

WELCOME TO SCRĪPTŪRA ŪNIVERSĀLIS

WHAT IS SCRĪPTŪRA ŪNIVERSĀLIS?

Scrīptūra Ūniversālis is a collaborative writing RPG based on classic Ergodic Literature like 'House of Leaves' and 'Life: A User's Manual'. Groups will meet once or twice a month and discuss the changes that were made to the story, and then each story will be traded to the next person on the list. That person will then have to add several paragraphs to the story, and edit several existing pages of the story, creating an ever-evolving story.

WHAT IS ERGODIC LITERATURE?

Think of ergodic literature as a "workout for the reader." While most books just ask you to move your eyes across a page and flip to the next one, ergodic texts require a lot more heavy lifting. The name actually comes from the Greek words for work (ergon) and path (hodos). Basically, you have to work to find your way through the story!

WHY SHOULD I DO THIS?

One of the hardest parts of writing is finding inspiration. This game pushes you to just take a look and start anywhere. Players are pushed to interject in the middle of another's scene, move scenes to other chapters, reorder pages in the book, edit out things, add things in, and generally be a collaborative menace to the other authors working with them.

Writing is just like any other mental skill. It's a muscle that needs to be flexed, and if you want to be a published author, this is the best way to start that!

WHAT DO I NEED TO PLAY?

All you need to play is this book, a way to write on a sheet of paper, and a standard set of dice.

Don't like writing by hand? Use a computer printer, and follow the spacing guidelines! Have a typewriter? Use it! Type your notes over existing text in pages and in the margins, use highlighters, redact some information (with a note at the bottom with WHY it's been redacted), etc. Colored markers, sketches, anything goes!

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

Rules are simple:

- Each 'turn', you must complete at least ONE round.
- You may take as many rounds as you want.
- Editing must not be malicious - (ie. don't redact all the character names on several pages, or draw a mustache on someone else's drawing. If it feels like a super dick move, don't do it!)

- Make sure you sign the bottom left of each page you do.
- It is YOUR responsibility to get the book to the next person in line. These are listed at the back of the book.
- When you are done a round, record how many pages and how many edits you made in the sheet at the back of the book.
- As a rule of thumb, don't kill off any character that you didn't make.
- You may reorganize anything in the book, interject and change any scene, and change the story in almost any way. The next person may ALSO change anything back.
- Don't tit for tat or take revenge for a change someone else made to your story.
- Feel free to add things like notes to the back of pages, just don't expect anyone to follow your orders.
- You may not edit these instructions. No rule lawyering. That means you.

Rounds work in the following way:

- Decide how much you feel you can write, then select either a D4, a D6, or a D8.
- Roll the dice, then add one to the number.
- At the back of the book, at the bottom of the list, add your name, and under the second column put the total from the roll (ie. if you rolled 3, write 4.) This is the number of pages you will need to write to complete the round.
- Roll either a d10 or d20, and record it in the third column. This is the number of edits you will need to make to existing text.
- When you are ready to write a page, roll a D6. This is the number of paragraphs (or min 5 sentence sections) that you will need to write.
- Repeat this until done.
- An edit changes the text in some way - draw a character, strike out and rewrite a sentence in the margins, move pages and change the last sentence so it makes sense, separate a page of text into two pages. Glue a leaf between paragraphs. Add an annotation with a [#]. Make a page look like an SCP document. Translate some text into Spanish. Make a fake news article, print it out, and clip it into the book. Add a journal page from some woman in Arkansas who is afraid that the harvest is going to fail, or a review from a book critic trying to make sense of the story. The world is your oyster here.

HOWEVER...

- You may not actually DESTROY a page.
- Finally, hand off to the next person, or do another round!

FAQ

- Q: Can I do something like rip a page in two and glue it to two different pages, and write in between?
- A: Yes, as long as it does not destroy someone else's work. (ie. they REMOVE an entire paragraph)
- Q: Can I substitute the paper for something more unusual?
- A: As long as it doesn't rot, and doesn't damage anything else, this is fine.
- Q: I can't get in touch with the next person in line! What do I do?!
- A: Get in touch with me through one of the following means, and I will sort it out:
- Discord: nymall
- Facebook: Nicholas Fagerlid
- Text: 250 706 9676
- Q: Can I use someone else's copywritten character?
- A: Please don't. Make it OCs only. Yes, I know, we all want to see Cloud Strife kick Darth Vader's ass, but this is not the forum for it. Same goes for fantasy places UNLESS they only appear in reference. (ie. it's fine to say "Dirty and wretched like the pits of Morghul" but not "We entered the tower of Izengard").
- Q: Do I have to use the same writing style as previous authors?
- A: Nope! Turn that romance into a Noir detective novel, then back to a Fantasy novel.
- Q: Do chapters have to lead into one another?
- A: Connect some stuff, but no! Add chapters and scenes as you are inspired, and connect things as they make sense. Or don't! You are one of the authors.
- Q: I have come across a malicious edit made by another author that destroys most a page or an entire paragraph! What do I do!
- A: Reach out to me, we'll meet and I'll have a look. I will have a talk with the person, and they may end up be removed from the game.
- Q: What happens when we're done?
- A: Is any work really done? The writer will get to keep the entire book as their keepsake, so we each get one!
- Q: I love this idea! Can I take this and use it?
- A: This work is licenced under Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International Licence. What this means is:

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- Q: Can I use this in my classroom?
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