

Heritage in the DragonQuest game

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Sooner or later, either as a player of the DragonQuest game or as a referee, you're going to encounter a character whose background gives you considerable pause; a halfling member of the greater nobility, perhaps, or an elf whose family are peasants—or maybe a fire giant descended from pirates.

To be sure, in the Heritage section of the rules (Section 8) it states that for nonhumans, the social status role will give the equivalent ranking in human society, and that the referee and the player should work out the details of the character's standing in his or her own society. Not to put too fine a point on it, poppycock. The player typical doesn't know enough about the campaign background to boldly make statements concerning the society of the nonhuman races, and the referee—particularly if confronted by large and/or changing cast of players—very likely doesn't have the time to give lectures on culture to individual players.

A faster, more efficient way to preclude some of the odder combinations of race and heritage is to revise the Social Status Table (8.1) to key it by race. Incidentally, this provides a chance to add a couple of common-in-fiction backgrounds that got left off. The result is Table 8.1b, which accompanies this article. This also calls for some minor modifications to the Order of Birth Table (8.2), as well as the Money Multiplier. And as long as I've got everyone's attention, we'll add something new: an Experience Modifier. (This should not be confused with the Experience Multiple from 6.3.) When the player is consulting Table 8.5 to determine the character's initial allotment of experience points, that allotment should be multiplied by the Experience Modifier listed in Table 8.2b (also contained herein). This reflects the fact that people growing up in different backgrounds will tend to learn more or less the ways of the world because of those backgrounds.

One last thing: I've always been troubled by the image of, say, the triumphant entry of the Prince into his real, accompanied by the throng of madly screaming, "Long live the Greater Nobility!" It seems like there should be some titles to go along with Greater and Lesser noble social classes. And so, if your character is of those social classes, consult Table 8.9 Noble Ranks) and roll 1D10 to determine the exact title you come with. The title is assumed to be inactive, for whatever reason: plague, war, exile, poor prospects, and so forth. If both the player and the referee are agreeable,

Table 8.1b

Social Class	Human	Halfling	Elf	Dwarf	Orc	Giant	Shape Changer
Barbarian	01-10	—	—	—	01-20	01-20	01-15
Slave	11-18	01-05	—	01-05	21-30	—	16-25
Woods Dweller	—	—	01-45	—	—	—	—
Miner	—	—	—	06-35	—	—	—
Peasant	19-25	06-15	—	—	31-40	21-30	26-35
Farmer	26-31	16-35	—	—	—	31-50	36-45
Townsmen	32-38	36-55	—	36-40	—	—	—
Soldier	39-46	—	—	41-50	41-50	—	—
Craftsman	47-53	56-75	46-65	51-65	—	51-65	—
Adventurer	54-63	76-85	66-85	66-75	51-60	66-75	46-65
Bandit	64-70	—	—	76-80	61-75	75-90	66-80
Pirate	71-77	—	—	—	76-85	—	81-85
Merchant	78-84	86-95	—	81-85	86-95	—	86-95
Merchant Prince	85-88	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lesser Nobility	89-97	96-00	86-95	86-95	96-00	91-95	96-00
Greater Nobility	98-00	—	96-00	96-00	—	96-00	—

Table 8.2b

Social Class	Money	Experience	Bastard	Legitimate	First
Barbarian	2	1.2	01-10	11-85	86-00
Slave	1	0.9	01-25	26-95	96-00
Woods Dweller	4	1.0	01-10	11-80	81-00
Miner	7	1.0	01-05	06-85	86-00
Peasant	2	0.8	01-30	31-85	86-00
Farmer	4	0.9	01-17	18-81	82-00
Townsmen	5	1.0	01-13	14-92	93-00
Soldier	5	1.1	01-13	14-92	93-00
Craftsman	5	1.0	01-13	14-92	93-00
Adventurer	5	1.2	01-13	14-92	93-00
Bandit	8	1.2	01-15	16-90	91-00
Pirate	8	1.2	01-15	16-90	91-00
Merchant	6	1.0	01-20	21-89	90-00
Merchant Prince	10	0.9	01-24	25-87	88-00
Lesser Nobility	5	0.8	01-27	28-96	97-00
Greater Nobility	10	0.7	01-35	36-98	99-00

Table 8.9

Noble Titles Roll	Lesser Noble	Greater Noble
1-5	Knight (<i>Sir/Lady</i>)	Marquees (<i>Marchioness</i>)
6-8	Baron (<i>Baroness</i>)	Duke (<i>Duchess</i>)
9-10	Count (<i>Countess</i>)	Prince (<i>Princess</i>)

adventures might be built around an attempt to regain the lands and status of the title.

The upshot of all these changes should be that your DRAGONQUEST game characters will be more clearly positioned with respect to the society they'll probably be outcasts from anyway...