

Another Hero  
Beta Test Version

## SETTING

### Contentment

Long before Heroes, there was only the Contented. They worked their farms, built their castles, and lived their lives with no want for anything great. They were never afraid, sad, or angry, never happy or blissful. They were simply Content.

### Old Beasts

For a long time, the Contented were undisturbed. Certainly they built great castles and fortresses, and fought wars with one another, but they were always Content. The Contented knew of a time before they lived, a time of Beasts and fear, but they thought that time was gone.

Nothing stays gone forever, though, and the Old Beasts awoke. They crawled out of their caves and flew down from their mountain lairs, and laid waste to the lands of the Contented. The kingdoms rallied together, and knights leading whole armies fought and fell, but none had the Resolve to stop any of the Beasts.

### Heroes

Without Resolve, the Contented were doomed. Their bodies were weak, and their spirits even more so. Then, the first Hero appeared. Once a Contented herself, she had found she suddenly had Resolve to do more than a Contented ever could. She pushed back the Beasts in her kingdom, and before long more Heroes found their Resolve and joined her.

Resolve was not a choice. It was a sudden and unexpected urge that captured individuals without rhyme or reason. With Resolve, these people found they could not die, they could not be stopped. They became Heroes and defeated the Beasts, slaying them one by one until the lands were safe once again.

### Plague

Without Beast to fight, the Heroes pushed themselves on, doing epic deeds of their own accord. They left their Destinies behind and forged their own paths, conquering lands and winning riches. Some fought to protect their people, others challenged armies to win new territory, some simply lost their Resolve and became Contented again. As they wandered and did as they would instead of what their Destiny demanded, they slowly fell victim to the Plague.

The Plague started without any obvious symptoms, Heroes who were more affected simply began to feel the urge to perform terrible actions. After a while, some Heroes began to develop incredible features; glowing halos, stone flesh, powerful wings, fiery breath. These features

ranged from the beautiful to the monstrous, making the Heroes a sight to behold. As time went on, the features continued to develop and transform the Heroes, the terrible urges increased and multiplied, and the Heroes became something else.

## Demons

When the Plague fully overtook a Hero, they lost their Resolve and became a Demon. The Plague did not stop there, though, and they grew more terrible and unnatural with time, unleashing Spawn upon the lands. One by one, the great Heroes that defeated the Old Beasts became Demons, and they proved themselves more terrible monsters than the Beasts by far.

## Another Hero

As old Heroes fell victim to the Plague, new Heroes rose up and took their place. They struggled and fought, defeating Demons one by one, only to eventually become Demons themselves. More Heroes fall, and more Heroes rise. So long as Resolve continued to appear and the Plague continued to eat away at it, there would always be another Hero.

## RULES

Another Hero is meant to be a three player game. As the game shifts from one scene to the next, players change which roles they are in, each taking turns as the HERO, VILLAIN, and SETTING. The VILLAIN sits to the right of the HERO, and the SETTING to the left. If there are less than three players, the VILLAIN takes over the duties of the SETTING. If there are more than three, the VILLAIN still sits to the right and the SETTING to the left - the VILLAIN and SETTING can assign duties or characters to the other players that don't have a role for the current scene.

Another Hero uses phrases to control the flow of the game, but sometimes a bit of chance is required to resolve conflicts. When this occurs, a ten sided die (or D10) is rolled. In addition to a single ten sided die, a character sheet will be needed for each player.

HERO: The current leader of the scene, starts the scene, names the goal, and names the protagonist of the scene (their character and the only one they control in the scene).

SETTING: Sits to the left of the Hero, controls neutral characters/locations and helpful characters/locations.

VILLAIN: Sits to the left of the Hero, controls demons, and antagonistic characters/locations.

Each character sheet has three sections:

Hero: tracks Traits, Alignment, Resolve, Plague.

Setting: tracks additional allies/friends/reputation with neutral factions.

Villain: tracks enemies/reputation with antagonistic factions.

The sections are each used by the different players. For each scene, all three players will be using a single sheet. When the scene ends and a new one begins, the sheet for the current protagonist will be used.

## CHARACTER CREATION

There are 7 steps to Hero creation. The first six are done for each Hero, and the seventh can be done throughout or at the end.

Choose Name

Choose Destiny

Choose Alignment (if desired)

Choose Traits

Choose Codes

Create NPCs

Create Map

### Name

What your Hero will be called. It can be a simple, single name. It can be a deed name, describing what the character has already done as well as being their identifier. Either way, it is only what your Hero is called, and not who they will become or what they will do.

### Destiny

What your Hero is supposed to do. Heroes are not necessarily aware of their Destiny. Some have vivid dreams, showing them in detail what they should do. Others have no idea, and only get hints of their Destiny by betraying it and opening up themselves to the Plague. All Codes applied to your Hero from Ranks in Resolve should relate to Destiny. Destiny can be an achievable goal, or something that can be worked towards eternally. If a Destiny is achieved, Codes related to Resolve still relate to the Destiny.

### Alignment

The group your Hero has decided to join. This is completely optional. Each Alignment grants a special Trait (which cannot be destroyed like normal Traits), and 2 Codes (which are not related to Resolve or Destiny, but instead to the goals of the Alignment). See the write ups for each Alignment to find out more about them.

### Traits

Things that your Hero has. Each Hero starts with three Traits. These can be allies (Contented), items (mundane or magical), weapons, or equipment. These can be used to obtain a re-roll on a Resolve Challenge - they are spent for the scene, but refresh once the scene has ended. Traits can be destroyed as a Consequence during Conflict, and can be created with a Feat. Feel free to be very creative with your Traits; they do a lot to describe your character.

### Codes

Actions your Hero is compelled to perform. Some Codes relate to a Hero's Destiny, and should require them to act in accordance with that Destiny, even if the Hero is unaware of the Destiny or the Codes. All too many Heroes fall victim to the Plague by violating Codes. For each Rank of Resolve a Hero has one Code (Heroes start with two Resolve, and therefore start with two Codes related to their Destiny). Some Codes relate to Plague, and are generally opposed to the Codes related to Destiny, requiring cruel or monstrous behaviour from the Hero. For each Rank of Plague, a Hero has one Code (Heroes start with one Plague Rank, and therefore start with one Plague based Code). Codes do not need to be exceptionally hard to follow, but they can

conflict with other Codes. Any time a new Code is to be added (by gaining Resolve or Plague), at least 2 of the three players must agree it is adequate and makes sense. If a Hero loses Resolve or Plague, one Code related to that stat no longer applies (it does not have to be the Code that was gained when that Rank was gained).

#### NPC - Villain

The Villain player is responsible for creating an antagonistic character for the Hero to interact with. This can be a Demon, another Hero opposed to the protagonist, or even a Contented (usually the leader of a group or area, not many individual Contented pose much opposition for a Hero). The level of detail at this stage is optional, this is just to ensure that something out there is opposed to the Hero to help create conflict and drama within the story. At the very least, make sure to name the character and record it on the protagonist's sheet.

#### NPC - Setting

The Setting player is responsible for creating a neutral character for the Hero to interact with. This is likely a Hero or Contented, someone that the Hero already knows. The level of detail is optional, just like with the Villain's character, this is to ensure that there is someone out there the Hero can interact with and not have to work against, adding more detail to the setting. At the very least, make sure to name the character and record it on the protagonist's sheet.

#### The Map

The Map can range in size from a city to a continent; it establishes a unified setting for the Heroes in the game. This helps create somewhere for the Heroes to go and will help inspire things for them to do, to relieve some of the pressure of having to create goals for each scene or needing to figure out where the scene will take place.

Each player adds something to the Map in each of their roles:

Each player adds and names a protagonist zone: An area (such as a section of town, a city, or a geographical area) that helps their protagonist, or is antagonistic towards their protagonist (specifically their protagonist, it should be neutral or helpful to other protagonists).

Each player adds and names a neutral point: A defined location (such as a tavern, castle, town, market, mountain, river, etc.) that is neither helpful nor hindering.

Each player adds and names an antagonistic point: A defined location (such as a Demon's lair, a town, fortress, volcano, lake, etc.) that is a threat and/or hindrance to all protagonists.

## ALIGNMENTS

Some of the Heroes decided that a Destiny chosen for them was not all that they wanted to guide them - they wanted to make their own way and follow a path of their choosing. These Heroes tied their Resolve to a God, forming an Alignment. The different Alignments each granted their own benefits, and required certain behaviour of the Heroes that joined them.

#### Homeland Heroes

They seek to protect their city or town from outside dangers. They fight Demons, armies, and Heroes alike to protect their home. They pledge themselves to the God of Hearth and Home, Esta.

#### Codes:

Do not allow a Contented citizen to come to harm from an outside force

Do not leave the city/town

Trait: Hearth-sword. Forged by the citizens of the place they call home, the sword bursts into flames when used to protect its makers.

Plague Doctors

They seek to reduce Plague in other Heroes, preventing the occurrence of more Demons. They often work alongside other Heroes, coaching them on their actions to help them take the path that will best avoid Plague. They pledge themselves to the God of Blood, Omrak.

Codes:

Encourage other Heroes to follow their Codes and accept their Consequences

Do not violate Codes

Trait: Plague mask. Hides Demonic features so that others cannot see them.

Tower Guardians

They protect items used by the first Heroes from falling into the hands of others. Many of them do reside in towers, but just as many are found in tombs, forests, and ruins - wherever the Heroes that fought the Old Beasts chose to leave their possessions. They pledge themselves to Anastacia, the First Hero.

Codes:

Prevent others from obtaining the protected item

Retrieve the item if stolen

Trait: Chest shield. A huge, magical shield that can fold onto itself to encase the item the Guardian is keeping safe.

Brotherhood of Contentment

They seek to protect the world not just from Demons, but from the Heroes that will one day become Demons. Unlike the Plague Doctors, they work to turn Heroes back to Contended, eliminating the Plague by eliminating those that can be infected by it. They pledge themselves to the King of the Gods, Lanta.

Codes:

Encourage other Heroes to accept their Consequences

Do not increase Resolve beyond rank five

Trait: Sigil of Contentment. A symbol which embodies the essence of Contentment, used to distract Heroes and Demons, reminding them of what they once were.

Slayers

They seek to defeat Demons at any cost. They are hunters through and through, will allow nothing to interfere with their hunt. Their reputation for collateral damage is unparalleled, but they can be relied upon to fell any Demon. They pledge themselves to the Old Beast, Klono.

Codes:

Fight any encountered Demon

Do not allow a Demon to escape

Trait: Hunter's lantern. Helps the Slayer hunt Demons, placing a piece of a Demon Spawn in the lantern will shine a light towards the Demon they grew from.

Plaguebound

They want to escape the drudgery of Contentment and the restrictions of Destiny and Resolve.

By pushing themselves to constantly violate their Codes, they hope to move beyond just being Heroes and experience freedom that Contented and Heroes never will. They have chosen a God to pledge themselves to with Codes that are easy to violate, Noshabkem, the God of Hope.

Codes:

Protect Contented from Heroes and Demons

Do not use Feats for personal gain

Trait: Thionite goblet. Any fluid poured into the goblet is transformed into a powerful wine that gives the drinker visions of their desires fulfilled.

## GAMEPLAY

In Another Hero, gameplay is primarily driven and controlled by the use of phrases. In order to start or stop certain aspects of the game, or to resolve conflict, phrases are used to mediate and keep things fair. Every game session of Another Hero begins with the phrase "Long ago, there were Heroes," to mark the beginning of the game and the start of storytelling.

Once the game has been started, the phrase "This is the tale of \_\_\_\_ (name), who sought to \_\_\_\_ (goal)" is used to name the protagonist that will be focused on and what they will be trying to do. This initiates a scene, during which the actual gameplay takes place. In a scene, the Hero works towards a goal, the Setting controls the world, and the Villain introduces obstacles to the goal. The passage of time is highly variable in a scene: moments to months can pass in a single sentence, whatever is appropriate. The scene can end at any time, though it's recommended to continue until the Hero achieves their goal, the goal becomes impossible, or significant events have occurred.

When the Villain sees the opportunity to introduce Conflict, they use the phrase "Even the greatest Hero must struggle at times" to mark the start of a Conflict, then explains what the Conflict is. The Hero may respond to the Conflict in one of two ways: Performing a Feat, or requesting a Feat Challenge. To Perform a Feat, the Hero says the phrase "With all their Resolve \_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_ (feat)." This attempts to overcome the Conflict, but leaves the Hero open to consequences from their actions. To request a Feat Challenge, the Hero says the phrase "Resolve and luck permitting, \_\_\_\_ (feat)." This attempts to overcome the Conflict without opening up the opportunity for Consequences, but opens up the Hero to the Plague for a brief instant. For the Feat Challenge, the Hero rolls a ten sided die (D10) and adds the Resolve stat - if it is over ten, it succeeds. If successful, the Feat occurs and Conflict ends then and there. If the Challenge fails, the Feat still occurs, but it is the same as if the Hero used the phrase for Perform Feat. Success or failure, the Hero must see if their Plague advances. To do this, the Hero rolls a D10 and adds the Resolve stat - if it is over ten, the Plague stat increases by one.

Once the Hero Performs a Feat, the Villain has a chance to respond by Naming Consequences, Denying the Feat, or Challenging Resolve. To allow the Feat to stand as it is, the Villain uses the phrase "As a Consequence, \_\_\_\_ (consequence)" to name a Consequence to the actions of the Hero. If the Feat seems far beyond the Hero's ability or not in keeping with the Hero, then the Villain can Deny the Feat by using the phrase "A Feat so great needs more Resolve." At this point, the Hero must reduce the scale of the Feat or change it to something completely different. This resets the response to the Feat, allowing the Villain to Deny the new Feat, request a Resolve Challenge for the new Feat, or Name Consequences. If the Feat seems to be at the

edge of the Hero's ability, the Villain can request a Resolve Challenge to see if the Feat can be performed by saying the phrase "Only with luck on their side." The Hero rolls a D10 and adds the Resolve stat - if it is over ten, it succeeds. If successful, the Feat occurs and the Villain Names Consequences. If it fails, it is the same as the Deny Feat phrase (Hero must restate the Feat). Success or failure, the Hero has pushed to their limit, and must see if their Plague grows. To do this, the Hero rolls a D10 and adds the Resolve stat - if it is over ten, the Plague stat increases by one.

Once the Consequences have been named, the Hero is given a chance to respond to the Consequences before the Conflict is completed. The Hero can respond to Consequences in one of three ways: Accept the Consequences, Deny the Consequences, or Fight the Consequences. To Accept Consequences, the Hero states the phrase "And \_\_\_ (name), accepted fate." The Hero accepts fate, and in doing so weakens their Resolve and attempts to shake off some of the grip that the Plague has on them. Resolve decreases by one rank (see the following information on Resolve for what happens if Resolve goes to zero), and the Hero rolls a D10 and adds the Plague stat - if it is over ten, the Plague stat decreases by one (to a minimum of one). To Deny Consequences, the Hero says the phrase "The world is not so cruel." This works in the same fashion as the Villain Denying a Feat; the Consequence must be reduced in scale or changed to something completely different. Once this is done, the response to the Consequences is reset, allowing the Hero to Deny the new Consequences, Accept the new Consequences, or Fight the new Consequences. To Fight Consequences, the Hero says the phrase "Unwilling to stop, \_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_ (feat)." The Hero states a new Feat as part of the phrase, and the Villain may Deny or Resolve Challenge the new Feat, but cannot Name Consequences. Once the new Feat has been completed (if the Villain Denies or Challenges it), the Hero gains one rank of Resolve. Once the Consequences have been Accepted or Fought, the Conflict ends and the scene continues.

There is no specific rule for when to end a scene, but the best time is usually after a Conflict that makes a significant move towards the goal, or introduces a significant setback. If the goal is achieved or becomes impossible, it's time to end the scene. For whatever reason you choose to end a scene, use the phrase "That is all there is to tell of that tale" to end it. There's no hard and fast rule for when to end a scene or when to end a game, it's best to alter this based on the preferences of your group. When you've finished playing, end the game with the phrase "And now, there are no Heroes."

Some ideas to consider regarding Conflict:

- The passage of time during Conflict is just as fluid as the rest of a scene; moments or months can pass in a single sentence.
- Feats are very powerful, but there are three things a Feat can never do: raise or lower Resolve, raise or lower Plague, or kill a Hero.
- Don't forget, Feats can be used to create or acquire a Trait.
- Violating a Code with a Feat adds a rank to Plague.

## RESOLVE

Having Resolve makes the Hero unkillable and unstoppable. They do not age, they do not grow ill from anything less than Demon poison, and they recover from everything eventually.

The Resolve stat is ranked from zero to ten. At character creation, the Hero starts with a rank of two.

For each rank of Resolve the Hero currently has, they will have one Code related to their Destiny. When a rank of Resolve is gained, a new Code is created (two of the three players must agree that it is adequate and makes sense). When a rank of Resolve is lost, any Resolve-based Code is lost (it does not have to be the Code that was created when that rank was gained).

At zero Resolve, a Hero becomes Contented, and no urge to follow their Destiny or work towards their Alignment remains. Their Plague goes to zero as well, and all effects from ranks in Plague vanish. Codes no longer apply, and Traits no longer have any value or use. They are no longer playable, and simply become part of the setting.

## PLAGUE

The Plague stat is ranked from zero to ten. At character creation, the Hero starts with a rank of one. So long as a Hero has ranks of Resolve, Plague may never drop below one.

Any time a Hero violates a Code (in or out of Conflict), they gain a rank of Plague.

At Plague ranks one, two, four, five, and seven through ten, the Hero will have one Code requiring monstrous or terrible actions. When one of these ranks of Plague is gained, a new Code is created (two of the three players must agree that it is adequate and makes sense).

When one of these ranks of Plague is lost, any Plague-based Code is lost (it does not have to be the Code that was created when that rank was gained).

At Plague ranks three, six, and eight through ten, the Hero gains a feature. This feature can be anything from horns, to halos, to stone skin, to angelic wings. Regardless of what the feature is specifically, it should be obviously supernatural and difficult to hide. When one of these ranks of Plague is gained, a new feature is developed (two of the three players must agree that it is adequate and makes sense). When one of these ranks of Plague is lost, any feature is lost (it does not have to be the feature that developed when that rank was gained).

At ten Plague, the Hero becomes a Demon. They lose their Resolve stat and all associated Codes (it does not go to zero - it stops existing). All Traits become corrupted and become Demonbranded - allies and items become monsters that other Heroes will have to fight. The Demon is no longer playable by the hero player and falls under the control of the villain.

## PHRASE GUIDE

“Long ago, there were Heroes.” - Start game.

“And now, there are no Heroes.” - End game.

“This is the tale of \_\_\_\_ (name), who sought to \_\_\_\_ (goal).” - Start scene, name Hero and goal.

“That is all there is to tell of that tale.” - End scene.

“Even the greatest Hero must struggle at times.” Start Conflict (describe it after the phrase)

Respond to Conflict:

“With all their Resolve \_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_ (feat).” - Perform Feat

“Resolve and luck permitting, \_\_\_\_ (feat).” - Feat Challenge

Respond to Feat:

“As a Consequence, \_\_\_\_.” - Name Consequences

“A Feat so great needs more Resolve.” - Deny Feat

“Only with luck on their side.” - Challenge Resolve

Respond to Consequences

“And \_\_\_\_ (name), accepted fate.” - Accept

“The world is not so cruel.” - Deny

“Unwilling to stop, \_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_ (feat).” - Fight

Respond to Fight Consequences

“A Feat so great needs more Resolve.” - Deny Feat

“Only with luck on their side.” - Challenge Resolve

CHARACTER SHEET