us to read and write, but only I took an interest. Learning how to heal myself was very useful, though.

At the young age of ten, while on a picnic with my family, I found a cave and began exploring. I soon was lost in the darkness and I was certain that every sound was a goblin or a troll out to get me. I spent a few hours crying in the darkness before a strange light appeared before me and a large glowing woman led me to the exit, saying “This is not yet meant to be.” I asked her what she meant but she only replied “We shall meet again” and when the sunlight hit her as we left the cave, she simply faded away. I asked everyone I knew what this meant but they all laughed and said I must have been dreaming.

Ever since I have had a great fear of caves and extreme darkness even though I know my fears are unfounded. I still wonder what the glowing woman meant, and I haven’t seen anything similar since.

When Stewart Medicia became Baron, things changed a bit in Descante—the town guards became more surly and some of the nobles he appointed cared more for fattening their pockets than for the commoners to whom they were supposed to be helping. I believe that all nobles in their hearts are the same even if they pretend to be caring. I would never work for nobility.

When I was old enough, I became apprenticed to a local cooper, making barrels for the town. It was boring work but it brought in the money my family needed. It was during this time that I became fascinated with magic, for next door to the cooper’s was the local Healers’ Guild. The healers there noticed my interest in their activities, and one—a nice old biata lady named Hindy—often delighted me with her tales of adventures in Ashbury where she had fought many monsters in her younger days.

It was she who finally taught me how to perform first aid, and it was she who taught me my first spell.

One day when I was with her, she received a missive which caused her to drop everything and suddenly leave. Even her husband did not know what had happened or why she had left, but I did happen to see that the note had in large letters the word “Viktaria.” Whether this is a person or a place I do not know, but I often worry about her and wonder what happened to her.



My father died permanently when I was 14. It was a very traumatic experience for all of my family. He had died previously—a few times while in the army and once when a large boulder fell on him, but he had been successfully resurrected each time. This time he had a terrible disease, and the Healer’s Guild could do nothing for him. I cried myself to sleep every night as he lay in bed in pain as the disease took over his body. Finally, I could take no more, and I placed a pillow over his head and held it down until he stopped breathing. I finally put him out of his misery. I have never told anyone of this and I feel very guilty about it. I made a vow to myself that I would never kill again, and that any enemy I would ever encounter would be captured if at all possible, and if dying would be first-aided.

When I turned 16, I felt that it was time to strike out on my own, and I decided to head to the area that Hindy had told me about. I decided to move to the big city where life is more exciting. I have now arrived in the city of Ashbury, where I hope soon to obtain a job and maybe—just maybe—find some adventure!

Notice how this history establishes a few character traits with which the player can have lots of fun—a dislike and mistrust of nobility, a fear of enclosed spaces and darkness, and a desire never to kill. Imagine the complications in-game when his views and desires run up against situations which require him to confront his fears. It also contains a few mysteries which he is trying very hard to solve. A good Plot Committee will take these things and use them in the future. Perhaps the answer to his questions can only be obtained by venturing into a dark cave with a knight who has vowed to kill anything that stands in her way...

This history also explains how he got the skills with which he will be entering the game: *One Handed Edged, Blacksmithing, Healing Arts, First Aid, Educated*, and a few spells.

It is also obvious that the writer has consulted the in-game campaign history and has written his character history based on what was happening in the lands as he was growing up, thus providing for more realism and allowing him to comment upon these things knowingly when they arise during in-game conversations. It could also unwittingly allow him to be tied to other characters’ histories.

In fact, if you have not read all about your campaign’s in-game history, it’s probably not a good idea to have your character come from there. Otherwise, you might end up looking foolish when you don’t know the name of the King or are not aware of recent activities.

So go to it!

Attitude

Having the proper attitude and understanding about the game will increase your enjoyment of the game tremendously.

The Alliance is a game where you get as much out of it as you put into it. You are as much of a part of the direction and feel of the game as any NPC. If your attitude towards the game is “I am here to be entertained by the NPCs” then you’re not going to be having as much fun as the other players who know that *they* are as much of the show as the monsters.

Don’t go into the game with the goal of winning, because really there are no “winners” in the traditional sense of the word. You should go in with the goal of creating a believable character and reacting as that character would to the other players and the NPCs. The goal of the game is experiencing adventures, and not “killing all the monsters and taking their loot.”

This is not a computer game where you, the hero, go through dungeon after dungeon, gathering treasure and just working your way up in power, never having your character’s experiences affect his or her personality. Our game is all about *telling a story*. It’s about creating characters that affect the story and who are affected by the story. The fun is in not knowing where that story will lead.

Some players tend to get bored when there are no monsters to hunt and kill. Don’t let that happen to you. The game doesn’t stop when the NPCs are resting or preparing for the next encounter; there is never a reason for your character to say “there’s nothing to do!” As you play, you will meet other players who will have the exact opposite claim: “There is not enough time for me to do everything I want to do!” These are the players who understand what the game is all about—they have followed up on every piece of information out there, are talking to other players, are staying in character and interacting with PCs and NPCs, have written to Plot Committee with their character

histories, and realize that you get out of the game what you put into it.

Above all, remember that this is acting where the audience is also the cast; the more everyone puts into it, the more fun there is. For some people, this means finding a group of staunch allies to hang out with in the hope of becoming rich and famous; for others, it means becoming the best individual in town at something so others will seek you out.

Imagination is the magic behind it all, and it's one thing that gets stronger with use.

Remember teamwork. It is practically impossible for you to be the hero all by yourself. In order to accomplish any great goals, you have to make allies and work with others. They will have skills and information you don't have. The game is designed to promote complementing characters working together to solve problems.

Look at it from a practical matter if nothing else: The Plot Committee is trying to entertain *all* of the players at the event, not just you. Therefore, plots are almost always written to involve as many people as possible. Information and clues are spread out and if there are tasks that need to be performed in order to achieve the final goal of the weekend, they are set up in such a way to make sure that one group doesn't monopolize them and go on them all at the expense of the other players. Further, these tasks (called "modules") almost always require a certain number of players to go on them because it would be impractical and a waste of resources to have an adventure for one player that uses up a number of NPCs and marshals.

Realize that if you decide to play a character who does not work well with others, you will limit your possibilities in the game. If you want to be a lonely and mysterious dark elf who distrusts all other races and stays to himself, then you won't have the same opportunities as someone who is outgoing and speaks to everyone.

This is a choice you have to make based on your character concept—just don't get upset when people or plotlines are passing you by. Think about these things before you create your character and you will have a much better time.



Preparation

Role-playing: Bashing something with plumbing supplies may be good exercise but it may not always be the best way to get ahead in the world. Not every problem can be solved by beating it into the ground. Remember at all times that we are a role-playing game.

Here's a true example: A family of vampires had captured some prisoners that they planned on using in their grand feast. The players knew this but had no idea where the feast was to be held. During the weekend, some undead were killed, and six invitations to the party were discovered. The Plot Committee wrote the module in such a way that a group of six PCs would bring the invitations, pose as vampires themselves, and be able to figure out a way to snatch the prisoners and run back to town. Instead, the entire town gathered its forces and stormed the building. Many died fighting the vampire's minions who guarded the place, and the vampires inside simply killed the prisoners, turned gaseous, and got away.



To reiterate: some problems can't be solved with weapons or spells. They require subtlety, guile, intelligence and *role-playing*!

This emphasis on role-playing is important not only in a module or other quest, but also when you're just hanging around town. If you are the world's best fighter but you don't care a bit about making a believable character, acting appropriately to situations, or even wearing a decent costume, you will never get very far in status in any in-game group.

Staying in character is the key. Don't make references to out-of-game situations. Don't say "I just bought my second proficiency," say "I have been training and can now do twice as much damage as I once was able." If someone asks your level (an out-of-game question since levels are not in-game), respond by saying something like "Well, I can now cast 5th level spells, is that what you are asking?"

Become your character during an event. This point can't be overemphasized. New players who put some time and effort into their costumes, try to constantly stay in character, and put a serious concern into role-playing will find that it won't be long until the old-timers

will notice, perhaps hire them for a quest, take them on as bodyguards, or otherwise get them involved. Then before they know it, they are in the thick of things.

This may be hard for some players at first, especially if you're the shy type. Role-playing doesn't mean you have to be an actor. It doesn't mean you have to be able to give long speeches or otherwise are expected to show Oscar-worthy skills. It simply means you need to think as your character would think and act as your character would act.

Role-play and get involved and you will soon be having so many adventures you won't know what to do next!

Set reasonable goals for your character. Some new players come into the game imagining themselves as Conan the Invincible, beating down all the evil monsters, becoming the toast of the town, and winning the affections of commoner and noble alike. Others think they will be the world's greatest assassin, sneaking through the woods, stealing from everyone, and becoming rich and powerful. When due to their lack of experience they fail to accomplish these things in their first weekend, these players then get upset. "This isn't any fun!" they think.

In order to get power in our game, you have to be patient. No one starts off the game as a nobody and ends up three days later being appointed a knight or becoming the head of the thieves' guild. It doesn't work that way.

The Alliance game gives every character the *potential* to make a name for themselves. It is not a guarantee. You have to start off small and earn your rewards. All those powerful characters you see in the game started off the same way you did.



You can get a lot of gratification from playing as long as you set reasonable expectations from the start. Vow to pass all tests to become a member of a guild. Aim to impress someone important and be hired as part of his or her entourage. Start an adventuring group and make a name for yourself through your costumes and role-playing skills. Strive to put together all of the pieces of the weekend plot and impress the nobles with the information you have gathered.

Most importantly, have the right attitude when doing these things. Introducing yourself as “the greatest fighter on the planet” or otherwise pumping up your ego will only alienate others, make enemies, and hurt you badly in the long run. Be humble and prove yourself through your actions ... and then when you *are* powerful and mighty later, you can honestly brag about your skills.

Now don’t take this section’s advice to mean that as a beginning adventurer, you can never be involved in the major plotlines of that event. Quite often, it’s not the most powerful characters who get to be the heroes!

For example: One time, an evil leader and his legion of undead entered the town and said that unless the town surrendered to them by midnight Saturday, they would destroy everyone. The high level players immediately began preparations for a great war, but some low level players remembered rumors they had heard, spoke to some NPC farmers who had come into town, and learned the location of the bad guy’s encampment. Some low level spies checked the place out and discovered that the head bad guy was being controlled as a puppet from that location. So that night, when all the undead left the encampment with only a few guards behind, the spies entered the encampment, took out the guards, and destroyed the puppet, thus ending the battle in town and saving everyone.

Realize too that the game is scaled, meaning the Plot Committee will often take into account who is doing what when deciding what kind of NPCs to place in an encounter. It’s the Plot Committee’s job to make the game challenging and fun, but not impossible. In that last example, for instance, the Plot Committee was aware that low level players were doing the spying and adjusted the monsters in the spy camp accordingly. Had the higher level players found the spy camp instead, you can rest assured they would have been facing a lot more than just zombies. (Now, don’t read this and get overly cocky, either—you should never ever feel confident that every battle is winnable. Perhaps you weren’t meant to destroy that puppet yet ...)

No matter what, don’t just assume that as a new player you can’t have a major effect on the game!

Learn the local food chain. Probably the most embarrassing way to get into deep trouble is to insult, attack, or trust the wrong person. If you're new in town, act like a tourist. Stay at the fringes of things until you have a feel for who the important people are and who you want to collect as friends and allies.

Make sure that your character knows the consequences of all of your actions first. Find out what you can and cannot get away with, or you're liable to run afoul of the local laws or step on the wrong toes. If you just walk on in and start your own thieves' guild, it's certainly not going to make the current guild very happy with you. Don't go insulting the nasty undead you see coming towards you only to learn that it is the most powerful liche in the kingdom.

Find a mentor. There are many veteran players who are willing to advise new players, from telling them how to avoid being poisoned to telling them where to go for training in various skills. You can often tell who these people are by the large number of people they greet and are greeted by as they wander through town. Anybody who does not look foul tempered or Terribly Important is usually willing to answer questions about the latest gossip, grudges and adventures. A good place to start would be to check out the local guilds.

Don't be afraid to ask questions; Most people are willing to answer. There is a common misconception among new players that the nobility want nothing to do with the new folk in town, but you may be surprised at how well you are received. Everyone is always looking for new allies and sources of information, and if they are too busy to help, they just might recommend someone who can.

Don't assume everyone is your enemy. Be suspicious and careful, yes, but realize that sometimes more can be accomplished through cooperation. Often groups have failed because they distrusted everyone.

Here's an example: A group of adventurers found a deaf girl tied up and being held hostage by goblins. They killed the goblins, and then took the girl along but refused to untie her. As it turned out, she was the only one who could get through a magical barrier that caused great damage due to sound. Because the group treated her so badly, she refused to help and the group could not complete its quest.

Remember, if you screw up, no one is going to come along and make things all better. You lost, and later, another group that won't fail will take the treasure and the credit.

Sometimes in modules key encounters are placed at a crossroads. If you treat the NPC at the encounter unfairly, then the NPC may tell you the wrong path to take or may not tell you the information you need.

Use common sense here! Not every evil thing should (or can) be killed outright. Sometimes a powerful being is sent into town merely to frighten you. Maybe it is there to provide you with information, or maybe it's just there for your role-playing fun. And not every plot can be solved by hitting it with a sword.

Always remember your quest. Perhaps you may have to treat an evil person nicely so that you may get the information you need. Sometimes you just have to grit your teeth and put up with the obnoxious shoe salesman because he knows which path to take. And remember that the person you kill may just resurrect and come back for revenge.

Getting Involved

The best way to get involved is to be active. Don't wait for things to happen to you—make them happen yourself!

Look for adventure. Adventures rarely just come up and bite you on the nose (although goblins may do so). There are no neon signs saying "Adventure Here!" You have to look for them.

Some are easier to find than others. If you hang around the tavern a lot, sooner or later someone might come in looking for mercenaries to help on a quest or an NPC will come in with valuable information. Joining a guild, the royal army, the town guard, or a noble court is a good way to immediately get involved in lots of interesting plots.

Another way to find adventures is to walk through the woods. Monsters are known to camp out in the woods, and often you can even find hidden caves worth exploring or other strange goings-on. Don't just hang around waiting for adventure to come to you.

As an aside, remember also to never go out in the woods with more than approximately six others, for large groups scare away monsters. Our "wandering monsters" are usually scaled for groups of six or less, and our NPCs

are generally instructed to run away from large groups if they think they'll be slaughtered. (Who wants dumb NPCs?) Further, many weekend modules are written for groups of six or so, and if you go out with too many people, you may miss the module hook (because the NPCs are avoiding you). This is of course a generality and does not apply in all cases, but for the majority of the time, if just wandering around, go in small groups.

Start a Group. A good sized adventuring group should contain around ten people maximum so that there will always be about six ready for any module that happens to show up.

Get a good mixture of character classes. Don't wait until the middle of an adventure to suddenly discover that you need a thief in order to get into a certain room. An unbalanced party has been the downfall of many a group.

Once you've established a group, don't fight among yourselves. Pick a leader. The leader should not be a dictator, but instead listen to all suggestions and pick the wisest action. Having a leader is most important in stressful situations. There is no time to call a committee meeting to decide whether to retreat from a battle. The group should delegate the authority for snap decision making to one person, and then follow that person's orders. If it turned out that person was wrong or made a mistake, that can be dealt with later.

Most parties that fail do so because of poor leadership. If the group wishes to be successful, it must have someone to give them direction. Nobody likes to be bossed around, but some carefully worded instructions in a friendly tone of voice can carry a lot of weight.

This only works if everyone is willing to follow the leader. A character who insists on doing things their own way and who runs off on their own will usually die because of it. You need to put aside differences in order to accomplish your goals. If you're constantly running off or arguing with your group, it won't be long before no one will invite you to join them and no one will help you out.

This is not to say that you should sacrifice your individuality or your personal role-playing quirks. It simply means that you've got to remember that you are not the only one involved. If you go wandering off in the middle of a module, you not only risk serious harm to yourself but also to the success of your group as a whole.

Have a battle strategy for your group. Any plan for fighting should include protecting your healers and mages. The plan that seems to work best for most groups is a sort of fighting wedge, where two fighters protect the mage behind them who can then cast spells over them. Healers should stay in the rear and throw healing spells at the party's backs. Necromancers should be up front throwing damage causing spells with the mage (unless there are witnesses around). Most importantly, stay together and cover each other's arses. Running off after monsters and splitting up the group is the quickest way to die.

If you don't have your own group with which to adventure, align yourself with an already existing group—or have your small group align itself with another group. The nobles sometimes need adventurers to act as spies or



messengers so that they won't get caught doing the dirty work. The Mages' Guild is always looking for apprentices. The Royal Army may be looking for recruits. The tavern almost always needs guards, entertainers, and servers. All of these ways will lead to adventure and if not, maybe at least you'll get paid!

Write your own plots. Some things you will encounter on a weekend are completely invented by the Plot Committee, but quite a few actions are started by players. Players are always surprised when they discover that an interesting plot twist was created by another player in-game. So make your own plots—use your imagination! For example:

Sell in-game items such as potions, scrolls, alchemical solutions, and armor repair.

Sell a service. Start a bodyguard's guild. Open a massage parlor and sell backrubs. Become a sage. Open a funeral parlor. Tell fortunes. Bring cookies and open a bakery.

Start a competitive guild. There is no reason why you can't start a second armorsmith shop or alchemy guild or thieves' guild.

Start a school. Every player needs other players to teach them skills they need. Maybe you can train people in real skills as well as game skills. It is one thing to teach someone the in-game skill *Create Trap* but it is another thing entirely to teach them out-of-game how to pick locks and disarm traps.

Be an entertainer. Tell stories in the tavern. Juggle. Play guitar. Start an acting troupe.

Blackmail somebody. We'll leave this idea to your own devices.

Become a "Robin Hood" stealing from the rich (Hey, compared to peasants, all adventurers are rich.). You can decide later whether to give it to the poor.

These minor little things may not seem like an exciting way to spend an entire event, but that won't happen. Instead, because you are making yourself known for something in the game, PCs and NPCs will soon be coming to you as an "expert" in your field, and you will be meeting a lot more people than you would have done just sitting around waiting for something to happen. This pretty much guarantees that you will be gathering important information, making new contacts, forming new alliances, and getting new adventures.

The plot can go racing off in all sorts of unpredictable ways, so the key is to remember that if something more interesting comes along, don't be tied to your idea of what you had planned for that event. Go with the flow and grab the opportunities when they arise.

Have your own adventures. Get your group together on off weekends and run your own adventures for practice. If you want to write an adventure module for your own group to have, that's fine—but it cannot affect regular plot. In other words, your character can go on an adventure where he gets 15 magic swords, becomes 33rd level, and rules the world, but when he shows up on the next Alliance adventure, none of it has happened. ("Gee, it was all a dream!") Go ahead, use our rules, we don't mind (as long as you don't charge admission, advertise, or present yourself as an official Alliance LARP game).

Your own in-game "modules" (for informational purposes only) can be performed without our approval and can be allowed in-game as affecting plot. For example, if your group arranges a meeting with another group to discuss an alliance or to plan some strategy, then that is perfectly allowable and encouraged. Obviously, no NPCs are allowed to be present without the Plot Committee's approval, and once more, no treasure or Experience Points can be obtained.

On-line conversations and meetings are very limited in the ways they can affect the overall plot (we are a *live* role-playing game, after all).

Send in a Plot Submission. Most campaigns will allow you to submit a proposal to the Plot Committee as to what your character is doing between events. Your local chapter will have their own specific guidelines for this.



However, keep these restrictions in mind:

- Your character cannot travel all over the place in a short period of time. Do not send a submission saying how you plan on traveling the entire kingdom in the three weeks between events.
- Your chapter may limit how many of these you can submit or how often.
- You may have to spend in-game money to accomplish your goals.
- Your failure or success will depend on a number of things. For instance, if you are doing research and have a Craftsman skill in that area, your chances of getting a good result are much better than if you cannot even read and write.
- Remember that we are a live role-playing organization, with the emphasis on *live*. Whenever possible, we attempt not to write out personal encounters but to have them happen in-game instead. If you make a submission to the Plot Committee saying “I am going to go and speak to Kelanor (the NPC)” you will probably receive the response “Kelanor is aware you are looking for him and promises to meet you in a few weeks” (i.e: live, during an event).

So then what is a Plot Submission good for? Primarily for studying, researching, and gathering basic knowledge. Traveling to other places to gather information is acceptable; traveling to other places to have adventures or find treasure is not.

Getting Information

The person who first said “Knowledge is power” wasn’t kidding. Consider information as a type of treasure to be obtained, for in our game it is as valuable as gold.

It could make the difference between life and death. Characters have died in the past because they didn’t prepare well enough by asking the right people the right questions.

Be smart about it. Too often, new players walk up to the tavernkeeper or a guild leader and say “Know of any adventure hereabouts?” —which if you think about it is a pretty silly question. “There’s adventure everywhere around here!” is the usual answer. Instead, ask if they have any work they need done or if they know anyone who does. Ask if anything unusual has been happening lately. Take a news item you have heard about or a piece of gossip and start a conversation. Most importantly, offer something in return. Nothing is free! Be prepared to pay for important information, either with money or with information of your own.



There are lots of people in-game who can give you all sorts of help. It is surprising how infrequently people take advantage of information easily available. Often NPCs will be given important plot clues but told not to give them out unless the players specifically ask. Other times information will be “sold” by other NPCs. Even more importantly, other players may have information that you need but you don’t realize it because you never talked to them about it.

Along these same lines, don’t hog the information you have. Unlike regular treasure, you can give away information and still possess it. We cannot emphasize this point enough.

Not sharing information has hurt many players. Often major plot events for the weekend require the putting together of clues obtained in various modules, each obtained by different groups. Sometimes the groups think that sharing the information means that they will not get to go on the ultimate module they theorize will end the weekend event and so they don’t talk to anyone about what they discovered. Whenever that happens, the weekend plot goes unsolved, and everybody loses. (And in case it hasn’t been clear all along, yes, you can *lose*. Our plotlines are written in such a way that if you do not resolve the plotline, it could cause bad consequences or go unresolved until next time.

We will *not* have the NPCs come in and fix things for you if you aren’t able to solve the weekend plot. What’s the fun in that?)

To reiterate: The best way to get lots of important information is to talk to everyone you meet, especially if it is someone new. “Hail, fellow! What brings you to our fine town?” is a good way to get the ball rolling. If it seems that certain players always seem to be at the center of many plots, it is mostly because they actively greet every new person they see (PC and NPC) and they find out everything that is going on around town.

Keep in mind that players can also start their own rumors. Some of these will drive you nuts and others will save your life. There have been characters who were left alone when they first came to town because they were rumored to be an agent of a very powerful Lord who would take revenge if they were harmed. Other players let rumors spread that they had no need to go about heavily armed or armored for unspecified reasons. In both cases, the players started their own rumors and stayed alive because of them.

The more you know about the people and the world in which the game takes place, the better you will be able to quickly understand what information is important and what isn’t. Read your in-game history and pay attention to any updates you may learn through newsletters, Rumor Sheets, and in-game by talking to others.

Once again, remember that everything you read or hear isn’t necessarily true. There is no such thing as an



unbiased history. Like histories in the real world, our in-game histories have been written by people with viewpoints which may skew perceptions of various events. Further, there may be facts of which the writer is not aware. There are bound to be biases and mistakes. Don't believe everything you read.

Further, don't believe everything every NPC tells you either. Just because the nice man tells you what you need to do in order to complete a quest doesn't mean he has your best interests at heart. Perhaps he's really not so nice, and he is telling you what to do so he can double-cross you later, or perhaps he thinks he's doing the right thing when from an objective point of view he's a complete loon.

Wise advice is to always be cautious and cynical when getting information while at the same time getting as much as you possibly can. You can later try to determine which information is true.

Keep notes of your adventures and the information you obtain in them; you never know, they may be important some day. Players who keep notes are already step ahead each time a new game begins. When Grizelda the dwarf comes to town, the smart player can check his or her notes and know that she appeared in town a year and a half ago, was looking for her long lost brother, had the key to the Mystic Orb, was the cause of the ogre riots, and had the first line of a riddle that would lead to great wealth.

Remember that in our game, plots do not always start and end at an event but run constantly, and the player who has the information can take advantage of it. Usually, the Plot Committee will introduce information about a plotline long before the actual plotline will run so that the players who follow up on the information they receive have a head start and usually get to be the weekend "heroes" when the big plot finally arrives.

Get as much information as you can as often as possible. The largest cause of boredom among new players is not assuming that everything they see and hear is potentially important.

Curiosity may have killed the cat, but it also got her involved in lots of adventures along the way—and you have the potential of having even more lives than the cat!

Pay attention to rumors. Some games will even give you a sheet at check-in filled with rumors. You'll also be sure to meet a few NPCs in town whispering other rumors and tidbits.

The rumors may say things about other players (gathered from their character histories), about political intrigue, about monster abilities, or the local history. There may also be rumors about things happening at that event which could lead to an adventure or perhaps even give you a clue as to how to get past a certain encounter in a module.

For example, once a Rumor Sheet had the statement: "Wizard Glick has been seen walking around town carrying a large sponge very protectively." A module that weekend took place in Wizard Glick's home. In the module, a note was found that told the players that in order to get through a certain door, they needed a "skeleton key." The sponge found in a washroom in the module was the "key" needed (since a sponge is essentially a skeleton). Players who remembered the rumor about how important the sponge was to Wizard Glick had a head start in figuring out this puzzle, and realized that the sponge was more than a mere atmospheric prop. (Yes, that was an extremely hard puzzle. No, they're not usually that hard, but on the other hand, don't expect to be spoon-fed.)

Information on Rumor Sheets are also "split up" onto more than one sheet so that no one person gets all the information. This requires you to role-play with other players to find out what you need. For example, if the Plot Committee wants you to learn that Cerik the vampire lives in a cave on the edge of town and that a strange old hermit vampire hunter named Phil has information about the cave's whereabouts, this information is going to be placed in many different rumors spread out on many different Rumor Sheets. You will see "There is a vampire living in a cave near town," "A crazed hermit lives in the woods," "The hermit knows all about vampires," "The hermit's name is Phil," "Cerik the Vampire hates Phil," and so on, each on a separate Rumor Sheet. In order to find all the information you need to go on this particular adventure, you will have to talk to as many people as you can to see what rumors they have heard.

Other clues and rumors will be dropped into game in in-game ways, and will often be aimed at new adventurers who are not as experienced at "finding the plot." Remember, don't think that just because you are new, you shouldn't be getting involved in the plotlines. *Grab* that plot! You deserve it just as much as the more experienced player.

Take the initiative; do it yourself! Only one person can make you a hero and that's *you*. The more you know, the more you can get out of the game.

Scaling

“Scaling” refers to the Plot Committee adjusting the power levels of the NPCs to take into account the PC’s levels. You should understand that the Plot Committee will scale encounters so that it’s the most fun. They’re not out to kill you with every battle—what’s the fun in that?

If it’s a low level event, and you see a troll or an undead, chances are it is not a bone troll or a liche. If the entire town is going into a field battle, the battle will be scaled according to who shows up to the battle.

Sometimes, in games with larger attendances, large scale battles will even be split up accordingly. “I see that the liche’s henchmen are coming from the north trail, so Baroness Darlissa, take your troops that way. The liche has sent his skeleton army down the south trail, so those of you in the Adventurer’s Guild, take that trail!”

However, it must also be pointed out that there are such things as unscaled encounters. Sometimes the NPCs are “unreasonable” or practically impossible to kill. This is usually done for one of two reasons: (1) The NPC has valuable information that you need, and killing the NPC would prevent that information from getting to you, so the NPC is scaled at an “unreasonable” level; or (2) The NPC is there for role-playing reasons only—perhaps just to scare the pants off of you—and it’s not there as a fighting encounter. These NPCs have specific functions and are not your standard ordinary “wandering monster” or “field battle” monster.

Sometimes you will encounter monsters that seem unkillable, but perhaps you are just not trying enough. If you discover a form of attack doesn’t work against a monster, try something new. There are often rewards for being creative! Perhaps this is a strange monster who takes 20 points of damage from *Awakens* or can only be affected by “ice” damage. If nothing seems to work, experiment!

Hesitation is often the biggest problem for players newer to combat. Always make sure you have the initiative. No matter how weak the monster, if you don’t stand to fight, you may end up taking a “dirt bath.” Even goblins can kill you if you aren’t ready and let them get the advantage over you.

The Plot Committees of the various games are always reviewing monster statistics to give you the most fun and excitement and sharing ideas. Realize that there may be variances in the local breeds: a goblin from one game may not have exactly the same statistics as a goblin from another game.

So take that chance against that monster that looks tough, and you may be surprised to find that it wasn’t as hard as you thought it would be.



Playing Fair

In case it isn't obvious, the entire Alliance system relies on all our players playing fair, abiding by the rules, and doing their best to make sure everyone has a good time at our events.

But you have to understand: sometimes the plot will bring about *in-game* conflicts between characters. It is imperative that these remain in-game only and do not turn personal. (If you have concerns that this is not the case, be sure to talk to the Alliance staff and let them know.)

If you have an active character, some other character will eventually want to kill/capture/arrest you. The “good guys” and the “bad guys” are always at odds, and both sides have had their share of successes and failures.

If you decide to play the world's sneakiest assassin, understand that there will be other players out to stop you. If you are the most honorable knight, there will be dishonorable people out to put you in your place. Don't take it personally and don't get upset if they get you. You'll just have to try harder next time.

A problem some players seem to have is that they want instant gratification from a plot, and if the plotline requires hardships or sacrifices, they will complain and want nothing to do with it. Please realize that sometimes you have to go through hell to get to heaven in order to earn your reward.

For example, if your character finds a powerful magical sword that has the unwanted side effect of attracting death knights who all want to kill you, don't go whining about it. Look at the bright side—when the death knights aren't around, you've got a magical sword! Most importantly, the chances are this sword will eventually lead to some long-term plot that you would not have received any other way. You may get to go on a personal module in order to get rid of the curse, or this may be a special sword attuned to one person and you will end up being the only one in town who can kill the big bad guy in next year's plot.

Remember that plot doesn't arise from peaceful situations. Plot comes from conflict. Some conflicts may be physical, some may be emotional, and some may last a long time before being resolved. Certainly let the Plot Committee know if you are not enjoying a plot, but be a good sport about it.

We can't make you happy if you don't keep us informed—just keep in mind that a plot that one person hates could be loved by another.

Don't cheat! We have kicked out cheaters in the past. Don't think it won't happen to you.

If you find a rules loophole that seems too good to be true, then it is. Don't bend the rules to your liking, and don't make us have to kick you out.

It's just a game. You don't “win” the game; you have meaningful and fun experiences, and hopefully you bring along others with you to share those experiences.

“Reverse Metagame” to help the game. If you “metagame” you are using your out-of-game knowledge for in-game benefit. This is cheating.

At the same time, for the good of the game, sometimes we need you to “reverse metagame” when it will help everyone have more fun.

For instance, if a poor farmer comes into town and says “I need to hire a small group of adventurers to help me get rid of the giant rats infesting my barn,” it's pretty clear that this is a hook for a module. “I can only afford to pay about six people,” he may say, “and even then, only a few coppers apiece.” Obviously, this then is a module meant for low-level players.

If you are a more powerful player, don't ruin the fun of the lower level players with your attempts to go on this module. If you are a low-level player, don't insist on bringing 20 of your friends when obviously this was designed for a small group.

Of course it doesn't make in-game sense that the farmer would turn down more help. *Of course* there is no real in-game reason why the entire town couldn't volunteer to help the guy for free. But will that provide the most fun for the players?

Reverse metagame. Use your OOG knowledge about how the game works to allow *all* players to have fun and have a shot at the adventures. It's all a part of being a good sport, and you don't even have to be playing a good guy to do this.

Role-playing a “Bad Guy”

Believe it or not, it’s harder to play a “good guy” than a “bad guy.” Good guys just don’t have as many tools at their disposal to solve the problem as bad guys do. No necromancy, no lying, no stealing—well, you can see the limitations. (Obviously, we’re using “bad guy” and “good guy” in its traditional useage and in no way mean to imply that women characters cannot be “bad guys” or “good guys.”)

On the other hand, playing the bad guy also means you take more risks when you do these things, especially if you get caught by those good guys just mentioned. If you get caught, you must play fairly and take your penalty without (OOG) complaint. That’s the cost of doing business when you are a bad guy, and you need to understand that before you go down that path. You need to remember that this is just a game and you, the *player*, should be a good guy even when your *character* is evil.

So how do you create a successful bad guy? Sometimes it’s easier to discuss what *not* to do.

One problem is that many of the players out there who want to play evil characters are playing *chaotic* evil characters who rob anyone whenever they get the chance, kill randomly with little or no reason, commit necromancy just for the fun of it, and are basically nothing more than thugs. Sooner or later, thugs get caught, tried, and convicted.

This is just like real life. The *successful* evil guys end up as politicians, televangelists, and tobacco company executives. They have a long term plan, and they don’t necessarily *act* like evil guys.

Don’t think of your character as evil. Most evil people in the real world don’t think of themselves as such.

Have a reason for your actions. Having a character history that involves you being a master thief is incomplete if it doesn’t say *why* you are a master thief. What was it in your past that made you this way? Are you so self-absorbed that you care nothing about the property of others? Are you addicted to the adrenaline of doing bad acts that



you can't help yourself? Are you actually a citizen of a foreign land here as a spy? Were you mistreated as a child and have decided to declare revenge on the rest of the world in some way? Are you a member of a race who feels that all other races are mere animals and so anything you do to them is justified? Think of the reasons *why* you are acting this way and it will help you decide *when* and *how* to do your evil acts.

In other words, have a plan. Set a goal for yourself which is more than "I will go from event to event and do evil acts." Only do those acts which further your goal and no others. Just because an opportunity to do something evil presents itself doesn't mean it's a wise idea to do it.

Second, to all outward appearances, act like the good guy. Wearing a dark cloak over your face at all times, lurking behind cabins, giving yourself a name like "Doombringer Blackheart" or otherwise calling attention to your evilness just puts everyone on guard, watching your every move until they can finally catch you. Instead, do the exact opposite and portray yourself as a valiant hero, righting the wrongs in the world, and above reproach.

This includes avoiding in-game complaining when you get caught. Angry letters to the editor of the in-game newspaper protesting your innocence, public notices attacking your enemies, and constant complaints about being persecuted or treated unfairly only opens the can of worms again and reminds everyone why you were found guilty in the first place. Move past it, admit you made a mistake, and do everything in your power to dispel that image. Most characters are willing to forgive if you are willing to swear that you have changed. If you want to be a successful bad guy, this point is a must.

To get involved in the "evil" plots out there, you have to be clever. Don't go looking for the thieves' guild because you won't find it. Although "thieves' guilds" are a mainstay in fantasy fiction, we are trying to make a game where people act a bit more realistic.

This is not to say there aren't groups out there serving the functions of thieves' guilds, with evil tasks and quests to perform and providing training for young thieves. They just usually aren't stupid enough to call themselves "The Thieves' Guild" and bring unwanted attention to themselves.

In fact, there will probably be more than one of these organizations, just like in the real world. These groups may fight among themselves for territory and control of the "underworld" and you may wish to do a bit of investigation before you decide which one(s) to join.

So how do you find them? There is an old saying: "If you can't find the thieves' guild, you're not good enough to join."

It is disturbing to see new players publicly asking others where the thieves' guild is. This will definitely backfire on you: First, it lets the good guys know to keep an eye on you, and secondly, it tells the bad guys that you are not subtle enough to be invited into their little group yet.

Think logically about these groups, how they would be organized, who would lead them, who would know about them, and where they would hang out, and go from there. (And those are all the hints we're going to give you.) But be careful.

Here's a true story: One naive player discovered who the real thieves' guild was, and he asked to join. "Very well," the leader said. "First you must prove your undying loyalty to us. We have here a healer with a Life spell. Kill yourself to prove you trust us, she will heal you, and then you can join." The player did as he was told, and as the guild dumped his dead body into the woods, they laughed and talked about how the candidate clearly was too stupid to join.

Realize as well that when these people give you tasks, they will not come right out and tell you so. "Baron Finther has many enemies," they will say. "I hope nothing serious were to happen to him." (Meaningful glance). Or "I am very concerned about Terin the Adventurer and have heard that someone is out to kill him. If this happens, I want to be the first to know about it and I will pay handsomely for this ... *information*." (Wink, wink.)

If you cannot complete their tasks, or if you get caught while doing them, you will probably not be given another chance. And you may even have them deciding to teach you a lesson for your failure. Remember that when dealing with the underworld, you are playing with fire and taking great risks.

The bottom line here is that nothing is handed to you by the Plot Committee, just as nothing is handed to the "good guys." You need to earn all of your rewards and this takes real talent and an understanding of the game.

Do your best, be smart, and you can rise far in the underworld and get lots of rewards; however, go it on your own, take chances, and go beyond your limitations, and you will eventually get caught.

Playing a Thief

Anyone can be a thief in our game—All you have to do is steal something. You don't even have to buy a skill.

However, some players want to play a real professional cat-burglar-like thief. The thought of sneaking into a heavily guarded place, finding and disarming every trap, picking every lock, and running off with all the treasure before anyone even knows you've been there is an exciting challenge.

Many players think that thieving skills are not useful for “good” characters, but you don't have to be evil to use those skills. We have run modules that require thieves to search the room of a suspected spy looking for incriminating evidence or to get past the traps to rescue someone who has been kidnapped—in these cases, these skills were required to in order to accomplish a very good result. Another module was done as a competition, with each thief trying to get farther into the module than the others before the time limit ran out.

So here are some golden rules for would-be thieves:

Be prepared. Being unprepared is a killer to many would-be thieves. Stepping into a dark room without a light source or trying to undo a complicated trap without the proper tools is a waste of time. It's also very embarrassing when you fail. Your adventuring group will be looking to you when these sorts of things come up and you are expected to be ready.

Be patient. Often in a module there is a time limit or guards checking the area every few minutes or so or some other reason to hurry—but there is such a thing as going too fast. When you enter a strange room, check thoroughly for traps. It's worth the minute or so you should spend looking for trip wires. Too often players have walked right into a trapped room, stepped on pressure plates hidden under rugs, walked right into trip wires, and otherwise doing exactly what they are not supposed to do. Or they see the trap, step over it, forget it's there, and hit it on the way out. (You're the thinking thief! Let the *fighters* act stupid!)



Think in three dimensions. Don't forget that the traps (and the treasure) may be located on the ceiling, under chairs, or in any location. Don't simply look at the floor and search for boxes. In one thieves' module, the box that players were searching for was hidden behind a secret door, in a closet, and up in the rafters of the closet.

Practice when you can. Buy a few cheap locks, get your tools, and work at picking the damn things as you watch TV. Get to the point where it comes completely naturally. Make your own trap boxes which will give you practice on disarming. Trade these boxes with friends and each of you practice on each other's. You can't get good at something unless you practice. Legerdemain is an art where your sense of touch is just as important as a keen eye. Practice makes all the difference in the world.

Don't panic. Keep an open mind. If something goes wrong, think of other possibilities and be creative. Always have some believable lies prepared in case you get caught and make sure anyone with you knows the lies too in case you're separated (you don't want to contradict each other!).

Don't feel trapped by the module. For instance, in one thief module, one group that forgot its *Light* spell groped around in the dark for half the module, setting off trap after trap, until they realized they could leave the module, get a candle, and then come back. This option isn't always available, but unless you think logically, you won't even consider it. (And don't expect any hints from the marshal!)

Know the trap rules. It is fine to cut strings and fishing wires to disarm a trap, but you may never cut electrical wires. All electrical devices are out-of-game and are merely there to represent gears or other items that may set off the trap. You cannot pretend to cut these wires.

You must disarm the trap by cutting something it is legal to cut (ask the marshal if you are unsure), unhooking any battery clip (representing a proper "disarming") or moving wires or other things that will keep the trap from buzzing or otherwise going off.



Thief Props

With these rules in mind, let's look at what the well-dressed thief will be bringing on this adventure (and why).

Candles (or a *Light* spell or a *Liquid Light* elixir): Don't be stupid. Just because an adventure takes place in the daytime doesn't mean that you won't enter a darkened room or need to look into a dark box. And don't forget matches to go along with that! (Make sure you know your game's fire rules beforehand, because many campsites will not allow candles.)

Gloves: Be sure to check every surface for contact poison (represented usually by petroleum jelly). It is always a safe idea to wear gloves at all times in a dangerous situation.

Rope: Rope can be used not only for climbing out windows (and tying up waylaid enemies) but also for opening drawers or chests from a distance. Remember that we do not mime props. You must actually possess any gear you wish to use. If you have no rope, you can't tie someone up with it.

Pole: A retractable pole (like a tent pole perhaps) can be used in much the same way as rope in opening doors from a distance.

Light-colored string: A bright string or ribbon is not heavy enough to set off trip wires but will bend when it hits one. Dangle it in front of you as you check hallways.

Scrolls and Potions: Assuming that you as a thief will not constantly travel with a spellcaster, you should learn to read magic as soon as possible and should invest in the following scrolls and potions which are especially useful:

Light: And don't forget your light phys rep or else the spell is useless.

Poison Shield: To protect yourself against poison traps.

Purify: To cure yourself from poison traps. Keep this easy to get to so that if a poison begins to take effect, you may be able to negate it before you are completely under its control.

Antidote: A good way to protect yourself as well. Some alchemical effects can be quickly countered with an all-purpose antidote.

Shatter: To destroy unpickable locks.

Wall of Force: In case you are discovered, you can block the door for at least 10 minutes.

Trap Disarming Tools: There are a number of useful tools you should have:

Scissors: A very small pair of scissors (especially if they have a long reach) can be very useful in cutting trap strings.



Dentists' Tools: Believe it or not, these things are very useful! Sometimes a long thin metal stick with a small hook on the end is exactly what you need. And that little round mirror (especially if it has a telescoping handle) is always handy. They can also sometimes be used as lockpicks.

A small flat piece of metal: This is used primarily to slip in between the top lip and bottom of the box without opening the box. You can sometimes use it to hold down triggering devices or just to “sweep” for protrusions.

Lockpicks: Obviously, right? It is always surprising how many thieves bring nothing and somehow expect the locks to open themselves. The best thing is to have a key ring with a series of lockpicks. A good basic one can be made by yourself, and you may also be able to find some from certain disreputable people in-game.

Sneaky Stuff

Here's some extra advice for those who want to increase their intake in the most efficient way:

If you notice a weapon being disarmed and then that person is then killed or runs away to find a new weapon, pick up the weapon, toss it into the woods, and come back ten minutes later. Chances are it will still be there.

When people fall in battle, search them quickly for anything you can get, then give them a healing potion and run off to “help” others.

If you have a cloak or another item of the sort, drop it on a chair in the tavern on top of someone's pouch. (This works well if someone has fallen asleep with their items next to them.) Then at one point, pick up your cloak while grabbing everything under it and simply walk out.

Look for people who have left things unattended. Many people will leave a pouch, knapsack, weapon, or even coins just laying around on the ground or on a table.

Don't forget to search common places when no one is around. While the battle is raging, you should be checking the ground for any treasure that may have been dropped. Be the first person up in the morning and check the area, because people drop things during the night but don't see them. And keep an eye on the weapons and possessions people leave in the tavern.

Keep one thing in mind, though: All it takes is for you to be caught once and you may find that no healer will help you when *you* fall in battle. There are always risks to being a Bad Guy.

Playing a Spy

Some players want to be spies. Thieving skills come in very useful to those who go this route, but are not absolutely necessary. Being a spy has more to do with your role-playing skills than your lockpicking or trap disarming skills.

If you would prefer the profitable profession of spy, consider these pieces of advice.

Don't look like a spy. This is the most important aspect of being a spy: Not looking like one. Wearing that hood over your face, sneaking around town, refusing to talk to people and otherwise acting as suspicious a possible will not encourage people to hire you to get information for them.

The best spies don't look like spies. See that loud inane Selunari who never shuts up? The drunk who sits in the corner of the tavern and just plays cards all day? The typical adventurer who just happens to travel with lots of different groups at different times? Guess how they earn extra income.

Dress Appropriately. You should always have a good set of dark clothing for when you need to sneak around. You don't want to wear this all the time (see above) but when the occasion does rise when you will need to sneak, you don't want to be wearing jingling chain mail or a brightly colored cloak.

Know how to eavesdrop. Obviously, the trick is to look like you're busy doing something else. An accomplice is useful here, as you can pretend to be deep in conversation while actually listening intently.

Knowing where to hide is also important—sometimes you can crawl under cabins and hear everything that is going on inside.



Always have an alibi ready. You will need help here, preferably someone who will always say you were with them no matter what and who won't ask you questions about where you actually were. Along these same lines, always have a story prepared in case you're caught in the act.

Keep your trap shut! No one will hire a spy who is known to tell the wrong people the information, and no one will hire a spy who talks about information, either in-game or out-of-game. You may feel tempted to brag about your spy jobs, but you will have to fight the urge if you want to stay employed.

Take good notes. You don't want to go to report your information and not know exactly who was there, and what they said, and what names were mentioned. No one will pay for "a bunch of guys were talking about killing someone sometime!" The important thing here is to have a good memory and write down everything as soon as you can get

out of range. (You certainly don't want to be caught writing down notes as you spy!)

Organize your contacts. Let those who you trust know that you are looking for information about certain things. Check with them often and pay them for information they gather for you. Keep them loyal and quiet. In the same vein, if you discover some information that you know one of your contacts would be interested in, offer it to them to keep their loyalty. Sometimes spies need to work together.

Find reliable clients. You can't just spy for yourself now can you? Usually the people who want spies the most are the nobles. They want to know what's going on in other nobles' courts, in some of those seedy adventuring groups wandering around town, and want to know what the commoners really think of them. However, nobles aren't the only people looking for information; as you play, you are certain to come into contact with visiting emissaries and racial elders who may be looking for information. Most importantly, these clients must pledge to you that they will not reveal the source of their information.

It is imperative that you find clients who can be as secretive as you can be, both in-game and out-of-game, or else all your spying is for naught.

Protect your anonymity. If your information is such that it could be used to convict someone of a crime, you may be asked to testify before a magistrate or a noble. Demand that the person accused not be present and insist that those present keep their mouths shut about the source of the information. If these provisions are met, cooperate fully. You do want them to hire you again, don't you?

Never lie about your information. If you want to keep the assignments and money coming in, your information must be accurate and truthful. The first time your information is found to be faulty or you are caught lying will be the last time anyone hires you. Your reputation is the product you are selling, and if your guarantee of truthfulness and accuracy is not upheld, your clients will be demanding more than their money back.

Demand Payment. You are taking risks here and you deserve compensation. Make sure you get the payment up front, but give a guarantee that your information will be worth it—and then make sure it is.

How to Be an NPC



The risks of playing your PC and getting killed off from ignorance don't appeal to you any more? You feel like you need to get out of a rut?

Welcome to the wild world of NPCing—part wild freedom, part volunteerism, part hard work, and as much fun as you care to make it.

The following rules, guidelines, and suggestions will help you be the best at what you are, whether it is an apprentice zombie or a Death Lord, a farmer or a foreign spy.

Not all of these suggestions will apply in all situations; if you are an NPC on a module, you will not have as much freedom as a wandering NPC on a weekend. Still, these are basic guidelines that will enable both you and the players to have the best time possible.

This is the primary NPC rule: *You are there for the PCs to have fun.* Your job is not to kill all the PCs. You are not the opposing team against the team of PCs. Your purpose is to *entertain* the PCs. This means making every part you play exciting, unique, and memorable. Following the guidelines below will assist you in meeting this goal.

Make sure you know the rules. You are not expected to be a rules expert at your first event, so when in doubt, be careful and don't do anything if you are not sure whether it is allowed.

If it is your first event, be sure to tell the Monster Marshal so he or she can provide you with some training and then make sure you travel with more experienced players at first. Follow their examples and you won't make a fool of yourself.

Behave as your character should. Act logically and always have a reason for your actions. Think about what you are and what you want to accomplish. Simply wandering around waiting for someone to kill you *makes no sense*, and we want all of our NPCs to make sense.

Not all monsters (or people) act alike. Know how your particular monster acts and thinks. Goblins are stupid and easily tricked. Zombies move slowly and don't hit anything that falls to the ground or remains motionless. Lizardmen speak with a lisping hiss and hate the cold. Mindless undead creatures can't talk. Know what your character is and how it acts before you go out and it will not only make your NPC more real to the player but will also let you have more fun as well.

This rule also applies to where your character travels. Have a reason for being where you are. If you are a monster, you probably have absolutely no reason to go into town. If nothing else, you are probably aware that when your fellow monsters go into town they rarely return—it must be a pretty dangerous place for monsters! (Alternatively, one wag suggested that these same monsters may deduce that the town is a wonderful place and the non-returning monsters have decided to stay—and as such we will soon be seeing swarms of vacationing monsters coming to town with picnic baskets, blankets and beach balls in tow. Hmph.)

Remember that even stupid animals know enough to hide in the bushes and surprise their prey, and will run away if the battle is going against them. As a monster with an intelligence that is probably greater than a fox or wolf, shouldn't your NPC do the same? Don't stand in the middle of the road and say "Come and get me!" and then fight until everyone in your NPC party is completely dead. Yes, you're supposed to be there for the players to kill, but if you treat your NPCs as something other than fish-in-a-barrel, the players will have a lot more fun and you will too. If outnumbered or about to die, surrender or run away. Be logical. Monsters who run into town screaming and attacking for no apparent reason until they are cut down by surprised players are no fun.



Ham it up! Give every part you play a unique personality so that the PCs remember you. And then keep that personality consistent. You'll have more fun and so will the players you encounter. In NPCing, there is rarely such a thing as an overactor.

Get Everyone Involved. When “performing” as your NPC, try your best to get as many players involved as possible. If you are a messenger coming into town, yell out your message so lots of people can hear it. If you are the major Bad Guy for the event entering with your minions, don't ask to speak privately to the nobles in town—yell out your demands so that everyone there can be a part of the plot and know what is going on. Don't be shy, just walk up to PCs and start talking to them in order to get them involved.

Remember that the goal is to entertain as many PCs as possible. Whenever it is logical and possible, do everything in your power to involve many players.

Know your character. When someone deals with you as an NPC, they are looking at part of your character's life. It helps to give your character a life for them to see, and it makes role-playing more fun and more natural.

If you are playing something with an intelligence enough to talk, you need to have some background information prepared in case the players question you. It is very important that you are ready to answer the questions without

hesitation or looking to the marshal for help. If you pause before every question, the players will easily figure out that what you are telling them is not important.

Have a name for your character. Whether it's supplied to you or not, every character has a name. It is awkward to greet “Who goes there?” with “Uh, can I get back to you on that?” If you don't have a name assigned, try to come up with one that sounds distinctive and shows a little imagination; if you use “Fred the Bold” you may find some PC yelling “You can't be Fred the Bold because I am!”

Think of your character's history. A module script or weekend write-up may explain the purpose of the encounter you're in, but will often tell you nothing of the character you're playing beyond “mage's bodyguard.” If you intend to role-play at all as an NPC, you need more. Where are you from? What do you love and hate? What kind of training do you have? What are your non-game skills? Why are you where you are?

Know the script. As an NPC you always have some sort of guide to your role. It may be a quick briefing from the Monster Marshal, but it may sometimes be a more detailed script to the weekend or a module. Read the whole write-up to understand how you and your encounter fit in, and read your own encounter until you know that you can do your part. The success of the adventure often depends on everything fitting together completely, and knowing what you're building is the start.

Be creative with every character. Too often NPCs will go to the Monster Marshal and say “I have an idea! How about if I go out as a practically unkillable high level mage with Dragon Magic and seven permanent magic items...(etc.)” This causes a red flag to pop up in the Monster Marshal's mind and will probably do the exact



opposite of what you want—that is, it will get you demoted to less powerful positions with a more experienced NPC baby-sitting you. You don't want that.

The way to get to play more powerful characters is to first prove that you can handle the lower level characters. If you can't make a goblin interesting, why should the Monster Marshal trust you with a more important character? If you want to play the bigger, more powerful parts, you have to convince us that you can role-play and that you can be trusted with this power.

That there is no such thing as a dull NPC unless you play it that way. Even a farmer selling his apples in town can be a memorable character if you make it so.

Look good and feel good. The more you look the part, the easier it will be for you to get into the part and easier it will be for the players to treat you as the part.

Wear your masks and makeup. Look at it from the players' viewpoint: How do they know you're a troll when all they see are three quick lines of makeup on your cheeks? The makeup doesn't hurt, and the fun you will give players who will then talk about who great the battle was (instead of how cheesy the monsters looked) is worth the time it takes.

This is especially important if you are playing different NPCs during the weekend. If you haven't changed your look between the time you went out as the evil assassin and the time you went back to town as the innocent waif, you are certain to be mistakenly identified and ruin the fun for lots of players.

Wear your costume. Your costume is as important as your face. It's the thing people will notice first. Bring a few things of your own to augment the costumes you can use in NPC camp. Jewelry, hats, sashes, belts, and armor all make distinctive changes in your appearance, and thus in your character.

Use accents and mannerisms. Your characters can also be distinctive in other ways. Use a different voice each time you play a new character; change the way you walk, act and move. Do everything you can to make each part you play unique.

Answer "What do I see?" questions properly. Because it is hard to tell certain monsters apart simply because of the make-up, players are allowed to ask "What do I see?"

If you have to respond, give the basic description as written on the Monster Card: "Skeletal figure" and not "Liche with 145 Body Points and seven rituals." Remember to just give a description; don't identify what you are.

Sometimes though, players metagame by asking, "What do I see?" when they really can't see anything. If asked "What do I see?" and you think they can't see you well (because it's dark, or you are wearing a hood), you can respond "Describe to me what you see." If they can prove that they can see you by saying something like "You have white face makeup on" then you can give a better description such as "skeletal figure" but if they say "a hooded figure" then you respond "then that is all you see at this point."

This all assumes that you are playing a bipedal creature like an orc, goblin, or troll. If you are playing a monster with a much different than human shape (bear, snake, unicorn, etc.), then you should read the “what do I see” description *even if they don't ask first*. This includes things like insects, animals, giant worms, and oozes.

Die when you're dead. Your role-playing should continue through your death. If your NPC died, lie there until the party goes away (unless you are told otherwise by the Monster Marshal). The only time you should even talk is if someone is doing a described search on you. Never walk around, congratulate the party on their good fighting skills, read over the marshal's shoulder, or otherwise get in the way.

Stay dead!

Return the props to their proper place. In many encounters, there will be some sort of prop used. Unless you or the other NPCs bring your own, these are Alliance property, and you may be asked to sign out for them. Afterwards, try to make certain that all props get back where they belong and all private gimmicks are returned to their owners. Disappearing props are an expense that drains money we could be putting into improving events.

Wear your headband when not in-game. A white headband is how we tell players that you are not there in-game. If you are out-of-game, be sure to have a white headband on.

However, try not to make that happen too often. If you are NPCing on a weekend and you wish to travel from the NPC camp to the town to get a bite to eat, rather than show up in the tavern with a white headband on, play a farmer or traveler who is heading into town for a meal. Ask the Monster Marshal and maybe there will even be some information you can give out while you are there.

Never improvise skills or creatures. While creativity in performance is welcome, taking major liberties with your NPC is not. There have been cases where a bored NPC has decided to become Supertroll with double the normal hit points and an enchanted blade that slays on every blow. In these cases the same thing always happens: an adjudicator is informed, the massacre is declared to have never happened somehow, everyone gets mad, and the NPC gets a lecture and demoted to menial monster parts (“Barney the one-armed goblin for you this event!”).

It is fine to use your imagination within the confines of your NPC character, such as finding new ambush sites, playing new tricks on the players, or otherwise role-playing as your character would. It is quite another thing to give yourself new skills, powers or treasure.

It also includes not adding new plots. If your assignment was to go to the tavern and sell some potions, don't create a backstory where you're actually enslaved to do so and your evil master is just outside of town.

If you want to write plots, we encourage that, but it must be done in advance, approved by the Plot Committee, and not on-the-fly.

Never target players. Your NPC probably does not know anyone in-game and therefore should treat all players the same. Walking around town looking for your friends to interact with (or for your enemies to attack) is a certain way to get demoted and removed. Keep your NPC neutral (unless the Monster Marshal specifically tells you to target someone).



Don't see the players as the enemy. Too often, NPCs forget that their primary purpose is to provide the players with a fun and challenging encounter. An unwinnable battle that can't be run away from is no fun. NPCing is not your excuse to be the powerful being your PC character is not.

As an NPC you should never give a *Killing Blow* unless you have been instructed to do so by the Monster Marshal. In any event, every time a *Killing Blow* is given it should make sense. Players generally do not object to taking a death if they have done something wrong or if they lost a winnable battle through their own incompetence but they do object if there was nothing they could do about it—and that usually happens when the *Killing Blow* doesn't make in-game sense.

Imagine this scenario: the Monster Marshal has sent you out roaming the town as an immensely powerful vampire with the power to give a *Killing Blow*. A poor inexperienced fighter runs up to you, and attacks without realizing what he's getting into. Don't immediately destroy him with one blow or spell—that's no fun for the player. You should instead parry him a bit while yelling out the huge amount of damage you will inflict upon him if he doesn't wise up and run away. Taunt him. Role-play with him. If he insists on fighting you even after this warning, *then* teach him a lesson. "Stupid should hurt" as the saying goes.

Here's a true example: An evil lich and his minions were traveling through the town late one moonless night when they came upon a lone adventurer on a bridge. "Be careful!" said the player, "I hear there's a lich out to-night!" The NPC walked towards the player until the death-face made up identified him as the lich in question, and as the player shivered in his boots, the NPC smiled and whispered "Yes, I know." Giving an evil laugh, he and his minions then continued across the bridge. The player in this example had a terrific encounter that he can tell everyone about over and over again.

And *that* is what the game is all about—having fun encounters! Imagine how little fun that player would have had if the NPC had merely attacked and killed the poor fellow.

Let the players do cool things. Along the same lines as the last point, if the players do something really interesting that would make a great story, you should probably let them do it. We're all in this together to make the best story we can, and sometimes it helps the game to let the players get away with something even if the NPC could have stopped them.

Here's another true example: The evil baddie captured a baron and held up the baron's magic sword in front of the entire town. "I will punish this baron for attacking me with this sword by using my Dragon Magic power to destroy it!" he said, and he began to start the incant. Just then, from the back of the crowd, someone threw a lowly *Disarm* spell which sailed over everyone's head and hit the NPC square in the chest. The Dragon Mage, of course, had all sorts of spell protectives on, but the NPC playing the part saw how cool this would be for the storyline, and he dropped the sword. The crowd cheered and lunged into battle, and it became a great tale players would recall for years to come.

So basically, while it's wrong to give yourself extra powers to make a cool story, there is no problem with ignoring some of your powers for the same reason.

Don't let the players bully you. Some players on a weekend will try to follow you around when you are out-of-game, waiting for you to put on your mask so they can rush in and attack you. Or they may merely "hang out" near the NPC camp waiting for you to come out. Do not play with them. They are cheating. If they attack you, yell "Hold" and then tell them that you refuse to acknowledge them. If they continue to do such things, be sure to report them to the Monster Marshal.

To a lesser extent, this also applies to high level players who hang around town waiting for low level NPCs to wander by. These players jump in before any low level players can arrive, knock these NPCs down with one or two quick blows, and then collect the loot. They should be picking on someone their own size outside of town where the higher level monsters hang out. Try your best to avoid these wimps.

Some players treat non-monster NPCs differently from PCs. These players will kill a human NPC quicker than they would a human PC. This is metagaming and should be discouraged. If a player asks you the out-of-game question "Are you an NPC?" you should lie and say "no." They shouldn't be asking that question in the first place. If they kill you, you should check with the Monster Marshal to see if your NPC would resurrect in the local Healer's



Guild. If the Monster Marshal approves it, then do what your NPC would logically do—either try to exact revenge or bring charges up to the local law authority.

Report bad players to a Marshal. If you encounter a cheater or a metagamer, do not attempt to argue the point with the player. Your recourse is to ask for the player's name, not to lecture. Let the marshals straighten out conflicts. That's what they're there for.

Similarly, if that player is upset with you and wants to know your name or player number, you must give it.

Don't argue. Remember that everyone in our game—both players and NPCs—always has the right to ask the out-of-game names of other players. You should not feel insulted if someone asks you.

Also: report good players! Players who are excellent role-players, never cheat, and help make a fun game for everyone should be acknowledged and thanked. Tell a marshal (and when you're a player, be sure to report good NPCs too).

Remember, your job as an NPC is to be the actor the players meet to make the game more enjoyable for them. You are not merely battle opponents. Think of every character you play as being unique and interesting and make them so. Be proud of your work!

You are here for the PC's enjoyment. But don't think it's all work—If you abide by these guidelines, you too will have great adventures and fun.

NPC Documentation

Every NPC is required to have documentation (usually in the form of a “monster card”) to prove that he or she has the powers, spells, and items they are using in an encounter. If a group of NPCs are out together and all have the same abilities, then only one is required to have the documentation.

The documentation may also be held by a marshal who is overseeing the encounter.

The documentation can only be adjusted, changed, or approved by an authorized marshal and never by the NPC.

A player can challenge an NPC and request to see the documentation. If a marshal is nearby, the NPC can refuse to show the card and show it to the marshal instead. Any problems should be brought to the attention of a marshal so that it can be verified that the NPC is playing the correct part and using the correct skills.

NPCs are only allowed to give Killing Blows if the documentation gives them that ability. This includes taking actions that are equivalent to “forcing a resurrection” such as pulling a dead or unconscious character behind enemy lines, placing that character in a *Circle of Power* or behind a *Ward* or *Wizard Lock*, or otherwise hiding that character in such a way as to prevent other players from finding the body. This does *not* include standing over the body to prevent the person from being saved, which is perfectly allowable.

NPCs are also only allowed to search and/or steal from players if the documentation clearly states so. Moreover, they may only search and/or steal to the degree to which the documentation allows them.

For example, an NPC may only have the right to steal anything obvious (such as weapons or other hand held possessions) but not necessarily to search through pockets or pouches; an NPC may have the right to break into cabins and search through possessions (with a marshal nearby of course); an NPC may have the right to search only for specific items (such as healing potions it can use on itself). The extent to which the NPC can steal or search should be documented.

Note that occasionally a monster's abilities may change from event to event or even during an event. This can be the result of many things, from mutation to strange magics to a new tribe moving into the area. Just because a monster had an ability or skill one time you met it does not guarantee it will be exactly the same every other time.

A monster may also have different skills and abilities depending on which chapter and campaign you play. So never get too confident that you know every monster out there.

Remember: The information on the NPC documentation and in this section is out-of-game. Even though you saw a monster card that said a monster was immune to sleep, your character would only know that your *Sleep* spell had no effect when you tried it or when you were told in-game that it would not work. To do otherwise would be metagaming, which is considered cheating.

Monster Cards

Every NPC you play should have a monster card. A sample card is below. The card contains the following information:

Monster Name: This will be printed clearly at the top of the card. This is the name commonly used to refer to this monster. (More details on the next few pages.)

Monster Type(s): These are printed just under the Monster Name. Keywords here are used to determine some rules effects, such as "Control <Monster Type> By Voice!" and whether they are vulnerable to some specific spells like Banish, Subjugate, or Control Undead.

ACE 12	Ogre, Coward	Role Tank/Protector
	Ogroid, Ogre	
Description	Yellow skinned ogroid	
Appearance	Yellow makeup with tusks.	
Intelligence	Normal	
Body Total	40	Armor rep to 60
Weapon Types	Weapons (Any)	Damage 4 (2 Handed = 5)
Carrier(s)	Normal	Threshold 0
Immunities		
Vulnerabilities	None.	
Strength	2	
Rips From	Slow, Pin	
Weakness Rip	None	
Spells	None.	
Combat Abilities	SWARM 4: Evade at will Weapon Strike Disarm <item> x4	
Defensive Abilities	Resist Necromancy x1. Evade x4.	
Other Skills	Weapon master. Style master.	
Notes		
Search/Steal	May Killing Blow	Ensure Resurrection
Alliance National		
v0.8 3/16/2019		

Role: This describes the general role of the monster. An NPC can get a good idea of how the card is supposed to be played by looking at this field. For example, a Protector would be intended to help protect other monsters on their side of the line.

ACE: ACE stands for "Average Character Equivalent." This number provides a rough estimate as to the power of the monster in PC level terms. This number does not include any PC skills that may be added to the monster, as certain monster skills are not easily equitable into Build Point costs.

Description: This briefly describes the monster in-game, and should be used to answer the question "What do I see?"

Appearance: This gives an outline of the expected makeup/costuming for this monster.

Body Total: The Body Points of this monster. These act just like PC Body Points.

Armor: This describes the type and amount of Armor

Points the monster may use. If the field says “Rep,” it may wear a suit of physical armor (potentially with a maximum point limit) just like a PC. If the field says “Natural,” the monster has the specified amount of Natural Armor (see the Rule Book for details on how Natural Armor works).

If this field says “None,” the monster may not utilize Armor at all.

Weapon Types: Lists the weapons this monster may use.

Damage: Specifies the damage amount called with each weapon swing from this monster.

Carrier(s): This describes which type(s) of damage the monster may call with its weapons. If multiple are listed, the monster must choose one and only one of these to use with each swing.

Threshold: A monster with a Threshold limits which weapons are able to get through its tough hide. See the Rule Book for details on how a Threshold works.

Immunities and Vulnerabilities: These fields describe any special weaknesses or immunities the monster may possess.

Strength: The monster’s Superhuman Strength rating; see the Rule Book description for details.

Rips From / Weakness Rip: These fields list which Binding abilities the monster can Rip from (see the Rule Book for details). If the monster is under a Weakness, it may only rip from the abilities listed under “Weakness Rip.”

Spells / Combat Abilities / Defensive Abilities: These sections outline specific spells or attacks and defenses the monster might possess.



Other Skills: A monster may have other skills outlined here. These might be combat skills, or they might be skills the monster can use in roleplay.

Search / Steal: Monsters may not search or steal from PCs unless this field is signed by a Plot member or Marshal. No matter what, they must still follow all rules under the Searching and Stealing section.

May Killing Blow: Monsters may not Killing Blow PCs unless this field is signed by a Plot member or Marshal.

Monster Types

There are a few common Monster Types across Fortannis. Most characters have at least heard of these creatures, even if they haven't encountered them themselves. These types are common enough that NPCs are encouraged to learn their standard benefits and drawbacks, as they will likely play these types of monster quite a bit.

Undead: Regrettably, these necromantic abominations are regularly encountered in most parts of Fortannis. Undead have no metabolism, are immune to the *Alteration* and *Command* effect groups, are often immune to *Ice*, and are always immune to the *Poison* qualifier. Some undead require special weapons to affect; for example, silver weapons will often inflict full damage where normal weapons might not.

Undead are healed by the *Necromancy* effect group and harmed by the *Earth* effect group. Anything that specifically targets undead (such as *Turn Undead* or *Destroy Undead*) will work against these creatures. A *Life* spell will inflict a *Destroy Undead* effect against an undead.

Undead generally have large amounts of Natural Armor, representing the powerful necromantic energies that animate them holding firm against any attacks. *Healing* ignores this armor, making it a powerful weapon against the undead. Additionally, many undead are limited in how they can use defensive abilities against *Earth* effect group attacks.

Most undead turn to dust at 0 Body Points and ignore the Bleeding Out and Dead periods.

Constructs: For a variety of reasons, powerful casters will create constructs (also called golems) to serve them—often long after their own death. Constructs have no metabolism, are immune to the *Alteration*, *Command*, *Necromancy*, and *Earth* effect groups, and are always immune to the *Poison* qualifier. Some constructs require special weapons to affect; for example, magic weapons will often inflict full damage where normal weapons might not.

Often, constructs will take damage from *Shatter* effects, and may not be able to defend normally against these. If you want to harm a construct with a *Shatter*, you should target their body (e.g. “Weapon Strike Shatter Body!”).

Constructs might be healed by rituals or specific elements (such as Flame or Lightning). Often, they are virtually mindless, following the simple commands of their creator until otherwise ordered.

Most constructs turn to dust at 0 Body Points and ignore the Bleeding Out and Dead periods.

Elementals: Creatures from the primal planes existing in the ether can at times come to harry or benefit the residents of Fortannis. These elementals come in a specific form, often reflecting a known element such as Flame or Chaos but at times arriving from strange places reflecting unusual Elements.

Elementals have no metabolism, are immune to the *Alteration*, *Command*, *Necromancy*, and *Earth* effect groups, and are always immune to the *Poison* qualifier. Elementals are generally healed by their own element and hurt—often doubly—by the opposing element.

When struck by an elemental-targeting effect—such as *Banish* or *Subjugate*—elementals will take special effects that the living might ignore.

Most elementals disappear at 0 Body Points and ignore the Bleeding Out and Dead periods, returning to their plane of origin.

The Game World

The Alliance is trying to create and represent a fantasy world based primarily on medieval Europe. However, this is merely the starting point: the game encompasses much more, and you will find as you play that there are societies in the game that are a mixture of real world cultures and purely fantastic ones.

Remember that we are creating a world here as we want it to be and not how it really was, so don't be picky about historical inaccuracies. We have people wearing costumes that would have been worn from 600 to 1600; we have weapons that did not exist during certain periods; we have laws and systems of government that are modern in concept.

And that's how we want it. Let's face it, once you bring magic into it, you have already moved away from historical accuracy anyway. Always keep in mind that the Alliance LARP is not a re-creation game, but a fantasy game.

Discrimination

You cannot be denied a position on any of our committees on the basis of your out-of-game race, religion, gender, gender identity, age (as long as you're old enough to play), handicap, sexual orientation, or country of origin. Nor can you be denied any in-game positions or benefits for those out-of-game reasons.

Further, you are allowed to play an in-game gender that is different from your out-of-game gender without any in-game ramifications. Most chapters will have a pin you can wear or some other indicia to let the other players know what pronouns they should use with you.

This policy does not mean that the in-game world is a egalitarian paradise. There are countries and people who will discriminate against your in-game race, for instance.

Example: Untok the high orc hates all dwarves. He thinks they are the lowest form of life and he kills them whenever he gets the chance. Players who have dwarven characters that are killed by him cannot claim that they are being discriminated against, because this is an in-game discrimination only.

All players should try to distinguish between in-game prejudices and out-of-game prejudices. Steer clear of the issue altogether if possible.

Further, you should try to avoid making a character history that may rely on real world racial or cultural stereotypes. For example, if you want to play a wild elf based on an American Indian culture, please make sure that you know something about that culture. If you walk around saying "ugh" and "how" and calling people "keemosabe" then you may be asked to stop. Even if no insult was intended, the result could be taken that way, so if you are not sure, avoid it. *When in doubt, don't.*

The most important thing is to prevent your character from being insulting to other players who, in real life, are from that culture. At the risk of saying we want PCPCs (Politically Correct Player Characters), please be careful. Just think first.



Science

How advanced is science? Well, scholars are aware that our planet is not the center of the solar system and that the world is not flat. They are also aware of the existence of real elements (as opposed to the ‘traditional’ magical elements of Earth, Air, Water and Fire) and of basic nonmagical healing techniques. Lenses for eyeglasses and telescopes are in existence but are generally of poor quality. There are compasses and navigational materials for traveling. There’s even indoor plumbing.

In general, scientific evolution in the world has been stunted by the prevalence of magic. Astrology and magic are considered scientific facts.

In most campaigns, you will find that the science will be right at the verge of the renaissance, on the tail end of the Dark Ages.

Government

Our present-day concepts of democracy is a foreign idea to the people of Fortannis. There may be some places that have a very limited version of democracy—for example, the nobles are allowed to vote on certain issues—but that is the extent of it. Even peasants who revolt against unfair nobles never think to replace their government with a democracy, but only to replace it with a fairer monarch.

Most Alliance games will take place in a form of a medieval feudal society. This means that there is a strongly observed hierarchy. This is not a system of equality, but a system of duty to one’s superior in exchange for support.

The highest noble in the land (usually a king or queen) owns all of the land in the kingdom but may grant land to others in exchange for fealty and promises to support the crown, provide troops in times of war, pay taxes, and otherwise obey their liege. These people are the vassals who in turn have vassals of their own.

These vassals, all of whom have titles appropriate to their station (duke, baroness, knight, etc.) are nobles. All others are commoners. Commoners are the backbone of the society. They are the farmers, craftsmen, healers, soldiers, and workers.

Somewhere between the nobles and the commoners are the adventurers. Adventurers get their respect from the deeds they accomplish and usually because they have a fair amount of money (compared to the lowly commoner at least).

Being an epic fantasy game, most of our players are nobles and adventurers, not commoners. Although a real medieval town would have many commoners walking the streets selling their goods, tending the fields, and doing the other day-to-day tasks that a society needs, no player wants to



spend their time doing these roles. For game purposes, assume that all of these support people are out there doing their jobs. You will meet NPCs playing these parts.

Each noble owes responsibilities to the commoners as much as the commoners owe responsibilities to the noble. In return for taxes and other services, the nobles are expected to protect the commoners from monsters, criminals, and invaders, to provide for their well-being, health, and education, to promote justice, and to use their skills and income for the betterment and protection of the people.

In exchange, the commoners are required to pay their taxes, serve in the militia in times of need, report criminal activity, and address and treat all nobles with the respect they are due.

Societal Conventions

The following four “laws” form the basic customs of the society and are obeyed by all, from the highest noble to the lowest peasant. These laws are so ingrained that they are rarely challenged. Any person found to have disobeyed these laws would be shunned by all as an untrustworthy villain.

Hospitality: Any person who is invited into your home or holdings accepts your hospitality and will be treated as a guest with the respect due their class and station. This person, even if an enemy, will be given protection while in your home from you and your household. If any harm were to befall your guest, you would be responsible. By accepting your hospitality, your guest also agrees to give you respect where it is due, to not take any aggressive action, and to not take advantage of your goodwill.

Loyalty: A person who swears fealty to you as their liege will obey you and be loyal to you, and you must in turn be loyal to them.

Kinship: A member of your family must be loyal to you and you must be loyal to them. Because they are family, they are worthy of your trust.

Honor: Each individual is considered to be able to defend their honor by the use of arms or magic. This type of activity is governed by local laws that may differ between nobility and commoner. This law does *not* mean, however, that every slight must be met on the “Battlefield of Honor.”

Titles and Inheritance

All noble titles that are obtainable by characters must be earned. Simply because your character history has your father as the duke does not automatically mean that you will become duke. You must first work your way up the chain of command by becoming a squire and then passing the rigorous tests of knighthood.

Then, even after you do all of that, you may still be denied being named as heir. There is nothing preventing a nobleperson from naming someone not related to them as their successor.

This is not historically accurate of course, but in our game, you must earn everything, including noble titles.

Titles and Rankings

The following lists the most common titles you are likely to encounter.

King/Queen: This monarch is the final word on all matters and that word is literally the law. They would be addressed as *Your Majesty*.

Prince/Princess: These are the children of the King and Queen. They are addressed as *Your Highness*.

Duke/Duchess: This title is granted by the crown and carries with it a duchy, which can then be divided into counties, baronies, and estates. They are addressed as *Your Grace*.

Count/Countess: This title grants sovereignty over a portion of the lands, usually encompassing a number of baronies. They are addressed as *My Lord Count* or *My Lady Countess*.

Baron/Baroness: This title is inherited or granted and has sovereignty over a number of estates grouped together into a barony. They are addressed as *My Lord Baron* or *My Lady Baroness*.

Knight: A knight is a person who is granted sovereignty over at least one estate. Knights are addressed as *Good Sir Knight* or *Good Dame Knight*.

Lord/Lady: A Lord or Lady is usually the spouse or child of a noble. They deserve respect as a noble but cannot perform any noble duties or own an estate. They are addressed as *Your Lordship* or *Your Ladyship*.



Magistrate: Magistrates are granted the right to try commoners and dispense justice in the lands of their liege. Their decisions can be overturned by any noble of their liege. Although not usually noble, they are treated with respect due a noble and are addressed as *My Lord Magistrate* or *My Lady Magistrate*.

Guildmaster/Guildmistress: Though not a noble title, the head of a chartered Mages' Guild or Healers' Guild is often accorded the same respect as a knight, though obviously without the knight's duties or powers. They are addressed as *Guildmaster* or *Guildmistress*.

Sheriff: The Sheriff is appointed by the Magistrate and is responsible for appointing and maintaining the Town Guard. They are commoners but with special duties. They are addressed as *M'Lord*, *M'Lady*, or *Sheriff*.

Guard: A guard is a person granted the right to uphold the laws and settle minor disputes within the lands of their immediate liege only. They are addressed as *M'Lord*, *M'Lady*, or *Guard*.

Squire: A squire is a knight in training. They hold no power and are not considered nobility. They are addressed as *Squire*.

Adventurer: Adventurers are not nobles but get respect from merchants and common townsfolk, if for no other reason than they fight against the monsters that plague the land. Obviously, the more powerful you are as an adventurer the more respect you get. They are addressed as *M'Lord* or *M'Lady*.

Merchant: A merchant is an upper class or wealthy commoner who may even own some land if granted to them by their liege. They are addressed as *Good Merchant*, *M'Lord*, or *M'Lady*.

Common Townsfolk: These are the regular citizens who do the daily work a society needs, from farming to bookkeeping. They do not own land. They are addressed as *Goodman* or *Goodwoman*.

Noble Powers

Nobility carries with it power and responsibility. If you are able to work your way up the chain of command to obtain a noble title, take this seriously. Your actions will affect the game greatly, and if you abuse your power (or fail to show up for many events) you may be removed of your title.

Power is hierarchal. Everyone on the list must obey the lawful orders of all nobles above them on the list. For instance, a knight must obey a baron, countess, prince, or king; however, an adventurer is not required to obey the orders of a squire, because a squire is not a noble.

However, there is more to this than mere obedience of orders: This is a list of status and respect, and all those lower on the list are expected to show respect to those above it. By that standard, an adventurer should always show respect to a squire and should obey the squire's orders (but is still not required to).

Commoners owe respect to the nobles because nobles protect them against marauding monsters, ensure that there is a flowing economy, strengthen the land's ties to the throne, and generally maintain a status quo to keep the citizens one step away from anarchy. Because of all this hard work, if a noble gives a commoner an order, that person is obligated to obey it. Although there is no Oath of Fealty between the commoner and the noble, the relation is implied because of the services the noble provides to the commoner.

Does this mean that the nobles have free reign over the commoners? Of course not. A noble who orders commoners to take suicidal actions or who pushes them around for no reason places himself or herself at risk of losing their noble title. The noble's lieges are obligated to investigate any charges of wrongdoing by the nobility.

Note that all Oaths of Fealty (even implied ones) extend up the chain of command. Thus a squire who swore an Oath of Fealty to a knight would also owe fealty to all those to whom that knight swore.

If someone higher than you gives an order, you are required to obey it unless that order contradicts an order already given to you by your liege.

For example, Sir Terin has sworn fealty to Baron Finther. Baroness Darlissa walks by and orders Sir Terin to accompany her as a bodyguard. Sir Terin is required to obey because she is higher in the hierarchy than he is. This is true even though he has not sworn fealty to her.

If, however, Baron Finther had earlier given him a command to wait there for a visiting dignitary, then Sir Terin could refuse Baroness Darlissa's command, explaining his reason in the process.

A good example of this chain of command can be found in the modern day army of nearly every country. A private who is a member of Company A must still obey orders given by a sergeant of Company B. It is assumed that this power will not be abused or misused.

To summarize then, all commoners (including adventurers) must obey all nobles of any rank, and must obey magistrates, sheriffs, and guards when they are acting in their capacity to make arrests and prosecute crimes. All nobles must obey any nobles of a higher rank provided those orders are not contradictory to orders already given by their lieges. Serious consequences could befall those who do not do so.

Becoming a Noble

Becoming a noble is a goal for many players. Since our game does not provide noble titles through heredity, any player can attempt to obtain a noble title.

Nobility offers many benefits, not the least of which is being in the midst of a number of interesting plots. Nobility also provides in-game power and, in some games, an automatic income.

Because this position provides such in-game benefits, it is not easy to obtain. To become a knight, you will have to prove your worth through a series of tests and challenges.

Being a noble has little to do with your fighting or spellcasting skills and everything to do with your role-playing skills. Stay in character, wear a great costume, and most importantly, act like a noble.

You also need to be well-respected out-of-game too. Acting like a noble in-game while being a cheater or whiner out-of-game probably won't get you very far.

Earning your knighthood is a reward. It's a quest. It's not a right. Take it seriously. All players should respect *you* for all the hard work you did to achieve knighthood even if their character doesn't respect your character.

The Laws of the Land

There is a gray area in dealing with the in-game laws. Because of our modern ideas of justice, we can't use the traditional medieval ways of determining guilt or innocence, nor do we want to. In those days, trial-by-combat was seen as just because the "hand of god" guided the righteous and made sure the good guy won. Obviously, in a religion-free game as ours, this would not be acceptable.

In some fantasy worlds, "truth" spells or other magical means can be used for determining guilt. However, these things cut role playing out of the equation. What need is there of a trial if a simple spell can solve the problem? No matter how smart the criminal, he or she would always be caught, and that's not much fun.

If you take truth spells and real medieval "justice" options such as trial-by-combat out of the equation, we are left only with role-playing as a way to determine guilt or innocence. We do not have at our disposal fingerprinting, DNA sampling, lie detector tests, or any modern ways of gathering evidence. We can't even alchemize blood to tell what race the blood came from. Therefore, absent crimes committed in front of witnesses, our chances of proving a criminal guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt" (the modern standard) are practically nil.

This doesn't make sense from a gaming perspective. The chance of getting caught and being found guilty must be present in the game for two reasons:

First, the characters who commit crimes need to face a risk for them to have fun. The adrenaline rush and the plot associated with committing the "perfect crime" and getting away with it are exciting, but greatly lessened if the chance of "getting away with it" is too easy. Bungee jumping is exciting too but not so much if you're only jumping a few feet and know that you have no chance of getting hurt. It would be like only fighting goblins all the time no matter how high level you are. Without a challenge and a risk, there is no excitement.

Second, and related to the first, the players whose characters try to capture and expose the criminals need to know that they have some chance of success as well. No one wants to feel like they have wasted their time or that they are fighting an unwinnable battle.

Therefore, the legal system in most Alliance games system has to be fair to the players while at the same time (a) making sense in-game given our medieval fantasy world and (b) allowing there to be a chance that characters who commit crimes might actually get caught.

The obvious solution is, especially since we do not have modern investigative tools at our disposal, not to use modern standards.

We instead turn the burden of proof around in dealing with in-game justice.

Instead of the Sheriff having to prove a suspect guilty, if there is a "preponderance of the evidence" against the suspect, then the burden is on the suspect to prove his or her innocence. (This is also a lot more historically accurate.)

Here is where the role-playing can come in. The suspect must produce witnesses and evidence to convince the magistrate that maybe the wrong person was arrested or that they didn't do it.

Think of it as the balancing scales of justice. We can't put exact numbers on this, but imagine that the sheriff is giving the magistrate all of the evidence he or she has collected. Each piece of evidence pushes the scales farther and farther to the right, indicating guilt. It is practically impossible to amass enough evidence to make the scales tip completely to the right, but once it has tipped more than 50%, it is certainly worth the questioning of the main suspect.

If the suspect has a criminal record or a seedy reputation, the scale tips a little more to the right. (This of course happens in our modern system as well.)

Now the suspect is brought in. If the suspect is a good liar, perhaps the scales can be tilted back to the left a bit. If the suspect has some reliable witnesses with good reputations who will testify on his or her behalf, perhaps the scales tip back a bit more. If the suspect is able to tip the scales back enough so that there is sufficient doubt (not "beyond a reasonable doubt") then it is likely that the charges will not be pressed.

This is all assuming the suspect is actually guilty. If the suspect is innocent, it should not be too difficult to really produce reliable evidence and witnesses to prove it—unless of course the suspect is being framed.

The bottom line is that your game will include a legal system that provides the greatest amount of role-playing without being unfair to either the accused or the lawgivers.

Transportation

Moving through the fantasy world of Fortannis is slow, as it was in the medieval days. Your character may decide to travel between events and see the country, and a good horse or cart can greatly affect your travel time.

Generally speaking, a caravan or single rider with provisions can travel about 30 miles a day cross country. This assumes good weather on good roads. Bad weather and bad or no roads can cut that in half easily.

A single rider dressed light without many provisions can travel maybe ten to twenty more. A messenger pushing a horse can do about 80 miles a day, but the horse will not be good for much use for quite some time afterwards.

A hiker with provisions can travel up to 25 miles without a horse, but there will be plenty of resting the next day.

Traveling by water is similar, depending on the type of ship, the water being traversed, and whether one is traveling upstream or downstream or against the currents or with the current.

Keep these times in mind when deciding what your character does between events.

Economics

You will be earning game money in various ways in our game. You can sell the items you make with your Production Points; you can earn money from your *Craftsman* skill; you can beg, borrow or steal; and of course, you can find treasure on monsters and in modules.

For anything to be valuable it has to be scarce. Diamonds would be worth little if they were as common as quartz. Monetary treasure is limited for that reason.

So what can you do with your money once you earn it? There are a number of things.



First of all, you will always need to pay for spells, potions, armor and other items you can buy from your fellow players. You may also be paying fellow players for Formal Magic rituals to be performed, or for bodyguarding, or for other services. Some players prefer to save their money for late night gambling sessions in the tavern, or for hiring bards to perform for them or write stories about them. And then there will almost always be merchants coming through town from time to time selling their wares or holding an auction of magical items.

The Guilds usually have items for sale as well, from ritual components and magic items to spells, potions, and scrolls. And of course, you will probably have to pay for your resurrections and identifications (usually a gold or so for each).

You may also have to pay bribes to get information you receive, and you may wish to contribute your wealth to a worthy cause such as an orphanage or healing center.

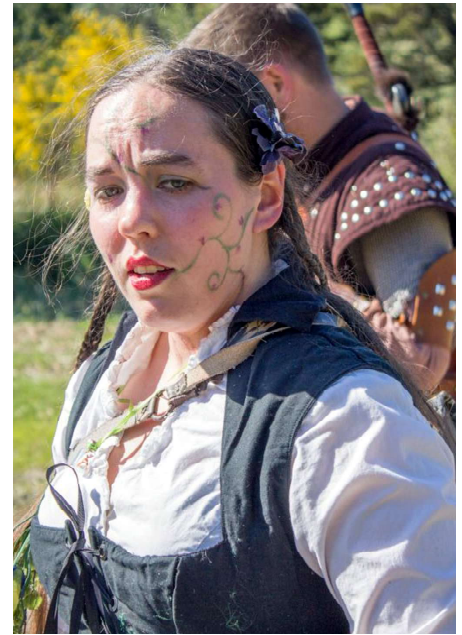
You can also buy items that will help you round out your character history concepts as well as help you with plot submissions, such as horses, homes, ships, and other out-of-play items. These items are meant to be for role-playing purposes only, such as for plot submissions. You will receive a tag for each of these items. You can lend or sell the item to your friends by giving them the tag.

Note that you will not be given a tag for every bloody item you have! We don't want to have to make tags for every lamp in your house and every stray cat you take in. The tags are for items that could affect your character in meaningful ways.

Following are some of the things you can buy. Your campaign may have other items as well and prices may vary in your game based on local economics.

These items can be purchased at Logistics or through in-game merchants, or may be given as rewards or found as treasure.

All costs are in coppers and are the basic costs for these items. (300 copper is equal to 3 gold.) By spending more than the base cost, you can make your item larger, better, fancier, or more to your liking.



Item Costs

Animals

Animals such as horses will help with your travel time. This list is only for trained animals, which of course are expensive.

Riding Horse	300
Draft Horse	400
War Horse	1,000
Dog (Guard/war)	200
Dog (Hunting)	100
Hawk/Falcon	100

Ground Transport

Wagon prices do not include horses or fancy decorations/additions, such as spikes on the wheels or ballista out of the back door or a roof.

Open wagon:

1 horse	10
2 horses	20
4 horses	40

Covered wagon (cloth):

1 horse	30
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2 horses	60
4 horses	120
Covered wagon (wood):	
1 horse	100
2 horses	200
4 horses	400

Water Transport

Before giving the prices, let us define our terms.

A *Barge* or *Raft* holds one to two people and is not seaworthy, but meant for calm rivers only.

A *Small Boat* holds one to three people and can only hug coasts or travel in small lakes. This is basically a small rowboat or a canoe.

A *Long Boat* holds six to thirty people and can travel in harsher waters. A small Viking rowing boat is a good example of a Long Boat.

A *Small Merchant Ship* holds twelve to eighteen people plus cargo. It will usually have sails.

A *Large Merchant Ship* holds 24 to 36 people plus cargo. It will definitely be a sailing ship.

Remember, the pricing does not include additions like ballistas and harpoons, nor does it include a crew.

Barge/Raft	10
Boat, Small	200
Boat, Long	600 - 3,000
Merchant, Small	6,000
Merchant, Large	12,000

Housing

These prices and the descriptions are the absolute minimum. They can be augmented to include extra rooms, more towers, artwork, secret passages, etc. These prices do not include any furnishings other than the bare minimum.

A “keep” is defined as a small castle with 10 rooms, 4 guard towers, a small moat and a drawbridge. You can build from there.

Players who buy houses might wish to submit floor plans and other descriptions to the Plot Committee.

Wooden

3 room cottage	1,500
Additional room	500

Stone

3 rooms	3,000
Additional room	1,000

Keep	25,000
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Hirelings

NPC hirelings can sometimes be obtained at the rate of their *Craftsman* level of proficiency.

For example, if you wish to hire someone with the skill *Craftsman: Artisan 1* to paint your portrait, it will cost you one silver per day—the same as a player character would make per day for their craftsman skill. If you want to hire Michelangelo with *Craftsman: Artisan 30*, then it will cost you 30 silver pieces per day. The more talent, the more you have to pay. Materials are not included.

Hirelings will *never* have Production Point skills or spellcasting ability. Such items and spells must be acquired in-game.

Note that availability of these hirelings is determined entirely by the Plot Committee. If you want to hire 100 miners to search for gold, but only 23 are looking for work right now, then you will just get what is available. And there is no guarantee that they won’t keep some of the gold for themselves, either...but then, without conflict, there is no plot!

The Alliance Code of Conduct

The “Good Sport” Rule

There is an underlying principle behind all of the many rules in this book. This “prime directive” is actually very simple: We expect you to be a good sport.

Some PCs have taken advantage of the rules, bullied other players, and made the game not fun for others and then claim in their defense “Hey, I haven’t violated any rules and besides, it’s all in-game.” This is *not* good sportsmanship.

The idea here is that you should play your character concept, whether good or evil, while at the same time keep the good of the game and the interests of your fellow players in mind. Don’t be a bully. Allow everyone to have fun.

No Cheating: The Alliance LARP system is set up to allow players to have as much freedom as possible, able to do things without supervision. We rely on the honesty of all players in order to make it work.

Therefore, we take cheating very seriously and take action against players who are not taking their damage, using spells and items they don’t have, or otherwise are ignoring our rules.

The way to make the system work best is through peer pressure. You, the player, need to watch other players to make sure they are obeying the rules and you need to check up on it and report it if you think they are not.

The Alliance LARP is basically a club, with membership fees and member requirements. You don’t have a “right” to play our game. If you are violating the rules or the Code of Conduct and are ruining the fun of other players, then we can prohibit you from playing.

Spirit of the Rules

Remember that in all cases where there seems to be a conflict, it is the spirit of the rule and not the literal meaning of the rule that should guide you.

If you find a loophole in a rule that obviously goes against the rule’s intention, then you should bring this to your local Rules Committee. Knowingly trying to take advantage of this unintended loophole is cheesy at best and could be considered cheating at worse if your interpretation is gravely in contrast.



If there is a dispute over a rules interpretation between players, a marshal should be called to act as an arbitrator. When dealing with a marshal or other game representative, you can help by presenting your case calmly and by answering all of the marshal's questions as directly as possible. Once a decision is made, play along with it and don't question the marshal's ruling—the marshal may have been aware of facts unavailable to you or may be making a decision based on what was intended by the rule.

If you feel the marshal's decision was incorrect or unfair, you may bring this to the attention of an adjudicator after the event. You must announce your intention of adjudicating before either the end of the event or before resurrectoring in the case of a death. All adjudications should be submitted in writing within a month of the incident.

Do not nitpick on the details of the situation—understand and follow the intent of the rules. If you play fair and be considerate of everyone else's enjoyment of the game, your comments will be taken more seriously and will be better respected.

Checking Tags and Documentation

If someone seems to have extraordinary powers, you have the right to challenge them for proof of what they claim. No one should have an item or a power that is not documented somewhere. If the person you challenged cannot produce a tag, monster card, character card, or other official proof of the powers, then the abilities do not exist. You are not required to accept anything that is not documented.

Checking tags and skill cards is a necessary part of the game and should be done even if you trust the other player. Even our most experienced players have been known to make mistakes about which skills they have, how they are used, and whether they have used up that skill that day. By always checking, these mistakes can be limited.

You should not accept skills or effects that are not in this book without proper authorization. For instance, if a monster hits you with the call "Two Disintegrate!" you have the right to refuse to accept that call since there is no "disintegrate" in this book.

With all that said, let us point out that there may be exceptions to all of this. If a marshal is present and overseeing the encounter and explains to all what the powers are, then you should accept the word of the marshal.

For instance, there are no specific rules here for magical portals that can transport you through space and time, but you may still run across them in your game, controlled completely by the local Plot Committee.

There may also be special powers that are unique to your particular event. However, even these special powers must always be documented.

Example one: Terin is walking along the road when suddenly a monster jumps out and throws a packet at him, saying "Arcane True Sight!" The monster then disappears. The NPC then hands Terin an official document from the Plot Committee which explains that he now has the ability to tell whether any monster in town is actually a doppelganger. The documentation is signed by the proper person in charge and explains exactly how the skill works. Whenever Terin uses this skill, he must show the card to whoever asks.

Example two: At the start of the event, the Plot Committee announced out-of-game that the players may meet some monsters which call out "ennui" as damage. They then explain exactly how players are to react when hit with this call and what can defend against it. They then provide a write up so that anyone who encounters such a monster when there are no marshals present can check the documentation to make sure there are no disputes.

Note that any such attack, skill, or power which does not exist in this book does not transfer from one chapter to another without express permission from both chapters.

Regulated Behavior

Arguing with marshals over rules calls. PCs who constantly argue with marshals over every rule call or who constantly try to worm information out of a marshal are not playing as good sports. This is not to say that every marshal is always right, nor that you don't have the right to disagree with a marshal's ruling; only that excessive arguments will seem like poor sportsmanship. Keep your disagreements reasonable and keep your voice down, and if you disagree with a ruling, file an adjudication later.

Breaking Character. This includes PCs who don't even make an attempt at a costume, continually talk out-of-game, walk through the game out-of-game and talk to other players who are in-game (even if they have a white headband on), smoke in non-smoking areas, and otherwise show no respect for the PCs who are trying to stay in-game.

Threatening, taunting or teasing other PCs out of game. Once the game is over, your character's feelings should be over too. Saying things OOG to other players like "When we're in game, my PC is going to murder your PC over and over until you don't resurrect any more" falls under this category. This works both ways and also includes the victims. Whining and complaining about what happened to your character and bothering the players who did it to you is just as bad. *It's just a game.*

PC Bashing. This is a tough call. Generally speaking, PC bashing is when a character kills a much lower level character for no real in-game reason other than "I felt like it." This really doesn't happen that often in this game fortunately. Most PC to PC deaths do have a reason, even if the reason was minimal ("I don't like him; we've been arguing for months and I wanted to teach him a lesson"). PC bashing refers mostly to cases where a powerful PC kills a low level PC just because they can.

There is no challenge in it, no sport, no reason, and, like the bully who beats up the little kids on the playground, is a sign of immaturity. We don't need that kind of attitude in this game.

Plot Bashing. Generally speaking, there is nothing wrong with your character trying to "destroy" the plot. For instance, if you and your friends decide to help the evil bad guy open the rift and destroy the entire city, more power to you. The game is designed to be open ended enough so that it is not always clear whether the good guys or the bad guys will win.

"Plot Bashing" refers to PCs who bash plots for no in-game reason, much like the bullies who PC Bash.

For example, a group of PCs are about to go on a module that is specifically for them (a follow up to a plot submission or a character history) and a Plot Basher who doesn't even know the PCs comes along and kills the hook or otherwise prevents the PCs from going on the adventure and having fun. It's another form of bullying that we don't need.

Props Bashing. OK, maybe "bashing" isn't the right word. Generally, this refers to PCs who hog the props we give out, preventing us from recycling them and costing us real money to replace them.

For instance, some players have decided that they hate getting copper pieces as treasure, so they hoard them, thus preventing the money from circulating, thinking that this will prevent monsters from giving them out. Unfortunately, we need coppers in-game to pay for Production Point items and for other minor things, so what happens instead is that we have to order more coins, thus using up real money that could have been spent elsewhere.

Gossiping. Gossip can ruin our game. Hearsay and innuendo are not wanted.

If you think someone is cheating or meta-gaming, don't whine and complain to your friends about it—report it to a marshal! And if a marshal comes to you and asks about a possible cheating situation, please cooperate and don't take it personally.

If someone makes an accusation against someone else in your presence, ask "How do you know that?" If they have firsthand information, ask "Why haven't you reported this to a marshal?" If they don't have firsthand information, refuse to listen to them.

Only by working together and trusting each other enough to give each other the benefit of the doubt can we keep this game running fairly for everyone.



Not reporting violations. If you know of someone who is cheating, you should immediately report this to a Marshal. Failure to do so only allows it to continue, impugns your own honor and integrity, and is considered a violation of the “Good Sport” rule.

Sexual Harassment or other forms of Discrimination. We’re trying to run a game that is welcoming to everyone, and these actions are a direct violation of the Code of Conduct. No one in our game is to be harassed or discriminated against based on race, sex, age, sexual orientation, sexual identity, country of origin, handicap, or religion. Nor do we want you to insult other players for in-game factors: No body shaming or bullying wanted.

If you experience or see harassment or discrimination, find a marshal and report what you saw. Do not wait for the victim to report because often victims are intimidated and afraid to do so. Protect your fellow players from abuse.

It’s really simple: respect other players and be nice. It’s not that difficult.

Regulated Items

Alcohol and drugs. Neither alcohol nor any drugs that affect your ability to participate are allowed at any Alliance event. This includes alcohol in the parking lot or anywhere on the premises, even before the game begins; nor can you go offsite to drink and then return to play.

This also includes prescription drugs which may limit your ability to react or think clearly. You need to be of clear mind to play or else you may be placing the safety of others in jeopardy.

We will remove any member who we suspect is intoxicated or high.

Real Weapons. If you bring a real weapon into a game, you will be told to put it away. Real weapons can never be carried on your person. (Swiss army knives, small thieves’ tool knives and other such devices are acceptable.) Daggers may be carried for eating/utility purposes, but they must be “peace bonded” (tied in a sheath) when not at the table.

Smoking. Smoking (and vaping) is only permitted in designated smoking areas. This is for the consideration for the other players, for fire safety, and because it takes away from the medieval feel of the games. This includes pipes as well, although carrying an unlit pipe and pretending to be smoking it is allowed.



Torches and Flames. The rules on candles, torches and flames vary based on the campsite's rules. They are generally not allowed, but there may be exceptions, so check with the game before lighting any flames. Even if allowed, flames are never to be left unattended.

In order to use a flashlight for in-game purposes, you must have someone cast a *Light* spell. The flashlight must be diffused by either taping a cloth over the end or using a red filter and must be pointed towards the ground or up in the air. A flashlight can never be pointed near or at a person's face. If at all possible, please avoid using flashlights as they distract from the medieval feel of the game.

If you want to use your flashlight to represent a candle or a small torch, you must have in your possession somewhere a real candle or torch that the flashlight represents.

Liquid Light elixirs are encouraged and are usually represented by chemical light sticks.

Matches exist in the world of Fortannis so that you do not have to bring flint and tinder with you everywhere. Lighters are discouraged but can be used to represent flint and steel.

Anachronisms: Some anachronisms cannot be avoided (glasses, modern shoes, etc.). However, please make every attempt to avoid modern trappings whenever possible. Don't talk on your cell phone during the game, and keep your soda cans and candy wrappers hidden away in your cabin.

You are not allowed to use modern electronic gadgetry such as infrared seeing devices, electronic listening devices, or any other technological anachronistic mechanism. In effect, by using these things, it's as if you have a powerful magical item and it would hardly be fair to the rest of the players.

Players should if at all possible refrain from wearing modern wristwatches or should at least cover the watches with wristbands or bracers. In addition, if you do wear a watch, remember that you are not allowed to look at it when on a timed module unless you have purchased a timepiece in-game and have the tag.

Out-of-Game

When someone takes themselves out of the action for their own convenience, they are out-of-game. In order to go out-of-game, you should wear a white headband. This signifies to others that your character is not there. Please do not abuse this!

Bathhouses or similar facilities are out-of-game. You may not, however, run into one if monsters are chasing you. Anyone traveling to and from the showers may be out-of-game if they so choose. If they are out-of-game, though, they should have no game items on them and should be wearing a white headband.

Out-of-Game Items

If you go out-of-game during an event, then any items you were carrying also go out-of-game (because in-game, your character has traveled beyond the borders of the gaming area). You may store these items in the approved out-of-game area in your cabin (such as under the bed) but once you return in-game, these items must be carried or placed in an in-game area.

You cannot store in-game items in out-of-game areas when you are in-game and then retrieve them during the event. All items which you wish to use during the event must remain in-game whenever *you* are in-game. You cannot lock them in your car, then go out-of-game to retrieve them, claiming that you were traveling to another area in-game where you had the items hidden.

It is possible to hide items in areas that are beyond the borders of the gaming area, but you must have Plot approval to do so beforehand.

For example, Terin finds the Legendary Wand of Noonah and wants to hide it to make sure it is not stolen before he can use it next month in the war against the hobgoblins. He goes to the Plot Committee and says "I want to go out-of-game to hide this in my house out in the country until the next event." The Plot Committee may say yes, but then decide that the house is broken into and the item stolen. (Why should your house out in the country be safe from thieves while your lodging in-game during an event is not?) The Plot Committee might also say no for other reasons, including logistical ones. ("Let's see the tag showing that you have a house in the country. No tag? So sorry.")

The point is that when you decide to lock your items in your car or to hide them in out-of-game areas, you are preventing the plot from progressing logically. You have taken a piece of the game out-of-game, unable to be obtained by any other player, and your decision could affect the game in many ways.

In essence, you are cheating because you are using out-of-game means to accomplish something in-game.

On-Line Role-Playing

The Alliance web page is located at www.AllianceLARP.com. You should check there often for the latest news. There is a Bulletin Board where you can ask questions in the “new player” area or just talk about your favorite events. There are also in-game sections of the Bulletin Board where you can discuss IG issues and post notices.

When leaving messages or discussing things in-game on line, understand that these discussions can affect the plot that can later occur during a game. Therefore, there are some rules for participating in these on-line conversations:

1. In-game, when your character sleeps, he or she can enter this “dream world” and communicate with others who may be many miles away. Whatever your character says or hears in this world can affect the live action game world. Players are allowed to use whatever information is obtained within these conversations later when they meet live. This also allows players from all campaigns to discuss their plotlines, no matter how far away they may be.

2. Characters may not act anonymously or with a false identity without prior permission from their home chapter’s Plot Committee. Characters must always sign their name to posts made to these lists. This is very important because many players have more than one character. If the Plot Committee can’t tell what character posted the message, then it didn’t get posted in-game. Any intentional misuse of anonymity or a character’s identity may result in your immediate removal from the Bulletin Board and consequences for your Alliance membership. Doing this may be considered cheating.

3. We want to encourage online communication in general but disallow communication that would allow a character an unfair advantage; for example, if your character has been kidnapped and is being held prisoner somewhere, you can’t go online and post a message saying “Here I am in Greystone, come get me!”

4. Remember that this is *not* an online game. It is an in-game Bulletin Board where messages can be posted. You cannot see anyone there, so don’t ask “What do I see?” or type something like “An elf in chain mail walks in the door.” There are no battles that can take place in this dream world, and if you have never met a character who has posted something, you will have no idea what that character looks like.

Basically, the bottom line is that this is for information exchanging only.

Finally, please understand that we do not wish to police any of the boards or mailing lists. Just keep in mind that this is a *live action* game which takes place at the events. The on-line chats are there to enhance your role-playing fun and not replace them.

Email can also be used as a way for you and your friends to submit plot Write-ups and decide what your characters are doing between events. You can decide to travel to some other place or meet with other characters and even have adventures (of course, no XP or treasure can be rewarded). Contact your local Plot Committee for details.



What you *can't* do is expect the Plot Committee to follow up on such things if they are not privy to the information. If it's not copied to them for approval, they reserve the right to ignore it and say "That didn't happen." Please understand the Plot Committee never wants to have to say that, but will in certain circumstances.

Infractions

Infraction warnings may be given by a marshal when a dangerous situation is observed.

Warnings are given to inform players of their actions in an effort to improve a player's attention to becoming a safer and better player. They are not given to humiliate or embarrass a player but merely to make everyone more aware of the requirements of the game.

Infractions are classified into Combat Infractions and Role-playing Infractions. There are two specific types of Combat Infractions: Dangerous Combat Infractions and Illegal Combat Infractions. These may also be seen as forms of cheating, especially if they reoccur. Even individually, they may be considered as grounds for disciplinary action.

This list shows examples and is not all-inclusive.

Dangerous Combat Infractions

A Dangerous Combat Infraction is anything that results or could result in an injury to a player.

Dangerous Combat Infractions include:

Throwing packets too hard in such a way as to result in personal injury

Charging

Shield bashing

Use of a weapon that has not been safety checked

Use of packets that are too large or filled with illegal packet materials

Dangerous acrobatics which may harm others (sliding, rolling towards players, not paying attention to others around you)

Hitting too hard with a weapon

Striking opponents at full combat speed and strength while they are known to be incapacitated (webbed, paralyzed, etc.)

Repeated or deliberate striking of illegal areas (head, hands, groin)

Throwing items in anger

Screaming at other players, intimidating or dangerous behavior

Illegal Combat Infractions

Illegal Combat Infractions are behaviors and habits that are explicitly indicated as incorrect in the Rule Book, but typically are not performed intentionally. They do not cause a risk of injury, but are mistakes that can affect the game significantly. Examples include:

Failure to finish an incant before releasing a packet

Failure to call damage clearly

Failure to use a 45 degree arc when swinging, or swinging too quickly (machine gunning)

Failure to call off defenses within the designated time

Not taking attacks, or failing to properly take effects

Casting scrolls, using potions, or otherwise using items for which you have no tag and/or no physical representation

Using scrolls incorrectly, with or without proper light

Role-playing Infractions

Role-playing Infractions are not as common as Combat Infractions, and only apply when there are blatant violations which harm the atmosphere of the game to such a degree that you are ruining the fun of other players.

Examples include:

Talking loudly about OOG things in an IG area

Smoking in a prohibited area

Not wearing the appropriate costume (for example, wearing jeans and tennis shoes)

Refusing to role-play effects upon you (for example, walking away yawning while under the effect of a Fear)

Role-playing your race incorrectly or not wearing the required racial makeup and/or costume

We're not here to be your drama coaches and you will not be punished for "bad acting." The purpose of this is to ensure that you show respect to your fellow players and not destroy their game enjoyment.

Adjudications

In any game, especially one as complex as a live-action role-playing game, rules mistakes and misinterpretations are always an issue. Because of this, the Alliance has the policy that any player may ask for an adjudication of IG results of such problems.

Such adjudications must be written up and turned in to the Rules Committee of the game where the incident occurred within 30 days of the incident. Occasional exceptions to the 30-day rule are allowed, such as when the player was not aware of the rules question until a later date. Adjudication requests should include a complete description of the incident, the people involved, and the contested result.

Once submitted, the Rules Committee then either makes a decision or chooses other staff members to decide if a possible bias is present (for example, if a Rules Committee member was involved in the incident). The player is then informed of the ruling, and the situation rectified.

Because of the nature of the game, the original event is never "deleted"—Plot events are often used to explain the change in the final outcome. For example, if your character died her permanent death and then had it adjudicated, the Plot Committee will write some way for your character to return without having to make everyone else in game pretend that the death "never happened."

Note that adjudications are for *rules* violations and misinterpretations, not plot decisions. You cannot adjudicate because you think that the Plot Committee didn't scale the encounter properly or because you thought the puzzle they wanted you to figure out was too hard.



In-Game Limitations

New players to the game often make arguments about some of the limitations of these rules, saying “Well, this doesn’t make any logical sense! Why should only *some* liches have essences that I can use for components? Why can’t necromancy be legal? Why shouldn’t I be able to create a *Ward* scroll?”

The fact is that every rules limitation has a reason, and usually that reason is game balance. We can’t have every monster be useful as a component or else the components become too common and the ritual system’s economy is ruined. We can’t make certain spells into potions or scrolls because then they lose their special nature and may make the goal to rise to higher levels to be able to cast those spells meaningless. We can’t have necromancy legal because then everyone would want to play an earth caster (plus we’d lose a really cool role-playing plotline).

If you come across a rule that you think doesn’t make sense for our game world, sit back and consider before complaining. There is a reason it is limited. Ask yourself how it could unbalance the game if the rule were different or how some players could abuse it.

Understand as well that the game is specifically designed to promote teamwork. You can’t be an expert in everything all by yourself. If you are a celestial spellcaster, don’t complain because there are no celestial healing spells. If you are an alchemist, don’t complain that you can’t affect certain monsters with your alchemy. These limitations are by design, to encourage players to work together and complement each other’s abilities.

The bottom line to all of this is that the rules are only here to support the plot, and not the other way around. You should be looking for plot solutions to the problems your character has to face, not rules solutions. Use the tools at hand and don’t complain if lack of certain tools makes your job more difficult.

Remember, nobody gets to be a hero by taking the easy way out!



Multiple Characters

You cannot play more than one character on a weekend (unless your character dies permanently and you start a new one). Otherwise, it would be too confusing to other players. Is this really your character in another guise, they will ask, or is it actually a new character as you say?

If you do create a second character, please have that character be as different from your original character as possible: your new character should have a different adventuring party, different costumes, and hopefully be of a different race and class as well.

Multiple characters belonging to the same player may never directly interact in any way. You cannot have one character sell, donate, or will items to your other character; nor can you use an intermediary to do this for you by giving them your possessions only to have them give them to your new character.

Disguises

You are not allowed to disguise your character using any sort of makeup to change your appearance, since makeup is the only way that players can represent another race or physical characteristics that the players themselves do not have. If you wish to have your character travel incognito, you must use costume and mannerisms.

After all, if there really were elves and orcs and hobblings, you would be able to easily distinguish between a real dark elf and someone disguised as a dark elf, wearing fake ears and face paint.

You are allowed to disguise yourself in limited ways—for example, an elf can wear a hat to hide his ears or a dark elf can wear a hood to cover her face. You can also wear a mask over your face (provided it is a Zorro-type of mask and not a monster mask).

Language

We ask that you try your best to not use modern colloquialisms and terms in your gaming. You don't need to use old English "thee" and "thou" like a Shakespearean play, but you should make every attempt to give your words that renaissance flair.

Imagine this conversation:

"Hail and well met! I am a merchant of fine goods!"

"Cool beans, Dude! You got any elixirs?"

"Aye, that I do. 'Tis one of my specialties. Are you interested in healing elixirs or mayhap something more exotic?"

"Man, I need some Amnesias in case I wanna kack someone. OK?"

Now the player buying the elixirs in this example was in-game the entire time but he certainly didn't do much to help the in-game atmosphere, did he?

We don't expect you to speak like a refugee from a renaissance faire, but please, at least make an effort.

Try at all times to use "aye" or "nay" and see how easy it is to slip into character. Use "'tis" instead of "it is" and otherwise try your best to not sound anachronistic and you too may be surprised by the improvement in the game.

In addition, please try to refrain from using foul language; not because we are prudes or your mommy but because it can really ruins the game atmosphere. Make up some in-game curses and see how much more fun it is. "By Kelanor's Beard!" "Mud and Moon!" "Gunther's Knee!" "By the Stars!"—look at your local game's culture and racial backgrounds and you are sure to find some appropriate things that will make wonderful medieval curses.

If you wish to be able to speak another language in character (such as elf or dwarf), then you must actually learn it. When you wish to talk in the other language, then you must talk in the other language. This is to prevent someone from overhearing you talk in English pretending that it is another language only to have you say "You didn't understand that; it's in another language."

You do not have to spend any Experience Points to learn another language—you just have to find someone who knows the language and then learn it.



Monster Size

All monsters are the size of the NPC or phys rep playing the part. There are no nine-foot tall trolls unless there is a nine-foot tall NPC playing the part or nine-foot tall apparatus built for that purpose.

For that matter, all players are the same size as their characters as well. A six-foot tall player with a dwarven character in-game is a six-foot tall dwarf.

Pages

Each Alliance game is allowed to set its own age limits to play. Underage players are called “pages.”

In most Alliance games, a page is someone who is at least 14 years old and less than 16 years old. In some chapters, you must be a page even until you are 18. Some chapters do not allow pages at all, and require all players to be over the age of 18.

Most chapters have Page policies similar to the following:

1. This must be pre-approved—no showing up at the door and asking to be a page.
2. The page’s parent or legal guardian must be present and must be a PC or NPC during the entire event. “Legal guardian” is a legal term and does not include older brothers or sisters.
3. The parent or legal guardian is responsible for the page’s actions and must remove the page from the site if asked. The parent or legal guardian must keep track of the page.
4. Any page who is disruptive, does not obey these rules, or in any other way is deemed to be harmful to the game will be asked to leave. There is no appeal.
5. All pages must wear an orange head-band with the word “page” written on it prominently.
6. Pages cannot enter combat in any way, including pouring healing potions in unconscious bodies during a battle. (After a battle or way off on the sidelines is fine.)
7. Pages cannot purchase any combat, weapon, or casting skills. Pages can purchase role-playing skills such as *Healing Arts*, *Craftsman* and such. *Alchemy* can be purchased but no gasses may be thrown. Pages cannot carry weapons at all.
8. Pages can carry in-game items (except weapons) and can be searched.
9. In order to kill a page, a player must stand near the page and call out their effects and weapon damage but cannot hit the page directly in any way. It is assumed that every weapon and packet attack hits the page. The page can call out any protective spells the page has and can yell for help or try to run away (unless prevented by an appropriate effect, of course). A page can be given a Killing Blow.

All other rules concerning healing and resurrections apply; and of course, all in-game ramifications do as well.

The bottom line is that we are attempting to run an adult oriented game with mature themes and an emphasis on role-playing, and we have found that if players are too young, they have not yet reached the maturity level we require.



(This is a generalization of course; there are certainly players over the minimum age who are not as mature as we want and some under the age who are.)

Further, we have found that the younger the player, the smaller they are as well, and this can be dangerous when dealing with combat situations. Page rules also help to keep our insurance rates down.

Sometimes, a player is allowed to become a page for medical reasons, and in those cases, these same rules usually apply.

Time

In Alliance games, time passes in-game at the same rate as it does out-of-game. If a month has passed between events, then a month has passed in the in-game world.

Strange how life can be so boring for a few weeks, then suddenly all the monsters start attacking on Friday nights, isn't it?

Actually, in-game, there are monsters attacking all the time, and though things might be heightened during an event, life still goes on.

It is assumed that your character is still fighting monsters and doing adventurous deeds between events. Where does the money go that your character earns during this period? Why, it pays for all the food, lodging, and healing your character needs during these off times!

Weather

Sometimes the weather at an event can make the wearing of armor impractical or even dangerous. Hot weather can cause heat exhaustion and dehydration, while wearing metal armor in extremely cold weather greatly increases the chances for hypothermia. Under these conditions those running the game may declare a "No Armor Day."

Until the "No Armor Day" is ended, players may use Armor Point tags as if they were wearing the armor that they would have normally worn that day. The player is then considered to be wearing that armor and get all of its benefits except for waylay protection.

At any time, a marshal may ask you to produce the armor that you would have normally been wearing to verify that you are using the correct amount.



Magic

What would a fantasy game be without magic? Alliance allows a wealth of options for those who believe that there's more to life than hitting your enemies until they fall down.

Even if you are playing a straightforward fighter who can't tell the difference between a magic spell and the proverbial hole in the ground, you, the player, need to know how magic works in Alliance games. At some point you'll interact with magic—whether as a caster or a target—and you want to play fairly while at the same time understanding how magic works in the game and how to either avoid or embrace it.

Magic rules are in the Rule Book, but there are some basic concepts about the Alliance magic system you should know.

Schools of Magic and Signature Spells

Whenever your character begins learning magic, either Celestial or Earth, you must select which of the two is your primary school of magic. The other will be your secondary school, costing more to learn. There is nothing preventing you from learning both Earth and Celestial magic but a separate spell pyramid must be built for each school.

Each school of magic has a Signature Spell—one core piece of magic which is available at every level. For Earth, this is the Cure / Cause Wounds spell; for Celestial, this is Evocation Bolt. These spells can be memorized in any Spell Slots of the appropriate school that a caster cares to devote to them.

Evocation Bolt can be manifested as either Flame, Ice, Lightning, or Stone at the caster's choice. Cure / Cause Wounds may be cast in either its Earth form as Healing, or its Necromancy form as Chaos. Both choices are made at the time of casting.

When these spells are cast, their power depends on the level of Spell Slot they were memorized in. Each Signature Spell will have a value of 5 per level of Spell Slot it is cast from. For example, a Celestial caster who memorizes one Evocation Bolt at 3rd level will cast it by calling "I Evoke a 15 Flame Bolt!" (or whatever element they chose). If they had one memorized at 5th level as well, they could later cast that one with the call "I Evoke a 25 Ice Bolt!" (or another element). Similarly, an Earth caster could cast a 4th level Cure / Cause Wounds spell as either "I call upon Earth to grant 20 Healing!" or "With Necromancy I create 20 Chaos!"

When these spells are put into scrolls or potions, they must have the appropriate value for the Production Points written on the tag. For example, a *Cure Wounds* potion created with 5 Production Points (as per a 1st level spell) would be printed as a Healing potion, with the value of 5 written on the tag. Without a value written in, the tag is not valid.

Schools and their Specialties

In the battle against the foul Undead, the healer has a very powerful weapon. Undead creatures are the reverse of living beings, and so are affected by healing spells in a reversed manner. Any Healing effect cast upon an Undead will instead do damage to them. Any Chaos effect, however, will heal the undead. Similarly, many Earth effects will weaken or debilitate the Undead while Necromancy will do the opposite.

Undead generally have a significant amount of Natural Armor, representing the raw power of the necromantic energies that animate them. Healing cuts right through an undead's armor, avoiding the bulk of its durability and striking straight at the core of its essence. Thus a *Cure Wounds* spell at 2nd level cast with the incant of "I call upon Earth to grant 10 Healing!" will do 10 points of damage against an undead creature and ignore its significant Natural Armor completely, while a *Cause Wounds* spell of the same amount will heal the undead for 10 points.

Similarly, celestial magic has a distinct advantage when fighting creatures not native to Fortannis as well as magically animated constructs or golems. Their "Banish" and "Subjugate" spells come in especially useful against these foes. Similarly, when battling the common Elementals of Flame, Ice, Lightning, and Stone, their spells can be especially impactful when blasting away with the opposing Element.

Eldritch Power

Many of the spells call upon an energy called eldritch power. This is a type of energy that only affects beings that are alive or animated.

If you cast a *Flame* spell at someone and miss and hit a tree, the tree will not catch on fire. Nor can you use an *Ice* spell to keep your ice cream cold. These spells can only affect creatures that are alive or animated.

In-game, they *feel* like fire or ice when they hit and you should certainly role-play that out when you are the subject of one.

Healing

Why need anyone ever suffer if there are healing spells? Well, the answer is that healing spells cannot do everything.

If you are damaged (or dead) and you are then magically healed to your maximum (or resurrected), then you are returned to the state your body was in before the damage was taken. If you had a limp before you were healed, you still have a limp. If you were dying of old age, then you are still dying of old age. If you were pregnant, you are still pregnant.

How to explain limps, handicaps, and scars? Healing spells (or resurrection) heals you up to the state you were in last before you took any recent damage. In other words, if your body healed normally after a battle (that is, without the aid of magic) and you ended up with scars, any future healing would not correct that old injury.

Body parts cannot be restored, regrown, or mended with “Cure” spells, potions, or elixirs, which only replenish lost Body Points. To restore a body part that has been withered, stunned, amputated or broken requires a *Restore* spell, a *Life* spell, or a resurrection.

Breaking or removing a body part requires at least three seconds. You do not have to do a “three count” but you must role-play the breaking to make it clear what you are doing.

A *Cure Disease* spell will only cure the game effect *Disease*. It will not cure cancer, get rid of athlete’s foot, or hide your bald spot. This gives some players fun at role-playing frustrations of being sick: “You mean they can bring me back to life after dying but they can’t cure the common cold?!”



Pregnancies in-game are completely a role-playing issue controllable by the player involved. The most important thing is to follow all rules of good taste! Being pregnant in-game will not change in any way any of the rules in this book. Using healing skills to detect the existence of a pregnancy is also up to the player involved, although one should remember the limitations of medieval medicine. *Healing Arts* is not a magical skill and cannot be used to determine an unborn child's sex, race, or heritage.

A doll used to represent an infant is considered a "personal possession" (if carried) in regards to the rules.

Necromancy

Is necromancy evil? Not every person on Fortannis thinks so—in fact, it is perfectly legal in some places.

However, necromancy is illegal in most parts of the world because many people believe it draws upon the decaying and dying aspects of the earth and thus prevents the earth from acting "naturally." Further, those who cast necromancy often tend to get, shall we say, "power mad."

The most accepted in-game explanation is this: Imagine the planet going through its seasons normally from year to year. Healing spells go with the flow of this cycle and do not disrupt the orderly process of living and dying that are part of this orderly system. Necromancy goes against the flow of this cycle by tapping into the chaotic forces that are not part of this system. Creating undead, for example, requires that a spirit behave in ways that are contrary to the orderly flow of the cycle.

This in-game theory has been used in the past to explain large numbers of undead randomly appearing ("The chaos in this area is so strong that the cycle is being completely disrupted!") as well as aberrant weather ("This cold wave this time of year can only be caused by too much necromancy being cast!").

Of course, there are many scholars who believe that this theory is a load of goblin dung and that bad weather and undead rising are all part of the normal cycle. It is up to you to decide as your character how you feel about the issue.

Assume for game purposes that there are many learned treatises on both sides and that people have been arguing the point for many thousands of years (although the people arguing in favor of necromancy not being harmful usually have, shall we say, ulterior motives). Characters debate this issue often, and we encourage this; gray areas are always more fun than black and white issues.

Necromancy may be legal in some of the NPC countries that exist on the world of Fortannis, but it will always be illegal in the main area in which the game takes place. The main reason necromancy is illegal is for game balance; if characters were allowed to throw these powerful spells without restriction, well, why wouldn't everyone be a healer, able to harm better than a celestial caster and be able to heal as well?

In-game your character can try to get your local authorities to make necromancy legal, but you the player must understand that out-of-game, this will never be done.

The existence of laws against necromancy are an unalterable rule of the game. Further, you cannot complain if your character is caught casting necromancy and is sentenced to a death (or worse) because of it. You have been warned, and it's the risk you decide to take on your own.

Potions and Scrolls

Potions and scrolls give the spellcaster a tremendous advantage. With a good number of these, you should not have to worry about being ineffective after your memorized spells are gone.

A healer should keep a stockpile of healing potions so they can use their binding spells in battle and yet still be able to heal. A mage with a pile of scrolls is a much more formidable opponent than one with just spells in memory. The most successful casters are the ones who know that having scrolls and potions at their side can double and triple their effectiveness, usefulness, and fun.

The effects of potions and scrolls are the same as for a cast spell.

A scroll or potion physical representation ("phys rep") is not valid unless it has an actual scroll or potion tag attached to the phys rep. Likewise, a scroll or potion tag without a physical representation is also invalid.

If you build or receive tags without physical representations (for example, after using your Production Points at Logistics to create items), then it is your responsibility to provide the appropriate physical representation and make

sure the tag is attached.

Both Potions and Scrolls must be identified; see the “Production Skills” section of the Rule Book for details.

Potions: All potion phys reps must be large enough to hold at least a minimum of a quarter ounce of liquid. The phys rep does not actually have to contain any liquid to be valid.

To use a potion, you must role-play the proper drinking motions, and this must take at least three seconds. You should not count it out loud. Only one potion may be quaffed at a time.

A potion may be “force fed” to an unconscious or sleeping person by someone else, but such a character cannot “accidentally” drink one. You cannot attach a potion or elixir to your collar

or shield and “bite” into it to get its effects while bound or in battle. You must be able to actually hold one in your hand, motion removing a cork or cap, and then mime drinking it.

Potions cannot be mixed into food or drink or diluted or mixed together in any way. If multiple are poured into the same container, both potions are ruined and provide no effects when consumed.

Earth Potions always have an implied “Spell” qualifier, just like an incanted spell.

All potions affect the drinker only, and bypass any protective spells such as *Spell Shield* or *Reflect Spell*. They can, however, be resisted by applicable racial abilities (such as *Resist Spell* or *Resist Necromancy* for a Necromantic potion).

Scrolls: All scroll phys reps must be at least 16 square inches (for example, a scroll that is 2 inches tall by 8 inches long would be fine, which will give you five scrolls out of a standard piece of paper).

To use a scroll, you must pull out the scroll, hold it before you, have enough light to be able to read it, touch a spell packet to the scroll, actually read the scroll out loud, and then throw the packet.

If your scroll is attached to a weapon or shield, you may not be swinging it while reading the scroll.

The entire scroll must be visible for it to be used. You cannot write the incant in very small letters in the top left corner and then hold a bunch of scrolls like a hand of playing cards with only the incant visible; nor can you overlap the scrolls and attach them to the back of your shield, fitting twelve scrolls in an area that should only fit four.

After the scroll is used, the tag is removed but the paper remains. The magical writing is inert although anyone with *Educated* can tell what spell used to be on the scroll.

You must have an actual scroll phys rep for each scroll tag.

Note that scrolls can only be used by someone with the *Read Magic* skill. A character may activate a scroll no higher than 4 levels above their highest level Celestial Spell Slot; if they only have *Read Magic* they can read up to 4th level scrolls.



Possessions

Starting Items

When you play your first event as a new character, you are given certain starting materials that your character should have in-game. After that, you're on your own. If, for example, your starting armor gets destroyed you'll have to get new armor tags in-game by buying, stealing, or making new armor.

Brand new characters with 25 XP start with a pool of 150 copper pieces to spend on items and gear. These points can be spent on equipment based on its Production Point value. It can also be used to buy spells in your starting spell book at the basic spell ink cost of 2 coppers per level of the spell. Alchemy recipes can be bought for 1 copper piece per Production Point of the recipe(s) chosen. Sources can be purchased for their standard cost of 20 coppers each, while armor, weapons, and other substances like scrolls and potions can be purchased for their Production Point cost directly. Production Point costs can be found in the "Production Skills" section of the Rule Book.

If a character plays its first game with a higher XP total (for example, if you've NPC'd a few times before playing a PC), its starting pool is bigger to represent the gear the character might have collected in-game during its adventuring time. The pool is equal to the character's XP times their level plus 100, up to level 30 (3000 XP) where it caps out.

Characters with enough points can spend them on starting Magic Items directly for their Ritual Point cost. This can be found on the Alliance website (www.AllianceLARP.com), where you can find a full list of Rituals with their Ritual Point costs. These items will be created in your local chapter (though they do not use up any of the chapter's Treasure Policy). The chapter may give you a temporary Magic Item tag for your first event that can be turned in for a permanent one at the end of the event.

Each Alliance PC will want to start with equipment appropriate for what they're starting their first game with. Any character will want to purchase Weapon and Armor tags equivalent to the gear they start with. Some examples are given below based on your chosen class; feel free to adjust these with your chosen pool spending as you like:

Fighters: In addition to weapon and armor tags, a fighter may want to pick up a few small healing potions for emergency healing. Extra weapon tags never go amiss, either, as fighters are often in the front lines and targeted by enemy *Disarms* or *Shatters*.

Rogues: A rogue with *Herbal Lore* might want to buy some alchemical coatings to put on their weapons. One with *Create Trap* could purchase a trap or two to protect their belongings. Any rogue with *Alchemy* will want to purchase some starting recipes in their recipe book. If they have enough levels of *Alchemy* or *Create Trap*, they might want to purchase some globes to throw offensively.

Scholars: Any scholar with *Channeling* will want to purchase one or more sources through which to evoke their Channeling Pool. Scholars will probably want to fill out their spellbook with a few starting spells as well, to make sure they can memorize the spells they need to face the day. Any scholar with *Read Magic* can make use of a few scrolls to augment their spell slots, while healers may want some starting potions to help heal allies who go down in battle.

Scouts: Weapons, weapons, and more weapons. Scouts often have one or more ranged weapons, for which they will either want to buy ammunition (arrows or bolts) or more weapon tags (thrown weapons). Scouts might make use of some of the rogue's sneakier options like alchemy or traps if they have the right skills.

Spellswords: Spellswords will want to make sure they have a spellbook like a scholar as well as weapons and armor like a fighter. If they have *Channeling*, they'll need a Source as well.



Adepts: In addition to some of the rogue gear, adepts will need a spellbook, as well as a Source if they have *Channeling*. Extra potions or scrolls can help stretch their limited spells in a pinch.

Artisans: Any artisan will want to make sure to fill out spell and recipe books appropriate to their crafting skills. They may want to pick up additional starting items they can use, whether it's earth potions, celestial scrolls, or alchemy elixirs and trap globes.

Example: Rendal the fighter has brought a long sword, a dagger, and a suit of armor that was evaluated by a marshal to be worth 25 Armor Points. From his starting 150 coppers, he purchases a long sword for 30 coppers, an armor tag of 25 points for 50 coppers, and a dagger for 5 coppers. Deciding he'd like a little backup healing, he purchases four Healing 5 potions

for a total of 20 coppers. This leaves him 45 coppers to come into game with in his pocket.

Ena the adept brings a short sword, three throwing daggers, and a suit of armor judged to be worth 15 Armor Points. She also has two first level earth spell slots, one level of Earth Channeling, and the Herbal Lore skill. From her starting 150 coppers, she buys a short sword for 25 coppers, an armor tag of 15 points for 30 coppers, three thrown weapon tags for 5 coppers each, a spell book with all five first level Earth spells for 2 coppers per spell, plus a Healing Source for 20 coppers. Looking at her remaining total of 50 coppers, she decides to purchase three Weakness Coatings for her daggers at 15 coppers each, and pockets the last 5 coppers to spend in the tavern.

*Brianna played an NPC for her first three Alliance weekends. Now she's ready to PC with her character Grizelda the high orc, starting with 51 XP. Instead of 150 coppers like a brand new character would have, she instead comes in with a much nicer total of 355 coppers ($51 \text{ (XP)} * 5 \text{ (level)} + 100$). After buying her armor and weapons, she has 200 left over and decides to buy a small magic item. Looking over the Ritual List, she sees that Elemental Imbuement—a ritual which allows her to swing an element like Flame or Ice for 10 minutes per day—can be purchased with 2 charges each Logistics Period for exactly 200 Ritual Points. Smiling at the thought of a flaming sword, she spends her last coppers to purchase this ritual, which will start on her sword at her first event. In-game, her character was lucky enough to pick up this weapon while on her first few adventures!*

Physical Representations

If you acquire any potions, scrolls, poisons, or alchemical substances during your adventures, they will have a tag attached. If you create your own through the Production Points system, then you must supply a physical representation (“phys rep”) for the item, and the tag must be attached. This physical representation can be stolen, at which point the thief will take both the tag and the item.

A tag by itself is not a valid item. If someone hands you an out-of-game potion tag and says “Here, drink this!” you should reply “Drink what?” since nothing is being shown to your character in-game. This rule exists because in-game these things take up room and add weight. You can't carry around a hundred potions as easily as you could a hundred tags.

Keep in mind that the tags themselves are stealable even if they are technically out-of-game. This is because it is not fair to punish the thief for the disobedience of the phys rep rule by the thief's victim. Thus, if you have a bunch of tags that you have not attached to phys reps and someone searches you, you must turn them over. Further, these tags can be destroyed by traps even though they are not attached to a phys rep.

The bottom line is that there are absolutely no advantages (but lots of disadvantages) for not having phys reps for each of your tags. It can never work in your interest to not have phys reps for all of your items. You must provide your own phys rep for magical weapons and items you create in-game, although there may be times that it will be provided in-game. Once it is in-game, you cannot alter the weapon in any way except to repair it when needed. If the phys rep wears out, then another must be built that looks just like the original. Permanent magic items can never be modified and must always look the same.

If you have a very expensive or personal item that gets turned magical (say, a very nice suit of armor) and the item is stolen in-game, you have the right to refuse to turn over your personal item. You must still, however, turn over the tags for that item. In exchange for keeping your own item, you forfeit your right to “recognize” your special armor later when the thief wears it in-game (using your tags with his or her own physical representation).

Identifying Potions and Elixirs

If you have the proper skill, you can identify potions and elixirs you may find. This process must be role-played accordingly, by scrutinizing the bottle, holding it up to the light, shaking the contents, and otherwise investigating the mysterious liquid.

After three seconds (which out-of-game is usually spent reading the tag on the item), a character with either Healing Arts or Herbal Lore can tell whether a liquid is a magical potion or an elixir and after an uninterrupted minute of this role-playing, can determine which magical potion it is.

Example, Darlissa the healer has three unidentified vials of liquid before her. One is a Cure Wounds potion, one is an alchemical Berserk elixir, and one is orc blood. She spends three seconds examining each one. After nine seconds (three for each), she can tell that one is a magical potion (the Cure Wounds vial). She also knows that the other two are not magical potions, but has no idea whether the other two are alchemical or something else. She then spends a minute examining the magical potion, at the conclusion of which she is able to determine that it is a Cure Wounds potion.

This skill cannot be used to identify blood types, detect the presence of poison in the bloodstream, identify a type of monster or a race from a blood sample, or otherwise do modern chemical observations.

Some potions you find will already be labeled. Others will be unidentified. These are usually marked as such but will say out-of-game whether the unidentified item is magical or alchemical. Once a character with this skill spends the minute to identify the potion, the “unidentified” tag may then be removed, revealing the real tag below.

Costuming

A good costume is an easy way to help you establish the personality of your character and to stay “in character.” Once you look the part, it doesn’t take much to become the part. Your costume need not be elaborate, but you must have one. Cutting a hole in a sheet and throwing it over your shoulders like a tabard is not sufficient and your lack of enthusiasm will certainly have an effect on how other players will treat you.

Blue jeans, t-shirts, and white tennis shoes are prohibited. Black jeans and black tennis shoes are accepted but discouraged. There’s really no excuse for not putting a small effort into looking the part—there are many inexpensive and wonderful places where you can buy costuming cheap. You can get a nice flowing shirt for under \$50, and your local department store will have tights for \$10 or so. These will also be a lot cooler in hot weather and much more comfortable than jeans and a T-shirt. At the very least, get black sweat pants and long sleeved shirts and cover those with a nice tabard.

Hats are also a great way to look good cheaply. A good medieval cap can add tremendously to your costume and help you get into character, and that’s what it’s all about, isn’t it? Keep in mind that your costume must be practical as well. You’re not going for a nice walk through the Ducal Mansion here—you’ll likely be doing some running around in the woods. Fancy silk shirts are probably not a good idea when playing our game (although there may be times, like during a fancy ball, that such a thing would be wanted).

Please don’t wear your watches, cell phones, or other anachronistic devices (though you can sometimes hide a watch under an arm guard). Eyeglasses are allowed for safety reasons, and in fact, they have been around since the 13th century. Dress the part and you will be astounded at how easy it becomes to act the part.

Logistics

You will be given a Character Card when you check in. On that card will be your skills. Attached to that is a “Battle Board.” You will be given a new “Battle Board” for each Logistics period. All the skills and spells your character possesses that are expendable will be printed on it. These Battle Boards are unique and personal for each character so they will not all look alike.

Everyone must carry their Battle Board and Character Card with them at all times. A marshal can always ask to see your Battle Board at any time to make sure you are properly keeping track of your spells and skills.

Battle Boards must be updated after a battle in which skills were used by filling in the bubbles next to the skill or spell used. Note that there may be ways to change some abilities during a Logistics period such as spending High Magic or Meditating back a skill or spell that was used; in this case, simply update the card and (if adding a skill or spell) have it initialed by a Marshal to show that they checked that your updates were legitimate.

Character Management

In Alliance LARP your character is managed in an online database called the Character Management Application (CMA for short). You can create an account online at db.alliancelarp.com. The CMA is your one stop shop for interacting with your Alliance character. You’ll be able to spend XP, Goblin Points, view your attended event history, and preregister for upcoming events. You can register an account and create your character right now, or reach out to your local chapter. For more details go to db.alliancelarp.com/getting_started.

If you’re interested in exploring character build options, Alliance runs a “Free Play” version of the CMA at freeplay-db.alliancelarp.com. You can edit all the information about your characters stored here, and see what your character could look like in the future.



Tags

All items are represented by tags. This allows you to buy, sell, steal, or trade items with other players. When you use an expendable item, you must then turn over the tag to an NPC or marshal, or otherwise destroy it. Each tag lists which game it was generated in, which may be the name of the chapter or the in game name of the campaign. Below are some examples of the tags you might see.

Weapon Tags are taped directly to your weapon; the weapon type must be visible after taping. The tag type must match the weapon being used exactly. If a weapon does not have one of these tags, it cannot be used (except by NPCs). A regular weapon that is not magic, silvered, or unshatterable will have those sections crossed off. If a weapon is silver, then the “silver” section will be circled. Every weapon must have either a weapon tag or a Magic Item number; without one of these two items the weapon is considered “Monster Quality” and may not be used.

Arrows and Bolts will have many “uses.” After a battle, a number of uses equal to the arrows and bolts you used during the battle must be torn off of these tags and handed to a Marshal or otherwise destroyed.

Armor Tags list the points your armor is worth. You can never have more Armor Points than the points the marshal has assigned to the armor you are currently wearing. If your armor was assigned 12 points and someone gives you a tag worth 15, you cannot use it unless you trade it in for a tag worth 12 points (usually at logistics).

Production Item Tags will only have one use, as the tags are meant to be attached to the physical representation of the item. A potion tag or elixir tag must be inserted into the potion vial or secured in some other manner (tape, rubber band). Globe tags are not kept on the packets that we use to represent Alchemical and Trap Globes for safety reasons, but may instead be kept in a pocket or on a tag ring. After a battle, you must turn over the tags that were used. These tags are stealable items even though they are not on a physical representation. Further, if someone steals your Globe physical representations, you must turn over the appropriate number of tags to represent that which has been taken.

Spell Book Tags are specific to each school of magic and must be kept with your spell book physical representation. Logistics will cross off all spells from the list that you do not have, leaving the ones available for you clear. New spells can be added to your book by paying money at Logistics with a source book to copy from, at which time they will give you a new spell book tag.

Alchemy Recipe Book Tags work in a similar way, except that you do not have to pay to add new recipes. You do still need to have a source book to copy from.

Trap Tags will list the type of trap, including the amount of damage done if applicable. Gas Traps and Scroll Traps must have an Alchemical Globe or Scroll tag attached respectively before being set.

Workshop Tags represent alchemy labs, scroll libraries, blacksmith forges, and the like. They are purchased at Logistics and will state the in-game owner of the workshop, the in-game location of the workshop, and the signature of the Logistics marshal who approved the sale.

Other Tags (sometimes called “asset tags”) are there to represent possessions not covered by the other tags: horses, ships, houses and other items with value. They are sellable in-game (if you can find a buyer). There are other tags you will encounter in your game but they are easy to understand as they follow the same basic rules.

Magic Item numbers may be found on any item. If an item has only a Magic Item number, it must be Identified before use.

Stealing and Searching

“Stealing” refers only to the in-game stealing of in-game items. Obviously, this means you must be very careful when attempting to steal anything in-game.

You are never allowed to destroy anything in order to steal something (no cutting of purse strings, no breaking windows to get into a home, no harming real property). If you can somehow manage to open someone’s pouch and take the game items within without that person noticing, then that is fine.

There are special rules for each type of in-game item and you are required to know them. If you are caught stealing something incorrectly, then you are cheating—and ignorance of the rules is no excuse!

Game Money, Magic Items and Jewelry: You are always allowed to take whatever game money you can find in-game. When taking jewelry or an item, always check to make sure there is a number scratched into it. If there is a number, then the item is now yours. If there is no number, then the item is personal property and not a game item. If you are unsure, you may find a marshal with a game item list who can check to make sure that it really is a game item.

If you have a magic weapon or item stolen, you must immediately head to the Mages’ Guild and turn over the magic item tag. Since this is a Logistical requirement that has to be performed, you can go to the guild out-of-game. Not turning in a magic item tag from something that has been stolen or lost is considered cheating.

Weapons: You must actually take the weapon you are stealing. Be reasonable about it—if these weapons were real, they would weigh quite a bit. You cannot grab piles of heavy weapons and walk through town with them.

Once you have stolen a weapon, you should then head immediately to the designated area for stolen weapons (usually the NPC camp or an NPC blacksmith shop). You cannot actually keep that particular weapon phys rep since it is the personal property of the player from whom you stole it, but the marshal in charge will give you the tag from that weapon which you can then attach to your own weapon phys rep.

If your weapon is stolen, you should head to the designated area to get your phys rep back. You can do this out-of-game since this is only a Logistical function. Once you have your weapon phys rep back, you will then have to buy a weapon tag from someone in-game in order to use that weapon again.

Some monsters will have weapons that are stealable. However, for logistical reasons, these monsters will simply hand you a tag instead of the actual weapon since they need the phys rep for later. Most monster weapons are not stealable simply because to allow that would be to ruin the in-game economy and make the skill of *Blacksmithing* useless.

If you steal a magic weapon, you will keep the phys rep but must go to the Mages’ Guild to have it Identified so you can use it. Remember, if you don’t have the magic item tag, the item cannot be used even if you do have the phys rep.



Armor and other expensive items: Since everyone's armor is personal and usually a bit expensive, you have the right to refuse to turn over the phys rep if someone steals your armor. However, by refusing to turn it over, you forfeit the right to later "recognize" the same armor on the person who stole it from you. If instead, you allow the thief to take your armor, it must obviously be returned to you at the end of the event, as it is your own personal property. This holds true for expensive jewelry, fancy weapons, and other personal items.

Spell Books and Recipe Books: In order to steal a spell book or an alchemical recipe book, you should take the card that is attached to the book. The actual book is the private property of the player. Some players will mark their spell books with a note saying "this spell book is stealable." In that case, you must take the actual book itself and not just the card, nor can you take the card out of that book and place it into a different book.

Gas Globes: If you steal gas globes from someone (or if those globes are destroyed), the owner of the globes must randomly give up the appropriate amount of tags for the globes. A marshal may be called to oversee this.

Other in-game items: The Alliance often provides props such as maps, notes, books, and other informational items. If you find these in a module or on an NPC, they're yours. If you steal them from another player, you should either contact the person you stole it from out-of-game and make sure that they were stealable, or alternatively, see a marshal to make sure.

Searching a Person

If you waylay, kill, or control a person or monster, you may search that being. Simply say "I search you." All game items must be turned over at that point. You do not need to touch the person and should not without permission.

Note that it is impossible to completely hide something on your body. If you are searched, you cannot claim that something was "really, really well hidden."

If you are searched, you also have the option of saying, "Describe your search." The searcher then must describe what he or she is doing to search ("I am looking through your pockets," "I am searching your cloak," etc.) This is not only to help you hide items, but it also takes up the time that the search should take. When the searcher asks about a place where an item is hidden, you must turn over the item at that point.

You must really have the item hidden where you say it is. In other words, you can't say "I'm pretending to have a secret compartment in my shoe, and you didn't ask about secret compartments there!"

If someone steals your magic item, do not give them the magic item tag. Immediately go to the appropriate logistical site (usually the Mages' Guild) and turn over the tag. It is up to the person who stole the item to find out what the item is and how it works. This applies to magical weapons as well. Not turning over a magic item tag after the phys rep has been stolen or lost is considered cheating. You must turn over these tags immediately.

Searching a Cabin

In order to search a cabin, you *must* have a marshal present. We cannot overemphasize this point! If you enter a cabin without a marshal, you are not only cheating but may be subject to legal action as well. The marshal does not have to actually be right next to you (after all, how can you sneak around with someone else tagging along beside?), but the marshal must be aware and within sight somewhere.

Every chapter has specific rules about where you can hide items and what must be done in order to search a cabin, so check with the marshal first before doing anything. These rules are based on the local chapter's policies which may be specific to the camp and may be based on the chapter's insurance requirements.

You must actually search the cabin yourself. The marshal will not simply look at the notes and go and retrieve items for you.

Do not take any items marked "personal" or any items stored in any area marked out-of-game. (In-game items may not be put in out-of-game areas.)

The marshal is also there to make sure that you properly disarm any traps that may be on the door or window.

Destroying property such as window screens or door hinges is not allowed.

Once more, the bottom line is: *Always get a marshal first*. Not doing so is the quickest way to be kicked out of the Alliance.

Securing Your Cabin

The world of Fortannis can be an unsafe place, so it's always a wise idea to guard your valuables. There may be places in-game where you can buy or rent a lock for your cabin. Some of these places will also install it for you for a small fee. Of course, these locks can be picked by a good thief, but at least it will slow the rascal down.

If you want to put a lock on a door, you must either use an approved lock or you must use your own lock after getting it approved by a marshal. Generally speaking, if you can demonstrate that you can pick your lock, then it will probably be allowed.

Remember though that we prefer easy to pick locks, as it is the in-game skill itself that is supposed to be used and not the out-of-game skill of actually picking a very difficult lock. Combination locks are not allowed to be used by players but may be found in modules (where part of the module is discovering the combination).

You can also buy or make traps for your cabin. Each trap must be accompanied by a trap card (see the section on traps).

Take your personal items and put them under your bed. Any items placed under the bed are considered to be out-of-game, so don't cheat and put game items there. If you like, put a dividing curtain up in your cabin, and place all the beds and your personal items behind it. Put any game items in front of the divider.

Any special security precautions you take must be entered on the marshal's notes on your cabin door. Make any appropriate entries there, with the spell labels and/or trap cards necessary. That way, anyone marshaling a thief through your cabin can dole out any damage that the villain may take. If no precautions have been entered on the marshal's notes, then there is nothing protecting the cabin in-game.

Anyone who does not reside in a particular cabin caught reading the marshal's notes will be subject to disciplinary action. These notes are for marshals only, and only when marshaling a thief into the cabin.



Goblin Points

The Alliance is staffed with volunteers, so the more you put into it, the better it is! Think of your own skills. You probably have something to offer in real world skills that you have. Are you a carpenter? You can make boxes and props for us. An electrician? Make some interesting traps. A writer? Come up with some modules. A computer professional? Help us with our web page. Let us know what you can offer.

Here are some suggestions as to things we always need done. Always check with the staff first before making, purchasing, or donating anything to be sure it is needed and wanted.

Write events. And help run them. We are always looking for writers who can produce good plotlines and modules for our players.

Help us find stuff. We always have to buy trap materials, batteries, paper for the computer, makeup, masks, and other supplies. If you have access to any sort of discount or can get things in bulk, let us know.

Make or donate props. Generally speaking, we can always use weapons, spell packets, and basic costuming (tabards, shirts, sweat pants). See what you may have sitting around in the attic. Furniture, old clothing that could be used for NPCs, large piles of money—we will gladly take them off your hands.

Help us publicize the Alliance. Let us know if there is any sort of medieval faire or other event in your area where we can hand out our literature. If you are going to a science fiction or gaming convention, take some of our flyers. If you know of a gaming club, see if we can make a presentation to them. If you are going to school, let us know if there is a festival or fair at the campus that we can use to hand out flyers. See if your local comic book store or gaming supply store will let us put our flyers there. If you have connections in the media, use them for us. You can also help by talking us up on the internet, making your own web page for your character or group, and otherwise keeping the Alliance in the public eye.

Be an NPC. Obviously! We always need NPCs. There is a definite correlation between good events and a large number of NPCs. You can never have too many NPCs!

Be creative. You've probably already thought of something we haven't. Let us know!

Goblin Points

People who work for the Alliance are compensated for their efforts with Goblin Points (sometimes called “Goblin Stamps” or “Gobbies”). Goblin Points are usually rewarded for work done at a rate of at least one per hour (more for more stressful, responsible, or undesirable jobs). You may also earn Goblin Points by donating or making props.

The amount of Goblin Points you will receive for donating items will be determined by the chapter it's donated to. It will not be an outrageous amount. We cannot allow richer people to simply “buy” their way to Goblin Point heaven.

Goblin Points can be collected and used at your convenience with certain limitations. The database keeps track for you when you earn and spend them. You can spend your Goblin Stamps in a number of ways, including those listed below. Your local chapter may also have some additional things to purchase not listed here.

Resurrections: You may trade in Goblin Points to “buy back” a resurrection that your character has experienced. This will reduce your risk of permanent death. In other words, the amount of black stones in the Resurrection Bag of Chance will be reduced by one.

There are some limitations on this use of Goblin Points: First, you can never buy back your first two resurrec-

tions. Second, you may not buy back a resurrection once your character has pulled a black stone. There are also some Rituals that will prevent “buying back” deaths in this way.

Finally, no character may ever buy back more than ten deaths in this manner. For logistics purposes, you can only buy back resurrections in your character’s “home campaign.”

The cost of buying back resurrections with Goblin Points is as follows: 40 Goblin Points to buy your first resurrection, 80 for your second, 160 for your third, and so on. The price doubles for each additional resurrection.

Game Items: For each Goblin Point turned in, you can receive one Production Point which can then be used to “purchase” coins, scrolls, potions, elixirs, gasses, traps, weapons, or armor. During your registration for an event, state what you wish to use the Goblin Points for and Logistics will provide the item(s). You cannot spend more than fifty Goblin Points per Logistics Period of the event (so a normal two-day weekend event would be limited to 100). Note that you will not be given random Production Points that you can store away to be used any way you want in the future.

How did your character get all these things all of a sudden? Maybe you inherited them; maybe you found them on a dead goblin; maybe you stole them from the Sheriff of Notingame. We do not provide the physical representations for any of these things, only the appropriate tags. You must supply the actual scroll, potion vial, armor, or weapon requested.

If spending Production Points on something that would normally require additional coin (like Strengthening or Silvering), you must supply the additional coin out of pocket.

Since a Production Point is worth one copper, you may also turn in your Goblin Points for coins. One hundred Goblin Points would then be worth a gold piece. Full Spell Books may be purchased for 500 Goblin Points each, and full Alchemy Books may be purchased for 250 Goblin Points (note that illegal recipes in your chapter may not be included).

You may purchase Spellcrafting Reagents for 50 Goblin Points. These Reagents may only be used at the event you purchase them, and only for the purpose of Spellcrafting, not for other purposes like Formal Magic or paying off summoned Elementals.

Event Points: You may trade in your Goblin Points to receive Experience Points for any event your character did not attend. These Experience Points can only be awarded if you did not attend any other events that weekend as a PC, even as another character. For example, if you were an NPC for a weekend event, you may use your Goblin Points to buy Experience Points for your character for that event. You cannot do this if you were a PC there.

The Goblin Point cost for Event Points is thirty Goblin Points per Logistics period of the event (so a regular two-day weekend event will cost 60 Goblin Points).

These Goblin Points are non-transferrable. You cannot use your Goblin Points to buy Event Points for a friend. Further, you can only spend Goblin Points in the chapter in which you earned them. You may only purchase Event Points three months prior to the current date, and may not purchase events for the same date from two different chapters, even if you attended one of the events as a player.

For example: Fred Player PCs an event in the Minnesota chapter. He cannot then use his Goblin Points from the New Jersey chapter to buy XP for an event that took place the same weekend.

Game Preparation: A player may purchase a full set of Protective Spells coming into the weekend (*Endow, Weapon Shield, Poison Shield, Elemental Shield*, and your choice of either *Spell Shield* or *Reflect Spell*) for 40 Goblin Points.

Players may spend 50 Goblin Points to come into game with up to 10 levels worth of spells in a *Spell Store* Ritual. This may only be purchased once per event; the spell levels may be split among different *Spell Stores* of differing schools if desired.

If a player wants to purchase a skill they have not yet been taught, they may spend Goblin Points to purchase a Teacher Tag for a skill for 100 Goblin Points. Multiple Teacher Tags may be purchased at once in this manner at 100 points each.

Writing Adventures

Writing live action games is unlike anything else you may have written in the past, mostly because in a live action game, you are not the only writer. Every single player can shoot the storyline off in a different direction, and sometimes all you can do is watch and scratch your head in amazement as the plotline you developed evolves into something completely different.

We are always looking for good writers, but you need to know what you are getting into before you submit anything.

The advice in this chapter is to help you get started by writing weekend encounters and modules (set adventures). Once you have had a few of these accepted by the Plot Committee, then you can start on the harder stuff—weekend long adventures and long term plotlines. But let's start off slow, shall we?

A weekend encounter is a simple plot that usually only requires a few NPCs and very little setup. These encounters are always in demand, and are very important because they give the NPCs reasons to be out there instead of merely “go out and find some players and fight with them.” The Plot Committee is always looking for weekend encounters, and they can be as short as a paragraph or two. Here are a few examples:

Example one: As a party nears the graveyard late at night, they hear cries for help. As they get closer, they see that a group of four goblins is fighting six zombies and losing. The party can do nothing, wait to see who wins and then go after the winners, or jump in to help. If they help the goblins, the goblins will not attack the humans. If after the zombies are killed the goblins are not attacked, they will thank the party for their help, allow them to keep the treasure on the zombies and offer to give the party some old chicken bones they have (they have nothing of value). If however the party attacks, the goblins will of course defend (or run away). If the party takes a lot of damage in the battle and the goblins think they may be able to beat the party, they will attack the party despite what the party has done for them.

Example two: You are a poor old beggar walking through town asking for coppers. If someone gives you a silver or more, say “Ah you are very kind. I will grant you one wish.” Take out a piece of paper and write down the character's name and the wish, and tell them that their wish will be granted in the morning. (Do not write the player's name; this must be completely in-game.) Soon that person will probably tell his or her friends and you will soon be getting lots of silvers and be writing down lots of names. As soon as you have as many as you think safe, or as soon as the Town Guard starts to eye you, you will hightail it out of town to run your scam somewhere else.

Example three: You are a ritual caster who has gone mad. You will take your two iron golems into town and demand that the town surrender to you. Of course, they will not, and you will then give the iron golems the order to “attack anything that moves!” The first thing they see moving is you, so they will beat you down quickly then go after the players. If the players stand completely still, the golems will walk past them and look for moving targets.

Writing encounters is a good way to start off your Alliance writing career. It shows the Plot Committee your creativity and gives them easy to run encounters that can be used whenever there is a lull in the action.



Modules are a bit more complicated, usually containing more than one encounter. Modules usually take place in separate buildings and areas away from the rest of the players. Players will find the “hook” to the module and a small group will then be able to participate.

The hook may be someone coming into town looking for adventurers to help her get rid of the giant rats in her barn; it could be a treasure map that is hidden in the tavern just waiting for someone to find it; it could be information a monster has that it will give you if you promise not to kill it. These hooks are basically available for all players. Some hooks are targeted to specific players or groups. For instance, the Mages’ Guild may be seeking guild members to investigate a strange rift that has opened in the woods; the local sarr leader has gathered all the sarr adventurers to help her destroy a local gnoll’s lair; the local underground is seeking thieves to help rob the house of a particular merchant who is causing trouble; an NPC is coming into town in search for a specific player to follow up on something written in a character history.

These modules may encompass many NPCs and use lots of props and special effects. There is a definite plot and a quest involved and it may sometimes be something that has an effect on the main plot.

Because of these reasons, there are more restrictions on modules. Here then are some pieces of advice for writing these modules (although in general the same advice goes for encounters). These are not rules, but guidelines. You may come up with a new twist or way of doing a module that goes against one or more of these suggestions, and that is fine—but don’t pin your hopes on having it accepted. When in doubt, don’t—especially if it’s your first module.

Think of a plot first. Sounds simple, but you may be surprised at the amount of modules we get that are well written except for one thing: They have no real plot. They are simply a series of encounters or fights with no real continuing thread. A good module should have each encounter build on the one previous. Every encounter should be there for a reason.

Imagine a module as a short story, with motivations for the characters and the NPCs, unexpected plot twists, and a build towards an exciting conclusion. If there is an encounter in your module that does not build toward your ending, then it would probably be better off being removed.

The question to always ask yourself when writing a module is “Why?” Why did the bad guy act this way? Why is this puzzle here? Why do these monsters stay in this room waiting for players to enter? If you don’t have an answer to every “why” then you have some more writing to do. Have a reason for everything and the module will be a lot more fun.

Don’t forget that there must be motivation for the party to go on the module as well. Players find it very frustrating when they have to think of some lame excuse for their character to go on the module.

For example, one module began with the party receiving an invitation to a party. It was not a bad module overall but many characters said “Why should I go to a party of someone I’ve never heard of out in the middle of nowhere?” Another module offered the party a few silvers for performing a task. Richer groups just said, “Three silver? Bah! I don’t need money.”

Try to avoid clichéd NPCs. The evil necromancer who wrings his hands and goes “Muhahahaha!” gets very tiring after a while. Give your NPCs real motivations and reasons for their being. No one in the real world considers themselves evil. They’re either power mad, completely selfish, fanatics, or have some sort of mental problem that prevents them from having any sort of empathy—but even then, have you ever really heard anyone laugh maniacally? Even Hitler didn’t laugh maniacally. (Although the world would be an easier place to live in if all bad guys laughed maniacally: “As your new boss, I am sure we will have a profitable working relationship, Muhahahaha!” “This used car is guaranteed not to give you any problems, Muhahahaha!” “Mexico will pay for the wall, Muhahahaha!”) People do not really act that way except in bad books and bad movies.

Another point is that evil people do not necessarily get along. If you have a necromancer in your module and a player comes up to him and says “Hi, I’m a necromancer too,” is there any reason why your NPC should trust this guy? Make your NPCs as smart as the PCs and they will face a real challenge, and have a lot more fun!

Don’t limit your inspiration to fantasy plotlines. Plots can come from anywhere. It is more important to think of an interesting idea and then find a way to make it work in our fantasy medieval game than it is to start with the limitations of the medieval world. Any sort of conflict can produce a plot.

Look for every possibility. A LARP is not as controllable as tabletop role-playing games you may have played. If the players do something completely unexpected, you can't just stop and rewrite the module in the middle of it. Therefore you have to think of every possibility when writing the module. This also means trying to imagine how players with a different slant on the game will play it.

Don't write modules that punish characters.

Some modules have been written in such a way that they require characters to do things that aren't very nice in order to complete the module. This punishes players who are

trying to role-play "good" characters. (Even though there are no "alignments" in this game, players often consider themselves good, evil or neutral, and for the purposes of this point, we will use those expressions.)

Modules that require players to steal items from homes, torture people to get information, or do questionable acts in order to complete the quest should be avoided. (This assumes of course that the module is an open one that could be attended by any player—if the module is targeted towards a specific person or group, then this could be completely acceptable.)

This does not mean that you can't write modules that challenge players' morals and beliefs. For instance, a module containing a monster that is only hurt by necromancy can be quite a moral dilemma for the "good" player. Just make sure that there is another solution—such as a way to avoid the monster—so that the module doesn't just end right there.

Even though you shouldn't write modules that require players to do evil acts, you *can* write a module that require player to do good acts. That may sound contradictory, but look at it this way: Evil characters are not completely and constantly belligerent. The player has made a conscious choice to play a violent or obnoxious character. You can write an encounter that requires the group to be civil.

Here's an example: The players on a module meet a merchant who is carrying some items of value. If they attack the merchant for the money, he will not give the party the information they need to complete their quest. In fact, he may even tell them a complete lie so that they spend the rest of the module wandering aimlessly in the wrong direction. This is perfectly acceptable. Even evil characters (unless they are insane murderous characters) can cooperate and be nice for a long term goal. And if the player chooses to play an insane character who murders everyone who gets in his way, that's not your problem.

Make it repeatable. In many cases, your module will be run many times so that as many people as possible may enjoy it, especially if it requires a major set up, props or special effects. Basing the plot on something that can only be done once is a waste of materials. Besides, don't you want every player to go on your module and see how much fun it is?

Try to make up new bad guys and don't use established plot bad guys. After all, we don't want five groups



claiming to have captured the wanted criminal Necro Abominatio and seven others claiming he got away.

If at all possible (and this is difficult) make your repeating module non-repeating. Have the encounters be the same, but have a different name for the bad guys in each run, and have it take place in a different place each time.

For example, instead of writing a module about a mad goblin king in a cave, write it so that there are a series of mad goblin kings now working together, and the only way to rid them of their power is to send a number of groups off to different caves to fight different goblin kings. Give each goblin king a completely different name and maybe even a different piece of a puzzle. The module is the same, but this allows for players to talk about the adventure without contradicting each other as to whether King Snotnose got away or not.

Along these same lines, don't base the module on the existence of some great magic item that the players will encounter. Some player out there will figure out how to get it and then the balance of the game is ruined; and since the module will be repeating, soon many groups may have this "unique" item.

Put in a time limit. You may have to write in a time limit to allow as many groups to go through the module as possible. Time limits on modules are often unrealistic in-game but necessary out-of-game, especially if you have other players you want to run through the module as well. You don't want one group figuring they have forever and hogging it all.

Try to be creative in your limit. For example, the party must reach the final encounter by midnight or the big bad guy will finish his evil ritual. Maybe the module takes place in a cave that is experiencing earthquakes and is due to collapse. If nothing else, if the time limit is almost up and the party shows no sign of leaving, have waves and waves of progressively more dangerous monsters attack until they either get the hint and retreat or die trying. (Obviously in this last example, the party must be allowed to retreat and escape!)

Make sure it's scalable. Never write a module that requires a greater vampire or other high level monster to be the main NPC because that immediately prohibits lower level groups from going on the module. The module should be written in such a way that for lower level groups, the bad guy could be an evil human, the higher the level you go up the scale, the worse it gets until it is a vampire.

If there is no way to write the module without using the high level NPC, then a way out should be provided for low level parties; perhaps the vampire just happens to be away at the time the party arrives and they have to attack some of his minions and then destroy his coffin. Rewriting for different levels is difficult to do, so it is better to avoid modules that require the use of a specific high level monster.

Don't worry about monster statistics or treasure. Our Monster Manual is not made public. After all, your character should have to learn thorough experience and talking to others in-game what powers certain monsters have and what their weaknesses are.

Therefore, when you write a module, you should submit it in very basic terms for monsters ("Goblins should go here until the party gets high enough level and then it should be orcs or other similar creatures.") All modules go through the Plot committee who will do the monster scaling for you.

You could, however, scale any player race NPC, as those statistics are available in the Rule Book.

When scaling for an NPC, a general rule of thumb is that the NPCs should average out at approximately the players' level. So if you have a celestial templar, buy his or her skills based on that level, and be reasonable about it. Buy a few skills like *Alchemy* or *Craftsman* that the NPC really would have and don't overload the NPC with nothing but battle skills or spells. Also remember that some spellcasters would have cast protective spells on themselves at the beginning of the day and these would take away from other spells available. Give your NPCs real personalities and logic and the character becomes more real.

Keep in mind that the players will go through more than one battle in the average module, so if you scale all your battles at party level, it will be too difficult for the players, because by the last battle they will have already expended most of their spells, skills and items.

Don't worry about treasure unless it's crucial to the plot. You may want to add points such as "The treasure should be all on the leader" or mention treasure that needs to be there for later encounters: "The box must have a *Evocation Bolt* scroll within it." Be logical. Why would your zombie have treasure? Make it all make sense.

Glossary

The following are a list of mostly OOG terms you may hear when playing the game.

Adjudicator: A judge to whom you may appeal if you feel wronged by a marshal's calling on a rule.

Basher: A player who cares only about fighting and not role-playing.

Battle Board: The card given to you when you sign in that shows all of your daily skills and spells. This is how you keep track of what you have and what you have used.

Battle Magic: Spells that are not Formal Magic.

Blade Spells: Spells that affect the type of damage you can do. The Blade Spells are *Chaos Blade*, *Earth Blade*, and *Enhanced Blade*. They are called Blade Spells even if you cast them on blunt weapons.

Cauliflower Hand: Somebody endowed with so much aura that the spell packets in their hand seem like a stalk of cauliflower.

Character Card: Your character card lists your current skills and all other important stats. Keep your Character Cards after each event like a receipt and that way you can keep track of your character's progress.

Cheese: To be a rules cheat by insisting upon the letter of the rule instead of the intent of the rule or to otherwise try to bend the rules to fit what you want.

Death Countdown: When your character reaches -1, you start your Death Countdown. For the first minute, any healing spell or healing elixir can bring you back to consciousness. After that minute, you are dead and need a *Life* spell. After five minutes with no *Life* spell, you must attempt to resurrect. This Death Countdown continues even if you are raised as a zombie and only stops if you are healed or given First Aid.

Dragon Magic: A spellcaster who can cast Formal Rituals as if they were standard spells. PCs may never possess this skill and only the most powerful NPC characters will ever possess it.

Drawing a Black Stone: When you go to the Healers' Guild to be resurrected, you



will reach into a bag with ten stones. White stones mean you are resurrected and black stones represent a permanent death. This is an in-game as well as an out-of-game phrase; In-game, characters are referring to the old myth that Death makes you choose from a bag of stones when you die. (Aw, you don't really believe that old fable, do ya?)

Effect Groups: Every effect in the game falls into a group. For example, in the effect group "Binding" you will find effects like *Shackle*, *Pin*, and *Web*. This provides consistency for spell verbals, specific defenses, and cures.

Experience Points: These are points your character can use to buy new skills.

Fishbowl: When random weekend NPCs need a reason to be out there, pre-written encounters can be pulled from a "fishbowl" to fill the need.

Fizzrep: See "Phys Rep."

FOIG: "Find Out In-Game." Said frequently to players who ask in-game questions while out-of-game.

Full Boat: Having every Spell Defense possible active on you. We have no idea where this phrase originated.

Goblin Munchies: Food for monsters. Some goblins, for instance, are very bribable. Offering a goblin some candy or other food to keep it from killing you usually works (especially if the NPC behind the mask is hungry). Lots of players carry around a small pouch full of "goblin munchies" for such an occasion.

Goblin Points: Also known as "Gobbies." Goblin Points are given to our volunteers for work performed and can be turned in for game items and experience.

Hack and Slash: Either a player who cares nothing about roleplaying and is only interested in fighting; or a module adventure that only provides fighting encounters.

Hawley-Smoot Tariff: An important piece of legislation that, in 1930, established strict controls on imports into the United States. Actually has nothing at all to do with the game; we just like the way it sounds.

Hook: The thing that gets the players into a module. It could be an NPC hiring them, or a treasure map found, or any number of interesting plot devices.

Huzzah!: The medieval version of "hooray!" Usually cheered by crowds at tournaments.

IG: In-game

In-Game: What really happens to your character. Not everything on a weekend or a module is "in-game." During a battle, the damage you call is "out-of-game" but the damage caused to the character is "in-game." Two players may talk between weekends, say something incriminating, and decide for the fun of it to treat it "in-game" as if their characters had said it. "In-game" also refers to knowledge your character has as opposed to you the player. Out-of-game, you can read and write but in-game you can't, for instance.

In the Bag: A character who already has a chance of drawing a black stone from the Bag of Chance. "I can't afford to die! I'm already in the bag!"

LARP: Live Action Role Playing.

Logistics: Logistics is where you get your tags, spend your Production Points, update your character, and take care of all the out-of-game paperwork that must take place for the game to run smoothly.

Machine gunning: A machine gunner stands next to his or her victim and moves the weapon only with the wrist, bringing the weapon back a few inches and striking repeatedly while yelling damage as fast as possible. This is not allowed.



Marshal: A staff member who is versed in the rules and can make decisions on rules interpretations when there are questions or controversies. Marshals are certified on a chapter-by-chapter basis.

Metagame: To use out-of-game knowledge to help your in-game character. This is cheating!

Module: A set adventure. On an adventure day, the module takes up your day as you go through several encounters. On a weekend, a module may be only one encounter.

Mundania: The real world. (You know—where we go when we’re not playing Alliance games.)

Mundane: A person who does not play Alliance games; especially one who does not understand why people enjoy these things—like our bosses and teachers.

Newbie: A new player, usually identified by the “Gosh Wow” expression on his or her face at the first event. This is not meant to be an insulting term. Everyone was a newbie once.

Nounverber: A character with a typical fantasy name such as “Dreamseeker” or “Shadowwalker” or “Death-bringer.”

NPC: A non-player character. NPCs are all controlled by the Plot Committee. NPCs include all monsters. A few people who serve important functions in the town may also be NPCs, such as the major nobles and guild leaders. To all outward appearances, all non-monster NPCs should look and act just like PCs.

OOG: Stands for “Out-of-Game.” Not to be confused with the sound you make when hit too hard in the stomach by an orc with a huge club.

Out-of-Game: Information obtained by a player (as opposed to a character) is out-of-game. Certain areas may be out-of-game as well, such as the bathrooms, the module set-up areas, and the NPC camp.

Phys Rep: Short for “Physical Representation.” There must be a Phys Rep for every item your character owns. In other words, you must have a small bottle or container and not merely the potion tag in order to use a potion.

PC: Player character. Everyone who is not an NPC (see above).

PC Basher: A player who earns game money and items primarily by killing and robbing other players. Not a very well-liked person.

Popcorn Battle: Sometimes a group of NPCs is sent out for a battle. Each NPC is given a certain number of lives. When they die, they wait to be searched (if applicable) and then they go out of the battle area OOG and come running back in as another monster. The players are surrounded with enemies coming at them from all directions and feel like they are in a popcorn popper.

Reversible Spell: Some spells are reversible. A spellcaster learning *Cure Wounds* also automatically knows *Cause Wounds*. However, not all reversible spells have a necromantic counterpart.

Rumor Sheet: An out-of-game sheet of paper containing in-game rumors that your character has heard. It can contain clues and other important information.

Scaling: Modules are often “scaled” so that different party levels will be properly challenged. A group of goblins may challenge a first level group but be a big yawn to a tenth level group so the higher level groups will encounter monsters and traps appropriate to their level.

Shadow Magic: This skill is similar to Dragon Magic, but the caster may only cast Formal Rituals of one school as a regular spell. This skill is also NPC only.

Spell Defense: Spell defenses are spells that are cast upon you for protection and stay upon you until used up. The spell defenses are *Elemental Shield*, *Endow*, *Poison Shield*, *Reflect Spell*, *Spell Shield*, and *Weapon Shield*. Sometimes they are also called “Protectives.”

Stats: Your characters’ statistics, which include level, skills, number of deaths and the like and are found on your character card (or on a Monster Card).

Stick Jockey: A player who only cares about fighting.

Sword and Board: Fighting with a sword and shield.

Tag Hold: A Tag Hold is held after a battle for the purpose of collecting the many tags and adjusting each player’s Battle Board. The game continues on for purposes of role-playing, first aiding, armor repair, and so on, but NPCs may be walking around out-of-game collecting used tags. This is different from a regular Hold where everything stops and you can’t even role-play or first aid.



Ten Percent Club: A club no one wants to join, consisting of characters who have permanently died on their first draw from the Bag of Chance.

Time Bomb: An NPC who sneaks into town and attacks for no in-game reason, suddenly “exploding.” This is bad. Do not do this.

Turtling: Crouching down and hiding behind a shield so that no legal targets are available for your opponent to hit. This is not allowed. Do not do this.

Unsleep: A player who has stayed up all night playing, powered by caffeine or adrenaline, and now looks half dead. Not as bad as a Greater Unsleep (usually identified by their staff cards).

Wave Battle: Battles that simulate having more participants than NPCs by having NPCs attack in “waves.” It’s the opposite of a “popcorn battle.”

XP: Experience Point.



Fortannis Books

There are a number of books available with great stories that take place in the world of Fortannis. You do not need to read these books to enjoy the game, but they're a fun way to learn about the people, the cultures, and the lands of Fortannis. Note that these books are all fiction, even in the in-game world. They may feature characters you will meet and may take place in lands where your character will play, but they are not "canon" to the in-game Alliance plot. All are available on Amazon and other retailers as paperbacks or in ebook form.

Arch Enemies

The prophecy said that the hero would save the duchy of Ashbury from the evil gryphons that were about to escape from behind the magical arch. Too bad they got the wrong guy.

When cowardly young bard Terin Ostler is called before the Duke and told that he fits the description of the hero of the prophecy, he is certain there has been a grave mistake. When the Duke's own men later try to kill him and he is forced to go into hiding, he realizes that it may be his own grave that is in question.



"Arch Enemies is a non-standard quest story with an atypical thrust-into-the-role hero that nevertheless keeps you turning the pages at the end of every chapter, eager to find out what happens next. Full of engaging characters in a well-crafted world." — **Elektra Hammond**, Buzzymag.com

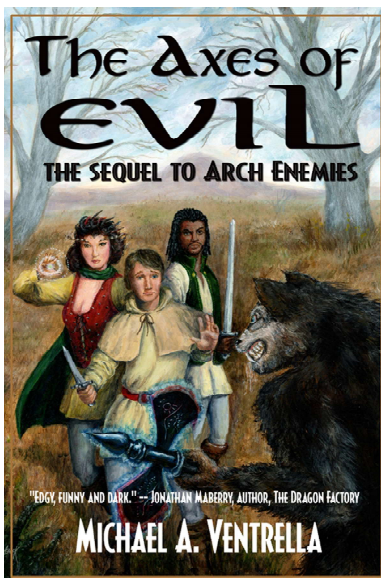
"A late twist lends the entire novel a surprisingly tight narrative." — **Pat Ferrara**, Mania.com

"Clever, funny and suspenseful. Normally, I would rather eat bees than read fantasy novels, but this one is great." — **Mark Waid**, author of *Kingdom Come* and *Birthright*

The Axes of Evil

Werewolves, barbarians, and misguided goblins stand in the way of Terin's attempt to resolve three contradicting prophecies. If he can live that long...

Accompanied by his fellow squires, Rendal, an expert swordsman, and Darlissa, a biata spellcaster, Terin sets out to obey his Duke's orders—orders that go against everything he believes. Can fulfilling the barbarian prophecies help him find a way to morally obey the Duke's orders as well?



*"Here Michael A. Ventrella takes up the mantle of Christopher Stasheff, and fans of *The Warlock in Spite of Himself* will hugely enjoy *The Axes of Evil*."* — **Gregory Frost**, author of *Shadowbridge* and *Lord Tophet*

"The Axes of Evil is a taut nail-biter of a thriller. Edgy, funny and dark." — **Jonathan Maberry**, multiple Bram Stoker Award-winning author of *V-Wars*, *The Dragon Factory* and *Rot & Ruin*

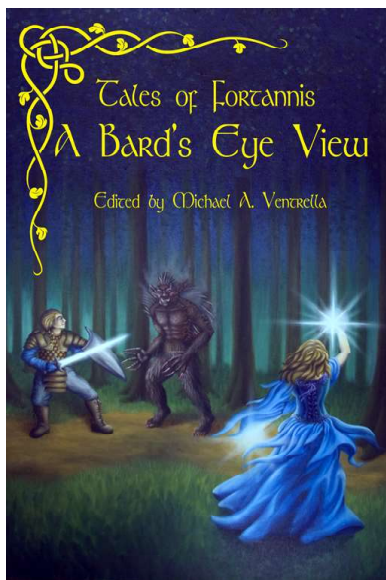
"Michael Ventrella weaves another of his perplexing tales where it seems the squire but would-be bard Terin Ostler cannot succeed in solving one problem without betraying another." — **Christopher Hoare**, author of *Arrival*



It's a Wonderful Death

A brave knight breaks her vows to fight against a lunatic king calling himself "the Doomsayer" and ends up dealing with unreliable henchmen, political assassins, and a sarcastic disembodied head in a bag. Can she and her friends save the Hidden Kingdom from an unstoppable foe before her prophesied death?

"Simultaneously epic and hilarious, *It's a Wonderful Death* tells a fast-paced story with a ton of heart. It focuses on a handful of characters and really makes you fall in love with them. Nevertheless, Beebe isn't afraid to ramp up the action to 11 and deliver massive fantasy set-pieces. Even though the book deals with some very dark subject matter at times, the tone was kept light by clever dialogue and moments of real levity. It never quite becomes a straight up comedy or farce but instead deftly toes the line, and in the end is an enjoyable epic fantasy story." — **Zachary Didur**, *Random Chat-ter* magazine.

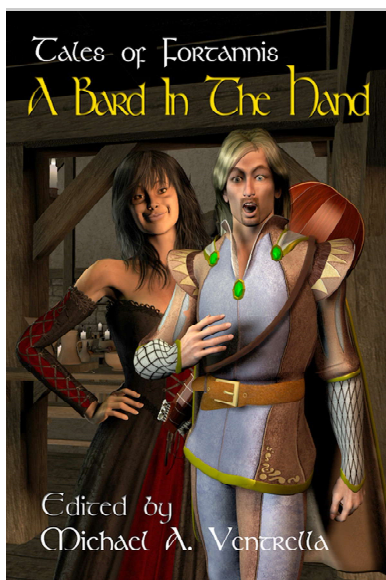


Tales of Fortannis: A Bard's Eye View

The first anthology features stories from Davey Beauchamp, Danny Birt, Nick Bond, Jon Cory, Roy C. Booth and Brian Woods, Tera Fulbright, Laurel Anne Hill, Ron F. Leota, Mark Mensch, Bernie Mozjes, Matthew C. Plourde, J. Thomas Ross, Mike Strauss, and Michael A. Ventrella.

"*A Bard's Eye View* is a varied collection of adventures, whimsies, variously grim, grand and comedic; this book will appeal to fans of gaming and fantasy alike." — **Jay Lake**, Campbell Award-winning author of *Green* and *Mainspring*

"You don't need to know the background material to enjoy the range of stories from the talespinners assembled here. It has plenty of adventures that end with a twist that leave you shaking your head in pleased surprise. I'll be happy to look for many of these writers in days to come." — **Jody Lynn Nye**, author of *View From the Imperium* and *Dragon's Deal*

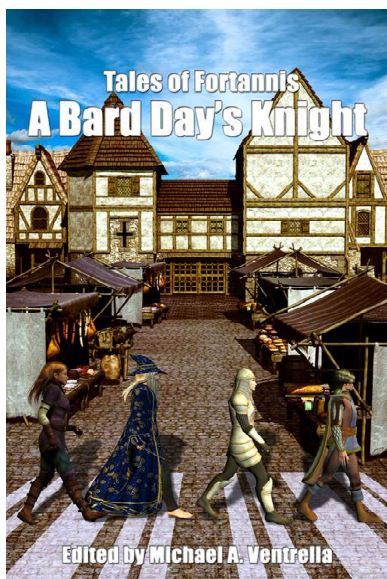


Tales of Fortannis: A Bard In the Hand

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"Magic. Knights. Werewolves. Doppelgangers. Elves. There's no telling what will pop up in Michael A. Ventrella's Fortannis fantasy series when he invites other writers to play in his sandbox. — **Daniel M. Kimmel**, author of the Hugo-nominated *Jar Jar Binks Must Die*, *Father of the Bride of Frankenstein*, and *Shh! It's a Secret*.

"Curl up in your favorite chair with your favorite beverage and get ready for adventure, action and derring-do—it's all here!" — **Gail Z. Martin**, author of *Ice Forged* and the *Chronicles of the Necromancer* series

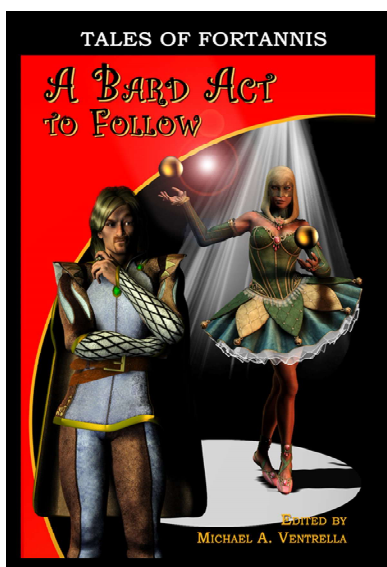


Tales of Fortannis: A Bard Day's Knight

This third anthology features stories from Derek Beebe, Roy C. Booth and Brian Woods, Jon Cory, Tera Fulbright, Christine Hardy, Laurel Anne Hill, Mark Mensch, Bernie Mojzes, Beth W. Patterson, KT Pinto, Shane Porteous, Angela Pritchett, Mike Strauss, and Michael A. Ventrella.

“From the ridiculous to the sublime to the downright heartfelt and — at some instances — mildly terrifying, Ventrella’s collection promises you that in Fortannis, anything and everything is up for grabs.” – **Tee Morris**, author of the *Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences* series

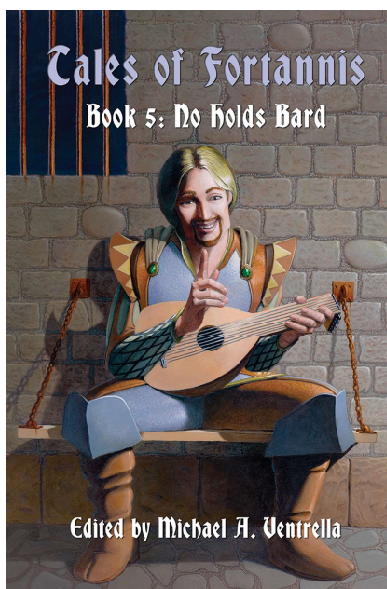
“A very readable collection of classic fantasy adventure.” – **Lawrence Watt-Evans**, author of *The Misenchanted Sword* and the *Annals of the Chosen* series



Tales of Fortannis: A Bard Act to Follow

This fourth anthology features authors Derek Beebe, Roy C. Booth and Brian Woods, Dominic Bowers-Mason, Jon Cory, Tera Fulbright, Henry Hart, Tom Haswell, Laurel Ann Hill, Bernie Mojzes, Mark Mensch, Beth W. Patterson, Shane Porteous, Mike Strauss, and Michael A. Ventrella.

“Some of the stories are simply amusing, some tragic, and others heartwarming. Our protagonists range from courageous knights and cynical adventurers to an absolutely chilling, self-justifying sociopath. Taken together, they give us a picture of a living, immense world which can cover the span of human (and biata, dwarf, elf, ogre, and goblin...) endeavor and passion. *A Bard Act to Follow* does not merely continue the fine tradition of Fortannis; it elevates the written world to the next level, and indeed, as the title plays upon, will be a hard act to follow!” – **Ryk Spoor**, author of *Grand Central Arena* and the *Balanced Sword* trilogy



Tales of Fortannis: No Holds Bard

This fifth anthology features stories from Derek Beebe, Susan Bianculli, Jon Cory, Henry Hart, Jesse Hendrix, Miles Lizak, Bernie Mojzes, Mark Mensch, Beth W. Patterson, Shane Porteous, Sarah Stegall, and Michael A. Ventrella.

“Want bards? Check. Elves? Check. Betrayal? Love? Sacrifice? Humor? Got ‘em all. This collection of authors come together, each with their own offering, to give the reader an experience they’ll not forget.” – **Peter Prellwitz**, author of the *Shards Universe*

“Fortannis is a complex world. This richness gives its authors plenty of room to move around in. Some stories are light, almost humorous. Others are darker, some grim, and some even tragic.” – **Allen L. Wold**, author of *The Planet Masters* and *Jewels of the Dragon*

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