THE ANCIENT ROAD

You are a lone adventurer and have headed west.
At the edge of a wood lies an ancient road.
The road leads to magnificent ruins of a world lost to time.

HOW TO PLAY

- This is a journal writing game using blank hex grid to map out an ancient world.
- Each hex traveled will be filled with unique features and encounters.
- Keep track of each day, what you see, what you do, and what you encounter.
- You will find relics of the old world and with these you can perform rituals to:
    - gain insight into ancient mysteries
    - increase your power
    - defeat hideous monstrosities

BEFORE YOU PLAY

Create a character using a system of your preference; if you need one, see the appendices.

TIME OF YEAR
Roll 1d4:
1 : Spring   2 : Summer
3 : Fall   4 : Winter

TIME UNTIL NEXT SEASON
Roll 1d4
1: One Month   2: Two Months
3: Three Months   4: One Week

THE FIRST HEX
What kind of hex is this? Roll 2d6
    6, 7, 8 : Forest   5, 9 : Hills   4, 10 : Mountains   3, 11 : Plains   2, 12 : Swamps

1.0 – ORDER OF PLAY

For each day, do the following:

1. Note the days since start. Each month is 30 days, note any season changes.
2. Determine the day's weather, section **1.2**.
3. Expend 1 ration and 1 water-skin, if possible, else you must hunt and gather.
4. Select your two actions for the day, section **1.3**
5. Resolve movement, if any.
6. If you move into a new hex, determine features, **2.1 to 2.8.**
7. If you explore, resolve exploration
8. Resolve encounters **5.1**
9. Resolve all other actions.

1.2 – WEATHER

What is today's weather? Roll 1d6.

	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
1	Cold	Very Hot*	Cold	Very Cold*
2 - 4	Clear and Warm	Clear and Hot	Clear and Chilly	Clear and Cold
5	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Snowy
6	Heavy Rain*	Heavy Rain*	Snowy	Heavy Snow*

*Difficult weather, slows travel.

1.3 – ACTIONS

Select two:
1. Move one hex, in difficult weather you may only move once that day.
2. Explore one hex, reveals hidden features.
3. Explore one ruin, reveals mysteries.
4. Hunt and Gather, gain 1d6 rations and fill all water skins.
5. Study relics, gain deeper insight into mysteries.
6. Contemplate, realize ancient connections.
7. Perform rituals, sacrifice artifacts for power.
8. Venture into the underworld, at risk of peril.

1.4 – TRAVEL & ENCOUNTERS

- Decide which hex side you wish to cross, travel there. If its a new hex, roll on **2.1** to **2.8**.
- Roll 1d6 to see if and where you have an encounter. Note the result, resolve in section **5.1**.
    1 to 3 : Nothing   4 : Wilderness   5: Ruin   6: Dungeon

2.1 – ENTERING A NEW HEX
Per you current hex, roll 1d8 to determine the type for the *next* hex you enter

	Forests	Hills	Mountains	Plains	Swamp
1	Forests	Hills	Mountains	Plains	Swamp
2	Forests	Hills	Mountains	Plains	Swamp
3	Forests	Forests	Mountains	Forests	Swamp
4	Hills	Forests	Hills	Forests	Forests
5	Hills	Mountains	Hills	Hills	Forests
6	Mountains	Mountains	Hills	Hills	Forests
7	Plains	Plains	Forests	Mountains	Plains
8	Swamp	Swamp	Plains	Swamp	Hills

2.2 – HEX TERRAIN
What is this new hex like? Roll 1d8 per under this hex's type.

	Forests		
1	Clear of brush, ease of travel	5	Overgrown, difficult to travel
2	Large old trees, thick canopy	6	Heavy canopy no light, rotting leaves
3	Rolling Hills, thorny bushes	7	Long limbed oaks surrounding a cave
4	Gnarled roots, small boulders	8	Dense with young and fallen pines

	Plains		
1	Perfectly flat fields of grass	5	Cut through by shallow ravines
2	Heavy shrubs filled with thorns	6	Dusty air swirls up dried grasses
3	Old farmland reclaimed by nature	7	Heavy oaks surrounded by scrub grass
4	Spotted with large ancient trees	8	Sulfuric tar pits, scattered willow trees

	Hills		
1	Gently rolling, clear sight	5	Rocky, with flowing creeks
2	Sparse with trees and bush	6	Bluff overlook, exposed cave entry
3	Large sections of dense brush	7	Moors covered in wildflowers
4	Sharp rock outcroppings	8	Twisted trees atop sandy dunes

	Mountains		
1	Airy and easy path, no rough terrain	5	Towering mountains, echoing caves
2	Few trees, undulating, rocky	6	Fog covered pines and granite boulders
3	Dense canopy with steep inclines	7	Deadly cliffs with scattered ferns
4	Natural hot springs and geysers	8	Sharp ledges packed with old snow

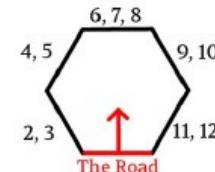|	Swamps		
1	Knobbed cypress trees, thick humidity	5	A rocky cave juts out of a clear pool
2	Thick algae pools on stagnant water	6	Dense overgrowth and muddy ground
3	Salty Marshlands with thin pines	7	Thick canopy, lily pad covered ponds
4	Mangroves, brackish flowing water	8	Grey dead trees litter a dry swamp bed

2.3 – WATER FEATURES
- For a newly entered hex, roll 1d6 to see if you come across water, 1-3 no and 4-6 yes.
- If yes, you can freely refill any water-skins. Roll 1d12 to determine the type:

	Water Features				
1	Pond	5	River, Gentle	9	Hot Spring
2	Lake	6	River, Rapid	10	Geyser
3	Creek	7	Waterfall	11	Ancient Well
4	Stream	8	Spring	12	Oasis

2.4 – THE ROAD
- Where does the road head? Roll 2d6.
- The red side is where you entered this hex

2.5 – CROSS ROADS
- Roll 1d6, on a 1 there is a second road.
- If there is a second road, roll 1d4:

2.6.1 – HEX INHABITANTS
- Roll 1d6 for **population** of this hex (it is on a 4 to 6). Then roll the d6 per the size.
- If it is, roll 1d6 for **who,** and again under the appropriate column.

	Population	Who	Monstrous	Demi Human	Human
1	No one	Monstrous	Goblins	Elf	Bandits
2	No one	Monstrous	Hobgoblins	Dwarf	Tribal Warriors
3	No one	Demi human	Orcs	Halfling	Cultists
4	Scouts, 1d6	Demi human	Kobolds	Gnome	Treasure Hunters
5	Outpost, 2d6	Human	Trolls	Centaur	Pioneers
6	Settlement, 4d6	Human	Bug bear	Giant	Wizard & hirelings

2.6.2 – INHABITANT ACTIVITIES
- If there are inhabitants, depending on their size, roll 1d6 to see what they are doing.
- If you need a **who** or **what** to further explain see section 5.

	Scouts	Outpost	Settlement
1	Searching for threats	Defending against threats	Building defenses
2	Mapping new lands	Setting up a watch tower	Developing farmland
3	Seeking Treasure	Erecting an excavation camp	Building a common house
4	Pursuing wild herds	Hunting wild game	Trading furs and pelts
5	Hunting enemies	Raiding enemies	Training scouts
6	Tracking lost allies	Consulting neighbors	Negotiating alliances

2.7 – OBVIOUS FEATURES
- For each hex, roll on the natural scenes and ancient ruins tables, 1d20 each.
- All ancient ruins are all accompanied by signs of former habitation, collapsed dwellings.
- Each ruin will have a *state* and a *component* that has its own *description* and *application* **2.8**

	Natural Scenes						
1	A flock of ravens	6	Narrow Gorge	11	Gigantic Waterfall	16	Dormant Lava Dome
2	A large stalking cat	7	Animal Trail	12	Ancient Redwoods	17	Natural Stone Arch
3	A herd of deer	8	Petrified forest	13	Sandstone Mesa	18	Fields of lavender
4	Hooting Owls	9	Littered Ravine	14	Limestone Grotto	19	Crater of devastation
5	A family of bears	10	Deadly Canyon	15	Flowering Trees	20	Erupting Geyser

	Ancient Ruins						
1	Castle	6	Bridge – Ravine	11	Colosseum	16	Temple
2	Fortress	7	Bridge – River	12	Aqueduct	17	Basilica
3	Barracks	8	Defensive Wall	13	Cistern	18	Monastery
4	Fort	9	Bath house	14	Mill and Granary	19	Cloisters
5	Keep	10	Chariot Racecourse	15	Farmhouses	20	Forum (4 Structures)

2.8 – Ancient Ruin Descriptions
- For each ancient ruin, roll 1d8 on each column.
- Ruin state cover the ruin as a whole.
- The component is a piece of the ruin and has its own description and application.

	Ruin State	Component	Description	Application
1	Untouched	Statues	Devilish	Praise Deity
2	Weathered	Frescoes	Vibrant	Preserve History
3	Disheveled	Columns	Ornate	Mark Sacrifice
4	Overgrown	Archway	Imposing	Describe Ritual
5	Partially Collapsed	Stained Glass	Brilliant	Provide Warning
6	Collapsed	Mosaic	Elaborate	Instruct Morals
7	Partially Destroyed	Bas-Relief	Menacing	Reveal Knowledge
8	Nearly Destroyed	Stone Door	Brutal	Persecute Evil

2.9 – HIDDEN FEATURES
If you decide to fully explore the hex, roll 1d20

	Hidden Features						
1	Witch's Hut	6	Mushroom Grove	11	Healing Fountain	16	Weird Ziggurat
2	Standing Stone	7	Overgrown Cemetery	12	A Lone Crypt	17	Dragon's Skeleton
3	Stone Circle	8	Corrupted Shrine	13	Catacombs	18	Wizard's Tower
4	Mineshaft	9	Haunted Battlefield	14	Magical Pool	19	A field of corpses
5	Monster's lair	10	Pyramidal Mound	15	Burial Mound	20	Two Features

3.0 – RELICS
- For each ruin you find, roll 1d6 to see if you find a relic within, on a 1-3 no and 4-6 yes.
- Relics may be sacrificed with rituals or studied for insight.
- If there is a relic, roll 1d6 to determine its type:
      1 to 3 : Religion   4 to 5 : Knowledge   6: Power
- With type determined roll on the table below for the exact object.

	Religion	Knowledge	Power
1	Beads of Prayer	Brass Scales and Weights	Silver circlet with rubies
2	Ornate Altar to the Dead	Astrological Charts	Ebony and Gold Staff
3	Sacrificial Knives	Tome of Metaphysics	Bronze cuffs with emeralds
4	Bust of a Forgotten Deity	Scrolls on Geometry	Fur-lined Purple Cloaks
5	Tapestry of Creation	Loose pages of Aphorisms	Platinum ring, onyx stone
6	Embroidered Robes	Geographical Maps	Silver sword, bejeweled hilt

3.1 – RITUALS
If you chose to perform a ritual today, select one of the following, the relic is permanently destroyed :

Relic Type	Number	Effect
Religion	One	Heal all damage, return to your maximum hit points
Religion	Two	Permanently increase your maximum hit points by 1d6
Knowledge	One	Learn everything about a neighboring hex, make all its rolls now
Knowledge	Two	Permanently increase an intelligence based attribute by 1
Power	One	Automatically win your next combat encounter
Power	Two	Permanently increase any attribute by two

4.0 – MYTHIC UNDERWORLD
Each hex you enter has a chance to contain either a cave system or dungeon. They could be attached to ruins as above, or found on their own. Either leads to the mythic underworld; labyrinths filled with horrors. Roll 1d6 to determine the presence:
      1 to 2 : Nothing   3 to 4 : Cave   5 to 6: Dungeon

4.1 – UNDERWORLD ENTRANCE
If there is a cave or dungeon, roll on the following to determine its exterior presence.

	Cave System	Dungeon
1 to 2	Overgrown and abandoned	Beneath a ruin, attached to a basement
3 to 4	In a clearing, suspicious tracks around	Behind a secret door, destroyed ages ago
5 to 6	Beneath a ruin, attached to a basement	In a crypt, through a false tomb

4.2 UNDERWORLD STRUCTURE
Once you know the entrance roll below to determine its overall structure. Following this, roll on the underworld encounter tables, and the outcomes table.

	Ruin State	Component	Description
1	Narrow passages	Statues	Devilish
2	Large open recesses	Frescoes	Vibrant
3	Medium chambers	Columns	Ornate
4	Isolated alcoves	Archway	Imposing
5		Stained Glass	Brilliant
6	Collapsed	Mosaic	Elaborate
7	Partially Destroyed	Bas-Relief	Menacing
8	Nearly Destroyed	Stone Door	Brutal

	Cave System
1	Narrow passages, smoothed by a river eons ago. Small spaces for dwellings.
2	Large open areas, littered with rocky debris. Filled with stalactites and stalagmites.
3	Ancient dwellings dotted in medium rooms with damp flowstones.
4	Single large area, with a cold pool, foggy with algae, moss covers the walls.
5	Jagged tunnels twisting downward, an unsettling breeze gently wafts from below.
6	Several medium areas connected to a main hall with glyphs carved into the stone.

	Dungeon
1	The remains of a lost prison: a single long corridor, each side lined with barred cells.
2	Labyrinthian complex, each room devoted to a different religious ritual.
3	
4	
5	
6	

4.3 UNDERWORLD ENCOUNTERS

Appendix 1 – Simple Characters

If you do not have a preferred system use this system as a simple alternative:

1. CHARACTERISTICS
- Roll 3d6 for each of the following characteristics:
  - **Physique**: strength, dexterity, and violence
  - **Survival**: wisdom, stealth, and constitution
  - **Investigation**: intelligence, education, and perception.

- Roll 1d6 + 2 for your HP, if your survival is 13 or higher, add +1 to this result.

2. PROFESSION
Choose a profession from the below:

Archaeologist – Advantage on investigation   Priest – Heal 1d4 damage, once per day
Assassin – Advantage on damage   Warrior – Advantage on combat
Hunter – Advantage on survival   Wizard – Two additional spells in a spellbook

3. ARMAMENT
Select or roll for weaponry and armor.

	Weaponry	Damage	Armor	Defense
1	Spellbook and Dagger	1d4	None	0
2	Wand and Staff	1d4+1	Robes of hiding	0
3	Sword and Shield	1d6	Leather Armor	1
4	Holy Mace and Shield	1d6 (+1 vs undead)	Chain armor	2
5	Shortbow and Shortsword	1d6 & 1d6	Chest Plate	3
6	Two Handed Sword	1d10	Half Plate	4

4. SPELLS
If you have a spellbook roll 1d12 three times below, for a wand roll 1d12 once.

	Spells Table						
1	Animate Dead	4	Fireball	7	Lightning Bolt	10	Silence
2	Charm Person	5	Invisibility	8	Read Magic	11	Sleep
3	Entangle	6	Light / Darkness	9	Read Languages	12	Unlock

5. EQUIPMENT
Select equipment, up to 8 slots of items can be stored in a backpack. Each item uses 1 slot:

backpack	flask of oil (3)	rations (7)	twine, 100 ft
bedroll	hammer	rope 50ft	water-skin (2)
chalk	hunting bow	spikes (10)	wax candles (10)
crowbar	mirror, small	tinderbox	winter clothing
lantern	pen and parchment	tent, 2 person	wire, 100 ft
lock-picks (3)	paper	torches (5)	wool blanket

Appendix 2 – Simple Gameplay Mechanics

1.1 Checks
- When you are uncertain if you can succeed in a task you wish to take, roll 1d20 against one of your three characteristics. If the result is equal to or lower you succeed.

1.2 Actions
Things you may want to make checks for, and what occurs on a success
Hunting   Gain 1d6 worth of rations from game

2. Oracle
- If you want to know something about the world, ask a yes or no question.
- If you the the answer is likely yes, add one to the oracle roll; if unlikely, subtract one.
- Once you have the question and the likelihood in mind, roll 1d6.
        1 or 2 : No   3 : Somewhat no   4: Somewhat yes   5 or 6 : Yes

3.1 Combat
- Combat between you and you foe(s) is broken up over rounds.
- Regardless of enemy numbers, you roll only once for everyone's attacks that round.
- For the combat round, roll 1d20 to determine the outcome using the table below.
- You may flee instead of attacking, but you still must roll an attack roll to see if you take any damage. If you survive any damage, you successfully escape.

3.2 Attack Rolls
- Roll 1d120 to resolve a round of combat. If your physique is 13 or higher, add +1 to this roll.
- Disarmed enemies do not deal damage on their next hit.

	Attack Roll Table		
1	You are down, see the death table	11	No one hits
2, 3	You are hit and stumble, -1 next round	12 to 15	You hit
4, 5	Brutal hit, take +1 damage (minimum 2)	16, 17	You hit and disarm 1 enemy
6 to 9	Enemies Hit	18, 19	You hit twice
10	No one hits	12	You immediately slay 1 enemy

3.3 Damage Rolls
- For the number of hits made, roll that many damage dice -- per weapon damage.
- Enemies always deal 1d6 damage. For multiple hits, only take the highest dice rolled.
- Subtract your armor's defense from that roll & take that damage with a minimum of 1.

3.4 Death Roll Table
If you reach 0 HP or get a 1 on the attack roll you might die. Roll 1d6 for the result.

	Death Roll Table
1, 2	You have died, the game is over.
3	You are unconscious and taken prisoner. You awake to armed guards prodding you.
4	You awake with 1 HP, but a prisoner. No one is watching you.
5	You are left for dead and wounded. Permanently reduce max HP by half, round up.
6	You are left for dead, but awake hours later at 1 HP.