

Royal Blood

The Divine Right of Kings

The powers of royalty are well established in fantasy fiction and in real-world mythology. Whether a King of England or France is curing a peasant of scrofula, Aragorn is commanding the dead to rise and serve him, Daenerys is standing unharmed amidst the flames, or Arthur is proving his ancestral bloodline by pulling the sword from the stone, royal blood coursing through your veins comes with both power and responsibility.

The Divine Right of Kings is a medieval concept; it states that a monarch is such by divine appointment and is often encapsulated in a ruler's title with phrases such as "... by the Grace of God" (or whatever deities apply in your campaign world).

Monarchies may be ancient in origin, but they are very suited to far future and science fiction settings, too. Entire planets, systems, or star empires can be ruled by dukes, kings, or emperors.

This article introduces the Royal Birth origin career, and the Monarch career.

The Royal Birth origin is suitable for player characters. It does not - by itself - grant them rulership; that requires the Monarch career. However, a PC (or NPC) can still be a rightful heir or displaced monarch by virtue of royal blood.

The Monarch career can be used for NPCs; some game settings may allow the career for player characters, but this should be considered carefully. Granting that sort of



power to a PC can be game breaking, unless for some reason you are able to separate the monarch from his or her domain. Certainly having one character with power over the others can cause difficulties in the game unless the players are all on board with the idea.

ROYAL BIRTH (2D6+6 YEARS)

Prerequisites: none.

Attributes: INT +1, CHA +1, REP +1, LUC +1

Skill choices: *law, rulership, heraldry, history, [social], swords*

You were born with royal blood coursing through your veins. Choose one of the following exploits:

Royal Touch. Once per month you may cure a creature of one disease by touching it.

Blood of Dragons. You are immune to either fire or cold.

The Monarch career, below, has a prerequisite of "royal blood". This means that the character must have a true royal lineage. However, some settings may allow for monarchs appointed by election or conquest; the GM must approve access to this career.

A monarch can be the ruling monarch, or a member of the monarch's ruling family, such as a high ranking prince or princess.

MONARCH (1D6 YEARS)

Prerequisites: Legitimacy (see below)

Attributes: INT +1, CHA +1, REP +1, LUC +1

Skill choices: *law, rulership, heraldry, history, [social], swords*

You are true royalty, by divine right, and not subject to any estate of man.

Princely Training. A prince or princess is brought up well. You gain the following skills at rank 1 (1d6); this does not increase a skill you already have beyond 1 rank: *riding, linguistics, law, heraldry, rulership, history*. You gain +1 REP.

Divine Right. You have a natural power of command. You can make a REP mental attack against a target within 5' per point of CHA; if you succeed, that target will obey one short, brief command. Once you have used (or attempted to use) this power against a target, it cannot be used again against that target. The target will not perform actions harmful to itself or its allies.

Fealty. Another being may willingly, without coercion or deception, swear fealty to you.

Fealty can be revoked by either party at any time, after which it can never be restored. Whenever you take damage, those who have sworn fealty to you also take 1d6 points of spiritual damage.

Royal Presence (requires Fealty). Royalty has a value all of its own. Those within 30' who have sworn fealty to you gain +1d6 to all attribute checks.

Defender of the Faith. You are able to grant spells to those have declared fealty to you, much like a deity can. Choose five secrets that you know; these form your portfolio in the same way that a deity has a portfolio.

Entourage (requires Divine Right). You gain a **knight** who accompanies you and acts as your squire. You may take this exploit multiple times, gaining another knight each time. Your knights will be loyal unto death.

Lord Protector (requires Fealty). You are the symbolic protector of the land, and of your subjects. You may take damage meant for somebody else who has sworn fealty to you (but not the spiritual damage they take when you take damage).

Arise, Sir Knight! (requires Fealty). You may knight somebody who has sworn fealty to you. That person immediately gains a single grade in the Knight career. Any given person can only benefit from this benefit once. The envoy is lost if fealty is lost.

Royal Symbol. You gain a special weapon which is a symbol of your sovereignty. The GM should introduce the weapon in a noteworthy way (perhaps you pull it from a stone or are given it by a supernatural entity). The weapon automatically increases in quality along with your REP attribute:

1-2	High Quality
3-5	Exceptional
6-9	Mastercraft
10-14	Artisanal
15+	Legendary

Fisher King (requires Lord Protector). You are linked to the land. Your fate and the land's fate are inextricably intertwined - when you are suffering an illness or below half HEALTH, bad weather ensues across your realm.

I am the Land (requires Fisher King). You have direct control over the weather within one mile of you.

LEGITIMACY

The pre-requisite for the Monarchy career is "Legitimacy". What this simply means is that, according to the campaign setting in which you are playing, you must meet specific requirements as described in the laws and traditions of that setting. It may be a requirement of birth, a deed, a birthmark, a prophecy, an election, or something else. You can roll on the table below for inspiration if required.

The GM will determine the qualifications for the career. The career can only be taken with the GM's specific approval.

1	Birthline*
2	Birthline*
3	Birthline*
4	Great Deed
5	Prophecy
6	Elected

If a birthline is indicated, proof of legitimacy (assuming there is any doubt) can be obtained via:

1	Birthmark
2	Royal Touch
3	Blood of Dragons
4	Unusual Feature (eye colour, etc.)
5	Unharmd by a monster such as a dragon
6	Ability to perform an action (sword from a stone, etc.)

HEREDITARY & ELECTIVE MONARCHIES

The most common type of monarchy is a hereditary monarchy - it is passed down

through a royal family. An order of succession strictly defines who the crown passes to upon the death or abdication of the monarch.

An elective monarchy, on the other hand, is one in which the monarch is democratically chosen. The best known example was the Holy Roman Empire, but there are many other instances. Sometimes an elective monarchy may be forced after a monarch is deposed or the throne becomes vacant with no legitimate heir; such monarchies usually then turn into hereditary monarchies. The Pope is an example of a current elected monarch.

Of course, the crown can be claimed in other ways. Revolution and conquest are ways to forcibly take a monarchy.

The rule of male primogeniture was common in the real world; it still applied in the United Kingdom up until 2013, which removed any gender dependency for succession to the Crown.

FEALTY

Several exploits in the Monarch career hinge off the Fealty exploit. Fealty is a solemn oath of loyalty and allegiance made from a vassal to their liege lord. Typically, the liege lord grants something in exchange, such as a promise to provide for or protect the vassal. Fealty is a cornerstone of feudalism.

In the Monarch career, several duties and benefits arise from fealty. In the first instance, the vassal takes damage whenever the liege lord does. This solidifies fealty as a solemn and binding oath, and drives the vassal to protect the liege lord.

Later, the vassal starts to accrue benefits from his oath. He gains attribute check bonuses in the presence of his liege lord, and his liege lord is able to honour his oath to protect his vassal by taking damage for him. Additionally, the liege lord is able to bestow knighthood - along with its associated benefits - on the vassal.

Fealty is a complex and powerful relationship between characters. Most often, it will manifest as an NPC monarch, with the PCs as her vassals; some players may enjoy the intrigue and social aspects of courtly play, however, and in these cases the GM may allow PCs to take on such roles.

ROYAL TITLES

Royal titles vary between cultures. Following is a list of some common ones in English.

Those listed below are common rulers of kingdoms.

- Emperor/Empress
- High King/High Queen
- King/Queen
- Prince/Princess
- Archduke/Duke/Grand Duke
- Sultan (Turkish)
- Emir (Arabic)
- Tsar/Czar (Russian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Croatian)
- Maharajah/Rajah (Indian, Nepalese)
- Khan/Khaghan (Mongol)
- Caliph (Islamic)
- Pope (Catholic)

LOWER BRITISH TITLES

The following titles fall below the monarch in descending order:

- Duke/Duchess
- Marquess/Marquise
- Earl/Count/Countess
- Viscount/Viscountess
- Baron/Baroness
- Knight/Dame
- Esquire
- Gentleman

Other languages and cultures, of course, have their own systems of ranks and titles. These ranks can be used in a sci-fi setting just as easily as a fantasy setting.

REPUTATION & RANK

For non-monarchs, you can optionally tie REPUTATION to rank, with social ranks being gained as REP increases. The following table should be used (although you are encouraged to devise tables for your own setting). Note that actual monarchy is not achieved in this manner (that requires royal birth and a vacant throne) so the ranks stop just below the monarch. A monarch is socially above this chart.

REP	RANK
0	Peasant
1-2	Yeoman
3-5	Gentleman

REP	RANK
6-8	Esquire
9-10	Knight
11-12	Baron
13-15	Viscount
16-20	Earl/Count
21-25	Marquess
26+	Duke

As the PC accomplishes great deeds, earns XP, and thus increases her REP score, she earns greater ranks. The GM should tie this into the setting - being awarded a new rank in recognition of great heroism, service, or accomplishment, is an event.

If this system is used, then a character who takes the Knight career without sufficient REP gains the benefits of the career, but not the technical title until his REP increases to an appropriate value. Instead, the character is known as a *Knight Candidate*.

YOUR TITLE

A monarch's title (known as her "style") can be long and include various honors and titles. For example, both real life and fantasy fiction contain titles like the following:

- Elizabeth II, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.
- His Royal Highness Prince Charles Philip Arthur George, Prince of Wales, KG, KT, GCB, OM, AK, QSO, PC, ADC, Earl of Chester, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles and Prince and Great Steward of Scotland.
- His Holiness Francis, Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the Vatican City State, Servant of the servants of God.
- Joffrey of Houses Baratheon and Lannister, First of His Name, King of the Andals and

the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm.

- Daenerys Stormborn of the House Targaryen, First of Her Name, the Unburt, Queen of the Andals and the First Men, Khaleesi of the Great Grass Sea, Breaker of Chains, and Mother of Dragons.

Characters taking the Monarch career build up their full style during the game. Each time they take a new grade in the career, the character randomly generates an additional element to the full title.

The titles below tend to reflect Western (European) Fantasy; you are encouraged to design charts specific to your own game setting.

Use the tables below to generate each title element. The first title, received upon first taking the Monarch title, is different to the rest.

1. **First Title.** Roll on the Primary Title table to create a title such as *His Imperial Excellency, Prince of Charbor*.
2. **Second Title.** Roll on the Lower Title table and append a location, such as *Duke of Balinost*.
3. **Sobriquets.** Roll on the further titles page. Where it says [lower title] roll on the Lower Titles table. Where it says [higher title] roll on the 4th column of the Primary Title table. You will get a result such as *Earl of the Three Seas*, or *Hammer of Winter*.
4. **Epithet.** Sometimes the Sobriquet table tells you to instead roll an epithet, such as *The Conqueror*, which is inserted just after the character's name. This epithet is informal, and not chosen by the monarch; it can, therefore, be unflattering.

SAMPLE RESULTS

The following are example results rolled on these tables.

- Her Revered Majesty, Agathe the Lawgiver, Queen of Andalor, Custodian of Heaven, Tribune of the West.
- His Serene Excellency, Mandallan the Pious, Hammer of the Gods, Commander of the Nine Kingdoms, Heir of the First Men.



Primary Title (2d6)						
2	His/ Her...	Apostolic	Holiness	[name]	Tsar	...of [location]
3		Revered	Lord/Lady		King/Queen	
4		Magnificent	Excellency		Prince/Princess	
5		Illustrious	Highness		Archduke/Archduchess	
6		Imperial	Grace		Duke/Ducchess	
7		Royal	Majesty		Grand Duke/Grand Duchess	
8		Most Gracious	Highness		King/Queen	
9		Serene	Majesty		Emperor	
10		Most High	Eminence		Prince/Princess	
11		Most Blessed	Worshipfulness		Sultan	
12		Most Noble	Notability		Khan	

Lower Titles (d6)	
1	Duke/Duchess
2	Marquess/Marquis
3	Earl/Countess
4	Viscount/Viscountess
5	Baron/Baroness
6	Roll on Alternative Lower Titles

Alternate Lower Titles (d6)	
1	Caliph
2	Master
3	Exarch
4	Patriarch/Matriarch
5	Raj
6	Satrap

Epithet (d66)	
11	the Accursed
12	the Apostate
13	Augustus
14	the Avenger
15	the Bad
16	the Bold
21	the Brave
22	the Confessor
23	the Conqueror
24	the Elder
25	the Younger
26	the Glorious
31	the Pious
32	the Great
33	the Impaler
34	the Invincible
35	Ironside
36	the Just
41	the Lawgiver
42	the Lionheart
43	the Magnificent
44	the Martyr
45	the Mighty
46	the Merry
51	Moneybags
52	the Noble
53	the Oathbreaker
54	the Peacemaker
55	the Proud
56	the Rash
61	the Red
62	the Black

63	the Reformer
64	the Restorer
65	the Righteous
66	Roundhead



Sobriquets (d66)			
11	Epithet		
12	[lower title]	...of...	the Realm
13	[higher title]		the Faith
14	Defender		the Isles
15	Protector		Dragons
16	Custodian		the [North/South/East/West]
21	Father/Mother		the First Men
22	Hammer		the [2d6]th Estate
23	Steward		[Season]
24	Heir		the [1d6+1] Seas
25	Chieftain		the High Tower
26	Guardian		the Land
31	Pillar		the Peace
32	Patriarch/Matriarch		the Gods
33	Epithet		
34	Heart	..of...	[location]
35	Dominator		Tomorrow
36	Marshall		the Void
41	Captain		Heaven
42	Lord		[deity]
43	Champion		the Earls
44	He/She		the [2d6] Kingdoms
45	Lion		the Mountains
46	Scourge		the Deep
51	First Knight		the [2d6]
52	Son/Daughter		the Lake
53	Tamer		the Sun
54	Reaper		the Moon
55	Keeper		the Dance
56	Voice		the Green
61	Commander		the Vandals
62	Tribune		the Watch
63	Warden		the Law
64	[higher title]		the Crypt
65	[lower title]		Ruin
66	Epithet		