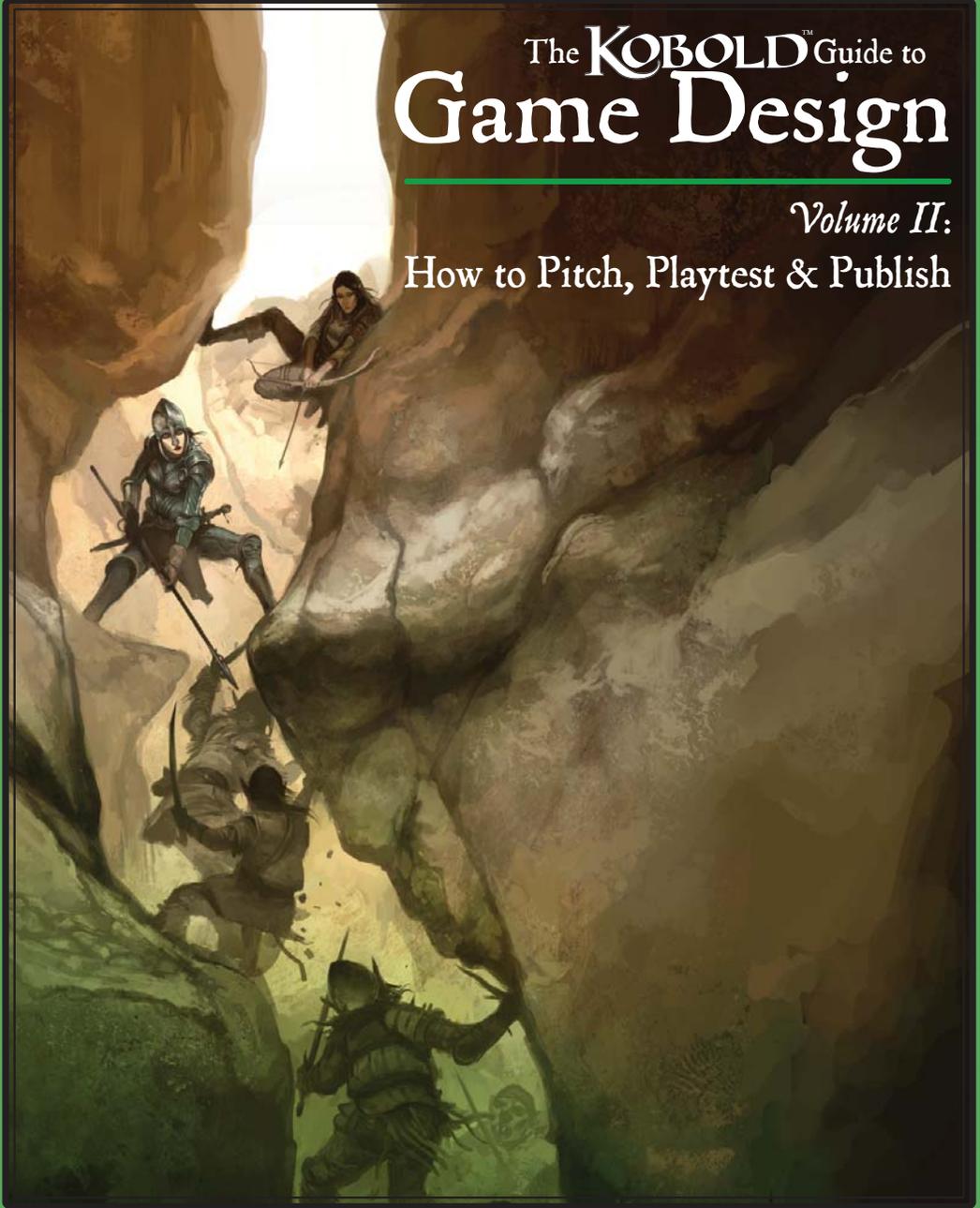


OPEN DESIGN™ presents

# The KOBOLD™ Guide to Game Design

*Volume II:*  
How to Pitch, Playtest & Publish



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with Nicolas Logue

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# 1

## Fortunate Accidents

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The things I talk about so often in design—the matters of design discipline, writing every day, using outlines, sticking to word counts, and meeting deadlines—are all important.

But sometimes luck and serendipity have something to do with it as well, and I find this is especially true when dealing with collaboration. People misunderstand and miscommunicate about shared settings and shared ideas.

And that's a great opportunity. Some of my favorite design moments come from that, and one of them just showed up today in the ongoing work of map labels for the Zobeck map. The list included the Moon's Grace Temple, the Moon Temple, and the Temple of the Dawn Goddess, in three different districts of the city. Now, these are all ways to refer to the Temple of Lada, the Golden Goddess. And originally, they were all meant to be a single place.

But the list made me think: "Why should there be just one temple of each god in a city? That's ridiculous!" And in fact, you never see this in the real world. Temples to the same god appear in many parts of the same city. Even in pagan times, there was more than one temple to Jupiter in Rome.

*"People misunderstand and miscommunicate...  
Some of my favorite design moments come from that"*

So, likewise, this kicked off some thoughts about the gods and temples of Zobeck. There may be just five main gods and two lesser ones in the Zobeck pantheon, but that doesn't mean just five main temples and some lesser ones. And the map reflects that.

I love these moments in design, when what seems like a mistake becomes a feature that sets a monster apart, or makes a map richer and more detailed, or makes an NPC worth talking to.

You got any favorite "splendid mistakes" from your campaign or your games? Visit the Kobold Forum ([www.koboldquarterly.com/KQForums](http://www.koboldquarterly.com/KQForums)) and let me know.