

HERE BE DRAGONS!

WHAT'S HIT IS HISTORY.

WHAT'S MISSED IS MYSTERY.

A roleplaying game of adventuring in the uncharted areas of the world , shooting exotic creatures and giving in to petty jealousies.

A 24 hour RPG for the November Ronnies 2005

Using the words 'DRAGON' and 'GUN'

By Iain McAllister

For Melinda

INTRODUCTION

Ah so you have chosen to cast your eye across this fine periodical have you. Excellent choice old boy, though I must warn you. The tales within are not for the faint hearted for this is a journal full of daring do, tragic loss and lucky escapes. Of men and women willing to go to the very extremes of society in order to further that they most strongly believe in 'Science'. You may think they sound like noble souls, no? Be careful, for even those who are willing to sacrifice much to journey deep into the darkest areas of the world succumb to human weakness, a desire to be the best, to bring back the most exciting specimen, to be recognised for the explorers they truly are. And they will do anything to ensure that they do!

WHAT IS THIS THEN?

The tome you hold in your hands is a game, but not like your conventional board or card games you will be use to playing. In this game you and a group of your friends, who we will refer to as players, sit round a table and pretend to be imaginary people called characters, or player characters (PCs). These characters you portray react to situations and people described to them by one of the players, who acts as a Games Master, essentially controlling the world the PCs interact with rather than just controlling a PC. Every Role Playing Game, RPG, has different objectives for the PCs to perform, be it rescuing damsels in distress from fiery castles, or saving the world from scheming villains.

WHAT DO I DO IN THIS GAME?

In 'Here be Dragons' the player characters, who we will call **Explorers** from here on in, journey into the darkest areas of the world, the unexplored areas, the areas where 'here be dragons' might be written on a map, to find, shoot and catalogue all manner of strange beasts, birds and insects. The dragons of the title are not literal dragons, but the metaphorical dragons of sailor's tales, myth and legend. Along the way they will overcome obstacles described to them by the **Guide**, the Games Master mentioned above, as well as their seething jealousy of the other players and their desire to be the best and come out on top no matter what. The game is set in and around 1850 – 1860, the period of Darwin and Wallace and the beginning of the theory of evolution.

GLOSSARY

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Journal of Student Charles Winston-Stanley Smithe
Peruvian Expedition from the University of Oxford, England
Year: 1853

Monday (16/7)

It has been a week now since I and the other students set out from the City of Huacho. Although I was thankful to leave that fetid, hellhole of a town it was nothing compared to the humidity of this jungle. As we creep ever inwards through the tangled undergrowth and looming foliage, a sense of foreboding creeps into my soul, accompanied by a longing to be sitting round a table enjoying one of mother's fabulous sponge cakes. Hector has quickly become the Professor's favourite after discovering a new species of spider creeping up the outside of his tent, and he has taken little time in rubbing his new found position in all our faces.

Thursday (19/7)

As you can tell it has been a few days since I have been able to write. We came to the base of a mountain the locals call Machu Pichu, and were quickly set to work setting up nets and smoking out insects and the like from the canopies above. As the accursed bugs rained on us from above, Hector whooped with delight, most unbecoming. As we turned to see what the excitement was about we saw a huge butterfly, float down into his palms, unconscious to the world. Once again the professor was delighted with this discovery and paid the rest of us no heed for the remainder of the day. One of these days Hector will get his comeuppance, he is far too cocky for his own good.

Sunday (22/7)

Hector is irritating everyone with his teacher's pet status and myself and some of the other lads have played a few pranks on him like apple pie beds and hiding insects in his tent. This seems to have only fuelled his determination to humiliate us, and he has begun writing a book about his journey that makes him and the professor out to be some kind of lone explorers fighting against the wilderness. His ego will surely be the death of him.

Wednesday (25/7)

Climbing to the top of the mountain the previous day had left us exhausted but enthusiastic for the hunt. There were many exotic birds lighting our way up the cliff side, and they will surely make excellent pieces in the Natural History. Unfortunately our day was blighted by an accident on my part. Hector was standing in front of me when I was shooting and I accidentally did not hold my rifle hard enough against me, the ricochet firing a bullet into his leg. He does not look well and may not make it back. Clumsy me.

BACKGROUND

Excerpt from a lecture given by Charles Winston-Stanley Smithe at the National Museum on his return from a triumphant expedition to Peru.

9/03/1854

Lecture Title: The Undiscovered Country

Since the beginning of time man has been an explorer. From those first tentative steps out of the cave towards the light, we have sought ever more information about the world around us. Over time we have come to learn more and more about the world around us and the universe that our lonely planet bobs in. But before we indulge in flights of fancy to far off planets with strange alien creatures, should we not stay closer to home. In the dark corners of ancient Africa, amongst the rivers of the mighty Amazon and across the perilous deserts of the Sahara, many a creature awaits to be discovered in the undiscovered countries of our planet Earth.

THE DARK AREAS OF THE WORLD

I have been to many great cities, seen many cultural wonders and experienced the thrill of a truly civilised society, ladies and gentlemen. But these things pale in comparison, for me at least, to the discovery of a new area of the earth hitherto unexplored. Over the next hour I would like to talk about the areas I have been to as well as the areas that younger men may one day explore, uncovering yet more secrets and dismissing, or perhaps confirming, the statements on the maps that say 'Here be Dragons'.

DEEPEST DARKEST PERU

Located on the west most part of South America, a continent perilous to get to in itself, Peru is full of ancient Aztec ruins and large amounts of dense rainforest full of some of the most fantastic creatures. Brightly coloured birds and several species of monkeys are resident in these jungle areas, but that is nothing to the large number of insects that can be found amongst the upper canopies. The human race is full of diseases yet to be cured and it is possible we will find solutions amongst the plant and animal life in this region. In the meantime it is fun to hunt them and some day someone may find the large fire salamanders and distant dinosaur relatives that are rumoured to lurk in the highest mountains and deepest valleys of this most mysterious region.

THE COLD ZONES

In stark contrast to the jungle areas that the majority of you will probably visit at some point, the cold zones, the Arctic and the Antarctica, are the least explored areas of our great planet. Amazingly enough the few expeditions that have made their way into these vast, icy wastelands have reported reports of some life up there, from the magnificent and majestic polar bear, to the strange and familial emperor penguin. Rest assured though ladies and gentlemen there is still more to be found in this pure ice sheets, and the Eskimos talk of huge behemoth whales that swim below the surface of the ice waiting to swallow whole colonies of penguins all at once.

THE BITING DESERTS

Like their cold counterparts, at first glance the deserts of the world, like the Sahara and Gobi, seem to be inhospitable places devoid of all life. However even in these dry, arid regions of the world life exists and human beings exist along beside them. Mostly snakes and insects are the primary source of life in these areas, but amongst the oases and towards the edges, you can find bird life and large animal life. For those willing to penetrate further in there are no doubt many wonders awaiting and I have heard rumours that the legendary Phoenix exists deep within the desert regions.

THE MAGNIFICENT AMAZON

An area closest to my own heart as you can read in my new book 'The Awesome Amazon', the majestic rivers and grandiose jungles of the Amazon hold many a fantastic creature as well as numerous myths and legends about what may lie within. From the upper deltas where the grand rivers start to their expulsion out into the seas, every inch of the Amazon River is teeming with life, and its jungles are positively replete with new and interesting species just waiting to be discovered. Rumours abound of gigantic fish, and huge spiders that lie at the heart of the web of the Amazon jungle.

FAR EAST

I have little chance yet to explore the far east, but several of my colleagues, including the brilliant big game hunter Archibald Montgomery Rose, have journeyed to that far off land and returned with specimens of such incredible beauty and quality that I intend to make my next expedition to be to that region of the planet.

It is here that the rumours of real dragons first came about. Although many regions have their own dragon stories it seems to be the Chinese that keep the myths most alive with their colourful celebrations and costumes, at is here that I have the largest hope of finding some of these mythical creatures. Yes ladies and gentlemen some of my research has pointed towards the actual existence and I intend to be the first man to put one in the national museum.

Alongside this undertaking I would also like to make a trip to Japan where I hear rumours of pure white tigers and some very rare monkey breeds that have almost human like societies. I also wish to invest time in the rumours of ogres in that region, men who are grotesquely large and brutish with minds bent on violence. If it is true these monsters exist then they may provide vital information to Mr. Darwin and friends.

THE DARK CONTINENT – AFRICA

One of our most interesting and varied colonies, Africa is far too large a continent to include all the possible places you could visit in this short lecture series. From the majestic areas near Cape Town, to its rugged ghosts and vast deserts and deltas, Africa is probably one of the best-known and most explored places in the world.

However, as with any area so large there are areas that are still to be explored and there are certainly rumours of cats larger than lions existing far in land as well as many types of bison, elephant and rhinoceros still to be discovered. I look forward to the day when we can confidently catalogue the entire continent.

Anyway I have really spent far too long talking about the areas you may or may not visit should you choose to follow my footsteps and become explorers yourselves. I would like to cover briefly the simple classification system we are using for the creatures we discover and what you should do to capture and collect these beasts.

ALL THINGS WEIRD AND WONDERFUL

The mere utterance of animals of legend, the slightest glimpse of an unfamiliar shadow or the call of an unfamiliar bird are enough to get any biological explorer hot under the collar. The world is full of many weird and wonderful creatures and life can be found in the remotest corners of the planet that has not been seen by human eye for decades or even centuries. I present you now ladies and gentlemen a means to classify those creatures I hope you will all go out and discover.

Every creature we capture we simply classify by type; bird, fish, mammal, insect etc., it's rarity, calculated using the number of incidences it has been found before, as well as information gathered from the local area. This rarity is also quantified by the British museum, the bible for all collectors from all over the world. Finally we quantify it by size from tiny insects to huge elephants, and then take photos and draw pictures of the creature in its natural habitat.

This simple classification system will help you take your field notes. How do you then get your specimen home though? For that you need a good team of men.

GATHERING YOUR EXPEDITION

Once you have the location where you want to go, it is time to sit down and think about whom you might want to take with you. The leader of the expedition will not necessarily be yourself, and sometimes it is prudent to employ an expert in the area you are going to as the leader. This person will hopefully keep you safe and it is just a matter of swallowing your pride and asking for a bit of help.

Apart from a leader an exploration team usually requires one or more artists or photographers, and a couple of men handy with a gun. Others are more than welcome as long as they are willing to either carry, shoot or draw and record. For the most part you will find most explorer groups have 3-6 main men and will then hire local help to carry their material into the areas they want to go.

RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

Of course no explorer would be without his trusty machete, compass and varied accoutrements, but the most important thing a collector and explorer can carry in this day and age is a gun. Or preferably several guns. Most explorers will carry a general kit on them of water, rations and whatever equipment they need to fulfil their role within a party. A gun will however, be part of every explorer's equipment, due to the dangerous nature of the environment, and very often the people in a given area.

The type of gun an explorer carries on him can often tell a lot about his experience and the sort of dangers he has gone up against before. Those who are inexperienced will tend to carry very few weapons on them, or many inappropriate weapons for their terrain, favouring long rifles for the jungle areas and the like.

The experienced will carry on them precisely the sort of weapons they need for the terrain they are traversing and are also more likely to carry fewer high quality weapons, from small pistols as backup, to a shotguns for close range encounters and rifles for shooting monkeys. Well that is what I use them for anyway.

CONCLUSION

Well ladies and gentlemen that is me for now, if you would like to come and talk to me after the drinks I believe they are preparing upstairs, I would be most happy to regale you all, especially the ladies, with tales of daring do and fantastic creatures and help you all on the path to becoming great explorers.

RULES

So now you know a bit about the background of the world you need to know how to interact with that background. First of all we need each player to create an explorer, a man, or woman, with the will and determination to go into the forbidden areas of the world marked 'here be dragons' and to come out bearing the corpses of many creatures to be crowned the king, or queen, of the explorers. So how do we go about deciding what sort of explorer you are going to play?

PREPARATION

First of all each player will need a copy of the character sheet that you can find in the back of the book. Each player will also need a pencil to write things down with and a good sense of humour.

CHARACTER CREATION

Each player now needs to create a character, or **explorer** for the game, an imaginary person they are going to control in the situations the **guide**, describes. Do this we need a **name, age, background, pride** and a description of their **physical appearance** as well as some **stats** and **ratings**.

NAME

A name is a very important thing in an era when reputation was everything, and so it is important that your character is happy with their name. Choose something that you would be proud to announce loudly over a silent rainforest, or here cheered in a tickertape parade.

AGE

Age is very important in this game as it determines how people perceive you and how well you are likely to get on with other people of different ages. This may not seem immediately important but we will see how age can play a great role in conflicts of jealousy. You may choose any age you wish between, and including, 16 – 55. Anyone younger or older than this would most likely not be on the sort of expedition you are on, but this is of course at the discretion of the Guide. As an explorer your age also determines the perception of you and you have a rank based on it:

AGE TABLE	
AGE	EXPERIENCE
16 – 25	Newbie
25 – 40	Experienced
40 – 55	Veteran

Example: Ross is sitting down with Melinda to create some characters for a game of 'Here be Dragons'. Ross starts out by deciding that his character is called Robert

Matthew Hough, and that he is quite young only 22 making him a Newbie. He fills in these details on his character sheet.

SEX

Most explorers, by the very definition of the period, will be male but there will always be the exceptions to the rule. If you are going to play a female character be aware that the other players, being the rugged explorers they are, will vie for your affections and that you may well become a focal point for jealousies when they arise.

BACKGROUND

Whilst you are traipsing through the jungles, across deserts or making your way slowly down the mighty rivers of the Amazon, it is likely that you and your fellows will do quite a bit of chatting about past conquests, the tricks you played at school etc.

First of all write down your reasons for being on the expedition a little bit of information about your career to this date and the sort of things that motivate you: is it the thrill of exploring new places, the thrill of shooting new creatures or just the thrill of coming back more respected so you can get the girls?

Some of the things you discuss in character may touch upon areas of your character that you are unwilling to share openly with many people, and will push your buttons and annoy you when they are talked about. Each player should write down two bits of **secret history** for their character in the space provided. This could be anything from how they met their current wife, to accidentally being the cause of a friend's death.

These bits of history have nothing to do with the mechanical game of 'Here be Dragons' but allow you to know what is secret from the other players and what is not. These are things you will tell your close friends but not random strangers and may provide for some interesting moments of in party conflict.

PRIDE

As well as your background you also choose a couple of things that you are really proud of in your life be these past achievements or talents that you have. Fill in two of your **pride slots** leaving the rest blank for fleshing out at a later date. These issues of pride will come up when we look at **jealousy**, **conflicts** and **obstacles** later on.

Example: He then goes on to write down his background sticking down that he is currently studying veterinary science at oxford university and wants to specialise in exotics. He writes down that he is proud of his work on Monkey viruses at the institute and his ability to always make his colleagues laugh.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Each player also writes a brief physical description of their character, from their actual body, strong, lithe, agile etc. to the clothes they most commonly wear on their current adventure. This helps cement in everyone's mind, exactly what you look like and makes

imagining other situations involving your character a lot easier. You can draw a picture of yourself if you like but this is not necessary.

Example: Continuing the example above, Ross goes onto describe himself physically, writing down that he is a muscular 6ft tall guy, who is slightly clumsy and has a tendency to wear a lot of tweed even when he is sweating his own body weight every single day.

WHAT ARE YOU LIKE?

In order to get a grasp on how you should play your character, and to give you some things to focus on during the game, each player writes down **two positive** and **two negative adjectives** to describe their characters general attitude. These adjectives should not include anything implied by early declarations about pride and background. The adjectives that are used are positive and negative in context of the character and as decided by the Guide in discussion with the player.

Example: Realising his character is basically a big clown Ross writes down two positive adjectives: Kind and Generous, and two negative adjectives: Loud and talkative.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Now we have a basic outline of the sort of person your character is and what he looks like, we can get down to the more mechanical bits of the game, the information you will use to determine when your character succeeds, and when he fails at a given task.

The numbers we use to define a character are known as statistics, or stats, and are laid out below.

Aim – In a game about collecting animals, many of whom are fast moving and dangerous if you get close up, it is important to know how good you are at shooting. This stat tells you that. This will be low for those who abhor violent methods of animal study and high for those who embrace the spirit of the age.

Chap – This stat tells you how much of a man you are how good you are at things like drinking, fighting, telling tall tales etc. Women have this stat in the game as well as they must be Tomboys really in order to survive in this competitive environment. This will be low for those academic types who keep to themselves but are very good at the actual cataloguing and scientific study of animals, and high for those who fancy themselves as big game hunters.

Explore – This stat covers everything from map reading to jungle survival and is a basic indication of how good you are at being what you are. This is likely to be very low for those just starting out on their exploration careers and high for those who have been on a few and know the territory. Some limits to be imposed might be:

SUGGESTED EXPLORE STAT	
EXPERIENCE	EXPLORE STAT
Newbie	1-2
Experience	2-4
Veteran	4-5

Each of the stats above is rated from 1-5:

STAT RATINGS	
STAT LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	A disgrace
2	Room for Improvement
3	Good Show
4	Marvellous
5	Paragon

Instead of having some points to put into these things, you merely choose the levels you have in the three stats, keeping in mind that the higher your stats, the more you can be a target for jealousy from other players. The more often you succeed and are praised by your superiors the more likely you are to come under attack from the other explorers in your party be this through sabotage of your work, or perhaps something more direct?

Once you have put all you stats together add them all up and put the total in your competency box on your character sheet.

***Example:** Continuing our example from above, Ross decides to assign his stats as follows. He has Chap 4, Aim 3, and Exploration 2. This makes him a bit of a young cocky lad who still has a lot to learn with a competency of 9.*

RATINGS

As well as stats you have two ratings that can be used to track the rivalry between different members of the party.

Jealousy – This is a measure of how jealous you are of the other party members. You have one jealousy rating for every other player in the game as well as some of the NPCs if the Guide says it is appropriate.

At the start of the game you have no jealousy rating to any other party members but that will develop as they prove themselves over you and take the limelight from you. For now just write down the other characters names in the space provided on your character sheet. You will still have space left for other character name including NPCs but these can be filled out during play.

Reputation – Like stats this is rated from 1- 5 using the same scale but is a rating of how well regarded you are, or will be once you get back, from your discoveries in the jungle. It is primarily used in social conflicts and combines with jealousy, as we shall see alter, to give an indication of the other party members feelings towards you. Your starting reputation is determined by your age and you competency: you just add the level of your age; Newbie (1), Experienced (2), Veteran (3), to your competency to give you overall reputation.

Example: Ross adds up his competency, which he did earlier to get 9, to his age, Newbie (1), giving him a total of 10 reputation when he starts out.

GEAR & GUNS

Now we have your stats worked out we need to choose what you are going to take into the jungle with you. For the most time you will have with you whatever you need, and do not need to write it all down. This will include things like backpacks, locals to carry your gear, cameras, nets, crates etc.

However the one thing that is determined by a combination of your stats and choices about age is the type of gun you can have. When young men first go into the jungle they are cocky and self assured, carrying with them the barest amount needed to survive and not the largest amount of weapons. The experienced explorers equip themselves a lot better, they know that the dangerous areas of the world are, well, dangerous, and will take everything they need with them.

There are three basic gear packages dependent on Age, this being an indication of how many expeditions you have been on previously: **Newbie, Experienced** and **veteran**.

It does not really matter exactly what is in these gear packages only the fact that experienced is better than newbie and veteran is better than experienced. If a player wants to find out if they have a particular item they will need to make a resource roll based on their gear package and other factors, but we will come to that under **actual play**.

GUNS

Unlike general gear, a gun is a very important symbol in 'Here be Dragons'. Not only does it tell you how likely you are to be able to shoot certain types of creature, but the number and type of gun you have advertises your experience with game hunting and exploring the dark areas of the world.

Depending on your stats you get some points to spend on obtaining guns for your expedition. Your age, exploration and aim are all taken into account when giving **Gun Points**.

Age: Your age is defined as in the table for gear above, and you get points as follows. This shows your experience and wisdom and the likelihood that you know more about what lies out there than other people.

Newbie	1
Experienced	2
Veteran	3

Aim : This represents the fact that you are handy with a gun and know the sort of weapon you might need. For every level of Aim you have you get a **gun point**.

Exploration: This represents your experience in the field and therefore your experience with shooting the unusual. As with Aim you get one **gun point** for every level you have.

SPENDING GUN POINTS

Now you have your gun points you can use them to equip yourself out.

There are three types of gun to chosen in the game, with their costs written in parenthesis beside them:

Pistols (1): These are 6 shot weapons capable of shooting at long and short range.

Rifles (1): These are 1 shot weapons and can only shoot at long range, but gives a bonus to the shot. They cause 1 extra damage to the target.

Shotguns (1): These are 1 or two shot weapons and can only shoot at short range, but gives a bonus to the shot. They cause one or two extra damage to the target depending on how many shells you fire.

And also three different qualities, also with their costs written beside them in parenthesis:

Standard (1): **Standard** Weapon cost with no extra benefits.

Expensive (3): **Well** made weapon that will only jam on a 6, see p.18.

Heirloom (5): Something that has been passed down from father to son over many generations of one family. This weapon can shoot at long and short range and gets a -1 bonus on all rolls and never jams.

For each weapon write down its details on your character sheet. There is enough space for carrying about 5 guns on you, and this is the most that someone should reasonably carry on them. You will need to record the type of weapon and its quality.

***Example:** Looking at his age and stats Ross sees that he has 6 points to spend on guns, 1 from the fact he is a newbie, 2 from exploration, and 3 from his aim. He decides to buy two guns: a standard pistol and an expensive shotgun. He writes down both his weapons under gear, on his character sheet.*

OFF ON THE TRAIL

Now you all have a character to play who is fully fleshed out and ready for action, it is time to decide exactly how long you plan to play for, where you are going to go and the sort of dangers you think you are likely to face. This process is called the **Planning** of the game and will allow both Explorers and Guide to have a rough idea of the limits of the game and will make it easier for the guide to write his **logs**, a session of play.

Every game, or **expedition**, of 'Here be Dragons' is split into weeks or months of exploration. A week of exploration should not take much more than a 3 or 4 hour session to play, so you can get an idea of how much time you wish to invest in exploring the weird and wonderful.

Every expedition of course needs a leader. This can be one of the player characters or can be an NPC portrayed by the Guide. Keep in mind however that as the leader of the expedition he is likely to draw a lot of jealousy from the other explorers and must therefore be careful and watch his back at all times.

Now you have a length of time and a leader, you decide where you are going to go. This allows the Guide to have a look at the brief descriptions in the background section of the book to get a rough idea of the lay of the land and the environmental dangers.

Last but not least you decide the sort of creatures you are going collecting, whether this be birds or mammals. You can choose to collect insects, fish or reptiles if you want but the spirit of the game is to go hunting animals and birds.

ACTUAL PLAY

So how do all these stats, ratings and decisions so far form a cohesive game. How do you become daring explorers intent on making your name above all other considerations?

GAME STRUCTURE

We have already discussed how the number of weeks of an **expedition**, well game play itself is split into days. Each day of an expedition focuses around a particular challenge to be overcome, be that scaling a particularly difficult mountain range, crossing a treacherous river or, more commonly, shooting a new animal or bird to add to your collection. These focuses are called **major challenges**.

Every day of play must include at least one major challenge and can include any number of smaller challenges be those **obstacles** or **conflicts**. Major challenges should be the reasons that the players are there: hunting wildlife and exploring, but many obstacles and conflicts can arise from the pursuit of the Major Challenge

Example: Now Ross and Melinda have both made characters for a game of 'Here be Dragons' they sit down to discuss their expedition. They decide that Dr. Alan Michael Hutton will lead their expedition, a man they both admire as an expert on the big cats of the Far East, and therefore are also slightly jealous of as well. They are trying to hunt down a rare white tiger that has been seen near Kyoto and the GM decides that it will take two weeks to find, probably two session worth of play. The GM lays out the first day's major challenge, of traipsing through the jungle, and begins to narrate their epic quest to find the white tiger, narrating the minor obstacles that take place through their jungle trek.

FREE PLAY

The majority of time in a roleplaying game is spent in what is usually referred to as 'free play' that is the Guide will narrate situations and the actions of NPCs and the Explorers will narrate their reaction to these situations as they see fit for their characters. The narrative control, the person who tells the majority of the story, lies with the Guide in these incidences of play.

OBSTACLES

The players will of course come across things in their way as they interact with the world, obstacles they can overcome either as individuals, or part of a team. Most of the time the Guide will merely determine whether or not an explorer can take a course of action, by comparing their relative stat against a difficulty he has assigned to it. If the individual is incapable of performing the action then they may 'ask for help', 'Leave it to fate' or see if they have an appropriate bit of gear to solve the problem at hand.

Example: Ross gets lost leading the party, the difficulty to navigate is 4 and he has exploration 2, and has to decide what he wants to do.

ASKING FOR HELP

If when you come across an obstacle the Guide deems you are incapable of opposing, you may ask for help from one of the other members of the group. There are two ways you can ask someone to help you. If they 'lend you a hand' then they add a point to whatever stat you are using. This is merely cooperative and no jealousy can be involved. Alternatively this method of help may not be enough to overcome something. You must then ask someone to 'Show you how its done' where you add a point to their stat. You may increase your jealousy of that person by one if you want.

Example: Ross decides to ask for help first from Melinda who lends him a hand by shimmying up a tree and shouting out the direction of land marks. He then must choose to ask the leader of the expedition to help him out, which he is reluctant to do as he feels he will lose face if he does so. He decides instead to leave it to fate to see if he gets the right direction.

LEAVING IT TO FATE

If you leave the test to fate then you roll 1d6 rolling under the relevant stat. You may do this after asking someone else for help. If you succeed then you can pass the obstacle without trouble. If you fail then you can not overcome the obstacle. You can however then ask for help in retrospect but must endure the humiliation of defeat as well as getting someone else to help you out. Anyone who helps you out you automatically gain a point of jealousy towards. You also lose a point of reputation.

Example: Since Ross is already receiving help from Melinda he has an exploration of 3 when he chooses to leave it to fate. He rolls a d6 and gets a 4. The party sets of in a circle coming round to the point where they started in a couple of hours.

USING YOUR GEAR

We have left gear fairly undefined at the moment but I am sure most of you are presuming the sort of things you have on you: walking stick, natty clothes, walking boots etc. Whenever you want to use some gear to solve a problem you make a check against the kind of item you want taking into account the type of gear you have on you.

The Guide rates the item you want to use as either

- Likely:** It is entirely possible you brought this with you
Unlikely: You might have brought this item with you
I don't think so: It is very unlikely you brought this item with you.

These three ratings have a number attached to them 0,1 and 2 respectively. Your gear also has a number attached to it.

GEAR LEVEL BY AGE	
AGE	LEVEL OF GEAR
Newbie	3
Experienced	4
Veteran	5

When you want to find out if you have a bit of gear you take the likelihood of you having the item and subtract it from your gear rating. You must then roll equal to or under this number to obtain the item.

If an item you request would able to help you out in the current situation you can raise you stat by one. Please note you can only request one piece of gear per obstacle or conflict. Once a piece of gear is known to be in your gear you can write it down in the gear section of your character sheet.

Example: In the above example, if the difficulty remained at four, Ross could see if he packed a compass. The guide decides he probably has that and makes him roll a d6. Ross

rolls a 3 meaning he has a compass and can get himself out of the situation without resorting to anything else.

NARRATION CONTROL

When you succeed at an obstacle you take over control of the narration, from the guide, until you have finished telling the story of how you overcome the obstacle. If you have to ask someone for help in anyway then you may narrate up until the point when someone helped you and then they take over narration until the obstacle is overcome in a narrative sense.

Example: In the above example if the difficulty had been 3, Ross could have asked Melinda for help to overcome the obstacle. Ross then narrates that he starts wandering off in the wrong direction, and the Melinda narrates, but I shout after him that I meant his other left.

CONFLICTS

A conflict is different from an obstacle, in that something, or someone is actually directly opposing you. This will most commonly happen in ‘Here be Dragons’ when you are trying to shoot an animal or when you eventually start beating the crap out of your fellow explorers because they have just pushed you that one step to far.

When a conflict happens a series of rounds are embarked upon with two sides, the protagonist and the antagonist. Both sides can consist of one or more people.

DECLARING STAKE

The first thing to decide in a conflict is the stake, exactly what is the cause of the conflict. Is it a physical fight, a bismirchment of your past or honour or maybe someone is calling into question your skills as an explorer. The exact nature of the stake is up to the two participants and the Guide to decide.

Example: Ross is scouting ahead when he sees a creature stalking through the undergrowth. Drawing his pistol he lines up a shot, his stake being to hit the animal.

JOINING BATTLE

Once the stake is decided the conflict can begin. Each participant on the different sides rolls a d6 and adds the relevant stat. The highest result on either side is taken and the highest result wins. The owner of the winning dice roll gets to narrate the conclusion to the conflict and also is the only one who can spend any jealousy to affect anyone in the conflict. See ‘Jealousy’ on p.19 for more details on how this works.

SHOOTING THINGS

When you want to shoot something you use you Aim vs. the difficulty to hit the object, usually a creature, see p.21. You also have an amount of ammo in each gun detailed under its description. When you run out of ammo you must spend some time reloading and must miss a round of the conflict if it continues, see below. Your target must also take any extra damage the gun inflicts. Extra damage is listed in the gun description on

p.12. When you take a test with a gun if you roll a 1 or a 6 the gun jams and may not be fired till it is unjammed.

There is one further restriction on shooting things and that is range. All guns can shoot at long or short range. Short range is defined as 20m and anything above that is long range.

NARRATION CONTROL

Just as for obstacles, control of narration passes to the winner of the roll, allowing them to narrate exactly what happens to everyone in the conflict. Of course they must spend 'Jealousy' to make bad things happen but we will get to that in a moment. If after the roll, neither participant is defeated, most commonly in a physical fight, then the conflict may carry onto another round, each person detailing their new stake as usual. Only after both sides declare the conflict is over, or one side is removed from the conflict, is the conflict actually ended.

DAMAGE

There are consequences to failure in everything we do and that is no different in this imaginary world. Every character has 5 levels of damage:

DAMAGE TABLE	
LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	Flesh wound
2	Deep Cut or bad sprain
3	Very Deep cut or fracture
4	Gaping Wound or Break
5	Kiss me hardy

Every level of damage you have reduces you stats by that amount making it harder for you to do things.

The only time you take damage is when you are involved in conflict that is physical, or you fail an obstacle that would have a physical outcome for failing. Every time this happens you take one level of damage. If you take enough damage to reduce all your stats to 0, then you are dead and your deeds will be told for decades to come, or maybe not if your rivals have anything to do with it. Don't fret if your character dies, you may still affect the outcome of some things by using your remaining jealousy.

HEALING

At the end of each day you reduce your current damage level by one. Someone may also make a **chap** test against the level of your wound once per day in order to reduce the wound level by one.

JEALOUSY

A fundamental part of ‘Here be Dragons’ is your feelings of jealousy towards the fellows in your group, whether that is because of the gear they carry, their achievements to date, or what they are achieving on the current expedition.

GAINING JEALOUSY

Every time an explorer succeeds at a test or in a conflict, all those who witnessed the conflict or test may raise their jealousy of that character by one point.

Also every day an explorer spends in close proximity to someone whose total competency is higher than the explorers gains a point of jealousy towards that person. They may also choose to gain a point of jealousy towards any one person in the group who has a better competency or gun than you after every day of play. Between days of play every player should choose if they are increasing their jealousy towards any other player.

PRIDE

Before we move on to how jealousy is used in play, we need to touch the issue of the prides that have been defined so far. When ever anyone does something that directly calls into question or affects in anyway, something you hold to be a pride, you may gain two jealousy towards that person instead of 1.

You may also gain a new pride whenever you succeed at doing something, that choice is yours. If you fail at task or conflict that directly involves a Pride then you lose a point of reputation.

USING JEALOUSY

Jealousy fluctuates throughout the game and is used to represent you trying to off the other players and claim all the prizes for yourself and allows you to manipulate the game world when you make tests.

Whenever you succeed at an obstacle or conflict you may spend jealousy to make negative consequences happen for other people nearby the conflict or in the conflict. For anyone in the conflict you may spend one point of jealousy you have for that person in order to narrate something bad happen to that explorer. You can directly injure them in this way if you want but the in game consequences of deliberately attacking a fellow will be no doubt severe. For people outside the conflict you can spend two jealousy to make negative consequences happen to them.

Example: Later in the same session, Ross has built up some jealousy towards Melinda. When he succeeds at shooting a tiger, he narrates that the tiger is leaping towards Melinda as he shoots, falling on top of her and causing her to be injured for one level of damage. He spends one jealousy to do this.

These negative consequence constitute an **obstacle** for the player against one of their stats with a difficulty set by the level of success of the person who is spending jealousy to harm them. For every point of success, a point is put towards the difficulty of the obstacle.

Example: In the above example, Ross has created an obstacle against Melinda's chap skill. Ross succeeded by three points against the tiger, rolling a 9 to the tiger's 6. This means Melinda has a difficulty 3 obstacle to overcome, and with her Chap of 1 it doesn't look like she is going to be able to avoid it.

THE CURSE OF JEALOUSY

If you build up a lot of jealousy towards one person and find no adequate release for it, then it is possible it may take over your actions from time to time and cause you to do stupid things. If you have more than 3 jealousy in total towards all players, other players may spend a point of jealousy for you to reduce your die roll by one for one obstacle or conflict. They may not reduce you below 3 jealousy in total like this.

LOSING JEALOUSY

Whenever someone you have jealousy towards fails a test or conflict you may choose to lower your jealousy towards that person by one. This can be useful if you are feeling too jealous and running the risk of screwing up because of your feelings toward other players.

JEALOUSY OF THE DEAD

If a character dies, he may use his remaining jealousy towards other players in a more direct way than the still breathing explorers. Anytime one of the people he was jealous of makes a dice roll, he may spend a point of jealousy to make them re-roll the test, or to lower the die rolled by one point. In this way the Karma that was built up between players is realised even after a character is removed from play.

REPUTATION

The other important rating we have touched upon is your reputation, how well regarded in the scientific communities that will herald your return with promises of money, recognition and general applause. Each species, see bestiary p.xx, has an associated rating with it that relates to the amount of reputation it will award you for killing that creature. As your reputation grows on the expedition the other players will of course get jealous, and may use their jealousy to relieve you of some of your finds.

LOSING REPUTATION

Although it is a harder matter to gain reputation, it is easy to lose. As discussed already in the conflicts section, if you fail an obstacle test, or lose a conflict, you lose a point of reputation.

BESTIARY

Of course this game is far too short for me to provide a complete list of animals that you might encounter, and to do so would also restrict the imagination of not only the Explorers but also the Guide. Instead I will provide you a loose structure to create a variety of creatures from insects, if you still want to be entomologists, to the more commonly used birds and animals.

There are three stats that define every creature you are hunting, all rated from 1-5.:

Size: How big the animal is, 1 is a tiny insect and 5 is a large elephant

Threat: How dangerous the animal is, 1 is tame 5 is extremely hostile

Rarity: How rare the animal is, how common is it to find it?, 1 is fairly common and 5 is one of the rarest creatures on the planet.

The stats are used to determine how easy it is to kill the creature and how easy it is to find.

The time needed to find a creature is directly proportional to its rarity. For every point of rarity, you need to spend a week of game time looking for the creature.

In order to shoot creatures, you need to enter a conflict with that creature. The conflict is defined as Aim vs. (Size + Threat) for the actual shot. Damage is dealt to a creature as for an explorer, straight to its stats, but is killed when either its size or its threat is reduced to 0, not both.

Most of the time when an expedition sets out they will not have a clear idea of exactly the sort of creature they are looking for, they will just be looking for new and interesting ones. Of course when they set out they may hear tales of fantastic animals and magnificent birds and may choose to hunt those creatures down specifically.

As the Guide it is your job to invent fantastic creatures for the explorers to discover and hunt. They may behave in a certain way; they may be fantastical and breathe fire or be able to disappear. The limit is only your imagination and you can invent whatever creature you want. If you want your creatures to have fantastic abilities then merely rule how they work within the context of obstacles and conflicts I have already provided for you.

REPUTATION REWARD

I mentioned a reputation reward for killing a creature in the reputation section above. This reward is calculated as an addition of the 3 stats divided by 5 and rounded up. This means that there are three levels of reward for killing a creature: 1, 2 and 3.

Example: Upon killing the tiger Ross takes its rarity, 2, adds its size, 3, and its threat 2, and divides them by 5, rounding up, to get two reputation for the kill.

FINISHING UP

Generally speaking a roleplaying game will finish when everyone around the table agrees it does. However, for 'Here be Dragons' there should be a defined moment when the game ends. This should be defined by all the players before the game even starts, and should either be when they have caught a certain number of animals, or gotten to a particular area. The condition of ending the game can be literally anything the players and Guide, decide it to be.

WHO HAS WON?

In 'Here be Dragons' there is a defined winner at the end of the game. The person who comes out of the expedition with the highest reputation, and therefore the most kills to their name, is declared the winner. Note that this may not necessarily be his kills, but as far as everyone outside the party is concerned they are, and he has gotten them by fair means. Or foul?

EXAMPLE SCENARIO – MYSTERY OF THE COCKATRICE

In the hills of Italy there is rumoured to live a fierce beast that can turn you to stone and breathe fire. As part of a British exploration group to the region you and your colleagues have agreed to go up into the hills above a small Italian village called Pandomino.

The creature involved in this scenario is indeed a legendary cockatrice, and has the head of a cockerel, lion and eagle and can breathe fire, ice and can hypnotise those unwary of its abilities. The cockatrice has the following stats:

Size : 4
Threat : 5
Rarity : 5

Can breathe fire from its cockerel head and ice from its lion head. Both these cause an extra point of damage and are short range attacks. The last head can hypnotize people meaning they can not do anything for a round in a conflict. This attack is the animal's threat vs. the targets Chap. Cockatrices live in caves near villages where they can pick of those who come wandering in to the hills. They only come out to feed when there is a full moon, and the rest of the time stay hidden in the vast cave networks of the Italian hills.

The scenario will probably run over two sessions so the Guide does not want to restrict to early the direction the players may take. He sets up the first major challenge as an attempt to get into the mountains, where the Italian Military are currently holding training exercises. It is one week before the next full moon so the players must hurry to capture the beast before it kills any more people.

A FEW QUICK THANK YOUS

I would just like to thank anyone who actually downloads this and gives their time to read it and hopefully play it. You guys are the reason we write games and in the end an unplayed game might not as well have been written.

I would also like to thank a few individuals who made this process easier:

Melinda my girlfriend for providing coffee, food and the occasional hug over a very long Tuesday as I typed away.

My parents for supporting me in all I do.

The CGS team for not killing me every time I come up with a new idea and being kind enough to publish some of the stuff I write.

Thank you one and all. I would like to fit more in, but I don't have time!

HERE BE DRAGONS

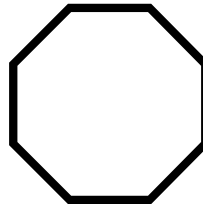
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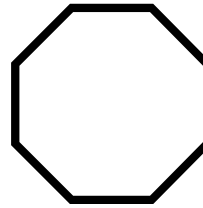
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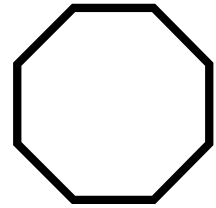
BACKGROUND



AIM



CHAP



EXPLORE

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY

DAMAGE

PRIDE

GEAR

PRIDE

GUNS

PRIDE

TYPE

QUALITY

PRIDE

PRIDE