

D&D Campaign

What is D&D

Dungeons and Dragons is a tabletop Roleplaying game, in which 1 player is considered the dungeon Master or Dm and they control the world and everything around the players. The other players each usually have one character they control, and they have absolute freedom on the choices this character makes. Before every Campaign or after their character dies, they make a new character with a class, personality traits and a backstory. The game is played in Campaigns and sessions. Campaigns are entire adventures or storylines, prepared by the DM with a somewhat planned ending, while sessions refers to a consecutive amount of time playing and advancing the story. D&D is not the only TTRPG of its kind, but it is one of the most popular ones and the most widely known one.

My World

The adventure I wanted to create for my players should be episodic in nature with an overarching story, where mostly small details get revealed at once, but they have smaller adventures in between, inspired by the anime or manga “One Piece”. To accomplish that, The world is set up in very disconnected nations on a single continent. These Nations have widely different cultures, laws, people and problems. Some of them should be kept open enough to consider the backstories of the characters and I still have to design details of most of these nations, if the players decide to head to one of them. There is no history looking longer than 300 years ago and it is a big mystery about what happened. Most Nations were founded during this time. There are some ruins that could tell a story, but there has not been a lot of research done. The Nations are mostly peaceful towards each other, apart from some exceptions, but there is not much communication between them

and they keep to themselves. Elves are very rarely seen or heard of, and when you do, they are either in a very high position, or trying to stay hidden. The only civilisation of elves still existing is a nation of wood elves in a big forest.

My Intended Story

To make the introduction into the world, ensure more freedom of choice in the future while still giving the player a good basis for the story and give me more time to flesh out the world, the players start off on an isolated island, scrapped off any conventional map. This way I can control what the players do more, and still give them freedom later in a way that feels natural. This happens by having the players be travelling on boat, as they reach a part of the sea that is said in sailor urban legends to be extremely dangerous. They crash land on the island and find out about the culture. On this island magic has been forbidden by the villager elder who clearly has the ability to cast magic. He is also a very rare high elf, and secretive. It is forbidden to talk about the outside and the villagers seem to have forgotten where they are from. But the village seems happy with this situation and it is weirdly idyllic. Everyone has their role and feels fulfilled. As they explore this town, they should be getting more questions, and less answers. At some point, they will get asked by the leader of the village to find some “artifact” as he fears it could get taken by someone. Reluctantly they should get convinced by some help to get off the island. There are very strong currents that make leaving the island a challenge. As they enter the cave where the artifact is located they should have some small puzzle to solve, as they hear voices from the entrance of the cave, they don't recognize. They should continue forward and enter a small dungeon, guarded by a friendly dragon. These are even rarer than elves and they should be a surprise to the party. The dragon has been mentioned as a “friend” by the village elder, but there wasn't a mention of the race of this supposed friend. The dragon should get their trust as they make their way through this challenging but manageable dungeon. The dragon was bored so makes a game of this exploration, and

doesn't give them any help. It is a race against time as orcs are trying to get into the dungeon and get this artifact too. They should get to the artifact in time, maybe with the dragon giving them a little time by fighting off the orcs, but the dragon is not so adept at fighting. This artifact seems to be a weak version of a staff of fire, and not the big threat the elder made it out to be. They make it back safely, depending on how well it goes, with or without the dragon in its tow. The orcs should be stationed at the beach they landed on and the party has to try and sneak past. As they make it back to the elder, he should be very happy and relieved you got the artifact. The party should at this point have more leverage to figure out the situation in the village as well as find a way to exit the island. They might even be convinced to return the memories of the villagers as they have seemed to be kept in check by removing their memories of anything outside of the villages. I would imagine some, but not all villagers would want to leave too and get back to their original home. Ideally they would accept the staff from the elder and decide it's safer in their hands. They get away from the orcs, and as they reach the mainland. At this point the main story has started and the players have a lot more freedom about where they want to go and what they want to do. They will have heard from the elder that there are 7 of these artifacts and that they are extremely powerful, especially in the wrong hands. It's up to the party to locate these artifacts, or to focus on other adventures. But no matter what they do, these artifacts will keep on popping up, and if they don't get ahold of them in time, the orcs or whoever they serve will get them instead, making it harder for them in the future. The people they travelled with will go their own ways, home or to their own adventures, and they might pop up later again. It is not prepared at this point, but some sort of conflict in the nation they arrived will have come across the party, giving them an idea on what they could do.

Look of the Sessions

The characters of the players have well designed pictures, according to the ideas of the player and the head of that illustration is used as a token if needed for combat. These Illustrations were provided by my girlfriend, Angel de Wit, and she agreed to the pictures being used for this project.

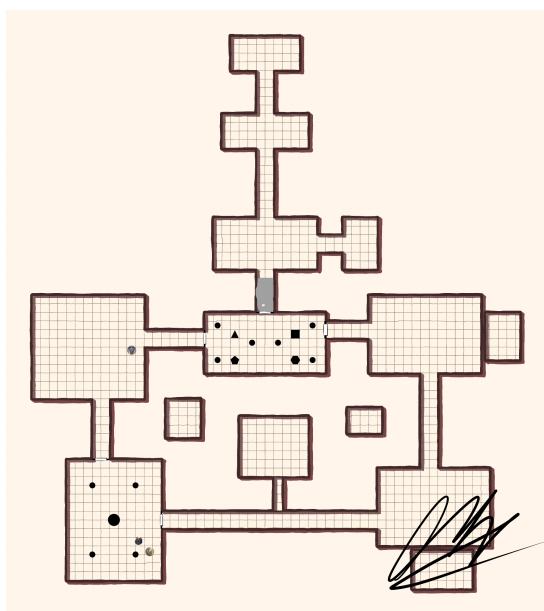
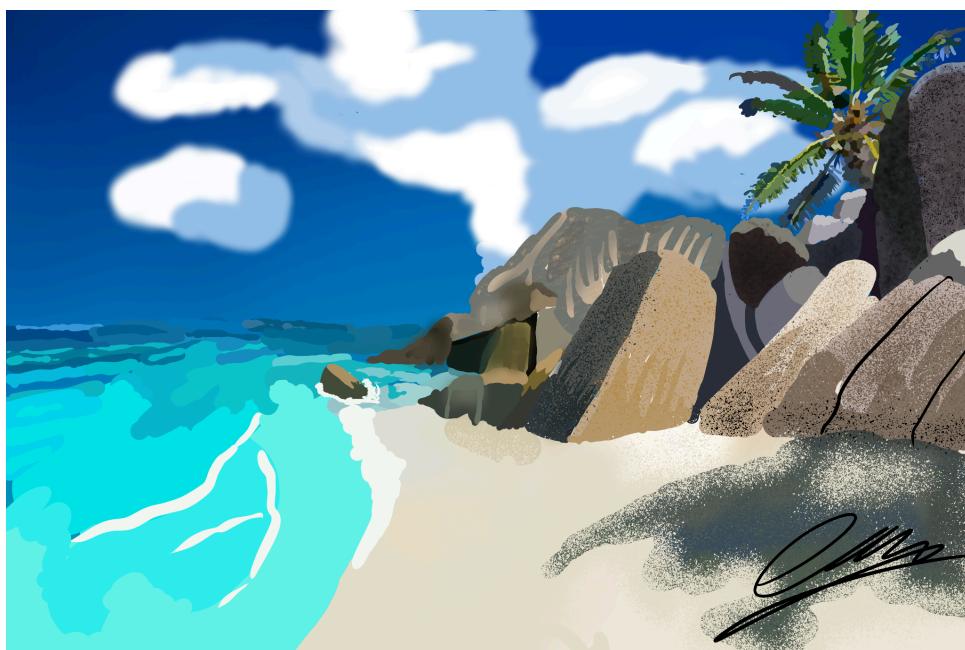


Meanwhile the NPCs (non-playable characters) have a small picture, that is very stylised to make them fast to draw, but still memorable and interesting. This makes them recognizable and gives a small canvas for the players to imagine the details themselves, to help with the immersion.



During the session I will use 2 types of background. One is used for Combat, when helpful, while the other is used generally during play. It's a digital painting that should resemble the area the players find themselves in from a first person's perspective. Again

this is done to maximize player immersion, without limiting their creativity. In Combat this painting is exchanged for a simplistic gridded map, with little details, so the players can imagine the contents of the area themselves. This makes it possible to use spiderwebs or pebbles for an attack, without them having to be drawn beforehand, encouraging imagination and creative combat gameplay. For ease of use, the pictures were shown on my drawing software (clip studio paint) to be able to adjust them efficiently during the campaign.



Session 0 (08.09.24)

In a Session 0 the players and the DM can discuss things outside of the game or about the game, before the campaign actually starts. This involves questions about scheduling, behaviour, snacks, how the game is played, taboos, topics to avoid, and rule specifications. This also gives the DM an opportunity to present the setting of the campaign and give the players ideas of what kind of character they want to play. This session is the groundblock of the campaign and is here to set expectations for everyone on how the campaign will look like. Here I introduced my world, the fact that they would start on a small isolated island and a general idea of the atmosphere in the campaign, being happy on the surface with a lot of secrets and darkness lurking beneath for the players to explore. For example one important input from the players was, to keep it serious, with some humour sprinkled in, but this humour should be unrealistic or ridiculous and should make sense for the characters, the story and the setting. Here it was also discussed that the first sessions would be recorded so I could have a memory of what happened during the session for this project in my portfolio. At the start of Session 1 i Even gave the players a small contract so that I know what they are comfortable with me sharing. I will share the names of the players, if they want to be credited, at the end of this document.

Session 1 (20.10.24)

The Session starts with the Party, apart from 1 player, on a boat, each with their own goals for being here. Garkahm is a dwarven trader (Class Sorcerer), which is rare in this world of isolated Nations. He is on his way to travel to more countries and establish more trade deals. Eventide is a water genasi and a historian (Class Warlock). On his travels he hopes to find out more about a ritual to bring back the dead, so he can reverse the death of a child he had previously failed to prevent. Cro is an orc woman, who works as a mercenary and bounty hunter. Her goal is to prove herself as a warrior to the orcs who

had previously outcast her. She has a companion Selmar, a rock gnome, who was leaving a dishonest life, until Cro spared him. Now he is trying to make up for what he had done in the past and learn from Cro how to grow and be a good person. This group of 4 gets into a very bad storm and after some attempts to stop the ship from sinking, the scene turns black. The party wakes up on an unfamiliar beach, as they check their losses. Garkahm, being the owner of the trading goods on the ship, is sad to see most of his ware to be destroyed or lost in the sea. He also can't find any of the crew Garkahm brought with him. The group is preparing to hold a group funeral, as an elven woman with what seems to be a pet snake, speaks up. She asks a lot of questions, but after the party asks, she lets them hold the funeral first. After that, she explains the rules of the island without giving too much context. The party is clearly confused and suspicious but they follow her to the village. In the village they are greeted by a bunch of cheerful villagers and the elven woman leaves them in the village and tells them, the village elder, who is also her dad, would like to talk to them later. The party is familiarizing itself with the town and getting their gear and clothes in order, as they see a commotion in the middle of the village. A puffy aarakocra named puff, extremely small and round, is leading a group of villagers through a warm-up for some workout. The small bird person seems to only lead the workout and not participate in it, but it is hard to make out. Cro confronts puff on his routine, and barely does not manage to get the crowd against him, as she misses a tree. At the end of the session they head to the tavern, which also has rooms to sleep in. For dinner they decide to eat "Fa gi tas" which Eventide says is a great meal, and the party has an out of game laugh.

Session 2 (10.11.24)

This Session continues a bit less than a month later and was done online, to not have the players wait too long. In between the Sessions, the player playing puff left the campaign, as they were busy with school and couldn't get immersed in the adventure. The adventure continues after the party ate dinner and they decide to confront the village elder. In the

conversation they ask why magic is prohibited and what is going on with the village. He says he has that rule to protect the villagers and have them lead a peaceful life. He mentions the artifact, and they very reluctantly agree after he tells them where to go. A villager that is responsible for the mine, shows them the way and they find the dungeon without much struggle. As they find the dragon friend, they are terrified. Cro has the courage to move in, as the door closes behind her. But since the dragon is nice, they start to trust him and question the whole mission. The dragon gets them to continue the search for the artifact. They explore the dungeon through some puzzles and combat as they reach a hard combat encounter against two slithering trackers. The dragon had quickly left to check on the noises being made at the entrance. Cro was still injured from the last encounter and she runs in, thinking she was invincible. She was not as she was tragically killed in front of her new companions. The dragon comes back hurt, but is shocked at the death and turns serious. He is very sad and stops the games. He shows them the way as he remembers now and leads them to the artifact. As they leave the dungeon, discussing how to bury Cros body, the Session ends on a low note.

Future plans

The death of Cro really messed with my plans, especially a lot of plans I had for the character later. On the day of the session I was stressed and did not know how to deal with it, but I have come up with a solution for the next session. To give the player whose character died a new character as soon as possible, we will skip ahead a bit, to where the party gets introduced to the new character, and then they play out the skipped part in a flashback. Which should mostly work how planned with maybe one of the old crewmates having survived the crash and maybe barely not getting caught by the orcs that are stationed at the beach. I assume now that someone died because of the dragon, he is going on a trip to learn about the world and get stronger. Then after finishing the meeting with the new character and hopefully accepting her into the party, they would continue the planned path in a new nation hopefully united under Cros legacy.

Reflexion

I have learned a lot already in these first 2 Sessions. First, i like to give players freedom, but I am still afraid of the consequences of the choices of my players. A perfect example is Cros death, which I tried to somehow rewind or revive her somehow but i got myself together and learned to grow from it and use it to tell a better story. This is what D&D is about. Secondly I need to improve my free speaking and prepare more help for the improvisation of dialogue. Especially when it comes to important scenes, preparing a text beforehand can help increase the impact of that scene. But I was also having a lot of fun DMing for this group and thinking about this world they are about to embark on, outside of the tutorial island. I already have at least 4 nations that are important for later that i will add (wood elf village, Mayan culture nation, mountain nation with a lot of dwarves. orc nation) and I'm happy to add more details to them and add more interesting nations with good dynamics and stories. I wish to keep on longer and create an unforgettable adventure for both myself and my players.