

Intro Music 0:00-0:36

Intro/News

J: Hi, welcome to 2 GMs 1mic, I'm Joe

K: and I'm Kevin

J: and this is season 6 episode 5 of 2 GMs 1 mic

K: yeah!

J: we're going to talk about epic fantasy today

K: because who doesn't want their fantasy to be fantastical and epic

J: right, normally, traditionally we do our gearing up for gen con episode because we're recording this before we go to gencon, but I don't know if it's going to be out before gen con.

K: it might, maybe. Maybe it'll come out while we're at gen con and make everyone think we're not there.

J: oh no, we're going to be there. There will be a Saturday night special this year

K: oh yeah

J: I'm pretty excited. I'm kind of excited about gen con I should say. I'm super excited about gen con but up until the day of recording I had a personal issue to resolve and was going to have a truncated trip. So I didn't look into anything so I could be pleasantly surprised

K: yeah so it's not going to be horrible horrible gen con this year. It's actually going to be good. It's going to be like normal

J: yeah, it's going to be super normal cool gen con. Although I did eat... was it last year that we are at that pizza truck and it wasn't very good?

K: uh, I believe so

J: I was talking to my son about that, he said "daddy do you like pizza" and I said "yes I do, except this one time in Indianapolis..." oh no he said "daddy do you like pizza from a truck" and I said "a pizza truck?" And he's like "yeah pizza truck" and I said "daddy once had pizza from a pizza truck in Indianapolis and it was poop" and he said "poo pizza?" And I said "yes it was poo pizza" and so he just kept repeating "poo pizza"

K: he does that with most words

J: mhm. I don't remember the name of the truck in particular so if you all go to get some pizza from a truck at gen con then you'll know if you taste it and it's crap then you'll know, surprise mother fucker, it was that truck.

K: tell them Joe sent you and you'll get nothing.

J: yeah you won't get anything. Well, you'll get a \$10 slice of pizza

K: that tastes like shit.

J: yeah it was really bad. Although I am looking forward to eating from the Jamaican food place again. You know I love that food

K: I know you do. You're Jamaican me crazy with this bullshit

J: I can't believe you just went there.

K: I did

J: I'm the one who's a dad and you just went there

K: we can't all be the pun police

J: so yeah epic fantasy you wanna talk about that

K: I guess

J: alright let's do that let's take a break.

Transition music 3:05-4:03

Main discussion 4:04

K: and we're back

J: we are

K: so epic fantasy

J: yes. I'm sure it means something different to you than it does to me

K: that's because you don't like fantasy

J: I do like fantasy. I think I'm just really picky about it and I've only really been exposed to the classics. I've read my lord of the rings, I've read my Silmarillion, I've read my hobbit. I've read the Cold fire trilogy? Is that what that was called?

K: it was, but then, surprise, it was aliens at the end so does that really count as fantasy?

J: absolutely. There can always be aliens and science fiction in my fantasy. Robots and aliens and laser guns are the peanut butter to fantasy's chocolate

K: no!

J: yes. Chocolate is always good on its own. Peanut butter is sometimes good on its own.

Chocolate and peanut butter... always good.

K: yeah, but sci Fi is not the soft caramel center... it's...

J: the peanut butter, we've discussed this! That's fact

K: it's completely separate. They're similar, like bread is similar to like.... A Graham cracker. But you can't substitute Graham crackers for bread the whole time.

J: and I'm with you on that. I didn't say that you could substitute peanut butter for chocolate. I said they always go together.

K: they don't always go together. You can't always have scifi mixing with your fantasy. And if you think you can, you're wrong.

J: not always. But they do go well together. Different brands, for instance. I would never put Peter pan on my Hershey's.

K: well no one would put Peter pan if they had five dollars.

J: I would put Skippy on my Hershey's. I would put Skippy on a s'more. I would put chocolate syrup on a big pile of Skippy.

K: Australian listeners are like [poor Australian accent] "why are they putting it on kangaroos."

J: they're probably wondering how you could do that Australian accent to them. I can do mine.

[Poor Australian accent] "The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plane"

K: g'day

J: they all say g'day and shrimps on barbies.

K: of course

J: and eat skippies, which is what I think they call kangaroos?

K: it is, it is.

J: I've had kangaroo. It's actually delicious.

K: apparently they put that in a lot of their dog food

J: well yeah wouldn't you? They're kind of everywhere.

K: you know we have a lot of things too but they don't put it in dog food

J: don't they put horses in dog food? Isn't that what we do? But no, I'm serious. Sci Fi and fantasy do work well together. However, I don't disagree with you. I wouldn't go as far as to say that I agree with you that they should always be separate at all times, but I will come with you along the Hershey highway.

K: I feel like there's a time and a place for scifi and fantasy. Sometimes you can have elements that are the same, but they inherently don't belong together.

J: I don't know I think they're really similar. I think they can be -

K: they can be very similar, just like technology so advanced it may as well be magic. Versus something that is indescribable powered by forces outside of our realm of understanding that is not inherently mechanical or scientifically based.

J: right

K: I understand that they can be very similar, but I have a distinct, hard "no means no" when it comes to "well this is a laser gun but you can't tell it's a laser gun because it's shaped like this, like it's a magic blasting rod."

J: I like scifi and fantasy mixed together in as much as that d&d game I ran. So the only real sci-fi elements were the stuff the characters brought. The rest of it was all going to be magic, or advanced ancient alien tech that is basically just magic.

K: that's fine

J: that's how I was going to run it. The only sci fi was going to be when you got off planet and when you got on planet. Other than that there wasn't going to be much sci fi. I do like some craziness in my fantasy. I actually prefer gonzo fantasy to epic or high fantasy. But let's turn that page and talk a little bit about what makes epic fantasy your favorite.

K: I feel like it's the easiest to roleplay in because it is the most divorced from any kind of reality that I personally experience on a daily basis. I feel that sci fi, while it's awesome, it's always just a little too close to "well this is just the world in like 30 years." I'll be there, it's gonna suck. My knees aren't going to work.

J: yeah I always feel like, in literature especially, sci fi is always connected to now. Whereas fantasy literature is not. It's connected to something more primal.

K: where scifi aims to be looking ahead, fantasy is always looking back.

J: if that. Sometimes it's looking up. You know, it's looking in a different direction.

K: and I personally feel that when I read I want to escape, when I play a game I want to escape. I don't want any of the trappings of real life to intrude. I will go full pointy green orc over green, sleek alien any day.

J: it's one of the reasons I actually prefer playing 7th sea to playing in the real world. I don't feel as bound to what has come before in the world. If we play 7th sea we're completely divorced from the real world, we just have enough of grounding.

K: that's really funny because whenever you play fantasy you always base it off of something that you know from history.

J: of course

K: Everything you do when you come to fantasy is “this is what I know from history” or “we’re emulating this”

J: Or I emulate an epic history story

K: You very rarely go out on a limb and create your own

J: I’ve done it before. I’ve created a couple of fantasy worlds. One of which was technologically advanced. It was more of a diesel punk type world. And then I’ve invented one in college. I was playing with something called TiddlyWiki, it was a technology that was like a wiki that you couldn’t edit, so you ‘d make your own wiki and it was just like a nested wiki-style experience but you’d upload it in one whole thing and I made a fantasy world that was not really connected to anything. So in my head I’ve always had this fantasy world brewing where there are no humans. Where the humans basically don’t exist and you’ve got light elves and dark elves that are culturally separate, kind of like in GURPS Yrth, which I didn’t know about. GURPS Bane storm, I mean. I created a sort of early renaissance type world that had been shattered by changing religions and things, more so than dark magic. My thing is, I’m not really good with High Magic in a European context. I’ve read Snorri Sturlson, I’ve read Beowulf, I’ve read Chaucer, but I’ve also read the Upanishads and some of the Tibetan myth stuff and pre-Islamic Arabic and African myth and Native American myth. Their worlds were so much more magical than a lot of the European stuff I’ve read that isn’t fantasy books. So, I tend to have a hard time crossing the cultural line.

K: So, for you, a fantasy world is always culturally based?

J: Well, kind of. I’ve got to find out what I’m familiar with in the story first before I can understand the rest of the world. I always have to have something to stand on

K: I guess

J: Who’s your favorite fantasy author?

K: Patricia McKillip

J: Maybe that’s what my problem is with her writing, it’s that she is like way out there. It doesn’t seem to be based on anything and I have a hard time catching up.

K: With her books it always seems like the world has been existing for hundreds and hundreds of years and you’re dropping in and just getting the cliff’s notes as you go. That’s something I’ve always enjoyed.

J: There was a series of books by Joe Abercrombie, I remember him but I don’t remember the name of his books, they were what we’d call a fantasy story but they’re so low fantasy, so gritty that they’re definitely not epic fantasy. When you say Epic Fantasy, the 2 things I think of are the Upanishads; the Bhagavad Gita, the Ramayana, all of the Indian epic poetry and the Lord of the Rings. I’m not real good with the fantasy genre. I don’t know it so well when it comes to different types. I know certain fantasy authors, I’ll always read their stuff. I know you’d disagree with me but the S.M. Stirling Change series. When you get all into the 3rd Generation, when there’s nothing left of the modern world, that, I think, is almost pure fantasy. Especially in the last book where there are literally magic swords that blow up the Koreans. Yeah, there’s literal magic swords that translate all languages and can never be hurt and they quest for these things

across the continent and then there's some other magic type stuff that isn't just wiccans chanting in the woods. As that slowly gets built up, that becomes more and more fantasy. And then anything by Mercedes Lackey. I love everything she's ever written just about. Then the rest of it for me would be Conan, Lord of the Rings. That sort of stuff.

K: Whereas I just kind of dabble with any kind of fantasy author that comes my way. Then I read it and I go "Is this too close to what I know? I'm done." And that was my problem with SM Stirling, when I started reading the Change series, I was like, it's a post our world world and how people are surviving and adapting, and I was fine with that. Then it started changing and the way it was changing was like... I understand that it's going to have weirdness but this is getting like... really?

J: That series is really good in my opinion because there's really 3 series. There's the people that survive the change and learn how to build the new world, there's their kids, King Rudy Mackenzie, and that series and they're kind of like the bridge between the old and the new and the grandchildren of the people after the change. They're literally questing for magic swords. And there's magic in the world and dark creatures and evil that must be destroyed. It becomes more and more fantasy to me. I like it.

K: I don't know, I feel like that is a shift in gears that I didn't appreciate.

J: I can understand that, maybe you should just read the grandchildren part

K: Maybe

J: That's kind of what I was aiming at, is like, get away from the other stuff

K: Also I liked the first book. I really like the first book. The second was like, this is getting really weird and really stupid really fast.

J: Yeah, they also stopped paying attention to my favorite part of—

K: which is the Bearkillers?

J: Yeah

K: Which is half the book is dedicated to this group and they're just kind of a side note now

J: And they stay a side note for the rest of the book. They're literally just that house they took over. That's all of their lands

K: wow

J: They never became a great empire like Mackenzie's or the Portland Protection Association or, there's even a group called the McDougalls or the McDonalds or something and they're Scottish and they show up and they're part of the Mackenzies and they're just kind of thrown in there in like book 8. There's some weird stuff. The Lakota are my favorite. It's not just Native Americans, it's like everybody but they all speak or at least try to speak Lakota and they live like the old Souix did but mixed with Mongolian yurts. It's pretty funny. I like world building a lot and I like the kind of worlds that fantasy worlds can create. It's not normally my comfort zone, but roleplaying has given me a lot to it. I think D&D, after second edition, stopped feeling like fantasy to me. In a way the books are written and in the pictures especially. It was like D&D 3rd and 4th edition... they didn't look high fantasy to me. That whole dungeon punk aesthetic didn't really do it for me. Now, the book I read for today, holy shit, that's awesome.

K: 4th edition looks almost exactly like what the World of Warcraft 2nd expansion tasted like. It's got the same look, vibe, vibrance, and I think that's what really kept me away from 4th edition. That and the fact that it wasn't roleplaying, it was glorified miniatures.

J: Yeah, nowhere near as good as Song of Blades and Heroes. Frankly. And I agree with you, that's why I'm so blown away by 5th Edition. I mean, 5th edition is basically everything I want in a fantasy game.

K: 5th edition is pretty much just fixing their mistakes.

J: Yeah, I mean, when I think fantasy roleplaying, if you were going to say "Hey Joe, I want to play a fantasy roleplaying game" the first games that come into my head are, not necessarily in this order, D&D 5th Edition, Castles & Crusades, Dungeon Crawl Classics. Those are my 3. I love the gonzone of DCC. That has always been my thing. I love that gonzo, crazy, random table, nutsy bullshit. But I love D&D and Castles and Crusades because that feels like D&D to me. There's not a whole lot of crap to keep track of. You roll your dice when you need to and you tell a cool, epic story Beowulf style, which is what I want to do. Which is why I backed that kickstarter they did for the new Codexes. So, I've already got Codex Celtarum, which we've talked about on the show, Codex Noridca which we've talked about on the show, and then I did a Kickstarter a few months ago where, I've already gotten 2 of them. I've gotten Codex Germania, which is honestly a lot like Codex Noridca, and then Codex Slavorum which is the old, pre-Christian Slavs, that one is really cool. I haven't read it all yet. The next one coming is Codex Classicum which is all Greek and Roman. So I read them and what they are is fantasy versions... they're not historical. Even though the map looks almost the same, they are mythic versions of those cultures. I would play any of those games in a heart beat right now. You could be Celts, Norsemen, Germans, Slavs, or Romans and Greeks. I'm really looking forward to the Romans and Greeks one to see what kind of urban fantasy they can pull out of that. Or if he does what he normally does and stays the hell away from cities. Because the German peoples had some and Codex Germania ignores them. So, I'm not really sure how he, because it's one author for all 5 of them, I'm not really sure how he's going to do Classicum, but I know so far what I've read of Slavorum and I've read Germanium and I've read Nordica and Celtarum, that would be one hell of a cool game. Some of the shit they've put from the epic mythic poetry from those cultures is just fantastic. Like, Codex Nordica we could easily play Vikings and we could still use names and places from our world just to give us grounding and then go over into the new world and have it full of skraelings and dragons and shit.

K: That would be pretty cool.

J: or go into the wilds of the north and deal with the Saami peoples. A lot of cool shit going on. Those are the kinds of grittier, not low magic, but... The thing I don't like about fantasy is when magic is everywhere. That's what I don't like about D&D in general. 3rd edition is the one that really pops to mind. But in D&D there's like fucking magic everywhere. Magic is just oozing out of everything. I like it better if magic is just the players who are wizards are like the only wizards. That's the kind of stuff I like.

K: Yeah, but that hinders the—I mean 3rd edition isn't magic pouring out of every orifice

J: Eberron is not magic pouring out of every orifice?

K: Dude, 2nd edition is magic pouring out of every orifice. Half the enemies can't be hurt unless you have a +1 to anything

J: that's true. Then I look at 2 of my favorite settings which are Al-Qadim and Spelljammer which are oozing magic from everywhere, so yeah, you're right. I think it's just a D&D thing, not an edition thing

K: Well, the problem with D&D is D&D, in order to get better, because you grow in level and your stats never increase, and because of that you have to augment your character somehow. You know, you can keep getting sharper swords but they only get so sharp

J: That d8 is only going to stay a d8.

K: I mean, Master Craft is what, D8 +1 for everything? And that's not even magic yet

J: I just bought the new book for Dark Albion, remember when I talked about Dark Albion?

K: Yeah

J: I just bought the supplement that came out for it, Cults of Chaos and in that there are a bunch of creatures that you have to hit with +0 weapons. And +0 weapons are like a big deal in that setting. That's a very low magic setting. In that one, the perfect example of magic swords in Dark Albion are the Valyrian Steel swords in Song of Ice and Fire

K: The Game of Thrones Universe

J: Yeah how they passed them down from generation to generation, those are obviously +1 swords. That's what those are. Those are +1 swords. And that's how they work in Dark Albion

K: So you kill white walkers

J: Well there aren't really white walkers in that setting, although it's funny. The one thing that was kind of skipped in Dark Albion, which I was disappointed by. And I know it's because the guy who wrote it obviously knows a lot about War of the Roses England, you know the mid- 15th Century England. If he had looked into England a couple hundred years before in the old Domesday book... the funniest thing about that, I had to read that for a medieval English class, or at least parts of it, and like every other page they talk about dead people getting up and beating the hell out of people in their village and then disappearing. They're called Revenants and they say there's just dead people wandering around everywhere in early medieval England, or in dark ages England. They're just everywhere.

K: yeah, that's normal

J: I know, it's crazy and I was like man, where are the revenants that would be so cool. Like if I were to run Codex Nordica with C&C, there's going to be Draugr. There's going to be vengeful ghosts. That shit's cool

K: Just like family reunions.

J: That shit's cool. That's what I want. I like fantasy settings where—I think this is probably because I read Lovecraft too early in my life—but, to me, there's always a good horror element, a very "What the fuck is going on here" element, to me, adds to a fantasy feeling. The weird, the odd, the unexpected. I like to take a world that is similar to ours, but just far enough away that the ghosts and the Ghoulies and the goblins don't appear out of place. But then the Dragon shows up and that's all fucking crazy. Am I not making sense, because you're looking at me like I'm not making sense.

K: You're not making sense to me You're trying to make a point, and you try and reinforce said point but instead you're not reinforcing it. You're like I want a tinge of the odd, I want the undead, the ghosts, the ghouls, the goblins, but then I want this crazy thing to happen like a dragon shows up... it's like that's just fantasy, that's not crazy. What it sounds like to me, for you, is what you want your fantasy to be is you want goblins, trolls, orcs, elves, and then all of the sudden the Great Old One wakes up and everyone goes insane.

J: Or can. You have to stop the Great Old One

K: I think a lot of your eccentrics is what you want in all of your fantasy. You can't seem to enjoy any setting that's made that doesn't have something fucked up about it.

J: No, I agree. When I think about it, my two least favorite settings in D&D are Greyhawk and Forgotten Realms

K: You just said, all good fantasy has a tinge of horror

J: Well, it can have a tinge of horror

K: No, to you, all great fantasy has a tinge of horror. Now, is it a tinge of horror needs to be there because horror is just your normal setting?

J: Yeah, I think so. Also, the more we talk about this, the more you allow me to prattle on, the more I am starting to get a sinking feeling that I have no idea what fantasy is
[laughing]

K: I think the problem is that you exposed yourself to too much shit that is not in the realm of reality so it's all technically fantasy. You're like, yep this is normal, playing D&D? We need the screaming anus goblins. That's normal.

J: Elves, Orcs, Trolls? Check, check, check. That's all normal. Time for the Old Ones. And a laser gun, and a robot.

K: I think your fantasy, instead of it being a book on a shelf, is just an umbrella that your putting everything under.

J: Yeah it does seem that way. I was thinking, when you first said "You're trying to make a point and I don't know what your point is" all I could think of is the next thing he's going to say is "Dude, fantasy's a great big tent, just bring it all in. It's all good. Now, I'm starting to realize, I think I'm missing the fucking point.

K: Fantasy, as a word, means not real. Fantasy, as a genre, when including other genres such as science fictions and westerns, those are on the same fantasy bookshelf, but fantasy itself, like Epic Fantasy is traditionally like Knights, knaves, dragons, treasure, princesses, shit like that. And I think you can't separate that from anything else in your mind

J: No, I don't think so. I think I agree with you, I don't think I'm very good at that genre. I don't think I've read enough in that genre.

K: I think you are too busy trying to be intergalactic squid ninjas while we're all making level 10 dwarf warriors

J: I am, no I am. I'm 100% with you there. I think I'm completely lost in this conversation. Normally, when we come up with a topic I know what the fuck I'm talking about. This time I don't. I have no idea what I'm talking about

K: I would love to read you all of the texts that Joe sent me about what this conversation should be about. It was something along the lines of “ I don’t know as much as you, but I’ll be able to hold my own.”

J: No, I can’t... This is pretty obvious, I cannot.

K: Joe is just “yeah, I love my fantasy. My Mary Shelley and Laurell K. Hamilton, Dr. Von Frankenstein. They’re all there in Isengard.

J: In my mind, the fantasy map is the one that has like Hogwarts next to Narnia... have you seen that one where they put all of the fantasy worlds in one map? That’s apparently what’s going on in my brain. My version of fantasy is apparently the show Once Upon a Time, like the nexus of universes, that’s my fantasy.

K: That’s pretty accurate, except even they are better at it than you when you’re trying to describe...

J: They are. I think it’s because I don’t have a good grounding in the literature. I don’t. I mean, I’ve read Tolkien, I’ve read Howard, like I said I like Mercedes Lackey, those 3 authors extensively. I cannot think of another fantasy author that I’ve read that much of. That isn’t just fucking weird. I’ve read that Choice of the Cat stuff, and the SM Stirling, and the Harry Turtledove, I just have not read a lot of fantasy. It’s just not my bag I guess. But again, I’ve read a lot of classical literature. I mean, I feel like I should know what this shit is. I should know but I do not

K: I feel like you’ve been reading the Dungeons & Dragons books upside down for the last 20 years.

J: Probably, I remember the look on Jay’s face when I showed him my favorite picture in the DMG and he’s like “Which one is that” and it’s the woman with a jet pack shooting a laser gun into a tentacle beast in a medieval city. I was like “That’s D&D” And he’s like “I don’t even know what you’re talking about right now.” This is D&D right here. This is what it is.

K: I mean, for anyone else out there that feels the way that Joe does, it’s perfectly valid. I have the distinct feeling that when I am speaking words, Joe is just like... when is he going to stop making these noises?

J: No, I’m listening to you and I’m hearing you I really think there is –

K: Is there some kind of cognitive dissonance between what we’re saying?

J: There is, I think what I think fantasy is, is wrong. Fundamentally and completely, horribly wrong. I think I am truly, truly lost in talking about epic fantasy

K: I mean, I might just be narrowing it, but it seem like you’re just like “Ugh, I gotta shoot that can on that fence? Get the tank.”

J: That could be that you’re defining it much more narrowly than I am and I’m defining it broader. That’s super possible.

K: I mean, that’s exactly what it is. You’re sitting here and like for you a good epic fantasy is Gandalf helping dig up the Telltale Heart.

J: Yeah man. Here’s what I like. I like when my fantasy gets fucking weird. I like it when it starts off medieval fantasy... okay Mercedes Lackey, I Pay Thee Not in Gold. I love this fucking book. Starts off in a medieval city. The only fantasy part is that only women have magic, women are in

charge. Men are slaves, right. That's the beginning. A little kooky, not too kooky. Fantasy Amazon stuff. But then, they start traveling around the world and they end up in an area that's basically a coral reef but on land full of air jellyfish and giant floating sharks. And then they go to another place that's like a desert made of bugs or something. Throw a little China Mieville in there and now you know what a fantasy world looks like to me. To me, fantasy, in my head... this is why I think I'm defining it wrong. When you defined fantasy earlier in the conversation, it meant something. It meant like one specific thing. To me, fantasy means dream world under dream logic. It's like... I'm in a house and you go through into the kitchen and it's like, well now that I've taken my airplane to China, I'm going to get lost in this street because I don't speak the language. Perfect fantasy plotline right there. That's how it works in my head.

K: Jesus Christ.

J: The only real fantasy books that I've read that are under your definition would be the ones where it's modern humans appearing in one of those worlds.

K: And even then I don't feel like that's true fantasy.

J: I know, because it's a modern human, right.

K: Yeah...

J: That's the closest I usually get. I was going through my head and I was like "I've read D&D novels. Which D&D novels have I read?" One Dragonlance book that I hated. Wheel of Time that I fucking hated. Then I was like, well I still own a bunch. I own I Strahd, I own the Tribe of One series from Dark Sun, and I own a smattering of others set in the Spelljammer, Dark Sun, and Ravenloft worlds. Yeah, so I'm just not good at fantasy bro.

K: no..... nope.

J: like I was going to say, one of the things that I thought of before we started talking today, I wanted to bring up. I know fantasy, I've read all of these fantasy books. So I was thinking of 1632, you ever read that book?

K: No

J: It's a town in Virginia in the late 90s that is transported to the middle of Thuringia in 1632. It swaps places with Germany across space and time. I was like "That's a good fantasy book." And this was literally on the car to your house, and I was like... I don't think he'd count that. I don't think he'd count that one as a fantasy book

[laughing]

K: I don't know, I don't think that fits.

J: What about Conan, does Conan count?

K: Conan counts.

J: Okay. See when it comes to a pure fantasy experience...

K: Conan is a pulpy fantasy

J: Yeah, I like that low magic, gritty, pulpy stuff. Like the Abercrombie books I was telling you about. I don't think there's any magic in them. You know what, I did read an epic fantasy series not that long ago. It wasn't that weird. It's called the—

K: Starship of Phineas T Starbottom?

J: No, I wanted to say The Thousand Names but that's a different one. There's one book called Thousand Names which is a fantasy stuff with magic but there's also guns so it doesn't count because it's like Napoleonic. But there was another one I read about a false prophet and he comes from a tribe of people who live in this monastery in the middle of the Taiga, in the middle of nowhere and they never leave the monastery except to kidnap people from the woods and peel their faces off to learn exactly how humans work. One of them escapes the monastery, he's sent out to see if the world is still working, and he can manipulate anybody. There's no magic to it, he's just been trained from a young boy to understand what everybody's thinking just based on what they look like. But there is magic in the world, too. There's 4 magical schools that hide their secrets. This guy shows up, quickly becomes a prophet, and starts marching on the enemies of the kingdom he found himself in and then founds his own prophets army and they march. There's no guns or anything in it other than magic. One of the main parts of the second or 3rd book, one of the main characters is a wizard and he's the only one that's figured this guy out that he's just a master manipulator. He's not everyone's friend, he's just doing whatever the fuck he wants and he can just manipulate everybody with a glance. But he gives up and teaches the guy magic because there's more dark magic coming for them and it turns into this monster almost-battle with this monk-turned-prophet-turned almost world ending god man who then fights the darkness off and is killed and then the world is just a shattered husk of dark ages.

K: Sounds like the ending of the Elric books

J: Yes, Elric! Another book I kind of liked. I read some of them. I read Michael Moorcock. I read like one of his books. And I was like "That was okay, but not okay enough for me to read another one"

K: I read book 4 of the Elric Saga.

J: No, I have a great big collected one that I read. I think it's 2 or 3 books. And I read those when I was in high school so I don't remember much about them. But yes, in Elric the ending was similar to that. I think I like that lower fantasy stuff. I don't like magic being everywhere. Or I like the magic being incomprehensible.

K: I think I have a books series you'd like. I believe it's by Karen Miller (Note: It's actually The Magister Trilogy by CS Friedman). Magic is powered off of life force so in order to do magic you kill yourself and women that can do it are witches and they always kill themselves faster because they use it to heal people or do nice things. Then there's men that are wizards and they can just do it all of the time and the big twist is the main reason women can't be wizards like the men do is because when the men are dying, like their flame is extinguishing, they grab onto someone else's soul and then they cast their magic as their soul and kill them. So, the story follows the one women who's able to be selfish enough to steal another person's soul and cast it

J: See that sounds pretty interesting

K: I think you'd enjoy that.

J: I'm in the middle of a – I have kindle unlimited, I finally rented that because my wife was like "Do you know how much money we spend a year on books between the two of us?" And I was like "Well not as much as we used to" and she was like "No, no no, we don't buy as many books as we used to because we buy e-books" and she's like "We spent like \$2500 on e-books"

K: Jesus

J: And I was like “Holy shit.” Not everything’s on there, but I’m reading this book right now called *The Contractor*, I can’t remember the name of the author (Andrew Ball). It’s usually a book I would not read at all. So, It’s a 16 year old boy, immediately a strike against for me. I don’t like young protagonists. But, 16 year old kid, kind of a dickhead, is visited by a frogman who shows up and says “Hey, I’m an interdimensional being made of magic” and he’s like “I’m hallucinating, goodbye.” And he’s like “No, I will turn you into a wizard so you can fight these other interdimensional creatures that are making people literally disappear. They’re these creatures that eat sentience that show up on earth and they eat your soul until you cease to exist and you are literally forgotten by people. They’ve killed millions already.” And there are wizards on the planet earth who have listened to the interdimensional frog people and thought they were lying and so the frog people are creating what they call Contractors who kill the Vorid, as they’re called and then suck in their force and become more powerful. So, I don’t know if it’s SciFi or Fantasy, I only have a vague idea of what I’m reading, only that it’s really cool. Much cooler than I thought it would be.

K: Sounds pretty good.

J: Yeah, it is pretty good. So, throughout this entire conversation about fantasy, we’ve pretty much established that I don’t know what the hell I’m talking about. Is that the thrust of this?

K: Your definition is different than mine? Maybe different than the majority of the world, I don’t know.

J: Well, then let’s set this aside. What we’ll do is let’s ask our listeners. Dear listeners, TV land, what does fantasy mean to you? Can you give us some examples? Can you tell Joe what the fuck he’s talking about?

K: Is Kevin just wrong? Is Kevin just an asshole?

J: Is one of us wrong? Are both of us wrong? Are both of us right? What the fuck is going on? So, please, shoot us an e-mail, call us, do any of that shit that we do at the end of the show that we’ll do again later.

K: Just let us know. Can jet fuel melt steel beams?

Music Transition (41:43-42:30)

Kevin and Joe’s Favorite Game of the Week (42:31)

J: And it’s time to talk about favorite game of the week!

K: Are you excited?

J: I am super excited. It took me 2 weeks to read my book

K: Well, it’s a huge book so of course it did.

J: Yeah, we could do a whole show just on it. Now, you also reviewed a massive tome.

K: I did

J: And so did *The Dragon*, actually.

K: Everyone read a lot of pages to go into this favorite game of the week.

J: Yeah, and part of the reason I really wanted to get this one done is 1. I Promised Wolfgang Baur that I would do it and 2. I want to see how the setting has developed when we go to the Kobold Press both at Gen Con this year. So I'm going to go first, I'm excited

K: Alright

(43:13 – Joe's review starts)

J: So, I did a Kobold Press new setting called **Southlands: Adventures Beneath the Pitiless Sun**. This is the Pathfinder version. There are also 5e compatible versions. This thing is massive. It is 300 pages and a map, a poster-sized map of the continent. It is Midgard's Africa. The first 20 pages is literally just tying this setting to the Midgard setting. This is the other continent in Midgard. So, now you've done a lot of reading about Midgard

K: I have done all of the Midgard reading

J: Right. So I took this from you, I get Africa. I read it. There is so much stuff in this book. Each chapter describes a different section of the continent. The end of each chapter has specific scary or weird things happening around that part of the world, new spells, new magic items, new creatures, new prestige classes and class options. The basics of this is a massive continent, it's a world in its own right. It's bigger than most fantasy worlds that you'd encounter in a novel series or in a typical supplement. It's huge. The races that are mentioned in this book, there are major and minor races that live all over the continent. Humans, there are various human types that range from what are basically north African type Arabs and Bedouins, all the way down to Zulu. So, there's all of these kind of north, east, west, central and southern African types of humans. Then there are dwarves. The dwarves are pharaonic. They're basically like ancient Egyptian type dwarves. So there's both Ancient Egyptian type humans and Ancient Egyptian type dwarves. There are 5 brand new races that are major races depending on which part of the country you're in. In the first part of the book, Chapter 2 is Nuria Natal, and that's the Ancient Egypt part that's all around the Nuria river and it is basically half human and half Gnoll. So, Gnolls are the hyena men, they are one of the major races of the continent. As are Kijani, who are plant people, they're trying to become mammals, they're trying to become human basically but they are plant people who look very, very human who are escaping the big central rainforest in the middle of the continent that has become alive and is basically like a giant cancerous monster... I'll get to that in a minute. There's the Nkosi, who are the warelions. They look like lion/human hybrids. But they can all turn into regular lions, too. So, automatically, they're shape changers to start but they look like cat people. Then there's the Trollkin. The Trollkin, based on what I read, they function a lot like half-orcs, but they're races on their own. They're called Trollkin because they're based on other monsters that wander around the continent, but they breed true because they're their own races. They're not based on normal monsters either. There's the Trollkin, who are the fae-based trollkin, the zimwi-based Trollkin, the Eloko-based Trollkin and the Adze-based Trollkin. So they're all based on different creatures from pseudo-African myth. Now, the Minor races are Aasimar, which are, you know, they're Aasimar. The Heru who are the ravenfolk, basically bird people. The Jinnbourn, the Lizardfolk, Minotaurs, Tieflings, and Ramag. Ramag are weird humans that look kind of like slenderman but have hair that looks like giant, magic dreadlocks. They're also white people, which is strange because just about

everybody else is of African tone, whereas all of the pictures that are of Ramag are all white people. Oh and then there's the strangest race. Believe it or not there's something that's stranger than all of these and that's the Tosculi. They're wasp people who are basically like giant wasp termite men who live in giant cities that have taken over big hunks of the continent. So that is chapter 1. Chapter 2 is Nuria Natal which is like ancient Egypt except the gods are very real and show up randomly. Their greatest city is not the capital, it's the old capital Per-Bastet, which is literally Bastet city. It's run by the reborn queen goddess who is a lich mummy monster thing with an undead army under the pyramid just waiting to come out if anybody crosses her, and then Bastet who basically just shows up randomly and talks to people. So the goddess, Bastet, walks around the city all the time. You can actually run into the goddess without a problem. The city, like all of the Nuria Natal cities, per-Bastet is about half human and Gnoll and then the other half is everybody else. Chapter 3 is the Dominion of the Wind Lords. In the northwestern corner of the continent, there's this haunted desert that had been destroyed long ago by dragons, so there was a big war amongst dragons that completely destroyed this chunk of the continent. It used to be a great civilization, it's all gone now. It's just a haunted desert. It's controlled by 3 super powerful wind spirits, the aforementioned Wind Lords. The theme I get from reading that part, and hopefully no one will correct me, is it is a nightmare version of 1001 Arabian Nights. So it's like a twisted 1001 Arabian Nights type thing. There's an undead city in there that people don't want to go to. It's in the perils section, like you stay the hell away from it. A lot of the nomads in both Nuria Natal and in the Dominion of Wind Lords, they sail around on sand ships. So there's actually like sand skiffs that can go through the great deserts. Then there's a lot of nomads that wander through both areas. My favorite group of nomads is a gigantic, city block sized camel known as The Restless Prophet that just wanders around the Dominion of the Wind Lords with a city on his back. Chapter 4 is called the High Jungles, so this is your Congo type place. This jungle is incredibly verdant because there's a hunk of Yggdrasil, the world tree, that's poking through the sky above it. There's this massive waterfall in the center of the jungle that pours out of a different reality. This jungle is known as Kush, it used to be a kingdom but this human wizard war turned it into a living thing and a demon creature known as the Green Walker popped up and it is an island-sized or large city-sized jungle cancer tumor thing with six legs that wanders around. They were never able to kill it but they were able to slow time around it so that it literally just stands in the center of the jungle, forcing the jungle to become more and more cancerous and rampant and full of life. The city of Kush, built on mile-high trees there is full of dark wizards who are trying to keep that darkness out of themselves by turning to even darker magic. Chapter 5 is about the dwarves. The Green Walker, when it came into the world, destroyed the mountain that all the dwarves lived in, like 500 years ago, 1000 years ago. They instead fled to the mountains around it. There's a couple of dwarven cities and then some human parts in these dwarven areas. The big dwarven kingdom is Sebbek Sobor and they made a pact with a local group called the Narumbecki who are the the Zulus, basically Zulu humans whose primary enemy is basically the Green Walker and the Jungle. They're trying to keep it out of their Savannah and so they fight the creatures that come out of it using the master craft stuff that comes out of the dwarven city. There's also Morreg which is a weird kingdom of people

obsessed with spying on themselves and the rest of the world. Spying, scrying, obsessed with knowledge. They carved their cities out of these giant rocks in the foothills of the mountains and now are an insular peoples obsessed with knowing everything. Then there's a human city-state called Lignas that reminds me a lot of the historical Congolese empires that rose out of central Africa in the 9th and 12th centuries except it's full of people who are worshipping snakes and snake monsters. Chapter 6 is the Corsair Coast. Think, for you historians out there, think post-Muslim expansion Africa, so like Zanzibar but full of barbary pirates. The Spice Coast is a kind of Zanzibari Sultanate of plantations where people use slaves to get spices to basically send all over the planet. The islands off the coast are completely lawless except for a few of the larger islands are controlled by a sultanate and by a pirate city called Mhalmet, the sultanate of Shibai. There's also areas on the Corsair Coast, there's one place called Kesara which is Kingdom of the Saffron Rajah and it's like a weird Indian influence type place run by a rakhasa tiger demon and then a lion man kingdom called Omphaya and then a massai kingdom called Terrotu. So these are Massai, the real tall guys that wear the red robes and have the big tall spears, they're called the Terrotu in this game and they move around with these herds of what are called Ankole which are gigantic cows, like they're twice the size of cows, they're almost the size of elephants with huge horns. Throughout the whole center of the continent is, Chapter 7, the Abandoned Lands. Which is a shattered land destroyed by a foul magic from the fall of a titan empire that had lived there. The Ramag live here as well as the Tosculi and then human migrants kind of wander around too. The Ramag have a few little cities. There's a big lake, basically like Lake Tanganyika, called Lake Debari and in that lake, which is big enough that you can't see one shore from the other, like the Great Lakes. It's huge. There's a human city in it that's made out of boats that's been there forever and they only make new boats from people that come to the shore and give them—it's a taboo to ever touch solid ground. They say they're protecting the world from something underneath them in the lake. The weirdest thing about the abandoned lands and the reason the Tosculi and the Ramag and this one city are the only things in there is because magic is all fucked up in the abandoned lands because of the Titans war. If you're in the abandoned lands, every time you cast a spell there's a 10% chance you roll on the primal magic chart. If you're near a monolith, it's a 50% chance and if you're near a ley line it's a 40% chance.

K: Jesus

J: Yeah, so shit can get weird real fast. Chapter 8 is the second to last chapter of the book which is the Southern Fringe which is really just like the southern part. There's a minotaur kingdom down there that used to be part of a bigger minotaur kingdom way to the north as well as savage Trollkin tribes in the bush. They're the ones that act like the evil Zulus. Also in this area is Zanskar, which is like Madagascar but run by a kind of sultanate Zanzibari thing that is very similar to the Corsair Coast. The other thing that's in the southern fringe is a group of lizard men who worship the world serpent of Midgard and they believe that they are the incarnation of the world serpent to help usher in the end of the world. So they're an evil lizard man kingdom bent on destroying the planet. There are also, by the way, dinosaurs in that jungle, because of course there are.

K: Watch out David Ike, they escaped the moon

J: Yeah, and then at the end of the book is Chapter 9 which is the Gods and Cults. It goes through every single culture and lists their Gods, their culture, the domains for their magic, all that stuff. This book is fucking massive. It's huge, it's heavy, it's also awesome. I would play the hell out of that setting. And you can come from anywhere in Midgard.

K: Which is really cool.

J: Yeah, they actually talk about which parts of them touch. Obviously the Spice Coast has a lot of contact with people from Midgard and things like that, things of that nature. There's a lot of cool stuff, and like I said, new magic, new spells, new magic items, new prestige classes, new monsters, all sorts of crazy shit going on. It's huge. So Southlands, Kobold Press. Check that shit out.

(56:46—Kevin's Review Starts)

K: Well, in the same vein and to keep copaceticism with epic fantasy, I decided to re-look at, or look at again... reexamine? Reexamine **13th Age**. 13th Age was reviewed by Nicky, I believe, earlier, and so chances are you've heard that episode and you still wish I was Nicky.

Unfortunately that's not going to happen. So, I won't go over exactly everything that 13th Age is, I'm just going to touch on what makes 13th Age unique. What I feel deserves a greater looking at. Outside of the fact that it's another D20 game and there's classes that you know and there's magic that you know. There's also a lot of streamlined good ideas like the escalation die. The escalation die, the whole premise of it is every time a turn happens, the dice kicks up a notch and then everyone adds the escalation die to their damage or their attack. Or you'll subtract it depending on what kind of buffs or debuffs are in the game. So, it can essentially make combat go from "Alright, I'm a rogue, d4, d4, d4, d4" to d4+1, d4+2, and all of the sudden that d4 is now doing d10 worth of damage verses standard little piddly stuff. It's there to speed things along, and I feel that's a great way to handle d20 combat which we've all been doing for the last like 40 years and it's kind of stale. But also, the one thing that I think is probably the most roleplaying innovative thing to hit a d20 system in the last 30 years is probably the One Unique Thing. Your One Unique Thing is something about you that fuels your imagination, your story, and is directly unique to your character. No one else in the world will have the exact same unique thing as you. Some of you go "That's going to be hard, that's a lot of pressure." Don't worry. If you don't want to think of it, there's plenty of examples in the book. There's also, believe it or not, a Google + group that lists all of their One Unique Things that people think are good. I learned of the funniest one unique thing ever from there. The greatest one, in my opinion, is "No matter what I do, every loaf of bread I bake is cursed." It talks about how they change up the recipe and they feel compelled, not magically compelled, they just want to bake a non-cursed loaf of bread. Your One Unique Thing can change over time because as it resolves you get something new or you become new at this, blah blah blah. In a world of one-handed demon slaying paladins, and reincarnated god creatures, you've got this person who wants to bake cursed bread. I felt that was just perfectly funny.

J: Yeah, that perfectly describes roleplaying groups.

K: It really does, and I feel like at the end of the day you can keep playing Generic D20 System Insert-Name-Here, but 13th Age is a really fresh and unique look. Even though it came out in like 2013.

J: I'm thinking, when our group—we'll talk about it a little more during currently playing, I was actually thinking of running a 13th Age game next. I want to play a fantasy game, and I know not everybody has the same taste as me so I think I need to move down a little. I was either going to snag one of the 13th Age books we have and run that campaign or build one. I was thinking about 13th Age because I've heard nothing but good things.

K: Well the more I examine it, the more and more content that comes out for it and the more and more content I read for it, I'm pretty sure the first 13th Age book that I in depth read was the Bestiary. Or it was like the 7 true ways. It was one of those two. I still have them and I'm never getting rid of them because they're really well done and they had really good ideas, really neat things and it's taking something old and making it new again.

J: Yeah, I mean I've been exposed to a lot more 13th Age through your reviews and it's making me want to play it a lot.

K: And I'm not just saying like, oh man I really want to check this out. Originally when I heard of 13th Age I was like "That sounds really cool," and upon investigating it, before I was on the show, I was like "Nah, that doesn't seem that great, not a big enough change" Then becoming a part of the show and having to read the books and all of the content, at first I was very reticent, I didn't want to read these books. I thought it was just going to be another stupid D20 clone or another "look at me trying to be this or trying to be that" I didn't want to read that, I wanted to read something new and exciting, but then reading all of the 13th Age stuff that came out, it's really good.

J: The Stone Thief

K: The Stone Thief is such a good campaign

J: I know

K: Even if you hate the system and you don't want to have a One Unique Thing or you don't want an escalation die or you don't want—just do yourself a favor and steal the settings and campaigns because it all goes together at the end of the day. It's Legos to Mega Blocks over here

J: I mean it's still pretty compatible with normal D20 stuff, right?

K: There's no harsh difference. It all reads the same. There might be a different abbreviation somewhere for something. But I mean at the end of the day it's gaming and you should really do yourself a favor and your wallet the disservice of picking up 13th Age

J: Yeah, like I said, I've been wanting to play it lately and I think I'm going to have to give the book another whirl because I have it. I even have the cool, special escalation dice.

K: Oh really?

J: Mhmm

K: that's cool. But yeah, give 13th Age a chance. It's fantasy, it's real fantasy. Joe can't even argue with me on this.

J: No, maybe I should reread it, because lately I've been reading a lot of Dungeon Crawl Classics and that shit's just weird. I am, I'm going to start reading 13th Age. That's going to be my pre-

Gen Con book. I think I want to run that and I know there's new shit coming out for it. Pelgrane pretty much always knocks it right out of the park. Pelgrane Press is a fantastic company. So is Kobold.

K: You know, we review a lot of stuff from them and I have to say, it's because they love us and want us to review their stuff, they don't pay us to say nice things about their stuff. The stuff that we get that we don't like, we just don't review.

J: Right. And I don't think I've gotten anything from either company that I haven't reviewed because I didn't like it.

K: I have reviewed absolutely everything that I have gotten from Kobold and Pelgrane.

J: I still have one or two things from Pelgrane I'd like to talk about. Accretion Disc comes to mind and some other stuff, but we will get to them. I love everything that both of them have put out. So what's the Dragon got for us?

(1:04:50 – The House Dragon Review)

K: He's wearing a pirate hat? And pointing to himself.

J: Give me that book... just give me the damn book. What have you got? **Pirates and Dragons** by Cakebread & Walton

K: He's so punny

J: Yeah, well... whatever. So, Pirates and Dragons, I think it's a really cool game.

K: From what I've heard about it and what I've seen, it is really cool sounding.

J: So the first conceit in the game is that you have to be a pirate. That's it. You're a pirate on a pirate ship with a pirate crew. In fact, part of character creation is you build your own ship because you are a pirate on a pirate ship. Done. In the magical dragon Caribbean.

K: Much like being a real pirate.

J: Pirates sail around these Dragon Isles searching for treasure and adventure and they don't get along with dragons because both of them want gold.

K: They both fight all the time

J: That's right. The Islands are in the Adalantic Ocean and they are thought to be the remains of an ancient civilization called Adalantas

K: No!

J: Yeah, and they're full of treasure and craziness and natives and dragons. Some of the islands have just native islanders, some have just dragons and their undead slaves, some have a mixture of both. The Islanders usually worship the dragons. So, it's like King Kong meets Pirates of the Caribbean. I really like the setting a lot, as derivative as it is. It's derivative from the Golden Age of Piracy like 7th Sea is but it doesn't pay any attention to Uropa at all. Now, the only time Uropa is mentioned is if you're from one of the countries there which are Esbania, Gaule, Albion, and Batavia. So you can come from either Uropa or one of the colonies on the Dragon Isles and you can, I think, be a Native as long as you're a pirate. You all get specific things you can do on the ship and you build your ship and that's a whole part of it. Now, system wise, there's a couple things that are cool in the system. So it uses what's called the renaissance system which was originally for Clockwork and Chivalry. It uses percentiles and you want to roll low. You get doubloons if you ever roll doubles on the dice. Doubloons are a system where you put them in

front of you and you flip them over when you use them, they've got to be 2 sided, and in the pot is one doubloon with a black sticker on it or a black mark or some kind and when you flip that one, the opposite of what the doubloons do happens to you

K: That sounds bad

J: Yeah. So the things you use doubloons for, they're basically like drama dice or fate points. You can get an automatic success, reroll and take the best of two, automatic win of an opposed roll, maximum damage, ignore an opponent's armour on an attack, get an extra attack, move or defense in combat round, turn normal wound into just a flesh wound, serious wound into normal wound, avoid death, lose a level of fatigue, find a useful item during combat, cancel enemy character's doubloons. The defense thing is pretty cool. In combat, you get a movement action, an attack action and a reaction. You always get to react in the game to defend yourself.

K: Nice

J: I think you only get one, I don't remember off hand if you get more than one, but you always get the one. But system wise, the system is pretty cool. There are also insect people on the islands too, kind of hidden.

K: Nice

J: So, the best thing about this book is, like I said, it's like Pirates of the Caribbean with Dragons and a little bit of King Kong mixed in. So you can do a whole lot of really cool stuff. There's a lot of pirate stuff and ships and exploration and gathering treasure and it is awesome. And that's Pirates and Dragons by Cakebread & Walton. Link in the Show notes.

K: Excellent

J: Mhm

K: Well now I believe it is time for your favorite setting.

Music Transition— 1:08:58

Currently Playing – 1:09:48

K: And we're back! With currently play-ing

J: I almost said favorite game of the week... again. It was like right up to my tongue, did you see me bite my tongue

K: Favorite game of the week, favorite ga—Ahhh! [yelling]

J: I loved favorite game of the week so much this week, so now we have to talk about currently playing. So our group has basically taken hiatus on weekly gaming so we've been getting together to play minis games with whichever remnants show up.

K: So we've played ZynVaded, we've played Two Hour Wargames Zombie

J: **All Things Zombie, ZynVaded and Song of Blades and Heroes.** I've enjoyed all 3 of them very thoroughly. It's very fun to play, I mean you and I are going to be at the ZynVaded booth this year

K: It's true, with special new shirts.

J: Yep, yep. And I'm involved. So I'll be at the booth, I don't have the booth number

K: I think it's somewhere, like 1946 or something. Something funny

J: We're gonna post it on our facebook group so that people know where we are.

K: Oh you guys wanna come visit us, like all 4 of you?

J: Yeah, anybody who wants to can come visit us, we'll put the booth number on the shownotes. We're all going to be working at least one shift there. I'm also running 2 games at Gen Con

K: There you go

J: I'm running **Apocalypse Prevention Inc.** by Third Eye Games, friend of the show. I'm also running **Low Life** again because that was awesome. I don't know what scenario I'm running for either of them I think I could run Low Life off the cuff.

K: I'm pretty sure you make a Low Life every time you shit in the toilet.

J: I do, that's called a Pile.

K: You're scrying your next game.

J: Yeah just picking it apart, like these corn are combats.

K: The corns are the boats up to Pile Isle.

J: Yeah, so I'm ready for Low Life. When it comes to the games we've actually played, I got to run ZynVaded with Josh He had never played it before. He dug it, even though he wasn't used to minis games and so didn't pay any attention to his objective and lost horribly.

K: Objectives are relative

J: Amanda and I played Song of Blades and Heroes, she had never played that before. We ended up rolling the worst scenario which is just kill each other.

K: Just murder each other.

J: I won by the skin of my teeth. I think she could have beaten me. She made two monster mistakes in the game.

K: Bear in mind she has never played a miniatures game before in her life

J: Well that's why I wasn't about to elucidate what mistakes she made and be like Took that bitch down, boom shakalaka! I'm not going to do that. I won fair and square because had she not made those two mistakes she would have just wiped the floor with me because I'm very bad at miniatures games. I've played them a lot. And then Josh played Doug and Doug did what he always does during minis games which is get real mad when the dice don't roll his way. It's adorable. Josh had a great time. So next Monday we'll probably be playing again or playing board games. We might play Castle Ravenloft.

K: We might, finally, after having it since Christmas

J: Right. Might play that. Haven't decided. Then a couple weeks ago we played All Things Zombie and the game beat the hell out of us.

K: Yeah

J: We didn't make it very far down the board at all

K: The church burst into flames, killed Amanda and Curbis climbed into a building and got shot by survivors.

J: That's right they shot me too. Wasn't it just you at the end and you were just like "Bye!"

K: No, I think we were like "Should we go up there, nah let's just leave." And we just ended the game.

J: Yeah, it was bad. I do love that game so much. We should play it again after I look up the rules for fire again to make sure I did that right because that seemed really stupid

K: Oh where the fire fucking sucker punches you

J: Yeah it fights really stupid

K: Roll melee, roll melee for fire. Oh the fire beat you with a jab, you're on the ground, you're dead.

J: Yeah that seemed dumb. I'll reread the rules and make sure I did that right. Other than that, currently playing has been rather sparse lately but we're going to change that and then after Gen Con we're going to have all sorts of shit to try out.

K: I've been playing Pokemon Go, Joe hasn't because Joe's old.

J: Yes, I haven't played it. I think it's a great game, I just haven't played it.

K: His son loves it

J: I'm sure he does. I saw that Amanda had my son label her Pokemon, that was pretty funny

K: He named my Scyther "Knife Hands" just "haha knife hands..."

J: And there's a part of the game where you pop bubbles or something

K: You hit pokestops, you spin them and then stuff comes out as bubbles and you can poke them

J: Yeah Pokemon Go is pretty much taking over the world. I've been playing Steam games and I downloaded Kick Ass Commandos. The Demo worked, I liked it, I bought it and it won't run. It just won't even start which is bullshit. It's Linux so, because my computer died and it's a long complicated story, I just installed Linux so I could have the internet and I tried to play a game on it and I went to the forums like "It's not starting on Ubuntu 16" and the forums are all like "Here's all of the gobbledygook you have to put into the thing and see if it works" and I was like "Aint nobody got time for that" so then I downloaded another game that actually works.

K: Welp that's easy.

J: That's just \$6 I flushed down the toilet.

K: I have been playing on a private WoW server called Dalaran-WoW. It's free, it's based in Europe so that's where most of our listeners are. Your ping will be infinitely better than mine. And yeah, our lives are sad and hollow.

J: Actually I did see you on Steam, because we're friends on Steam, and I saw that out downloaded Salty—

K: Salt of the Earth or salty something

J: It's some Pirate... yeah what is it

K: It's a Metroidvania style game, it's 2D. It's essentially Metroidvania meets Dark Souls

J: Yeah I want a Metroidvania game

K: you don't want this one

J: No I can't run it

K: Well you wouldn't want to because it's one of those "learn to dodge everything or your dead" games

J: Ghosts and Goblins

K: Yeah except more infuriating. I made the mistake of being like no, fuck magic, I don't need magic and then the first boss you encounter is like "use magic to defeat this boss" and it's like "Well let's do this... I almost beat him, I was one hit away from killing him, never playing this game again."

J: Yeah I saw you hadn't played it much. I'm looking for a good Metroidvania game. I think that's my next purchase.

K: I've got a couple of them

J: They're actually one of my favorite types. They only run on my computer if their graphics aren't too bad.

K: I believe the one you would enjoy is UnEpic

J: Oh yeah I'll try that. Alright, so that's it for currently playing. Next time we talk to you will be from Gen Con

K: Gen Con 2016, record breaking attendance...

J:... again. It should be awesome I'm looking forward to it. I'll look forward to it more now that I know that everything's resolved and I'll be there the whole time

K: I'm excited for it too because now I don't have to worry about like... cars.

J: yep, we're good to go now. So those of you in TV land, if there's anything at Gen Con that you want us to check out... well if this comes out before Gen Con and there's anything you want us to check out, e-mail us, facebook us, tweet us, call us... yeah!

K: Yeah!

J: Bye!

1:17:16-1:18:30 – Exit Music

1:17:25 – Credits

K: 2 GMs 1 Mic is a 3 Die Stunt Production hosted by me, Kevin who is very sick of Joe's Anus. Co-Hosted by Joe who's anus is leaking. Edited by Jay Dehlinger who's anus is probably in normal repair if not better than most. The Intro Song is Roll the Dice, Make My Day by The Mustard Men (Stick Jones Remix). Transcripts by Amanda, who has no anus because she's a woman and nothing but sunshine and rainbows happen there.