

# Baby it's cold outside...

Temperatures dropped below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, that is about -18 degrees Celsius. That is cold folks. It is cold enough that I don't want to be out in it too long. It is cold enough that the old fireplace is working overtime just to get up to heat. The breeze is bone chilling.

To top all this off, we were without power for a few hours this morning. Since I have electric heat, that meant I woke up to a cold house. Since I have a well, it also meant no hot showers. Conserve water, get a fire going and report the outage. Actually, I found out I didn't need to report the outage. It was widespread enough to alert the local electric company without my call.

Days like today are made for playing games, and drinking hot tea or cocoa. I was able to heat a kettle of water on the wood stove and made some instant cocoa. My youngest and I played a few games and had a good time until the power came back around lunch time.

Still going out and getting firewood was an experience today. I guess I'm just not used to the cold yet. I remember, not too long ago, going out on days like today and playing games with my girls. Just last year, I remember going to the [zoo](#) with most of my family. Walking around and admiring the many [lights the zoo](#) puts up for the holiday season. Our family has been [members of the Toledo Zoo](#) for many years, and will probably continue as members for many years to come. I have yet to see the lights this year, but will before they close by the end of the year.

So for all in places that are cold right now, find some way to stay warm. I will.

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# Not much movie watching today

My weather day turned into a day to install my new router. This now allows all the computers in the house to access the cell modem at the same time. Yes, this does slow down from the direct connect speed just a bit, but if only one person is on, I didn't notice any difference. But I will be able to work, my daughter will be able to do homework, and I'll finally be able to get to the internet from my linux box.

I also found out that I can IM multiple daughters at once. Could be fun if they are ever online at the same time.

Things just moved fast when I was able to get my high speed cell modem. And the speeds are getting faster every day, well almost every day.

Then on to a party with the people I work with. It was a fun time.

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# It was a dark night...

You are all alone, and there is a light, from what looks like a campfire, in the distance...

That is how the evening started. As I expected, the group of theater regulars were up to the task of playing a character. In that there was never really a doubt in my mind. The problem for all came when the small polyhedrons were needed (variety of dice for those not in the know). The comments, "Do I use this? No, that one. This one? No the one just in front of

that." were in common usage the entire evening.

All of this is common when starting this type of game. There are 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 20 sided dice used in this game. Knowing how and when to use them is a bit of a learning curve. It seems that teenage boys and some young adults are much better at learning this, just like video games. □

Well, I think most of the group had fun. I certainly had fun. It has been than a few years since I ran any sort of game, and I certainly had fun doing it. Thinking on the fly, running people through a part of a world I created are enjoyable to me. But the complexity of the characters, and multiple dice rolling, sometimes slows down the game play. What to do, what to do?

Me, I started thinking of games with no dice at all. There are a few on the gaming market, but the character creation is just as complex if not more complex. How do you determine winners and losers of confrontations without randomizing effects of cards, spinners or dice.. How complex do you make your rules?

Well, I'm thinking of just such a game. Role Playing for the actors in all of us, and no dice to confuse the situation. Designing it in my head as I write this. In few weeks, I will be looking for a group of volunteers to run through this game.

For those who want to know the setting. Think current time period, and ghost hunters...

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## **Running a game...**

I was given a challenge. To come up with an simple Dungeons and Dragons adventure that could be finished by novice players

in one evening (around 2-3 hours).

There are a few ways to go about that.

- 1) Make it so simple, it will not give a good indication of how the game works
- 2) Make the area to be explored very small – again lose some of the way the game works
- 3) Heavy Non-Player (game master run) character guidance – See above.
- 4) Come up with something where the primary objective is straight forward, but allow some side paths that will allow players to make their own choice. But the path to the true objective is easily found if looked for. Do this to make sure as many aspects of game play are introduced. Fights, parleys, retreats, find paths, avoid pitfalls, ect.

And of course don't start with, you all meet in a tavern...

Guess which one I chose?

To make it easier, I also generated some characters with survivable statistics. I know more people who dropped the game just because their character didn't survive the first attack. No overpowering characters, but they aren't slouches either. Given a good selection, they should survive the first adventure (unless they try to combat the dragon).

Those that decide the game is worth playing could continue with the characters they are given for many further games. Those who want to give up the game, can. If they don't like the type of character they have, they can change after the first game.

It has been fun getting back into the swing of running even a game. I was hoping to run a tournament module for some more experienced players in the future, so this should give me a bit of practice to get back into the swing of things.

I do have a tournament module that I designed years and years ago for low level characters , but that is/was an experience in survival. It ran under 3 hours most of the time, but it was because the characters were all killed. Survival to the furthest point in the game was the object. I was told is was a lot of fun for players used to running high level characters to step back and see how well they can survive with the low level again. All the playing experience, with a rookie character for backup...

The next adventure shouldn't be an experience in survival, but it could turn out that way. Make an incorrect decision and oops.

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## Who's counting anyway?

I've been having a bit of fun writing up an Dungeons and Dragons adventure journal. It is something I wanted to share, but I didn't want them to get lost or take over the main part of my blog. So I put them into different pages. Because I wanted easy access to my posts, I decided to change my blog theme too. This new theme allowed me to post the page links in a side bar and allow easy access. so far so good.

But the one thing i did notice is that the new pages were not included in links to new posts... Hmm, no easy way to indicate a new story line was added. I thought about writing an intro post for each new chapter or page. That seemed to be a bit too much. One or two lines are all that are needed anyway. Since I have a post that starts the adventure, I'm thinking that I will add a comment for each new page. The comments are listed as recent events, so people who are interested can see the new additions easily.

Lost a few on my post count, but who's counting anyway?

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## Look to the top

For those interested in Dungeons and Dragons, or Role Playing games in General, I started a new page to detail the adventures of a character I have in a game run by one of my son-in-laws.

It has been a lot of fun getting back into role playing again. I did it years ago when the girls were very young. I even taught my eldest daughter how to play.

The trials of raising a family brought an end to my role playing days. Well that and the fact that the game was changing and I didn't want to spend more money on it.

There was a time when I spent some time playing with a local group, but that ended when some people moved away.

Well, now my daughter and her friends run a game or two, and they kindly invited the old man to sit in. I have and have had a lot of fun doing it.

Just in case you miss the link on the top, you can [click here](#).

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## A different type of game

One of my friends and blogging buddy posted some [notes on a game we played \(click to read\)](#). These were written by they guy

running the game, so they were an overall view, as if someone was watching the action. I was thinking of writing something like that from a player's (character's) point of view. Just not with that game. I'm thinking of a game I'm a bit more familiar with...

Dungeons and Dragons... My Son-in-Law's campaign. But first a background of the character whose story will be told.

A short history of Calinth Knight of Deinir

Calinth of some temple in some town was orphaned at an early age and raised on the temple grounds. The Clerics there were good to him, and taught him their ways. All there thought he would grow to become a priest in that temple.

When Calinth reached the age of 11, the town and temple were attacked by a large band of orcs. Calinth was weeding and hoeing the small herb patch behind the living area when he was attacked. He drove his hoe blade deep into the head of the first orc, and then picked up the orc's sword and shield. He was able to make it to the Temple stairs by fighting his way there. Cut and bloody, he fought side by side with the holy warriors of the temple. Both clerics and knights were side by side to prevent the orcs from the worship area.

A great knight was knocked down by what could only have been an Ogre. (as seen by the eyes of an 11 year old. Actually just a very large orc.) Calinth jumped into the path of the Orc's sword, blocking the killing blow with his shield. This blow broke his arm and threw him over the downed knight. The Orc was furious that his blow was stopped. He raised his battle ax high over his head to kill both of the temple defenders. Calinth saw his chance to save both himself and the knight under him. He pushed his sword up just under the Orc's breast plate with all his might. After that blow he passed out.

The next day he found himself in the infirmary, with the knight standing over him.

“I am Bahoson, and would like you to be my squire. I am a Paladin of this temple and I think you are also called to serve.”

A warm feeling went over Calinth at that time. His arm was no longer sore. He felt a peace he had not known before. Yes, he would do that. He would be whatever a squire was.

Years passed, and Calinth learned the ways of the sword. He learned the ways of all that is right and good. In his 18th year, he became a knight in his own right. In his 22nd year, he saw the injustice of his own service. His master, mentor and friend, Bahoson, was driven out of town by a corrupt and power hungry official. Rumor has it, that Bahoson was assassinated on the outskirts of town. The law of the land and his calling prevented Calinth from interfering. A priest in the temple told him of “another way”, and he was given directions to look for Kandomere in some other town. This started him on the path of the Grey Guard. There were all kinds of evil, corruption and chaos in the world, and now Calinth had a path to follow that could fight these problems at the closest source.

Calinth traveled far and wide fighting evil at its most foul. On the way back home from a successful campaign, he stopped at a strange Inn for a light noon meal. In the middle of town far from any sea, a large ship stood. The ship itself looked as though it could sail at any minute, except for the doors cut into its hull. Here is where Calinth’s next adventure begins...