

Tarragon

Glossary of Changes

Glory = Experience

Epithet = Promise

Pathos = Effort

Divine Favor = Features

Islands = Adventures

Vault of Heaven = The Big Bad

Voyage and Exodus = Long Rest

Introduction

A Paragon game

To play Tarragon will need to have access to the Agon rule book. If you are new to Tarragon, I recommend you read through Agon before diving into this adaptation.

Another Dragon Game

Tarragon is a game about fantastical heroes fighting against a big bad villain that is causing strife in the world.

It is a game about hitting tropes and playing out familiar ground.

Terragon's intention is to support you by playing a party of heroes, fighting terrible foes and protecting those they care about.

This game is my answer for when people would like me to run the other very popular Dragon game.

Dust Them Off

Use material from other fantasy roleplaying games to provide inspiration for your own Tarragon game.

Monsters, adventures, dungeons, classes, it's all a fair game. The aim is to take the excitement from that material and leave behind the baggage of balance and political views.

Playing in this Space

This place is close to many people's hearts. It's how many people got started with role playing games. Unfortunately there are aspects of this type of fantasy role play game experience that are rooted in racism and colonialism. Terragon does not allow those themes to run rampant without introspection or discussion.

By default Tarragon leaves the following behind:

There are no functional differences in races.

There is no alignment.

The world is not a place for the adventuring party to loot, exploit and do violence to.

Have plenty of discussions with your group about expectations and comfort levels with some of the themes in traditional fantasy roleplaying games.

Get everyone's feedback on what they would like to see in the game and what they would really like to leave behind.

An Adventure Awaits

Together the Hero Players will form a party. This party will have a central figure they are opposing called the Big Bad. The Big Bad could be a dragon, a living spell, warlord, or whatever you all come up with. All that matters is that the Big Bad threatens something precious to you. If you do not stop it, who will?

Tone

Tarragon is a heroic fantasy. Meaning that we know the heroes will most likely triumph in the end. We play to find out how they attain that victory and what it costs them along the way.

Setting

Feel free to make your own world or use a premade one. Tarragon assumes a setting of magic, adventure, and monsters. Together you will turn something sort of generic into something special and unique.

Starting the Game

The Big Bad

The first step in starting the game is to decide who the Big Bad is.

Choose from one of the options below or invent your own. More on inventing your own ([here](#))

The Dragon - A cunning, ancient and greedy, winged lizard.

The Warlord - A ruthless, charismatic, and brutal leader.

The Demon God - A dogmatic, grotesque, and influential creature.

The Archmage - A conniving, irresponsible, and destructive force.

Build your own or grab a premade.

Before you can defeat the big bad you must go on adventures to gain strength and learn how you can defeat them.

As you go on adventures the Strife Player will mark in what aspects your quest got you closer to defeating the big bad.

Decide on how long you would like to play.

One shot- we fight the big bad in this session's adventure.

Short campaign- fight the big bad after three aspects are filled.

Long campaign- fight the big bad after 5 aspects are filled.

Creating your Hero

1. Your Promise

Write the Promise you made to the party on the adventure.

Examples:

I Promise to -

shield you all from harm

be the nightmare of our foes

keep spirits high

always be ready for a fight

know the secrets of the past.

not leave anyone behind

make the choices no one wants to make

never lose sight of our ideals

be the strongest warrior

be a great leader

watch out for danger

be an ambassador to the wilds

get into places no one else can.

not get caught.

make the gods favor us.

protect the innocent.

vanquish evil.

never forget you all
to follow orders
always have hope
make sure we all make it home.
be a master of magic
rally all to our cause

Know

Assign a d6 to it.

You add your Promise die to an encounter if you are keeping your Promise

2. Your Name and Pronouns

Choose a Name and Pronouns. Assign a D6 to your Name. As you gain more Experience your Name die will increase.

3. Backstory

Your backstory replaces your origin. What did you do before you joined the adventuring party? Sum up the answer in a short title. Such as the Champion of the Area or Schoolmaster.

You can choose to have a tragic backstory. If you have a tragic backstory, write what the Big Bad did that made your life so tragic. Such as the last survivor of my village or Widowed.

4. Favored Domain

Based on your backstory choose your favored domain and assign a d8 for it. Your other domains get d6. The domains are the same as Agon.

Culture and Fellowship - Resolves Encounters of negotiation, making friends, being vulnerable, sharing your culture and understanding other cultures.

Initiative and Tactics

5. Features

Features represent powers, spells, equipment, feats and all sorts of trappings that come with being an adventurer.

Just as in Agon: Choose your favored feature and mark it twice.

Distribute three other marks among the other features.

Use the Feature Lists or make up your own features using material from other sources as inspiration.

6. Look and Style

Finish off your Hero with writing how they look and what their style is.

7. Bonds

Once everyone is finished making their hero. Introduce the heroes.

When you introduce your hero, tell us their name, role, backstory, their defining feature, look and style. Each hero gains 2 bonds with

each other hero. If the hero has a tragic backstory they gain 1 bond with each hero and an advantage die named "vengeance"

Lists

Use these lists if you're stuck on coming up with something for your character.

Names

1	Theo
2	Kalm
3	Nessa
4	Mordcai
5	Pip
6	Fizzbus
7	Dex
8	Risma
9	Ength
10	Pearl
11	Athas
12	Daze

Backstories

1	Acolyte
2	Folk Hero
3	Soldier
4	Outlaw
5	Parent
6	Educator
7	Hermit
8	Leader
9	Noble
10	Student
11	Lover
12	Caregiver

Tragic backstories

1	Turncoat
2	Lone Survivor
3	Family Troubles
4	Freed Captive

5	Regretful Past
6	Cursed

Features

Martial

1	Crushing Blow
2	Whirlwind
3	Cleave
4	Defensive Stance
5	Weapon Master
6	Tactician

Arcane

1	Fireball
2	Tendrils from Beyond
3	Lighting Bolt
4	Counterspell
5	Blink
6	Arcane Eye

Thrifty

1	Sneak Attack
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2	Useful Equipment
3	Fleet-Footed
4	Sure Shot
5	Multi-shot
6	Shadow Step

Primordial

1	Shapechange
2	Animal Companion
3	Regrowth
4	Nourish
5	Winter's Grasp
6	Entangle

Divine

1	Radiant Shield
2	Healing Song
3	Smite
4	Enflame
5	Tongue of the Dead
6	Turn Undead

Looks

Pick as many as apply

- androgynous, conforming, shifting, nonconforming
- Asian or South Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Indigenous, Middle Eastern,

White, _____

Style

1	Practical
2	Alluring
3	Unkempt
4	Flamboyant
5	Punk
6	Ornate
7	Cute
8	Goth
9	Military
10	Leathers and Furs
11	Elegant
12	Messy

Starting Adventure

After making characters jump into the adventure phase. Either make your own starting adventure or use one of the premade adventures in the book.

Paragon Adaptations

This section will cover the changes to the Agon system. If something is not covered here, it works the same way it does in Agon.

Experience and Encounters

In Tarragon the Heroes earn Experience instead of Glory.

Encounters replace Contests.

The Strife Player calls for an Encounter when the Heroes are challenged in a significant way.

In an Encounter the Heroes earn Experience in a slightly different way than earning Glory in Contests.

If any hero prevails each hero who earns Experience equal to the Target Number of the Encounter. If no hero prevails every hero earns 1 experience.

In Encounters the best Hero or every hero can earn rewards just as in Agon. The Strife Player will announce when an Encounter has a reward on the line.

Types of Rewards

Feature

Bond a with a particular npc

Advantage dice

Using these types of Rewards you can craft familiar situations.

Short rest - any (or appropriate domain to find safety) encounter

All heroes that prevail mark 2 features. The best hero earns a bond with the Hero of their choice.

Domains

Culture and Fellowship

Initiative and tactics

Riddle and guile

Tenacity and Guts

Effort

Instead of Pathos the Hero Players have Effort.

Harm

Tarragon keeps the same harm rules as Agon but changes some of the names.

Perilous - Mark Effort if you suffer in an Encounter

Epic - Mark Effort to enter an Encounter

Arduous - Spend a Feature if you suffer in an Encounter

Legendary - Spend a Feature to enter an Encounter

The Cycle

Terragon has two phases of play.

Adventures: The Hero Players take on Encounters to get closer to defeat the Big Bad. This is similar to the Island phase in Agon.

Long Rest: The Hero Players gather their strength and prepare for their next adventure. This is similar to the Voyage and Exodus phase in Agon.

Adventure -> Long Rest

Adventure

In the Adventure phase the Hero Players take on challenging and dangerous Encounters to get one step closer to defeating the Threat.

The adventure phase has the same structure as Islands in Agon.
The only difference is the Sign of the Gods is replaced with Rumors.

Rumors > Arrival > Trials > Battle

Use a premade Adventure, make your own, or come up with it in the moment following this structure.

Premade adventure pg X

Make your own X

Improvising pg X

This section will provide some guidance on each part of the Adventure cycle.

Rumors

The Strife Player will present 2 or 3 cryptic rumors that foreshadow treasures, lore, dangers to the Leader of the Adventure. The Leader will interpret these rumors in what potential ways this Adventure can help them take down the Big Bad.

Arrival

Just like in Agon, start the Adventure with a bang that relates to the themes of the adventure. This could be an ambush, a mystery, or something in danger. Arrival is all about cutting to the action and setting the Adventure down an exciting path.

Trials

Trials offer a bit of freedom during the adventure. Here the heroes decide what is important to accomplish during the adventure. Trials could include deadly traps in a dungeon, getting lost in a forest, or a sidequest.

Battle

The Battle is the climax of the adventure. The Battle is a boss fight. The themes and foreshadowing of the adventure are punctuated in the Battle phase.

Long Rest

Long Rest is more structured than adventure. Long Rest is composed of the following phases.

Great Deeds, Celebration, Reflection, The Big Bad, Fellowship, Leadership, Preparation.

Great Deeds

This phase works the same it does in Agon.

Celebration

After an Adventure the Heroes will celebrate one another's virtues.

This phase works the same as Virtues in Agon. The Virtues in Tarragon are:

Courage

Passion

Grace

Brilliance

Reflection

In the Reflection phase the Heroes introspect on their latest adventure. During this introspection they may change their Role to one that fits them better.

The Big Bad

The Big Bad phase is similar to the Vault of Heaven in Agon. In this phase the Strife Player will mark a path to the final showdown of The Big Bad based on what the actions in the Adventure Phase.

A path represents different tools or paths for defeating the Big Bad.

For each path the Strife Player marks, each Hero marks a Feature based on what you learned about yourself on the adventure.

For every path Aspects marked each Hero earns a boon, representing the strength they gained to take on the Big Bad.

When an path is full each Hero records an advantage based on that Aspect.

The Strife Player will also mark Schemes if the Big Bad gained some sort of advantage or furthered their agenda during the Adventure.

Once the Campaign goal is complete the Big Bad can be defeated in a Battle during the Adventure phase. After the Big Bad is defeated the game concludes with Adventure's End.

Leader's interpretation of the **rumors** of the adventure informs which Aspects should be marked and the severity of the Scheme.

Fellowship

In between adventures the heroes spend time with one another. Each Hero chooses another hero to have a short scene with.

After the scene each Hero answers one of the following questions and earns a bond with the Hero they spent time with.

What do you appreciate about that Hero?

What concerns do you have for them?

How is your relationship different than it was before?

All heroes unmark any marked Effort.

Preparation

In preparation the heroes tell the Strife Player what adventure they would like to go on next and prepare for it.

If the heroes are uncertain on what adventure they will like to go next the Strife Player will describe a couple leads the heroes could follow.

Starting with the hero with the most experience the heroes will describe what they do to prepare for the next Adventure. Each hero will participate in an Encounter. The heroes choose the domain. The Strife Player rolls 2d6 and keeps the highest die (there is no Strife Level). The best hero earns an advantage based on their preparation.

Each hero that participated marks two Features based on their preparation.

Leadership

Mechanically works the same as Agon, the context is slightly different. In Tarragon the heroes are faced with an encounter that foreshadows the coming adventure. This could be while on the road to the next adventure or the location the adventure will take place in.

Strife Player

Here are some things to keep in mind when being the Strife Player in Tarragon.

Presenting the Big Bad

Besides the Heroes the Big Bad is the focus of the game. Every adventure should either have the Big Bad in it or have their presence felt in it. The goal is to have an understanding of who this awful person is. Regardless if you are able to sympathize with them, they must be stopped from continuing on their path of ruining lives.

Converting Adventures and other materials

Tarragon offers the opportunity to convert existing material into Adventures, Features, and other aspects of the game.

When converting, try to find the essence of what excites you about that thing you are bringing into Tarragon. The pictures of a module or a monster will often be more helpful than the text itself.

This section will provide some advice on converting different materials into Tarragon.

Features

Depending on what Features your heroes include will change what sort of setting your game is taking place in. Groups may curate a list of specific Features to have a certain setting. Other groups may let the players choose whatever Features they want. Inspiration for Features can be from a wide range of places. They can be your favorite feats and abilities from other games. You really just need a cool name. Through play we will see the Feature play out in new and exciting ways.

Adventures

When converting an Adventure try to find the core theme that you're interested in exploring. Strip away everything from the adventure that does not help support that theme. That theme is your concept. Use the different sections in the Adventure phase to spotlight your theme in different ways.

When converting do not convert every single room or monster. Choose the most fun and exciting parts that relate to your theme. Slot those parts into the different parts of the Adventure. Generally converting five or six different parts is a good rule of thumb. One or two for the Arrival, three or four the trials and one to two for the battle.

Use Agon's Island creation chapter for creating fully prepared adventures.

Characters

For converting characters from more complicated games it is best to avoid all the stats and numbers. Base the name, role, and special abilities around the monster's name, the type of monster or what role it has in the setting and the various different titles of its abilities. When you would like the heroes to contend with many characters such as bandits or zombies it is best to make them into one character.

Just like in Agon Characters have special abilities. When converting special abilities try to distill what that ability is doing for the monster. The breath weapon of a dragon can be conveyed as a harmful trait or a threat during the battle phase.

Consult Agon's section on creating characters for Tarragon.

Magic Items

Magic items are best used as advantage dice. They fulfill the same role as Special Rewards in Agon.

Surprises, Twists, Discoveries

In Tarragon the Strife Player role is not to know the truth of the world or create the plot for the players to follow. Keep these traditional roles for the Dungeon Master to have in the mystery section of your adventure.

Discover the twist during play not before.

Building a Big Bad

Building the big bad is just like making any other character. You pick a name, give them a role and a few special abilities. The Gods in Agon are a good template.

Adventures

Lasting the Night

The Big Bad is making a show of force. Their goal is to destroy Heathtown. If they succeed they will break the spirits of all those opposed to them. We will make sure Heathtown still stands before help arrives.

Set up

Ask the Heroes what they remember from when they came to the Hunter's Moon Festival.

The Big Bad is attacking Heathtown. Help is coming but if we cannot hold out this night it will be too late.

Rumors

Heathtown is not just a symbol to be destroyed, there may be something the Big Bad wants to get rid of before it can be used against them?

The Big Bad is sending a newly formed army: the Scarglave. How did the Big Bad rally such a force so quickly?

The Leader of the Scarglave is a Sorcerer named Bavel Areleis who is rumored to be from Heathtown. What could make him turn like this?

Arrival

As heroes arrive to help Heathtown, the air is thick with hopelessness. People are packing their belongings ready to flee, soldiers console one another which they expect to be their last night, and the Queen sings a lament resigned to her fate.

The eve of the attack

- Will you breathe hope back into this town that help will arrive in time? **Tenacity and Guts vs Dread itself (2D8 Perilous)**
If Dread wins the heroes are overtaken with doubt and fight amongst one another on what to do. If the heroes win, the best hero gains a bond with the people of Heathtown.
- Or will you the soldiers rally, training and planning together? **Initiative and tactics vs Scarglave General Bavel.**
If Scarglave General Bavel wins he anticipates their plans and attacks while they are still preparing. If the heroes win, Heathtown is ready for the assault when the army arrives.

- Or will confront the queen to do something that might turn the tide instead of mourning what is not lost yet. **Arts and Oranation vs Queen Diliaana.**

If the Queen wins she will exile the heroes. She declares that they are arrogant. Surrender is the only chance to save lives. If the heroes win she writes a letter to her exiled estranged lover Catherine, leader of the Razorwood Rangers asking for aid.

Trials

Brace the gate

The gate to the town is bashed by the Scargalve battering ram. Can you hold the gate? Initiative and Tactics vs The Scargalve Army.

Devastating Ritual

General Bavel leads a cohort of sorcerers in a ritual to engulf the town in flames. Tenacity and Guts vs General Bavel to counter the ritual with magic of your own or Riddle and Guile to sneak past enemy lines and disrupt the ritual vs The Scargalve Army.

A judgment call

The Queen's sister Trivia calls for the execution of deserting soldiers. Will you spare these fearful people's lives Culture and Fellowship vs Travia.

Battle

- Will you meet the enemy head on as the gate falls holding them off until help arrives?
Thearts: Heathtown is destroyed. Bavel kills the Queen.
- Will you try to convince Bavel to switch sides?
Threats: Trivia declares the heroes traitors and the army turns on them. The people of Heathtown flee and are cut down.

Characters

Queen Dilia (d8)

Promise: To be what Heathtown needs me to be to its very end. (d10)
Sorrowful (d6)

Scargalve Army (d8)

Promise: To follow orders (d8 perilous) well armed (d6) Cold (can not be encountered using Culture and Fellowship)

General Bavel, Sorcerer (d10)

Promise: To show no mercy (d8)
Stubborn (d8 Arduous) Duelist (d6 legendary)

Trivia, Sworn Sword (d8)

Promise: To protect my home and my sister the Queen (d10)
Duty Bound (d8 perilous)

Catherine of the Razorwood Rangers

Still in Love (d8) Exiled (d6) Leader of the Razor wood Rangers (d10 legendary)

Places

Heathtown outer ring - stables, small market, and several cottages circle a keep on a hill.

Heathtown keep - a small wooden castle. Faded paintings of past great deeds still catch the eye with brilliant crimson and gold details.

Special Rewards

A phoenix feather: a gift from when the phoenix last visited the Heath. It is rumored that burning it can bring a soul who recently passed back to life.

Mysteries

Bavel's betrayal

What made Bavel, a hero of Heathtown, change sides? The Queen has wronged him gravely.

Scargalve origins

Are the Scargalve human or were they made from magic or technology? This might be a test for a larger, more devious plot.

The devastation of Heathtown

What is here that the Big Bad fears to be used against him? A phoenix feather is kept in the throne room. The Big Bad must fear its powers of rebirth.

Salt in the wound

There once was a temple dedicated to the Gods of Salt and Sea. The salts and waters located in the temple could soothe and mend many injuries.

The Big Bad defiled the temple. Using the power of the temple for their own purposes. We can not stand by and let them get away with this.

Rumors

The fishermen say the big bad hasn't come to the temple in months but it is still heavily guarded.

The people of Crabtree Village, a day's walk from the temple, have noticed that small cuts and bruises are healed after bathing in the local creek.

The temple is heavily guarded, perhaps the big bad is using it for a greater plot.

Arrival

When the heroes arrive at the temple they find it dilapidated. The ocean water has flooded the entrance. Salt and Sand forms a crust on the outside of the building.

The temple is guarded by the Long Knives, a marooned pirate crew.

The temples new occupants

- Will you try to convince the Long Knives to stand down or switch sides? Arts and Oranation vs The Long Knives. If the Long Knives win they will threaten violence.
- Or will you attack the Long Knives to get inside? Blood and Valor vs Long Knives. If the Long Knives win they will feed the heroes to the Hungry One.
- Or Will you sneak your way in through the entrance or an alternate passage. Craft and Reason vs the Long Knives. If the Long Knives win they will try to capture the heroes or kill them.

Trials

The Warded salt cavern

If the heroes try to go down into the salt cavern below the temple, they trigger an Encounter of Resolve and Spirit vs the cursing runes (2d8 Perilous).

If the runes win the heroes will be cursed all Encounters will be Arduous in till its lifted.

If the heroes win they will gain access to the Ritual Pond where Thalaiza a God of Salt and Sea is trapped and being used in some powerful ritual for the big bad.

The Loyal Servant

Caring for the defiled temple is the last remaining servant of the previous order. Once he finds the heroes he will ask the heroes to flee this place before it's too late. Arts and Oranation vs _____.

If the servant wins the heroes must leave the temple or else the servant will summon the big bad. If the heroes win the servant will aid them in their plan along as the people of Crabtree Village and the God are unharmed.

The Prayer well

From the waters of prayer well a beautiful woman appears. She offers healing and insight to those that solve her riddle. Craft and Reason vs the well demon. If the well demon wins the Heroes will lose all track of time and place. They will be forever trapped here till they can break the undine

spell or solve the riddle. If the Heroes win, the well demon gives them a secret about the big bad and heals their Unity and Fate.

Battle

- Will you try to release the trapped God and cleanse this temple of its corruption? Battle the corruption ritual
Threats: The god's power is drained and given to the big bad. The salt mine and temple collapse.
- Or will you rescue what few artifacts remain and destroy the temple. Battle vs the Hungry One and the Long Knives. Threats: the corruption of the temple goes into the creek poisoning Crabtree Village, the trapped God awakens and becomes a monster of their former self. The most prized artifact: the Moon Wand is destroyed.
- Or has the big bad been summoned? Battle the Big Bad for the gods and the temple's freedom. Threats: the big bad kills the Loyal Servant, they kill and take the god's power. Crabtree Village burns tonight.

Characters

Long Knives (d8)

Pirate crew (d6 perilous)

Calow: Card shark (d6 legendary)

Marlov: Ruthless Captain (d10)

Shelly (d6)

Temple Servant (d8)

Earnest (d10)

Aquix (d10)

Well demon (d8)

Cruel (d6)

Tricky (d8)

Petty (d6 Arduous)

Hungry One (d10 perilous)

Sea Monster (d8 epic)

Hypnotic bioluminous (d6)

Cold (cannot be encountered using Arts and Oranation)

Thalaiza a God of Salt and Sea (2d12 epic)

Tidebringer (d10)

Fickle (d6)

Merciful (d8)

Places

The temple grounds: abandon foul beach.

The temple: a circular chamber attached to a small tavern.

Salt mine: below the temple is a massive cave network.

Special Rewards

Moon Wand

This slender wand spun from Moon light. The magic of the Wand grants the wielder the power of changing the tides.

Mysteries

The Big Bad's ritual is to harness the power of a god. What power is the big bad hope to attain? Is this the first ritual or are there others? How will the god be forever changed?

Someone is dumping the salt from the mine into the river. Is it on purpose or by accident? Is this a good deed to share what healing properties this temple has left? Is this all part of the Big Bad's plan?

The Long Knives and the Hungry One have teamed up with the Big Bad. What agreement has the big bad made with them? Do they agree with the Big Bad's agenda? How is the Hungry One being controlled?

Big bads

Dragon

Infercro the decorated

Name - (d12)

I Promise to add you to my horde

(d10)

Features

Adamantium Scales (Arduous d6)

Fire breath (d10 perilous)

Wrath (d8)

What has Infercro taken from you and now lies in his hoard?

The Tyrant

Zahra, the Princess of Hollow Mountain

Name (d10)

I Promise to become Queen of this realm. (D12)

Features

Master of mountain blade (d8 legendary)

Charming (d6 perilous)

Stubborn (d10)

How has Zahra made you feel small?

Demon God

Malice

Name (2d10)

I Promise that you will all suffer (d6 epic)

Features

Cold (cannot be engaged in Encounters of Culture & Fellowship.)

Soul crusher (d8 perilous)

Star should (d12 Arduous)

How does Malice toy with you?

Archmage

Mysterion Alphonso Krasis

Name (d12 perilous)

I Promise to harness unlimited power (d8)

Features

Master of Flame and Lighting (d10 legendary)

Elemental Servants (d6)

Genius (d8 Arduous)

What experiment has Mysterion Alphonso Krasis used you in?

Feedback 10/23/21

Promise

Greg - Liked the promise mechanic. Good direction for creating a character.

Punchy - short and evocative is a good epithet

George - Clear indicator of what my character would do. Little bit of constraining but not.

Karl - Really liked promises instead of class.

Character gen

Karl - Features

Greg - Liked character gen. Creativity right off the bat. Intimidating because you have to do extra work. Features can be left open and discovered in play.

George - Coming up features was not the hardest part. Promise
Flew by itself. Felt