

Quest For The Hazzlewood

A One-On-One Dungeon

Tournament Dungeon for Detroit WinterCon VII Gamefest

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DESIGNER'S NOTES by John Van De Graaf

When we were given the task of designing the D&D tournament dungeon for Wintercon VII, we decided to design it as a tournament first and an adventure second. Most D&D tournaments we have seen and participated in have suffered from the fact that the dungeon is designed as an adventure first, without regard to the needs of tournament competition. Whether we have been successful remains to be seen, but we hope that our approach will foster some thought for future tournament dungeon designs.

The most important requirement in a dungeon to be used for a tournament is that every player should be judged for his own ability. The most frequent complaint heard at tournaments from players is the variability of the groups to which they are assigned. A good player in a poor group usually loses quickly, while a poor player in a good group may be carried along to the final round. If we want to rate each player on his own merits, the logical step is to run each player through the dungeon by himself, eliminating all problems of assigning players to random groups. We decided to try this approach if the other problems this raised could be solved.

There are certain practical difficulties to running players through a dungeon one at a time. A convention cannot afford to have as many DMs as players, and it is difficult to get DMs to volunteer to run more than one 4-5 hour session. We calculated that if one DM can run a group of 8 players for a 4 hour dungeon, he can run 8 players through a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour dungeon in almost the same amount of time. A ratio of 1 DM per 8 players is about normal for D&D tournaments. Would this detract from a player's participation in the tournament? A dungeon lasting only a half hour sounds very short, but on the average players cannot contribute more than one-eighth of the time in a four hour, 8 player group. In theory, at least, it seemed that a player could get as much participation in a one-half hour dungeon as in the normal 4 hour dungeon.

Designing a dungeon on the basis of a single player with a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour time limit made certain demands of the dungeon. We had to give the player a clear objective to reach within the time limit, and of course it must be attainable within the time limit. To provide a means of evaluating performance, we had to include as many decision points as possible for the player to deal with. The dungeon thus rewards players who make correct decisions as quickly as possible.

To make the tournament as fair as possible, the players will generally encounter the same situations during the tournament and random elements have been minimized as far as possible. With only one player to deal with, the player's choices in a given situation are rather small; thus we were able to instruct the DM how to handle most situations and monster reactions. This also had the benefit of eliminating another common complaint: the variability of the DMing. Given the nature of the D&D rules, local interpretations, and individual idiosyncrasies, it is almost inevitable that 20 DM's will handle combat, spells, and the like in different fashions if left to their own devices. A tournament should be run consistently, so we have provided extensive instructions to the DM so that there will be as little variation between DM's as possible.

With the dungeon designed on these lines, it was relatively easy to incorporate a point-scoring system for an objective determination of victory.

The dungeon has been play-tested by over a dozen people, and thus far no one has complained of the $\frac{1}{2}$ hour time length or that it is not challenging. We have also found that it is a good dungeon to give novices a short taste of D&D campaigning; new players are far more likely to try a half-hour adventure than to get involved in a 4-6 hour marathon.

QUEST FOR THE FAZZLEWOOD

SCENARIO:

You are called Athelfrogg the Agile, a freelance Master Pilferer with a modest reputation for bold and clever thievery. You have also had some training in using a sword and in minor thaumaturgy, which has saved your skin on more than one occasion when stealth failed you. At the present time, however, your string of successes seems to be at an end, for you sit none too comfortably on the cold, wet floor of a dark underground cell. Your mission had been to steal a valuable gem from the weird tower of Tormag, the Archmage of Luho, a task for which your anonymous employer had offered a very handsome reward. Unfortunately, after working your way past all the traps and guards in the tower, your theft was interrupted by the untimely arrival of the Archmage himself who stunned you into unconsciousness with a single Word of Power.

Your musings upon your unkind fate end as you hear footsteps approaching in the corridor outside your cell. With a rattling of keys and a few muttered words, your cell door swings open, flooding your cell with the bright light of Tormag's staff as the Archmage enters with an ugly one-eyed troll at his side. Your spirits sink even lower, if that were possible, when you notice the brazier of glowing coals and red-hot tongs borne by the troll.

"Regained your wits, have you?" asked Tormag with a small grin. "Perhaps it is now time to learn your name and what you sought in my humble abode. D'tan here enjoys that sort of question game, though he likes to work too hard at getting truthful answers." The Archmage signalled the troll with a wave of his free hand, and D'tan extracted the glowing tongs from the brazier with a loathsome grimace (as close as he could come to a cheerful smile), and lumbered forward with the smoking iron.

"On the other hand," said Tormag as he halted the troll's progress, "such sport may not be necessary, despite D'tan's disappointment. You did do rather well to avoid the guards and devices and to reach my chambers undetected, and I may be able to make use of your abilities myself." Tormag gestured while muttering an incantation, then said "I have cast a spell to detect your very thoughts. At the first lie, I shall turn you over to D'tan's not-so-tender mercy and delight. Now then, if I spare your life unharmed and promise to set you free, do you agree to undertake a mission for me?"

Fear seems to have deprived you of your voice, but you quickly nod assent, vigorously.

Tormag smiles again, a curious smile of smug satisfaction. "Then listen well to my tale, young Athelfrogg, and you shall learn of the task you must perform. The tale begins several centuries ago in a far off land where I learned, quite accidentally, the location of the legendary Staff of Fazzlewood, said to possess rare powers of the arcane arts. I naturally followed the clues to its location and found it in an ancient crypt in the land of Kowloon.

"Now there dwelt in the land of Kowloon another wizard named Felspel the Necromancer, an evil nemesis who had long been my rival. Years before we confronted each other in a duel of magick, but neither could prevail over the other. As fate would have it, Felspel must also have stumbled onto the secret of the Staff of Fazzlewood at the same time as I, and arrived while I was in the crypt. As I emerged from the crypt, he took me unawares and took the staff, then imprisoned me helpless in a vault of the crypt.

"Several years later, I was rescued from my plight by a hopeful apprentice who followed my trail to the crypt. After recuperating from my ordeal in secret hiding, I exacted my revenge by surprising Felspel, imprisoning him in the body of a Burak-beast, and regaining the Staff of Fazzlewood.

"After studying the staff for several years, I learned that its value was highly exaggerated, and not at all worth the troubles it had cost me. It does possess some rare powers, but of a rather esoteric nature, such as eliminating steps 3 through 8 of the eleven arcane steps needed to turn gold to lead. I thought the matter ended even if Felspel should escape his shambling prison since he too knew the nature of the staff. To my surprise, Felspel did escape and hired a gang of thieves and brigands to steal the staff from me. They succeeded despite losing half their number, and in the process stole everything they could carry, and interrupted several important arcane experiments in progress.

"Naturally I hunted the brigands down one by one and regained most of what they had taken, except for the staff. After tending to other matters for several score of years, I procured the services of a group of daring adventurers to regain the staff. Half of them returned with the staff and an impressive collection of rightful plunder for their efforts. Later I heard that Felspel ambushed the survivors and stole their plunder.

"Thus it went over the next century, with Felspel sending larger and stronger gangs of cutthroats to steal the staff and then I sending noble adventurers to retrieve the staff. The staff itself was not important, but possession of the staff became a matter of pride to both of us. Eventually it got out of hand: the succession of raids and rescues was turning both of our dwellings into shambles and grievously interfering with our respective magickal researches. Worse yet, we found it increasingly difficult to obtain volunteers to obtain the staff as word got out that even survivors usually had short life spans.

"In the course of the last century, Felspel and I have therefore evolved certain limiting rules by tacit agreement for our contest over possession of the Staff. First, I can send only one person, a person who will not pose any substantial threat to Felspel himself, which in the present case is you, Froggy. In return, he must permit the possibility that a single person can steal the staff without extra-ordinary abilities. This means you will have to use your wits, but the Staff will be in his quarters and you can find it without doing undue damage to the premises. When you find the Staff of Fazzlewood, you can identify it as being about 6' in length, carven from the heart of cherrywood, and topped with a knob of gold molded into the shape of a nude maiden.

"You are fortunate that I recently learned, at some expense, that the craven Felspel will be absent from his quarters for one-half hour on the morrow cavorting lewdly with a certain water-nymph. This is an opportunity for you to steal the Staff, but you must find it and depart before Felspel returns from his pleasures. If you are there when he returns, he will capture you as easily as I did, and you would prefer D'tan's treatment, I'm sure, to the foul necromantic experiments of Felspel. You can recognize Felspel, should you tarry too long, by his pale, withered visage, black robe adorned by a single grey crescent moon, and his left hand scarred from his encounter with the Slime Creature of Sibarra.

"I can tell you naught of the design of his cave dwelling or of what you might meet therein, for he changes the design and defenses after each raid, as do I myself. All I know is that he has a small band of ogres guarding the entrance to scare off common riffraff. I will give you one item to assist you and to give you as much time as possible: a Talisman of Homing I made which will teleport you back to me when you have found the Staff. It is activated by the words "ROTPME TAEVAC", so remember them well."

That night you study some spells suggested by Tormag before going to sleep. In the morning he returns to your cell with all your possessions. While you prepare, Tormag consults a crystal ball for long hours. Finally, at mid-morning, Tormag looks up, gestures at you with a swift incantation, and you find yourself teleported to a hillside near a cavernous opening. You are near the entrance to Felspel's quarters....

CHARACTER SHEET

Character: Eric the Bold Player: _____

Class: Thief Level: 8 Alignment: Neutral Hit Points: 28

Armor Class: 7 (-2 for dexterity)
Strength: 15 +1 to hit and damage rolls (melee weapons only)
Intelligence: 14
Wisdom: 9
Dexterity: 16 +2 to hit roll with missile weapons, -2 to AC for AC 5
Constitution: 13 +1 hp per hit die, included in hit points above
Charisma: 10

Saving Throws:

poison or death ray	12
magic wands	13
turn to stone or paralysis	11
dragon breath	14
rods, staves or spells	13

Thief's Abilities:

open locks	65%
remove traps	60%
pick pockets	65%
move silently	65%
climb sheer surfaces	94%
hide in shadows	55%
hear noise	1-4

Base Movement: 120' per turn (40' per round)

Combat Bonus: +1 to hit and double damage when striking unnoticed from behind.

Languages: Common, Thieves' Cant, Orcish

Magic Items:

(normal) sword +1
 dagger +2
 sleeping poison (effective on humans and humanoids for 5 rounds per level)
 potion of diminution
 talisman of homing (second adventure only)
 ring of spell storing with following spells (as 6th level magic-user):
 First Level: *charm person, detect magic, magic missile, ventriloquism*
 Second Level: *knock, phantasmal force*

Other Equipment:

Leather Armor
 Thieves' Tools
 Tinder Box
 Iron rations (sufficient for one week)



Trim this sheet along the perforation and give it to the player at the start of the adventure.

A. CAVERN ENTRANCES

Read to player: "You are behind a boulder on the right side of a 40' cavern opening in the hillside. Cautiously peering around the boulder, you see the cavern extends back 30' to a 5' wide passageway leading deeper into the hillside. A single ogre guard clad in chainmail sits on a boulder in the center of the cavern about 10' back from the front opening. The ogre watches the opening and the sloping hillside in front of the opening and carries a huge club in his hand. Beside the ogre is a brass gong. From the passageway to the rear of the cavern you can hear occasional ogre voices, but they are not approaching."

DM: The ogre guard will investigate any noise before alerting the other ogres, walking towards the noise. Thus

1. the VENTRILOQUISM spell, if used, will distract the ogre and will mask any slight sounds of movement behind him. The player, if moving silently, can creep through the cavern undetected — no roll for discovery unless he is walking normally.
2. a THROWN ROCK (there are many handy rocks) to the other side of the opening will distract the ogre into looking the other way. The player must roll for moving silently to pass undetected.
3. a SLEEP SPELL automatically puts the guard to sleep, but the player must have substituted the spell for one of the other 1st level spells prior to play.
4. a player may try to sneak through moving silently and hiding in shadows, but must roll for discovery each turn of movement. Once he is behind the guard, roll only for moving silently (since the guard couldn't see him anyway).
5. the player may ATTACK the ogre:
 - a. To garrotte or blackjack, he must sneak behind the ogre first, then roll for moving silently to attack from behind. If the ogre is distracted as in #1 or 2 above, detection is as specified there. If the character is detected, the ogre will turn around, making either weapon useless.
 - b. the character may strike with his sword from behind. Detection is as in "a". If detected, the character gets no bonus for attacking silently from behind, but fights normally. If not detected, the player gets one free strike from behind before the ogre turns around.
 - c. Normally, a frontal assault with sword, missile, or dagger. This is the worst choice a player could make, and he deserves the results.

If the ogre detects a player, or if attacked frontally (or if the player attempts to talk to the ogre), the ogre first strikes the gong, then immediately attacks the player. Note that if the ogre has been distracted and has walked away from the gong, he cannot strike it until he moves back. The ogre can shout for help (but not if being garrotted) with a 50% chance of being heard.

The gong, or shouts for help if heard, bring ogres #1, 2, and 3 through the passageway to help him. (The other ogre remains in the ogre den "B" waiting by the entrance ready to bash anything that tries to enter.)

Conduct combat using the COMBAT SHEET. Ogres will attack 3 at a time if in the open, or 2 at a time if the player is against a wall.

Note: CHARM PERSON will not affect the ogre, and there is no fire to use PIROTECHNICS. Either spell is used up if cast, however, and the guard will hear the spell being cast on a roll of 1-4(D6).

MAKE SURE that the player moves his figure physically over the map to show where he is going. Get the player used to the system right away.

The passageway leads to area "B"

CHECK TIME

F. The OUTER SANCTUM

Read: "You enter the Outer Sanctum as depicted in map F. There is a door in the center of each side wall. Along the walls to your left and right hangs an arras projected about 2' out from the walls. On the stone dais directly opposite from where you stand, you observe a man clad in a long black robe adorned with a grey crescent moon. The man has his back to you and seems to pay no attention to you. He is painting Runes on the blank wall in front of him, holding a brush in his scarred left hand and a red paint pot in his right hand. As you watch, he completes a row of Runes about six feet long at a height of 7' up the wall and begins to paint another row of Runes one foot below the first row."

DM: 1. The Mage and the blank wall on which he is painting Runes are all part of a phantasmal illusion. The illusion will disappear only if touched. When any part of the illusion is touched, the illusion vanishes and reveals that a door exists in the wall to Area J.

The "mage" paints one row of Runes each movement turn, each row 1' below the other, until 7 rows of Runes are completed. The illusion is programmed to repeat the cycle whenever the room is entered. When all 7 rows of Runes are completed, the total design forms a SYMBOL OF BLINDNESS. If the player is looking at the illusion when the bottom row is completed, he is immediately blinded, no saving throw possible. The player will be looking at the Runes as long as he is anywhere in the room (except behind the arras) unless he specifically states that he is not looking.

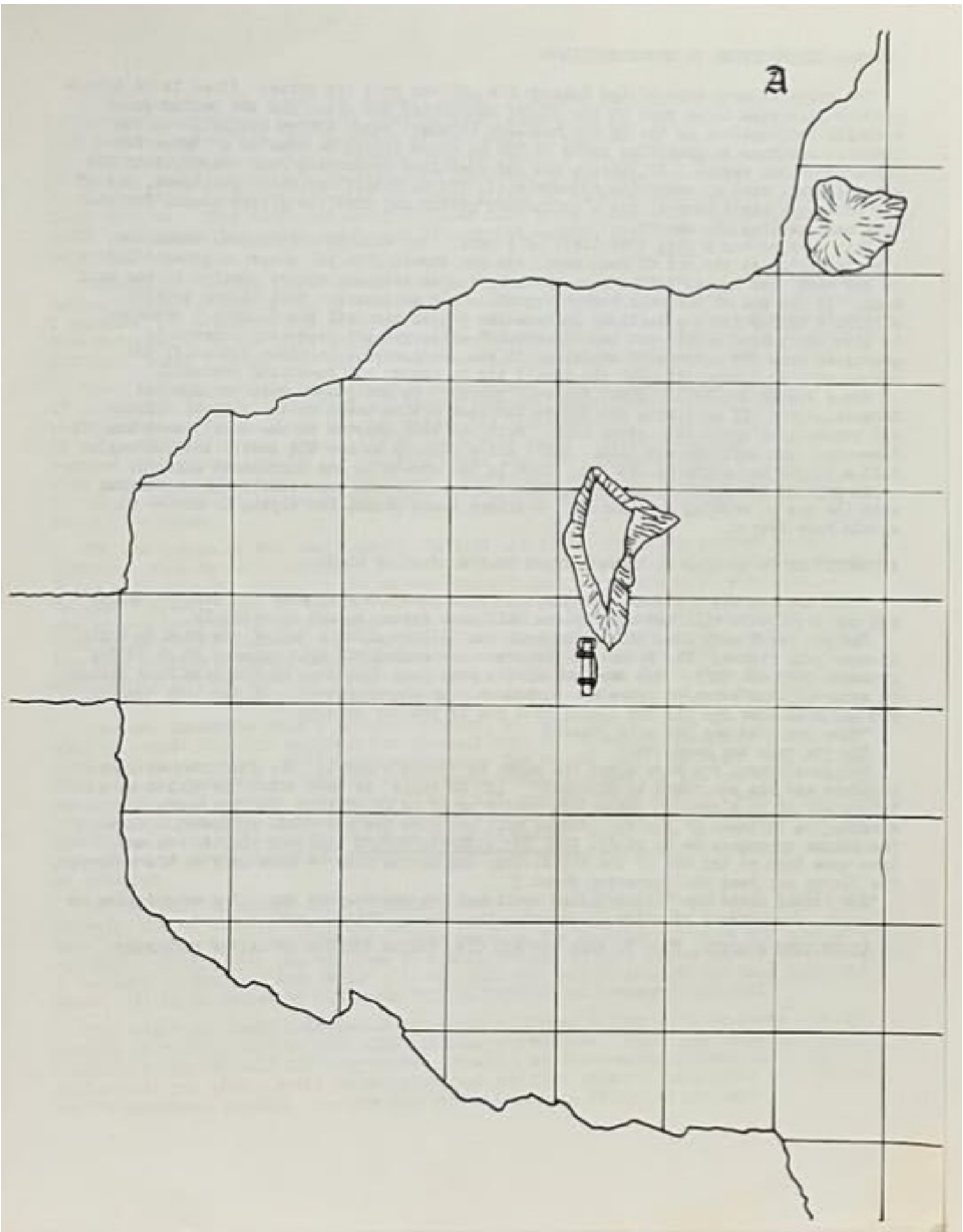
If the player is blinded, remove the map and playing piece or shield the map and figure from the player's vision. From this point on, the player must suffer the same handicap as his character. Describe only things he touches or hears for the rest of the expedition.

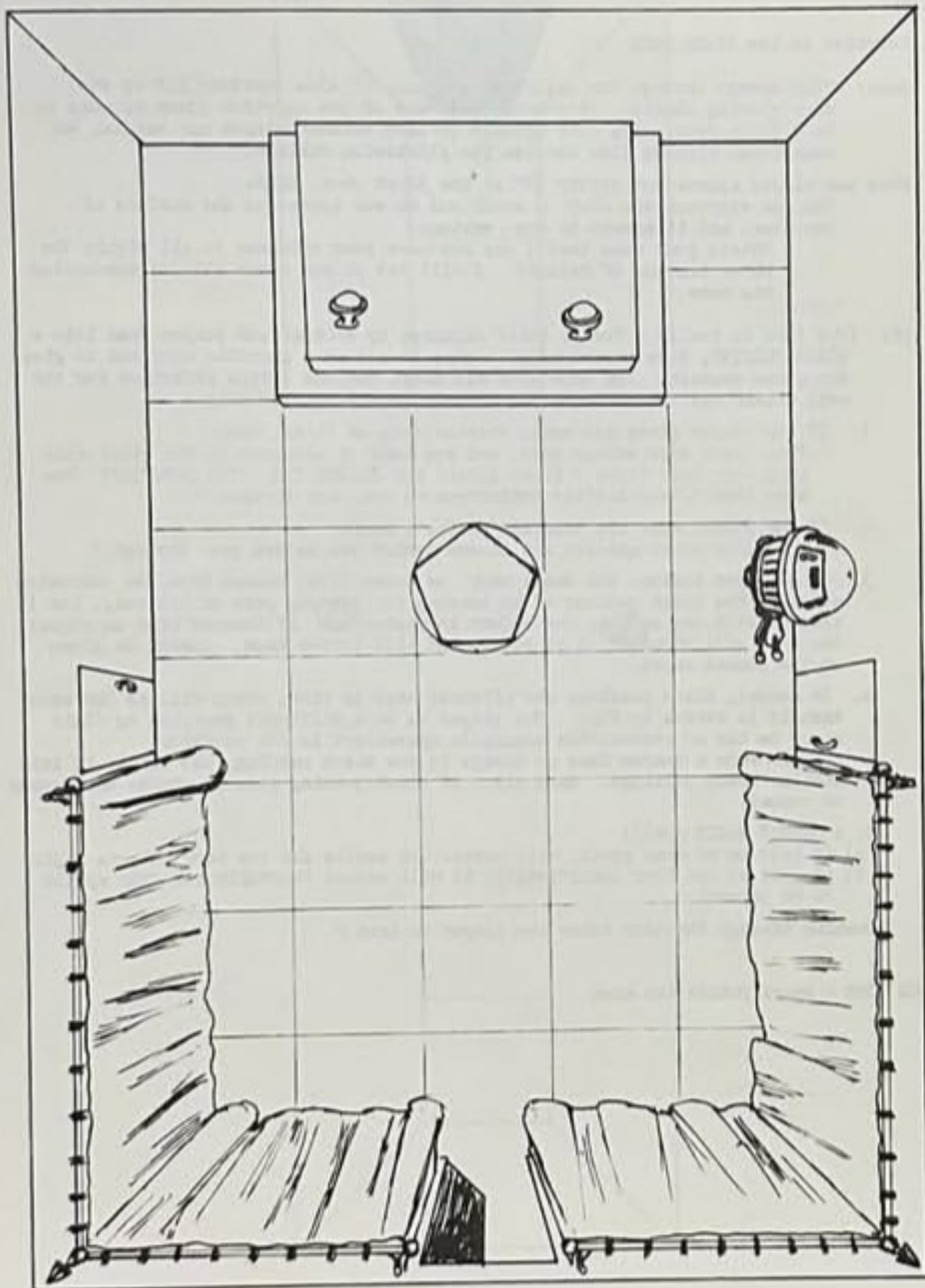
After the Symbol appears, the Runes will disappear and the mage will again begin to paint Runes upon the blank wall, repeating the cycle.

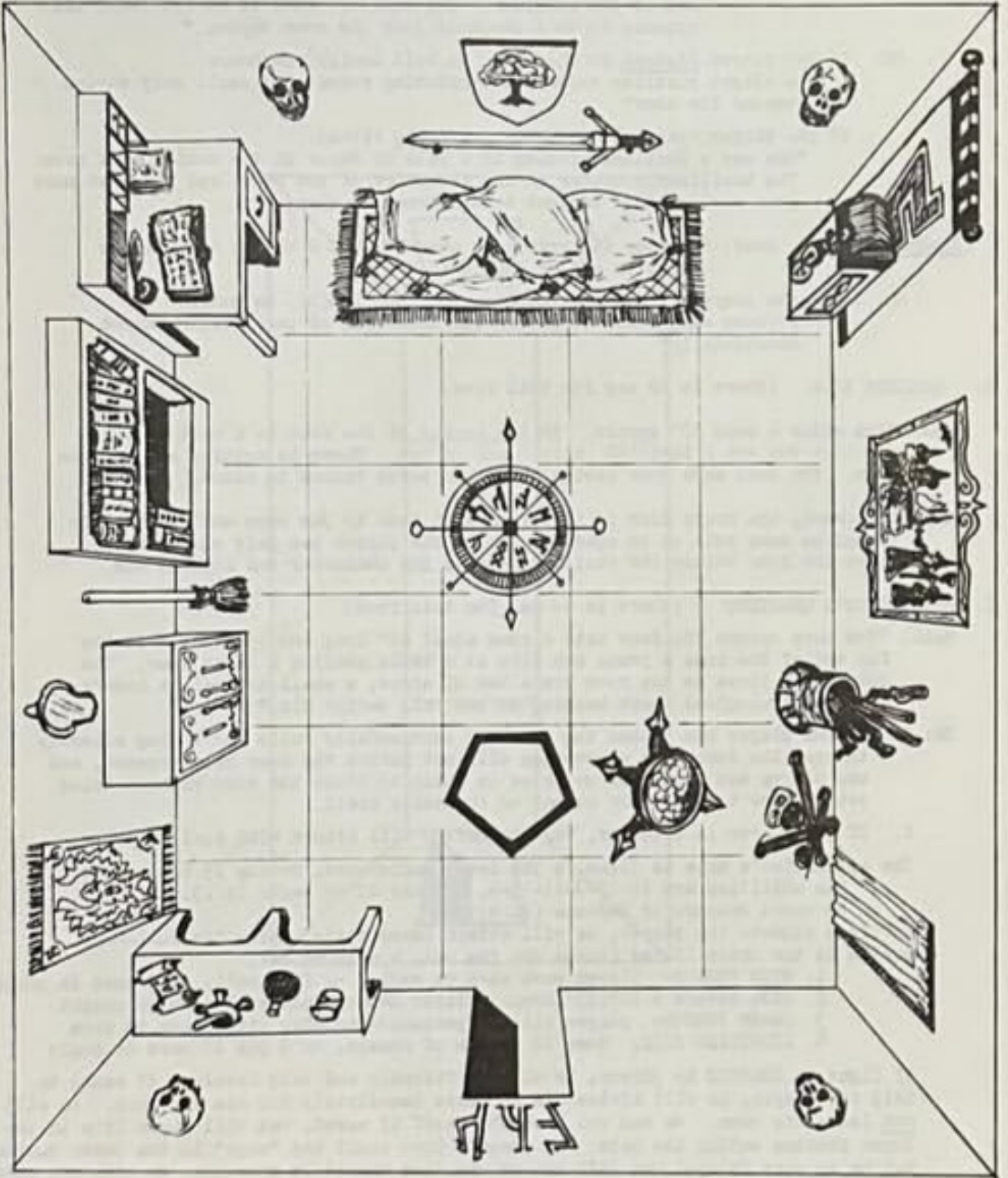
KEEP TRACK of each movement turn. After each movement turn in this room, tell the player how many rows of Runes have been completed as long as he is in sight of the illusion. The Symbol appears after 6 movement turns in the room.

2. THE ARRAS: The character may move behind the arras to either side, but there is no light behind the arras. When the character reaches the indicated locations he will be caught in magical WEBS placed there by Pelapel.
If caught in the webs, he can free himself on roll of 1-2(D6), or 1-4 with strength spell. Each turn trying to free himself is one movement turn.
3. INVISIBLE WALL: located along the front of the stone dais, it will prevent the player from moving directly to the mage and will block any missile fire.
4. Other items in the room:
The Pentagram: a magical symbol used to confine demons when summoned.
The Alanthor: a magical alchemical furnace.
2 standing braziers containing glowing stones: the stones are enchanted with Continual Light spells to light the room.
5. Going through either side door takes the character to corridor G.
Going through the door concealed by the illusion takes him to room J.

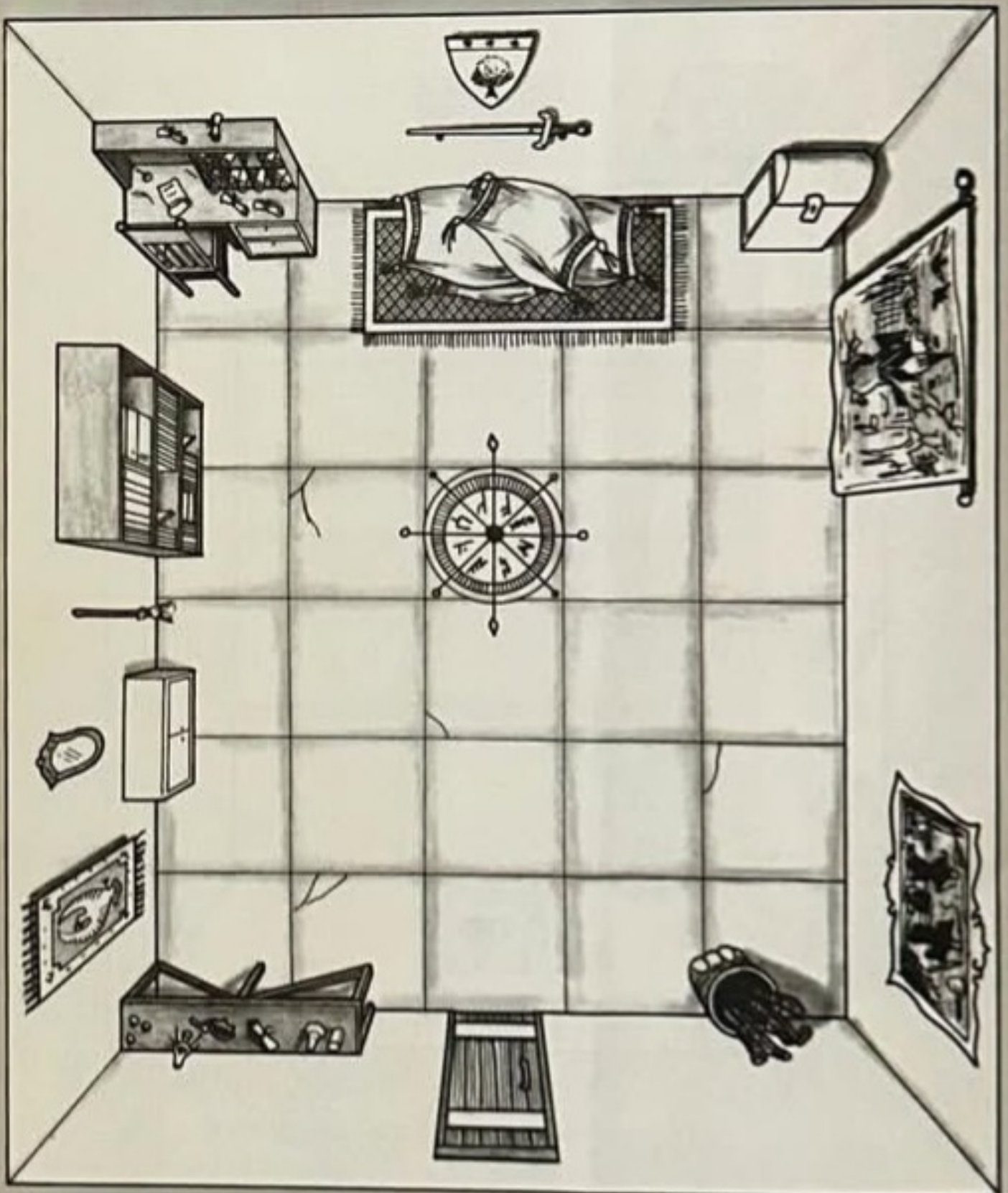
CHECK TIME - award points







Player's Map 19



PLAYER EVALUATION SHEET

Player: _____
 Time Start: _____ Time end: _____

		<u>Points</u>	<u>Totals</u>
General:	Using Strength Spell prior to play	1	
	Trying to map	-1	
A. OGRE SENTRY	Using Ventriloquism to distract	2	
	Using Sleep Spell (if substituted)	2	
	Throwing rock to distract sentry	1	
	Attacking sentry from behind	0	
	Frontal attack or talking to sentry	-2	
	Getting past sentry without alarm raised	2	
	Sentry alarms others by gong or shouts	-2	
B. OGRE DEN	Using pyrotechnics to create smokescreen	3	
	Using Ventriloquism to distract ogres	2	
	Putting Sleep Potion in ogre's ale only	1	
	if after Pyrotechnics or Ventril.	2	
	Detected by ogres	-2	
	Fighting ogres	-3	
	Getting past ogres undetected	1	
C. ANTECHAMBER	Testing Black Arrow for magic	1	
	Hanging up own weapons	-2	
D. HALLWAY	Following directions to area E on first attempt	3	
	Finding exit to E by Detect magic or searching	1	
	Falling into trap	-2	
E. BLACK DOOR	Announcing name to be "No One"	2	
	Giving a false name	1	
	Giving true name	-1	
	Trying to force door open or fighting door	-2	
F. OUTER SANCTUM	Stating and acting as if mage is illusion ..	2	
	(cannot get points for this if goes behind arras)		
	Touching illusion to make it vanish	3	
	Being caught by webs behind arras	-1 each time	
	Going through each side door	-1 each	
	Being Blinded by Symbol	-3	
H. BASILISK ROOM	Looking through peephole	-1	
	Opening door	-2	
	Being turned to stone by basilisk	-3	
I. APPRENTICE	Charming the apprentice	1	
	Fighting the apprentice	-2	
	Each magic item taken from room or apprentice	-1 each	
J. INNER SANCTUM	Finding Staff on first attempt	15	
	Finding Staff eventually	10	
	Each magic item taken or experiment disturbed	-2 each	
ESCAPING THE DUNGEON	Remembering and using the words to work Talisman	5 (with or without Staff)	
	Getting out of dungeon with Staff without Talisman	10	
Total for all areas:			<u> </u>

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