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Scheherazade



Quickstart

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ON THE COVER

*The Dream of
Scheherazade*

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THE ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS RPG

Quickstart

Welcome to the Eternal Caliphate

“Here Scheherazade perceived the light of morning, and discontinued the recitation. How excellent is thy story! And how pretty! But what is this in comparison with that which I will relate to thee in the next night, if I live, and the Caliph spare me! And the Caliph said, I will not kill her until I hear the remainder of her story.”

The One Thousand and One Nights

Far away, in space and time, in the city of Bagdad, it's sunrise.

Under the fading light of the moon the city is still sleeping, apart from a single light on the top of the tallest tower of the palace of the Caliph.

There, in the light of a lamp, a girl with black eyes is telling a story to the Caliph Shahryar, ruler of all the kingdom. Her name is Scheherazade.

“... and so, my Caliph the story continues... as I'll tell you tomorrow night.”

The girl and the man both smile. For one thousand nights Scheherazade has told a story to the Caliph, who let her live another night to hear the end of the Tale.

But both of them know the threat of death ended many months ago: Shahryar tenderly loves Scheherazade, as she does him, and tomorrow, when she will tell him her last story, the Caliph will make her his queen.

But sometimes stories don't go as they are supposed to.

The next day, at second prayer's time, when the servants go to wake up Scheherazade, they find her in deep slumber. They try to wake her, but to no effect. Frightened, they call the Vizier Jafar, the right hand of the Caliph, but not even he, a man of great knowledge, can manage to wake up Scheherazade. The voices carry to the Caliph's rooms, and the mighty ruler of all Persia comes in person to wake up his future queen.

But with no effect.

The best doctors and hakim, which are wise men, are called, but nobody manages to wake her up.

"Blessed son of God" they say, prostrating themselves, "an incantation of some sort has been placed on her. One we cannot unravel. We fear she will sleep forever".

"It cannot be!" the Caliph cried "I am the most powerful man in all of Persia! I swear that the man or woman who will free Scheherazade from the curse will be rewarded beyond all imagination!"

Mad with grief, the Caliph refused to see anyone, and ordered that Scheherazade be brought to the top of the highest tower of the palace.

The sleep of Scheherazade continues to this day, many months later, and the people are worried. The Caliph is grieving, neglecting his duties, which fall entirely on Jafar, the Vizier.

And despite his wide smiles and polite manner, the right hand of the Caliph isn't a just man: his guards tax the rich and vex the poor, and nobody laughs anymore in Bagdad.

As if this were not enough, disturbing voices come from the far provinces of the kingdom: bandits roam the desert, pillaging caravans, strange beasts infest the skies, the dead wake up in the ruins of forgotten cities under the sands, and djinn howl in the cold nights.

"If Scheherazade doesn't wake up, the Eternal Caliphate will end!" the prophets cry.

But nobody pays heed to their warnings, only the moon, with her pale stare.





The Dream

The night Scheherazade fell asleep you had a dream.

You were in the desert, alone in the starry night. And then, reflected in the full moon, you saw a girl. She stared at you with eyes full of fear. "Please, help me!" she said.

You knew her.

She was Scheherazade, the promised bride of the Caliph.

You knew her because you had met her in the past, and told her your story. A story that she retold to the Caliph during the one thousand nights.

You woke up covered in sweat, knowing that something terrible was happening, not only to Scheherazade, but to the whole caliphate.

Something only you, and those like you, can stop.

In the sky, the moon shimmers, like a pale gem.



HEROES OF SCHEHERAZADE

This game is a very special one. It is a role-playing game, set in a world similar to ancient Arabia and Persia. It is the world of the One Thousand and One Nights, a place of marvels, where djinn can fulfill the wishes of mortals, where poor orphans can become rich, and where carpets can fly, I assure you, because I have seen them with these very eyes!

You'll take the role of a fictional hero, one of the many folks Scheherazade met, and whose stories she tells.

You are tasked with a very difficult quest: discover what happened to Scheherazade and, possibly, wake her up. There are others like you: people who met the young princess before or after you, and who had the same dream you had.

Together, you'll be the heroes of *Scheherazade*, and will hopefully save her, and the whole kingdom.

But this is only a loose framework: The Caliphate of the Eternal Moon is a place of wonder, and you can experience a number of adventures in it, even not connected to the royal princess.

WHAT A ROLE PLAYING GAME IS

If you are reading this Quick Start, you probably know what RPGs are, but, well, in case you found this old scroll by chance in the sultan's library, role playing games are a form of entertainment where players take the role of a fictional hero (a player character) and live a story in a fantastical world.

One of the players takes the mantle of the Storyteller and is tasked to describe the world around the heroes, including the consequences of the other players' actions. Altogether, Heroes and Storyteller, give life to awesome stories.

It's a lot of fun.

ABOUT SINGULAR THEY

The growing consensus is that "they" can and should be used as a gender-neutral, singular English-language pronoun when one is needed. We have adopted that as the style in *Scheherazade*. If you see this grammatical construction, it is intentional.

THE MAGICAL LAMP



Many tried to find it, but only I, Alladin, Prince of Thieves of all Bagdad, held it in hands. Do you want to hear the whole story? Well, It's a long one, my friend, but the night is young, so, please pour some other tea...

-Alladin, Prince of Thieves

GAMING MATERIAL

To play *Scheherazade*, you need a copy of this Quick Start, including the pre-generated heroes and the introductory adventure, and a dozen six-sided dice, one of which must be different from the others in size or color (the Fate Die).

You also need some pencils, erasers, and paper on which to sketch and write notes. You could also find having a dozen or so tokens (coins, glass beads, or something similar) to track things in the game useful.



A DISCLAIMER FROM THE AUTHOR

This game is about the Arabian world, its legends, and fascinations.

Despite the fact that the names and the places sound familiar, it is fictional. The customs, persons, and situations represented in the game relate to the real Arab world as the vanilla fantasy settings of many RPGs relate to the real European Middle Ages.

We have maximum respect for Arabian culture.

In other words, this is only a game. take it as a game.



CHARACTERS

Characters in *Scheherazade* are defined by a *Name*, a *Concept*, few *Attributes* and a *Unique Gift*.

Concept and Attributes have a numerical value, determined by the number of marked boxes on the Character Sheet.

The *Concept* simply indicates what your hero is: a crafty mariner like Sinbad? A poor orphan destined to become a hero like Aladdin? Or a smart servant girl like Morgana? Concept ranges from 1 to 3.

Attributes, coupled in opposing pairs, describe various aspects of your hero and range from 1 to 6.

POWER [POW]. Your strength and raw power. Useful in melee combat.

PRECISION [PRE]. Your accuracy and finesse. Useful in ranged combat and delicate tasks.

COURAGE [COU]. Your bravery and audacity in the face of danger.

CAUTION [CAU]. The opposite of courage. Your common sense and defensive reactions. Useful to get out of harm's way.

PASSION [PAS]. Your empathy, wisdom, and capacity to talk with others.

REASON [REA]. Your rationality and knowledge.

In addition, you also have a seventh, special Attribute.

RESOURCES [RES]. It defines your wealth, contacts, and connections.

Do you see that boxes on Attributes have different shapes? This is because characters also have a Life score, which is equal to the number of heart boxes marked and an Energy score (equal to the number of star boxes marked). When Life drops to zero the character is defeated, while Energy is used to cast spells and activate some special abilities.

Finally your character has a Unique Gift, a special ability which makes him or her unique and different from any other (yes, only they have!).

Unique Gifts are usually very strongly tied to your Concept and are described on the character sheet of the pre-generated heroes. They usually trigger in specific situations, so they are written like that: "When [a condition] applies, then...".

MAGIC. Certain heroes also have the capacity of casting spells, as described on their Character Sheets. Casting a spell is automatic, it doesn't require any roll (but it is still considered an action) and costs 1 Energy point.

GEAR. Pre-generated heroes begin with three pieces of Gear, linked to their Concept. Normal items in *Scheherazade*, usually aren't defined by specific rules: simply when you lack a necessary object (for example a healer bag to tend wounds of a friend) you suffer a penalty, while if you have the right tool at the right moment you have a bonus. But heroes have the chance to acquire special items, which are handled through Keywords (described on the pregens' character sheets).

PLAY THE GAME

ROLLING DICE

In *Scheherazade*, as a rule of thumb, only players roll dice against a Difficulty Level set by the Storyteller, unless you decide to use the Active Rolling rule, or there is a player vs player conflict (described in the core rules).

ROLL ONLY WHEN REALLY NECESSARY. One of the temptations that Storytellers have is to make players roll for everything. Don't do it. Only ask for a roll when the outcome of the roll really changes the situation.



ACTION RESOLUTION

When a player declares an action with an uncertain outcome, the Storyteller sets a *Difficulty Level* (or simply *Level* or *LvL*) from 1 (Very Easy) to 10 (Nigh Impossible), and chooses *two Attributes for the player to roll on*, depending on how the player described their Action. You can use the *Difficulty Table* as a reference for setting the level, and the *Example Actions Table* for deciding what Attributes to use.

Then, the player rolls a *number of dice equal to the two Attributes' values and the character's Concept value* (if relevant) added together.

EVERY 4 OR MORE ON A DIE IS A SUCCESS, EVERY 3 OR LESS IS A FAILURE.

If the player scores at least a number of *Successes equal to the Difficulty Level*, the action is *successful!* Extra successes mean greater positive results (margin of success). If the player rolls less successes than the *Difficulty Level*, they fail, and may suffer consequences depending on how many successes they are short by (margin of failure).

FATE Die. One of the dice rolled must be a different size or color than the others. This is the Fate Die. It works exactly as the other dice with two important differences.

First, *the value of the Fate Die cannot be changed* in any way by Unique Gifts or other rules.

Second, if the Fate Die's *result is 1*, *the action has a negative Consequence*,

regardless of whether the overall roll is successful or not. On the opposite side, if the *result is a 6*, *the action has a positive Consequence*, whether the overall roll is successful or not. If the Storyteller can't think of a reasonable consequence given the specific roll or situation, simply add +1 to the Difficulty of the character's next action (negative Consequence), or give -1 to the Difficulty of the character's next action (positive Consequence).

Example. Aliyaya the Blue Dervish tries to jump over a crevasse to escape a pack of Fire Jackals. The Storyteller asks her for a **POW+COU** roll vs a Level 3. Aliyaya has POW 2, COU 4 and her Concept is Dedicated Dervish 1 (which is relevant, since dervishes are skilled in acrobatic fighting). Aliyaya's player rolls $4+2+1=7$ dice. She rolls 5,5,6,4,3,2,1 (Fate Die). Four successes, one more than necessary, but she rolled a 1 on the Fate Die! The Storyteller decides that the Blue Dervish not only jumps to the other side of the crevasse, but she also runs away a bit, reaching the entrance of a nearby cavern. And now the Fate Die: landing near the verge of the crevasse Aliyaya breaks away some of the edge, which now makes it more difficult (+1) for her friends behind her to jump over the obstacle.

Difficulty Table

LEVEL	DIFFICULTY	EXAMPLE
1	Very Easy	Climb a wall full of handholds with climbing gear
2	Easy	Climb a wall full of handholds without climbing gear
3	Average	Climb a wall with sparse handholds
4	Difficult	Climb a wall with no handholds
5	Challenging	Climb a wall with no handholds while being chased by enemies
6	Intimidating	Climb a wall with no handholds while being chased by enemies, in darkness
7	Formidable	Climb a wall with no handholds while being chased by enemies, in darkness, while carrying a wounded companion
8	Heroic	Climbing a perfectly smooth wall
9	Legendary	Climbing a perfectly smooth wall, using only one arm
10	Nigh Impossible	Climbing a perfectly smooth and impenetrable wall

IMPROVING YOUR CHANCES

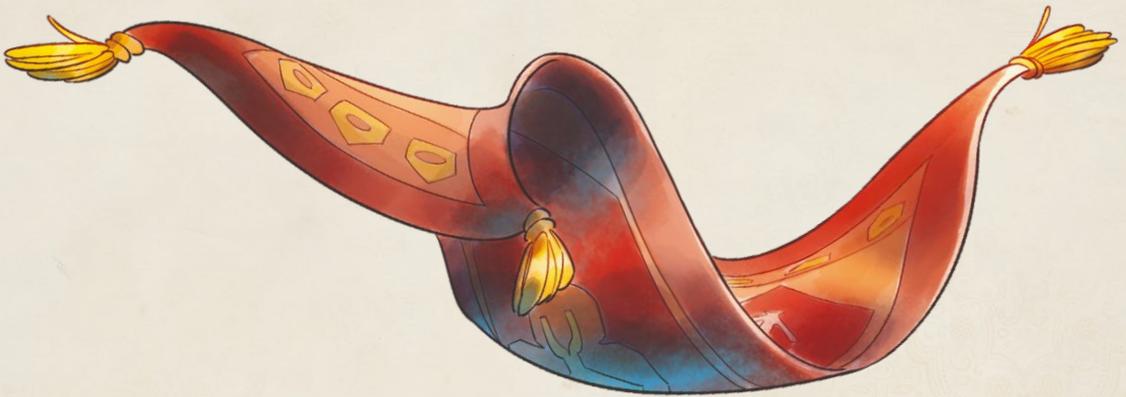
You may have noticed that the difficulty table is a little unforgiving: in other words, it could happen that a hero has no chance to succeed at an action, if their Attributes are too low. This is on purpose. If you want to succeed in these cases, you must use your brain, not simply rely on rolling the dice.

TACTICS AND GEAR. A good tactic, or using a suitable piece of gear, can improve your chances, lowering the difficulty of an action by 1 or 2 to a minimum of zero (in which case you don't have to roll at all).

Example. A few heartbeats after Aliyaya made her leap, Abbas the Old Ghul Hunter puffs up to the edge of the crevasse. He has to jump too (and the Difficulty Level is now 4 because of Aliyaya Fate Die roll of 1). The Storyteller calls for a roll of **POW+COU**, but Abbas has a meager POW 1, COU 2, and his Concept won't help in this situation, so the player only has 3 dice. Too low to succeed at the Difficulty of 4. Abbas's player looks around, finding an old wooden plank abandoned among the rocks. It isn't very solid, but it's enough to lower the Difficulty by one (to Level 3). Abbas rolls: 6,4,2. Two successes, one less than necessary! The Storyteller says that the Ghul Hunter cautiously walks across the plank until halfway over the crevasse, then the plank breaks, and the old man has to jump to the other side. He misses, but clings to the edge! All of this, while the Fire Jackals howl their frustration on the other side of the crevasse...

HELPING. Forfeiting any other action, you can help a friend in a task, granting them one extra die, plus another one if the helper's Concept is relevant to the action. Note that NPCs cannot help a friend, if they collaborate, use the Group Enemies rule (see page 24).

FAIL-FORWARD. Failing an action by one point can mean (Storyteller's call) that you succeed but, with a negative consequence (like rolling a 1 on the Fate Die).





EXAMPLE ACTIONS TABLE

IMPORTANT: this table is only a suggestion, let the players' descriptions of their heroes' actions guide you! If you are really in doubt, ask the player what Attribute they feel would be appropriate for the task (but as Storyteller, you always have the final word).

Example Actions Table

TO...	YOU ROLL ON
...attack in melee	POW+COU
...attack with a ranged weapon	PRE+REA
...defend from a melee attack (parrying)	POW+CAU
...defend from a ranged attack (dodging)	PRE+CAU
...intimidate someone	PAS+COU
...persuade someone	REA+POW
...move stealthily	CAU+PAS
...pick a lock	PRE+REA
...heal a wound	PAS+REA
...remember a piece of lore	REA+PRE
...lift a boulder	POW+CAU
...notice a detail	PRE+CAU
...find or follow tracks	PRE+REA
...gather information at the bazaar	PAS+RES
...find a passage on a ship	CAU+RES



DIFFICULTY ZERO

Through clever use of Gear and Tactics, the Difficulty of an action can drop to zero. In this case, consider it an automatic success and you don't need to roll.

COMBAT

Sooner or later, the heroes will get involved in combat, a deadly situation to be solved with strength of arms, and with cunning and guile, of course!

SETTING THE SCENE

Before any dice are rolled, the Storyteller must describe as clearly as they can the scene, or at least what the heroes can see of it. The battlefield in *Scheherazade* is roughly divided in Zones, each of them representing a particular portion of the area. You don't need to be overly detailed, you can say something like: "the entrance to the room", "the center, where the table is", and "the back of the room, with the strongbox and the small window". To use Zones effectively in combat, we suggest having at least 3-5 of them.

After describing each Zone, the Storyteller must indicate where the heroes and their opponents are.

ZONES IN COMBAT. The items and props described in a Zone aren't only decorations: the heroes and their enemies could, and should, use them: barrels must be overturned, chandeliers swung from, mugs of wine thrown in the face of enemies, and so on. In the core rules, you'll find specific rules on them.





ACTIONS AND INITIATIVE

During a round, a character can always make a *Movement*, and choose one among: another *Move*, an *Attack*, or *Doing Something*.

In addition, a character can perform *any number of Defenses* that they need to.

But first, you must decide in what order the combatants act, by rolling for Initiative.

INITIATIVE. At the beginning of the combat, the Storyteller asks for a **CAU+COU** Test of the LvL of the opponents. Characters passing the test act before the opponents (in any order the players

decide), characters failing it act after the enemies. In case of mixed level opponents, the Storyteller can declare multiple Difficulties and place the heroes accordingly. When all the heroes and the opponents have acted, the round ends and a new one begins, following the same order.

The Initiative order remains the same for the whole combat, unless some external event occurs to change it.

Note that in certain cases, Initiative can be skipped, such as if a party has Surprise (core rules).

Example of normal Initiative. Aliyaya and Abbas are ambushed by a band of thugs (LvL 2). Aliyaya succeeds at the Initiative roll, while Abbas fails. The initiative order is: Aliyaya, the thugs, Abbas.

Example of multiple Initiative. Aliyaya and Abbas are attacked by a band of thugs (LvL 2) lead by an evil sorcerer (LvL 4). Aliyaya scores one successes, missing both difficulties, while Abbas scores three successes, passing the thugs' difficult but not the sorcerer's Difficulty. The initiative order is: sorcerer, Abbas, thugs, Aliyaya.

Movement

Scheherazade uses "theater of mind" style combat. As mentioned above, the battlefield is divided into Zones. A character can freely move 1 Zone during their turn (before or after making an action). If they want, they can spend an action to make a second Movement.

DIFFICULT ZONE. If a Zone is particularly awkward to cross (for example, there is a wall to climb, a fire to avoid, or so on), the hero can be asked to make a Lvl 2

(**PRE+CAU**) roll to pass through it. If they fail, they cannot cross the zone, and the movement is considered spent.

LEAVING COMBAT. If a hero is engaged in melee and wants to leave the Zone (not to move across the same Zone, which is allowed), they suffer a free attack from every opponent engaging them.

Attack

Characters can normally attack only opponents in the same Zone with melee weapons, while they can attack enemies in other Zones with ranged attacks

To attack an enemy, the character must pass a Test (usually **POW+COU** for melee, or **PRE+REA** for ranged).

The test is made at the LvL of the defender.

If the test is successful, they can spend one Effect, plus another one per margin of success, as follows. The same Effect can be selected multiple times.

- **Damage.** Spend one Effect to cause one point of damage to the opponent, lowering their Life by one.
- **Hinder.** Spend one Effect to give the opponent -1 to their LvL until their next round (a suitable description is necessary). Enemies reduced to LvL 0 cannot act (consider them stunned).

Example. Aliyaya, much to her dismay, sees one Fire Jackal jump over the crevasse, right near poor Abbas, who is hanging from it. Without even thinking, she charges the foul beast [LvL 3] swinging her sword! She rolls 4 successes, which qualifies for two Effects. She decides to spend the first one to deal one damage to the Jackal, and the second one to push it back, hindering it (and reducing it to LvL 2). In this case, the Storyteller, considering that the beast is on the edge of the crevasse, decides that it falls down screaming.

Defend

Characters attacked by enemies must defend to avoid being hit.

This is done by making a test (usually **POW+CAU** to defend from a melee attack, or **PRE+CAU** to defend from a ranged attack). A hero can defend as many times as necessary without penalty.

The test is made at the LvL of the attack.

If the defender fails, the Storyteller can spend one Effect against the character, and they suffer one Effect per margin of failure, as described below. The same Effect can be selected multiple times.

- **Damage.** Spend one Effect to cause one point of damage to the hero, lowering their Life by one.

WHY HINDERING?



The power players among you (yeah, I know you are here), may question why one would ever waste an Effect point in an attack on Hindering someone instead of dealing a damage point?

There are at least two reasons. First, a hindered enemy will be easier for you to defend from.

Second, a hindered enemy will be easier for your friends to attack, if they came after you in the turn.

REMEMBER: TEAMWORK CAN SAVE YOUR DAY IN DIFFICULT FIGHT.

- **Hinder.** Spend one Effect to increase by +1 the Difficulty of the hero's actions until their next round (a suitable description is necessary).

On the other side, if a hero defends very well, they obtain one Effect point per margin of success, which they can spend

as it follows. The same Effect can be selected multiple times.

- Spend two Effects to Hinder an enemy (as shown under Attack above).
- Spend three Effects to perform an immediate free attack, action, or movement (only once per round).

Example. The first Fire Jackal is already howling in terror when a second one jumps over the crevasse, attacking the Blue Dervish. Aliyaya must defend [LvL 3], but she only rolls 2 successes, failing by one. The Storyteller decides to spend one Effect dealing her one point of damage. The mandibles of the monster close on the young girl's arm, leaving a red line of blood on it. But it doesn't end there: a second Fire Jackals attacks Aliyaya, who this time rolls 6 successes, gaining 3 points of Effect! Aliyaya's players decides to use them to immediately make an attack: she is successful, dealing three damage and actually killing the second attacker!

Do Something

Under this catch-all category, we include all the other activities which can take place during combat which are not attacking or moving. For example, casting a spell, helping a friend, opening a door, quaffing a potion, or whatever. For very

long actions (such as deciphering an ancient scroll), the Storyteller can say that the activity requires more Actions to be done (which the character must spend over multiple turns).

Gear

Items which have Keywords can give substantial bonuses to your actions in combat. Certain Keywords are triggered when a "6" is scored on dice when used actively by the players. The same

Keywords, if used by the enemies, trigger when the players roll "1" on the Fate Die.



DAMAGE AND RECOVERY

Heroes and opponents alike can get hurt. This can happen in combat, from falling down from a high place, ingesting a poison, and in a number of other ways. Per each point of damage suffered, a character reduces their Life by one (even if some attacks can damage their Energy too).

DEFEATED. When the Life of a hero drops to zero, the character is Defeated, a special status meaning basically that the character falls down and cannot do

Recovery

After a scene, when the situation settles down, the heroes can decide to Rest. The characters must be in a calm situation, be able to eat and drink something, and then sleep or relax for a night. The exact number of hours is left to the Storyteller, but in general, only a single Rest is allowed per day. After doing so, they recover all their Energies. If a healer is present, they can also try curing an Injury for a friend (see core rules).

During a Rest, the group can also decide to Tell a Story (see Moon Points below).

TENDING WOUNDS. While the heroes are in the thick of the action, they cannot afford the luxury of a Rest, but they can

anything until Recovery (see below). If the group is playing with the Injuries rules (see core rules), it may even mean that the character is dead, otherwise, unless someone finishes the character off, they will awaken one to six hours later (roll one die). What happened in the meantime is left to the Storyteller: the hero could have been left for dead and abandoned, captured by their enemies, or simply been taken care of by their friends.

try to tend their wounds, if they suffered some. It is a (Lv1 1, PAS+REA) Action, which allows a hero to recover one Life point plus the margin of success. A skilled healer can roll for the whole group if they want, receiving Help from a Friend. Tending wounds requires ten minutes of time per patient.

MEDITATING. A character taxed by the use of spells, or simply worn down from events, can try to recover their composure by meditating. It is a (Lv1 1, PAS+REA) Action, which allows the hero to recover one Energy point plus the margin of success. A single attempt can be made each day, and requires ten minutes of time.

MOON POINTS

The heroes of *Scheherazade* have a particular connection with the moon. In some way, they have been chosen by it to be its agents in the world. This special connection is handled through Moon Points.

Every hero begins the game with 1 Moon Point, and can gain up to four, each of them representing a quarter of the moon, up to the full moon.

Using Moon Points

How can Moon Points be used? Basically, in two ways.

REROLLING DICE. A player can spend a Moon Point to reroll one or more dice of their choice if they don't like the result. They can be part of an Action roll or any other roll regarding the hero, like the Injury roll or a random roll to check who falls into a trap.

CREATE A STORY ELEMENT. The character can spend a Moon Point to influence in some way the story. For example, they can invent a connection on the fly, like an old hakim friend who happens to know a lot about the Magian religion, or a minor event, like a herd of goats passing in the bazaar, blocking their pursuers during a chase. The Storyteller can veto the expense of the point, but, if it is allowed, it must have a real influence on the story.

Gaining Moon Points

There are various ways of receiving Moon Points. First, they are gained in-game for outstanding actions such as (but not only):

- Saving a friend's life at risk of your own
- Being really heroic
- Finding an outstanding solution for a problem
- Telling a Story (see below)

NARRATOR BOX



OPTIONAL RULE: STORIES AS SOCIAL SITUATION SOLVERS

Stories, actually told by players, can also be great elements of role play, for example in certain social situations.

- ◊ A monster could accept a story as payment to spare your life.
- ◊ A lord could be amused from your story and help you in exchange.
- ◊ A story could be an element of a incantation.



THE GOLDEN RULE OF TELLING STORIES

Telling a story is an art, and not everybody is good at it. Nobody, even your friends at the table, expect you to be a master Narrator. So, relax, tell the story as best you can, and enjoy it.

A suggestion: it is perfectly fine to think up a story before the game starts and keep it ready for when it is needed



TELLING A STORY



Sheherazade is a master story teller, and stories are a key element of this game. So, it should be no surprise that the heroes, in game, have the chance to tell stories.

When does it Happen? During a Rest, or between sessions, the players, one at a time, have a chance to Tell a Story. In published scenarios, you'll know it is "a moment for a story" because you will find a small fire icon like this one in the text. Players can also Tell a Story between sessions, or at the end of it. If you and your players chat via email between sessions (as many groups do), the Narrator (see below) can use that opportunity to tell their story.

Who tells the Story? In turn, each player has the chance to Tell a Story. It can happen on a voluntary basis, randomly, or following a pre-selected order. When the hero tells a story, mark the "Narrator box" in the center of the moon symbol of the character sheet (look at the sidebar on the left). This means that they have already told a story, and cannot tell another one until all the players have taken on the Narrator role. When all the players have told a story, they erase the Narrator box.

How does it work? The story a player tells is of their own creation. Basically, it should be a story in the style of the One Thousand and One Nights, told from the character's perspective. Some suggestions:

- **A fable or a parable**
- **A tale from the hero's past**
- **A tale of one of his companions**
- **A tale of how the hero got involved with Scheherazade**



OPTIONAL RULE: USING STORIES TO INSERT A STORY ELEMENT IN THE SCENARIO



A story told by a player can be a simple way to gain a Moon Point, or can also be used, if the Storyteller approves it, to actually add a Story Element, which means saying that something in the story told is true and becomes part of the gaming world, affecting it.

Example. The heroes are dying of thirst on a hopeless journey through the desert, after having lost their water supplies in a hasty escape from the Vizier's minions. One night, huddled together to resist the desert's cold, one of the heroes tells the Story of the Blue Oasis, a lost place which seems to appear in different locations, which is fabled to have saved thirsty travelers from death, and decides to insert the Oasis as a Story Element. The Storyteller accepts the intrusion and, then next day, the party sees, in the distance, the Blue Oasis... which could be as the hero narrated, or maybe a little different.

In Scheherazade, as you see, stories have power.

Note that a story doesn't have to be original (oral cultures are based on retelling the same story). A story doesn't have to be true. The other players can contribute, in-game, to the story, asking questions, intervening, and so on, but without stealing the focus from the Narrator.

If you are telling stories at the table and not outside the session, we suggest that you keep the length of the story short, between 5 and 10 minutes.

What does it grant? The Narrator, at the end of the tale, receives a Moon Point (and marks the Narrator box on the character sheet), or can insert a Story Element into the Scenario. They can also give a Moon Point to another player of choice who interacted with them.



THE EXPANDABLE STAT PROFILE

As a rule of thumb, *NPCs in Scheherazade have a single stat: Level (LvL)*. In other words, they are treated as an Action the heroes have to accomplish or an obstacle they have to overcome. So, persuading a beggar (LvL 1) to reveal the information they know will be a LvL 1 task, while attacking a LvL 3 wolf will be a LvL 3 action.

This generalization simplifies a lot of the opponents' creation procedure: give them a LvL and you are done.

But this approach makes NPCs simplistic, a LvL 5 warrior has 5 Life, attacking them and defending from them is LvL 5, and this is reasonable, but what about persuading them? LvL 5 doesn't make as much sense in this case.

For this reason, *the profile of creatures is expandable*. Below you will find a list of possible *attributes of creatures, which you must consider only if different from the LvL*. When they aren't expressed, simply assume they are equal to LvL.

ATTACK. This is the LvL of Difficulty to defend from the creature.

DEFENSE. This is the LvL of Difficulty to successfully attack the creature.

LIFE. The amount of damage the creature can sustain (as the player characters).

INITIATIVE. The speed and quickness of the creature, it is the Difficulty of the Initiative roll of the player characters.

OTHER CAPACITIES. In this catch-all category we put all the other abilities of the creature.

KEYWORDS. The Keywords used by the creatures, including those of their gear. Creatures' gear uses the same Keywords of the heroes, but effects which, for the heroes, trigger on a 6, in their case trigger on a 1 on the Fate Die of a defending hero. In addition, they can use a number of special NPC-only Keywords, detailed in the core rules..

DESCRIPTION. A physical description of the character, if necessary.

LORE. A legend, or some piece of reserved info the Storyteller can use for inspiration (it can be true or false). Usually the heroes, to know it, must have a suitable Concept and/or make a **REA+PRE** roll.

OTHER SPECIAL ABILITIES. Unique capacities of the creature (which cannot be reproduced with a Keyword).

Example NPC Table

LVL	CREATURE OR NON-PLAYER CHARACTER
1	Beggar, Small Monkey
2	Innkeeper, Street Thug
3	Desert Bandit, Wolf
4	Fire Jackal, Ghul
5	Ashashin, Caliph Guard
6	Magus, Lamassu
7	Manticore, Mummy
8	Djinn, Phoenix
9	Genie, Roc
10	Dragon, King of Efreets

GROUP ENEMIES

It could happen, especially in combat, that you pit a number of enemies against the party. In this case, you can decide to use the Group Enemies rule, which means that you basically “combine” multiple characters into a single game entity.

Take the highest LvL enemy as the base LvL, and add +1 to this LvL if they have an ally helping them.

Every time the number of characters doubles, they gain another +1 (see table below). The bonus applies mainly to Attack and Defense, but the Storyteller can decide if it extends to other cases too (a group of guards can be more difficult to fool than a single one, for example).

Group Enemies attack and defend as a single creature, but maintain separate Life scores: when the group suffers damage, the attacker decides where to allocate damage, every time the group loses one or more elements, the group level can drop (see table below).

You can make as many groups as you want: the commonest way is to divide the total of enemies by the number of heroes, creating more or less equivalent groups, but it isn’t mandatory.

Group Enemies are basically the NPC version of the Helping action (which NPCs cannot use).

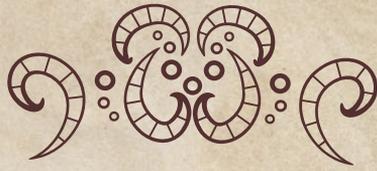
LOWER LEVEL ALLIES. To grant a bonus for the purposes of the Group Enemies rule, there must be not more than 4 levels of difference between the allies. So, a LvL 10 dragon won’t benefit from the help of a LvL 1 beggar, but will receive a bonus from a LvL 6 efreet.

CAUSING EFFECTS TO GROUP ENEMIES. When fighting against Group Enemies, you can distribute Effects to any member of the group as you see fit.

Example. Aliyaya sneaks into the harem of Yusuf the Desert Merchant, looking for information, but she is discovered by a eunuch who calls for help! Yelling guards rush into the harem, swords in hands. They are fairly inexperienced (LvL 2), but there are six of them! The Storyteller decides to use the Group Enemies rule, this means that the guards are considered a single enemy of LvL 2+2=4! After the first round of combat, Aliyaya manages to deal 2 damage, enough to kill one of them (they have 2 Life each), but there are still five allies, enough to maintain the LvL of the group at 4. In the second round, with a lucky strike, she deals 4 damage, killing two enemies. Now there are only 3 enemies, and the LvL Bonus drops to +1.

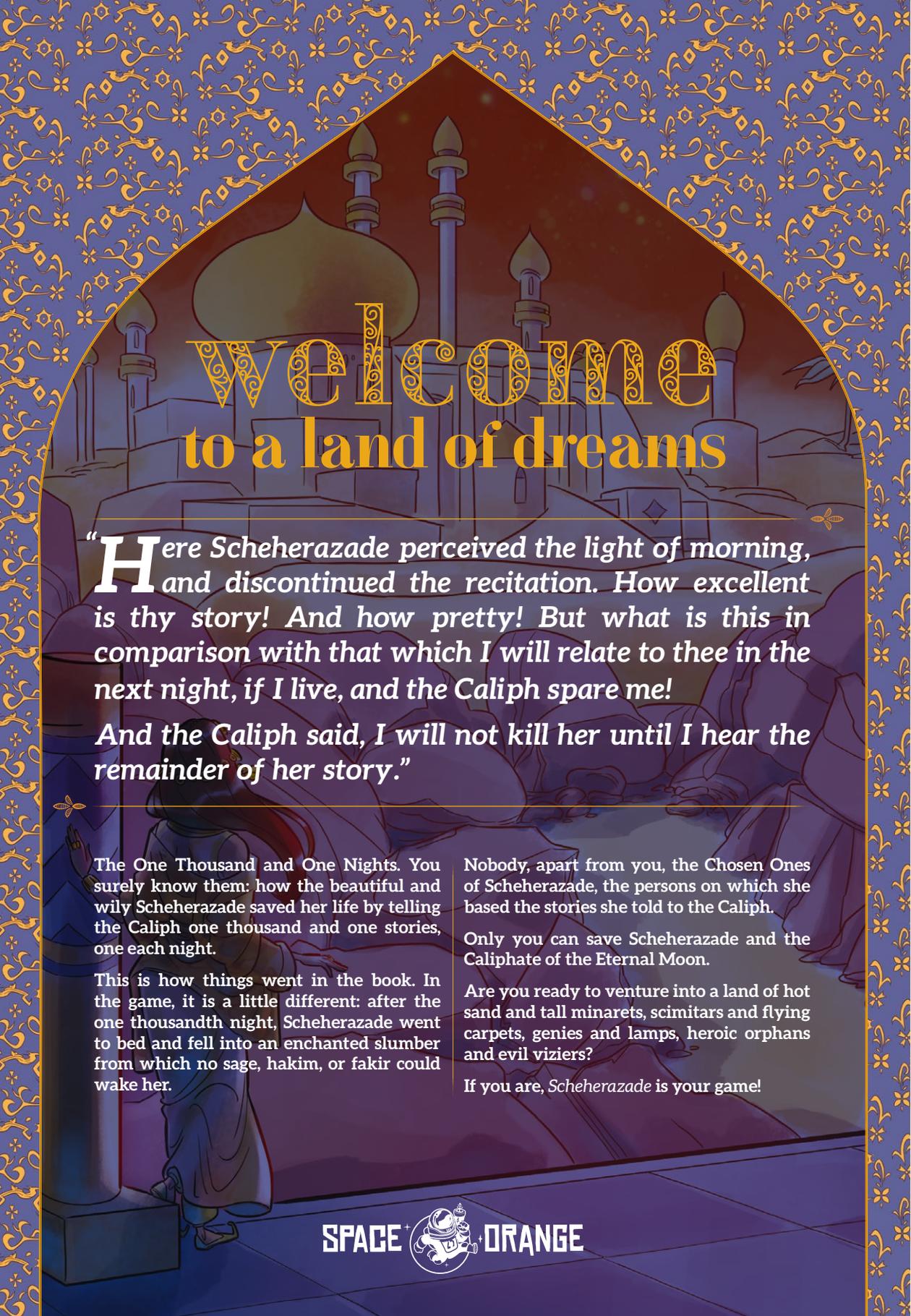
Group Enemies Table

NUMBER OF CHARACTERS	LVL BONUS
1	0
2	+1
4	+2
8	+3
16	+4



Now you know enough of the game and you are ready to play the introductory adventure, welcome in the Eternal Caliphate!





welcome to a land of dreams

Here Scheherazade perceived the light of morning, and discontinued the recitation. How excellent is thy story! And how pretty! But what is this in comparison with that which I will relate to thee in the next night, if I live, and the Caliph spare me!

And the Caliph said, I will not kill her until I hear the remainder of her story.”

The One Thousand and One Nights. You surely know them: how the beautiful and wily Scheherazade saved her life by telling the Caliph one thousand and one stories, one each night.

This is how things went in the book. In the game, it is a little different: after the one thousandth night, Scheherazade went to bed and fell into an enchanted slumber from which no sage, hakim, or fakir could wake her.

Nobody, apart from you, the Chosen Ones of Scheherazade, the persons on which she based the stories she told to the Caliph.

Only you can save Scheherazade and the Caliphate of the Eternal Moon.

Are you ready to venture into a land of hot sand and tall minarets, scimitars and flying carpets, genies and lamps, heroic orphans and evil viziers?

If you are, Scheherazade is your game!