

QUESTLANDIA

A roleplaying game
by **Hannah Shaffer**

QUESTLANDIA

A game of ill-fated kingdoms



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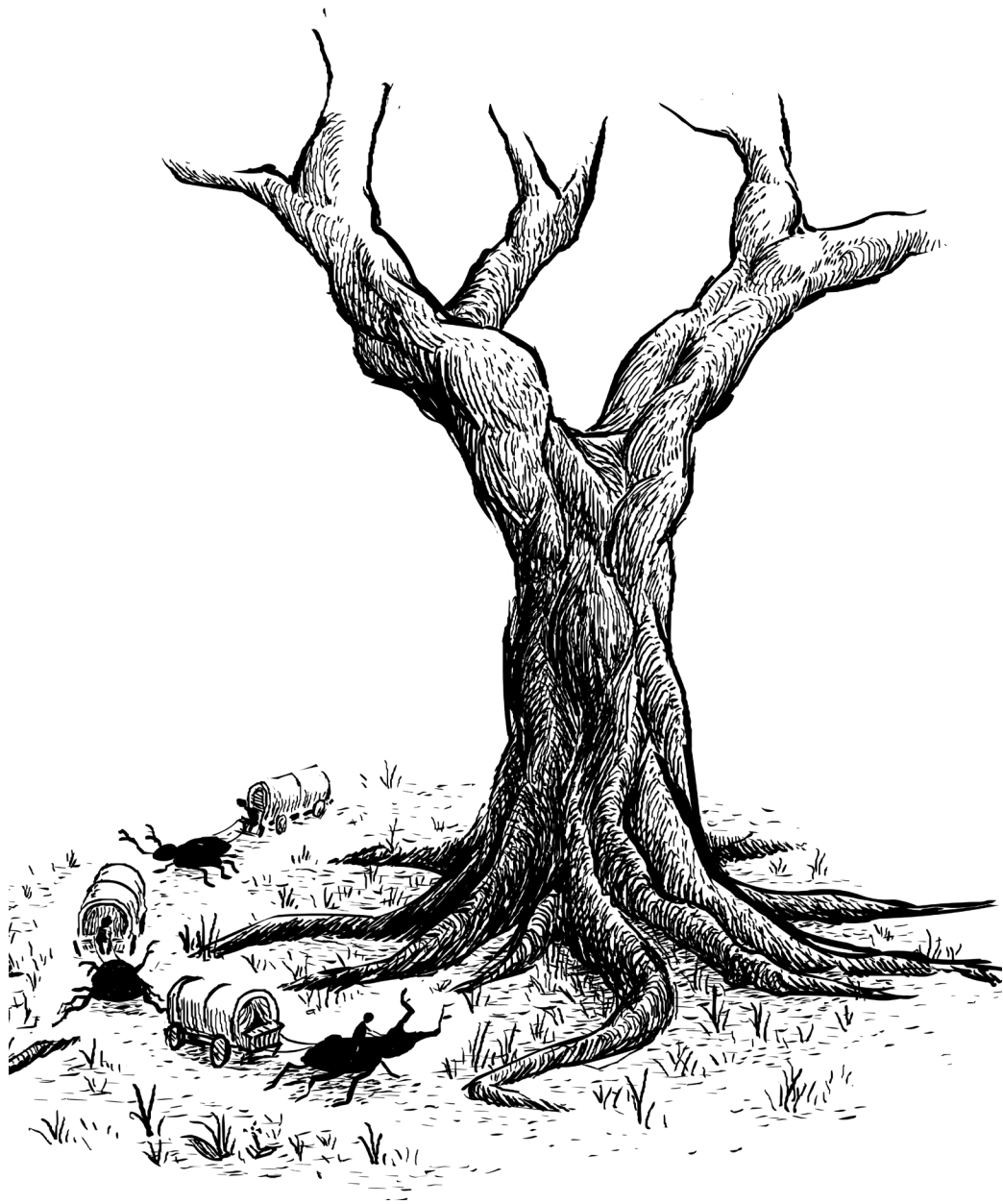
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FUNDAMENTALS

*About Questlandia
What You'll Need
The Goal of Questlandia*



ABOUT QUESTLANDIA

In the Questlandia roleplaying game, you'll gather with friends to build a unique kingdom and world. Players take on the role of characters trying to achieve their goals amidst the chaos of a collapsing society.

Questlandia is a cooperative game about personal shortcomings, the cost of courage, and the challenge of enacting meaningful change.

❖ THE CHARACTERS

Characters in Questlandia come from many different backgrounds. You may play as nobility or peasantry. You may be a shopkeeper, mercenary, wizard, librarian, artisan, or thief. No character is explicitly good or evil.

❖ THE SETTING

The setting in Questlandia is designed collaboratively by you and your friends. Though all games will take place in some type of kingdom, you shouldn't feel bound by genre stereotypes. The best Questlandia games feature nontraditional and inventive fantasy.

❖ ROLEPLAYING IN QUESTLANDIA

On your turn, you'll take on the role of a single character. Throughout the game, you'll be responsible for your character's thoughts, speech, and actions. Most likely, this will look like a combination of some improv acting (*"Give me back my sword!"*) and exposition (*I can't just let my sword go, so I jump on my horse and ride after him*).

During other players' turns, you will be acting out the characters and obstacles that populate the world. Questlandia doesn't have a Game Master—all players share the responsibility of creating a great story.

If acting out a scene feels intimidating, don't worry! You will have the other players to help you, and your character's hopes and goals to guide you.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

❖ PLAYERS

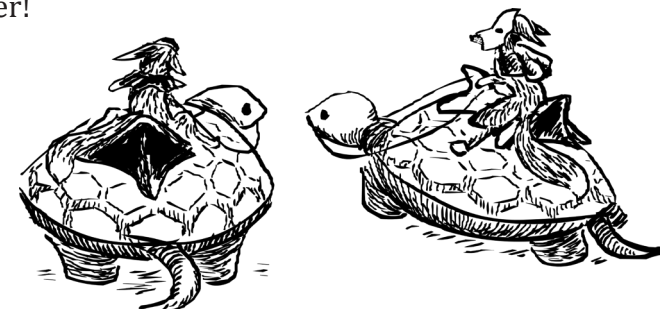
Questlandia can support three to five players. If you're playing with three people, the game will go faster. If you're playing with five people, you should plan for a longer game.

❖ TIME

A full game of Questlandia takes about four hours. The game can be played in one day, or broken up into a number of shorter sessions. Whatever you decide, keep snacks and beverages on hand, and take stretch breaks as needed. If you'd like a shorter game, check out the two-round variant on page 92. If this is your first game, plan for extra time as you learn the rules. An outline of the rules can be found on page 95.

❖ GUIDANCE

There is no Game Master in this game, but it's important to have at least one experienced player around who knows the rules and can help maintain the flow of the game. If you're reading this book, that person might be you. Of course, the more players who have read the rules, the better!



❖ MATERIALS

12 six-sided dice (6 white, 6 red)

A deck of playing cards

A pen or pencil for each player

A pile of index cards

Tokens in two colors

Paper for notes

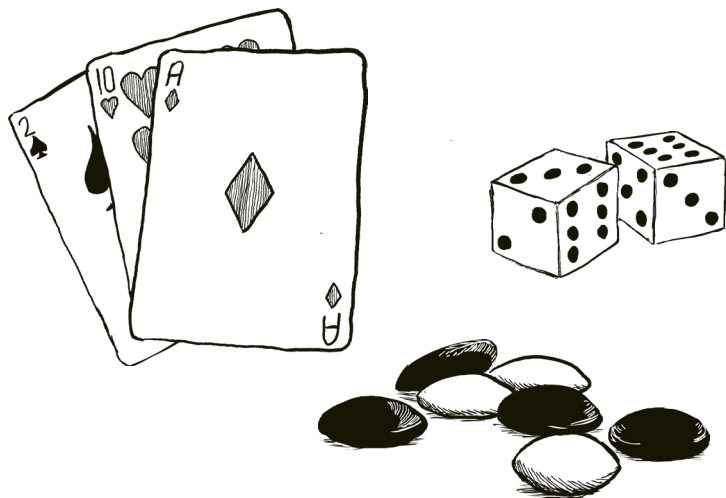
Printed character sheets (p. 99)

(Optional) Printed reference tables (p. 96)

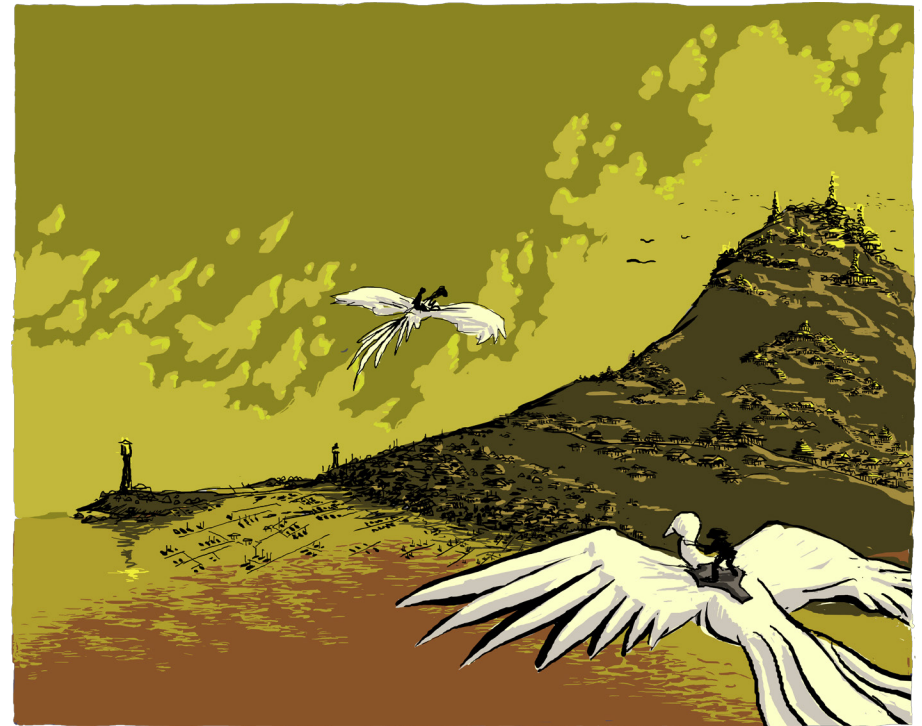
DICE - Questlandia uses common six-sided dice. You'll need at least twelve dice total. Half should be white, and half red. You can use different colors if you like, but the colors should be distinct.

PLAYING CARDS - Questlandia uses a standard deck of playing cards (jokers removed). Give the deck a good shuffle before the game begins.

TOKENS - You'll also need a pile of tokens in two different colors. Choose contrasting colors like red/black or black/white. Use what you have on hand: poker chips, checker pieces, or Go stones.



THE GOAL OF QUESTLANDIA



In Questlandia, your character will have a personal goal that you'll be working to achieve. Along the way, you may get swept up in trying to save your kingdom or in helping your friends to achieve their own goals.

Above all else, the goal of Questlandia is to create a memorable kingdom and an exciting story.



KINGDOM & CHARACTERS

Kingdom Creation
Character Creation
Introductions & Relationships
Establishing Goals
Establishing Obstacles
Making the Map
Ownership in Questlandia



The FORSAKEN TREE KINGDOM of ISH'TYA



READING THIS BOOK

The Questlandia rulebook has been divided into two sections. On the right side of the book are the complete rules. On the left side of the book is an abridged transcript of a Questlandia game.

The rules correspond to the transcript where possible, but they won't always be a perfect match.

The transcript to follow is from a three-person game with players Hannah, Evan, and Joshua.

HANNAH: The first thing we'll learn about our kingdom is its ambition. Joshua, take a die and give it a roll.

JOSHUA: I rolled a 1!

HANNAH: A kingdom bent on conquest and domination.

JOSHUA: Jerks!

The players write down "conquest" on their character sheets.

HANNAH: The next thing we'll do is draw our kingdom troubles. Evan, want to draw 6 cards?

KINGDOM CREATION

❖ KINGDOM AMBITION

You'll begin the game by establishing a sense of place. Roll a die. This number represents your kingdom's ambition as shown in the chart below. Your kingdom's ambition will help set the tone of the game and gives you something to build upon when describing the kingdom troubles and its features and norms. Record your kingdom ambition at the top of your character sheet.

•	Conquest, Domination
◻	Religious, Philosophical
◻◻	Culture, Prestige
◻◻◻	Technological, Scientific
◻◻◻◻	Industry, Trade
◻◻◻◻◻	Regulation, Control

❖ KINGDOM TROUBLES

Shuffle the deck and draw six cards. Lay these cards out in a row, face up on the table. Look at the suits of your cards. How many cards did you draw in each suit (meaning how many clubs, hearts, diamonds, and spades)? The number of cards in a given suit represents the severity of a certain trouble, as shown in the chart below. Write down each trouble's level on your character sheet.

Clubs	<i>Civil Unrest, Revolution</i>
Hearts	<i>Sickness, Health</i>
Diamonds	<i>Wealth, Resources</i>
Spades	<i>War, External Conflict</i>

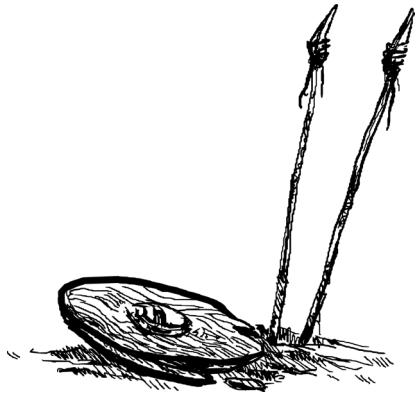
EVAN: We have two diamonds, two spades, one club, and one heart. So wealth and war are our biggest concerns.

The players record the kingdom troubles on their character sheets.

JOSHUA: We have issues with wealth, we're approaching a war, and we're bent on conquest and domination? Sounds believable.

HANNAH: Right now we have just one card for civil unrest and one for health troubles, so those are only recognizable by an expert. Our wealth and war problems aren't severe, but they're definitely in the public consciousness.

JOSHUA: I think I heard about this on NPR this morning.



When you have one card in a suit, the problem is just beginning. Probably only a few people in your kingdom are aware of it—the king and his closest court, an environmental scientist, or a master fortuneteller.

Two cards in a suit is a more widespread problem—anyone on the street could tell you about it, but most people have been spared its impact.

By the time you've drawn three or four cards in a suit, the trouble is at your front door—war, drought, rebellion, economic collapse.



Six or more of a kind is bad. Real bad. Numbers that high indicate a kingdom falling to ruin and overcome by despair. This kingdom may never recover.

HANNAH: Okay, so kingdom features and norms...things like customs, beliefs, what our people look like, the kingdom's topography.

JOSHUA: Hmm. Mountains, giant trees, ice caverns? Giant caverns? I'm brainstorming.

HANNAH: Oh! What if this is an "old growth" society. The mountains are old and big, the trees are old and big.

JOSHUA: Old mountains would be small, I think.

HANNAH: That's true! Okay. So we have old mountains that are smaller, old trees that are massive.

The players write down "old trees and mountains" under the features and norms section.

EVAN: What if we're some of the smaller creatures in our world? A lot of the vegetation and the wildlife are much bigger than us.

JOSHUA: I really like it.

HANNAH: Me too!

The players write down "we are small relative to our world."

JOSHUA: It could be that we're small enough that a single one of these enormous trees makes up our entire kingdom. The other trees around us are other kingdoms with their own unique cultures.

HANNAH: Cool!

The players write down "we live in an enormous tree."

HANNAH: What if some of our society is winged and some people are not?

❖ KINGDOM FEATURES AND NORMS

You now know a little something about your kingdom. Maybe it's a kingdom bent on conquest, going through economic crisis and on the brink of civil war. You may already have thoughts about where you'd like this storyline to go.

But hold tight! Before the storyline comes together, you'll collectively establish the features and norms of this kingdom.

Kingdom features are things like geography, topography, climate, and architecture. Norms are the laws and customs that define your society. Together they form the foundation of your unique setting. Go around the table and suggest features and norms, or expand on those suggested by other players. Example:

Emily suggests that the kingdom spans the length of a tall, craggy mountain. Sam suggests that many people in this kingdom are pair-bonded with a helper animal (like animals as we know them, but bigger).

Building off of Emily's idea, Jason suggests that the kingdom topography has created a class divide—the ruling classes live at the top, which is only accessible by air travel.

Brian rounds off the idea by suggesting that the wealthiest members of the population are pair-bonded with giant flying birds, and the poorest members of the population (who live at the base of the mountain overlooking a vast swamp) are bonded with giant turtles, beavers, and raccoons.

Players can contribute in any order, but everyone must contribute one idea before any player gives a second. Keep going until you fill all nine slots on your character sheet. You're welcome to write more features and norms on a piece of paper, but don't spend too long on this discussion. You'll learn more about the kingdom over the course of the game.

JOSHUA: Or we can have animals that fly?

HANNAH: That's neat, but I really like the idea of two distinct groups of people. One with wings and one without. Does that work for people?

JOSHUA: Sure. How about the winged people are considered a resource? They're working class because they can do something everybody else needs. Their power isn't a freedom, it's an obligation.

HANNAH: Cool.

The players write down "winged people are laborers."

HANNAH: How about the winged people are able to fly up to the canopy, where there's this intermingling of cultures. It's like the Star Wars cantina. It has a bad reputation for people who have never been there.

JOSHUA: Caravans! A canopy of sin!

The players go around the table and come up with a few more features and norms. The tree kingdom has used up its resources, and is preparing to conquer a neighboring tree.

HANNAH: Okay, we need a kingdom name. Let's come up with some syllables.

The players go around the table and come up with: In — Brun — Turg — Ish — Klim — Tya — Bal — Ru — Ing — Tash

*They settle on the name **Ish'tya**.*

EVAN: Before we make characters, we have to establish ownership over a few things.

JOSHUA: I'm interested in our neighbors. I'll take ownership of the neighboring tree. Is that okay?

Here are a few examples of features and norms from other games:

- *This kingdom enforces limits on magic*
- *Children are raised communally in village nurseries*
- *All citizens wear masks in public*
- *Everyone is a psychic, but psychic abilities are heavily regulated*



❖ POWER OF VETO

All players must agree on the suggested features and norms. If someone doesn't want to play in a kingdom inhabited only by sentient floating amoebas, they don't have to. At any point in Questlandia, a player can change or undo another player's input if it makes them feel uncomfortable. Veto power is non-negotiable and need not be explained.

❖ KINGDOM LANGUAGE AND NAME

It's time to give the kingdom a creative name. Go around the table and write the syllables that will form the base of your language on a piece of paper. For example, one player might suggest "Sur." Another player suggests "Ru." Another player suggests "Ta." Start with 8-10 syllables, then combine some of those syllables to create your kingdom's name. New syllables can be added as the game goes on.

❖ OWNERSHIP PHASE

At this point, each player will receive ownership of one element of the kingdom. **Ownership** is an important concept in Questlandia that will be used throughout the game. In a nutshell, ownership means that when a question comes up about something in the story, a specific player will answer that question. Look over the section called **Ownership in Questlandia** on pages 41-45.

EVAN: Works for me! I'm really excited about the canopy. Can I take it?

JOSHUA: Sure!

HANNAH: I'll take the wealth trouble—the diminishing resources.

EVAN: Okay. From now on, if anybody has a question about something in the kingdom, we'll give it an owner.

OWNERSHIP OF ELEMENTS

Ownership means that when somebody has a question about a specific story element, the owner of that element gets the first and final say.

The players write their names on their ownership cards and place the cards in the middle of the table where everyone can see them.

The players then take a few minutes to discuss features and norms, and to clarify questions about the kingdom.

They agree that the tree kingdom of Ish'tya is in dire straits. For hundreds of years, its inhabitants have relied on the resources the tree provides for water, food, shelter, and energy. Now, the society is consuming resources much faster than the tree can produce them.

As Ish'tya approaches a resource crisis, there's been talk of invading a neighboring tree, whose inhabitants enjoy a life of plenty.

After this discussion, the players move on to character creation.

After reading the ownership section, you'll establish ownership over a few elements. This means taking ownership over certain **features and norms** (like *the neverending festivals*) or **troubles** (like *the winter famine*). If you've discussed specific locations or people within your kingdom, those are fair game for ownership as well.

Anything you can take ownership over is called an **element**. At this point, **every player should take ownership of one element**. Again, refer to the rules on page 41 for details.

This initial assignment of ownership marks a shift in the way worldbuilding happens in Questlandia. Before this point, decisions were made by consensus. After this point, the owner of an element will get the first and final say. Make sure everyone understands the etiquette of letting owners answer questions, and establishing new owners as new questions come up.

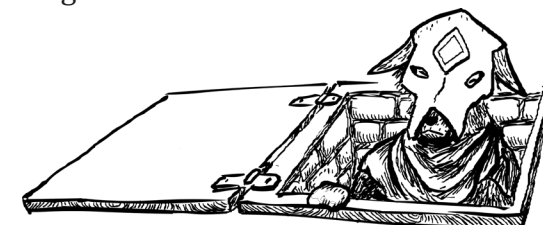
❖ KINGDOM STORY

After each player has taken ownership of one element, you can spend a few minutes creating a cohesive story that connects your kingdom's features and norms, troubles, and ambition.

What led you to where you are now? How has each trouble impacted your kingdom?

During this conversation, questions may come up about owned and unowned elements. Use the ownership rules on page 41.

Don't solve every mystery. Don't tell the entire history of your kingdom. Once you have a picture of life in your kingdom, it's time to meet the characters living within it.



HANNAH: Now we draw cards for each player in the game plus one. Each card should have one die on top. Joshua, can you roll four dice and place one on top of each card?

JOSHUA: Got it.

HANNAH: We'll write out each result on an index card to keep track. It looks like we've got...

EVAN: A magician driven by adventure. It's a red card, so they're starting with good luck.

EVAN: A holy person driven by honor or glory. A lucky person.

EVAN: A laborer driven by love or loyalty. Having bad luck.

EVAN: A hero driven by love or loyalty. Also unlucky.

JOSHUA: What kind of hero?

HANNAH: Whatever this society's equivalent of a hero is. The identities are like archetypes. Now we look at the cards to see if anything jumps out at us.

EVAN: I'm leaning towards this one. *[Takes laborer]*

HANNAH: A holy person might travel up to the canopy to convert nonbelievers. That seems fun. I'll take the holy person.

JOSHUA: I want to do magic! I'll take the magician.

HANNAH: All right! It's time to come up with a few things about our characters: traits, weakness, physical characteristic, and a name.

JOSHUA: I want to know more about what we look like before I decide. Are we completely hairless? Are we humanoid? Maybe we can talk that out a little.

HANNAH: Sure! I prefer somewhat humanoid.

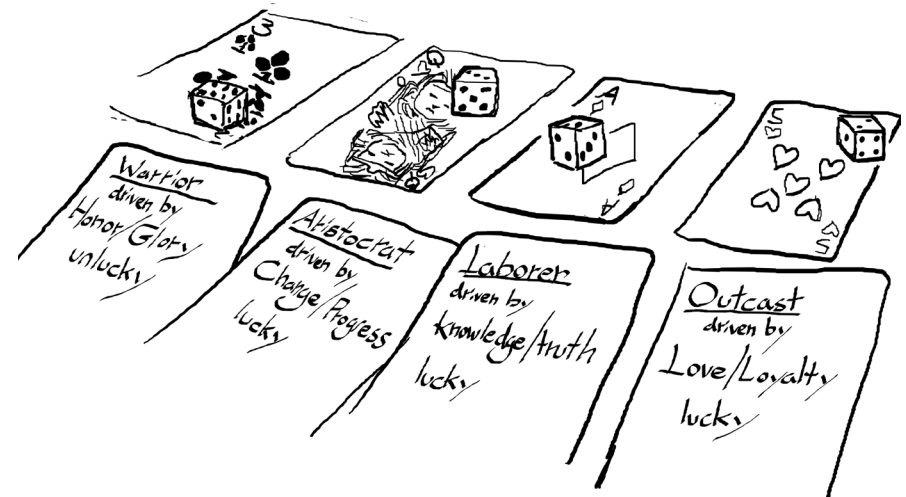
CHARACTER CREATION

Questlandia's story follows several key characters in the kingdom. Despite their different goals, they are connected to one another and will discover their kingdom's fate together.

Shuffle the deck and draw a card for every player in the game, plus one additional card. Lay the cards out, face up, in a row. For each card, roll a die and place that die on top of the card. At this point, no one owns these characters. Each player will be choosing a character shortly.

Take a look at the cards and dice in front of you. Using the tables below, match each card with an identity, drive, and starting luck. The number or face of the card represents the character's **identity**, the die represents the character's **drive**, and the color of the card's suit is the character's **starting luck**. These terms will be described on the following pages.

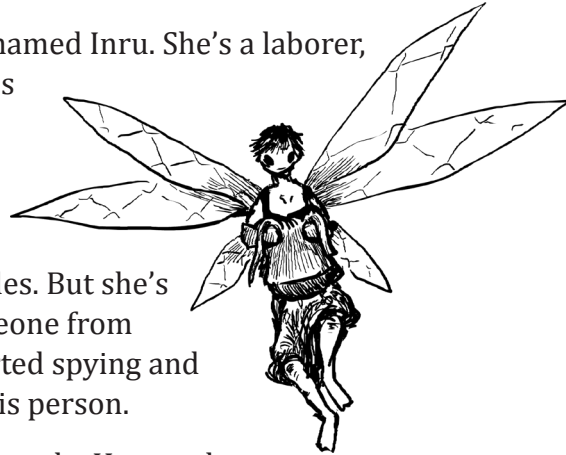
Have one player read aloud each character's identity, drive, and luck. As they are read, another player should write each character's information down on separate index cards. Lay out the index cards where everyone can see them.



EVAN: What if we're humanoid but with subtle differences? Maybe some people are sort of furry, some have extra digits. We know that some have wings. How about that?

The players agree, then spend a few minutes thinking about their characters and jotting notes on their character sheets. Then, they make introductions.

EVAN: My character is named Inru. She's a laborer, so she's got wings. She's driven by love. She's a servant to a wealthy merchant. She brings stuff up to the canopy and helps with the trades. But she's fallen in love with someone from another tree. She's started spying and delivering secrets to this person.

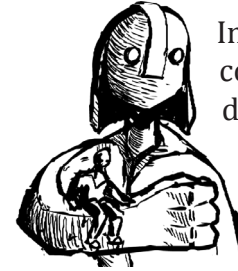


Inru is subversive and gentle. Her weakness is giving in. Her notable physical characteristic is that though she has a very muscular physique, she moves gracefully.

JOSHUA: Tyaru is a mendicant magician. He travels around solving people's problems. Sometimes those problems are magical, sometimes not. His work is some combination of real magic and troubleshooting. Someone might come to him and say, "My marriage is failing, I need a magician!" He's striking and seductive. His weakness is that he cheats his way out of problems, because he's so damn charming.

HANNAH: My character is Klimtya, but I like to be called Klim. I'm a holy person driven by honor. I'm old-fashioned and commanding. At some point in the distant past holy people and magicians were one and the same, but now holy people don't do any real magic. They're considered mostly irrelevant.

❖ IDENTITY



In Questlandia, your identity is defined within the context of your society. Your identity is part choice, part destiny. Use the examples below as a guide, but don't feel bound by them. Interpret each identity as makes sense within your unique kingdom.

A	Laborer	<i>Peasant, Slave, Swain</i>
2	Merchant	<i>Shopkeep, Trader, Peddler</i>
3	Warrior	<i>Knight, Soldier, Mercenary</i>
4	Messenger	<i>Courier, Go-between, Emissary</i>
5	Outcast	<i>Miscreant, Thief, Pariah</i>
6	Magician	<i>Enchanter, Diviner, Illusionist</i>
7	Virtuoso	<i>Master Creator, Maestro, Artisan</i>
8	Hero	<i>Adventurer, Champion, Superstar</i>
9	Holy Person	<i>Healer, Priest, Prophet, Monk</i>
10	Academic	<i>Scientist, Scholar, Philosopher</i>
J	Advisor	<i>Counselor, Mentor, Guide</i>
Q	Aristocrat	<i>Noble, Elite, Upper Crust</i>
K	Royalty	<i>King, Princess, Leader, Chief</i>

❖ STARTING LUCK

The color of the suit represents your character's starting luck. Red indicates a character who is beginning the game lucky: this character has gained recognition, come into money, or perhaps fallen in love. Black represents a character who is beginning the game down on their luck: their big scheme flopped, they're penniless, or perhaps they've just been dumped.

I have a few brothers who've followed the path and made my parents proud, but I'm a failure at preaching. I'm being sent away as a missionary to the canopy. I want to prove myself to my family and restore my honor. But they aren't taking me very seriously.

After the introductions, the players start to create relationships between their characters.

HANNAH: Joshua, what if our characters—Klim and Tyaru—are related? Maybe you're my brother?

JOSHUA: What if we're cousins? In the past I showed promise as a holy person but I left because it all seemed bogus. I wanted to work for myself, helping people solve problems with real magic.

HANNAH: So you've gone rogue?

JOSHUA: Yeah. I'm kind of a black sheep. But I'm too good looking to be dislikable.

HANNAH: So in this society, if you're not a holy person but you still "talk the talk," you're considered a magician?

JOSHUA: Yeah. Maybe there was some sort of philosophical shift that happened at some point. I guess we should talk about magic now and establish ownership?

EVAN: I'll take magic, if nobody minds. I like the idea that magic is closely tied to the health of the tree. There are these stories from "back in the day" when magic could do crazy stuff. Those stories are now considered fables. In fact, magic has just lost power as the health of the tree has declined.

JOSHUA: So there are these properties of the tree that we've been tapping. And now they're sort of...tapped out.

❖ DRIVE

Throughout the game, each character's actions will be governed by a core desire. What drives your character's thoughts and actions? What motivates your character to work toward their goal?

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Knowledge, Truth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Love, Loyalty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Change, Progress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tradition, Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adventure, Wanderlust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Honor, Glory |

❖ CHOOSING YOUR CHARACTER

Choose a character card that speaks to you. If two players reach for the same card, see if you can talk out an agreement. Otherwise, flip a coin.

Once everyone has a character, remove the dice from the cards and shuffle the cards back into the deck. Discard the leftover character card.

Now, take a few minutes to privately develop your character. Formulate a bit of your history. Figure out what your character cares about. By the end of this process, you should have:

- A name for your character
- One defining physical characteristic
- Two character traits
- One character weakness

Each of the above items will be discussed in detail below.

EVAN: Maybe we even hear things about magic from neighboring trees, but we disregard what they're saying.

JOSHUA: Okay, that helps me with my character. I'm a magician with some sort of genuine connection to the tree's magic. I like to help people and I like being likeable. I'm quite vain.

HANNAH: You're my vain cousin.

JOSHUA: Right.

HANNAH: And I've heard some cautionary tales about you. "Be careful, you don't want to end up like Tyaru." I'm pretty rooted in tradition, and I haven't had enough worldly experience to realize I'm misguided.

JOSHUA: Evan, let's figure out our relationship. You're a laborer and...a spy?

EVAN: Well, my society has never regarded me highly. It didn't take much for me to start sharing secrets with someone.

JOSHUA: Is it traitorous to have a relationship with someone in another tree?

EVAN: I would say yes. It's normal in the canopy though. Lots of trade and intermingling.

HANNAH: What happens in the canopy stays in the canopy!

JOSHUA: Maybe we're drinking buddies?

EVAN: Hmm. Maybe we did something together to protect people from canopy predators?

JOSHUA: Yeah! We shared a past ordeal. We were in the same caravan and we were attacked.

EVAN: Great. We survived an ordeal together. We're friends.

❖ NAME AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC

You can name your character now, or come up with a name after selecting your character's traits and weakness. Combine kingdom syllables to come up with a name that suits your character. If the list feels lacking, you're welcome to add an extra syllable—just make sure to write it down!

What's the first thing people notice about your character when they enter a room? This could be your height, your silver hair, a moon-shaped tattoo on your forehead, or the cloud of fireflies that surrounds you. There's no list to pick from here—invent something that feels right for your character.



❖ CHARACTER TRAITS

In this story, no character is simply good or evil. Every character is fighting for what they care about. The traits listed below are intended to be morally neutral. A proclaimed pacifist might be a real jerk. A notorious criminal might have a soft spot for romantic poetry.

Select two character traits from the list below.

Striking	Highbrow	Seductive
Brawny	Pacifist	Commanding
Gentle	Subversive	Wealthy
Grouchy	Daredevil	Eccentric
Disabled	Old-fashioned	Notorious

HANNAH: So, Evan, you're a laborer and you go up into the canopy often. When my family sends me away to do canopy missionary work, I'll need a guide. Does that work for you?

EVAN: Yeah. I work with this merchant, but he's just sold my time to your family. I'm the person who literally carries you up to the canopy. I think the winged people are much bigger and stronger than most people in the society.

JOSHUA: Muscular people with wings? I guess they have a high strength-to-weight ratio...

EVAN: So I ferry you around and try to keep you safe.

HANNAH: Maybe I preach at you a bit.

EVAN: Or maybe a laborer is below preaching. There are more important people who you're trying to convert.

JOSHUA: Is this a matter of converting people? I want to understand the religion.

Hannah takes ownership of "religion."

HANNAH: Perhaps it's a Peter Pan situation. Like, "Clap your hands if you believe!" My religion is based around tree magic, and the tree is stagnant. Whether it's true or not, I think a lack of believers is the cause. The tree isn't growing because there's a lack of faith. I'm not sure how that impacts our relationship.

EVAN: Well, if you believe that faith is needed for the tree to grow, maybe you also believe that faith is weighted. The faith of a winged person isn't worth much, but every bit helps.

HANNAH: We're both female and we'll talk about things other than boys. That's better than most Hollywood movies.

After all relationships have been established, the players take a moment to think up their character's goal.

❖ CHARACTER WEAKNESS

Whether they hide it or flaunt it, your character has certain behaviors they return to when they're at their worst. When your character is at the end of their rope, what do they do?

Select one weakness from the list below.

Give In	<i>Seek comfort in sex, food, alcohol, drugs</i>
Cheat	<i>Lie, twist truths, backstab, steal</i>
Check Out	<i>Withdraw, seek solitude or alienation, escape, flee</i>
Give Up	<i>Become depressed, do nothing, stop caring</i>
Lash Out	<i>Lose control, become violent, rage</i>
Show Off	<i>Become proud, vain, cocky, overconfident</i>

INTRODUCTIONS & RELATIONSHIPS

You should now have a bit of backstory for your character. Go around the table, in any order, and introduce your characters. Share your name, defining physical characteristic, traits, and weakness. Use your backstory to provide context, but keep your introduction brief—no more than a minute per player.

After all characters have been introduced, it's time to establish relationships. The first person who feels inspired to do so may suggest a character relationship with the player to their left (clockwise). Relationships can take many forms: familial, romantic, professional, mentoring, or antagonistic. There may be unique ways of relating in your kingdom. In any case, both players must agree on the nature of the relationship. If your proposal doesn't work for the other player, come up with another idea. Continue around the table until everyone has a relationship with the player on their left and on their right.

These two relationships will benefit your character in the roleplay to come. Though you may develop relationships with other characters, you won't receive benefits from those relationships.

JOSHUA: My goal is to revive the tree!

HANNAH: Do you have any idea how?

JOSHUA: Nope!

EVAN: That's a great obstacle. You don't know where to start.

HANNAH: What if people dismiss the possibility that the tree can be healed? They're no longer interested in remediation. They're just interested in war.

JOSHUA: Yeah. People think my beliefs are hippie woowoo.

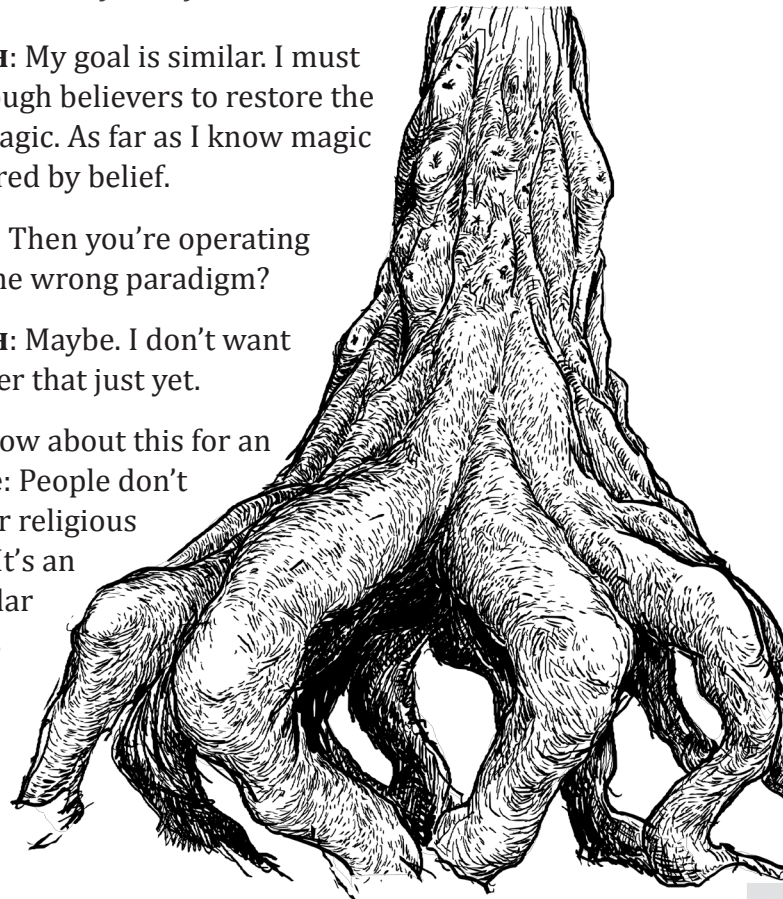
Joshua records the obstacles "I don't know where to start" and "people dismiss my beliefs."

HANNAH: My goal is similar. I must find enough believers to restore the tree's magic. As far as I know magic is powered by belief.

JOSHUA: Then you're operating under the wrong paradigm?

HANNAH: Maybe. I don't want to answer that just yet.

EVAN: How about this for an obstacle: People don't buy your religious beliefs. It's an unpopular opinion.



ESTABLISHING GOALS

After the relationships are in place, it's time to come up with your character's goal and obstacles. Your **character goal** is something big you'd like to accomplish. This is your life's work, your magnum opus, your loftiest hopes and dreams. Your goal should be something interesting that moves the story forward. To keep your goal relevant to the story, it should be connected to a **character relationship**, **kingdom trouble**, or your kingdom **features and norms**.

A goal should be action-oriented and difficult to accomplish. A good personal goal is not something that can be easily bought or bargained. Goals should contain imperative language and a definitive action.

- *I will end the war between the tribes.*
- *I will expose the conspiracy behind the land monopoly.*
- *I must reveal the true identity of the queen.*
- *I will recover the amulet from the haunted tower.*

❖ CONTRADICTING GOALS

It's okay for characters to have contradicting goals. If two characters are vying for position as King, that makes for great storytelling. However, if your goal involves some sort of direct action on another player (such as kidnapping, dueling, or marriage), that player must provide consent.

❖ GOAL PROGRESS

Questlandia ends after all players have taken three turns. On turn one, you'll begin your personal quest. On turn two, you'll find yourself in the throes of change. On turn three, the final path toward your goal should be clear: your goal should feel either imminently attainable or completely impossible.

If you complete your goal on turn three, great. If you don't, that's fine too. That's what the epilogue is for.

HANNAH: That one works for me.

EVAN: Your family wants you out of the way, right? Let's say you're...unpersonable.

HANNAH: Okay!

Hannah records the obstacles "people don't buy my religion" and "unpersonable."

EVAN: My goal is to prevent the conquest of the neighboring tree.

HANNAH: One obstacle might be that the momentum of war has already begun.

EVAN: All right, war momentum. Let's do it.

JOSHUA: Your lower social class?

EVAN: Yeah...I have huge wings. No hiding that.

Evan records the obstacles "war momentum" and "lower class."



ESTABLISHING OBSTACLES

An **obstacle** is something standing between you and your goal. Obstacles can range from annoying and frustrating to devastating and life-threatening.

At this point, go around the table and explain your goal to the other players. Then, they will collaborate to come up with two obstacles that stand between you and your goal. If you are uncomfortable with an obstacle, you can veto it.

❖ CREATING GREAT OBSTACLES

What makes for a good obstacle? If you're having trouble coming up with obstacles, review character relationships, kingdom troubles, and your kingdom features and norms. Traits and weaknesses also make for great obstacles! If a character is trying to lead a covert underground rebellion, their notorious trait will certainly get in the way. Here are some questions to help in obstacle creation:

- Will societal beliefs impede this character's goal?
- How about the kingdom troubles?
- Do any of the character's traits get in the way?
- Is their weakness particularly relevant to their goal?
- Do any of their relationships conflict with their goal?

Examples of good obstacles connected to these questions are:

- *My society looks down on half-breeds.*
- *The sun has become too hot. I can't go out in daylight.*
- *I have seven siblings, but only one of us can become emperor.*

After all goals and obstacles have been created, you're ready to map out your kingdom and begin the first scene.

With goals and obstacles in place, the players map out a few locations.

JOSHUA: Where is the center or heart of our society? I want to propose certain ideas but I'll wait to see if someone else wants it first.

EVAN: It's fine with me if you want to own it.

HANNAH: Yeah, go ahead.

JOSHUA: Okay! I'm thinking there are so many holes in the tree that nutrients don't travel naturally any more. Instead, we have artificial systems that carry nutrients throughout the tree. The center of our society is about halfway up the tree. It's like the heart of a city—densely packed, thriving marketplaces. Some people live in the heart but most residential stuff is above it.

HANNAH: What about the root system? I have an idea about the roots.

EVAN: Joshua and I each have a location, so you should take ownership of them.

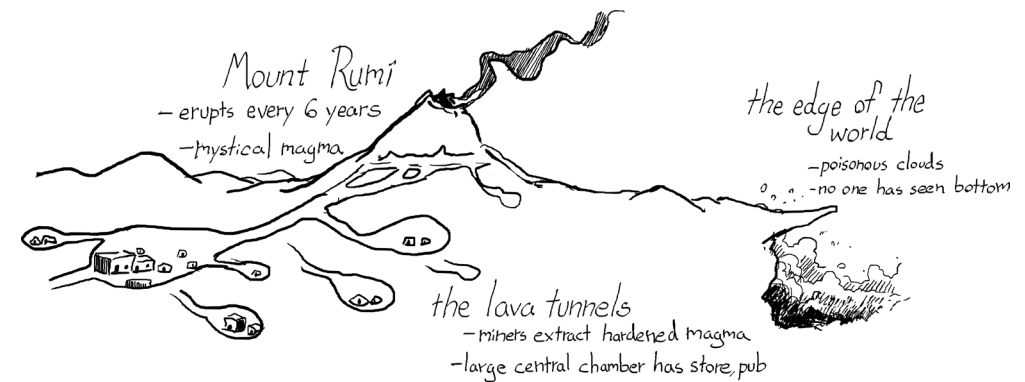
HANNAH: Okay! If we have this resource problem and there's this artificial system delivering nutrients from the roots, then there's got to be people toiling away to keep that system functional. We already have this lower class that's exploited for labor, so maybe they're also stationed down in the roots.

JOSHUA: I love that. Oh no, they couldn't even fly around down there!

HANNAH: Oh no, you're right! They must have their wings clipped. That's terrible.

EVAN: We have our three main starting locations then.

MAKING THE MAP



By this point, you will have created a kingdom, established its features and norms, established ownership over a few elements in the kingdom, and developed a character living within the kingdom.

Before the first player takes their turn, it's time to map out some important locations in your kingdom.

You may already have mentioned some locations while discussing features and norms. If so, that's great. Establish ownership over each location using the rules on page 41. You should have at least three locations in your kingdom to begin with. If you don't have that many, come up with some new locations as a group and establish ownership over them.

Choose a player to outline the borders of your kingdom on a piece of paper. The map need not be an artistic masterpiece. You just need a visual indicator of where various locations lie in relation to one another. Ask questions like, "*How far does the floating marketplace extend?*" "*How far is the town pub from the venerated holy site?*" and have each location's owner fill in the details.

Mark locations on the map using words, pictures, or both—whatever makes it easy to reference at a glance.

HANNAH: Right. The canopy, the heart of the society, the roots.

After adding the locations to the map, the players take the opportunity to ask a few ownership questions.

Evan currently owns “magic,” “the canopy,” and “the lower class.”

Hannah owns “the resource trouble,” “the roots”, and “religion.”

Joshua owns “the neighboring tree,” “the heart of the society,” and “food and drink.”



HANNAH: Evan, you already own the canopy, should we go into some detail about it?

EVAN: Sure. What would you like to know about it?

JOSHUA: What gives the canopy its bad reputation?

Good locations are relevant to characters, kingdom features and norms, or troubles: the bakery that your character owns, the giant solar crystal that powers the society, or the blighted forest.

Make sure you’ve marked at least three locations on the map before moving on.

❖ CHANGING THE MAP

The locations on your map are vulnerable to your kingdom’s troubles. Any time a new kingdom trouble is drawn, this trouble will have a direct effect on a location in your kingdom.

For rules on impacting and changing locations, see page 77.

OWNERSHIP IN QUESTLANDIA

In Questlandia, important concepts, locations, and characters are owned by individual players. **Ownership** means that when somebody has a question about a specific story element, the owner of that element gets the first and final say.

For example, if Lydia owns “the mushroom faeries,” then questions like “What do the mushroom faeries eat?” or “Do the mushroom faeries make art?” are Lydia’s to answer. Other people can contribute their ideas, but Lydia should provide the first answer, and only she can decide the final answer.

Other players should avoid leading questions. These are questions that introduce or imply new information. Be careful with questions like “Why do the mushroom faeries hate the rock faeries?” If no one’s ever mentioned the rock faeries—or a conflict between the two groups—then this question is introducing new information, and is not allowed. If the mushroom/rock faerie conflict has already been established, the question is entirely legitimate.

EVAN: Well, it's the kind of thing overprotective parents tell their children. "Stay nearby, or a winger might snatch you up to the canopy." The canopy is a place where people can speak freely. There's a thriving cultural exchange.

HANNAH: What do people in the canopy think about the war?

EVAN: Oh, they think it's totally bogus. With our resource crisis, we've relied more and more on trade with canopy merchants. No one wants to admit it though.

JOSHUA: Yeah. At the heart of the society there's a lot of propaganda about foreigners. They talk about our own merchants being driven out by the "aggressive" canopy traders.

EVAN: What's it like to travel from the roots to the canopy?

JOSHUA: Let's give somebody ownership of "travel."

HANNAH: I'll take "travel." I'm thinking the length of the journey depends on your social class, which relates to your mobility. So, Evan, you could describe how the lower class gets up the tree.

EVAN: The lower class travels up by their own power. There are stations outside of the tree where they stop and rest. You can only get to them by flying. They're rickety and vulnerable to predators.

JOSHUA: They're probably not vulnerable to predators. They've been dealing with this for hundreds of years, right?

EVAN: I own it, so I get to make that call. Despite their best efforts, these stations are vulnerable. So, for example, if you need to deliver something very valuable up to the canopy, you might not send it with a winged person...because it might not get there. You'd instead use the inner tree transports.

❖ ONGOING OWNERSHIP

After the ownership phase in kingdom setup, new ownership can be established at any point in the game. However, not everything that comes up needs an ownership card.

It's isn't until somebody **asks a question** about an unowned element that a new ownership card is made.

Decide who will take ownership of the card and answer the initial question. The guidelines for making this decision are as follows:

- If you have more ownership cards than another player, you cannot take a new ownership card.
- If the element strongly relates to a player's character, give the card to someone else.
- If somebody is particularly excited about that element, let them have it.
- Otherwise, decide by consensus.

When you take ownership of a new element, write your name and the element on the card. Then put the card in the middle of the table. Over the course of the game, as more questions are answered about the element, feel free to update the card with new information.

Sometimes, because of the distribution of ownership cards, somebody will get a card that feels unexpected. If this happens, don't sweat it.



Justin takes ownership of "the living crystals."

HANNAH: Which I own! They're super direct (like an elevator that goes straight up) but they stop at every station inside the tree. It's slow and it costs money to travel this way.

JOSHUA: How long does it take to get from the bottom to the top? An hour? A day?

HANNAH: If you want to get from the roots to the canopy it'll be a solid day of travel. Maybe ten or so hours.

When everyone feels like they have a good sense of the setting, it's time for the first player's turn.

OWNERSHIP AND PACING

It's okay to establish ownership and ask questions at any point in the game. It may take a moment, but it will lead to stronger fiction. Just make sure to keep the focus on moving the story forward.

After the owner has answered the question that prompted the card's creation, you may optionally take a moment to learn more about the element. If you choose to do so, invite each player to ask another question, then promptly hop back into the action!

Before storming the underwater castle, Mai asks, "How long can our battle hippos hold their breath underwater?"

Ian takes ownership of "battle hippos" and says, "The hippos are equipped with a special mask. They can breathe underwater almost indefinitely, as long as the mask isn't damaged."

Now that someone owns "battle hippos," the other players take the opportunity to learn a bit more about them.

Kate asks, "When were battle hippos first tamed?"

Matt asks, "How many regular hippos could a battle hippo take on at once?"

Ian answers all the questions, then the players return to the action at hand.

❖ OVERLAPPING OWNERSHIP

Situations will likely arise where a question is asked about an element that's governed by more than one person. Brian asks, "Who usually attends the annual Festival of Riches?" Harita owns "holidays and rituals," James owns "uppercrust society," and Gwynne owns "rural country folk."

This is a great opportunity for collaboration. Harita expands on the nature of the festival, James determines if the royal family is invited, and Gwynne decides how the country folk participate.

Whenever there's overlapping ownership, element owners can ask advice and collaborate. Be a flexible collaborator, but don't let your friends step on your toes.



PLAYING the GAME

Setting the Scene
Playing the Opposition
Playing the Protagonist
Engaging in Weakness
Ending Your Turn
The Epilogue



Evan takes the first turn of the game. During his scene, his character, Inru, delivers secret information to the neighboring kingdom. Hannah begins the next turn on a journey to the canopy.

HANNAH: This is Klim's first missionary trip, which is coming just days after Inru's spying got the canopy market shut down.

I'm with my family at our home. The goodbyes are happening. My mother and father and two brothers are here. Inru, you'll be here because you're my guide for the journey.

EVAN: I have an idea. The normal thing to do would be to take the central elevator, but you want to travel the way the lower class travels. To see "the dark side of things."

HANNAH: Haha. That's what I was going to suggest.

EVAN: It's very embarrassing for me. You're like, "I want to see the dark side. Now carry me!"

HANNAH: Okay. So my scene goal is to get up to the canopy so I can start "converting" people. How does that sound?

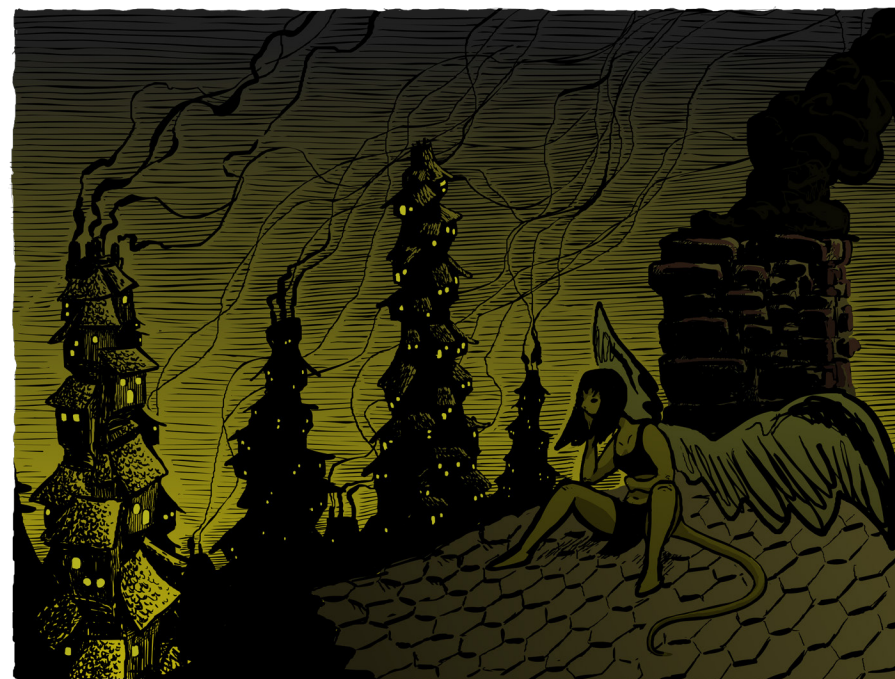
JOSHUA: I think getting to the canopy is a pretty routine journey. Are you hoping to convert people along the way, or are you waiting until you arrive?

HANNAH: I don't feel focused on the missionary work while we're traveling. I think I want to get to the destination.

EVAN: Do you have any desire to learn from me or develop a rapport with me?

HANNAH: Okay. Yeah! How about, for my scene goal I want to learn the secrets of the lower class. "How do I talk to these lower people?" It's very offensive, but I have this idea that there's some secret that will help me relate to you. My obstacles are "unpersonable" and "unpopular beliefs."

SETTING THE SCENE



During your turn, you're the **protagonist** of a scene. You'll play out a scene that begins with some roleplay and ends with a resolution, in which you roll dice to learn the scene's outcome. When every player has taken three turns, the game moves on to the epilogue.

Let the most excited player take the first turn, or choose randomly. After the first player's turn, turns continue in a clockwise order.

On your turn, begin by answering the following three questions:

- Where are you?
- What are you doing?
- Who are you with?

Next, tell everyone what you hope to accomplish in this scene. This is your scene goal. Your **scene goal** is the chronological next step in achieving your character goal.

EVAN: I start off by telling you that you're not dressed warmly enough. But really I just want you to cover up your religious garments. It's kind of mortifying. I have to basically strap you in and carry you up.

HANNAH: Front to front? Like a frontal papoose.

EVAN: Oh man. That is ridiculous.

HANNAH: Evan, you own magic. How closely tied are magic and religion?

EVAN: Magic and religion used to be one in the same, then the two split off. Magic became practiced by wizards and sorcerers (like Tyaru) and was widely used in the marketplace. Religion became more regulated with lots of rules and doctrines.

HANNAH: What's the magic called?

EVAN: How about Runin? And Brunin is the sort of mercantile magic, the kind looked down on by the religious class.

HANNAH: Okay, back to goodbyes. "Mother, father. Thank you for all you've provided! I'll make you proud! I'll send many letters!" Mind you, I'm only supposed to be gone about two weeks.

JOSHUA: "Daughter, we look forward to hearing about your adventures."

HANNAH: "Adventures, no! This is a spiritual journey. Any adventure will be in service of restoring Runin to the hearts of the people."

JOSHUA: "Yes. Runin be blessed."



Here's an example of creating a good scene goal:

Heidi's character, Falmato, is an elder advisor. Once revered as a great leader, Falmato's old-fashioned ways are losing ground. Falmato's character goal is to restore the kingdom's old ways.

Heidi begins her scene at a conference about the kingdom's dwindling water supply. "My scene goal," she says, "is to give a speech about saving the spidersilk dam."

*There's a problem with this scene goal. For Falmato, giving political speeches is routine. The other players ask Heidi, "What do you **really** want to accomplish in this scene? You don't just want to get up on a soap box. What if you get booed off the stage?"*

Heidi thinks for a moment and says, "That's true! Okay, my goal for this scene is to give such a rousing speech that the majority of the audience will sign my petition."

When it's clear what the protagonist hopes to accomplish, the opposition can throw relevant and challenging hurdles between the protagonist and their goal.

After declaring a scene goal, the protagonist should remind the other players of their **character goal** and **obstacles**. Reading these aloud will help the opposition craft a relevant, satisfying scene.

Now that you've set the scene, made a scene goal, and reminded your friends of your overall goal, it's time to introduce the opposition.

PLAYING THE OPPOSITION

Once the protagonist sets the scene, the other players take on the role of the **opposition**. They must work together to maintain the momentum of a scene—to keep things exciting and to spur the protagonist forward.

HANNAH: “Inru, shall we be off on my journey?” We head over to the nearest docking station, toward a tree exit, and I get ready to strap in.

EVAN: I give you a buckle to wrap around yourself. The buckle is going to be pretty tight and we head off with a jolt. This might be startling.

HANNAH: I’m terrified, but I play it down. I say earnestly but ignorantly, “You might be surprised to hear this, but this is the first time I’ve interacted this closely with someone of your class.”

EVAN: I make sure the ride is extra bumpy.

HANNAH: “Oh my. I didn’t expect this to be so...turbulent. I plan to speak with many citizens during my journey. I thought perhaps you could help me understand more about your people.”

EVAN: “Oh?” I’m kind of suspicious. “What do you want to know?”

HANNAH: “Well, it’s almost as if your people have lost faith in Runin. My mother says it’s because you want to see Ish’tya fail. As if you don’t respect the...”

EVAN: “Hey, I still go to the quarterly Runin festivals.”

HANNAH: “But it’s the daily worship of Runin that powers the magic of the great tree! The belief that keeps our society alive!”

EVAN: I wave to a passing winged person. “Hey Larklim!”

JOSHUA: Larklim points and laughs.

EVAN: “You have the time for *daily* worship?”

“Opposition” is a loose term. You’re not actually trying to oppose every move the protagonist makes. As the opposition, you’re describing and roleplaying the world around the protagonist, you’re responding to the protagonist’s choices, and you’re finding ways to bring the protagonist’s obstacles into a scene.

❖ MAINTAINING THE FLOW

As the opposition, it’s your responsibility to provide the protagonist with a scene that feels believable, challenging, and fun. If you’re having trouble driving a scene forward, don’t panic. Below are some tips and tricks to keep things moving:

- At the beginning of a scene, listen closely to the protagonist’s scene goal and obstacles.
- Ask for clarification if something is unclear, or if you’d like more details.
- Let the scene develop organically. Let some roleplay happen before throwing hurdles in the way.
- Unless it’s appropriate for the scene and setting, keep hurdles related to the protagonist’s obstacles. This means no flash floods, sudden fires, or spontaneous acts of the gods.
- Discuss the direction of the scene with the other players. Even the protagonist should weigh in! Remember that everyone is working together to create a good story.

❖ ROLEPLAYING NPCs AND PLAYER CHARACTERS

The protagonist will rarely be alone in their scene. Decide at the beginning of a scene who will be playing who. If a new NPC (non-player character) enters, assign that character to a willing player. If there are many NPCs in one scene, players can roleplay multiple NPCs.

HANNAH: “Of course! I wake up. I pray and do my rituals. I take a mid-morning nap. Then there’s lunch, then rituals, sometimes there’s a prayer meeting...”

EVAN: “I see. Well, I’m not sure I have that kind of time. I mean, you have time for a nap.”

HANNAH: “Oh, it’s only a five-hour nap! What do *you* do during that time?”

EVAN: “Lifting. Packing. Carrying. Unpacking. Carrying out the day’s assignments. All day long.”

HANNAH: “Yes, I suppose that’s quite a bit of flying.” *[pauses]* “Oh! You can pray while flying!”

EVAN: “Pray while flying? Well, sometimes we sing...”

JOSHUA: Would you like to roll to learn the outcome of your conversation, or should we introduce a juicy conflict?

HANNAH: Let’s roll to see what I’ve learned. I don’t see imminent danger or conflict in this scene.

The players roll dice to discover the outcomes of the scene (as explained later in the book, starting on page 63).

Over the course of their journey, Inru and Klim develop a friendship, and reminisce over old Runin holiday songs as they fly up to the canopy.

However, as Klim begins to feel comfortable with Inru, she drifts further from her upbringing and family.

Hannah is awarded a fortune and a misfortune token in her scene, which will impact her character’s epilogue.

Once everything has been marked on Hannah’s character sheet, Joshua’s turn begins.

If your character is present in a scene, you should always roleplay your own character. During another player’s scene, your primary role is to add drama, opposition, or intrigue. Even if your character is in direct conflict with the protagonist, the protagonist is the only person who receives benefits and losses from the resolution of the scene (described in detail in **Resolving the Scene**, starting on page 63). When your character is in another player’s scene, pay special attention to opposition etiquette, as described below.

If you aren’t currently roleplaying any characters, support the story by narrating overall events and giving setting details.

INTRODUCING NEW INFORMATION

It’s normal to introduce new characters, settings, or details about the world as you play. If everyone is fine with the new information, then just roll with it.

Anyone can ask a question about the new information. If that happens, make a new ownership card as described on page 41. The owner might not be the same person who suggested the idea.

Kohl says, “I have a fear of dragons.”

Miriam asks, “Are there actually dragons in the kingdom?”

Ownership of “dragons” is assigned to Ken, who says, “Probably not. They just appear in ancient legends and children’s storybooks.”

❖ OPPOSITION ETIQUETTE

Besides finding ways to engage the protagonist’s obstacles, the opposition should support the protagonist and each other by offering encouragement and advice.

Joshua starts his turn by establishing his location.

JOSHUA: I'm in the canopy awaiting the arrival of Inru and Klim. People are starting to get hungry and desperate. I've dug myself into a branch and I'm trying to do some research about the Brunin that's available here. Because of the trade embargo, most people have left the canopy.

My scene goal is that I want to find conclusive evidence that the ill health of the tree is what's led to our current problems (both material and magical). My obstacles are that I don't know where to start and people dismiss the possibility that the tree can be healed. Right now I'm taking samples from a piece of branch.

EVAN: You hear a shout from a lower branch as we come up.

EVAN: "Tyaru, I brought you your cousin!"

HANNAH: "Ah Tyaru, nice seeing you again. It looks like you're taking your work very seriously. Lounging about on a branch..."

JOSHUA: "I'm licking the tree, thank you very much."

EVAN: "Tyaru, any place open where I can get a drink?"

JOSHUA: "Any place will open for the right price. If you've got money, you'll find something."

EVAN: "Ha. Money..."

HANNAH: "Looks like you're up to your old fun and games, Tyaru. Are you working or are you joking?"

JOSHUA: "I'm working. I'm living my life."



Remember, Questlandia is about gathering with friends to tell a good story. When someone is faltering, you're encouraged to contribute suggestions. Basic rules of courtesy apply. Don't talk over other players and keep the spotlight shining on the protagonist.

During the protagonist's scene, the protagonist is **in the spotlight**. The characters you play, whether they're NPCs or your own character, should be in a supporting role.

◇ *Niall and Sam are in a scene together. Niall is the protagonist of the scene. Niall is a blind librarian. Sam is a devout priest of a religious sect.*

◇ *When the great deity of the religion, Buniko, appears in the scene, Sam says, "I fall to my knees and pray. I'm oblivious to Buniko's words as I babble scripture."*

◇ *With a sigh, Buniko turns away from the incoherent priest and speaks directly to Niall's character, the blind librarian.*

By taking his character out of the spotlight, Sam is giving Niall the leading role. The deity's arrival may be more relevant to Sam's character, but he'll get his chance to shine during his own turn.

As the opposition, you will be describing the thoughts and actions of all supporting characters in the scene. However, you may not tell the protagonist what to think, say, or feel. Let the protagonist choose how they respond.

PLAYING THE PROTAGONIST

As the protagonist, you'll be guiding your character toward achieving their scene goal. During your scene, you'll be controlling your own character. The other players will be roleplaying the people and events around you.

You can roleplay your scene as your character, describe the scene as a third-person narrator, or switch back and forth between perspectives.

HANNAH: “Well, I suppose it’s none of my business.”

JOSHUA: “That’s where you’re wrong. This is very much your business. It’s my understanding that the well being of this tree is of immediate interest to you and the rest of your family.”

HANNAH: “And how does burrowing into a branch and licking the tree get us anywhere?”

JOSHUA: Can I roll the dice to see what the outcome of this situation is?

EVAN: Yup! Let’s find out.

*The players roll dice as described in the **Resolving the Scene** section on page 63. Joshua learns that the tree has been tainted with something toxic—maybe accidentally, maybe intentionally.*

The kingdom resource problem grows into a crisis and transit shuts down within the kingdom.

Due to food scarcity, the panicked population starts to flee from the suburbs to heart of the city.

During Evan’s next turn, Inru takes Tyaru and Klim down to the roots to find the source of the toxicity. The three characters navigate through the chaos of the inner tree and land safely outside of the roots. They discover that the gate to the roots is tightly sealed.

JOSHUA: If we have predator problems here then I know what’s coming...

HANNAH: Yup, we’re the opposition. Let’s oppose!

EVAN: “We’ll have to try another gate...higher up. I’ll have to take you up one at a time.”

HANNAH: “That means someone gets left behind...”

Your scene isn’t a runaway train. At any point, you can talk on a player-to-player level about the type of scene you want or the direction the scene is taking.

- *I’m not comfortable having a romantic scene with the count. Let’s take this in a different direction.*
- *I don’t want to just barge into the castle! Can you throw some scary things in my path?*

If you’re feeling stuck, you can always ask for help. But don’t let the other players step on your toes. Only accept the advice that feels right.



❖ ENDING THE ROLEPLAY

As the protagonist, you have the power to trigger your scene’s resolution. The **resolution** involves rolling dice to discover outcomes—whether you overcome challenges, how your actions influence the people around you, and what consequences come of your scene’s events.

You have the freedom to call for resolution whenever feels appropriate to you. When the emperor’s secretary tells you that no one may enter the royal chambers, your opposition might suggest resolving the scene here. You can choose to immediately call for resolution, or you might decide this isn’t the conflict you want to end on, and simply narrate, “*I brush past the bureaucrat and burst into the emperor’s throne room!*”

JOSHUA: While we're discussing this a predator makes a move for us.

Hannah takes ownership of "predators."

HANNAH: It's some type of reptilian predator. Like a small lizard. Except, to us, it's massive. It's got white hair on its back. It's called a Turg.

EVAN: I press you both against the wall and tell you to be quiet.

HANNAH: Let's roll some dice to see what happens.

During Evan's resolution, Inru wins a victory against the menacing Turg. In the meantime, the civil unrest increases in the kingdom. The players learn that the root workers are organizing an underground rebellion.

Hannah begins her second turn.

HANNAH: I'm with Tyaru and Inru. Inru has felled the beast. We're outside of this gate...

I think Klim envisions the roots as a major spiritual site. This is like the ultimate pilgrimage. It's pretty misguided because, as we know, the roots are actually a place of horrible forced labor. My scene goal is to get through this gate. Probably using magic. I don't even know if I possess any real magic.

EVAN: I own magic, I'm going to say the magic is real. We're all feeling it down here. Everyone is feeling more...potent.

HANNAH: "We need to get through this gate! Together we must summon the energy of Runin."

JOSHUA: "If that's what you want to call it..."

HANNAH: "Tyaru! I'll have none of your Brunin nonsense." I sit down and start meditating.

Sometimes, you'll roleplay a scene to the point where you achieve your scene goal before calling for resolution. That's fine! When this happens, stop the roleplay and use the dice to discover the consequences of your achievement.

Other times, you'll call for resolution right away. "*The plans are all in motion. We storm the castle! What happens next?*" Some scenes will be 15 minutes, some will be 5 or less. You are free to choose the pace and detail of your scene. However, in fairness to all players, don't go longer than 15 minutes before calling for resolution.

"LET'S JUST ROLL THE DICE!"

Sometimes, you may want a scene to go immediately into the resolution.

That's just fine! Jump straight to rolling the dice and let the outcome of your scene guide the roleplay, as described on page 63.

Here's an example from one Questlandia game:

◇ Alex's character, a messenger name Daio, has been quarantined within the palace walls of an enemy kingdom. Daio has been tasked with a time-sensitive delivery, so this quarantine does not bode well for Alex's scene goal: to deliver the secret letter to the king.

◇ When Daio puts up a fuss about the quarantine, another player takes on the role of a palace guard. Daio demands to be released from the palace, but the guard laughs and turns away. Daio decides to play his Flute of Gentle Snores to pacify the guard.

Will the guard fall asleep? Perhaps the guard is immune to the flute's soporific spell? When Alex calls for resolution, the roleplay stops, and the players will turn to the dice to discover the scene's outcome.

JOSHUA: *[exasperated]* “You know, it works better if you actually touch the tree.”

HANNAH: “I knew that. I was...warming up.” In reality I’m totally out of my element. I get up and start groping around on the tree.

JOSHUA: “Here. Come over here to this spot. Put your ear to the tree and listen.”

HANNAH: I put my face to it. It’s warm and tingly.

JOSHUA: “Do you hear that sound?”

HANNAH: “It sounds like a rainstick. *[pauses]* I can’t believe I’m asking a Brunin for advice, but I’m going to swallow my pride. What do we need to do?”

JOSHUA: “Well, we need to ask the tree to open the gate.”

HANNAH: “Do we...pray?”

JOSHUA: “No. The tree is right here. Just ask it.”

HANNAH: I’m trying to communicate with the tree. I want to roll to see what happens.

Hannah begins with two white dice. She then receives two additional dice for having two relevant relationships present in this scene.

Finally, the players decide that because there’s true power in the old Runin rituals, Hannah should get an additional die for her “old-fashioned” trait.

The opposition begins with three red dice, then gets one additional die for the kingdom’s severe resource trouble. The players decide that neither of Hannah’s obstacles are working against her in this scene.

RESOLVING THE SCENE

The following section details the steps for resolving scenes in Questlandia. Some scenes may immediately jump to the resolution, while others may involve more lengthy roleplay.

When it’s time to resolve a scene, the protagonist and opposition will roll dice and match up their results. Each die represents a possible outcome for the scene, such as losing a friend, mastering an obstacle, or escalating your kingdom’s troubles.

Over the next pages, you’ll learn how dice are compared and how to narrate the various outcomes. If you’d like an overview of the whole process, check out the reference rules on page 95.

A scene’s resolution begins with the protagonist and opposition drawing dice. Don’t worry about the unfamiliar terms introduced below; they’ll be explained later in this section.

❖ DRAWING DICE

The protagonist starts with **two white dice**. Look over their character sheet, and give the protagonist an additional white die for:

- Each relevant **mastered obstacle**
- Each relevant **relationship** (unless it is **exhausted**)
- Each relevant **trait**
- Each relevant **boost**

The opposition starts with **three red dice**. Look at the protagonist’s character sheet, and give the opposition an additional red die for:

- Each relevant **obstacle**
- Each **kingdom trouble** at a level of 3 or higher
- Each relevant **hindrance**
- The protagonist’s **weakness level**

Hannah rolls her five dice and gets: 

The opposition rolls four dice and gets: 

Hannah matches her dice as shown:



Hannah is winning on a 6, winning on a 4, and losing on a 5.

HANNAH: I won a 6, so I get a resounding success! I also take a fortune token. This is the first time I've used my magic to any effect. I've prayed and done rituals my whole life but I've never connected my religion directly to its source. I've never touched the tree. This is a powerful spiritual moment for me. The gate opens, lets us through, and closes behind us. Is everybody okay with us going through?

EVAN AND JOSHUA: Yeah!

HANNAH: I won on a 4, so I also master an obstacle. Hmm. I don't have any great ideas for this one. Any suggestions?

EVAN: Maybe you now understand the disconnect between what you preach and what you practice. Now that you've connected with the tree, you have a breakthrough about how to talk with people about Runin. That turns the obstacle into an advantage.

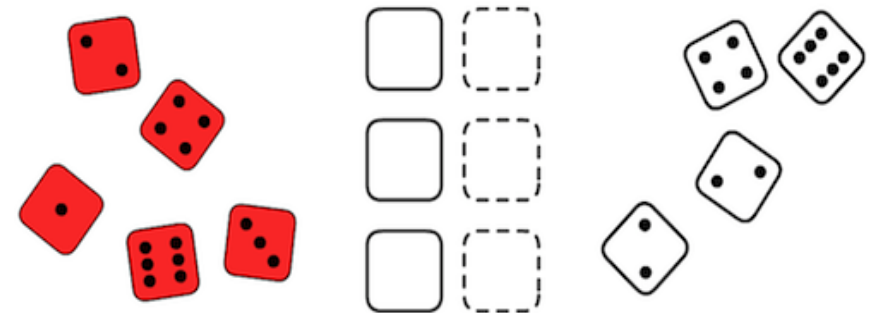
HANNAH: Cool! That gets me closer to my goal.

JOSHUA: You're losing on a 5, so you'll have to gain a hindrance. I think the way you communicated with the tree defies Runin tradition. You take the hindrance "doubting your faith."

Players must come to a consensus on which obstacles, traits, and relationships are relevant to the scene. In general, for a relationship to be relevant, that character must be present in the conflict (corporeally or otherwise) and must care about the outcome. Be generous in applying traits and obstacles.

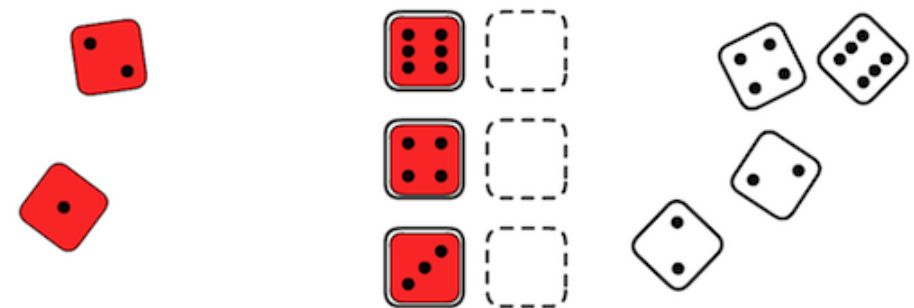
❖ ROLLING AND MATCHING DICE

The dice are your resources in a conflict. The protagonist and the opposition roll their dice simultaneously.



Opposition dice on the left. Protagonist dice on the right.

The opposition must put forward their three highest dice. In the example above, the opposition must put forward their 6, 4, and 3.



The opposition puts forward their three highest dice.

Joshua starts his second turn within the tree's roots. He's searching for the source of the tree's sickness amidst hostile root workers. Production has slowed to a standstill as the workers begin to organize a rebellion.

HANNAH: What does the organizing look like?

JOSHUA: Somebody should own the root workers.

EVAN: I have ownership over the lower class, but this might be different. Does somebody own civil unrest?

Joshua takes ownership of "civil unrest."

JOSHUA: The workers are in an increasingly toxic environment and they're exceeding their capabilities. Their willingness to put up with it has ended. The laborers are slacking off and their supervisors are getting desperate.

Evan owns "the lower class," so he chimes in as well.

EVAN: I'm going to say there's an increase of people getting sent down now. People are being conscripted as the food problem worsens.

JOSHUA: Yeah. There are some freshly clipped workers. It's grim.

EVAN: I think Inru is having trouble following you down these passages. The wings are clipped for a reason. There's just not enough room.

JOSHUA: So what's happening around us right now?

EVAN: I think the supervisors confront you. A supervisor says, "There's absolutely no visitations. Classified people only."

JOSHUA: "That's cute." I'm just going to shove by and keep going about my business.

After the opposition puts their best dice forward, the protagonist may choose any two dice to put forward. Each die must be matched against one of the opposition's dice.



The protagonist could try the above combination, or they could try...



this combination!

As the protagonist, it may seem like the best strategy is to put forward your two highest dice to match the opposition's two highest dice. However, different dice have different narrative effects. Review the possible outcomes listed below before choosing your matches.

EVAN: “Hey. Hey!” He shouts after you, runs a few steps, shouts at a few workers who are sitting by on the sidelines. He gets distracted and lets you go. But I think as you and Klim shove by, Inru doesn’t make it past. The supervisor corners her. You go on without me, not even realizing I’ve been left behind.

HANNAH: “Tyaru, do you think it’s safe down here?”

JOSHUA: “Nope!”

HANNAH: “I feel nauseous. I can feel the tree’s sickness in my body. These poor workers...”

JOSHUA: “It used to be that everybody could do what you and I do. But magic’s gotten weaker. These people don’t even know that they’re sick. They think this is...normal.” We keep moving along the root tunnels.

HANNAH: I barf a few times.

EVAN: The deeper you go the closer you feel to whatever has gone wrong.

JOSHUA: All right. We keep going down.

EVAN: You come to a passage that’s been boarded up. It’s been sealed—recently.

JOSHUA: I start pushing at the barrier.

HANNAH: “Tyaru, I don’t want to go any further.”

JOSHUA: “We can go forward scared or we can stay here scared. Only one of them is going to solve anything.”

EVAN: It’s heavy, but the barrier starts to give. It makes a horrible screeching sound that echoes throughout all the hallways.







HANNAH: The noise attracts the attention of nearby workers.

❖ OUTCOME OF MATCHES

You should now be looking at two pairs of matched dice (white versus red) and one unmatched red die. The first step is to clear away any tied matches. So, if you’ve pitted a 4 against a 4, clear those away. Consider those matching dice to represent a standoff where neither side has a victory.

For each white die that’s greater than its matched red die, the protagonist gets to narrate a success. The type of success is determined by the following table:

Protagonist wins on a...

-  - *Not possible (matching 1s are cleared away)*
-  - *Change any player’s misfortune token to a fortune token*
-  - *Heal a relationship*
-  - *Master an obstacle*
-  - *Gain a boost*
-  - *Resounding success. Fortune token.*

Next, for each match with a higher result on a red die, or for an unmatched red die, the opposition narrates a defeat, determined by the following table:

Opposition wins on a...

-  - *Profound humiliation (all players take one misfortune token)*
-  - *Change protagonist’s fortune token to a misfortune token*
-  - *Exhaust a relationship*
-  - *Receive a new obstacle*
-  - *Receive a hindrance*
-  - *Doom. Draw a new kingdom trouble. Misfortune token.*

EVAN: I think the workers move to stop you. They're big people. Muscular. One of them pushes you away and says, "Whoa there."

HANNAH: It seems like it's time for dice.

JOSHUA: I'm striking and seductive...and I'm trying to impress people down here.

HANNAH: Is your "striking" trait going to help you down here?

JOSHUA: Why not? People respect people who are attractive.

HANNAH: And some people resent people who are attractive.

JOSHUA: That's true.

EVAN: We'll give you striking. Not sure about seductive. You have one relevant trait and, because Inru got left behind, just one relevant relationship.

Joshua gets four white dice. The opposition gets six red dice: three to start, one for the kingdom resource trouble, and two for Joshua's obstacles.

Joshua rolls and gets: 

The opposition rolls: 

JOSHUA: Whoa. That's a lot of sixes. I think I need to engage in my weakness and cheat here. I have my hand on the wall when he's trying to push me away. I touch him lightly and funnel the toxicity through him. Let's reroll those sixes.

Joshua engages in weakness as described on page 81. He increases his weakness level, takes a misfortune token, and rerolls the opposition's four 6s.

The opposition's dice now look like this: 

● - PROFOUND HUMILIATION

The opposition narrates a major misfortune that impacts all characters. All players take a misfortune token.

◻ ● - REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

Protagonist victory: Change a misfortune token belonging to any player into a fortune token. If there are no misfortune tokens, gain a fortune token. Narrate this fortunate turn of events.

Opposition victory: Change one of the protagonist's fortune tokens into a misfortune token. If the protagonist has no misfortune tokens, give them one. Narrate this dire reversal.

◻ ● - HEALING OR EXHAUSTING A RELATIONSHIP

Protagonist victory: Heal one exhausted relationship. Narrate how it is healed. If both relationships are healthy, gain a fortune token and narrate how your relationships have sustained you.

Opposition victory: One of the protagonist's relationships becomes exhausted. Narrate how the relationship is exhausted. If both are already exhausted, give the protagonist a misfortune token and narrate how their isolation has impacted them.

An exhausted relationship is one where the flame has flickered out. However the other character may feel, the relationship has changed for you, or lost its meaning.

- *He saved your life, but only through the power of dark magic. You can no longer look your son in the eye.*
- *Once you sampled the forbidden fruit, her love poems suddenly seemed hollow and naïve.*

An exhausted relationship gives no extra dice in future scenes until healed. Fill in the circle next to that relationship on your character sheet.

Joshua matches his dice as shown:



Joshua cancels out one pair of 6s, wins on one 6, and loses on a 4. He takes a fortune token for his resounding success and narrates the outcome.

JOSHUA: The workers stagger back, feeling confused and sick. We squeeze through. What's through here is a fungus growing everywhere. It's not naturally growing. It's been planted to deliberately infect the tree. It makes the tree panic and overproduce. If not kept under control something like this could take over the whole tree.

I dig my hands into the sides of the roots to help the tree fight off this fungus. This is my resounding success. The fungus is cleared from this area. There's a lot more work to do, but it's a good start.

EVAN: Great. You lost on a four, so we need to give you a new obstacle.

HANNAH: Now you know this big secret: Someone in power has chosen to compromise the health and safety of the kingdom. This is some serious stuff.

EVAN: Let's say the "fungal conspiracy" is your new obstacle. The fungal conspiracy stands in the way of you reviving the tree.

JOSHUA: Right on.

Third Round: On the game's final round, there are additional effects for winning or losing on 3s, 4s, and 5s. If a relationship changes on your final turn, gain a fortune token if it's been healed or a misfortune token if it's been exhausted.

- MASTER OR RECEIVE AN OBSTACLE

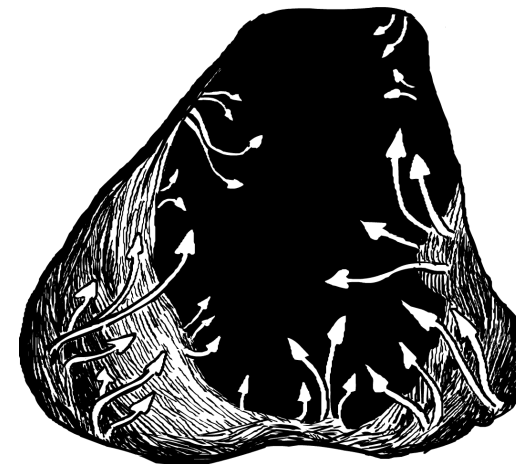
Protagonist victory: You master an obstacle. Narrate how that obstacle has become an advantage. If you've already mastered every obstacle, gain a fortune token and narrate how your mastery has served you.

Opposition victory: The protagonist receives a new obstacle. Narrate the new roadblock between the protagonist and their goal.

"Mastering an obstacle" means you've uncovered a secret, gained experience, or found support that changes an obstacle into an advantage.

After mastering an obstacle, the protagonist will gain a die for the obstacle instead of the opposition. The next time the obstacle comes up in a scene, remember to give an additional white die instead of a red one!

Third Round: After narrating, gain a fortune token for mastering an obstacle or misfortune token for receiving a new obstacle.



Evan begins his third turn after Inru has been separated.

EVAN: Inru's plan is to get out of this tree and escape to the neighboring tree. But right now she's cornered by a couple supervisors. They don't believe her when she says she's not one of the laborers. They get that a lot.

So they're trying to force me into the clipping room.

HANNAH: Ack!

JOSHUA: Is this like declawing, or like taking the flight feathers from a chicken?

EVAN: I think it's more like declawing.

HANNAH: Aah!

EVAN: At this moment I'm pleading with the supervisors. They're saying, "Take it easy. This is just routine."

JOSHUA: As you're backing up the path is getting narrower. This is your last moment. A supervisor is saying, "Look, every worker here has had this done. They're all fine."

EVAN: I extend my wings and try to dive past him.

JOSHUA: You swoosh past him. They raise an alarm. You can hear doors shutting down the hallways.

EVAN: I'm shouting your names. Trying to get help.

HANNAH: We can hear you but there's not much we can do.

EVAN: Well, let's roll some dice and see if I make it out.

Evan gets three dice total. Two starting dice plus one more for his "subversive" trait. His relationships aren't there to help Inru.

Both of Evan's obstacles, "lower class" and "war momentum," are working against him. The opposition gets six dice total.

- BOOST OR HINDRANCE

Protagonist victory: Gain a boost. Narrate the lasting benefit.

Opposition victory: The protagonist receives a hindrance. Narrate the lasting impediment.

A boost or hindrance is a lasting effect that impacts future dice rolls.

- *I kicked so much butt in that fight! I'm feeling invincible. I'll write down "Superman Syndrome" as my boost.*
- *Word of your lame party spreads through the kingdom. You're now known as "the Wettest of Blankets."*
- *You won the fight but broke both your noses. Take the hindrance, "Deaf to the Scent Spirits."*

When drawing dice in future turns, the protagonist gains an extra die for each relevant boost. The opposition gains an extra die for each relevant hindrance. Remember to record boosts and hindrances on your character sheet.

Third Round: After narrating, gain a fortune token for a boost or a misfortune token for a hindrance.

- RESOUNDING SUCCESS OR DOOM

Protagonist victory: You achieve a resounding success. Gain a fortune token and narrate your mind-blowing victory.

Opposition victory: Doom! Draw a kingdom trouble from the deck and give the protagonist a misfortune token. Collectively narrate the trouble's impact on the kingdom and record the trouble's new level.

Narrate the new kingdom trouble *after* narrating all other victories and losses. The new card will escalate an existing kingdom trouble or introduce a new one if it's your first card of that suit. The trouble might be related to your scene, but will often be a glimpse of what's happening in the world at large. After you've described the trouble, mark its effect on the map as described on the next page.

Evan rolls his three dice and gets: 

The opposition rolls six dice and gets: 

Evan matches up the dice as follows:



EVAN: I really want a resounding success in this scene. I'm going to use my 6 as a win rather than canceling out the other 6 with it. And I'll master an obstacle while I'm at it.

HANNAH: Always throwing the kingdom under the bus...

EVAN: For my success, I'm dodging the clipped-wing guards. There are lots of guards at the exit. I charge straight at them.

This is the gate we came through, and it still remembers me. The gate opens just as I go to crash through it. The guards tumble out with me. I fly into the air but they're not able to follow. They can only watch me go.

I've also mastered the "lower class" obstacle. I've learned that the other classes are scared of us. We're mobile, we're bigger.

The opposition draws a new kingdom trouble: a civil unrest.

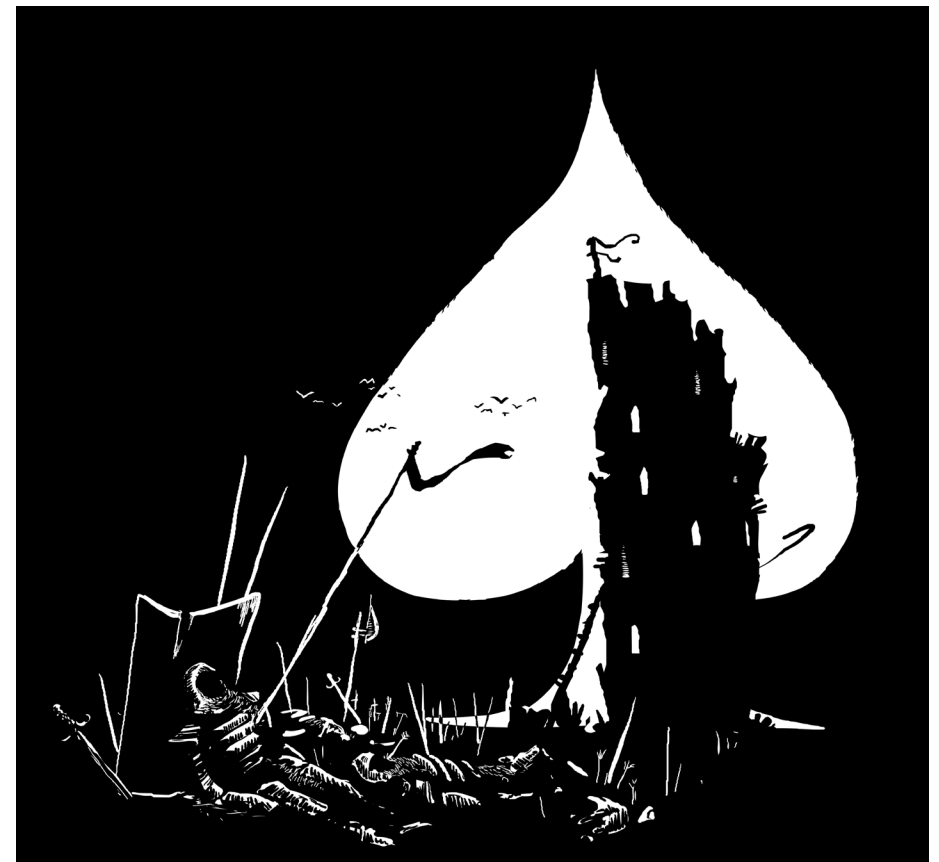
HANNAH: I own "the roots," so I'm going to say that between the fungal conspiracy and Inru's escape, the murmurs of an uprising have turned into rioting in the roots.

JOSHUA: I own "civil unrest." I'll add that the roots are now the locus of the proletarian uprising. Anyone without wings isn't allowed in. The roots transform into the "rebel underground."

Each new trouble will have a direct effect on a location in your kingdom. The first time a trouble affects a location, that location is impacted by the trouble. An **impacted** location no longer functions the same way—the hospital has shut down, the woods are ablaze, rationing is enforced in the city.

The second time a trouble affects a specific location, that location is transformed. A **transformed** location has taken on a new meaning entirely—the hospital becomes an orphanage for demon foundlings, the woods become the dragon's domain, the city becomes a ghost town.

Treat the transformed location like a new place. If more kingdom troubles target this part of the map, first impact the location then transform it again.



❖ NARRATING RESULTS

The protagonist begins by narrating the effects of each of their victories (as determined by the dice). When describing a victory, the protagonist has narrative control over the outcome of their scene.

Next, the opposition narrates the protagonist's losses. If the protagonist has no victories, the opposition has **full narrative control** over the scene's outcome. However, whatever the opposition decides, only the protagonist can tell us what their character thinks and feels.

Evan takes a fortune for winning on a 6 and a misfortune for losing on a 6. Because it's the final turn, he also takes a fortune for mastering an obstacle. Then Hannah begins her third turn.

HANNAH: I don't think my training is such that I'm going to try to calm this uprising.

JOSHUA: Really?

HANNAH: Yeah. I think I would panic. I'm trying to think about what my scene goal is. It's my last turn so I want it to be big. My overall goal is to find enough believers.

JOSHUA: There's chaos. You can take advantage of it.

EVAN: Yup. Lots of potential believers.

HANNAH: I know what I'm going to do. I think the tree is sensitive to the people in its roots. As the riot begins the roots start to quake. The tree is going to collapse.

Now that I've used real magic, I put my hands on the roots to calm the tree. My hope is that people will see what's happening and it will inspire them to believe. I want to attract the attention of the rioters. Does anyone want to block me or can we roll for it?

The players decide to roll. The results leave Hannah outmatched.

HANNAH: I'm going to engage in weakness to reroll the opposition's dice. My weakness is lashing out.

JOSHUA: One of the people says "we've had enough of your above-ground bullshit! Things are *real* down here. We're taking what's ours!" It's not a particularly well-formed argument or anything. How do you lash out?

HANNAH: I root my hands to the tree and I'm like, "**LISTEN!**" The sound is magically amplified through the roots.

Alex won on a 6 and 4, and lost on a 6.

*He says, "I won on a 6 so I get a resounding success. My flute doesn't just put this guard to sleep, it knocks out **all** the guards. I'm able to sneak away and slip my letter under the king's pillow, accomplishing my scene goal.*

"My success on a 4 means I master an obstacle—I'm going to mark that I've mastered my 'Flute Anxiety.' It turns out the melody was in my heart all along."

Alex takes a fortune token for his successful 6 and marks that his "Flute Anxiety" obstacle is mastered.

Alex also lost on a 6. The opposition draws a new card from the deck. It's a club (civil unrest). The players decide that when the guards wake up to find their prisoner gone, they flip out and declare all music illegal.

The players agree that the new trouble will have the biggest impact on the prison island. The prison island was already impacted earlier in the game, which means this trouble will transform it. The players decide that all confiscated instruments are sent to the island for incineration. They transform the prison island into "Music Graveyard."

Hannah increases her weakness level, takes a misfortune token, and rerolls the opposition's dice. She gets a slightly better result, but not by much. She decides to engage in weakness again so she can reroll some of her own dice.

EVAN: You have their attention but it's not enough.

HANNAH: I throw my hands down. The energy I'm channeling funnels out through my fingers. There's a blinding flash.

After rerolling the dice, Hannah has: 

The opposition's dice are 

Hannah matches the dice to give a resounding success:



HANNAH: I channel the energy down. It radiates out like rings of a tree. As it catches people in its path, there's this moment of mass spiritual enlightenment. People are looking up at me, looking up at the tree. They're glowing green. It's very beautiful. The riot stops in this part of the roots.

Hannah also gets a hindrance. Because it's the third turn, it comes with a misfortune token.

JOSHUA: What if your family disowns you? You're an enemy of the state.

HANNAH: Why?!

JOSHUA: Because you're leading a peasant uprising!

HANNAH: Oh! I'm leading a peasant uprising?

❖ DID I SUCCEED IN MY GOAL?

The dice don't determine whether you succeeded in your scene goal. As long as you have any victories, you have the opportunity to narrate whether your scene goal was accomplished. If you have no successes, the opposition decides the outcome.

If your scene goal was accomplished during roleplay, the resolution's narration decides the impact it has had on you and your kingdom.

No matter who has narrative control, the aim should always be to move the story forward. Whether or not you achieve your scene goal, the end of a scene should never leave you back where you began. You should never have to play the same scene twice.

❖ *Despite her exhaustive search, Desiree didn't find the rainbow gem. Instead, she uncovered a vampire den.*

If it's important to you to achieve your character's scene goal, but you don't have any narrative control, consider giving in to your weakness to reroll the dice and improve your odds.

ENGAGING IN WEAKNESS

The opposition will always put forward three dice. The protagonist can only put forward two. The protagonist will always be losing against at least one of the opposition's dice.

As the protagonist, if you find yourself hopelessly outmatched, you may choose to engage in weakness to improve your odds. Engaging in weakness provides short term gain for long term trouble.

After the initial dice roll, you may engage in weakness to do either of the following:

- Reroll any number of your dice, or
- Reroll any number of the opposition's dice

JOSHUA: Whether you like it or not, all eyes are on you.

HANNAH: Oh my...

Hannah writes down “public enemy” as a hindrance. Then a new kingdom trouble is drawn. The war momentum has escalated.

JOSHUA: While the workers in the roots organize some type of coup the people in the heart and residential areas are just plain desperate. They need an outside enemy. All this trouble must be because of our horrible neighbors, the Nee’ka. Surely it’s not the result of our own flaws.

The players transform the heart of the city. Forced rations had already impacted the heart but now it becomes mobilized for war. It is transformed into “the conscription base for the army.”

Joshua begins his third and final turn.

JOSHUA: I’m trying to revive the tree, which at this point is entirely populated by jerks. Even though I’m tempted to let them all die in this stupid, futile war. It feels a little naïve but I’m going to try to revive the tree.

EVAN: Will exterminating all the fungus be enough?

JOSHUA: I guess I need to stop the war so we don’t consume what little we have left. So, I need to end this society’s reliance on a class system, heal its resource issues, and stop the war. Okay! My work is cut out for me.

EVAN: Plus you’re covered in fungus.

HANNAH: Yeah, whatcha gonna do now?

JOSHUA: My scene goal is to use the sum of my magical powers to get the tree to reject the people who live in it.

HANNAH: Save the tree, sack the society?

Before rerolling the dice, add some flavor by narrating how your character’s weakness comes into play in this scene.

- ◇ *The nobles have me surrounded, and I can feel my blood start to boil as they taunt me. I’m going to engage in my weakness and **lash out!***

After rerolling the dice and matching them up, narrate how giving into your character’s weakness has changed the situation.

- ◇ *I can’t control my pyrokinesis...the draperies burst into flame. It’s scaring the crap out of everyone!*

Or, if the results aren’t so favorable:

- ◇ *I can’t control my pyrokinesis...my pants burst into flame!*

REROLLING THE OPPOSITION’S DICE

If you’ve chosen to reroll any of the opposition’s dice, they should now put forward their *new* three highest dice.

If you engage in weakness and you’re still unhappy with the results, you may choose to engage in weakness once more this turn. If you first engaged in weakness to reroll any of the opposition’s dice, you must reroll your own dice this time. If you first engaged in weakness to reroll your own dice, you now must reroll the oppositions dice.

Every time you engage in weakness, take a misfortune token and increase your weakness level on your character sheet. Your weakness level will give the opposition extra dice in future turns.

JOSHUA: Yup. I don't know what else to do. I've got my fingers dug into the roots as the last of the fungus dies.

EVAN: You've got a growing collection of unconscious guards nearby. You're channeling some serious magic.

JOSHUA: I think we can go right to dice.

Joshua's traits and relationships are no help this turn. He only gets two dice, and the opposition gets seven.

Joshua rolls a  and a 

The opposition rolls       

Joshua matches his dice to win on a 5, tie on a 4, and lose on a 5:



JOSHUA: The tree's energy is funneled into growing a single giant nut. Steam pours out of the canopy. People begin to flee. My boost is that I gain a rapport with the tree.

HANNAH: I have a thought for the hindrance. I think you're the only person who has ever communed this intimately with the tree. After doing what you've done there's no going back.

JOSHUA: So I'm an outcast?

HANNAH: Not even that. You basically achieve enlightenment.

EVAN: Let's write "enlightened" in the hindrance category.

Because this is the final turn, Joshua gets a fortune for his boost and a misfortune for his hindrance. When his turn ends, the players gear up for the game's epilogue.

ENDING YOUR TURN



Once you've narrated the outcomes of your scene and recorded the results on your character sheet, your turn is complete. The player to your left (clockwise) will take the next turn.

After every player has taken a turn, a round is complete. This is a good time to check in and take a break. Questlandia lasts three rounds.

When you've completed the third round, it's time for the epilogue.

PLAYING THE FINAL ROUND

During the third and final round, remember to use the special rules for dice outcomes, as described in the section **Outcome of Matches** (page 69).

Your third turn is your last chance to achieve your goal, so aim for the stars! You're encouraged to narrate big, impactful results on your third turn.

The players arrange their tokens, and Evan begins the epilogue.

EVAN: When we last saw me I was hightailing it over to the neighboring tree. Fortunately, I not only arrive safely in Nee'ka, but I manage to find my lover, Par'nee, who takes me in.

JOSHUA: Unfortunately, Par'nee has joined up with the Nee'ka army. Despite how pathetic our own kingdom is, the Nee'ka people are taking our threats of conquest seriously.

EVAN: Fortunately, there are refugees from our tree that are coming to seek help instead of war. They're being received well by some of the Nee'ka.

HANNAH: The troops from Ish'tya are hopelessly outmatched. Thousands of the winged people—who were put in the front lines—perish in the war. You watch your people disappear and there's little you can do about it.

EVAN: That's so sad! Fortunately, my pleas for my people were heard. With my help, some war atrocities were prevented.

JOSHUA: Ultimately, it's a crushing defeat for Ish'tya. It leaves a society of impoverished, resentful mourners.

Joshua begins his epilogue. His story is mostly misfortunes.

JOSHUA: Fortunately, the nut is fertile. It sprouts a new tree that's healthy and fully capable of bearing a population.

EVAN: Unfortunately, the bitter remnants of Ish'tya society immediately claim the new tree.

JOSHUA: Fortunately, I live in the center of the seed. I act as the tree's conscience, preventing the abuse of power.

HANNAH: Unfortunately, through your symbiotic relationship with the tree your personhood is slowly sapped. All of your energy goes to communicating with this tree.

THE EPILOGUE

Questlandia ends after all players have taken three turns. Your story, and the story of the kingdom, are then concluded with an epilogue.

Begin the epilogue by tallying your fortune and misfortune tokens. Then, arrange your tokens in a row in front of you. Start with a fortune token and alternate between fortune and misfortune. If you have an unbalanced set of tokens, your story may end with a string of good or bad fortune.

Choose a player to receive the first epilogue. The epilogues need not follow turn order. If you'd like a happier ending, end with a player who has more fortune tokens than misfortune tokens.

Using these tokens, you'll end your story with an epilogue of mixed fortune. Begin by sliding your first token forward. Start on a positive note (a fortune) and alternate between fortune and misfortune tokens. You will narrate your fortunes, and the other players will narrate your misfortunes.

◇ *Desiree begins her epilogue with a fortune token.*

◇ *Desiree: Though I never found the final rainbow gemstone, I found true love in the pale arms of the Vampire Matriarch.*

◇ *Chris: But your dark past continued to haunt you. After a few short months, the vampire hunters came and took your Matriarch away.*

◇ *Desiree: Alas! But with my trusty steed, I launched a daring rescue...*

Each fortune and misfortune should only be a few sentences. If you like, you can begin each narration by saying "Fortunately..." or "Unfortunately..."

As you narrate each token, slide it forward to show that it's been used. Continue the story **until you reach your final token.**

EVAN: Unfortunately, the conscience you lend to the tree and its inhabitants includes your faults and resentments. The culture in this new tree becomes isolated and bitter.

HANNAH: New Ish'tya is a xenophobic society. They're afraid of repeating past mistakes. They don't leave and they let no one else in. They're alone in their little bitter nut.

Hannah has the most fortune tokens. Her epilogue ends the story.

HANNAH: Because Klim is now an enemy of her people (who aren't worth a sack of potatoes), she ventures into the forest to begin a spiritual order and spread the word of Runin.

JOSHUA: Unfortunately, it's like a dilettante "new agey" thing. People start following you around like you're a self-help guru.

HANNAH: Fortunately, after years of doing public speaking gigs and going on book tours, I realize this isn't the true word of Runin. I renounce my possessions, hop on the back of a Turg, and discover a receptive society in a nearby swamp.

EVAN: Unfortunately, they had a dark prophecy about the Turg rider who would come to cast doubts upon the very foundation of their faith.

HANNAH: Fortunately, after being cast out by the swamp people, I return to Nee'ka. Refugees from Ish'tya have been able to preserve the better parts of their society. They have a new egalitarian social order. Winged people aren't treated like slaves anymore. It's the beginning of something promising.



Your final token is special—this token describes an outcome for the kingdom. This narration can relate to any aspect of the kingdom's future.

◇ *Desiree's final token is a fortune.*

◇ *Desiree: My sweet, forgiving Matriarch has blessed the mortal kingdom. Every child born hereafter is merciful and pure of heart.*

When every player's epilogue is finished, the game is complete.



EXTRAS & RESOURCES

Alternate Rules

FAQs

Key Concepts

Quick Reference Rules

Reference Tables

Character Sheet



ALTERNATE RULES

❖ EXTRA TROUBLE

If you want to play in a harsher setting, you can draw an additional kingdom trouble at the end of every round of turns. Collectively narrate the impact of the new trouble before starting the next round.

❖ HEALING THE KINGDOM

Do you dream of making the world a better place? If you'd like to play a game in which the kingdom can be healed, try this:

- If a player gets **two resounding successes** (two wins on a 6) in one turn, they may use the first victory to narrate a resounding success and use the second victory to narrate healing a kingdom trouble.
- That player takes a fortune token for healing the kingdom, and all players reduce the trouble by one level on their character sheets.

❖ TWO-ROUND VARIANT

If you're short on time, Questlandia can be played in two rounds.

- Draw seven kingdom troubles at the beginning of the game instead of six.
- Follow the "Extra Trouble" rules and draw an additional trouble after each round.
- On the second round, use the "third round" rules for all dice outcomes.

Looking for other ways to play the game? Additional rule variants can be found at www.Questlandia.com.

FAQs

❖ CAN MY CHARACTER DIE?

The opposition may put your character in peril, but your character can't die. If you have any victories during your turn, you have narrative control. Even if you don't have victories, you have final say over anything that directly impacts the well-being of your character.

With that said...if character death is one of your kingdom norms, and it works within the context of your game, feel free to break this rule.

After his death, Ralph is born into his fourth life, known as the Exalted Reincarnation of Decadence.

❖ CAN I CHANGE MY GOAL?

Character goals cannot be changed. If the storyline has strayed from your character goal, that's okay. You don't always know the direction that the game is going to go. Just focus on your scene goals and use the epilogue to wrap up your story in a satisfying way.

❖ HOW OFTEN SHOULD MY CHARACTER APPEAR IN OTHER SCENES?

A protagonist receives additional dice for including relevant relationships in their scene. However, there's no rule requiring scenes with other player characters.

It can be fun for every adventurer to go spelunking together, but it can be just as satisfying to brave the depths alone. Go by what feels right for your story and your character. If a protagonist wants your character in their scene, and it doesn't feel right to you, you're allowed to decline.

KEY CONCEPTS

CHANGING THE MAP: New kingdom troubles have a direct effect on locations in the kingdom. The first time a new kingdom trouble affects a location on the map, the location is “impacted.” The second time a kingdom trouble affects a location, that location is permanently “transformed.”

NARRATIVE CONTROL: The ability to say what happens in a story. In Questlandia, individual dice victories give you narrative control.

OPPOSITION: The players who aren’t currently taking their turn. They play a supporting role in the protagonist’s scene—detailing the setting, roleplaying supporting characters, and generating challenges.

OWNERSHIP: Control over an element in the story. Whoever owns an element has first and last say in conversations about that element.

PROTAGONIST: The character who belongs to the player taking their turn. When you’re playing the protagonist, the spotlight is on your character.

RESOLUTION: The use of dice to discover the various outcomes of a scene. The protagonist can call for their scene’s resolution at any point.

VETO: The power of any player to change or undo another player’s input that makes them feel uncomfortable. Veto power is non-negotiable and need not be explained.



QUICK REFERENCE RULES

❖ SETUP

- Create the **KINGDOM**
 - ... Kingdom ambition and troubles
 - ... Features and norms
 - ... Language and name
 - ... Initial ownership
- Develop **CHARACTERS**
 - ... Draw cards (# of players +1)
 - ... Identity, starting luck, drive
 - ... Choose a character
 - ... Name, appearance, 2 traits, weakness
 - ... Establish **RELATIONSHIPS** with players to left and right
 - ... Declare **GOAL** and receive **2 OBSTACLES**
- Make the **MAP**

❖ SCENES

- Set the scene: **WHERE? WHAT? WHO?**
- Declare your **SCENE GOAL**
- Roleplay until there is a call for **RESOLUTION**

❖ RESOLUTION

- Roll protagonist dice
 - ... Start with 2 dice, add 1 die for each relevant **TRAIT**, **BOOST**, **RELATIONSHIP** and **MASTERED OBSTACLE**
- Roll opposition dice
 - ... Start with 3 dice, add 1 die for each **WEAKNESS LEVEL**, **KINGDOM TROUBLE** at 3+, relevant **OBSTACLE**, and relevant **HINDRANCE**
- The protagonist may engage in **WEAKNESS to:**
 - ... Reroll any number of protagonist’s dice, OR
 - ... Reroll any number of opposition’s dice
- Match any 2 protagonist dice to the highest 3 opposition dice
 - ... Protagonist narrates victories
 - ... Opposition narrates losses

❖ EPILOGUE

- Arrange each player’s tokens, starting with a **FORTUNE**
 - ... Tokens should alternate between fortune and misfortune
- Tell a fortunately/unfortunately story token by token
 - ... Each player’s final token tells a **KINGDOM EPILOGUE**

REFERENCE TABLES

KINGDOM AMBITION

•	Conquest, Domination
◻	Religious, Philosophical
◐	Culture, Prestige
◑	Technological, Scientific
◒	Industry, Trade
◓	Regulation, Control

KINGDOM TROUBLES

Clubs	<i>Civil Unrest, Revolution</i>
Hearts	<i>Sickness, Health</i>
Diamonds	<i>Wealth, Resources</i>
Spades	<i>War, External Conflict</i>

CHARACTER IDENTITY

A	Laborer	<i>Peasant, Slave, Swain</i>
2	Merchant	<i>Shopkeep, Trader, Peddler</i>
3	Warrior	<i>Knight, Soldier, Mercenary</i>
4	Messenger	<i>Courier, Go-between, Emissary</i>
5	Outcast	<i>Miscreant, Thief, Pariah</i>
6	Magician	<i>Enchanter, Diviner, Illusionist</i>
7	Virtuoso	<i>Master Creator, Maestro, Artisan</i>
8	Hero	<i>Adventurer, Champion, Superstar</i>
9	Holy Person	<i>Healer, Priest, Prophet, Monk</i>
10	Academic	<i>Scientist, Scholar, Philosopher</i>
J	Advisor	<i>Counselor, Mentor, Guide</i>
Q	Aristocrat	<i>Noble, Elite, Upper Crust</i>
K	Royalty	<i>King, Princess, Leader, Chief</i>

CHARACTER DRIVE

•	Knowledge, Truth
◻	Love, Loyalty
◐	Change, Progress
◑	Tradition, Preservation
◒	Adventure, Wanderlust
◓	Honor, Glory

CHARACTER TRAITS

Striking	Highbrow	Seductive
Brawny	Pacifist	Commanding
Gentle	Subversive	Wealthy
Grouchy	Daredevil	Eccentric
Disabled	Old-fashioned	Notorious

CHARACTER WEAKNESS

Give In	<i>Seek comfort in sex, food, alcohol, drugs</i>
Cheat	<i>Lie, twist truths, backstab, steal</i>
Check Out	<i>Withdraw, seek solitude or alienation, escape, flee</i>
Give Up	<i>Become depressed, do nothing, stop caring</i>
Lash Out	<i>Lose control, become violent, rage</i>
Show Off	<i>Become proud, vain, cocky, overconfident</i>

PROTAGONIST VICTORIES

Protagonist wins on a...

- Not possible (matching 1s are cleared away)
- Change any player's misfortune token to a fortune token
- Heal a relationship
- Master an obstacle
- Gain a boost
- Resounding success. Fortune token.

OPPOSITION VICTORIES

Opposition wins on a...

- Profound humiliation (all players take one misfortune)
- Change protagonist's fortune token to a misfortune token
- Exhaust a relationship
- Receive a new obstacle
- Receive a hindrance
- Doom. Draw a new kingdom trouble. Misfortune token.

THIRD ROUND RULES

During the third and final round, remember to use the special rules for dice outcomes:

In addition to the normal outcomes, take a fortune token for winning on a 3, 4, or 5 and a misfortune token for losing on a 3, 4, or 5.

_____ KINGDOM NAME _____					
 WEALTH	 UNREST	_____ AMBITION _____	 HEALTH	 WAR	
_____ KINGDOM FEATURES AND NORMS _____					
_____ NAME _____		_____ IDENTITY _____		_____ DRIVE _____	
<input type="text" value="TRAIT"/>	<input type="text" value="TRAIT"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		WEAKNESS	
<input type="radio"/> LEFT RELATIONSHIP			<input type="radio"/> RIGHT RELATIONSHIP		
PORTRAIT/NOTES					
_____ GOAL _____					
<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	
_____ OBSTACLES _____					
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		
BOOSTS			HINDRANCES		
<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>			<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>		
FORTUNE			MISFORTUNE		

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