MEET DM "QUICKLEAF":
AARON INFANTE-LEVY

- 42 year old white heterosexual cis-male (he/him)
- 30+ years GMing experience
- Currently runs 5th edition D&D, but has experience with Beyond the Wall (OSR), DungeonWorld, Palladium, White Wolf, GURPS, Shadowrun, Cyberpunk 2020, Paranoia, Star Wars Saga, and all past editions of D&D
- I've run everything from one-shots to epic campaigns, including Planescape, Al-Qadim, my homebrew "Witching Grounds", Dragon Mountain, Tomb of Annihilation, Hamunaptra, and more
- Commitment to diversity, accessbility, and welcoming new players to the hobby
- Published RPG author
- Favorite fantasy book is LeGuin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*

Old School Sensibilities & New School Techniques

I am an old school DM at heart who borrows techniques from indie RPGs and even outside of gaming if they improve the flow of the game. "Old school" means that I encourage players to look to their own imaginations and wits first, and their character sheets second. But I'm not into nitpicking players about describing *exactly* how they probe the room with a ten-foot pole. "New school" means I'm comfortable saying "yes but" and "solving the players' solutions" to keep the game dynamic and fresh. I also recognize that certain parts of the rules need a bit of helping along, such as making exciting chases, meaningful campfire scenes, or thrilling boss battles.

Dice & Decisions

Encouraging interesting decisions is more impotant to me than dice-rolling. My games tend to have fewer dice rolls with bigger consequences. I almost always attach stakes to any die roll that gets made – *something* is going to change, for better or worse, when you roll the dice. That said, sometimes the dice will make the game take a "hard left"!

Unapologetic Homebrewer & House Ruler

I'll usually seriously consider a player's request for homebrew (though I'm going to say "no" outright if it's anything from dandwiki.com because everything I've seen there is broken). Similarly I often tweak my monsters and homebrew spells and items. I make any house rules I'm using available before our game begins.

Roll in the Open & Good Communication

I am a strong believer in being transparent. While I have my secrets like any DM, I'll almost always roll in the open, tell you the DC of a check, and often will reveal monster AC and/or HP. I want my players to make informed choices. Discussing character story beats, scheduling issues, and boundaries are not something I limit to a "session zero"; rather, I encourage an ongoing conversation with my players. "No D&D is better than bad D&D", so I'd rather part on good terms than force a game that's not the right match.

Diverse Challenges & Moving Spotlight

In the long-run I tend to throw a pretty even mix of combat, exploration, and roleplay challenges at my players, though some sessions lean more heavily one way. I'm also a fan of scenes that don't conform neatly to the rules, like tense waterfall ascents, escaping dreamscapes, or repelling sieges. Generally, if something is extremely lethal, I will foreshadow or telegraph that – so you'll have *some* kind of forewarning before walking into a death trap, for example. Connected to presenting a "bouquet" of interesting challenges, I like to keep the spotlight moving and that means encouraging teamwork, leading players out of analysis paralysis, and keeping them guessing.