

A SWIFTLY FALLING EMPIRE: CAMPAIGN RULES FOR SWORDSMEN & SKELETONS© 2015 DRAGON TROVE LLC

BACKGROUND: For many centuries, the North Eastern Empire of Great Velkar has been a land of peace, but the realm has fallen into decay. Armies of monsters and barbarians rage forth from the borderlands, sacking the Free Cities. It is up to a few noble men of courage and vision to take the reins of the empire for themselves, and bring again a time of order and stability.

FORTUNES OF WAR: Roll 1d20 each time the party leaves a Dungeon. This is defined as no specific amount of time. 1-9: Place a Chaos Army at a random Chaos Fortress. 10-12: Move each Chaos Army on the map 1d6 spaces toward the nearest Lawful Army or Free City. 13-15: Place a Lawful Army at the Free City nearest a random Chaos Fortress. 16-18: Move each Lawful Army on the map 1d6 spaces toward the nearest Chaos Army or Chaos Fortress. 19-20: The War Intensifies; each time this result is rolled, add 1d4 to the number of armies either Law or Chaos adds to its forces each time either side adds armies from a roll on this table from this turn forward. Future rolls of 19-20 are cumulative with prior rolls of 19-20. Map Symbols: City and village symbols are Free Cities, and are the same for all purposes. The Roman enumerated hexagons with the skull castles are Chaos Fortresses roll 1d6 to determine a random Chaos Fortress when needed. Armies can move across the ocean; they will hire ships as needed. All allied armies that start in the same hexagon move as a group. Dice to determine a target location if two or more are equally close, or for movement order when it matters. New armies cannot be raised at a destroyed Free City or Chaos Fortress, reroll.

MASS BATTLES: When opposing armies or a Free City or Chaos Fortress and an opposing army meet in the same space, each side immediately rolls 1d6 per army, Free City or Chaos Fortress present. The higher total score destroys the enemy, without significant harm to itself. If the scores are equal, the armies are locked in a war of skirmish and maneuver until the next year. No army will move while locked in battle. If a battle involves a Free City or Chaos Fortress, and the side aligned with the city or fortress loses, it is destroyed and is now a dungeon, in which the players can adventure. All armies will ignore it. If player characters are present at a mass battle, the battle can be fought as above, or as Heroic Stand, at the player character's discretion. The player characters will face the enemy champions (one per each Chaos Army present, each rolled up as a single monster on the highest level dungeon encounter chart), and their minions (one per each Chaos Army present, each rolled up as a single monster on the lowest level dungeon encounter chart, 1d6 creatures present per roll). Law gets the player characters plus one roll for 1d6 of the following troops for each Lawful Army present: 1=Dwarf Guards, HD:4, AC:16, Damage:1d8 MV:6; 2=Elf Rangers, HD:3, AC:14, Damage:1d6 Special: Ranged Attacks, MV:12; 3=Knights, HD:5, AC:17, Damage:1d10, MV:15, 4=Men At Arms, HD:3, AC:17, Damage:1d8, MV:6; 5=War Dogs (as wolves); 6=Militia, HD:1, AC:12, Damage:1d6, MV:12. Each side checks morale when the number of its troops or minions drops below 50%, and troops or minions (not champions or PCs) flee if they fail. Champions must check morale or flee if half their number is destroyed, or half hit points lost for a single champion. The side losing at the Heroic Stand (the critical juncture of the battle) is destroyed. A player character does not check morale, but can flee at his discretion, taking a single back attack (-4 to AC) from each adjacent foe, but escaping if he survives. If all PCs flee, their side loses, as above. A fleeing PC is disgraced, and a price is put on his head. If he is recognized, he will be subject to arrest and execution.

DISCOVERING HONORS: There is a 1% chance per level of the highest level monster defeated in any encounter (dungeon, lair or wilderness) of acquiring a random Honor, double for army combat. Honors often take the form of a captive that the monsters are preparing to enslave or eat. The party must return the captive to the free city nearest a random Chaos Fortress. Players decide who gets the Honor, or roll 1d20+Charisma modifier, with the high score getting the Honor.

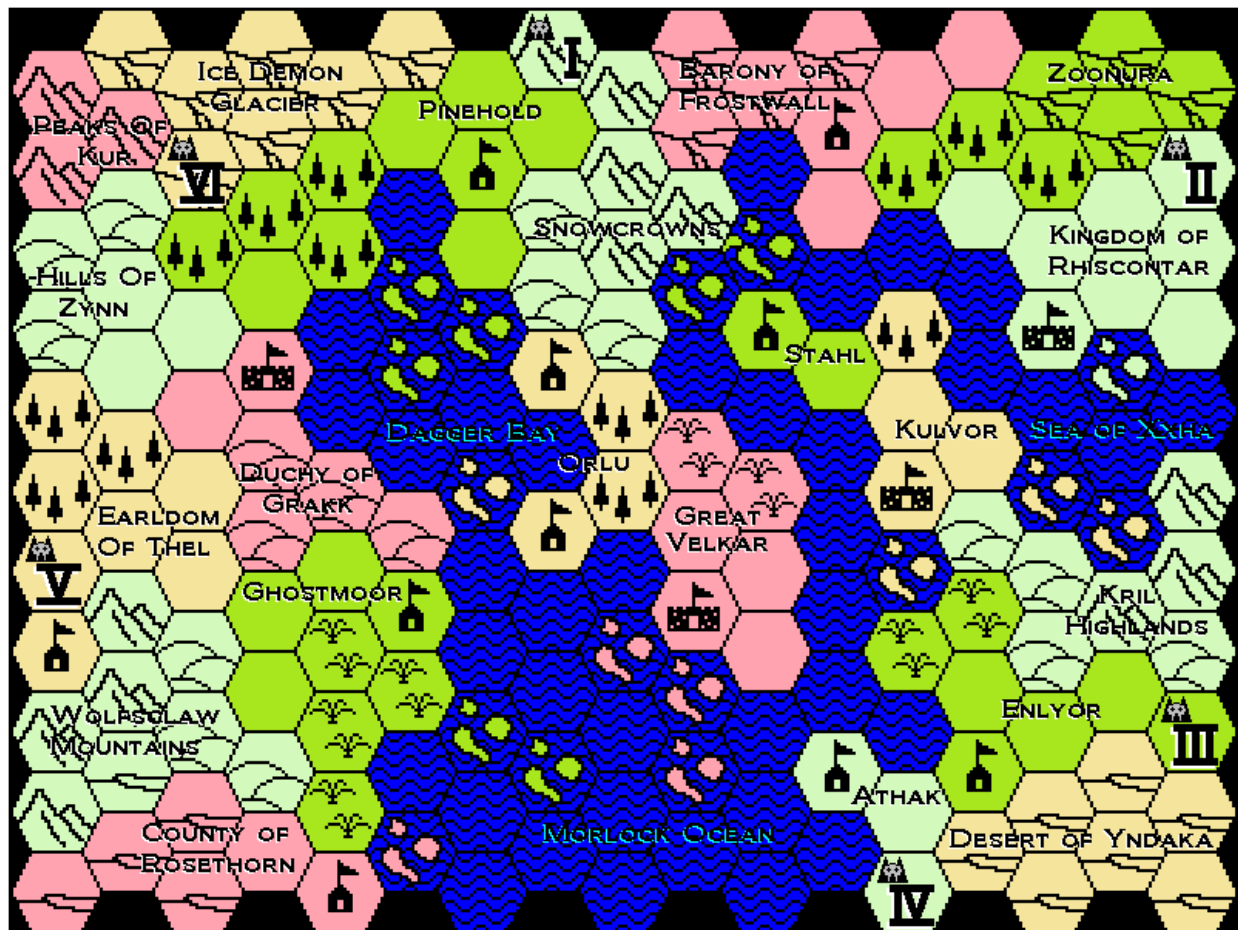
HONORS (1D12): All bonuses for Honors are cumulative with bonuses for other Honors. All Honors can be gained multiple times unless specifically stated otherwise. *A PC disgraced for cowardice (see above) he loses all Honors received; the next Honor he receives has no effect other than to redeem him, lost Honors do not return.* 1-2 Steel Bank Investor: Can invest any amount of money immediately after a Fortunes of War roll is resolved. Immediately after the *next* such roll is resolved, the investment will earn +1d20%. The money cannot be spent until the investment matures. 3 Princess Bride: Rescues a daughter of the Emperor and is raised two ranks in the nobility. Future rolls of this count as 7-8 below. 4 Companion Guard: 4th level swordsman enters your service (you saved someone dear to him). He never checks morale and is loyal unto death if treated honorably. He will adventure with you, and gains experience like a player character. 5 Privy Councillor: +3d6 Influence points; +1 Influence Roll (audiences with the emperor). Future rolls of this count as 7-8 below. 6 Defender of the Faith: The church grants 5 free levels of spells/adventure at its temples; +3 to reaction with priests. 7-8 Powerful Friends: +1d6 Influence points. Each can be used to modify a single *Influence Roll*. These are d20 rolls that can modify Imperial actions: 15+ gain access to forbidden area of the palace, 20+ changes target of a moving Army of Law (or stack of Armies of Law), 25+ orders a non-moving Army of Law (or stack of Armies of Law), to move, 30+ rebuilds a destroyed city, 35+ raises a new Army of Law. 1+CHA bonus Influence rolls can be made after each Fortunes of War roll. Influence points must be divided among the rolls, and declared before the rolls are made. Influence Points can be used again each time a Fortunes of War roll is resolved. 9-10 Nobility: Raised to the rank of knight or

promoted to the next rank if already a noble. Each time received, grants +1d3 Influence Points, also grants 2,000 GP per Fortunes of War roll. Ranks: knight, baron, marquis, viscount, count, earl and duke. 11 General: Raised to general. Commands Lawful Armies if present at battle. If he fights without a Heroic Stand and loses, he can, if he makes a save modified by Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma (player's choice), reroll the result; second roll is final. 12 Priceless Heirloom: Find a dying man who was on a quest for an extremely valuable, legendary gem, worth 1d4 x 50,000 GP (Note: if the die roll is 4, add 200,000 GP to the total and roll again. Keep rolling until you do not roll a 4). He will tell you where it is (1d6 rooms away in a random direction) and ask you to use it for the good of the Empire.

RAISING ARMIES AND BUILDING KEEPS: Chaos will overwhelm the Empire if you do not act. Non-disgraced PCs can hire Mercenary Armies (cost 100,000 GP) or build Keeps (count as Cities, cost 50,000 GP). These function as ordinary free cities and armies, but the player controls them. A Mercenary Army will move where the player orders it to, at the rate of 1d6 hexagons after Fortunes of War roll is resolved. A PC accompanying his own Mercenary Army or in his own Keep acts as General, though if both Lawful Armies and Mercenary Armies are present, a General commissioned by the crown outranks a Mercenary General.

ROLEPLAYING RANDOMIZERS (OPTIONAL): Get a set of Rory's Story Cubes. When the players enter a Free City, roll 2 cubes, and apply the symbols in any way the players and GM think sounds adventurous. This is a great way to add intrigue.

WILDERNESS TRAVEL AND ENCOUNTERS: Hexagons are 25 miles across. Travel 2 hexagons per day over plains or sea (ship travel costs 100 GP / person / hexagon), 1 hexagon per day over other terrain. Roll 6 on 1d6 each day for encounters. Plains and hills count as low level, forests, desert, ocean and swamp as mid-level, and mountains and glacier as high level dungeon.



OPTIONAL RULE: OUTLAW PCS: A PC who is disgraced can raise mercenary armies and build keeps. It is harder to do this (he must declare what he is going to raise and set aside the money, then SV, modified by CHA; if he fails, he gets no armies/keeps, and loses the money) and his forces will be treated as if lawful by Chaos and as if chaotic by Law. However, he can attack anyone, and if he conquers Great Velkar, he can get a pardon (at the point of a sword) from the Emperor and start getting honors anew.