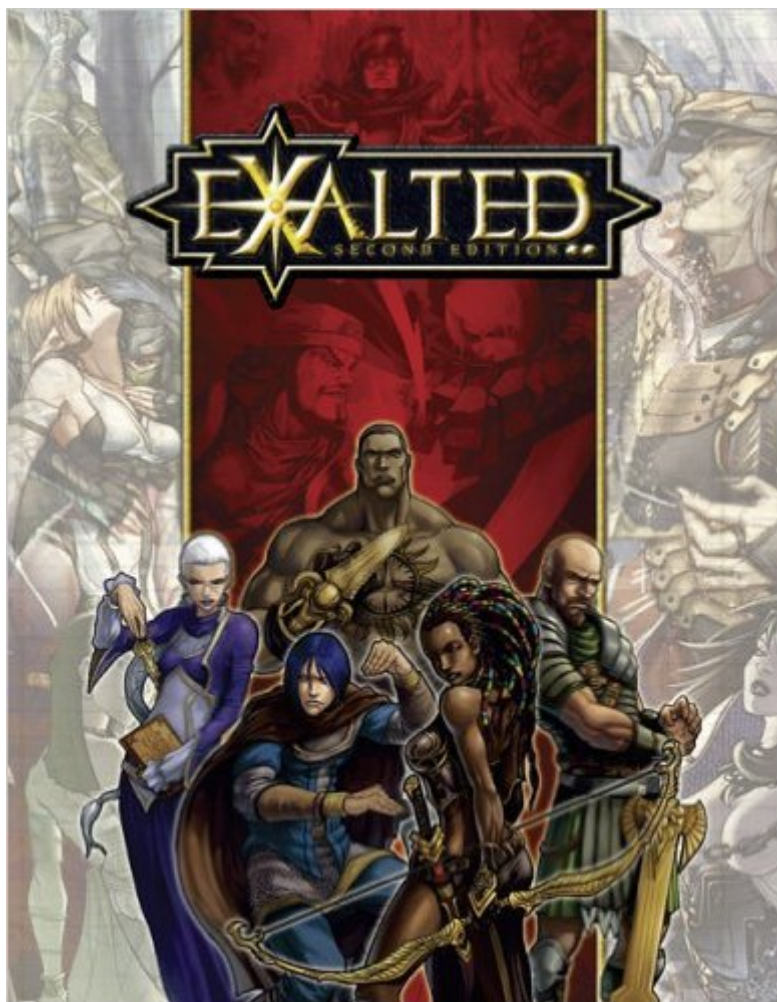


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Exalted, Second Edition



Synopsis

Do not believe what the scientists tell you. The natural history we know is a lie, a falsehood sold to us by wicked old men who would make the world a dull gray prison and protect us from the dangers inherent to freedom. They would have you believe our planet to be a lonely starship, hurtling through the void of space, barren of magic and in need of a stern hand upon the rudder. Close your mind to their deception. The time before our time was not a time of senseless natural struggle and reptilian rage, but a time of myth and sorcery. It was a time of legend, when heroes walked Creation and wielded the very power of the gods. It was a time before the world was bent, a time before the magic of Creation lessened, a time before the souls of men became the stunted, withered things they are today. This is the story of that time. THIS IS THE STORY OF THE EXALTED.

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Customer Reviews

Exalted takes a completely innovative approach to the RPG. Instead of beginning life as a meek, low-level character who could meet his untimely death at the hands of a fearsome kobold, in Exalted you start with great, heroic, near God-like power in a world as colorful and large as the Manga settings that influences it. The opening chapter tells the story of the world and creation. We learn of the Primordials (think elder Gods), the first beings of shape who created, then battled the Gods. The Gods have in turned granted great powers to mortals to use as their tool in ultimately defeating the Primordials. These are the Exalted! The Exalted are nearly ageless and live for hundreds of years. They have great vitality, resistance to injury, and heal rapidly. There are five types of Exalted: the Solar, Lunar, Sidereals, Dragon-Blooded, and Abyssmal, and there are several different castes within each of these Exalted types. The opening chapter also goes on to describe the world and

lands of Exalted in great detail. These different castes help essentially define the characters class in the next chapter on character creation where you will devise and define your character in far greater depth than simply rolling a series of six-sided dice. You'll pick their abilities and attributes and decide on an appearance. As mentioned there are several different castes your character can choose to be part of which are basically like classes. For example the Dawn Castes are warriors, The Twilight Caste are the sorcerers and wizards, the Night Castes are thieves and assassins, and the Zenith Caste are the priests. Chapter 5 is one of the longest in the book and covers charms/spells.

I reviewed the 1st edition and told readers to hold off on buying it and wait for the new edition to come out. Now I've got it, and I've read it, and I was right--this is a big improvement on an already-fine RPG. The original Exalted was rushed into production, and showed it. Even so, it was a good game, one that I enjoyed playing quite recently--it really renewed my feelings for the high-fantasy genre. And while many of the first-edition supplements were quite good, they all had to follow on from the problems of the core book, so the whole thing suffered from a slapdash effect. This time around, it looks like the supplements are very well-plotted. And the core book actually includes enough rules and information so that a GM can include all the major character types as NPCs without having to guess how their powers work. In fact, if you don't plan on running Abyssals and Dragon-Bloods and so on as player-characters, you can easily get by with just this core book and nothing else--although the Storyteller's Companion helps a lot with that. This is a big improvement over the 1st edition. The art is, almost without exception, excellent, and a fundamental part of the book, as each section starts off with a multi-page manga story that shows you how the Exalted world works. There are a few minor margin-art pieces that don't seem to fit well, looking more like amateur fan-manga than the highly professional look of the majority of the art, but these are rare and easy to ignore. Oh, and the whole thing is full-color, printed on glossy, high-quality paper. Players of the first edition will be amazed at the power boost to the Solar Charms and Anima powers--boosts that make sense, as well. Here and in many other rules I felt it was much more unified and rational than before.

Before the "World of Darkness", mortals walked the earth with heroes of extraordinary powers and abilities. That's the world of the Exalts. You get to be something, someone that mere mortals look upon as a god. The core of Exalted is to play a Solar, chosen heroes of the Unconquered Sun, in a very Anime like setting. Of course, there's more to the history than that, this is a White Wolf product

after all. And everything comes out over time, in supplement after supplement. I was a little disappointed with the timing of the release. White Wolf had only released the last large supplement for First Edition: the Autochthonians Exalted months before. However, with Second Edition, White Wolf took the opportunity to stream-line many of the rules and charm systems, that the rushed release of the First Edition hadn't given them time to do. If you plan on running or playing in a setting involving any of the other types of Exalts, other than Solars, you'll have to wait. There's plenty of material around that you can try to give it a shot, but the systems vary enough it'll probably be worth the wait. The same goes if you're trying to recreate a Exalt with sorcery, there's shockingly small amounts of spells in the First Edition, and the Second doesn't fix that. However, most of the old spells will still work well in the spirit of continuing on an old campaign. The Second Edition book is lovely, the actual gaming aside, there are beautifully drawn and colored comic panels at the beginning of every chapter. And there are colored drawings throughout the entire book, a rarity for most any gaming system. The book is well-bound, hopefully outlasting it's predecessor which fell apart after a few thorough readings.

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