

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CAMPAIGN SETTING

DARK EARTH



CAMPAIGN SETTING

First Edition

CREATED BY OCCULT ENTERTAINMENT

THE STORY...

Earth has always been a feudal planet. Wars over religion and ways of thinking have rocked our planet since time primordial.

So it surprised no one when a large group of Muslim extremists attacked Israel.

What did surprise some, however, was the result.

The United States reaction to the attack was swift - troops poured into the small land, and many innocent people died. Surrounding Muslim countries ordered the United States to retreat, saying too much innocent blood had been shed.

The United States refused to budge.

A Jihad was declared, and a holy war unlike any ever seen before was begun.

With super technological weapons and equipment at their disposal, the United States seemed guaranteed to be the winner - until China stepped in, saying the US had stepped out of bounds, and Russia joined the US, saying they had every right to be doing what they were doing.

Soon afterwards, the rest of the world chose sides.

The Earth's first true World War soon took place.

No one knew who launched the first nuclear missile. It triggered many others though, and the Earth was soon devoid of life...

...Somewhat.

Several groups of people from different societies saw the inevitable nuclear outcome, and made their way underground to avoid it. These groups eventually banded together, and a large society was formed. They had a great amount of technology at their disposal, and enough supplies and science to survive for an indefinite amount of time.

As the bombs fell, the underground dwellers felt the tremors...but were safe from the radiation and nuclear fallout that destroyed the rest of the species.

But all was not harmonious.

Civil war began underground.

The people divided themselves into two large groups, and eventually separated from each other.

The group that left had very little technology and food, and were forced to find ways to survive on their own.

And thus they did.

Years passed. The Earth was devastated not only by the effects of Nuclear war, but also by meteors that pounded into the small planet, putting up layers of dust that blocked the sun's rays and froze the tiny planet over.

More years passed. The planet began to thaw.

The humans underground, who had been monitoring the planet's condition with their advanced technology, prepared to surface. The entire time they were underground they did things to prepare themselves for this glorious moment - skin treatment so they would not burn when they finally arose, eye treatment so they would not become blinded by the sun's rays...

The smaller groups of humans who separated from the larger also prepared - but they had changed much in their time apart from their brothers. Because of the lack of technology and food, they turned to cannibalism. When they realized that this would ultimately lead to their death, they developed a plan - if they simply drained people of blood, they could survive off of the other foods they discovered and created from their underground environment.

So they separated themselves, raised groups of themselves to be mindless cattle with the sole purpose of feeding the others. This worked well, and they soon developed other unique technologies to help them better survive in their harsh environment: strict workout regimens, age-defying technologies, strength and speed augmenting drugs...

These super-humans were the first to rise from the darkness. It was hard for them to adjust to the sun's light, even though it was still weakened by the dust of the meteors, and they found themselves prone to skin burns and blindness.

They retreated back underground, developed protective lotions and contacts for their skins and eyes, and they rose again.

They quickly built a city, and began propagating - all the while keeping with their blood drinking ways.

They developed clans, and the members of the most powerful clans ruled over the weaker. Cattle were still raised all over the city, which they dubbed Nexus, and hundred of years passed in this fashion.

They came to greatly outnumber their more technologically advanced brothers, who were still underground, preparing to rise.

This is the Earth that the technologically advanced Humans - the true Humans - rose to: a Dark Earth, in more ways than one...

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SPECIAL THANKS

Everyone on the Wizards.com\Campaign
Workshop\“World Developers Needed”
board
– you guys STILL rock so hard...

Based on the original Dungeons & Dragons rules created by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, and the new Dungeons & Dragons game designed by Jonathen Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

INTRODUCTION

Wow. It's really, really hard to stop working on this campaign setting. I never thought this campaign would have the same place in my heart as Zymph - my first world - does.

But it grew on me.

Once I started creating, it was hard to stop. Dark Earth is a really, really fun world to develop. Hopefully it will be just as fun for you guys to play.

Like Zymph, this is very much still a work in progress - so if you think something should be contributed, send it in! Chances are, we'll use it!

Regardless, let us know what you think. We really want to know.

Above all, have fun!

- James C.N. McKinney

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW (AKA THE QUICK AND THE DIRTY)

If your looking to get into a game using Dark Earth as your campaign setting right away, this section is for you. (Not that we don't want you to read the rest of the book too, but hey, we understand.)

Now on to the facts:

The world is uninhabited except for one huge city called Nexus. Nexus is run by clans, which are mostly comprised of Vampires. Most Humans are "cattle" for these Vampires, but some intelligent Humans do exist, and struggle to fit into a Vampire run society.

Relations between the intelligent Humans and Vampires are tense at best, though Humans are allowed to live in the city and do business.

Businesses both small and large litter Nexus, the most prominent of these being the 7 major corporations.

Nexus is a microcosm of our world, with all the technology, entertainment, and objects that you know from the real world. Players can purchase things from a Sears catalog, for example, or buy food from a McDonalds menu at McDonalds prices.

Keep what you want from the real world, change what you don't.

There you go. For details about Corporations, Clans, or anything else you want to know about, just read the appropriate chapters.

Have fun!

Keep in mind that Dark Earth is still very much a work in progress – the world will evolve as time goes on!

In other words, none of this is set in stone! Have fun with it!

LOCALES

There are only two standard locales on Dark Earth: Nexus and The Wildlands. Both are described below.

NEXUS

Nexus is the city that the vampires built when they emerged, and the location that everything takes place in.

It is the only civilized city known on earth, and is where the humans and vampires wage their constant war...

Nexus is a huge city, taking up almost 1/4 of the planet's surface.

WILDLANDS

Everything beyond Nexus. It has never been explored, and no one knows what occupies it.

Some Nexus residents are brave enough to journey a bit out of the city, but never very far - some strange, dangerous things are said to reside in the Wildlands...

Note that anything at all can exist here. It is truly up to the DMs imagination what lays beyond Nexus.

The Wildlands can be a fun place for your players to explore, but there are some things you have to consider first:

1. Survival. There are no stores or gas stations out there. PCs need to take this into account.
2. Plan ahead. Even though there won't be anything to encounter near Nexus, there will be farther out. If you're the DM, have this planned out.
3. Direction. It is easy to get lost and never find your way back to Nexus. So be careful!

CLANS

Clans rule Nexus, much like political parties rule our Earth. Being a member of a clan is a status symbol, and is proudly displayed.

The clans do not often fight with each other: rather they draw from each other and manipulate each other to whatever ends they May desire at the moment...

ANCIENT ONES ^v

Only the 100 oldest vampires may be a member of this clan. In the vampiric community, The Ancient Ones are the most powerful and respected of all the clans. They are also the most mysterious - no one is really sure who the members of this clan are.

They are usually members of other clans, and manipulate things behind the scenes...

BA'AT ^{H,V}

Mutated rejects of society. They live in the sewers, and have very close-knit societies that are almost familial.

The mutations of a Ba'at are hideous - so hideous that they cannot function in normal society in any way...

DM NOTE: You can insert any monster in the Monster Manual into Dark Earth by calling them Ba'at or Ba'at animals.

DIGERATTI ^{H,V}

The most elite super-hackers on the planet. The Digeratti are computer programmers, security specialist, and technology developers.

They will work for any clan, are very expensive to hire (they are worth it) and stay politically neutral. Because of this, the clans leave them alone - they are too valuable of a resource to harm or lose...

It goes without saying that only the most intelligent, skilled programmers have any hope of joining.

DISEMBO ^{H,V}

Actors, comedians, writers, painters - people who live to create works of art in one form or another. Their art is their life, and they care about little else...

ILUM'NA ?

A mysterious group of individuals who tend to dress in black robes and rarely speak. Not much is known about these individuals, except that they rarely get involved in the events of the world - but when they do, they do so in force, never failing in their tasks...

IODS ^{N/A}

Artificially intelligent robots. How or why the Iods came to be is unknown to any save them - and if they know, they aren't saying...

LOKUST SOCIETY ^{H, V Females}

The only clan that denies membership on gender - the Lokust Society is a group of all female mercenaries. They can be hired to do just about anything, though their prices are high. The work they produce, however, is top-notch...

NOCIA H, V

People who have no affiliation with any clan whatsoever. Nocla is short for "no clan", and there are more of these than is publicly believed...

NOMADS H, V

People who shun technology, and live in the Wildlands. Not much is known of the Nomads, as they refuse to partake of anything related to Nexus and it's people.

ORNATI H

Ornatists are purebloods - they believe that vampires and humans should never mix, and that humans are the superior race - vampires are defective mutations who should be destroyed and not tolerated.

WIDGETS H, V

Widgets are people obsessed with "improving" themselves using cybernetic enhancements. They are fanatic about their enhancements, and often implant cybernetic enhancements in others to raise money for their own personal enhancements. (Which they do themselves if at all possible - if not, they pay other Widgets)

WOLFPAK V

Technologically advanced intelligent-human "hunters". The Wolfpak wear red robotic suits that not only augment their strength but also give them a variety of abilities, not to mention a fully functional artificially intelligent computer built in to the suit.

There are not many Wolfpak members - not only do the suits cost over \$10 million each to make, but they only accept the most intelligent / physically superior of the species as members.

¥Suit Features

- Artificially Intelligent computer.
- Air filterer.
- Strength augmenting robotics.
- Tiny rocket thrusters in feet.
- Communications unit for other Wolfpak members.
- Telephone emulator.
- More undiscovered.

Ba'at

If you haven't read the Ba'at description in the Clans listing, please do so before reading this chapter any further.

So, how do you play a mutated sewer-dwelling human in a modern day world? Do you have to make up the stats for whatever type of human you want? Is your head reeling from the amount of work it would take to do this?

Well?

Relax. It's not necessary to make the statistics for your mutated human from scratch (although you very well could if you know how to do so) - use the Monster Manual (or any other pre-made monster) instead. Steal all the statistics and abilities from it, and change things like personality, alignment, habitat, and any other non-mechanics related information.

Of course, this is not as simple as it seems - you have to make sure the innate abilities and properties of the monster would make sense in Dark Earth. (Read the Magic and Divine Abilities chapter for more insight into this.)

And remember that Ba'ats are outcasts - they live in the sewers and are rejected by everyone living above ground. This is not an easy life to live. Things live in the sewers that the surface world has never seen - mutated creatures made up of nightmares and flesh that would make Human and Vampire alike scream and run.

It is not easy being a Ba'at.

Of course, they don't always stay below ground. They do venture above ground sometimes. And this is where the fun begins...

Iods

Why would you possibly want to play an artificially intelligent robot when you can play a human, vampire, or mutated super-human?

Because robots are unique.

Their motivations, reasoning's, and very existence are so different from the rest of the worlds that none can truly understand them. They operate on another level of being so different from anything any living creature has experienced . No living creature can possibly understand them.

What true role-player could resist that?!?

But how does one draw the statistics up for a robot? Well, much like making a Ba'at (see the chapter titled "Ba'at"), you can simply use statistics for another pre-made monster and just call it a robot.

What would we suggest? Use a construct as a template. Or maybe a golem. Whatever you use, remember this: Iods are not trying to take over the world - just live in it...

Iods can look like anything – and tend to walk around disguised as humans. They are almost impossible to tell apart from the real thing.

GOVERNMENT

Nexus does not have a government system - there are no laws, and no one exists to enforce them if there were. The clans rule Nexus, and fear of them is what causes the inhabitants of Nexus to "behave".

So how does such a lawless society function without constant violence and crime? Simple: everyone carries weapons, and no one really wants to die...

Because of the lawlessness of Dark Earth, it will be extremely hard for player characters to "pillage and plunder". EVERYONE is armed, and they are assumed to be proficient with what they are armed with. So be careful!

CURRENCY

Nexusians use the same currency we do. They have dollars, quarters, and every other form of currency that we have.

Of course, if you read the "Government" chapter, you are probably wondering how a government-less society can produce and regulate currency.

Well, this is the one and only thing all of the vampiric clans have come to an agreement on. (Human clans don't have a say in the matter, of course...) They deal with currency the same way our government does now. (Unless your trying to get super-detailed, just suffice it to say money has the same value the American dollar does now)

Nexusian currency looks the exact same as ours does now.

Same value, same look. Makes things simple, doesn't it?

CORPORATIONS

Corporations are large businesses that have a huge amount of influence in Nexus. In some ways they are more influential than clans, though they lack the loyalty and overall power.

COMTEK

Founded by Rasta Dredd, Comtek focuses on computer and security systems. Comtek is the largest and most influential of all the corporations.

INFERIOUS

Makers of occult objects, Inferious is shrouded in mystery - it's CEO has never been seen, and it's products are high in quality and oddly intricate.

LUCIOUS

Lucious is the biggest and most popular provider of electricity in Nexus. They are constantly researching new ways to make energy consumption more efficient...

PSYKOSIS LABORATORIES

Psykosis specializes in mind studies - you could say that they are a bunch of psychologists with wealth ambitions, and no one would think you odd.

BIOTECH

Biotech deals in biological research - they study things like cures to sicknesses, physical augmentations, and DNA manipulation.

QWEST ENTERTAINMENT

Qwest Entertainment are makers of video games, game shows, and board games. They also make toys and children's books.

SEFERON AUTOMOTIVES

Makers of automobiles and other vehicles. The largest and most trusted in Nexus - also, the most expensive...

RELIGIONS

The same religions exist in Dark Earth that exist in the real world now. And the residents of Nexus have the same varying degrees of devotion to these religions as people do in real life now.

However, things are different in Nexus. People live a much more stressed, violent existence. Because of this, religious devotion tends to weigh a little more heavily - people either disbelieve or avidly believe...

...however, loyalty to clan is much more important than loyalty to religion.

This should tell you volumes about Dark Earth...

RELIGIONS

TIMELINE

0 The Emergence

150 Artificial Intelligence perfected.

4000 The Apocalypse

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FAMOUS PEOPLE

BASTA DREDD

Founder of Comtek, this dread-locked Jamaican is the most charismatic and famous of the founders...and also one of the most intelligent and shrewd...

FAMOUS PEOPLE

MAGIC AND DIVINE POWERS

Can a character use magic in Dark Earth? How about divine powers? The answer to this (and almost any question you will have about whether you can or can't do something in Dark Earth) is this: "Can you do it in real life?"

If you are one of those people that believe that magic and divine abilities really do exist, then the answer to that question is "yes". If you don't believe, then the answer is "no".

If your answer is "yes", there are things you need to consider: magic in real life (assuming you believe in it of course) is not as flashy and instantaneous as it is in traditional D&D. It is also not as easy to do. It is certainly not believed in by the majority of the population.

So some care needs to be taken when allowing magic into a Dark Earth campaign. Below are some recommendations on how to incorporate magic and divine abilities...

- Limit spells. Take out the spells that would be hard to pull off in real life - fireball, magic missile, etc.
- Restrict usage. The majority of people do not believe in magic and divine abilities for a REASON. It is something that, if exposed, would cause such hysteria as to make its users hunted and hated. So when players use magic, they must follow a code - use it discreetly, or don't use it at all.
- Explain it away. What if magic was just super advanced technology? If maybe it is the result of alien weaponry and devices, or if it's users are aliens themselves stranded on earth? Find an explanation for magic and stick with it. Maybe use more than one. Whatever you do, make it plausible...

So what about Paladins? And other classes that rely off of deities for their powers?

Get creative with it. Was it truly the deity giving them the power, or was their mind unlocking inner potential? Do the gods really exist and interlope, but only to their most faithful servants?

Have fun with it!

Divine powers are a bit different than magic, but in the real world those differences would be impossible to tell from a viewers standpoint.

Because of this, most of the text here deals with magic, although everything written also applies to divine powers.

So there you have it - it is ultimately up to the DM (as always) whether magic and divine abilities exist at all.

The official stance? No, magic does not exist - it died away a long, long time ago. But it doesn't HAVE to be that way. This is Dungeons & Dragons, after all!

UNIQUE CREATURES

ROVERS

Leftovers from a corporations failed attempt at robotic guard dogs, these vicious entities roam the streets attacking anything they come across with wolf like tactics.

The weapons on these robots are varied and powerful, and it is unknown who (if anyone) repairs, creates, or maintains them.

DARK EARTH is a campaign setting unlike any you have ever played. It will take your imagination and grab it, caress it, and make you never want to leave.

Just think: a world run by clans, each struggling to gain dominance over the other. Humans are cattle to a vampiric mutation of people calling themselves "vampires", and the few intelligent humans that do exist struggle to maintain their humanity in a world of true darkness.

Imagine also if most of the world was wild, unexplored, and feared. What would you do? What clan would you choose? Would you be a human or vampire? Or maybe a mutation (Ba'at)? Or an artificially intelligent robot (Iod)?

So many choices - the time to start making them is now.

Dark Earth: It's more than just a campaign setting - it's a spiritual awakening...



To use this campaign setting, a Dungeon Master also needs the Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, and Monster Manual .

A player needs only the Player's Handbook.

Visit our website at www.occultentertainment.co.nr