DUNGEON MECHANICA

FREE SAMPLE

The Sealed Lantern

A 90-Day Journaling Adventure

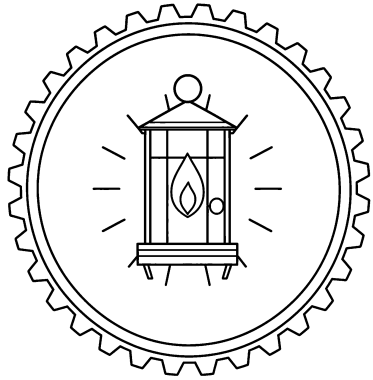
This free sample includes How to Play, the Wayfarer sheet, the map of the Hollow Road, the opening of Act I, and Days 1–3. The complete book is a ninety-day solo journaling adventure: a story on the left-hand page, and room to write on the right.

You will need two ordinary six-sided dice and a pen. This sample is for your own use. Please do not resell or republish it. The complete book is not in this file.

DUNGEON MECHANICA

The Sealed Lantern

A 90-Day Journaling Adventure



Ninety days of story, dice when trouble finds you, and a road that remembers whoever walks it.

DUNGEON MECHANICA

The Sealed Lantern

A 90-Day Journaling Adventure

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The Sealed Lantern is an original, system-neutral solo journaling game from Dungeon Mechanica. Every character, place, creature, and rule in it was written for this book. It needs no other game, setting, or book to play, and it is not affiliated with any other game or publisher.

You may photocopy the Wayfarer sheet for your own use. Please do not reproduce the rest of the book without permission.

SET IN CRIMSON TEXT, IM FELL, AND ALEGREYA SANS
ILLUSTRATED IN PEN-AND-INK LINE ART

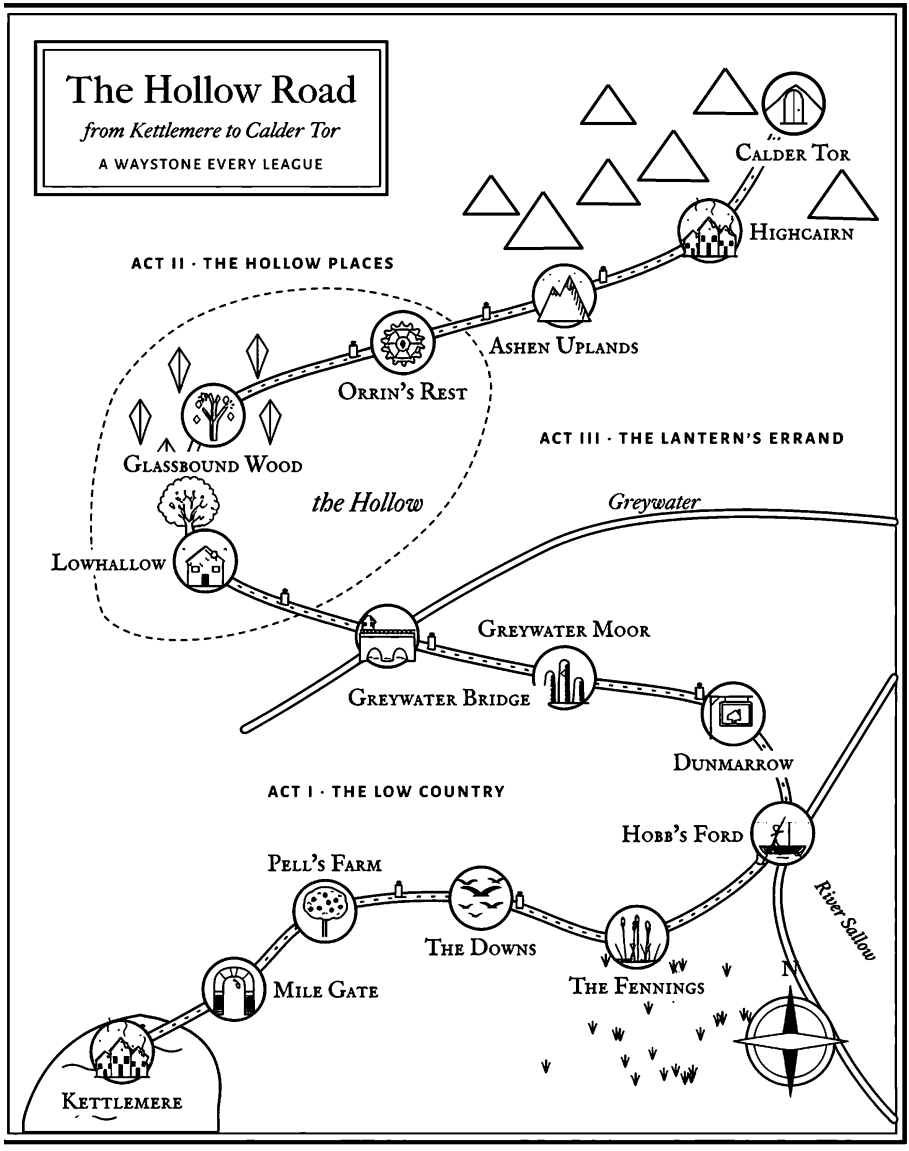


THE ROAD AHEAD

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Each day is a spread: the story on the left page, your Chronicle on the right. Open the book flat and write.



The map shows the old road as the surveyors drew it. Your road may wander.

BEFORE YOU SET OUT

How to Play

A journaling game for one wayfarer, ninety days, and two six-sided dice.

What you need

- **This book.** Each day has two facing pages.
- **Two six-sided dice:** the Two Cubes. Any ordinary pair will do.
- **A pen or pencil,** and a quiet quarter-hour, most days.

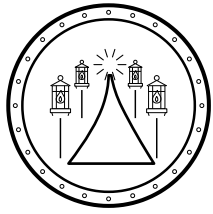
How the book works

You are the wayfarer. The story is written to *you*, and your writing decides who that is. Open the book flat and each day lies across a spread. The **left page** tells that day's part of the adventure, shows a picture of it, holds any dice for the day, and ends with a prompt marked Write. The **right page** is your Chronicle: a date line, the day number, and college-ruled lines for your answer.

Write the real date you sat down on the date line. Days don't have to be consecutive. Skip a day of life and come back; the road waits. Read the left page, roll if it asks you to, then write: what happened, what it cost, what you noticed, what you felt. The prompts are a door, not a fence.

Before Day 1

Fill in the Wayfarer sheet: your name, your trade, where you hail from, and why you said yes. You can leave the rest blank. The road will fill it.



The Clash: roll the Two Cubes

Some days bring a threat: thieves, things in the water, the silent Muffled. The left page sets up the danger but never says how it ends. You do. Roll both dice, add them, find your band, and write the fight.

2–4	Hard Blow	You survive. Mark a Wound. Write how you barely made it.
5–6	Costly Stand	Mark a Weariness, or strike one found item. Write the price.
7–9	Narrow Win	You prevail with a scrape. Write the close call.
10–12	Clean Stroke	You prevail well. Clear one Weariness, or take today's bonus.

Every Clash box names a **Clean Stroke bonus**. On a 10–12 you choose: clear one Weariness, *or* take the bonus. Whatever you roll, you live and the road goes on. Later days are written to make sense whether a fight went well or badly.

Why only two dice? Two cubes make a curve: 7 is common, 2 and 12 are rare. Most Clashes end in a scrape. A Hard Blow should feel like bad luck, and a Clean Stroke should feel earned.

An example

On Day 14 a reedgrip hauls itself out of the black water under the causeway. You roll a 2 and a 5: total 7, a **Narrow Win**. On the right page you write how a plank snapped under your boot, how Cinder caught the grey wrist, and how you held the lantern high with mud to your elbows. Nothing to mark. Turn the page.

The Cube: one die

Some days carry a table of six. Roll one die and write what you got: a **found item** for your sheet, or an **outcome** that shapes the day. A few Clashes end with a small Cube table for what you take afterward.





KEEPING COUNT

Wounds, Weariness & Marks

Reading a day

CLASH	A threat. Roll the Two Cubes and use the four bands.
THE CUBE	A table of six. Roll one die and take that line.
HEARTH	A night of rest. Clear one Wound, or up to two Weariness.
MARK	The road recognises you. Fill a Mark circle.
Waymarks	An optional quick log on some left pages.

Wounds (0 to 3)

A Hard Blow marks a Wound. While you carry **three Wounds** you are **Laid Low**: subtract 2 from every Clash total (a total can't go below 2). If a Hard Blow lands while you are Laid Low, mark a Weariness instead of a fourth Wound. Wounds clear only on Hearth nights.

Weariness (0 to 5)

A Costly Stand marks one Weariness, unless you choose to strike a found item from your list instead. A few Cube results mark one too. If all five boxes are full and you would mark another, mark a Wound instead. A Clean Stroke clears one.

Hearth nights

When a day is marked HEARTH, clear one Wound *or* up to two Weariness, then write the rest.

The chronicle always goes on

Nobody dies in this book. If a mark has nowhere to go, write what keeps you walking. Wounds and Weariness change how the story feels, not whether you reach the end.



Marks of the Road

Marks are moments when the road recognises you. Some days hand you one; some lucky rolls earn one. Fill a circle on your Wayfarer sheet and note its name. Marks never hurt you. Now and then a day says *"If you bear five or more Marks..."* and gives you a little more.

Found items

When the story or the Cube gives you something, write it on your Wayfarer sheet. Some later days ask *"If you still carry the brass key..."*. Either way the story continues; the item only changes how.

Writing in the book

- Pen or pencil both work. The lines are standard college rule.
- There are no wrong answers. Contradict the story if your wayfarer would.
- Out of room? Write in the margins, use the Road Notes at the back, or tuck a page in. Chronicles get fat.
- Tick the small boxes at the top of the right page so you remember what you rolled.



The one real rule: the lantern is fed by remembering. The more truly you write, the brighter this book burns.

Gentle roads

Some days touch grief and goodbyes (Days 26, 39, 50, 60, and 70). Write as much or as little as feels right, write a different memory, or turn the page. It is your chronicle, and you set its pace.

House Rules

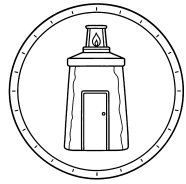
Your own rules

Want a harder road? Start each act with one Weariness marked. A softer one? Let every Hearth night clear everything. Whatever you choose, write it here so you keep it the same all ninety days:

The Clash at a glance

2–4	Hard Blow	You survive. Mark a Wound. Write how you barely made it.
5–6	Costly Stand	Mark a Weariness, or strike one found item. Write the price.
7–9	Narrow Win	You prevail with a scrape. Write the close call.
10–12	Clean Stroke	You prevail well. Clear one Weariness, or take today's bonus.

Laid Low (3 Wounds): subtract 2. A Clean Stroke clears one Weariness or takes the day's bonus.



Your Wayfarer sheet is on the next spread.

WHO CARRIES THE LANTERN

The Wayfarer

Name _____

Trade _____

Hailing from _____

Why you said yes

What you carry

The sealed lantern *(it cannot be lost)* · this book · bedroll · waterskin · a good knife

Wounds, Weariness & Marks

Wounds ☐ ☐ ☐ *At three you are Laid Low: –2 to Clash totals. Clear on Hearth nights.*

Weariness ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ *Full and marking another? Mark a Wound.*

Marks ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯

Write each Mark's name on the facing page.

Notes on your wayfarer

Found items & Marks named

1 13

2 14

3 15

4 16

5 17

6 18

7 19

8 20

9 21

10 22

11 23

12 24

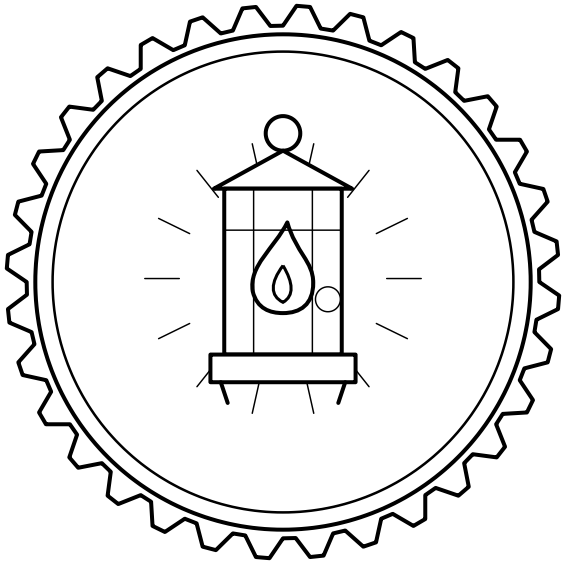
Companions & people met

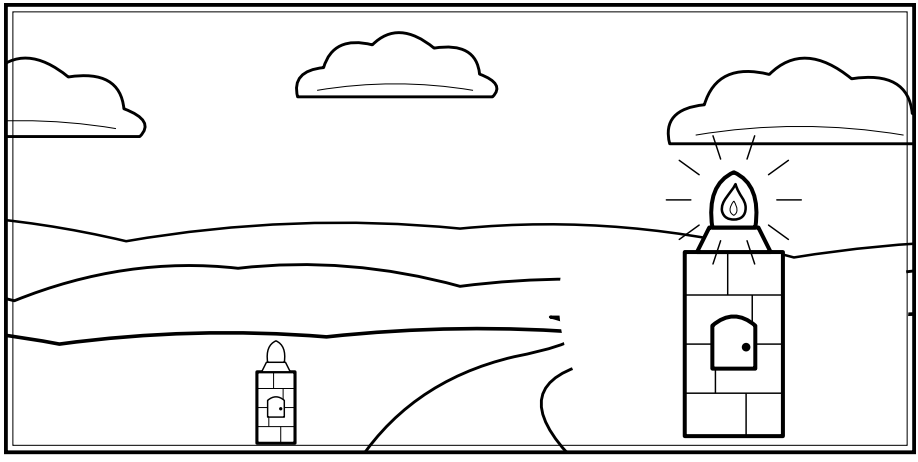
Things you swore to remember



ACT

I





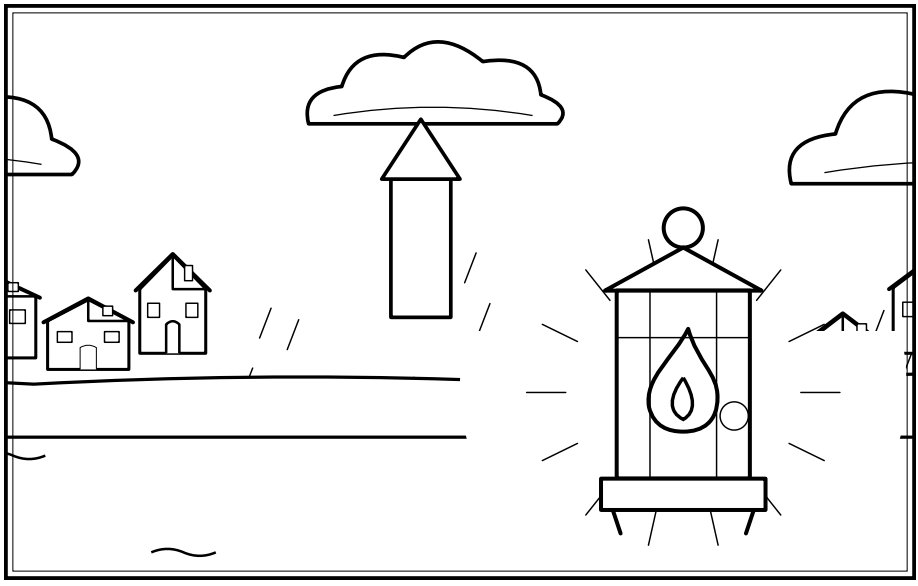
ACT I · DAYS 1–30

The Low Country

A sealed lantern, a guild commission, and the long green leagues out of Kettlemere, through orchard, marsh, and moor, to the place where the road begins to go quiet.

Chapter One	The Lantern Commission	DAYS 1–10	14
Chapter Two	The Fennings	DAYS 11–20	34
Chapter Three	Greywater	DAYS 21–30	54





The Commission at Brasswright Hall

Rain walks across the lake at Kettlemere in grey sheets, and the Brasswright guildhall smells of lamp oil and wet wool. Warden Hesper Quill does not waste words. She sets a lantern on the table between you: eight panes of smoked glass in a brass cage, its little door sealed with red wax and the guild's stamp of a gear around a flame. Inside, a flame no bigger than a thumbnail burns without wick or oil.

"Carry it to the end of the Hollow Road," she says. "To Calder Tor. The road has gone quiet. Nobody else who asked me for this work meant it."

She names a fee that would keep you for a year. She does not say what the lantern is for. When you lift it, it is warmer than it should be, and lighter, and for half a breath you would swear it leans toward you.

Waymarks — a quick log, if you like

WEATHER _____ WHERE YOU SLEPT _____

SOMETHING YOU HEARD _____

THE LANTERN BURNED ○ LOW ○ STEADY ○ BRIGHT

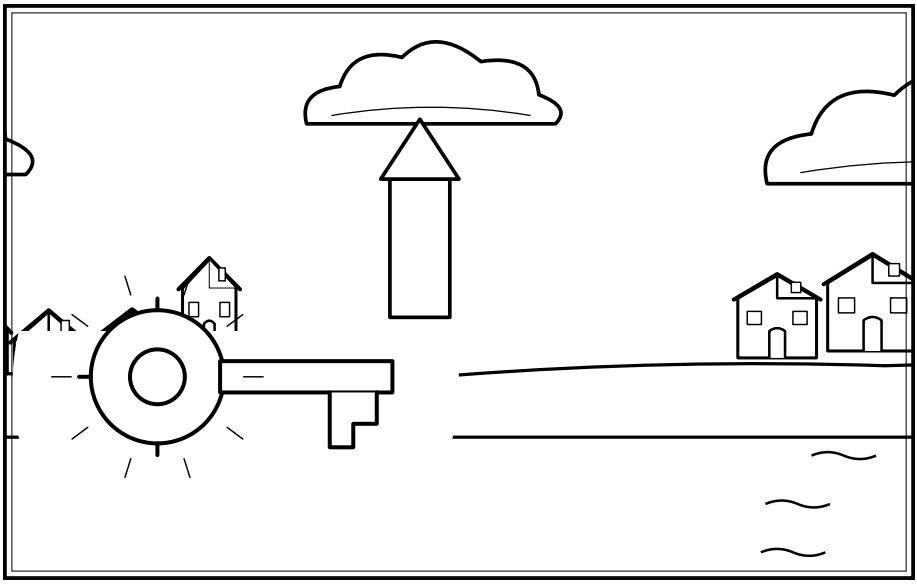
Write *Who are you, wayfarer? Write your name, your trade, and the real reason you said yes. What are you leaving unfinished in Kettlemere?*

Date _____



THE CHRONICLE · Day 1 of 90

The Commission at Brasswright Hall



Three Rules and a Brass Key

Hesper Quill finds you at your lodging before breakfast, ink on her cuffs, and gives you the rules the way a carpenter gives you measurements.

"One. Never break the seal. Two. Never let the flame out of your sight overnight. Three. Walk the whole road. No cart, no barge, no borrowed horse. The road has to be walked."

She presses a small brass key into your palm, warm from her pocket. "For the waystone lamps along the way. Their little doors still lock. You'll know what to do." When you ask what that means, she only taps the lantern's glass. The flame bows, slow, like a cat that has decided you will do.

By noon your pack is on the bed: bedroll, waterskin, a good knife, the lantern wrapped in oilcloth, and this book.

Waymarks — a quick log, if you like

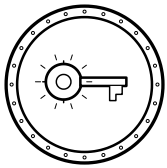
WEATHER _____ WHERE YOU SLEPT _____

SOMETHING YOU HEARD _____

THE LANTERN BURNED ○ LOW ○ STEADY ○ BRIGHT

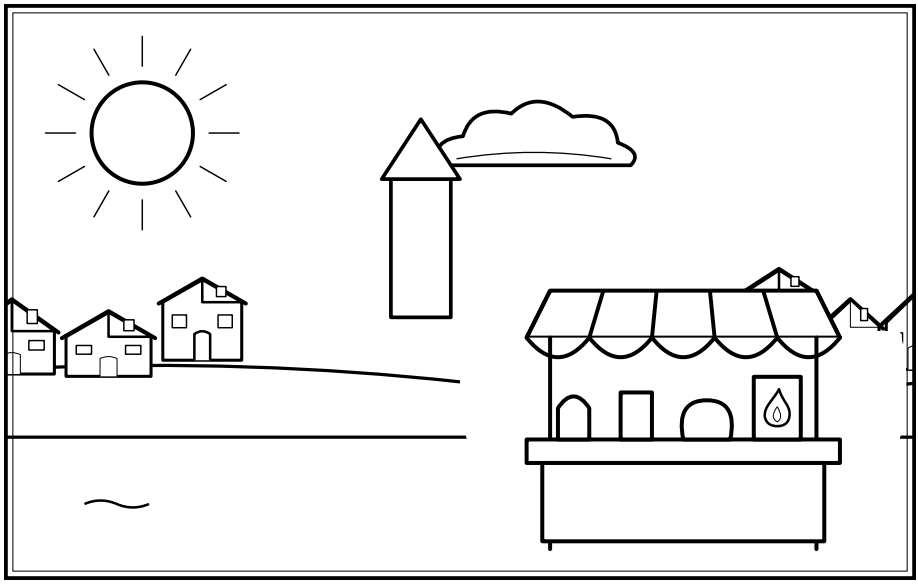
Write *Write the brass key on your Wayfarer sheet. Then list what you pack, and the one thing you bring that nobody would expect a sensible traveller to carry. Why that?*

Date _____



THE CHRONICLE · Day 2 of 90

Three Rules and a Brass Key



Market Day at Kettlemere THE CUBE

Kettlemere's market fills the lake-front with awnings and shouting. Fish on ice, cider in casks, a tinker with a hundred hanging spoons. You have one good coin left after paying your lodging, and a long road ahead.

Near the end of the row stands a stall you don't remember from other market days: lamp-glass and wicks and tin shades punched with stars, under a painted sign of a single candle in a tin cup. A girl with soot on her nose watches the oilcloth bundle on your hip and does not pretend otherwise. When you meet her eye she goes back to polishing a chimney-glass, very fast.

You spend your coin on something you think will matter.

The Cube: What your last coin buys — Roll one die · Found item · Write it on your Wayfarer sheet

⚀ A tinderbox with a brass dragonfly on its lid	⚁ An oiled cloak with far too many pockets
⚂ A pocket almanac of weather-signs	⚃ A whistle carved from a heron's leg-bone
⚄ Honey-cakes in waxcloth that keep remarkably well	⚅ A tin-backed mirror stamped with a little candle

I ROLLED ☐ AND GOT _____

Write *Write what you bought and why it called to you. Then describe the girl at the lamp stall. What do you think she wanted?*

Date _____

CUBE ROLLED ☐



THE CHRONICLE · Day 3 of 90

Market Day at Kettlemere