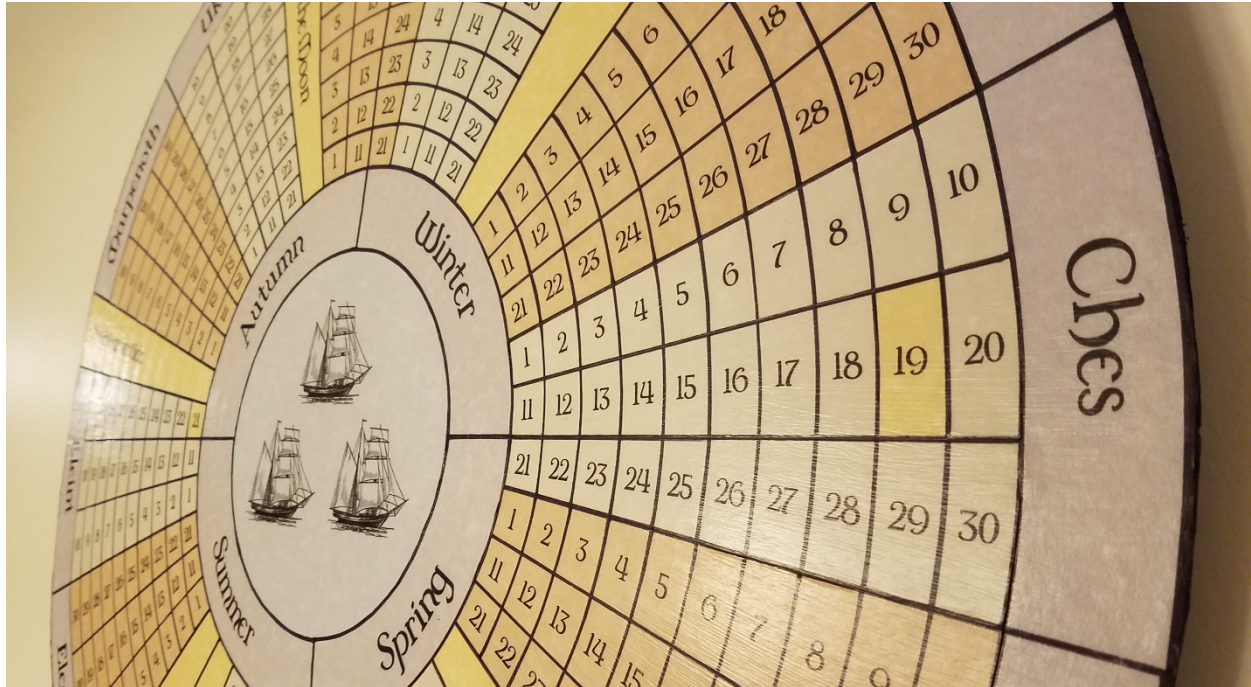


DRAGON HEIST REMIX - ADDENDUM: TIMELINES & STARTING THE CAMPAIGN

[by Justin Alexander – April 1st, 2020](#)



A question I've been not infrequently asked is what starting date I used when running [Dragon Heist](#) using the Alexandrian Remix. A quick summary:

- PCs arrive in the Yawning Portal on Ches 1st.
- Grand Opening of Trollskull Manor on Ches 20th.
- Fireball on Ches 22nd.
- Cassalanter kids get their souls sucked to Hell on Tarsakh 11th.

Some of this timeline, particularly as it pertains to the dual festival weeks of Fleetswake and Waukeentide (with the sacrificial feast thrown by the Cassalanters being a Feast of Leiruin on Tarsakh 10th), is laid out in [Part 4](#) of the Remix. Other dates are given on the master timeline in [Part 5](#). But I apparently never clearly laid out how these dates related to the events in Chapter 1 (rescuing Floon) and Chapter 2 (opening Trollskull Manor and joining factions).

Basically, there are four considerations here:

First, you want to give the PCs plenty of time to resolve the situation before the Cassalanter kids get their souls sucked, but not so much that they don't feel any pressure. It's not quite the *illusion* of pressure, but it's close: You want the players to look at the calendar and think, "We could run out of time!" without that just kind of accidentally happening despite their best efforts.

Second, you want the Grand Game stuff to play out across the full length of the festival season to give maximum opportunities for onsite surveillance. (Jarlaxle, Xanathar, and the Cassalanters all have opportunities tied to the festivals.)

For both of these reasons, you neither want the *fireball* (which triggers the PCs' meaningful involvement in the Grand Game) arriving too early (no time pressure; the onsite surveillance opportunities aren't available yet) nor too late (no time to save the kids, fewer surveillance opportunities).

However, the third consideration is that the section of the campaign you simultaneously have the least AND most control over is the refurbishing of Trollskull Manor (and simultaneous faction missions): Least because the players can theoretically fritter away a ton of time here in unpredictable ways. Most because once they're done frittering you can ultimately say, "Okay, and then it takes you [arbitrary amount of time] for the last of the repairs to be finished. Looks like you can open the joint on [arbitrary date]!"

This allows you almost infinite control over the date that the Grand Opening happens AS LONG AS the players don't run past your desired date. Starting the campaign on Ches 1st gives you a nearly three week lead time. In other words, you'll have plenty of time with a healthy margin of error.

But why do we want the Grand Opening on Ches 20th?

First, it allows the Grand Opening to be its own distinct day.

Second, you get a "normal" operating day on the 21st (which you can also use to cleanly establish the beginning of the back-to-back festival weeks; see [Addendum: The Twin Parades](#)) before you blow the windows out with a *fireball* on the 22nd.

You're letting the Grand Opening be a legitimate payoff for all the hard work the players have been doing and then you're establishing something at least vaguely resembling the new status quo before you literally blow it up.

The picture at the top of this post depicts an amazing Faerunian calendar that was made by Erik Malm, one of the players in my Dragon Heist campaign.