

# One Thousand and One Nights and One Night

a role-playing game campaign design 'zine

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## School is Hard!

I'm up to my ears in schoolwork, but had time enough to make another issue of 1001+1. I return to *D20* for my first two part series. I welcome any comments you might have!

## Quote of the Month

"Gaming corrupts our disposition and teaches us a habit of hostility against all mankind." - Thomas Jefferson.

## My Style: Factions

When I start a new game, I build major and minor factions. I sketch out a dozen or more, good and bad, important and expendable. Each has a simple goal and method, like "expand territory" by "exploit other faction's troubles." I start the game at some "initial condition," with one major faction as the catalyst that sparks the End of the World. As play goes on, with or without involvement by the PCs, each faction changes or lives or dies and I show those changes to the PCs in the form of "Cut Scenes" (see *Issue 2*). For example, a major unknown-to-anyone faction called the Magpie Kingdom launched a series of attacks against the other factions (the Elves and the Worgs, at the start) using massive numbers of the Stupid, Stupid Rat Creatures (see *Issue 1*). The Worgs, logical enemies of the PCs, and the Elves, logical allies of the PCs, were wiped out early on in the game. As play progressed, it became obvious to the PCs that only by combining the might of the free peoples would it be possible to stem the tide of the Rat Creatures. But the longer they took to cement alliances and achieve their goals, the bigger chance that several important possible allies would be destroyed. I started that game with about 15 factions and after a good 6 months of playing, almost half of them had been overrun by the Rat Creatures. Try defining some factions yourself and setting the "initial condition" at the start and see how they progress in play.

## Actual Play: My New D20 Fantasy Campaign, Part 1 of 2

About a year ago, I started thinking about my new *D20 Fantasy Campaign*. This is different from the *D20 Multi-verse Campaign* I shared in *Issue 1*. I'm a big fan of fantasy but don't want the usual *Forgotten Realms*-esque mildness. I wanted a unique take on it (who doesn't?), different races than the norm, a world with lots more magic, that sort of thing.

## Hypertext D20 SRD

The *Hypertext D20 System Reference Document (SRD)* ([www.d20srd.org](http://www.d20srd.org)) is on-line and I used it to re-build the standard races with the Elemental Racial Variants. I built two races of humans, one Earth- and one Water-aspected. I dropped the dwarfs entirely and mixed some of their abilities (but not their temperaments) into the elves, now called the Glittergold Cave Elves (Fire-aspected). Halflings became Air-aspected Hobbits, and I added another race similar to stone golems named Elessars (Earth-aspected).

## Race #1: Glittergold Cave Elves

These elves are modified *PHB* elves with a dash of the *PHB* dwarf. They live in underground grottoes and caves, but still like the woods. They are skilled smiths, have a keen stone-sense and some have beards. They get a +2 to Dex, -2 to Con, +2 to Int, and -2 to Cha. They're medium-sized with a move of 30 feet. Like *PHB* elves, they are immune to magical sleep and they get the usual bonuses (+2) on resisting enchantments. Glittergold Cave Elves have darkvision and +2 bonuses to listen, search and spot skills, including spotting a secret door by passing it (search check). They (continued on Page 2, First Column)



## Actual Play, Part 1 of 2 (cont.)

are Fire Creatures (Fire-aspected) with a +1 to attacks on creatures but -2 to saves against abilities that are Water-aspected. They have resistance to Fire 5, improved Stonecunning (+4 to notice unusual stonework) and the Exotic Martial Weapon Feat: Elven Bastard Sword.

## Race #2: Elessars

Elessars are beautiful stone or iron living statues that were originally created as golems by the Glittergold Cave Elves millennia ago. Due to close association with the elves, they gained sentience. The Elves freed their creations and helped them in the years since. They are still on friendly terms with the Elves. They get a +2 to Str, +2 to Con, and -2 to Dex. They are considered Giant class creatures, not affected by spells that target humanoids, like Charm Person, but they are still medium sized and move 30 feet. Their physical build is powerful and are treated as one size larger for specific attacks, if it is an advantage. Elessars have low-light vision and are fire acclimated, with a +2 save on fire effects. But they are Earth-aspected and gain a +1 to attacks and -2 to saves against Air-aspected opponents or abilities. They get a +4 to resist bull-rushes or trip attacks due to their natural stability.



## The Stars are in Alignment!

I don't like the standard *D20* alignment rules, so I cut the standard *PHB* to just Law / Neutral / Chaos. No Good/Evil aspects. It was good enough for *Basic D&D*, it's perfect for me. I added Chaos-taint, a disease that drives creatures mad and mutates them horribly if they attract Chaos by their actions, rather than their alignment. The PCs start with zero (0) Chaos-taint and can only gain more!

## Starting Feats: Cantrips and ...

In order to make the world more "magical," I figured that everyone - good, bad, ugly, PC, NPC, monster, etc. - could cast cantrips. I gave everyone the Cantrip Dabbler Feat, which does not count towards any class feats. All 0-level spells are free to use, with no spell slots required. There are also no class-specific cantrips since cantrips and orisons are the same. So I scoured the Internet and found lists upon lists of cantrips, which I compiled into one master list. Each PC started the game with their Int score in cantrips, while Wizards and Bards got twice that amount based on Int or Cha. I also ruled that a Wizard or Bard could make new cantrips with a successful Spellcraft roll and about 8 hours of work.



I also liked the thought of specific weapons for the races, so I let all non-goblins get the Martial Weapon Feat: Longsword for free, while goblins got the Martial Weapon Feat: Hand Axe instead.

## Dress, Equipment and Money

I set fashion to be Elizabethan in style, with shirt, breeches, doublet, hose and boots for men and linen chemise, stockings, bodice, petticoat, kirtle, gown and shoes for women. Arms consisted of longsword, bows and crossbows, and some blackpowder weapons (axes are tools or Goblin-weapons only), while armor is buff coat, with breastplate over it and helms and bucklers for additional defense. Heavier armor (full plate or chain) is rare, mostly historical or unique treasure and not worn in public unless the wearer wants trouble from the local authorities. However, a buff coat and high boots are both fashionable and fairly inconspicuous as armor. Prices are in English monetary units (the Pound, Crown, Shilling, and Penny) and I allowed starting wealth to be fixed at 200 Crowns (50 Pounds). Most *D20* equipment is still available.

