



# Introduction

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*The Curse of Er'Mah'Gerd* is a tabletop role-playing game (TTRPG) designed for newcomers to the medium as well as veteran players looking for a fun, lighthearted approach to interactive storytelling.

This book is intended for the gamemaster (GM)—the person running the game—and includes everything you'll need to enjoy the self-contained adventure within, including maps; detailed directions for navigating the story; and descriptions for every character, creature, spell, and special item that appears in the game.

If all of that sounds kind of complicated, don't worry...we'll take it one step at a time!

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## You're in Good Company

Whether you're running this game as a first-time GM, planning a campaign for new TTRPGers, seeking a relatively quick adventure that favors storytelling over crunchy rules, or craving a fresh and funny take on fantasy tropes, you've come to the right place.

Let's start with the basics.

*The Curse of Er'Mah'Gerd* is designed for 1 to 6 players who are led by you, the GM. The story can be completed in as few as three sessions or could span many more, depending on how many optional encounters you choose to include. The game can also be played through multiple times, but let's not get ahead of ourselves!

Simply put, with *The Curse of Er'Mah'Gerd*, you choose your level of commitment. Want to stick to the main plot points for an on-the-rails, full-speed-ahead dash to the Big Bad? Go for it! Looking for some extra puzzles and roleplaying opportunities for your heroes in between battles? Sprinkle in as many optional encounters as you wish to!

One important caveat: this game adheres to the fifth-edition (5E) ruleset for “the world's first fantasy roleplaying game.” (Go ahead and Google that.) Suffice it to say that although this book has everything you need to complete the adventure and does its darnedest to streamline the mechanics of the game, it doesn't spell out the underlying *rules* for legal reasons.

Fortunately, the 5E gods have made the rules available here for free: [https://media.wizards.com/2016/downloads/DND/SRD-OGL\\_V5.1.pdf](https://media.wizards.com/2016/downloads/DND/SRD-OGL_V5.1.pdf).

After familiarizing yourself with that resource (start at page 76), you, as GM, are strongly encouraged to read the rest of this Introduction as well as Preparing for the Adventure before running the first session.

While pertinent information generally is revealed as it is needed throughout the three-act adventure, you'll have a much easier time “GMing” if you are familiar with the setting, recent events, and the heroes summoned to save the world.



## *Hail and Well Met!*

*My name is Asher Brzezinski, and I'm the real mind behind Mezzo-Earth.*

*My friends and I completed numerous quests set in this homemade fantasy realm while larping (live-action roleplaying). As the GM, I helped everyone create their characters, invented a number of weird villains, and coordinated our adventures in the woods near my house. I also played the part of Elvish Presley in game.*

*Unfortunately, my family and I moved away, so I had to come up with a new way to keep our adventures in Mezzo-Earth alive. I teamed up with author David Michael Williams—who also wrote a novel about my friends and me, *The Lost Tale of Sir Larpsalot*—to produce this game. Now we can play remotely thanks to the internet...and you can explore Mezzo-Earth from wherever you are.*

*Since I'm the expert on Mezzo-Earth and the heroes of Good Company, I'll be commenting throughout this book, providing you with GM tips and other helpful observations.*

*To quote one of my favorite movies:  
"Have fun storming the castle!"*

*-Asher*

Unbeknownst to Good Company, however, the Funk's foul influence began to fade shortly afterward, and it continues to shrink more and more with each passing day.

As the longstanding curse ebbs, the liberated land presents a tempting prize for the ambitious nations that border the Funk. Now three factions vie for the once-cursed land: the elves of the Untamed North, the dwarves of the Civilized South, and the humans of the Disorient to the west. War seems inevitable, if not imminent!

Because of Good Company's role in (accidentally) breaking the curse, the heroes have been called back to the Forbidden Frontier to help negotiate a peace treaty.

To complete this mission, the heroes will be forced to forge an alliance with one of the factions—and make enemies of others—before they can venture into the dwindling Funk to discover the other-worldly threat lurking at its core.

Throughout the game, the player characters (PCs) will learn about the events that led to the creation of the Funk as well as the Prophecy for what the elves have dubbed the Unholy Land. However, it's important for the GM to have a good understanding of these details going in—especially since the occasional rumor and the beliefs of individual non-player characters (NPCs) may blatantly contradict the truth.

## **Background**

Once upon a time, a cursed land called the Funk isolated the nations that bordered it. In a previous adventure, a band of heroes called Good Company entered the Funk and claimed the powerful *Staff of Er'Mah'Gerd* for their own. Sure, they had to fight a bunch of wimps and a miniboss, but it wasn't a very difficult quest in hindsight.

## **HISTORY**

Many centuries ago, a girl named Er'Mah'Gerd was born in the region known today as the Forbidden Frontier. The daughter of an elf noblewoman and a human from the fledgling Disorient nation, Er'Mah'Gerd lived as an outcast in the Untamed North, never truly belonging to her mother's people because of her human heritage and her strange and sometimes sinister magical gifts.



When scouts discovered that the humans of the Disorient had sent a secret expedition into the Unholy Land—a region referenced in the elves’ direst of prophecies—the elves concocted a plan that would prevent the humans’ further intrusion. They sent Er’Mah’Gerd alone to stymie the Disorient’s forces in exchange for acceptance and a coveted position in the elven capital.

The half-elf magus accepted the mission, even though she didn’t personally believe in the Prophecy.

Instead of striking from the shadows, Er’Mah’Gerd infiltrated the human ranks by using her father’s affiliation with the Disorient to her advantage. In short, she *joined* them and, for a time, was seduced by the power the Disorient sought within the Unholy Land—a hidden wellspring of chaotic magic that the humans hoped to tame and claim for their own.

However, the more Er’Mah’Gerd learned about the unpredictable magic, the more she realized that releasing it could result in the very catastrophic consequences detailed in the Prophecy. When Er’Mah’Gerd confronted her Disorient cohorts with her fears, she was met with resistance and ultimately resorted to sabotage to stop them.

Unfortunately, Er’Mah’Gerd’s efforts only exacerbated the situation, ripping open a portal to a dark realm populated by creatures that hungered only for disorder, disruption, and decay. One such being was Tohubohu, the Commode-O Dragon.

Knowing she could not seal the breach on her own, Er’Mah’Gerd instead infused her staff with all of her innate arcane power to create a ward that would limit the spread of the entropy magic. Though her body was destroyed in the process, the *Staff of Er’Mah’Gerd* remained as a metaphorical lock to keep the Funk from spreading beyond the borders of the Unholy Land.

Nearly a millennia later, Good Company took the *Staff of Er’Mah’Gerd* from the Funk and unwittingly removed the only means of keeping

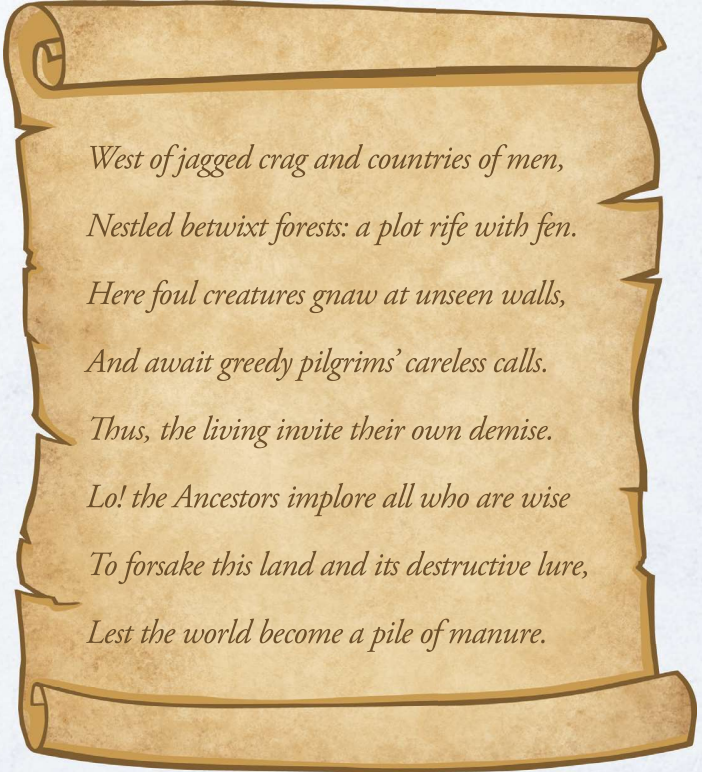
the Funk at bay. (Oops!) So, while the other races might celebrate the newly available land, the long-lived elves of the Untamed North fear that the shrinking of the Funk is not a blessing, but rather the quiet before the storm.

And many elves believe the realization of the Prophecy—and the destruction of Mezzo-Earth itself—draw near!

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## THE PROPHECY

An elven soothsayer wrote these words in the earliest days of the Untamed North:



*West of jagged crag and countries of men,  
Nestled betwixt forests: a plot rife with fen.  
Here foul creatures gnaw at unseen walls,  
And await greedy pilgrims’ careless calls.  
Thus, the living invite their own demise.  
Lo! the Ancestors implore all who are wise  
To forsake this land and its destructive lure,  
Lest the world become a pile of manure.*



## Adventure Overview

OK, GM, let's take a look at the main story beats of the adventure. This section provides a summary of all three acts, along with some overarching information that you should know going into the game.

### ADVENTURE FLOW

*The Curse of Er'Mah'Gerd* features several paths for players to choose from, based on which faction the heroes ally with. While the middle of the adventure varies from playthrough to playthrough, it always starts and ends in the same locations.

Events unfold in this order:

1. Good Company arrives in Farway to negotiate a treaty with the three factions.
2. Ruffians interrupt the peace talks, ending the negotiations prematurely and permanently.
3. The heroes form an alliance with one of the factions' delegates.

4. While escorting their chosen delegate from Farway to the delegate's home, Good Company is ambushed by one of the rival factions.
5. The heroes reach their destination and learn more about their allies and their political motivations, but they are quickly sent to investigate a disturbance in the Funk.
6. Immediately upon entering the Funk, Good Company is confronted by the remaining rival faction.
7. Good Company travels to the Tower of Shiz and navigates a series of challenges inside.
8. At the top of the tower, the heroes battle (and hopefully defeat) the Commode-O Dragon.

The following flowchart illustrates the various paths Good Company can take. It doesn't include optional encounters, which can be sprinkled throughout the game, as indicated in the adventure text.

