

# WELCOME TO THE RG QUICKSTART

Thanks for picking up *The Broken Tower*, the RuneQuest quickstart! Released as part of Free RPG Day 2017 to resounding acclaim, this is a preview and introduction (or reintroduction) to the world of Glorantha and to RuneQuest: Roleplaying in Glorantha, to be released later in 2017.

Based on feedback from the thousands of players and gamemasters who've already read the quickstart and played through *The Broken Tower*, we thought it would be useful to provide a helpful guide to running the adventure if you're unfamiliar with RuneQuest.

## INTRODUCTION

*The Broken Tower* was written to be a relatively light-but-flavorful introduction to the world of Glorantha. Created by Greg Stafford in the mid-1960s, the setting has been expanded and detailed over the course of 50 years, and as such, there's a daunting amount of information out there about the setting, including the encyclopedic two-volume *Guide to Glorantha*. This adventure, *The Broken Tower*, was specifically created to appeal to newcomers and veterans, with a relatively isolated area and new threats, yet connected to existing Gloranthan content. There are no tests requiring extensive knowledge of the background, but players and gamemasters familiar with the setting will instantly grasp the cultures and conflicts being presented.

## RESOURCES

Before playing, it is highly recommended that you, the gamemaster, review the errata for the adventure at: <https://www.chaosium.com/content/FreePDFs/RuneQuest/CHA4027%20-%20RuneQuest%20Quickstart%20Errata.pdf>. There are no critical issues, but some minor issues and typos have been addressed.

Furthermore, you may find it's useful to make copies of the following pages for player use: the Ability Results table (page 3), the Rune Summary reference (page 9), the Spirit Magic Summary (page 19), and the Rune Spell Descriptions (pages 22–24).

## ADVENTURERS

Five adventurers are provided, with a sixth available via download at: <https://www.chaosium.com/content/FreePDFs/RuneQuest/CHA4027%20-%20RuneQuest%20Quickstart%20Optional%20Adventurer.pdf>. If there are fewer than six players, the most "critical" to the adventurer's resolution are, in order: Harmast, Vasana, Yanioth, Sorala, and Vostor. The sixth, Vishi Dunn, is optional but provides an intriguing glimpse into the Gloranthan spirit world and its practices. However, no single

character is indispensable to the adventure, and it can be resolved with any lineup of characters.

## LOCATION

A look at the map on page 27 reveals that the area the adventure transpires in is quite cozy, covering a relatively small area. Familiarity can breed complacency, and the gamemaster may wish to keep this map from the players, emphasizing the isolation of the badlands and the relatively miserable weather. Under normal circumstances, a 20-kilometer ride to Greydog Village might be no challenge, in poor weather over a rocky and inhospitable landscape, it is no walk in the park. Similarly, if players question the distances and relatively slow going, you might point out that the villains are herding a group of sixty cattle on foot across such territory, a ponderous effort at best.

## AUGMENTING ABILITIES

The rules for augmenting skills, Passions, and Runes are new to this edition of RuneQuest, and have been met with overwhelming enthusiasm, but they should not dominate play. Ask players to provide in-character reasons why a specific Rune or Passion would influence a particular action, and don't be afraid to say "No" if it doesn't seem plausible. Failing a Rune or Passion augment can have penalties, so keep those in mind.

## MAGIC

Encourage players to review their spells and the Rune summaries before play. This can help minimize points where players can become paralyzed with indecision, but it can also can present opportunities where normal weapons or mortal skill usage might not be the most effective choices.

## ENCOUNTERS

Due to the nature of the RuneQuest rules, the whims of the dice and player tactics can play equal roles in the degree of danger the player characters are in.

- The rock lizard encounter on page 31–32 is relatively low-stakes and can be resolved without much risk, but the gamemaster can increase the threat the predators present by increasing their number or having them gang up on individual adventurers, rather than spreading them out. If the encounter becomes boring or drags on too long, have the rock lizards run away. They have nothing to gain once the cow is out of their reach.

- At the hilltop ruins, the mad Greydog Varanik might be used as an ambusher, striking rapidly and drawing the adventurers into conflict with the Stone Woman's elemental servitors, the sprul-pa. He should use his spirit magic wisely, casting Bladesharp, Protection, and Strength on himself, and Heal if he's wounded. Showing tactical use of spell use like this will demonstrate to players that they should do the same.
- The sprul-pa can also be used in relatively large numbers. They're weak and easily disabled, but the Stone Woman can command as many of them as the gamemaster wishes, without even needing to spend magic points. Rather than being a menace individually, they can be used to great effect as distractions, or even to herd the adventurers to (or away from) the Stone Woman herself!
- Danakos is a smart and capable opponent. Before leaping into combat, he'll cast spells such as Bladesharp, Fanaticism, and Protection on himself, and might lead with a Demoralize attack on one of his hated Colymar rivals. He's also not above fleeing to Heal himself later, to attack on another day.
- Idrima also has a wide range of abilities, and you might find it easier to write a script for her in combat, should it come to that (hopefully, not!). While the adventurers are dithering with Danakos (who becomes less useful to her every moment) she may be quietly summoning more sprul-pa and dream-wefts, reading an Enthrall or the Faceless Gaze, or leading into combat with an Earthquake Stomp to throw her foes into disarray. Yanyoth or Vishi's summoned earth elemental may prove more a liability than a help, as Idrima is a chthonic earth goddess and may wrestle control over the elemental with a command in Earthtongue or even a POW vs. POW roll against the elemental.

## VILLAINS

Ultimately, the real enemy of the piece is Danakos, the hate-filled Greydog whose bloodthirsty act spiraled out of control and led to the current conflict. Remember that Danakos' actions are not normal in this region, and will come at a price.

Idrima, the Stone Woman, is mostly a menace, but can also become a valuable ally. As with many situations in Glorantha, the quickest and most direct solution is not always the best, or the wisest!

## PLAYERS

It's worth mentioning that the greatest resource you have are the players themselves. Pay close attention to what questions they ask, and feed them info to keep them interested and engaged. Don't be afraid to make changes to the adventure based on their investigation, and even let them suggest background.

In various playthroughs, Danakos has become a spurned ex-lover to Vasana as well as a secret Colymar bastard seething with resentment for his half-brother Harmast, and Sorala's investigative skills have leapt to the forefront, with well-timed castings of Reconstruction to reveal all that transpired at the sites of the cattle-rustling and Lannike's murder!

## COMMUNITY

Finally, a hearty welcome to the fellowship of Glorantha and RuneQuest fans and players, an international group of passionate enthusiasts and newcomers that have kept the game and its setting (sometimes independently of one another) alive and thriving for decades. There are Facebook groups for RuneQuest, Glorantha, and Chaosium, and the Basic Roleplaying ([www.basicroleplaying.com](http://www.basicroleplaying.com)) site is the official home for discussion of RuneQuest, Glorantha, and even this quickstart adventure!

