

# Drama: Soap Opera Sourcebook



By David Caffee

## Avalon Games



# OGL

3.5 SYSTEM COMPATIBLE

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Version 1.0, 2010

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# Drama: Soap Opera Sourcebook

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## Introduction

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Drama is your guide to all things overemotional and melodramatic. This book will provide players and GMs with all the tools they need to create stories centered on the personal lives of the PCs. Whether the characters are international demon hunters or backstabbing members of wealthy family, the personal interactions and emotional concerns of the people involved are what really matters.

Soap operas and melodramas have a long history as a form of entertainment. These art forms were once restricted to daytime entertainment for bored housewives. In recent times this audience has expanded and other types of entertainment have mimicked the various standards of the genre.

A great many television shows have adopted soap opera conventions in all their cheesy glory. Open ended plots, revolving storylines, and emotional outbursts are found in a great many other places than their original home in romantic serials.





# Chapter One: The Soap Opera Campaign

A soap opera campaign can be very different from your typical hack-and-slash or shoot'em up.

Just beating the bad guys and saving the day isn't enough if Derik and Samantha don't get back together or Kelly doesn't reconcile with her long lost twin. Whether the characters are hot shot lawyers, mystical druids, or privileged high school students, the campaign will center on who the characters are, not what they do. The breaks between primary action sequences are where the real nitty-gritty role playing is found. A soap opera plot can unfold anywhere, at any time. It doesn't matter if the characters are staving off an alien invasion or just hitting the beach, the opportunities for role playing will be just a plentiful.

Recreating the feel of a soap opera/drama in a role-playing game can be an interesting challenge. A soaps campaign is one where the core focus is on interpersonal conflict rather than physical challenges. In this type of game, emotional concerns often take precedence over material affairs such as acquiring more powerful weapons. Soaps touch on a wide variety of subjects such as family relationships, sexual entanglements, moral dilemmas, and psychological problems.

In a traditional campaign the player characters team up with each other against a common foe. In a soaps game, the characters will be part of several rapidly shifting alliances, alternately taking sides with and against each other. NPCs and minor characters fill out these alliances, each with its own agenda. The characters will certainly find themselves in competitive roles as they plot and scheme their way through the campaign. The shift from cooperative role-playing to internal strife can be a big hurdle for some groups to overcome, as many players will instinctively adopt an "us against the NPCs" attitude. It is helpful for the GM to encourage a love/hate relationship between the various characters, making sure to alternate attention between friends and foes as the game continues.

## The Setting

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The soap opera style campaign can be set just about anywhere. The genre tends toward wealthier, upscale settings but this is not always the case. Just as much drama can be found in the alleys of a rough neighborhood as the cul-de-sacs of a trendy suburb. Traditionally soap opera settings revolve around high tension activities like medicine, law, or big business. Sometimes the central setting will be the home of an extended family or a closely knit neighborhood. A location can almost become a character in its own right. A busy law office, haunted mansion, or beachfront hotel can have a personality that interacts with the environment almost as if it had a will of its own.

The setting of a soap opera/dramatic campaign has a major impact on both the characters and the plot. A drama set in a big city police precinct will have a greatly different feel to it than a drama set in a small rural town. By the same token, a campaign that revolves around an underfunded third-world clinic is going to be a far cry from one that takes place in a plush Los Angeles hospital. Each of these examples brings with it a set of unique circumstances that complicate the entire game. The doctors at a prestigious LA hospital would never even think about buying medical supplies from a dangerous black market dealer, while the doctors at a third world clinic don't have to worry about spurious lawsuits from celebrity patients.

A more modern trend in soap opera style plots has become blending in elements of the fantastic with the back story and personal drama. This mix creates soap operas that are set in space or take place in a world filled with demons and paranormal events. The fantasy/soap mix is a popular combination because it provides a little gratuitous violence to break up the melodrama. The fantasy elements can also be incorporated into the dramatic wrinkles of the plot. How will Cheyenne cope with the knowledge that she's really a robot double created by Dr. Reaker?

# Avalon Games



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Avalon Games is happy to offer tons of little games, that we like to call Mini-Games, and with over 30 titles, you are sure to find one or more games that will blow your mind. Little, however, does not mean lame. No, these are great gaming gems, just in small bite sized forms. Fun, fast and cheap, they are a great way to get some gaming fun into a short block of time. Have a look, you might be surprised at what you find.

### **Worlds of Wonder**

Worlds of Wonder is a fast, simple to play RPG system designed for use by advanced players who wish to create detailed characters without having to roll on endless charts and deal with endless rules.

After 30+ years of playing, running and designing games, be they RPG's or board games, we at Avalon have come to one conclusion. Its not the game's rules that make it enjoyable, but the people you play with. With that in mind, Worlds of Wonder takes the most important aspect of any RPG, the character creation, and tries to offer players, and their GM, the tools needed to make the time spent playing together well worth the time spent creating the characters.

### **Worlds of Wonder Expansions**

Want more Worlds of Wonder? Try one of the many expansions for the system. More monsters, foes, magic, skill sets and gaming stuff to keep you occupied for weeks, months, hell maybe for a lifetime. Ever expanding, the WoW system is made for gaming fun, so don't wait, have an adventure and enter Worlds of Wonder.

### **Arcana**

Arcana is generic world, designed for use with any Fantasy RPG System, and so the information presented here and in other Arcana expansions will of course be a bit vague as to stats, levels and powers. The intention is to give the GM and players a world rich in personality, history and depth, one where they can seek adventure, but use any RPG system they feel most conferrable with.

The basics of the game world are presented here in the core book, but as expansions are released, the complexity of the world will grow as more and more of its history, dangers and wonders are explored. When it is all said and done, Arcana will become a vast world of detailed and expansive depth, one where that you and your friends can full explore.

### **Game Geek**

Avalon's Monthly game magazine, inside you will find tons of gaming goodness, free games, add on materials for many of Avalon's titles, and a monthly sections dedicated to S&G, Battle Axe and Arcana. Great game stuff each and every month.

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# S & G Battle System

Avalon's premier game system the S&G battle system allows you to play skirmish level engagements, and do so with a fast, easy to learn system that also allows for endless expansions and genres. With S&G you can fight battles between fantasy based elves and orcs, or blast off into the cold hard future with space marines and aliens.

2

## Warlord Grom

2

4

<b>Strength</b>	3	
<b>Speed</b>	8 / 1	
<b>Movement</b>	4	
<b>Adrenal</b>	4	
<b>Will</b>	4	

**Health**

### Weapons and Armor

Weapons	As mod	Damage mod	Notes
Scimitar	-1	+1	-
Dagger	+0	-1	-

### Special Abilities

- 1. Savage Blow (Attack, 3)**  
 Grom can make a single savage attack, often killing a foe outright with a single blow of his deadly scimitar. You must declare this ability is being used before Attack Dice are rolled. On a single attack, Grom may add +2 Attack Dice to his total for that attack. (With no limit to the number of dice that can be rolled)
- 2. Command (Move, 2)**  
 Grom may use his loud demanding bellows to command other orcs near by. When this ability is used, Grom may activate any one orc character, who is within five squares. This activated character may perform one action. (Note that the character may still take their normal actions when their turn comes up.) Gram may perform this ability but once a turn.
- 3. Shatter Shield (Attack, 1)**  
 Grom often shatters shields and weapons with his mighty blows. Declare this ability before the Attack Dice are rolled. If Grom scores a hit, instead of doing any damage, he may shatter, and thus destroy, a foe's readied weapon or shield (Your choice.) If the foe does not have a readied weapon or shield, then this ability has no effect.

Magical items gain a save. Roll 1D6, and on a roll of 6+, the item resists the effect. Per five points of the item's cost, over the first five points, adds an extra +1 to the die roll is gained.

Spirit  
Tiger

Wolf

Night Stalker

Lamia

Major Glory

Sie

Gyea

Kir



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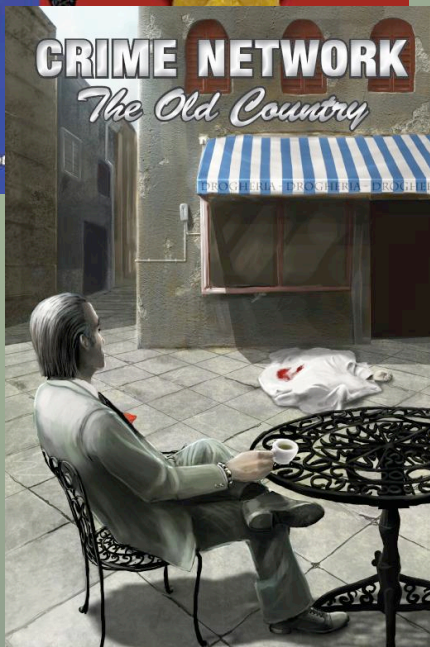
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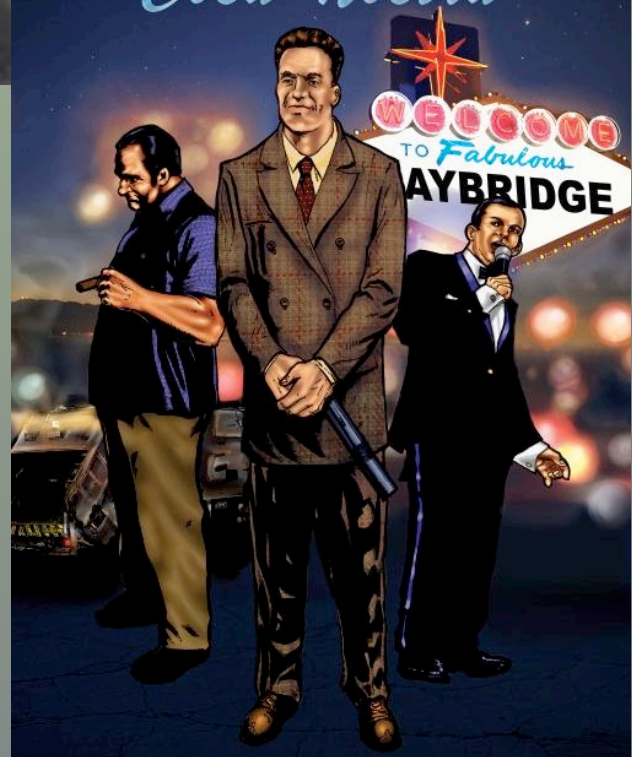
## CRIME NETWORK

The Old Country



## CRIME NETWORK

Cosa Nostra





Battle Axe is a simple to play tabletop system for skirmish level battles. Using cards instead of dice, you will find the game to be less luck based and much more tactical in nature. The rules and cards provide here will be enough to get you started, and new characters and rule expansions are on the way so you can continue to increase both the size and composition of your War Bands.

