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DRAGON AND THE THIEF



SYSTEM
NEUTRAL



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DRAGON AND THE THIEF

How often do your characters spend the night in the tavern but the actual evening is glossed over? Want to have a good excuse to start a rollickingly good barroom brawl or simply fancy changing the pace of the session? Dragon and the Thief is a ready to play game of chance your characters can enjoy as they relax in the tavern between adventures. A game of Dragon and the Thief is the perfect backdrop for introducing new NPCs, giving the party the chance to gather information or starting a barroom brawl!

Dragon and the Thief comes with a full-page game board designed by Matt Morrow ready to print and use at the table.

CREDITS

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Art: William McAusland and Matt Morrow. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission.

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SYSTEM NEUTRAL

Welcome to this Raging Swan Press System Neutral supplement. Herein you'll find evocative, inspiring text designed to help you—the busy GM—run better, quicker and easier games.

This book is compatible with most fantasy roleplaying games. It's impossible to create a truly system neutral book, though, and some generic game terms—wizard, fighter, human, elf and so on—lurk within. These generic terms are easily modified to the GM's system of choice.

One special note about the NPCs in this supplement. While some are magic-users, fighters, clerics and so on, others are simply normal folk. Because different game systems handle normal folk differently we've made no attempt to note their "class" leaving them simply as "female human" and so on.

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HOW TO USE DRAGON AND THE THIEF

Dragon and the Thief is a perfect game for the characters to play when relaxing in their favourite tavern after a hard day's adventuring. They can play it among themselves or try to win coins from other tavern patrons. Unlike some gambling games, a game of Dragon and the Thief can go on for some time, but large amounts of money are rarely won or lost as each player usually only puts down or picks up one coin at a time.

For a GM, a game of Dragon and the Thief is a handy addition to their toolbox. A game of Dragon and the Thief is a great way to:

- Introduce new NPCs—perhaps interesting locals, rival adventurers, thieves or even potential employers.
- Introduce whispers, rumours and adventure hooks or enable general information gathering.
- Start a barroom brawl.

GETTING READY FOR PLAY

To facilitate play, print out a copy of the game board at the largest possible size. (The graphics accompanying this book are sized to print up to A3—double letter—size). You'll also need coins or tokens to represent the various players' wagers.

If you are planning a barroom brawl, you'll also need a map of the tavern and so on.

HOW TO PLAY DRAGON AND THE THIEF

To play, Dragon and the Thief, each player needs two six-sided dice and some tokens to represent their characters' wagers. The game is best played with three or more participants.

Play continues as long as the participants want to play; players can join or drop out at any time.

Start: Before play begins, the players must decide what type of coin (copper, silver, electrum, gold or platinum) to wager. All players start by placing a coin of that value on the number 7.

Who Goes First: The players all roll their dice. The player with the lowest score goes first. Thereafter, play passes to the left.

Playing: Each player rolls their dice. The result determines the player's action:

- **2 (The Thief):** The player takes all the coins except those on number seven (The Hoard).
- **3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 or 11:** The player checks the number for a coin. If a coin is there, the player takes it. If there is no coin the player puts one down on that number.
- **4:** The player does nothing.
- **7 (The Hoard):** The player puts a new coin into the Hoard.
- **12 (The Dragon):** The player takes all the coins on the board, including those in the Hoard.



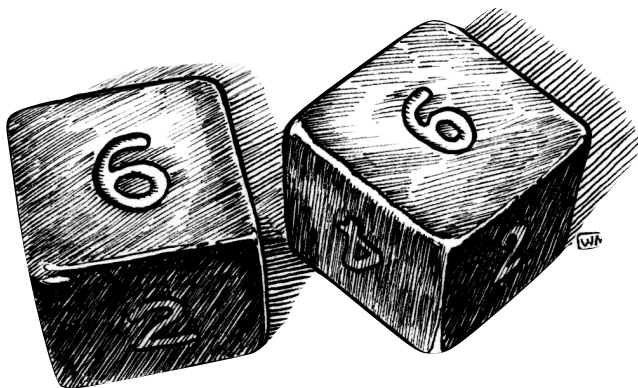


EVENTS

Not all games of Dragon and the Thief are uneventful. You can use these events on the table below to inject excitement, conflict or opportunities into the game.

Either choose a suitable event or roll randomly:

1. **Drunkard:** A drunk tavern patron stumbles and falls onto the table. Coins fly everywhere and drinks spill on the floor. The man is very drunk—and mumbles his apologies—but several of the players don't care and start shouting at him. In the meanwhile, other players scabble about for the fallen coins, which provokes another argument as no one can agree on what coins were where and whose is whose. Unless the characters calm the situation, the arguments rapidly spiral out of control and a brawl ensues.
2. **Arrogant Player:** Jarrick Hivel, an arrogant minor nobleman (or rich merchant), swaggers up to the table and demands to play. He sneers at the pitiful stakes on the board and demands the players wager gold coins. If the players refuse his demand, he belittles them, calls them "pauper scum" and continues to be irritating until forced to leave.
3. **Got to Leave:** One of the players suddenly realises he has to urgently be somewhere else, but doesn't want to leave until someone has rolled the Dragon. He gets increasingly irritated and exhorts his fellow gamblers to play quicker. If they ignore him, he gets increasingly agitated until he eventually just grabs a handful of coins and makes a run for it. Shockingly, the other players object and make a grab for the fleeing man. Chaos ensues.
4. **Ranting Priest:** The game is proceeding peacefully until a devout cleric of a lawful god enters the tavern, sees the game and proceeds to sermonise loudly about the evils of gambling. Some of the players tell him to shut up, but he persists in his rantings. The cleric, Fabius Drusu (LG male human cleric 1), is a reformed gambler and preaches with the conviction of a convert. Unless the characters convince him to go away he ruins the game. Shortly after his arrival, the other players start to drift away to seek entertainment elsewhere.
5. **Spilled Drink:** A player spills a full drink across the table, which messes up the board and displaces several coins. No one can agree on where the coins were in the first place; an argument ensues.



6. **To the Privy:** Several of the players have finished their drinks, but don't want to get up and lose their place at the table. They ask an observer to get them drinks and he readily agrees. The man, however, is a malicious trickster and adds a powdered herb to the beers. Half an hour later, several of the players experience violent stomach cramps, and must make a dash for the nearest privy.
7. **Talkative Petty Thief:** One of the players, Avel the Jolly (CN male human thief 1), is a petty thief. He is hammered and accidentally blurts out details of a major robbery happening tomorrow night in which a merchant's town house will be burgled. The next day, his body is discovered in a nearby alley—his mouth and throat stuffed with tarnished copper coins.
8. **Lady of the Night:** An attractive, scantily clad lady saunters to the table and asks if anyone would like some company. In reality, the woman (Katla [N female human thief 2]) is a thief merely disguised as a prostitute to facilitate her pick pocketing (at which she is rather skilled). After getting close to her mark, she picks his purse, names an outrageous price for her services and leaves when her offer is rebuffed.
9. **Extra-Marital Affair:** One of the players is getting very friendly with another man's wife. The two sit close together, cuddle and generally seem smitten with one another. All seems to be going well until the woman's husband arrives and see the two canoodling. He storms over to the table and a loud (and potentially) violent argument breaks out. Unless the characters intervene, the men come to blows, which upsets the table and could lead to a full-scale brawl!
10. **Deluded "Adventurer":** One of the players has epic delusions of grandeur because he was slightly involved in an adventure many years ago. The man (Lothair of Dol [N male fighter 1]) loves to tell people about it and when he discovers the characters are adventurers he launches into a long and convoluted story about his own heroics. Sadly, many of the other players have heard the story repeatedly and they beg him to shut up. Undeterred he continues to tell the story as long as the characters feign interest.
11. **Cheeky Monkey:** One of the players rolls the dice a little too violently and they bounce off the table onto the floor and under a chair. Sadly, a monkey (which is also the wizard Anhuri of Nekham's familiar) lurks under the chair. It grabs the dice and makes off with them, running away under chairs, over tables and eventually up into the rafters where it sits nibbling on its prize. Anhuri (NE male half-elf wizard 6) is protective of his familiar and does not allow any harm to come to it. The characters must come up with a nonviolent way of coaxing the monkey down, abandon the game or make a powerful enemy (and potentially get involved in a full-scale battle over a pair of dice).
12. **The Watch Arrive:** A patrol of town watch burst into the tavern. They are searching for a petty criminal who may (or may not) be in the establishment. Their searching and questioning are a little rough—the thief in question just mugged a powerful family's son and there is a reward for their capture; characters resisting or ignoring the watch's attention are detained for further questioning.

PLAYERS

Along with the characters, other players are likely to join in a game of Dragon and the Thief.

Design the game's other players or use one or more of the NPCs listed below:

1. **Barita Kildann** (LN female dwarf fighter 2): Desperate to raise funds to pay for her passage home, Barita has resorted to gambling—something she abhors. All the way through the game she makes sarcastic remarks about the dice, other players and the foolishness of humans. If the characters discuss an upcoming adventure or journey in the general direction of her homeland she offers to accompany them. She is trustworthy and brave, but somewhat racist.
2. **Solalith Evdearn** (CE male elf fighter 1/wizard 1) capitalises on the misconception that all elves are good. He is a relentless—and merciless—gambler who delights in creating discourse and rancour. He argues the rules, nudges the board to displace coins and indulges in other nefarious behaviour.
3. **Miro Giantbasher** (CG male halfling fighter 4) keeps falling asleep in the middle of the game. Cheerful, half-drunk and flush with cash Miro has been carousing and gambling for almost three days without a break. He is exhausted. Empty mugs litter the table and floor around his chair. He is a ripe target for a pick pocket or mugging.
4. **Oggor Skull-Splitter** (CN male half-orc fighter 3) doesn't really understand the rules of Dragon and the Thief and is not terribly bright. He constantly asks for rules clarifications, gets distracted and ogles nearby attractive women. Shockingly, he has lost quite a lot of cash and is getting increasingly irate.
5. **Taneli Keto** (N male human) obsesses over one of the other players (male or female). Taneli is playing the game simply to be near the object of his lust. Although he thinks he has masked his feelings, the object of his desires is very aware of his interest, but does not reciprocate his feelings.
6. **Kaari Ojanen** (CN female human) loves the thrill of gambling and thinks the other players enjoy her company. Attractive and vivacious, she wears a low-cut top and enjoys the reaction it provokes among the other players. She likes free drinks and is charm personified if she thinks she can get something out of her fellow players.
7. **Aevar the Flat-Nosed** (NG male human fighter 2) arrived in town two weeks ago. He is a caravan guard and has been busily spending his wages since he arrived. Aevar's down to his last 10 gp and is looking for a new job. He asks everyone playing (and anyone watching) if they know of any such openings. He is friendly and a good drinking companion.
8. **Khai Desouk** (N male human wizard 1) wears a cowed cloak at all times due to horrific burns covering his face. He is searching for Anhuri of Nekham (see "Events" #11 for more information) and has been for almost a year. Several years ago, one of Anhuri's experiments went badly wrong and Khai was horribly burnt as a result. He now seeks revenge and has heard Anhuri sometimes drinks here. A pleasant man, he is

nevertheless bitter and resentful and—where Anhuri is concerned—has an impressive mean streak.

9. **Ivo Njars** (N male human) only plays Dragon and the Thief to identify talentless idiots with a lot of money to lose. Ivo is an expert gambler and a skilled cardsharp. If he spots a likely candidate, he invites them to a private "gambling saloon" where Ivo promises they'll be "properly looked after". He drinks little and is only friendly to those he thinks he can fleece. He keeps away from other skilled gamblers and reveals little of his personal life.
10. **Roza Vagoth** (NG female human) worries she won't be able to feed her children and that she'll soon lose her home. Several months ago, her husband, Sigdag, was slain while serving in the watch. He left Roza with six children to feed and almost no savings. She sits quietly throughout the game, not making eye contact with her fellow players. In truth, she is at her wit's end and anyone expressing genuine interest in her plight easily wrings the details of her troubles from her. Roza is a skilled seamstress and has been trying to start up a respectable business—thus far with little success.
11. **Filimer son of Huml** (LN male human fighter 6) works as a mercenary, and is skilled at his job. His one vice is gambling. Now between jobs—but with gold to fritter away—he is considering giving up a mercenary's life and becoming an adventurer. While the risks are much greater, so are the rewards and Filimer dreams of returning to his home village and building a grand house. If the characters discuss an upcoming adventure while playing, he seeks them out later and offers to join their group—for a decent share of the profits, of course!
12. **Pekko Mustonen** (N male half-elf) gambles only with copper and silver, but has a good eye for people. Pekko is scheduled to sing later at the tavern and is simply killing time until his performance. He is well groomed but obviously not particularly wealthy. If the characters are obviously adventurers he makes certain to flatter them and asks to hear about their exploits. Later during his performance, he flatters the characters and tells the crowd of their adventures—portraying them as his personal friends. Afterwards, he approaches the characters and waxes lyrical about his "temporary financial difficulties" in the hope of securing a generous payment for his services.



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