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Revised Thank Yous…

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Extra Thank You On Top

To Ken Hite, who, I believe, has impeccable taste. If you like this game, and you see Ken at a con, say a polite, "Thank you."

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And let us not forget Danny and Mike at the Compleat Strategist. They'll never let *me* forget it if I don't thank them.

Gold Dedication

This book is dedicated to a lost, confused 19-year old boy. Follow your dreams, dumb-ass, but be careful what you wish for. You might get it—and then what the hell will you do?

A Special Nod

To Barbara Tuchman, JRR Tolkien and to Ursula K. Le Guin for continuing to inspire me.

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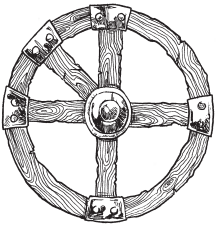

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Foreword

At their core, the Burning Wheel books are instruction manuals on how to play. Luke and company have never wasted much ink on why to play their game. Perhaps because when one sees *how* to play the game, the *why* becomes clear.

So how do you play Burning Wheel? Fight for what you believe. Or, since it's a roleplaying game: Fight for what your character believes. Everything else in the rules tells either how to craft that character's beliefs or how to fight for them.

Burning Wheel's character creation drips with character history. History breeds conflict. Conflict means taking a stand. What will your character stand for?

Burning Wheel's core mechanics, advancement and Artha rules demand more-than-usual attention from the player. Skill or stat advancement isn't an afterthought, but rather a crucial part of the game. The decision to solve a problem with cold steel or silken words isn't just one of better numerical values—it's a question of who you, the player, want your character to become. Every action—pass or fail—is growth. Every decision affects how your character matures, shifts, changes. Even little decisions impact the characters in permanent, subtle ways.

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The Wheel's Rim, those "crunchy bits" that players like me thrive on, builds tension when the heat is on by putting more control into the player's hands. Burning Wheel is a game, and like all good games, it requires skill to play. To really enjoy Burning Wheel requires some investment in Burning Wheel. You, the player, have to care. You have to believe.

I believe in Burning Wheel.

Like a Burning Wheel character, I'm an amalgam of my experiences: military brat, missionary in a foreign land, veteran of the Iraq War, husband and father, and historical European martial artist. For each of these things, the *why* is built into the *how*. I love each of these parts of my life because of how I lived them. If life is a game, then I love my experiences because of how I played them.

Burning Wheel's why is built into Luke and company's extensive how. The game is meant to be played as written. Each rule has been lovingly crafted—and now, many of them re-crafted—to support player-driven stories of white-knuckled action, heart-rending decisions and triumph against the odds. Burning Wheel Gold is the result of a decade of such stories. It's not a "fix" of Burning Wheel Revised or Classic. It's a new how.

May you enjoy discovering the why as much as I will.

Jake Norwood
March 2011

Jake Norwood is the creator and author of the acclaimed (and out of print) roleplaying game The Riddle of Steel. *He is also a veteran of the 101st Airborne (Rakkasans!), president of the HEMA Alliance (www.hemaalliance.com) and an internationally recognized German longsword fighter and teacher. He lives in Maryland with his wife, daughter and mom-in-law.*

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