By Dark of Torch

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Author's note: I wrote this game in bed one night, in
the course of an hour or so. The core dice mechanic is
influenced by *Tunnel Goons* which was written by Nate
Treme. Other mechanics were pulled from a larger
project I am working on and condensed to fit the
aesthetic of *By Dark of Torch*.

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By Dark of Torch is a rules-lite fantasy role-playing game. It is an evolving work in progress…

How to Play

To play this game you need some six-sided dice, pencils, paper, and these rules. You will need one person to act as Game Master (GM) while other participants are players who take on the role of characters of their own creation.

Conflict Resolution

Roll 2d6 and add ability modifier. Compare the roll to a Difficulty rating. **Easy 8. Medium 10. Hard 12.**

Rolling boxcars (two 6s) is always a success. Rolling snake eyes (two 1s) is always a failure.

Favorable and Unfavorable

Leave it up to fate and let the dice determine the outcome to a yes/no question. Roll 2d6, the higher the roll, the more favorable to the PCs.

Example: The PCs are looking for a water source nearby. The GM rolls 2d6 and gets a 10 indicating there is a good chance an accessible water source is nearby.

Player Characters (PC)

Races. Choose 1. **Humans** get two extra gear slots due to their greedy natures. **Elves** get +1 bonus to all Actions involving agility. Elves can see in the dark as if it were daylight. **Dwarves** are robust and get an extra Health point at Level 1. Dwarves can see in the dark as if it were daylight. **Halflings** are small and any creature larger than a human attempting a melee attack against a halfling automatically has a Difficulty of 10+.

Abilities. PCs start with 2 points that can be applied in any way they want. **Brute** is a measure of strength. Brute is used for all strength related actions and melee attacks. **Nimble** is a measure of speed and dexterity. Nimble is used for speed/dexterity actions and ranged attacks. **Wits** is a measure of intelligence. Wits are used for actions of observation, intellect, and to cast spells. A PC must have a Wits score of at least 2 to cast spells. No ability can exceed a score of 3.

Actions. PCs get 2 actions. Move and attack. Attack twice. Move double. Etc.

Attacks. PC attacks do 1 damage.

Health. PCs start with 5 Health. They gain d2 Health per level. When Health is 0, death.

Gear. PCs have 10 gear slots. Something like a dagger or bag of coins is 1 slot. One-handed weapons take up 2 slots. Two-handed weapons take up 3 slots. Light armor 3. Heavy armor 5. Normal clothing doesn't count as slots. Exceeding the 10 slots results in a -1 penalty per point exceeded to Brute and Nimble rolls.

Example: The PC is carrying 13 slots worth of items and has a carry capacity of 10 slots. The PC takes -3 penalties to Brute and Nimble rolls due to the encumbrance.

Random PC Backgrounds
Randomly roll for your PC's line of work before taking on the role of adventurer.

11. Alemaker	42. Lumberjack
12. Baker	43. Merchant
13. Barber	44. Noble
14. Blacksmith	45. Plague Burier
15. Butcher	46. Rat Catcher
16. Carpenter	51. Roofer
21. Cobbler	52. Sailor
22. Cook	53. Shipwright
23. Doctor	54. Soap Maker
24. Dyer	55. Stonemason
25. Executioner	56. Tanner
26. Farmer	61. Thief
31. Footpad	62. Trapper
32. Gambler	63. Treadmill
33. Grave Robber	Operator
34. Herder	64. Weaver
35. Hunter	65. Wheelwright
36. Leech Collector	66. Winemaker
41. Locksmith	

Group World Builder

1. GM draws a rough map outline. This is the world where the adventures will take place. This can be a simple outline with land and water boundaries or a more involved and detailed map with features and locations. The map can expand over time as well.
2. Players take turns adding map locations based on the list below.
3. As players add the map locations, they make notes on their character sheets as to how the locations are connected to their PCs.

A natural landform
A place of rumor
A place of danger
A place forgotten to time
A town
A battlefield
A dungeon
A place built long ago
A place with monsters
A ruins
A place of wealth
A place of fun
A place to retire
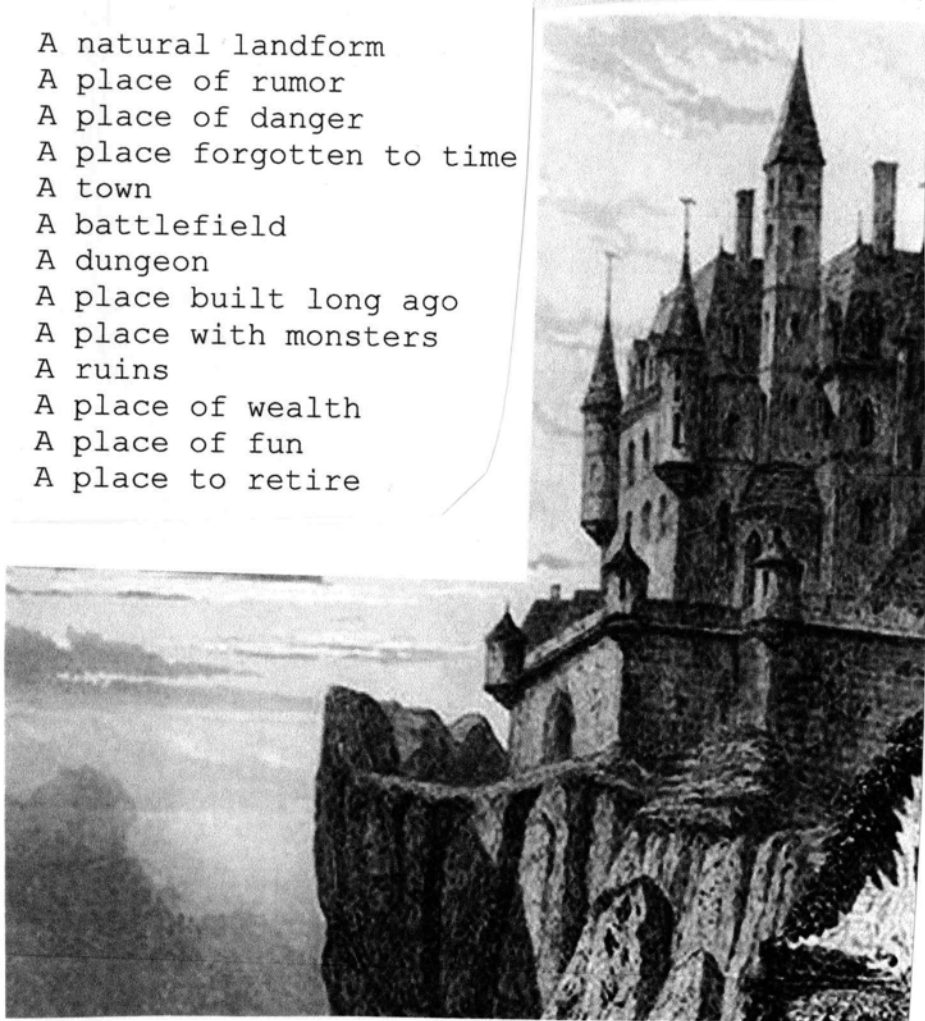
Group History Builder

Use the list below to create historic moments tied to each PC. Players can choose which events to connect to their PC. These events should be defined in some detail. Players should think of the events as things connecting their PCs to the map created.

Experienced Local Event
Experienced Conflict
Experienced Death
Experienced Hardship
Journey Undertaken
Rumor of a Discovery
Rumor of Betrayal
Rumor of Mystery
Rumor of Enemy

XP

XP is gained in two ways. **Overcoming obstacles** (like defeating monsters, defeating traps, etc.) awards 1-2XP per session. **Goals** (like solving a crime, retrieving an item, etc.) awards 1-3XP per session. GMs determine how XP is awarded.

Leveling Up

PCs gain a Level every 10 XP. Maximum Level is 5.
Level 1 PCs are hit on 8+.
Level 2 PCs are hit on 9+.
Level 3 PCs are hit on 10+. PC gains 1 Ability point.
Level 4 PCs are hit on 11+. PC gains 1 Ability point.
Level 5 PCs are hit on 12+. PCs gains 1 Ability point.

Performing Actions

If the outcome of an action is unclear, make a check using the appropriate Ability versus a Difficulty established by the GM. A successful roll indicates a successful action.

Combat

Turns and Rounds

Combat is broken into rounds and turns. Rounds are the time it takes all combatants to take a turn. A Turn is composed of 2 Actions.

Initiative

Group Initiative is used when one side clearly goes first, PCs overpower the opposition, or when turn order doesn't matter. All combatants on one side take their Turns first followed by the opposing side. **Individual Initiative** is used when turn order is important, stakes are high, or the PCs are outmatched. Each combatant rolls 2d6 to determine turn order.

Attacking, Damage, Death

Roll 2d6, add modifiers, compare to the Difficulty of the target. If the roll is equal to or higher than the Difficulty, determine damage. Base damage for most attacks is 1 (Hard monster have a base damage of 2). Be sure to add the MoS of the attack for total damage. Total damage is subtracted from the target's Health. If a target is reduced to 0 Health, they are dead.

Distances: Here, There, and Gone

Here means the combatants are close and can use close/melee attacks.

There means the combatants are at a distance and can use only ranged attacks.

Gone means combatants are not close enough to engage in combat.

Movement

A combatant can move Gone to There or There to Here with a single action. Gone to Here requires 2 actions.

Magic

Spells use the Wits score (minimum score of 2). Magic is freeform. Casters roll against the difficulty (easy, medium, or hard) of what they are attempting to accomplish. For example, shooting a fireball is treated as a ranged attack. Destroying a door is based on the strength of the door. Healing wounds is based on the severity of the wounds. The player describes what the spell is attempting to do. The GM decides if the spell action is possible and if so is Easy, Medium, or Hard.

Casting a spell uses both Actions for that round. The caster's hands must be empty when casting.

Casting a spell costs 1 Health of the caster. This loss of Health can be recovered through normal rest.

Rolling snake eyes on a spell cast attempt results in automatic failure and the caster taking d3 damage.

Healing and Rest
Each hour of rest restores 1 Health.
One night of rest restores Health completely.

Weapons
Normal weapons have a base damage of 1.
Always add the MoS of the attack for total
damage.

Armor
Light armor gives an additional +2 Health.
Heavy armor gives an additional +4 Health.
Health is reduced from armor first. Armor
that reaches 0 offers no protection and must
be repaired.

Monsters

Actions. All monsters get 2 actions per round.

Easy monsters are hit on 8+. Easy monsters have 1 or 2 Health and deal 1 damage when attacking. Easy monsters get +1 when performing actions.

Medium monsters are hit on 10+. Medium monsters have 3 or 4 Health and deal 1 damage when attacking. Medium monsters get +2 when performing actions. Medium monsters grant +1 Treasure die.

Hard monsters are hit on 12+. Hard monsters have 5+ Health and deal 2 damage when attacking. Hard monsters get +3 when performing actions. Hard monsters grant +2 Treasure dice.

Monsters in a lair gain an additional +1 to all rolls while in the lair.

Freeform Monsters

No monsters are listed in this book. Instead, GMs should use their imaginations to take monsters they already be familiar with and determine whether they are Easy, Medium, or Hard. For example, a goblin may be easy while a dragon may be hard.
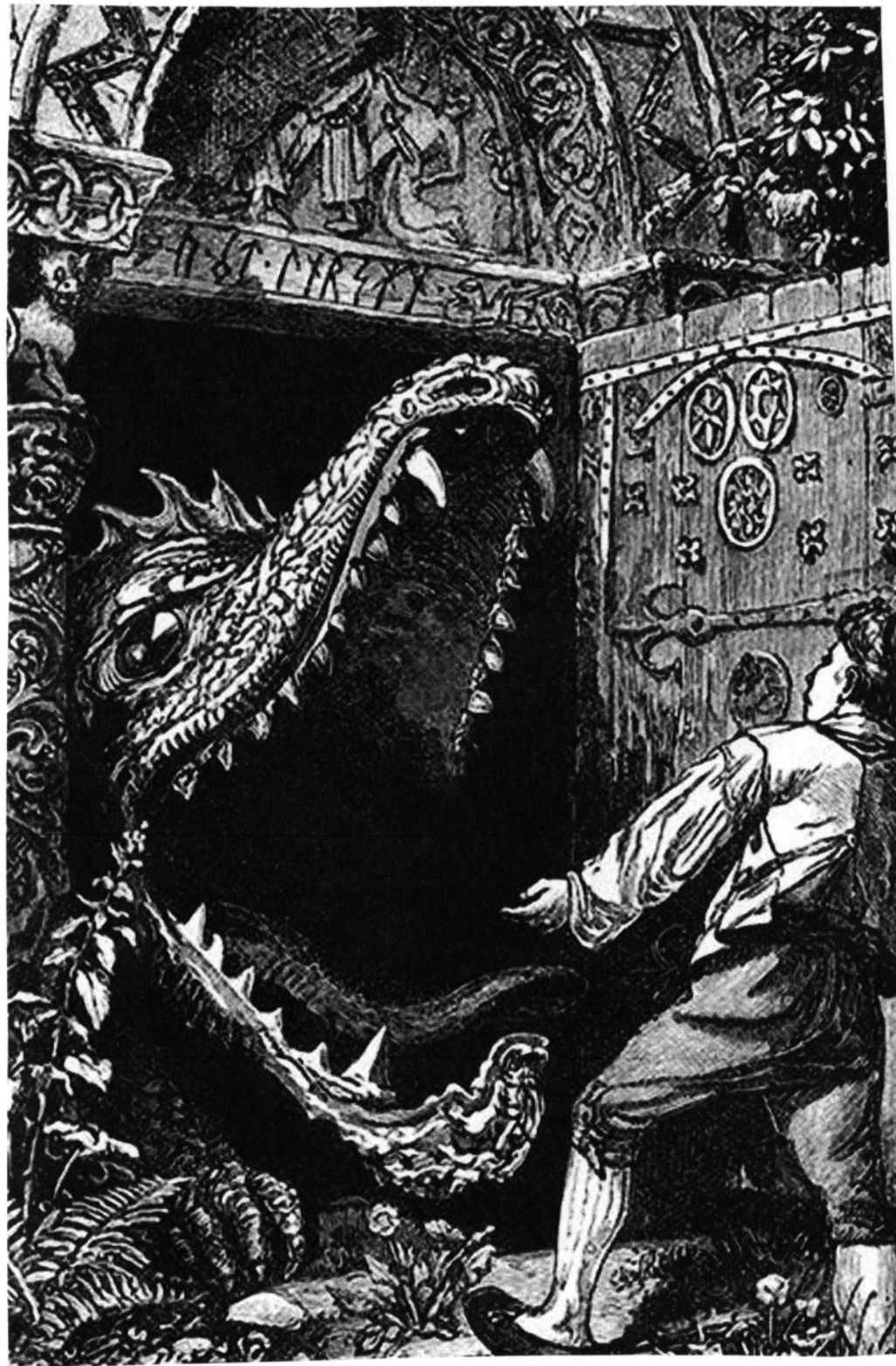
Treasure

Roll 5d6 (medium and hard monsters grant extra dice). You get three rolls and on each roll you roll as many dice as you want (setting aside dice you wish to keep). The goal is to get at least 3-of-a-kind. If you do not have at least three-of-a-kind at the end of the roll, there is no treasure. After three rolls, add all of the similar dice to indicate the total value of the treasure in gold pieces. The GM may multiply value amounts as needed.

Example: Ending up with a total of four 4s would indicate the treasure is worth 16gp.

The GM may roll a d6 to determine what type of treasure was found: 1 Gold, 2 Item, 3 Weapon, 4 Armor, 5 Potion, 6 Magic Item.