



WEATHERGUARD GOLD ~2011 SPELL SAGA 4.0 BOX

Dear Weatherguard, this letter is to acknowledge the debt you paid to own a piece of gaming history--The original 2011 Spell Saga 4.0 box.

This box was designed for a 2011 meeting that I thought would decide the fate of my life. It was crafted from a cardboard treasure chest I had bought at a craft store, silver mirri paper, and pieces I had printed at a commercial printer. The silver paper was expensive, and difficult to work with. There four decks of cards inside the box as well, the original tutorial style prelude was (if I recall) a last minute edition, and the endlude has never once been played, though I did read aloud the ending in a old house out in the country for my friends Sakroka & Paxson of Ashgarden's weekly gaming group. Both the cards and the box are sort of a monument to my earliest post-prom-bra fumlblings with Photoshop. I didn't know what the fuck I as doing, and making it up as I went along would became both a staple and a curse in Spell Saga's future.

In 2011 things were not going swell. I was married. It was bad. And I had just got over literally crying myself to sleep at night. I had done this by running away in my mind into other worlds, in the Winters I worked on Spell Saga, and the rest of the year was spent either on WHYLC (a comic book, then a novel, and now a comic book once more), Travels, a comic book that might be a novel, who knows) and, for about two years straight: Those Who Wear Green, a trilogy of books that I have yet to finish, all these nine years later. When I finished the first draft of Those Who Wear Green, I found myself terrified that I might have to pull out my fantasy worlds and deal with the shit-fire my life was continuing to become. I was a twenty-six year old idiot, so I decided to escape once more, and as quickly as possible. I would get Spell Saga published, and in doing so would save both my future and my marriage.

I guessed the email of Peter Adkison, whose gaming accolades are far larger than necessary for me to record right here. Suffice it say that he started the biggest gaming company in the US during the 1990s, brought tabletop roleplaying back from the brink of extinction, and as of this writing, is the owner of the largest board game convention in the world: Gen Con. After guessing his email, he agreed to meet with me to try out a prototype of the game. I had three months and no game to speak of, so I set to work. I had a calendar taped above me on the wall, and each day was filled with insurmountable odds. When I finished the first working version of the game, Sakorka told me it wasn't fun, and I had to start back at the beginning, almost (or as it seemed at the time) from scratch. With one month left I crafted all five decks, the playmat, the rulebook and the packaging, and left for Indiana to pitch my game. Sakorka came with. I kept the game in my backpack. Terrified it would somehow disappear or catch itself on fire.

I had never done anything like this before. I was terrified to the point of not being able to walk. Also, my wife left me about two days before the convention, so I was uh...not well. In a penthouse suite larger than your imagining, I met with Peter and showed him the packaging I had created. He was very kind about the whole ordeal, and even compared me to his friend, the game designer (and modern card game creator) Richard Garfield. But he did not want to publish my game. Actually, that's not true. He did want to, but he had just quit the publishing business, and had not the heart to tell me before our meeting.

A year later I was remarried and living a new life. I had (mostly) quit making art, and started drinking with friends instead. It was fun for awhile! Sometimes. A guy named Nathan Ives asked me to bring the game over one night to a place we called "the boy's house". We sat on the floor and I taught him how to play as everyone watched and passed the box and it's pieces around the room. Then my friend Joshua Rizzo showed up (it was, after all, his house) and I showed him how to play too. That was December of 2012. I think I had decided to use a fundraiser for the game by the next day.

A word about the cards in this box: The Prelude & Deck One ~ The Highlands should still work with modern Spell Saga rules. Deck Two is partly unplayable (I had attached blank stickers to certain cards in hopes of redesigning them) and the box for it is now missing (Joshua leant it to a passing girlfriend). The Endlude has its own rules but has never been played! It should be taken as a spoiler heavy prototype of its eventual final form, coming in 2019.

This Box is the 2011 Spell Saga 4.0 Prototype, crafted AT 918 Knox Avenue, in Nashville Tennessee, USA. Inside are the original Prelude Deck, Deck One ~ The Highlands, Deck Two ~ The Forest, & The Endlude.

