



# THE KING'S LAST LAUGH

*A Delightful Campaign of Revenge by James Laslavic*

SESSION 0



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## PROLOGUE

For many centuries, two entities of terrifying might fought for the souls of the otherwise lovely Kingdom of Hamdorf. One was a heavenly being whose great power was only matched by its drive to do right, while the other was a sinister creature of limitless malice and greed.

They fought in the shadows every night. The mutilated, de-limbed corpses of their followers in the streets and the disappearances of children each morning were the only hints of their ongoing battle.

Then, one night, it ceased. All that's known is that heaven's side won. Ever since then, the Kingdom of Hamdorf has been ruled by benevolent cleric-kings.

Five generations later, the small kingdom has never been more prosperous and happy. A new cleric-king, Remwald the Jubilant, was recently chosen for the throne after years of famous adventures abroad and catching criminals at home.

He is not so popular at Krüllbrohg Hill, the hidden fortress-dungeon in the mountainous northern tip of the kingdom where he has sent the most evil of all. He locked five new inmates away for varying reasons just before he was crowned.

They won't stay locked away for long though, and he won't have the last laugh.

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## CHARACTER CREATION RULES

1. All official D&D 3.5 source materials are allowed, but it's always a good idea to ask before using stuff outside the core rulebooks (Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, and Monster Manual).\*

"Savage Species" has the most broken stuff, just to warn you. But don't worry about it, I'm lenient.

Remember that most evil people don't consider themselves to be evil. Your characters have not seen their character sheets, so to speak.

2. No good characters. Acceptable alignments are Lawful Evil, Neutral Evil, Chaotic Evil, Lawful Neutral, True Neutral, and Chaotic Neutral.

3. Player characters (PCs) will start with 6,000 experience points (level 4) and 5,400 gps worth of gear picked out. You may play a race, bloodline, or template with level adjustment if you can afford it.

Curious about all the less common options? Start with "Unearthed Arcana" and the "Complete" series.

If you ever need to roll a billion dice at a time, there are lots of web sites and free programs to save your sanity.

4. All dice rolls must be done in front of me, and please call out the result of each roll before and after you add any bonuses or subtract penalties.

5. Please write a backstory for your character that ends with your character being recently imprisoned. It can be as short as you like, but the more content you give me to work with, the more personalized I will make your experience.

If you draw your character, then you can take 6 bonus skill points. If everybody draws their character, then everybody will get 1 bonus feat.

*\*My favorite books: Book of Exalted Deeds, Book of Vile Darkness, the Complete series, Frostburn, Magic Item Compendium, Oriental Adventures, Planar Handbook, Sandstorm, Stormwrack, and Unearthed Arcana.*

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## PLAYING TIPS

*You don't see the world in numbers and rules, so don't describe what you do with them. It's boring.*

1. Storytelling is what D&D is all about, not rolling dice. Don't think of the rules before thinking of what you want to do. Decide what you want to do first, and then worry about how to do it afterward.

2. New players often have a really hard time separating themselves from their characters. I think this is a strength because it makes the characters way more intense. Don't lose that.

*But please don't cry if your character dies. It makes me feel bad, which makes it harder for me to DM for you.*

*Just don't be a Nazi. Comedic relief will happen, and that's a good thing (up to a point).*

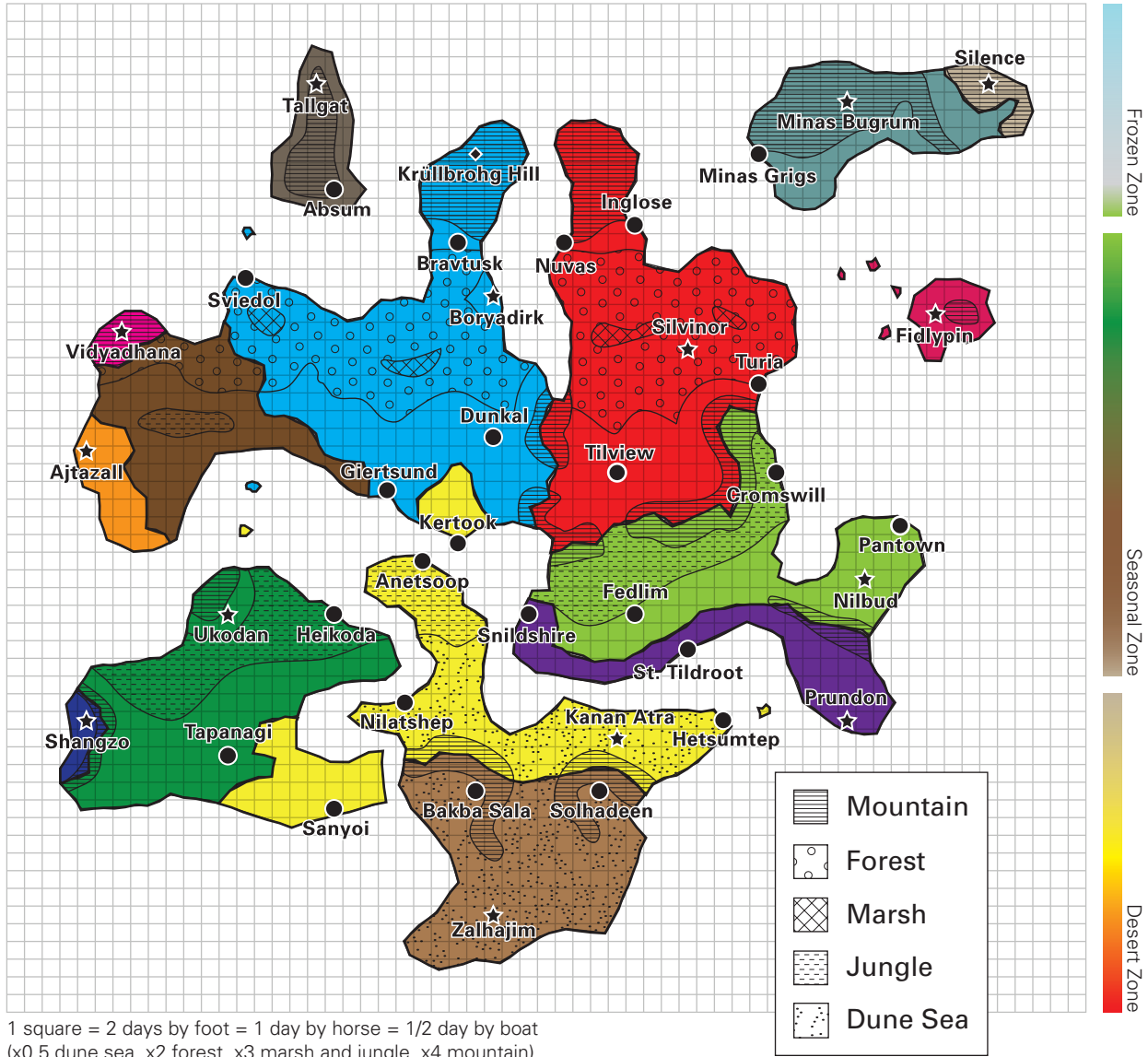
3. Do what you can to help everybody immersed in the game world as fast as possible. If somebody is ruining the atmosphere, please don't always make me be the one to get things back on track.

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|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Tirath Golintus    | ■ Zidlum Islands      | ■ Ho-Kalrah Empire       |
| ■ Dunkraul Dominion  | ■ Hajanyir Plateau    | ■ Taganoku Empire        |
| ■ Skrullbrig         | ■ The Dirty Lands     | ■ Queendom of Elioria    |
| ■ Kingdom of Hamdorf | ■ Kingdom of Limrista | ■ Realm of Xi'Lam        |
| ■ Kingdom of Arhavis | ■ Jobadistan          | ■ Dunes of Salha-Fatoosh |



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## **HOLY KING REMWALD THE JUBILANT**

### **Youth**

Remwald was the third and youngest son of Holy King Drogus the Solemn. His formative years were spent studying and playing in the capital city Boryadirik's abbey-acropolis with other young monks of noble heritage. He was naturally playful and lighthearted, so it was a surprise when he showed such an uncanny ability to grasp the famously strict doctrines of the deity Pholtus.

In accordance with the tradition of the Kingdom of Hamdorf's royal family, he set out at the age of fourteen with a band of his oldest friends to do great things in the name of his god and country, returning to his homeland each winter.

### **Adulthood**

Over the course of the next thirty years, Remwald returned with impressive trophies that included the heads of evil monsters, a dragon's egg, and treasures from ancient ruins. He is responsible for breaking up several small criminal syndicates and purging at least two dark cults started by the same dark mage, whom was eventually caught beginning to form a third.

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Usually he slew the evil he found, but if his enemies surrendered, were helpless, or Remwald simply lacked evidence, he would take them prisoner if he safely could. These spared individuals were sent to the secretive, icy fortress prison at Krüllbrohg Hill in the North. The common people of Hamdorf know only that it is rather unpleasant there.

## **Reign**

When Holy King Drogus the Solemn died one year ago, his three sons were summoned back to Boryadirk to determine which would be given the throne of Hamdorf. Although his brothers Epsurus and Nilothur also had impressive accomplishments to their name, the Fifth Diet of Hierophants of Hamdorf elected Remwald after several days of deliberation.

King Remwald rules with the love of his people, including his two brothers, who have returned to adventuring. His most popular accomplishment is the founding of the simply named Sun Games, a week-long series of athletic events to honor Pholtus that invites the best athletes to compete for fame and glory in the newly built Colosseum of Boryadirk.

He has a wife, Ludra, and two sons aged thirteen and nineteen, Symial and Aidruk.

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## **Appearance**

Father Remwald is a middle-aged man with a leathery but friendly face lined as much by his hearty laugh as by the stress of his past adventures. He has a wide but pointed nose that make his energetic brown eyes seem small and beady even though he usually has them open wide with excitement and enthusiasm about whatever it is that he's doing.

The top of his head is shaved on top so that a large circular island of visible scalp remains, similar to the monks from his youth. The remaining rim of salt and pepper hair to grow upward and outward in a way meant to be suggestive of a crown. His sideburns grow down into full beard that grows out from his face like a mane, finishing his unusual yet commanding aesthetic. It is also said that a nimbus floats just behind his head from the perspective of all who look on him regardless of how he turns.

Typically, he wears thick brown robes with a fine white rope knotted around his waist as the base of his attire. Many layers of elaborately patterned, bejeweled linens cover much of those robes. He carries an unusually long platinum scepter with a leatherbound handle, which was given to him when he was fourteen. It ends in an ivory fist clutching a golden orb symbolizing the sun.

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PREQUEL  
PART I



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## **OPENING**

In the city of Sviedol, the Golden Troll Meadhouse recently had an interesting visitor.

A drunk traveller boasted of how he and his companions would soon be rich and powerful because they had just done a job for the ruler of Jobadistan, a brutal and ambitious warlord. The drunk man claimed he would be immortal and would be made baron of Sviedol as soon as he delivered "somethin' secret" back to the chief. The other patrons of the bar stopped laughing at him when he tried to plunk down 10 platinum coins with the markings of the Jobadistani Regime on them for a wager in a card game. At that point, his comrades entered the bar and took him away.

The news has reached your ears, and no doubt grabbed your interest. You've recently begun an investigation for yourself.

Needing a band of people to travel the roads with so as to avoid any unnecessary altercations involving your hands and bandits' throats or any of the suspicions that can come from travelling alone, you've banded up with a few other individuals coincidentally heading in your direction.

Your small group rented horses (and one riding dog) and got travelling the same night. The city of Sviedol is coming into view now. It is

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currently dusk, and you don't know how many days it has been since the incident at Sviedol.

How much more treasure does that drunk adventurer's crew have, and what is it that they're delivering to the chief of the Jobadistan?

## **SYNOPSIS**

1. Party arrives at Sviedol.
  2. Sentry stops party. Cicero bluffs that they've come for the farmer's market. Guards allow passage.
  3. Party goes to the Golden Troll Meadhouse.
  4. Surly bartender stops party and suggests they leave because Malar is a half-orc. Malar intimidates him into going away.
  5. Achel goes upstairs and mingles with a sketchy, out-of-place merchant.
  6. Percy joins a table of gamblers, then goes upstairs to watch a halfling burlesque show and see what the cocktail waitress knows. He learns that the drunk's name is Telon, and his comrades are a woman named Elaine and a half-orc named Gargash.
  7. Cicero and Malar talk to the new bartender, who eventually directs them to the owner of the inn where the query stayed. After buying him a round of drinks, the innkeeper says where they went and what route they took.
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8. The party immediately leaves Sviedol to try to cut off their quarry in The Dirty Lands. They decide to go straight through the badlands.
  9. They come across a small nomadic band of orcs. Malar tells them in orcish that she is from another orc tribe and has brought the others as slave gifts.
  10. The orc scouts take everybody to the chief, who asks them why they are here. The party says they are hunting three humans because they said bad things about orcs. When asked if they are friends or enemies of Jobadistan, the party says enemies.
  11. The orc chief decides to go with the party to kill the humans. On the way though, some of the other orcs can't restrain themselves from starting to throw stones at the elves. A fight breaks out after they hit Cicero in the head.
  12. The raging orc chief fiercely charges at Malar and skewers her on his crackling spear. The rest of the party teams up on him.
  13. Percy chants sinisterly and downs the chief with waves of pain, revives Malar, and splits open the skull of another orc with his morningstar.
  14. Achel starts showering the battlefield with arrows, tearing through the throat of an orc that was stomping toward her.
  15. Malar gets back on her feet, swigs a healing
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potion, and then swings her greataxe directly through the center of a nearby orc's head in a single furious arc.

16. Cicero unleashes rays of fire and balls of pure force on the battlefield, maiming most of the orcs and mercilessly slaying the one that threw the stone.
17. The battle ends, and the rest of the small orcish tribe scatters, screaming.

## **REWARDS**

### **Standard Yields**

- Story Progression Bonus: 1700 xps (Everybody. 100 xps for each bullet in the review.)
- Noncombat Earnings: 300 xps (Everybody.)
- Combat Earnings: 300 xps (Everybody.)
- Combat Accomplishment Bonus: 500 xps (Everybody. 100 x 5 casualties)

### **Major Story Checkpoints**

- Investigated the Golden Troll Meadhouse: 150 xps (Everybody)
- Soiled in the The Dirty Lands: 150 xps (Everybody)

### **Individual Accomplishments**

- Takedown Bonus: 200 xps (Rusty. 100/kill.)
  - Takedown Bonus: 100 xps (Sandy. 100/kill.)
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- Takedown Bonus: 100 xps (Francesca. 100/kill.)
- Takedown Bonus: 100 xps (Jisuk. 100/kill.)

## **Session Awards**

- Exemplary Combat: 300 xps (Rusty. You had the most takedowns, which included the orcish chief, and also revived a teammate.)
- Exemplary Out-of-Combat: 300 xps (Jisuk. You got into character right away, stayed serious, interacted with the world thoughtfully, and made useful skill checks.)

## **Loot**

- Greatclub, 5 gps (4)
- +1 Shock Greatspear, 2325 gps (1)
- Leather Scale Armor, 35 gps (5)
- Tent, 10 gps (10)
- Potion: Detect Magic, 25 gps (2)
- Small Ruby, 1000 gps (1)
- Violet Garnet, 500 gps (3)
- Bronze Idol of Gruumsh, 400 gps (1)
- Individual gold pieces (430)

Total Value: 6,000 gps

## **FINAL NOTES & TIPS**

- Learn about your feats, abilities, and action points.
  - Try to increase your damage and AC right now.
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PREQUEL  
PART 2



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## **SYNOPSIS**

1. After the slaughter of the orcs, Cicero heals himself and Cicero before the party sets off toward Ajtazall.
  2. To get passed the young, belligerent tribal guards of the city, Cicero creates the illusion of the regime's emblem and the party is allowed in.
  3. The party finds an inn and haggles with the innkeeper just to get the regular prices. Some party members squabble over who gets the room with a window, although it doesn't end up mattering.
  4. After recuperating for two days, the party sells loot taken from the nomadic orcs. Achel is able to haggle with a gruff merchant to get more than what it all was actually worth, but keeps more of the gold for herself than her share.
  5. The group sets up an ambush along the main road, waiting at an outdoor hookah bar for a couple days.
  6. The targets arrive. Cicero and Achel viciously snipe at the brutish half-orc barbarian in the enemy party from a roof with scorching rays and arrows, killing him within seconds.
  7. Matar leaps off of the roof onto the target party's cart like a shock trooper, towering over the humans and swinging her greataxe.
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8. After seeing the woman in the party attempt to cast some type of sleep-inducing spell on Percy, Cicero lobs some magic missiles at her.
  9. The roguish man they'd tracked tumbles to Matar's flank and finds a weak spot with his rapier, but doesn't quite down her. Matar reconsiders her full-on assault.
  10. Cicero shoots magic missiles at the man, sending him flying through a glass window to his crispy death.
  11. When Percy tries to command the sorceress to remove her protective gear, she instead blasts him with orbs of force.
  12. Achel finishes off the Sorceress by shooting an arrow through her throat.
  13. With concerned city guards starting to arrive on the scene, the party convinces them that the caravan took their emblems but that the problem was now solved.
  14. Achel discovers a locked iron jug with mysterious holes in the back of the wagon.
  15. The party moves the wagon to a side alley to investigate (read: loot) it without interruption. Cicero tries opening the char, but a magic trap on the lock singes the tip of his nose with a flash of lightning.
  16. A cocky rogue named Kryscho who also had been tracking that caravan appears in the alley
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and offers to help open the magic man-sized jug in exchange for a share of all the loot. The party agrees.

17. Kryscho spends an hour carefully opening the lock, and finally it clicks open. Inside the jug is a mucous-like liquid with an unconscious young vanara (OA 16) and five bright red rubies.
18. The party takes the rubies, but seals the helpless boy back up in the mucous-filled iron jug and takes it up to the Chief of Jobadistan's palace for the reward.
19. On the way, Cicero shares what he knows about Jobadistan and its politics:

*A harsh, rocky plain that was part of The Dirty Lands not so long ago, it is ruled by a single powerful tribal regime. The only two laws of this land are to respect the authority of the chief, Dalkoram the Conqueror, and worship no deities other than Al-Ishtus (SandS 45). The brutal, greedy rulers of this land plot to take over all of The Dirty Lands, and then seek to finance an invasion of the Hajanyir Plateau with raids on Hamdorf's cities. The goal is to demand immortality from the djinn that rules Vidyadhana.*

20. Cicero, Kryscho, Matar, and Percy proceed to the palace. A burly vizier greets them, and the
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party members each take 5000 gold pieces and a slave in exchange for the iron jug. Because Achel isn't there, they split most of her share amongst themselves. The party leaves the city with their fortunes and slaves immediately.

## **REWARDS**

### **Standard Yields**

- Story Progression Bonus: 2000 xps (Everybody. 100 xps for each bullet in the review.)
- Noncombat Earnings: 300 xps (Everybody.)
- Combat Earnings: 300 xps (Everybody.)
- Combat Accomplishment Bonus: 300 xps (Everybody. 100 x 3 casualties)

### **Major Story Checkpoints**

- Ambush the Enemy Party: 150 xps (Everybody.)
- Collecting a Tainted Reward: 150 xps (Everybody.)

### **Individual Accomplishments**

- Takedown Bonus: 200 xps (Sandy. 100/kill.)
- Takedown Bonus: 100 xps (Jisuk. 100/kill.)
- Important Lockpicking: 100 xps (Shannon.)

### **Session Awards**

- Exemplary Combat: 300 xps (Sandy. You had the most takedowns this time! Congratulations!)
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- Exemplary Out-of-Combat: 300 xps (Jisuk. Once again, you deserve recognition for solving obstacles with things like illusion spells and knowledge checks.)

## **Loot**

- Gargash the Barbarian's equipment: Masterwork Breastplate, 350 gps (1); Climber's kit, 80 gps (1); Masterwork Greataxe, 320 gps (1); Composite Longbow, 100 gps (1); Dagger, 2 gps (1); Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds, 300 gps (3); Potion of Delay Poison 400 gps (4); 2700 gps
- Elaine the Sorceress' equipment: Masterwork Light Crossbow, 335 gps (1); Dagger, 2 gps (1); 2150 gps
- Telon the Rogue's equipment: Masterwork Buckler, 165 gps (1); Masterwork Rapier, 320 gps (1); Masterwork Light Crossbow, 335 gps (1); Masterwork Studded Leather Armor, 175 gps (1); 1500 gps
- From the Iron Jug: Red Ruby, 1000 gps (5)
- Chief Dalkoram's Reward: Human Slave, 750 gps (5); bag of 5000 gps (5)

Total Value: 39784 gps

## **FINAL NOTES & TIPS**

- It was fun getting to know you and your characters, and hopefully we'll do more in April!
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