Master's Talk vom 05.10.2023

How to prepare a one-shot

Daniele prepared this topic, wants people to ask questions. Is no expert but runs a lot of one-shots.

- Also fails a lot so don't worry if it happens to you.
- What is a one-shot
  - Short adventure for one session (if it's more it's not a one-shot) approx. 4 hours
  - Adventurer League is a great place to experience it!
  - In the one-shot you assume, that the character didn't exist before or afterwards (for you as GM)
- Coherence does not exist in the one-shot. ex. Dragon in this cave. In the long term it doesn't exist.
  - Coherence in a small scale is very important though. Bring back beginning at the end or background.
- Goal for one shot: My personal fun, getting to the end to the story. People at the table having fun.
- Improvisation is a main tool for a one-shot. What do I want to keep as stable points – what can change. Story ready but then let it flow by interacting with the players.
  - The less you know the more you will be able to improvise.
- Character preparation can work but it's normally better to do it beforehand. Or even premade characters.
- How to start
  - Introduce yourself
  - A bit of the setting what you will play
  - Ex. character tent → a few info about their characters
  - Setting boundaries ex. X cards, safety tools, pronouns but boundaries about the story as well. Players with disrupting characters for ex. Can really derail you so ask the to at least begin as a party and follow the story. Don't play an evil character (in DnD). They should fit the story (if we play a treasure hunt the character should be interested).
  - Start in motion – you don't have time for a long tavern session. Start already going to the goal, getting the quest and so on. Do they know each other or not?
    - Idea. Introduce characters step by step: Appearing, how is the character approaching the situation. Works well to get them invested
  - How the players introduce themselves
    - Let them introduce themselves
    - How does the character appear to the others
- What can I let go of a story because of time, player actions and so on. Break down sessions in 3 parts. It's easier to adjust if you just have the broad concepts.
  - Beginning: Why are the adventurers here (motivation, goal)
  - Middle: What is the struggle (puzzle, conflict, problem) → doing as long till it reaches peak. Recognize peaks with personal satisfaction.
    - Players don't know the story, you do. You can change it on the fly. As long as you are keeping the story beats people will engage.
    - Up the stress to poke the players.
  - End: Idea of how it should end but you can find the ending where it fits in the story.
    - Write down times when they should reach certain points to always have the ending or improvise from there.
    - Ending needs its space because it's remembered heavily. It often gets too shorted.
- Talk a break in the middle. Some time before the end, set a timer and then start to transition to the end.
  - Tip for module that's great structured (3 acts, with character, paragraph of location, motivation and how connected): eternal boundry
- If you don't find info for the one-shot don't run it. Could also ask the players if you don't want to come up with everything. ex. Ask goblins how they are treated and then run with it.
- Examples for one-shots (see notes)

How to improvise

- Secret, a goal, quirk/looks
- Scenes: peculiar things will help you improvise
- Rolltables help to spark the idea
- Look to solo rpg's: no, no but, yes but, yes
- Contrasts
- Note taking technic for listening exams

How to switch to your role
- Characters one after another
- player intro with boundaries so there are not to many options
- Set up the world to get into the mood
- Ask two questions to each player. Very specific questions for characters
- See also points last time (music, hypnotic, silence)
- First person
- Maybe just "Now we start"
- Storyteller voice to start
- Let them vent at the start so it doesn't come up later
- Just be quiet and look at them. Wait for them to shutup

Roleplay and interaction goes down over time
- Not necessarily a bad thing. Role playing game – still playing game and interacting with your world.
- How does your character look or interacting, ask to describe actions, battles and so on. Also how do they feel
- Could be that they are tired or inexperienced
- Have to react to a NPC a certain way to force them
- After break in the middle to the starting stuff again

How to react with "How do I feel"
- Give them prompts about world or past
- Describe situations or experience (cold sweat and so on)
- Knowledge is fine
- What are different ways could feel
- Drawbacks and Boons like in DSA. Force them to feel a thing.
- Don t let them roll if it's not necessary. Good if it worked there but not generally. Rolls shouldn't get into the way of playing.
  - Excurse on why rolls = bad

Ideas for future Masters Talk:
- Note taking again
- New player introduction
- scheduling