The HERCULES & XENA Roleplaying Game

THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS™

WARRIOR PRINCESS™

HERO'S GUIDE

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DEDICATION
To Dad, Mom, Dave, and Marianne, for all their love and support.

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Disclaimer: Only one neurotic game designer with extremely tight deadlines was harmed during the production of this roleplaying game. Well…not physically, but he did wander off muttering to himself about *things*.

THE ANCIENT WORLD

WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN AGE, A TIME OF MYTH AND LEGEND, OF VICIOUS MONSTERS AND PETTY DEITIES, OF DIABOLIC WARLORDS AND FEARLESS HEROES.

THRUST INTO THE HEART OF THIS ADVENTUROUS ERA ARE INGENIOUS MERCHANTS TRYING TO EARN A QUICK DINAR. ONE NOTED IMPORTER/EXPORTER HAS CREATED AN AMAZING GAME THAT PUTS YOU INTO THE ROLE OF A GOLDEN AGE HERO FIGHTING AGAINST TYRANNY, OPPRESSION, AND EVIL IN GENERAL—AVAILABLE FROM FINE VENDORS ACROSS THE LANDS.

I'M SALMONEUS, AND I'LL BE YOUR GUIDE ON THIS MAGICAL MYTHOLOGY TOUR. HEY, WHERE'RE YOU GOING? YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE WHOLE SPIEL YET. WE'VE GOT MINOTAURS, WE'VE GOT SEA SERPENTS, WE'VE GOT CYCLOPS—CYCLOPSES...CYCLOPSESES—WE'VE GOT ONE-EYED MONSTERS. WE'VE GOT EVERYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY WANT IN A GAME OF HEROIC ADVENTURE. AND IT'S ALL OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED BY HERCULES AND XENA—OF COURSE, I WOULDN'T BOTHER THEM BY ASKING ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW, THEY'VE GOT A LOT TO DO: EVIL TO DEFEAT, GOOD DEEDS TO PERFORM, YADA-YADA-YADA...

SO GRAB YOUR SWORD, SADDLE UP, AND PREPARE TO ENTER THE ANCIENT WORLD...

(PRETTY DRAMATIC, HUH?)

SCROLL I
A WORLD OF ADVENTURE

Welcome, welcome, welcome. I'm Salmoneus and I'll be your guide on this thrill-a-minute ride of epic proportions. I know you're anxious to start playing, so let's get right to it.

You saw this game on the shelf at the bazaar, and you said to yourself, "Cool!" And then you examined the packaging and read the snappy text describing what was inside and you thought, "What in Tartarus is this?" That means you've got what we call in the business "intuition": you could tell it was cool even though you didn't know exactly what it was—and now you're going to find out why you're a true psychic genius!

You've heard tales of Hercules' and Xena's exploits journeying across the world, punishing evil-doers, thrashing ne'er-do-wells, even battling against the gods themselves. The excitement, the suspense, the passion! It gives me goose bumps just thinking about it.

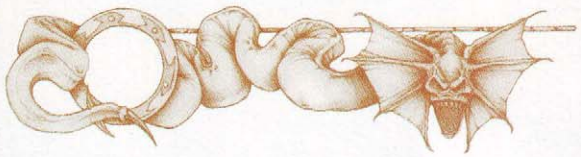
With the Hercules & Xena Roleplaying Game, *you—yes, you!—can get in on the action! "How?" you ask. Excellent question.*

During a Hercules & Xena *game, you become a hero in the Ancient World. And when I say "you" I don't mean to imply that you're playing yourself*

as an individual who has been transported in time and space to the Golden Age of Heroes. I mean that you create an alter ego that you control throughout the game, deciding what your hero does every step of the way.

"So," you're wondering, "how do you play? Is it a board game or what?" I'm getting to it—don't get so antsy. Rather than try to explain the Hercules & Xena Roleplaying Game *in a logical discourse (I don't care what Aristotle says, philosophical "discussions" give me a headache), why don't we look in on a game as it's being run.*

Five friends (Marcus, Daphne, Perdicus, Omphale, and Phallicus) show up at the appointed gaming site—a table with enough room for all of them plus food and drink. Phallicus has decided to run the game and so goes by the moniker "Game Master" through the course of this particular session. The rest of the group comprise the collective unit known as the "players," and each of them has created a hero (an alter ego) to use in the game. Check out the following transcript to get an idea of how a Hercules & Xena Roleplaying Game *adventure runs (dialog spoken in the voice of the hero is enclosed within quotes):*



TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

This manuscript was recently rediscovered after thousands of years hidden within a cave with Ares, God of War, along with a collection of texts known as the Xena Scrolls. While some scholars have laughed at this body of work—written and compiled by Salmoneus, the Greatest Merchant of All Time—we here at the Salmoneus Appreciation Society (SAS) have dedicated the last several years to the painstaking task of translating the document you now hold in your hands.

Every effort has been expended to accurately capture the essence of each passage, although often times direct translations have proven nearly impossible as a result of dialect variations, missing or destroyed scrolls, and blotches caused by a dark, semi-adhesive substance (scientific tests, although not entirely conclusive, report the substance as a mixture of peanuts, molasses, and olives, which some mythologists believe has a correlation to the outbreak of the stomach virus that nearly caused the collapse of Thrace—we at the SAS do not concur with this hypothesis, for we know that Salmoneus, the Greatest Merchant of All Time, would never have been involved in such a marketing disaster).

In conclusion, we wish you the best of luck with your adventuring career. The game is fast, furious, and fun, and if you're not enjoying yourself, you're not playing it right!

Game Master (Phallicus): Marcus, put those cards away. It's time to start. Everyone bring their heroes?

Daphne: Yeah. I'm playing Evadne, Slayer of Monsters!

Perdicus: I'm Acacus. He's a warrior.

Omphale: Hyperion here. He's sort of a mercenary/bounty hunter type of guy.

Marcus: And I, of course, am the dashing rogue Ion, "Ultimate Lady's Man, Lover Extraordinaire, Keeper of the Golden—"

Game Master: Just remember to keep it to yourself this time, Marcus. All right, if you remember from last week, you had just entered the antechamber of an ancient temple dedicated to the Titans. Two massive doors with knockers the size of cart wheels stand before you, preventing your entrance.

Omphale: What're the doors made of?

Game Master: Looks like metal of some sort.

Daphne: "Okay, as leader of the group, I say we should proceed very cautiously. There's no telling what's behind those doors. Especially after running into those two harpies on the way here."

Marcus: I stride purposefully up to the doors and bang the knockers.

Omphale, Daphne, Perdicus: "No!"

Marcus: "What? You afraid or something?" [Laughs.]

Game Master: As Ion turns to make fun of the rest of you, the doors swing silently outward into the room beyond and the gargantuan head of a slobbering, mutated beast—like a really ugly minotaur with a nasty case of skin disease—looms into view above Ion's figure. The rest of the monster's body remains hidden in the darkness of the chamber.

Marcus: Do I notice this?

Game Master: Make a *perception* roll.

[Marcus checks his Hero Sheet for his *perception* die code and then rolls four dice.]

Marcus: I rolled a one.

Game Master: Sadly, no, you don't notice the slavering, gaping maw about to consume you whole. The rest of you, however, see this immediately.

Omphale: Hyperion aims his bow at the creature.

Daphne: I pull out my chakram.

Perdicus: I draw my sword and start walking toward it.

Marcus: [Acting like his hero doesn't know what's going on.] "So I opened the door? I don't think that's any reason to get physical on me. I'll just close it." I turn to shut the doors and then just stand there in shock when I see the creature.

Game Master: Okay, looks like we're going into battle. Everybody make *Reflexes* rolls to see who gets to act first.

[The Game Master and all the players roll dice.]

Game Master: Anyone with a six or above.

Marcus: Me!

Game Master: What's Ion doing?

Marcus: I look the creature right in the eye and say, "Nice monster. Nice monster." Then I turn and run back toward the rest of the group.

PRINTED IN CANADA

Game Master: Why does that not surprise me? [Rolls some dice.] The creature looks at you, obviously puzzled, giving you enough time to scamper back to your companions. Okay, anyone roll a five...?

And the adventure continues, with the heroes battling against the deadly creature until they either defeat the beast, run away, or die. If they do succeed, they move on to the next part of the story. This particular excerpt happens to revolve around a combat scene, but throughout their adventures, heroes will also face puzzles, traps, politics, and various barriers of interaction during which they may have to bluff, persuade, intimidate, or even emotionally move their "opponents."

You can think of roleplaying as a mix of storytelling, improvisational acting, and strategy, with dice thrown in to determine the outcome of actions taken within the game. Unlike board or card games, roleplaying allows you to attempt anything within the realm of possibility, limited only by your hero's abilities, the random roll of the dice, and your imagination.

The Game Master acts as the narrator, director, and referee. He sets the scene, describes the action, plays the roles of the characters encountered by the heroes (villains, allies, commoners, goons, etc.), and enforces and adjudicates the rules.

Now don't get worried. There really aren't that many rules. In fact, the game has a single basic mechanic that acts as the foundation for the entire system: Roll a number of six-sided *Hercules & Xena* dice (available separately at fine game and hobby shops near you) and count the number of *chakrams* (the round killing things) that turn up. That total is compared to a difficulty value. If the roll is equal to or higher than the difficulty, the action succeeds. Otherwise, it fails. It's as simple as that.

Most of the time the Game Master extrapolates from this basic rule rather than looking up references in the text. See the *Secrets of the Ancient World* book in the *Hercules & Xena* boxed set for more information on the role of the Game Master.

If this style of play at first seems confusing, daunting, or just plain strange, don't worry. After a single game session, you'll get the hang of it. Only roleplaying games can empower you with complete control over your hero's fate—you determine her thoughts, feelings, and actions—creating a saga akin to that of Hercules, Xena, Perseus, Achilles, Theseus, and the like, complete with suspense, action, humor, and heart. You'll never want to go back to those boring one-dimensional non-roleplaying games. They just don't have the same fullness of being, the same grip on your senses, the same atmosphere of freedom. It's a trip, man.

However, don't discount the other games in the *Hercules & Xena* series. These particular games serve to get you into the mood or work as an excellent intermission within a long roleplaying session. And, of course, they, too, are available at bazaars everywhere.

THE SAGA, OR, WHY GO ADVENTURING?

One of the coolest aspects of roleplaying games involves the ongoing development of your hero. While your alter ego begins as a weak, inexperienced, would-be adventurer, over time he grows into a true hero (or even a Demigod). This evolution is reflected in the game mechanics by the improvement of skills (adding additional dice), the accruing of Character and Fate Points, and the accomplishment of Deeds.

You keep the same hero from session to session, learning more about him as the saga progresses. While each episode may have a definite conclusion, another episode comes into being immediately thereafter, weaving into a long-term storyline of epic scale—your hero's quest for fame, fortune, or godhood (or some combination thereof).

Along the way, your hero will face recurring villains, establish a network of allies, and leave her mark on the Ancient World. Heroes who become powerful

entities in their own rights often come up against the gods themselves—and only those with big...uh...hearts can hope to survive such godly encounters.

Your hero will have his own goals and ambitions depending on her background and personality. Perhaps she seeks to steal the world's greatest treasures, or to expose the dangerous world of the would-be hero for her readers, or to reclaim her own sense of purpose as she begins a new scroll in her life, or to simply defeat evil wherever it exists in whatever form it chooses to take.

Success brings the adulation of the populace at large, but may also make you a target for warlords, bounty hunters, and deities. Tread carefully, friend adventurer, for the hero's life can reap great rewards, but the risk runs high, and death is not an uncommon companion. (I should be a bard.)

In a world plagued by sadistic deities, foul monsters, and vicious warlords, brave heroes stand as the last defenders of the Greater Good. Join the ranks of the few and the proud!

And heed this warning well: Never let *hubris* get the best of you.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

Roleplaying games don't have as clear of a victory condition as board games. Just surviving an ordeal could consitute winning in a roleplaying game. Most often, however, a hero and his companions succeed when they accomplish the goal of an adventure (rescuing the king's son, freeing an innocent man, preventing a war between the Amazons and the Centaurs, etc.).

IF YOU'RE NOT HAVING FUN, YOU'RE NOT PLAYING RIGHT.

Over time, your hero may become famous, another reward for completing feats that require skill and bravery. Winning could then include elevating your hero to legendary status. Or maybe, in the case of a thief hero, the gathering of enough loot to permanently retire.

In roleplaying games, *you* get to decide how you define victory!

GETTING STARTED

I know, I know. You want to play. You're already getting tired of this description stuff, and I don't blame you. You want to get straight to the fun, which is what games are all about.

IF YOU WANT TO BE A PLAYER...

You have two options:

1. Photocopy a *Hero Template* from the back of this book and fill in the missing information (see the next chapter for more on completing Hero Templates). I recommend the use of Hero Templates for beginning players as well as for those who want to jump right into the action without spending too much time on preparation.

2. Photocopy the blank *Hero Sheet* (not a Hero Template) from the back of this book. Read the "Hero Creation" chapter to develop your own unique alter ego for the game.

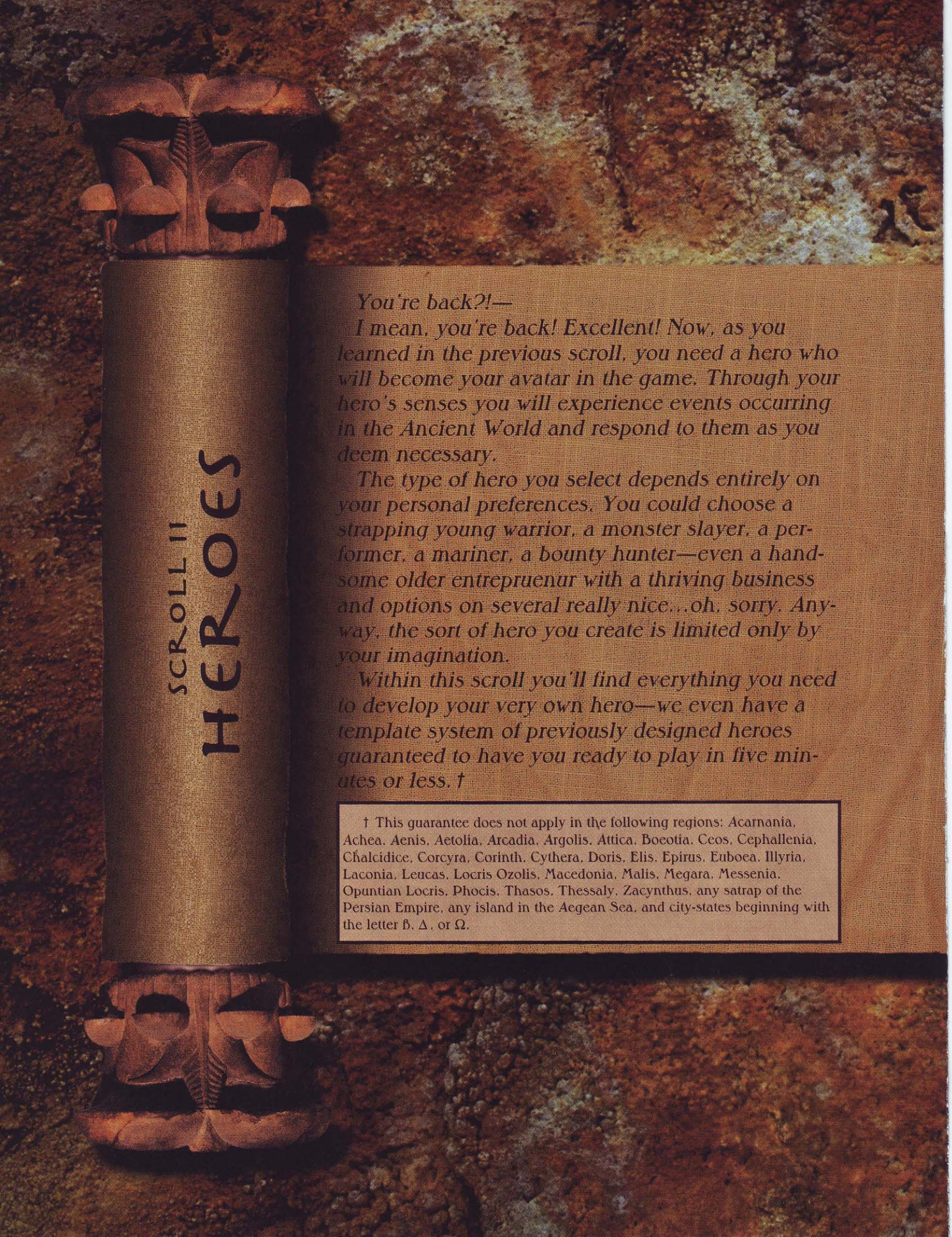
If you own the *Hercules & Xena* boxed set, play the sixteen-page solitaire adventure to get a feel for the rules before you show up for the first game session.

IF YOU WANT TO BE THE GAME MASTER...

You will need the *Hercules & Xena* boxed set if you want to tackle the role of Game Master. Read through this book and play the solitaire adventure for an introduction to the game mechanics. Next familiarize yourself with the *Secrets of the Ancient World* book and read at least one of the three other adventures included in the box.

Now, just invite your friends over (or meet at one of their houses), get some munchies, and start playing! And don't forget: have fun!

Oh, and if you can do me a favor, tell 'em Salmoneus says to buy all of the follow-up supplements to the game! I hate to beg, but...no, wait. Actually, I don't mind begging at all. Please, please, please spend your money on our game! It's quite a deal: countless hours of entertainment—without commercials!



SCROLL II
HEROES

You're back?!—

I mean, you're back! Excellent! Now, as you learned in the previous scroll, you need a hero who will become your avatar in the game. Through your hero's senses you will experience events occurring in the Ancient World and respond to them as you deem necessary.

The type of hero you select depends entirely on your personal preferences. You could choose a strapping young warrior, a monster slayer, a performer, a mariner, a bounty hunter—even a handsome older entrepruenur with a thriving business and options on several really nice...oh, sorry. Anyway, the sort of hero you create is limited only by your imagination.

Within this scroll you'll find everything you need to develop your very own hero—we even have a template system of previously designed heroes guaranteed to have you ready to play in five minutes or less. †

† This guarantee does not apply in the following regions: Acarnania, Achea, Aenis, Aetolia, Arcadia, Argolis, Attica, Boeotia, Ceos, Cephallenia, Chalcidice, Corcyra, Corinth, Cythera, Doris, Elis, Epirus, Euboea, Illyria, Laconia, Leucas, Locris Ozolis, Macedonia, Malis, Megara, Messenia, Opuntian Locris, Phocis, Thasos, Thessaly, Zacynthus, any satrap of the Persian Empire, any island in the Aegean Sea, and city-states beginning with the letter ß, Δ, or Ω.

Just grab a Hero Template (or a blank Hero Sheet) and a pencil and read on!

HERO CREATION

In this scroll, we're going to create a hero for play. Don't worry: it's quick, simple, and fun, and I'm going to show you my own progress at each step of the way just to make sure we're moving at the same pace.

USING A HERO TEMPLATE

If you want to start playing immediately or if you're new to the roleplaying world, you can skip the hero creation process and choose a *Hero Template*. Think of a template as a foundation for a character—all the ground work has been done for you. You need only supply a few details to customize your hero, and you can then embark upon your first adventure. It's as simple as that.

Make a photocopy of the Hero Template you want to use, and then follow these steps:

1. Choose a **NAME** for your hero.
2. Select a **UNIQUE POSSESSION**.
3. Assign 10D of **SKILL DICE**.

CREATING A HERO

To create a hero from the ground up, photocopy the blank *Hero Sheet* from the end of this book and follow these steps:

1. Choose a **NAME** for your hero.
2. Designate a hero **TYPE**.
3. Select a **RACE**. Note any **SPECIAL POWERS** or **VULNERABILITIES**.
4. Choose a **UNIQUE POSSESSION**.
5. Create a **GOAL**.
6. Assign **ATTRIBUTE** (24D) and **SKILL** (10D) **DICE**.
7. Determine **BODY POINTS** (20 + *Endurance* roll).
8. Heroes begin with 15 **CHARACTER POINTS**, 1 **FATE POINT**, and 0 (zero) **FAME**.
9. Indicate **SPEED** as determined by the hero's race.
10. Determine the hero's **PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**.
11. Create the hero's **BACKGROUND** and **PERSONALITY**.
12. Purchase **GEAR** (heroes begin with 200 dinars).

OPTIONAL STEPS

13. Create or choose **SPECIALTIES**.
14. Select **ADVANTAGES** and **DISADVANTAGES**.

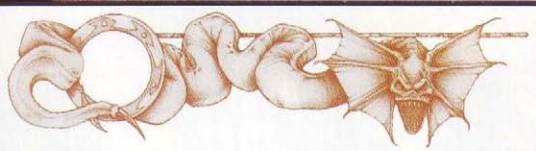
NAME

Your hero's going to need a name. You may decide to select it now or wait until you've fully developed her persona—like all of the other aspects of the *Hercules & Xena* game, it's up to you.

In the Ancient World, most people go by a single name given at birth. To avoid confusion, certain individuals tack on an appellation or title of some sort or the location of their home town. For example, Acastus of Rhodes or Meleager the Mighty.

Below you'll find a list of possible names. If your hero hails from a region on the other side of the Aegean or (gods forbid as far as) Mediterranean seas (Egypt, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, etc.), you may wish to select a more appropriate-sounding name.

If you're unfamiliar with the phonetics of the Greek language, you can extrapolate from the following pronunciation guide. An effort has been made to create a close transliteration, but the special cases and nuances of any language preclude a definitive set of rules.



USING A TEMPLATE AS A BASIS

If one of the Hero Templates appeals to you, but you would like to change one or more facets of the basic character foundation (race, gender, physical description, etc.), you can copy the portion of the hero's information you liked from the template to the blank Hero Sheet and then make modifications as you so desire.

PRONUNCIATION KEY

Letter/Letter Combination	Sound
ae	ay
c	s (or k)
ch	kh
–des	dees
–les	lees
–ope	ah-pee
–tes	tees

NAMES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Abaris
Abderus
Absyrtus
Acamas
Acantha
Acastus
Acestes
Achelous
Acheron
Acidalia
Acrisius
Actaeus
Actis
Adamanthaea
Admetus
Adrasteia
Adrastus
Aeacus
Aëdon
Aegialeia
Aegis
Aegisthus
Aegle
Aeneas
Aeolus
Aerope
Aesacus
Aethra
Agamemnon
Agathodaemon
Agenor
Aglaia
Ajax
Alastor
Alcathous
Alcestis
Alcinous
Alcithoe
Alcmaeon
Alcmene
Alcyone
Alcyoneus
Alecto
Alectryon
Aloadae
Alope
Altis

Amalthea
Amphiaraus
Amphilochus
Amphitryon
Amphoterus
Amphritrite
Amycus
Anchises
Androgeos
Andromache
Andromeda
Anius
Antaeus
Antenor
Anteros
Antilochus
Antiope
Apis
Apollodorus
Arcas
Arethusa
Aretos
Arge
Argeia
Argus
Ariadne
Arimaspi
Aristaeus
Arne
Asclepius
Asopus
Asteria
Astraeus
Astyanax
Atalanta
Ate
Athamas
Atreus
Auge
Augeas
Ausonia
Autolycus
Autonoe
Avernus
Baphyra
Battus
Bellepheron

Bendis
Boreas
Borias
Britomartis
Brizo
Brontes
Bucephalus
Busiris
Butes
Cabeiri
Cadmus
Caduceus
Caeneus
Caicas
Calais
Calchas
Callidice
Calliope
Callisto
Canace
Capaneus
Caphaurus
Capys
Carme
Carpo
Carya
Caryatis
Cassandra
Cassiopea
Castalia
Catreus
Caucasus
Cedalion
Celaeno
Charon
Daedala
Daedalion
Daemon
Danaans
Danaë
Danaidae
Daphne
Dardanus
Deianira
Deidamia
Deino
Delos

Demophon
Diomedes
Dodona
Doris
Dryope
Eirene
Enceladus
Ephialtes
Epimenides
Erato
Erichthonius
Erigone
Erisichthon
Eros
Erytheis
Etna
Eudora
Euhemerus
Eunomia
Euphrosyne
Eurydice
Eurytion
Galanthis
Galatea
Ganymede
Gasterocheires
Geryon
Glaucus
Gnatius
Gyges
Haemus
Halirrhothius
Harmonia
Hebe
Hebrus
Hecate
Hector
Hecuba
Helenus
Herema
Hesione
Hesperides
Hesperus
Hipocretes
Hippolyte
Hippolytus
Horae

Hyacinthus
Hygeia
Hylas
Hymen
Hyperion
Hypermnestra
Hypnos
Hypsipyle
Idomeneus
Indigetes
Io
Ion
Iphicles
Iphimedia
Iphis
Ixion
Jason
Jocasta
Lacedamon
Lachesis
Ladon
Laertes
Laestrygones
Laius
Laocoön
Laodameia
Laodice
Laomedon
Lapiths
Latinus
Leda
Lethe
Leucippus
Leucothea
Liartes
Lotis
Lotophagi
Lycaon
Machaon
Magnes
Maia
Marsyas
Medea
Meanderus
Meleager
Menelaus
Mera

Metis
Midas
Minos
Moly
Momus
Narcissus
Nessus
Nestor
Nike
Niobe
Nox
Oenone
Omphale
Orestes
Palladium
Pallas
Panathenea
Pandarus
Pandora
Paris
Parnassus
Parthenope
Parthenos
Pasiphaë
Patroclus
Pausanias
Peleus
Pelops
Penelope
Penthesilea
Pentheus
Perdix
Perseus
Phaedra
Phaethon
Phallicus
Phaon
Pheromoneus
Philoctetes
Philomela
Phlegethon
Phlegyas
Phobeus
Pleiades
Polycrates
Polydamna
Polyphemus

Polyxena
Pothos
Priam
Priapus
Procrustes
Proteus
Rhadamanthus
Rhesus
Rhoecus
Ripheus
Sarpedon
Selene
Semele
Sibyls
Sinon
Stallonus
Talus
Tantalus
Tantrum
Tartarus
Telegonus
Telemachus
Telephus
Telesphorus
Terpsichore
Testicles
Thalia
Thallo
Thamyris
Thanatos
Themis
Thersites
Theseus
Thespis
Thespius
Thethys
Tiresias
Tithonus
Travoltus
Triton
Trophonius
Typhon
Xanthus
Yokus
Onus
Zephyrus
Zetes

HERO TYPE

What does your hero do for a living? "He's a hero!" you say? Fine, but what areas of aptitude and expertise does he possess? Is he more inclined toward battle? Toward sea life? Toward the performing arts? Toward trading?

SALMONEUS'S HERO

A name, a name. My extensive collection of regional spoons for a name. I think I'll choose... Triton. Sounds pretty cool to me.

Below you'll find entries on various vocations, their important attributes, typical skills, and roles in the Ancient World. Consider this list a starting point. You can develop your own hero types at your discretion, though you may want to get your Game Master's approval if you're not running the adventures.

Words within parentheses in the "Typical Skills" section indicate recommended Specialties.

AMAZON

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Endurance, Reflexes*
Typical Skills: *acrobatics, battle cry, climb, command, cultures (Amazon), dance, dodge, fighting, first aid, hide, hurled weapons, marksmanship, perception, run, stay up, survival (forest), track*
Role: The collective Amazonian culture encompasses many individual tribes of human warrior women. Each tribe has its own tenets, history, fighting styles, and goals, but all stand for the proliferation of women's rights to one degree or another in an otherwise male-dominated world.

Paradoxically, most Amazons ascribe their origins to the daughters of Ares, God of War, though they all agree that Artemis initiated the Amazon cause, stealing away a select group of young girls and training them to become self-sufficient huntresses capable of existing without men. Unfortunately, males do come in handy for the propagation of the Amazonian lineage, so raids into nearby villages occur every few months to ensure a healthy source of females. Male infants are either left to die or are returned to the village of their father (or whichever settlement is closest), depending on the culture of the particular tribe.

Most Amazon tribes reside in forested regions where they use the trees and plant life as natural defenses. Tracking an Amazon through her own woodland is a nearly impossible task, especially considering the Amazon penchant for traveling through the upper branches of the forest canopy.

Each tribe tends to select a single weapon as its weapon of choice—crossbow, lasso, javelin, or other—but this does not mean that they shun other types. Rather it indicates a preference and therefore an expertise, but no Amazon worth her blood would be found without at least three different weapons on her body.

In general, Amazons prefer seclusion from the "civilized" world, focusing on their own society and the defense and growth thereof. One would do well to avoid ticking off an Amazon, especially males—unless of course you feel those jewels you're carrying are just getting in the way.

ARCHER

Important Attributes: *Coordination*
Typical Skills: *smithing, marksmanship, perception, stay up*
Role: Warriors specialized in the use of the bow or crossbow are rare across the Ancient World. The training time required to produce such skilled marksmen precludes the development of large units of archers, especially during war time, when new soldiers must be recruited as quickly as possible. As a result, most archers are mercenaries hiring themselves out to armies, warlords, or individuals who can afford their services (which can vary from one to ten dinars per day, depending on the locale, type of work, and danger level). In some city-states, archers act as members of the city's police force, able to "apprehend" criminals at a distance.

While most Greek archers employ the standard thumb-and-forefinger grip, the Scythians (nomads based around the Caspian Sea north of Thrace) have perfected a technique they call the "Mediterranean loose" in which the first three fingers of the hand are curled around the bowstring, allowing them to draw more powerful bows (known as Scythian bows).

Archers do not wear armor or carry other weapons (though they may have a knife used to construct new arrows).

ARTISAN

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *smithing, invent, leatherwork, perception, scholar (basketweaving, glass-blowing, painting)*
Role: Artisans run the gamut from skilled laborers (architects, fashion designers) to true artists (painters, poets). They earn their keep by performing contracted work or by selling merchandise they have created previously. Well-known artisans often receive offers of employment from individuals across the Ancient World—trendy nobles just have to have the latest from the current movers and shakers in the artistic arena.

ATTENDANT

Important Attributes: *Charisma, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *animal handling, cultures, instruments, perception, persuade, reading/writing, remember, scholar (sucking up)*
Role: The attendant fulfills the every need and desire of his employer, seeing to everything from sustenance and lodging to paperwork and personal hygiene. While the life of an attendant may appear difficult and at times revolting, it pays well (at least, better than the slave wage) and allows him to travel the world with his master. Even better, the attendant learns exactly what annoys his employer, enabling him to enact revenge for any injustices cast upon him by his master in a way that puts the blame on someone or something seemingly beyond the attendant's control (and it works every time!).

BARD

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Charisma, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *astrology, cultures, dodge, history, instruments, legends, monsters, omen interpretation, pantheon, persuade, reading/writing, remember, singing, storytelling, streetwise*
Role: The bard plays a crucial role in the society of the Ancient World. She bears the responsibility of recording the saga of history as it unfolds around her. Many bards simply create their poems or prose by interviewing eyewitnesses or researching public records. But the best (and most daring) bards accompany a hero or band of heroes to experience the events for herself so that she can better convey to her audience the moment by moment details of the trials and tests of the hero or heroes.

BOUNTY HUNTER

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Awareness*
Typical Skills: *fighting, hurled weapons, intimidate, lockpick, marksmanship, perception, ride, streetwise, track*
Role: The bounty hunter spends the majority of his time tracking down wanted men and women, recouping a fee from the party interested in the individual in question. For experienced bounty hunters, this line of work can pay well. But unless based in a large city like Athens or Thebes, he or she must travel from one village or settlement to the next seeking out opportunities.

CHARIOTEER

Important Attributes: *Reflexes, Awareness, Mettle*
Typical Skills: *animal handling, battle cry, charioteering, hurled weapons, marksmanship, ride, scholar (chariot racing), stay up*
Role: Driving a chariot takes skill and courage, and few people across the Ancient World dare to accept the challenge. As a result, most charioteers have learned their skills from the military or a well-paid instructor. Chariot races throughout the lands draw huge crowds who pay to watch the charioteers compete for hefty purses (which often result in deadly collisions, especially near the finish line). The charioteer leads an exciting life, traveling from hippodrome to hippodrome, continually streamlining his chariot and honing his skills so that he can win the next big prize, with an eye always toward the Olympic Games.

CHRONICLER

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Charisma, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *disguise, dodge, flirt, hide, history, reading/writing, read lips, ride, run, search, sneak, streetwise, swim*
Role: As the exposer of truth, the chronicler journeys across the world recording the deeds of men, women, monsters, and deities. When she has a chance and a large collection of filled scrolls, she stops at a large city to deposit her work in the library so that scribes might copy her writings and distribute them throughout the Ancient World. The life of a chronicler can quickly become dangerous, as she finds herself accompanying heroes into battle with ferocious monsters, masquerading as part of a vicious warlord's army, or even infiltrating a government senate to reveal rampant corruption.

ENTREPRENEUR

Important Attributes: *Charisma, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *bargain, bluff, geography, flirt, intimidate, perception, persuade, navigation, reading/writing, scholar (business), streetwise, trading*

Role: An entrepreneur earns his keep by exploiting deficiencies in supply and abundances in demand, moving goods from one region to another or providing a needed service to the citizens of a particular town or city.

While many consider entrepreneurs bloodsucking middlemen, they are often the ones responsible for forging new alliances between territories and blazing new trade routes. Their lust for money takes them where more content individuals would rather not tread. Truly, the entrepreneur is the greatest of all heroes (and someone should let the bards know about that), valiantly sacrificing himself for the needs of the populace at large (that's not over the top, is it?).

GLADIATOR

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Strength, Mettle*
Typical Skills: *battle cry, cultures (gladiator), dodge, fighting, hurled weapons, intimidate, lift, marksmanship, stay up, willpower*
Role: The gladiator is a true fighter in its most basic sense. He lives to battle, using his time between contests only to practice his combat skills. While the majority of gladiators have short life spans, the successful (and therefore long-lived) ones often find themselves given positions of power in the military or government or lauded as heroes and patrons of their home city-states.

HEALER

Important Attributes: *Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *first aid, reading/writing, scholar (medicine)*
Role: Healers come from one of three schools: religious, philosophical, or hybrid. Religious healers, found almost exclusively in temples, typically venerate Apollo or Asceplius, the gods most associated with healing, and look to these deities to help rejuvenate the injured and the sick.

Philosophical healers follow the sixty medical treatises of the Hippocrates Corpus (Nature of Man), which directly clashes with the tenets of the religious school, shunning the intervention of the gods while relying on the intelligence and ingenuity of the human mind. These practitioners have established centers for the study and application of medicine, usually as an outgrowth of an existing academy.

The hybrid school combines elements of the other two, but healers of this mindset often find themselves outcast by both groups, forcing them to set up independent clinics in areas that will accept their practices.

HOPLITE

Important Attributes: *Endurance, Reflexes, Mettle*
Typical Skills: *battle cry, cultures (army), dodge, fighting (spear, sword), run, stay up, willpower*
Role: The armies of the Ancient World have as their foundation phalanxes of heavy infantry, hearty soldiers armed and armored to the gills. Hoplites carry swords and spears for attack and wear a breastplate, helmet, and greaves for defense. The name hoplite derives from *hoplon*, the name of the heavy shield emblazoned with the symbol of the entity for which they fight, be it a city, state, or deity.

According to the Code of War, hoplites owe their allegiance to their leaders and must comply with any orders given them. The Code also delineates the ethics of combat and the tenets of victory in the eyes of

THE HOPLITE'S CODE OF WAR

- Obey, upon pain of death, all orders given by a superior.
- Give the enemy no quarter in battle.
- Never abuse the trust of those you are charged to protect.
- Stay at one's post until properly relieved.
- Victory is only won with honor, blood, and valor.
- At all times, conduct yourself in a manner appropriate for a warrior of (fill in region, kingdom, or city here).
- Never give up, unless doing so will save those you have sworn to defend.
- When under interrogation by the enemy, reveal only your name, rank, and favorite meal.
- Above all, place your own life last in all matters. You live to serve.

the gods. Breaking the Code results in immediate banishment from the army, unless the individual in question agrees to perform a particularly dangerous task as determined by the highest-ranking commander present.

INVENTOR

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *invent, perception, reading/writing, scholar* (area of study)
Role: The typical inventor has studied at an academy somewhere in the Ancient World, focusing on a particular discipline that intrigues him: mathematics, physics, engineering, or other science.

Since leaving formal education, he has set to intensive experimentation in an attempt to devise a new method, theory, or device within his field, a discovery that will guarantee the survival of his name long past his death. Such intense work often requires him to search out additional information, from texts lost in natural disasters to inventors in foreign lands operating in the same discipline. Such research can take him far from his homeland, but the rewards of travel can far outweigh the time and difficulty of the journey.

If you create an inventor hero, you should immediately select his area of interest and the name of the school where he studied it. Every major city has its own academy (Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Epidaurus, Delphi, Thebes, and so forth) as do many of the Greek regions (Attica, Euboea, Boeotia, Messenia, and others).

MARINER

Important Attributes: *Endurance, Strength, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *astrology, geography, fighting, marksmanship (ballista, catapult), navigation, reading/writing, scholar sailing, survival (sea)*
Role: Exploration, trade, and war have lured many to the sea. Though geographers, merchants, and kings commission such excursions, mariners are the men and women charged with carrying them out.

Since navigational charts remain a rare commodity, a mariner relies on the sun and stars to guide him, and must therefore have a working knowledge of astrology. And as the prevailing winds constantly shift direction across the Mediterranean depending on the season, mariners aboard sailing vessels require additional knowledge in the area of weather patterns.

Because the size of the crew plays a role in determining the speed of the craft (the weight it must carry), most mariners must also have several additional skills, especially those related to combat for fighting off marauders, pirates, and enemy warships.

MONSTER SLAYER

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *dodge, fighting, hurled weapons, marksmanship, monsters, navigation, stay up, track*
Role: Monster slayers journey across the Ancient World seeking out supernatural creatures who plague civilization. Woe to the fiend who crosses paths with such fearsome, dedicated warriors, for they will not relent until every monster on the face of the earth has been destroyed.

Some would suggest that monster slayers are nothing more than obsessive, bigoted thugs intent on eradicating anything possessing morals and appearance different from their own. And, at times, this perspective appears to hold some truth. But many heroes, including Hercules and Perseus, have risked

their lives battling creatures who would have killed hundreds if not thousands of innocents. Monster slayers, therefore, must walk a fine line between heroism and hatred.

Over time, the monster community comes to learn of these slayers and their deeds. After a few successful encounters against such creatures, a slayer may find that the roles have reversed—the monsters have become the hunters and he has become the prey. A slayer must therefore constantly be on guard...

MYRIMIDON

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Endurance, Reflexes, Strength*
Typical Skills: *battle cry, cultures (army), dodge, fighting, hurled weapons, intimidate, leap, lift, marksmanship, perception, stay up*
Role: The myrimidon is at heart a mercenary, ready to carry out any military command regardless of its nature. Most cultures view myrimidons as ruthless thugs, tolerated only for their skill in combat and their willingness to act as a first line of defense against warlords' armies.

According to scholars, the first myrimidons were created by Zeus himself from ants when King Aeacus of Aegina, one of Zeus's sons, requested that his father replenish Aegina's population after Hera sent a plague to destroy all its citizens. King Aeacus then sent these new soldiers to accompany Achilles in the fight against the Trojans.

PERFORMER

Important Attributes: *Reflexes, Awareness, Charisma*
Typical Skills: *acrobatics, animal handling, dance, instruments, juggling, legends, lift, philosophy, singing, streetwise, survival (cities)*
Role: Performers include actors, dancers, singers, musicians, comedians, jugglers, and other individuals who can draw a crowd to watch them employ their skills. More famous performers command large audiences, and the most renowned can even fill stadiums, arenas, or hippodromes, depending on the size and facilities of the city.

Street performers receive a range of reactions from the general populace, running from acceptance to pity to outright hatred.

PRIEST/PRIESTESS

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *astrology, cultures, omen interpretation, pantheon, reading/writing, scholar* (god), *willpower*
Role: The priests and priestesses of the Ancient World dedicate their lives to a particular deity, be it a member of the Olympian Pantheon, a lesser god or spirit, or an entity of inexplicable supernatural power.

Priests of most deities spend many years as acolytes under experienced mentors who teach the new adepts the tenets of the god's world view and goals, as well as the rituals required to appease the deity. Some priests are then sent out into the world to spread the word of their god and bring new worshippers into the fold. Above all, a priest seeks to erect new temples to his god, thereby increasing the power of the deity.

Some entities have been known to grant their priests and priestesses mystical powers, from healing and foresight to the ability to wield dangerous energies like fire or lightning. To gain and retain these powers, however, the priest must constantly prove his dedication to the deity—and even so, the whim of the gods often seems without rhyme or reason, and a priest may therefore find himself stripped of his divine abilities at any time.

When an individual agrees to create such a close relationship with a god, he takes his life into his hands. Contrary to popular belief, the life of a priest is one filled with hard work and danger—very few are up to the challenge.

ROGUE

Important Attributes: *Charisma*
Typical Skills: *bluff, cultures, dance, disguise, gaming, flirt, instruments, marksmanship, perception, persuade, ride*
Role: In certain regions, the rogue is also called the lady's man (or, for the female of the species, the man's lady—ooh, somehow I don't like the image that terminology evokes). He is the quintessential charmer, earning his keep at the local gambling house and in the beds of noble women. Of course, he must have tales to tell of his heroism in order to weave his charismatic spell (and to earn a few dinars for the gaming tables), so once in a while he embarks on a "valiant" errand with some terribly non-dashing, would-be heroes.

While the rogue tends to quickly rub the nerves of his companions raw, he does have his usefulness, especially when it comes to members of the opposite sex who would thwart the heroes' goals. And the rogue does not discriminate against the beatifically challenged—he's an equal opportunity swindler.

SEER

Important Attributes: *Awareness, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *astrology, omen interpretation, perception, scholar (fortune-telling)*
Role: Proclaiming yourself a seer is a two-edged sword. First, the majority of the populace considers you daft, out of your mind, loony, bonkers, wacko (you get the idea?). And second, everyone wants you to divine their destiny. If they like what they hear, they'll acknowledge you as the greatest seer that ever lived. But if they don't appreciate what you have to say, it's back to the insanity remarks.

A seer can help steer an adventuring band in the right direction—if he reads the signs correctly. The gods love to toy with mortals, so they often leave clues of things to come that go unnoticed by all but the observant seer, who must then set to the challenge of interpreting these well-disguised omens. A correct deduction may save the lives of one or more heroes, but an incorrect one...well, that could cost you. The seer, then, bears a great responsibility at all times, and it is not unlikely for him to slowly drive himself insane with this psychological weight, lending ever more credence to the debunkers who view all seers as neurotic blasphemers.

SPY

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Awareness, Charisma*
Typical Skills: *bargain, bluff, conceal, disguise, dodge, flirt, hide, intimidate, lockpick, persuade, pick pocket, read lips, reading/writing, remember, search, sneak, streetwise, willpower*
Role: The spy constantly treads on dangerous ground, using his skills to infiltrate enemy territory to gain access to the intelligence of his benefactor's adversaries. He must be a master of disguise and an accomplished thespian to pull off such risky business.

The majority of spies belong to the military forces of one Greek city-state or another (especially those of Athens and Sparta) or of a Persian satrap or Egyptian Pharaoh, but a few count themselves as agents for hire, willing to sell their services to the highest bidder.

Spies often masquerade as another hero type: rogue, thief, warrior, or whatever seems appropriate for the particular mission. Heroes must therefore be ever wary of their companions—you can't judge a scroll by its roller...

THIEF

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Awareness*
Typical Skills: *acrobatics, bluff, climb, conceal, disguise, dodge, hide, lockpick, pick pocket, run, scholar (treasures), search, sneak, streetwise*

Role: Thieves procure items belonging to other individuals or entities, often bypassing certain codes of ethics and law in the process. Some do it for the money, others for the challenge—either way it is a dangerous and therefore exciting profession. A thief must be quick, nimble, good with his hands and his tongue (please get your mind out of the gutter, you're only embarrassing yourself).

The greatest of thieves, of course, are the ones who are never caught. These master purloiners often create an alter ego for themselves, leaving a calling card (a black glove, a feather, a broken arrow, etc.) at the scene of each crime to further his reputation.

WANDERER

Important Attributes: *Endurance, Awareness, Knowledge*
Typical Skills: *astrology, first aid, geography, legends, monsters, navigation, omen interpretation, resist disease, ride, run, survival, swim, trading*
Role: The wanderer, well, wanders across the Ancient World. Some have a particular goal in mind (to see the Seven Wonders of the World), others don't, preferring to meander aimlessly, entrusting their lives wholly to the whims of Fortune (good luck).

Over time, the wanderer comes to be an expert on the world at large, acquiring bits of information about every area and culture she has visited. In some cases, the first-hand experience of the wanderer surpasses the knowledge of sages who have learned only from crusty old scrolls slowly decaying in ancient libraries.

WARRIOR

Important Attributes: *Coordination, Reflexes, Strength, Mettle*
Typical Skills: *battle cry, command, dodge, fighting, hurled weapons, intimidate, first aid, geography, leap, lift, marksmanship, navigation, ride, stay up, survival, track, willpower*
Role: The warrior is the ultimate fighting machine, focusing her entire life on battle. She trains daily, honing her skills, heightening her senses, preparing for the next melee with whatever force dares to challenge her.

The physical prowess of such heroes can lead to difficulties down the line, however. Often times a warrior comes to rely solely on battle to settle any conflict, when compromise, trickery, or bribery might work just as well (and without as much spilled blood). Some warriors may even become addicted to the rush of adrenaline that surges through their veins during combat, causing them to crave battle constantly—these are the men and women who eventually become fearless warlords intent on the subjugation of all they see. Only the strong of mind and heart can hope to resist this preternatural urge.

RACE

Most heroes in the Ancient World come from human stock, but you may instead choose to play a Centaur, a Nymph, or a Satyr. Each of these races has its own set of minimum and maximum attribute scores (more on attributes later) that gives you a quick overview of that races' general aptitudes. For example, Centaurs have a higher limit on *Endurance* scores than humans (6D vs. 5D), indicating the Centaurs' more robust resistance to bodily harm (I just wish I had a higher resistance to their smell).

CENTAUR

Centaurs (SEN-tars) have the head, arms, and chest of a human and the body, legs, and tail of a horse.

According to one myth, they are the offspring of Ixion, the king of Thessaly, and a cloud. He had arranged a tryst with Hera, but Zeus got wind of it and fashioned a cloud into Hera's shape. Therefore, the Centaurs are sometimes called Ixionidae.

Centaurs tend to follow the god Bacchus, and so have earned a reputation for drunkenness and absconding with young maidens. Centaurs gather in clusters they call tribes, though lineage does not necessarily play a part in determining whether or not a particular Centaur belongs to a particular tribe. The original tribe continues to live on Mount Pelion in Thessaly, but several splinter groups have established colonies or even new tribal lands in many areas of the Ancient World.

Tribes come together only rarely, either in times of festival or in times of

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Well, I've been admonished in my first draft for choosing "entrepreneur" as my hero's type, so I'll have to select something different. Hmm...there really isn't much of a selection beyond entrepreneur, is there? I guess I'll take "monster slayer." Ooh, dangerous. I like that in a man...not that I like men, I mean, not that I don't like men, I mean, there's nothing wrong with, oh, who cares what I think. Let's move on.

darkness, when the Centaurs must combine their resources to fight off a powerful foe. Such a gathering bodes ill for all in the immediate vicinity, for the physical might and undefeatable willpower of the Centaurs often intertwines to create a fierce bloodlust during heated battles.

According to Hercules, Centaurs attending the wedding feast of Penelope and Marcus at Nespa became intoxicated and started a massive fight during which the bride was kidnapped.

But not all Centaurs display this wild behavior. Chiron, a close friend of Hercules, received instruction from Apollo and Artemis. He grew renowned for his skill in hunting, medicine, music, and the art of prophecy and omen interpretation. In turn, Chiron counted many heroes as his pupils, including Jason and Achilles.

Chiron's friends considered him the wisest and most just of all the Centaurs, and at his death Zeus placed him among the stars as the constellation Sagittarius. Most Centaurs throughout the Ancient World view Chiron as a hero, but a few see him as a traitor who abandoned his natural inclinations to adopt the behaviors of humans and the will of the gods. In some regions, this issue runs hot, at times erupting into full-fledged battles. This difference in viewpoint has created a subtle division among the Centaurs, and the answer to the question "What do you think of Chiron?" can quickly determine the reaction of one Centaur to another.

According to some scholars of the Olympian Pantheon, the blood of a small percentage of Centaurs can produce magical effects, ranging from the ability to create an inextinguishable flame to invisibility, invulnerability, or even flight. As a result, some unscrupulous bounty hunters track down and kill Centaurs for their blood. (Game Master may opt to make a secret roll of the Wild Die to determine whether a Centaur hero has magical blood. If the Thunderbolt of Zeus turns up, the Centaur's veins course with magic.)

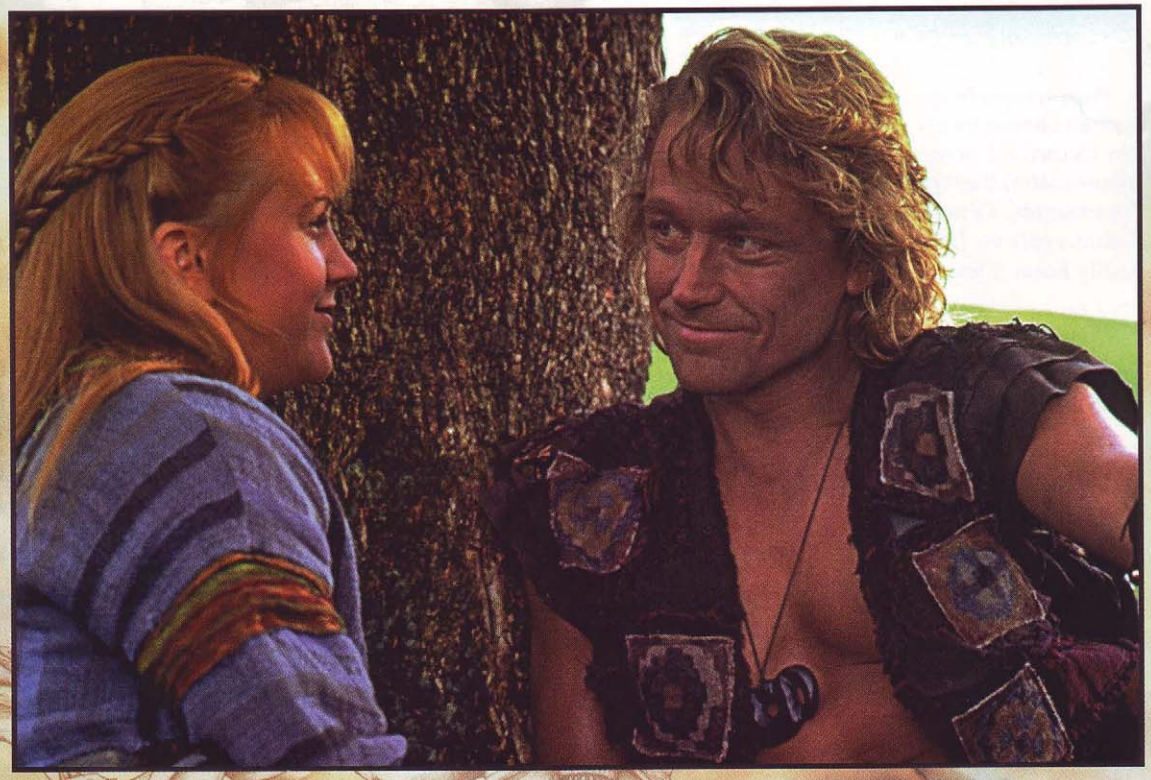
Speed: 45

SPECIAL POWER

Heightened Endurance: The Centaur's physical fortitude engerders him with high resistance to injuries resulting from disease, poison, and the like. As a result, Centaur heroes gain a +1D bonus to their *Endurance* attribute (not to exceed the race maximum of 6D).

MATING

While crossbreeding occurs on a fairly regular basis, the offspring of such unions display the features of only one parent. A Centaur and human couple would produce either Centaur or human children with equal probability. A single family may include children of different races, but interspecies breeding will never succeed in creating any sort of hybrid child...unless, of course, the gods have something to do with it. Then you're up that, you know, that creek.



VULNERABILITY

Bloodlust: Each time a Centaur attacks during battle, he must make a fast-react *willpower* check against his total attack roll. Failure indicates that the Centaur loses control of his battle rage and assaults the closest living target (whether friend or foe) each exchange thereafter. To escape the effects of bloodlust, the Centaur must beat an attack roll by at least two (2) or else remove himself from the presence of others. Once alone, he may make *willpower* rolls every five seconds against a base difficulty of three (3) to shake off the bloodlust.

CENTAUR ATTRIBUTE RESTRICTIONS

Attribute	Min	Max
Coordination	2D	5D
Endurance	2D	6D
Reflexes	2D	4D
Strength	2D	6D
Awareness	2D	5D
Charisma	2D	4D
Knowledge	2D	5D
Mettle	2D	5D

HUMAN

Humanity has earned a reputation as masters of adaptation, constantly devising new ways to survive in and interact with the environment. Their lust for adventure has taken them far from the mainland to establish colonies in uncivilized regions and thriving trade with foreign territories. On any seaworthy vessel, you would be surprised to find a non-human aboard.

Some scholars (especially human ones) consider humans the favored among all of the gods' offspring, and this viewpoint has led to an arrogance displayed by no other race, at times producing ferocious warlords intent on conquering the regions they wish to control and laying waste to the rest.

But humans also have a great capacity for understanding and compassion, if only they can bring themselves to tap that aspect of their souls. Most heroes throughout the Ancient World have come from human stock, a testament to the tenacity, vitality, and goodheartedness of the race as a whole.

Speed: 30

HUMAN ATTRIBUTE RESTRICTIONS

Attribute	Min	Max
Coordination	2D	5D
Endurance	2D	5D
Reflexes	2D	5D
Strength	2D	5D
Awareness	2D	5D
Charisma	2D	5D
Knowledge	2D	5D
Mettle	2D	5D

NYMPH

Nymphs resemble human females in many ways, especially form and facial features (that's a series of similar consonants poets call illiterat...alotarat...oh, just ask Gabrielle). In fact, most observers would see no dissimilarity between the two races upon casual inspection. But looks can be deceiving, especially when deities are involved.

According to many historians, Nymphs descend from a line fathered by Zeus himself. Some scholars even consider Nymphs to be lesser spirits. Though they do tend to have long life spans, however, they are not immortal.

Nymphs are typically associated with elements that foster fertility and growth: water, forests, and so forth. The term Nymph refers to the overall race, which encompasses several groups differentiated by the sphere of nature with which they have established a symbiosis.

Name	Sphere
Alseids	Glens and groves
Hamadryads	Forests and trees
Naiads	Springs, rivers, and lakes
Nereids	Saltwater (and sometimes freshwater)
Oreads	Mountains and grottoes

Nymphs regard themselves as the guardians of their respective spheres. This relationship has grown so close over the centuries that the well-being of the one has come to rely on the well-being of the other. Alseids in proximity to burned-out groves or Naiads near polluted lakes suffer as if they had directly experienced the destruction.

But this symbiosis also has its benefits. Nymphs gain strength and fortitude from the promulgation and purity of nature. A Dryad in a thriving forest senses a subtle power supplementing her own innate abilities, for example.

Speed: 40 (within native environment); 20 everywhere else

NYMPH ATTRIBUTE RESTRICTIONS

Attribute	Min	Max
Coordination	2D	5D
Endurance	2D	5D
Reflexes	2D	5D
Strength	2D	4D
Awareness	2D	5D
Charisma	2D	6D
Knowledge	2D	5D
Mettle	2D	5D

SPECIAL POWERS

Environment Reinforcement: When within her own sphere, a Nymph becomes attuned to her surroundings. In game mechanics, the player controlling the Nymph may reroll any one die during a skill roll (*replacing* the original result, not *adding* to the total).

Heightened Charisma: Since Nymphs reside within nature, they tend to possess natural beauty. In game terms, Nymph heroes receive a +1D bonus to their *Charisma* attribute (not to exceed the race maximum of 6D).

VULNERABILITY

Environment Deprivation: When a Nymph spends more than two weeks outside of her sphere, she loses a portion of her connection to the world. For each week beyond the second, a Nymph loses 1D from a random attribute (roll 8D to determine which attribute, rerolling if you generate a total of zero). If any of the Nymph's attributes falls to zero, she immediately falls into a coma, staying that way until brought back into her sphere. Healing occurs at a rate of 1D per attribute per day spent in her native environment (all attributes heal at the same time).

SATYR

Satyrs (SAY-ters) have human upper bodies and goat legs and horns. They tend to live in forested regions, especially those covering foothills at the base of mountain ranges.

Human settlements in the vicinity of Satyr lands view the Satyr as wild, uncivilized barbarians with little to offer any sophisticated culture. This view appears to have arisen from a series of Satyr raids several hundred years ago. During this stage of the Satyr's cultural evolution, Bacchus (sometimes called Dionysus) was venerated as their patron deity. To please the god of fertility, ecstasy, and wine, the Satyrs routinely drank themselves into a stupor and proceeded to attempt to mate with the women of outlying human villages.

As of late, however, a majority of the Satyr population has taken to following Pan, god of flocks, fertility, shepherds, forests, and wild life. This migration has essentially eliminated the desire to drown themselves in intoxicants and assault nearby towns. Most Satyrs hope to establish an exchange of goods and ideas between themselves and other races, but they often find themselves stymied by the sins of their ancestors. A small segment, however, continues to worship Bacchus, and at the behest of the god—or so it is said—seek to bring their brethren back into the fold...one way or the other.

Adolescent males typically grow some sort of facial hair: mustaches, beards, goatees, sideburns. In some Satyr villages it has become an art form, with elaborate shearing and braids that create a unique look for each individual. Satyrs of this age pride themselves on their creativity and the fullness of their growth.

The most popular instruments of the Satyr culture is the syrinx, a seven-reed flute devised by Pan himself.

Speed: 25

SPECIAL POWER

Heightened Awareness: The Satyr's combination of affinity for nature and creativity results in a higher level of perception than other races. In game terms, Satyr heroes receive a +1D bonus to their *Awareness* attribute (not to exceed the race maximum of 6D).

SATYR ATTRIBUTE RESTRICTIONS

Attribute	Min	Max
Coordination	2D	5D
Endurance	2D	5D
Reflexes	2D	5D
Strength	2D	5D
Awareness	2D	6D
Charisma	2D	5D
Knowledge	2D	5D
Mettle	2D	4D

UNIQUE POSSESSION

Your hero should have one item that reflects his heritage. A warrior may have been bequeathed his father's sword, or a juggler might have been given a perfectly weighted set of balls (hey, I know what you're thinking—stop it) by his teacher, or a chronicler may have received a rare ream of papyrus or vellum as a gift from an anonymous party.

The unique possession should in some way add to the hero's background or provide adventuring opportunities down the line, i.e., it should have sentimental value to him or her. It shouldn't be a precious object (gems, a sack of dinars, the Kama Sutra) that the hero can turn around and sell or trade away.

The hero does not have to purchase the item using her initial allocation of dinars. She is assumed to have acquired it prior to the start of her adventuring life.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Let's see. Oh, I think I'll just play your standard human this time. If I'd chosen a Centaur or one of the other races, I would indicate their Special Powers and/or Vulnerabilities on my Hero Sheet. See how I've already saved myself some time? Waste not, want not, I always say...

No, wait, I don't say that. Hercules says that. Me, I say waste as much as you want. I can make more.

GOALS

What does your hero hope to accomplish during his lifetime? To become monarch of a region? To slay the creature that killed his family? To play the Athenian stadium? Knowing what your hero wants can help you more consistently run her over the course of dozens of adventures.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Okay, Triton is a human monster slayer. What unique possession would he have? Got it! The iron necklace his father was wearing when he was killed by a Gorgon shortly after Triton's birth. (See how I'm already starting to define my hero's background?)

Goals may be achieved or may change, but the hero should always have an objective in mind, if only vaguely (to right wrongs, for example).

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

Characters in tragedies, comedies, and epics have inherent aptitudes and learned areas of expertise that help define their physical and mental abilities. You need to determine similar information for your hero that will be used throughout the game to adjudicate his attempts to perform particular actions. For example, if your hero wants to pick a lock to rescue an imprisoned ally, the Game Master will call for you to make a *lockpick* roll. Using the die code of your hero's *lockpick* skill (more about die codes in a moment), you gather a certain number of dice and generate a number. This value decides whether or not your hero succeeds at the attempt to pick the lock.

Each attribute and skill has a *die code*, a score that represents the number of six-sided dice you must roll when the hero tries to accom-

SALMONEUS'S HERO

If Triton's father was killed by a Gorgon, he probably wants to hunt down and destroy the beast. My hero won't rest until he avenges his father's death.

plish a given task. Attributes for human heroes fall in the range of 2D (for two dice) to 5D (for five dice). (See above for the minimum and maximum values of other races.) All skills fall beneath one of the eight attributes (*Coordination, Endurance, Reflexes, Strength, Awareness, Charisma, Knowledge, Mettle*) and have a base value equal to the governing attribute's die code. For example, a hero's *acrobatics* skill has a base value equal to his *Reflexes* die code since *acrobatics* falls under *Reflexes*.

ASSIGNING ATTRIBUTE DICE

At this point you must distribute your starting attribute dice. You have 24D to split among the eight aptitudes in any manner you deem appropriate as long as the die codes do not exceed the boundaries noted in the race's Attribute Restriction tables above.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

I won't go into my reasoning, but based on the monster slayer's "important attributes" as designated in the "Type" section above, I've distributed my 24D of attribute dice thusly:

COORDINATION	4D
ENDURANCE	2D
REFLEXES	5D
STRENGTH	2D
AWARENESS	3D
CHARISMA	2D
KNOWLEDGE	4D
METTLE	2D

What're you doing? Checking my math? Frankly, I'm insulted. I've never cheated in my life...shaved off a fraction here or there, maybe. But cheated? I can safely say that I have no recollection of that incident.

ASSIGNING SKILL DICE

Your hero also begins with a certain amount of expertise in various skills of your choosing. You have 10D to distribute among skills, with a maximum of 2D assigned to any one skill during the hero creation process (you can improve skill dice beyond this limitation as your hero adventures—see "Improving Skills & Specialties" below).

Remember, the attribute acts as the base die code for the skills it governs. For example, if you assign 1D of skill dice to the *survival* skill, you add that 1D to the *Knowledge* attribute (say 3D) for a total *survival* skill of 4D (3D + 1D = 4D).

To reiterate, skill dice *add* to the attribute dice when determining the total skill die code. See the "Attribute & Skill Descriptions" section below for full details on each skill.

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS AT A GLANCE

COORDINATION
Hurled Weapons
Instruments
Lockpick
Marksmanship
Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE
Resist Disease
Resist Poison
Run
Swim

REFLEXES
Acrobatics
Charioteering
Dance
Dodge
Fighting
Juggling
Ride
Sneak

STRENGTH
Climb
Leap
Lift

AWARENESS
Animal Handling
Conceal
Hide
Invent
Omen Interpretation
Perception
Read Lips
Remember
Search
Track

CHARISMA
Bargain
Beg
Bluff
Command
Flirt
Intimidate
Persuade
Singing
Storytelling

KNOWLEDGE
Astrology
Cultures
Disguise
First Aid
Gaming
Geography
History
Leatherwork
Legends
Monsters
Navigation
Pantheon
Philosophy
Reading/Writing
Scholar
Smithing
Speaking
Streetwise
Survival
Trading

METTLE
Battle Cry
Stay Up
Willpower

MAKING AN ACTION ROLL

So what are these attribute and skill dice for?

At some point during a *Hercules & Xena* adventure, you'll want your hero to attempt a task that she has a chance of failing. In these cases, the Game Master will call for an action roll.

Don't worry, the mechanic to resolve an action is simple and applies across the board for all attributes and skills. First, determine the die code of the skill the hero is attempting. If he does not have any expertise in that particular skill, i.e., he has no skill dice, use the base attribute die code. Second, roll that number of six-sided dice and count the number of chakrams

(as opposed to hydras) that come up. Last, inform the Game Master of the count total.

The Game Master then compares your hero's total to another value called the difficulty. Depending on the type of roll, the difficulty may be a static, predetermined number (1, 2, 3, etc.) or a dynamic opposed roll (a roll made by an entity opposing the hero's skill attempt). You don't need to know the specific difficulty value—the Game Master will handle all of this information for you and will tell you whether or not your hero has succeeded at the action.

The difference between the hero's die roll and the difficulty is known as the effect value.

FAST-REACT ROLLS

During the course of an adventure, the Game Master may call for a fast-react roll for any given skill or attribute. This type of roll reflects the body's and the mind's unconscious, immediate reaction to a sudden and/or unexpected occurrence.

For example, a blade springs from the corridor wall at a hero. The Game Master calls for a fast-react *Awareness* roll to determine whether or not the hero has a chance of leaping out of the way before the blade strikes her. Even if the die roll indicates that the hero does have the opportunity to evade the blade, she must still make a *dodge* roll to do so, i.e., the fast-react roll decided only that she had enough time to take an action.

Though the distinction between a normal and a fast-react roll may seem subtle, it becomes important during combat situations, when the number of actions a hero takes during a combat exchange (a period of five seconds) determines whether or not he sustains multi-action penalties (the more actions, the more difficult it becomes to perform each action).

You won't have to worry about multi-action penalties when you need to make a fast-react roll—the Game Master will handle all of that for you. Now at least you won't look at him funny when he asks you to make such a roll.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

After consulting the typical skills listed in the "monster slayer" entry, I've assigned my 10D of skill dice thusly:

COORDINATION 4D
MARKSMANSHIP 6D
ENDURANCE 2D
REFLEXES 5D
DODGE 6D, FIGHTING 7D
STRENGTH 2D
CLIMB 3D
AWARENESS 3D
TRACK 4D
CHARISMA 2D
KNOWLEDGE 4D
GEOGRAPHY 5D, MONSTERS 6D
METTLE 2D

I spent 2D to increase Triton's marksmanship from its Coordination base of 4D to its current level at 6D, another 1D on dodge, 2D on fighting, 1D on climb, 1D on track, 1D on geography, and 2D on monsters. That's my 10D starting allotment (2D + 1D + 2D + 1D + 1D + 1D + 2D).

DIE FACES

CHAKRAM

HYDRA

EYE OF HERA

THUNDERBOLT OF ZEUS

Note: If you want to use standard six-sided dice, 1s and 2s are equivalent to hydras and 3s, 4s, 5s, and 6s are equivalent to chakrams. On the Wild Die, the 1 represents the Eye of Hera and the 6 represents the Thunderbolt of Zeus.

THE WILD DIE

Just to make the game more heroic and more fun, one of the dice used to make an action roll—called the Wild Die (it has the Eye of Hera and the Thunderbolt of Zeus in addition to the chakram and the hydra)—has a special function. This die works normally, unless the Eye or the Thunderbolt turns up.

When the Wild Die rolls the Eye of Hera, something terrible has transpired. The hero has botched the action in some way (determined by the Game Master). The player excludes the Wild Die and one other die that came up a success (a chakram) when counting the number of hits.

Qualifier	Difficulty
Very Easy	1
Easy	2
Moderate	3
Difficult	4
Very Difficult	5
Heroic	6
Very Heroic	7
Ultra-Heroic	8
Demi-God-Like	9
God-Like	10

Rolling the Thunderbolt of Zeus indicates that something spectacular has occurred. The hero managed to accomplish the task better than anticipated (as determined by the Game Master). You get an automatic extra roll. Count the number of chakrams, counting the Thunderbolt in the total, and then reroll the Wild Die. If it comes up a chakram, add one more to the total. If it comes up a hydra or the Eye of Hera, keep the original total. If it comes up a Thunderbolt, add one to the total and roll again, repeating the process until you roll a chakram, a hydra, or the Eye of Hera.

Note that the Wild Die is not an extra die added to action rolls, i.e., you still roll the same number of dice as indicated by the attribute or skill. If you have a *dodge* of 5D, you roll five dice *including* the Wild Die (four regular dice plus the Wild Die).

ATTRIBUTE & SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

Below you'll find descriptions of the eight attributes and their accompanying skills including sample difficulty values and Specialties (if applicable). The charts are provided to help you establish an intuitive understanding of the levels of difficulty associated with each skill. They are not intended as reference tables that must be consulted every time a hero (or Game Master character, for that matter) attempts an action.

COORDINATION

The *Coordination* attribute measures a hero's fine motor skills, aim, and hand-eye cooperation.

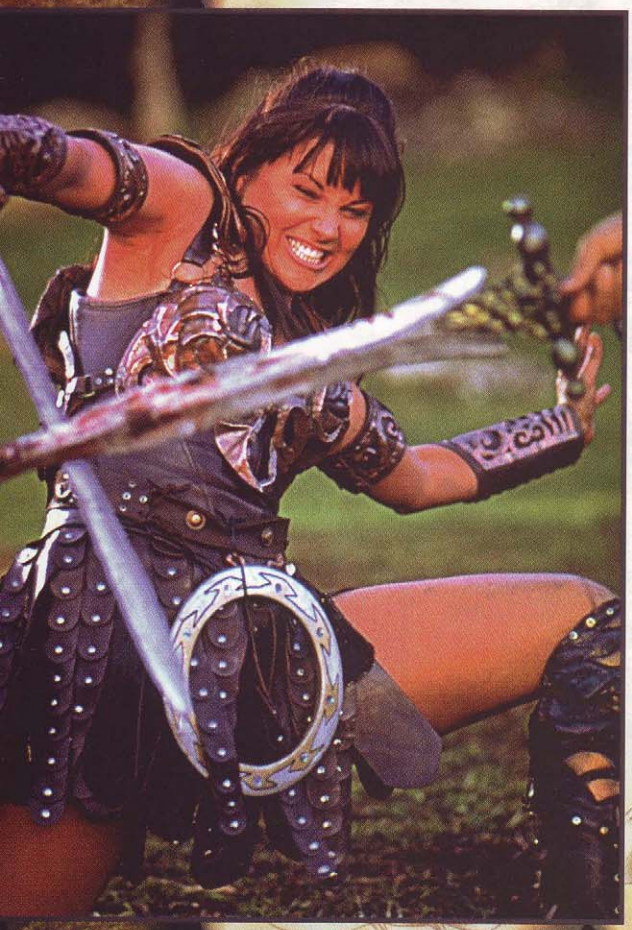
HURLED WEAPONS

Sample Specialties: Chakram, dart, discus, javelin, knife, rock, spear, throwing star

This skill represents a hero's accuracy throwing ranged weapons.

INSTRUMENTS

Sample Specialties: Flute, harp, hydraulis (water organ), kera (horn), lyre, percussion, salpinx (trumpet), syrinx (pan flute)



This skill gauges a hero's ability to create music with the specified *instruments*. Higher levels of expertise indicate increased prowess in tonal quality, rhythm, and improvisation.

LOCKPICK

Sample Specialties: Athenian locks, Egyptian locks, Thracian locks

This skill indicates a hero's proficiency at bypassing or disabling mechanical devices used to secure enclosed spaces. The difficulty is based on the complexity of the lock.

MARKSMANSHIP

Sample Specialties: Bow, crossbow, siege engine, sling

The *marksmanship* skill covers all mechanical devices used to project missiles across a distance. The wielder of the weapon relies more on aim than gross motor ability to successfully hit the intended target. (See the Scroll IV, "Battles" of *Secrets of the Ancient World* for more modifiers.)

PICK POCKET

This skill represents a hero's prowess at surreptitiously removing an item from the confines of another character's pockets.

The hero's mark may make an opposed *Awareness* roll (or *perception* roll if actively watching for would-be pick-pockets) to notice the attempted pilferage.

ENDURANCE

The *Endurance* attribute covers a hero's ability to withstand bodily injury, to maintain high levels of activity for long durations, and to resist the effects of toxic elements.

RESIST DISEASE

Hero's subjected to the conditions necessary to contract a disease must make a *resist disease* skill roll. Through various training regimens and dietary plans, a hero can increase his immunity to disease.

RESIST POISON

Toxic substances come in many forms: gaseous, fluidic, solid. Hero's who come in contact with such substances must make a *resist poison* roll to avoid succumbing to the effects of the toxicant in question.

RUN

Sometimes you need to get somewhere fast. I heartily recommend the *run* skill for just that purpose (especially for you merchants out there).

SWIM

The *swim* skill measures a hero's ability to stay afloat and move through water.

REFLEXES

The *Reflexes* attribute gauges gross motor coordination, reaction time, and nimbleness.

ACROBATICS

Sample Specialties: Tight-rope walking, tumbling, trapeze

Acrobatics covers balance, tumbling, walking on one's hands, and other actions involving flexibility and precise control of body weight.

CHARIOTEERING

Sample Specialties: Racing chariot, war chariot

This skill measures a hero's ability to accelerate, steer, and decelerate a chariot. Stunts like sharp turns, driving over treacherous terrain, and ramming require higher levels of expertise. Difficulty increases with additional speed.

DANCE

Come on, who can't dance? All right, well, not counting the Spartans.

This skill represents a hero's ability to contract and expand various muscles in rhythm to (usually) syncopated music in an aesthetically pleasing way. The effect value indicates the gracefulness, precision, and artistic flair of the dancer.

DODGE

This skill can play an important part in combat, especially if your hero has a propensity to be hit by opponents. *Dodge* measures the ability to guess where an opponent will target an attack and to adjust the positioning of the body to evade the strike.

Dodge acts as an opposed roll against attacks.

FIGHTING

Sample Specialties: Brawling, club, flail, knife, mace, martial arts, morning star, spear, staff, sword

This skill covers all up-close-and-personal melee-weapon attacks, from brawling (punches, kicks, clothes lines, and so forth) to swords, knives, and staves. Higher levels of expertise indicate increased prowess in striking vital areas, evading parries, and causing damage. (The complete game mechanics for this and all battle skills appear in the "Battles" scroll of *Secrets of the Ancient World*.) Note that *fighting* may only be used at point-blank range.

JUGGLING

The *juggling* skill gauges a hero's ability to keep multiple objects traveling through the air in a circuit or between himself and another juggler.

RIDE

Sample Specialties: Ass, camel, horse, mule, pegasus

The Ancient World covers a vast amount of land. To travel from one location to another becomes quicker and easier with the aid of some sort of mount: horse, mule, camel (depending on the climate and locale). The *ride* skill governs a hero's handling of his mount, from simple movement and steering to complex stunts.

Ride is opposed by an animal's orneriness roll (see "Transport" under the "Gear" section of Scroll III for orneriness codes of various animals).

SNEAK

A hero wishing to move surreptitiously relies on her *sneak* skill. Note that *sneak* only covers the ability to eliminate sound (the *hide* skill allows a hero to evade sight).

Perception opposes *sneak*.

STRENGTH

Strength represents a hero's physical power and athletic ability. Heroes gain +1 to damage totals per 2D of *Strength* when wielding muscle-powered weapons (those requiring the *hurled weapons* or *fighting* skills, plus bows and slings). For example, a hero with a *Strength* of 2D–3D gains a +1 bonus, a hero with a *Strength* of 4D–5D gains a +2 bonus, and a hero with a *Strength* of 6D gains a +3 bonus, and so forth).

CLIMB

This skill covers all climbing media, from rocky outcroppings to city walls.

LEAP

The *leap* skill determines the distance and height a hero can jump. The chart below indicates the difficulties for leaps of given distances. A hero may choose to jump the total distance horizontally or some combination of horizontal and vertical distance. The vertical distance (up to the maximum listed) is subtracted from the horizontal. For example, a hero who wants to jump three feet vertically may only move two feet horizontally (5 – 3 = 2) on a difficulty of 1. On a difficulty of 2, however, he could jump vertically three feet and horizontally five feet (8 – 3 = 5).

LIFT

This skill represents a hero's hefting capability, i.e., how much weight she can lift and how long she can carry it.

AWARENESS

Awareness represents a hero's powers of intuition, observation, general sensory acuity, and empathy.

ANIMAL HANDLING

Sample Specialties: Ass, camel, cat, dog, horse, lizard, mule

The *animal handling* skill measures a hero's ability to calm, coax, and otherwise coerce animals into various actions and to intuit meaning from an animal's stance, expressions, pheromones, and other physical conditions.

Animal handling is opposed by an animal's orneriness code.

CONCEAL

Expertise in this skill enables a hero to hide an object from view, whether on their persons or in the surrounding environment.

Conceal is opposed by the *search* skill.

HIDE

This skill comes in to play when a hero wishes to hide himself from the view of others. Note that this applies only to sight-based perception—sound, smell, vibrations, air movement, and the like are not covered by the skill.

Hide is opposed by the *search* skill.

INVENT

Through this skill a hero may devise a new technique, device, or method to accomplish a given task. A successful roll indicates that the hero has come up with the idea, but she must still gather the materials, create, and develop the system (with the time required to ready it for use determined by the Game Master).

OMEN INTERPRETATION

The Ancient World is filled with omens, and a hero able to correctly interpret such signs has a chance to avoid future calamities. (The "Heroes" scroll of *Secrets of the Ancient World* contains more information for the Game Master on adjudicating this skill.)

PERCEPTION

Think of the *perception* skill as a heightened version of the general *Awareness* attribute with regard to a hero's ability to sense changes or notice specific elements in her environment. Unlike *Awareness*, however, a hero must be actively attempting to perceive such changes, i.e., with *Awareness*, the Game Master requests the skill attempt, whereas with *perception* the player determines when he would like to make a skill roll.

Heroes may use *perception* to oppose *sneak* rolls.

READ LIPS

The *read lips* skill indicates how well a hero can perceive another character's words by watching the movements of that character's mouth.

REMEMBER

Details often escape the mind's retentive powers. The *remember* skill allows a hero to recall data he previously saw, heard, felt, smelled, or otherwise sensed. Note that players are not required to make a *remember* roll every time they want their heroes to recall something. Only use this skill if the player herself forgets the information. On a successful total, the Game Master fills in the forgotten data.

SEARCH

Heroes employ the *search* skill to locate objects or persons within a given area. *Search* acts as an opposed roll against *conceal* and *hide* rolls.

TRACK

The track skill measures a hero's ability to follow a particular quarry by locating signs of that quarry's passage (footprints, wheel prints, broken twigs, etc.).

CHARISMA

Charisma encompasses a hero's natural charm, presence, manner, and speaking ability. Note that these skills are intended to be used against Game Master characters, not other players' heroes.

BARGAIN

This skill represents a hero's ability to negotiate, whether for a better price, a better trade, or a better agreement.

The hero's opponent may oppose the hero's skill with a *bargain* roll of his own. The Game Master may give the opponent a bonus to his skill roll to account for unfair or outrageous demands made by the hero.

BEG

At times a hero must plead for what he wants, whether it be money, objects, affections, and so forth. *Beg* may be opposed by a *willpower* roll.

BLUFF

This skill gauges a hero's proficiency at convincing his audience that a falsehood is true. *Bluff* may be opposed by *perception*.

COMMAND

The *command* skill governs the act of forcing individuals to comply to specific directions as well as maintaining morale and unified action during multiple-person undertakings (like combat). The difficulty increases as the commander's side finds itself in an inferior position (losing a battle, for example) and decreases as the commander's side finds itself in a superior position (winning a battle, for example).

FLIRT

The ability to charm an individual can save a hero's life. Using the *flirt* skill, a hero may coerce a mark through flattery, innuendo, and other flirtatious behavior.

Flirt may be opposed by *willpower*.

INTIMIDATE

The *intimidate* skill represents a hero's ability to force an individual into taking an action under threat of severe penalty (embarrassment, property damage, injury, etc.).

Intimidate may be opposed by *willpower*.

PERSUADE

Persuade represents a hero's ability to alter his audience's beliefs by illustrating logical or emotional arguments that support his position.

Persuade may be opposed by *willpower*.

SINGING

This skill measures a hero's natural singing voice—its range, quality, and tambre—as well as the ability to perform difficult vocal maneuvers including improvisation.

STORYTELLING

The *storytelling* skill attests to the hero's ability to sway an audience from one emotion to the next by means of a tale, whether true or fictional. A storyteller must constantly read her listeners so that she may alter her pacing, volume, or even change the course of the story to elicit the greatest response. A hero may employ storytelling in an effort to bring her audience to a particular emotional state that in some way benefits herself and her companions (preventing her from being jailed or hanged or securing the aid of the locals in a fight against a warlord's vicious and formidable army).

Storytelling may be resisted by *willpower*.

KNOWLEDGE

The *Knowledge* attribute covers general learning, whether from books, tutoring, or direct experience. Skill rolls allow heroes to recall information about a particular topic and, in some cases, to put that data to use (smithing, for example).

ASTROLOGY

Heroes may use *astrology* to predict future events based on the phases and relative positions of various celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars, planets). The skill also enables heroes to determine their geographic position in the Ancient World by the positioning of stars in the night sky.

CULTURES

Sample Specialties: Amazonian, Athenian, Babylonian, Centaurian, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Phoenician, Spartan

This skill indicates a hero's knowledge of the customs and traditions of the indicated region or group.

DISGUISE

The *disguise* skill is used when a hero attempts to pass herself off as another individual. The skill applies only to visual inspection; for a complete masquerade, the hero may also be required to make a *bluff*, *persuade*, or *intimidate* roll.

Disguise may be opposed by *perception*.

FIRST AID

Using the *first aid* skill, a hero may attempt to heal an individual (who may be himself) by dressing wounds, applying splints, and disinfecting injuries. Note that a single individual may use this skill only once on a particular individual following the battle during which the injuries were sustained (multiple people, however, may make separate attempts on the same individual).

A first aid skill attempt restores a number of Body Points equal to the roll (not to exceed the target character's total Body Points). For example, a healer who generates a *first aid* total of three, restores three lost Body Points to his patient.

GAMING

The *gaming* skill represents a hero's knowledge of games of chance, strategy, or physical prowess.

GEOGRAPHY

A hero's *geography* skill indicates her knowledge of the lay of the land, including major geographical and topological features, terrain type, bodies of water, trade routes, roads, locations of temples, towns, city-states, and regions, and the like. The difficulty is modified based on the particular area's proximity to the hero's base of operations (lower difficulties for regions with which the hero is familiar).

HISTORY

The *history* skill reflects the hero's recollection of historical events, from natural catastrophes and wars to lines of succession and Olympic game statistics.

LEATHERWORK

Leatherwork enables a hero to create, inspect, and repair items composed partly or entirely of leather. When mending armor, the *leatherwork* roll determines the number of lost Body Points that are restored (only one attempt may be made per battle).

LEGENDS

Using the *legends* skill, a hero can recall information about heroic sagas, mystical items, and supernatural events. Often times, these occurrences and objects cannot be found in historical texts typically because they have no supporting evidence.

MONSTERS

Heroes may use the *monsters* skill to recollect various types of information regarding creatures spawned by the gods.

NAVIGATION

The *navigation* skill reflects a hero's ability to locate the position of a ship and plot a course to reach a given destination.

PANTHEON

Heroes employ the *pantheon* skill to recall information regarding immortal beings.

PHILOSOPHY

Heroes may use the *philosophy* skill to persuade an audience to accept a position through transcendental discourse.

Philosophy may be opposed by *philosophy*.

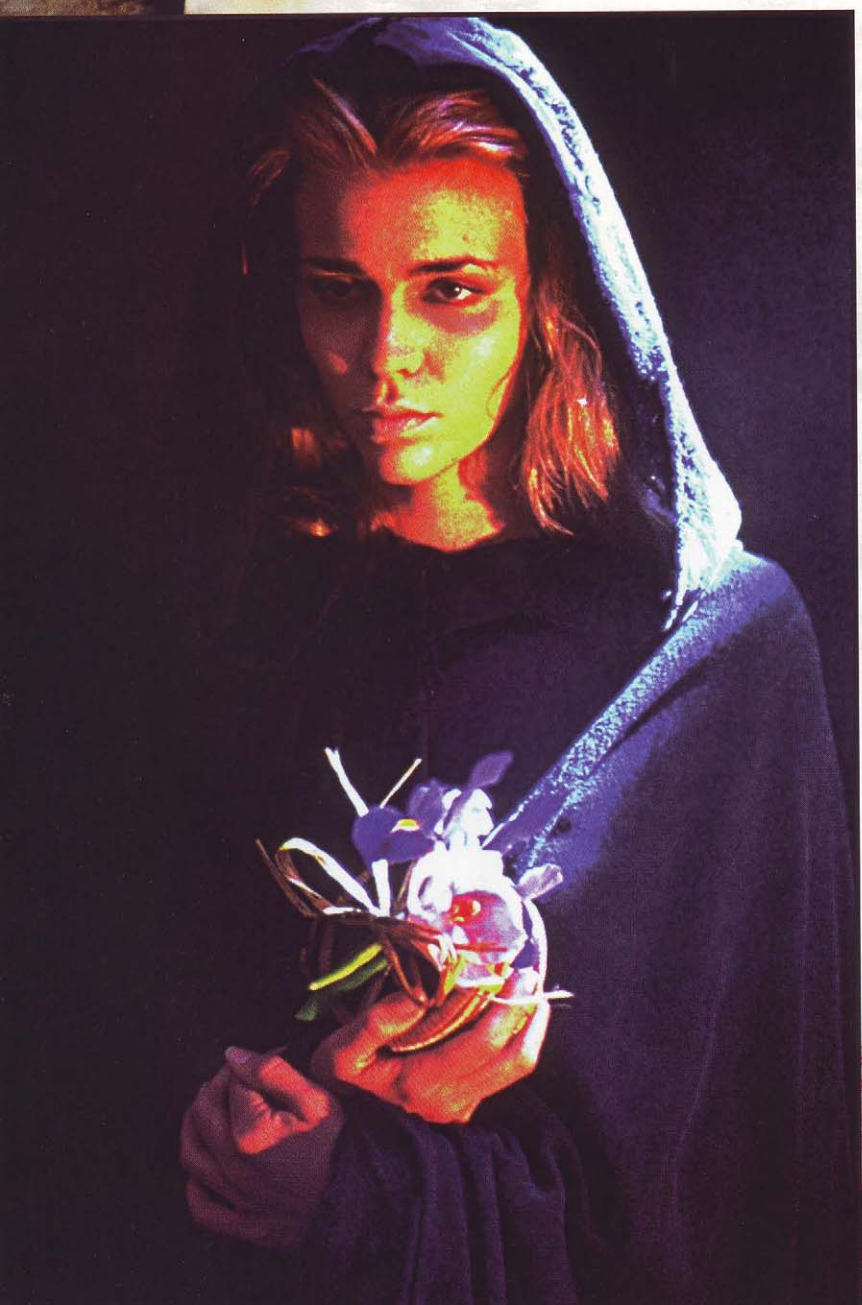
READING/WRITING

Sample Specialties: Babylonian, Cypriot (used on Cyprus), Egyptian, Linear A, Linear B, Phoenician

This skill determines a hero's ability to comprehend and compose written language.

SCHOLAR

Sample Specialties: Agriculture, biology, Crete, etiquette, Mesopotamia, olives, physics, politics, weaponry



Scholar acts as a catch-all for areas of knowledge not already listed as skills. A die roll indicates the amount and detail of the information the hero knows about the concentration. Note that the broader the Specialty (especially when relying on the general *scholar* skill), the higher the roll needed to recall specific data.

SMITHING

Sample Specialties: Bronze, iron, steel

The *smithing* skill covers the creation, inspection, and repair of metal objects. When mending armor, the *smithing* roll determines the number of lost Body Points that are restored to the armor (only one attempt may be made per battle). See the "Armor" section of the Ancient World scroll. For example, on one *smithing* roll a hero may inspect a suit of armor to determine whether it requires repair, and on the second he may attempt to actually fix it.

SPEAKING

Sample Specialties: Babylonian, Cypriot (used on Cyprus), Egyptian, Linear A, Linear B, Phoenician

This skill determines a hero's ability to comprehend and speak languages.

STREETWISE

The *streetwise* skill reflects a hero's experience out in the "real" world of the common individual, including the ability to tap into the grapevine and to establish contacts with street informants and other underworld (not *U*nderworld for gods' sakes!) figures.

SURVIVAL

Sample Specialties: Arctic, desert, jungle, temperate forest, sea

A hero may use the *survival* skill to locate sources of nourishment, water, and shelter in the

specified environment. The difficulty of the skill attempt depends on the scarcity of the particular commodity in the given environment as determined by the Game Master—for example, it's harder to find water in a desert than in an arctic region.

TRADING

This skill measures a hero's knowledge of trade routes, commodity prices, exchange rates, major imports and exports of given regions, and other information regarding barter and sales. The Game Master may adjust the difficulty based on the hero's familiarity with the area in question.

METTLE

The *Mettle* attribute gauges a hero's mental and psychological strength and fortitude and his resistance to high levels of stress and mental fatigue.

BATTLE CRY

A fierce battle cry can help a warrior defeat his opponent psychologically. If the hero's *battle cry* roll beats his opponent's fast-react *willpower* roll, the attacker gains a +2 bonus to her attack total for that combat exchange (note that the hero must take two actions to use *battle cry* effectively: *battle cry* and an attack of her choice, incurring normal multi-action penalties). Opponents may choose not to resist, in which case the effect of the *battle cry* is automatic.

Battle cry may only be used against opponents at point-blank range.

STAY UP

As noted in the "Body Points" section below, a hero falls unconscious once her Body Points fall to zero. Using the *stay up* skill, however, a hero may continue to stand and fight through sheer willpower. The hero must make a *stay up* skill roll during each combat exchange following the one during which he dropped to zero Body Points. The difficulty of the attempt is equal to the number of exchanges since the one during which he would have lapsed into unconsciousness. The difficulty increases by one if the hero suffered additional damage during the previous exchange (note: Body Points cannot drop below zero; all additional damage is disregarded). The *stay up* roll counts as an extra action when determining multi-action penalties (it's a Game Master thing—don't worry about it).

For example, during the first exchange after dropping to zero Body Points, the hero must beat a difficulty of two (one for the first exchange plus one for having suffered damage in the previous ex-

change). During the second exchange, the difficulty is two (or three, if he sustained damage during the previous exchange). During the third, it increases to three (or four if he suffered damage on the previous exchange), and so on.

WILLPOWER

Willpower gauges a hero's ability to withstand stressful situations and acts as an opposed roll to resist intimidation, persuasion, and similar mental "attacks."

BODY POINTS

Heroes begin with a number of Body Points equal to an *Endurance* roll plus a base of twenty. During adventures, heroes may suffer damage that decreases this total. Once Body Points drops to zero, the hero falls unconscious. Without proper treatment, the hero dies five minutes later. Heroes may never have less than zero Body Points (no negative values).

The *first aid* skill, certain mystical artifacts, and time all serve to restore lost Body Points. Heroes naturally rejuvenate at the following rates:

Level of Activity	Body Points Restored
Full rest	5 per day
Light (walking)	3 per day
Heavy (running, fighting)	1 per day

CHARACTER POINTS

All heroes have an allotment of fifteen Character Points at the time of creation. These points can be used in two ways: die roll bonuses or skill improvement.

After a player makes an attribute or skill roll for his hero, he may elect to spend Character Points in exchange for additional dice if he feels the roll may not be high enough to accomplish the task his hero has set out to perform. Spending one Character Point gives the player one extra die to roll for that skill attempt. Note that the player simply rolls the extra die, adding one to the total roll if he generates a success; he does not completely re-roll the attempt with the extra die.

A player may spend up to two Character Points on any given action and may declare his use of them after he makes his roll (unlike Fate Points—see below).

For information on using Character Points for skill advancement, see the "Improving Skills & Specialties" section below.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

To determine Triton's Body Points I make an Endurance roll my 2D with a resulting total of 1 (I rolled a chakram on the Wild Die and a hydra on the other die only chakrams count when adding up the total). Adding that to 20 gives Triton a starting Body Point score of 21.

FATE POINTS

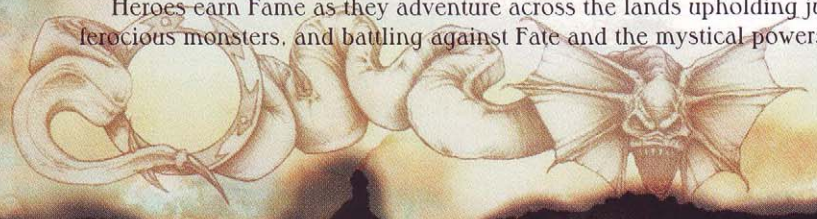
Heroes start with a single Fate Point. Spending a Fate Point allows a hero to *double* the number of dice he rolls on a given attribute or skill attempt. Note that the player must declare his use of a Fate Point *before* he makes his roll (unlike Character Points).

Heroes earn additional Fate Points by performing heroic feats (as determined by the Game Master). Usually this involves sacrificing the hero's safety for another, be it an ally, an innocent bystander, or even a villain. One hint: heroes who fully embrace the Greater Good will find themselves rewarded with Fate Points more often than those who do not.

FAME

A hero's Fame score represents her reputation throughout the Ancient World. This value encompasses a hero's deeds, attitude, special abilities, and all the other subtle acts that together reflect her stature in the eyes of the common individual.

Heroes earn Fame as they adventure across the lands upholding justice, seeking truth, fighting ferocious monsters, and battling against Fate and the mystical powers wielded by the gods.



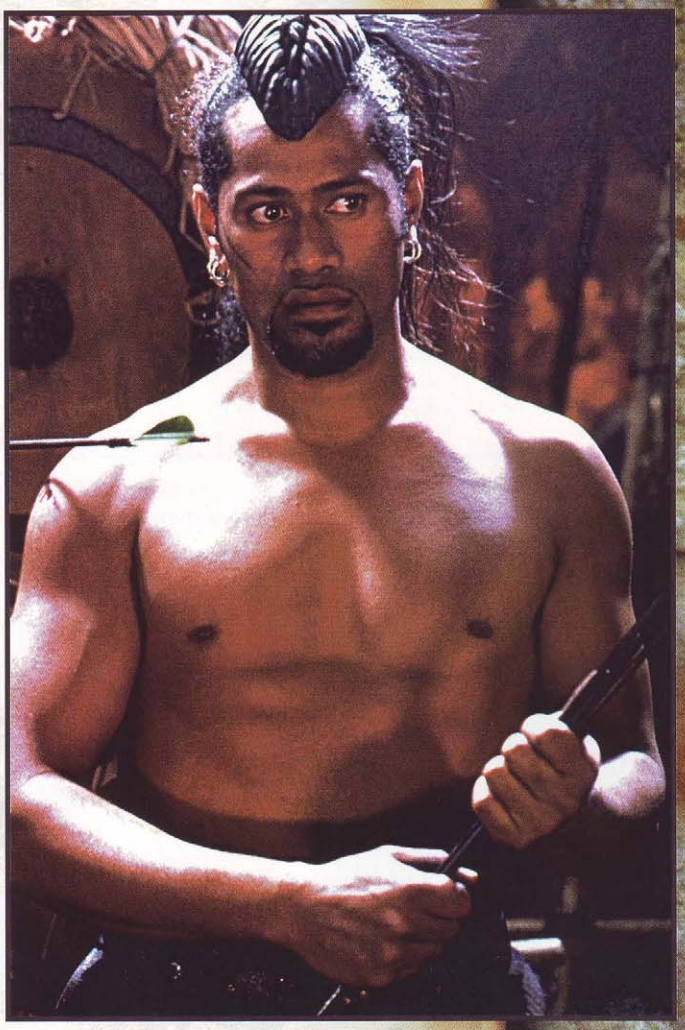
Fame Score	Reputation
0	Completely Unknown ("And you are...?")
1–10	Hero-In-Training
11–20	Town Hero
21–30	Hero
31–40	Champion
41–50	Protector
51–60	Vindicator
61–70	Vanquisher
71–80	Legend
81+	Demigod† ("I'm speechless... well, I guess not completely.")

† Pending completion of the Hero's Challenge

THE HERO'S CHALLENGE

To complete the Hero's Challenge and become a demigod (not a true god, or even a half-god like Hercules, but a mortal given the respect normally reserved for the gods—and the first step in achieving immortality), a hero must have at least five skills with die codes of 10D or greater (not counting Specialties). She must then face a god or goddess in combat and live to tell about it (she doesn't have to win—if that were the case, there'd be even fewer demigods than there are now).

The Game Master possesses the rest of the secrets regarding the Hero's Challenge. Over the course of your hero's adventures, you will come to know the other aspects of the Challenge—and the consequences of failure...



SPEED

The Speed score defines the distance a hero may travel during a five-second combat exchange. Unless otherwise noted, the value is given in feet per exchange. For example, a hero with a Speed of 30 may move up to thirty feet during an exchange.

See the entries on your hero's race to determine her Speed value.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

On my Hero Sheet I record Triton's 15 Character Points, 1 Fate Point, and speed of 30 (since he's a human). Ooh, that was hard, wasn't it?

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

What does your hero look like? You've already selected a race (Centaur, human, Nymph, or Satyr) so you should next decide on gender (male or female).

Is the hero short, tall, or of medium height? Thin or copious? Of dark or light complexion? What color hair and eyes does he have? Does any physical feature in particular stand out? Does he have any noticeable scars, tattoos, or similar markings? How old is he? How old does he look?

How does he dress? What mannerisms does he possess? Does he smell of any particular scent (good or bad)? Is he well-groomed or a slob? Does he wear a beard or fix his hair in any interesting way?

Consider these and whatever other questions will help you conjure up a mental image of your hero and then write down his description on your Hero Sheet.

BACKGROUND AND PERSONALITY

At this point you've created a skeletal structure for your hero: all the physical and readily quantifiable aspects of her being. Now you must delve into the more personal and metaphysical elements that define her. (While this may sound more difficult than the previous hero creation steps, it's actually the most fun).

A person's past experience plays a strong role in her reactions to events happening both to and around her. Since you will have to determine how your hero deals with any situation she encounters, you need at least a basic idea of her perspective on life, which has been formed by the major emotional episodes in her background.

Start with the simple factors. What are (were) her parents like? What about siblings? Did she work on a farm or in the bizarre or in the court of the regional monarch? How much education has she had? What does she want to be when she "grows up?"

Next you may want to consider specific incidents that contributed to her current state of mind. Was she teased as a child for a slight physical deformity or because her parents were foreigners? Has she experienced any emotional disasters: loss of a sibling or parent, abandonment by a lover, abuse by a beloved superior? Did she win every event at the Nemean Games in her age category on her first try? Has she struggled through a major catastrophe and arisen stronger than before?

Once you've sufficiently detailed your hero's background (which may be anything from one sentence to several pages), turn your attention to her personality at this point in her life. Take into account all of her background and throw in some of your own experience to determine her general nature. Over the course of your hero's career (especially if you play in a multi-adventure saga that spans months or even years) her background will expand to encompass her latest experiences and her personality will therefore inevitably change. I draw your attention to one of our most powerful heroes:

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Well, relying on my masterful artistic abilities, I see Triton as a young man barely into his twenties, with long red hair tied into dozens of braids. A scar runs under his chin, so he wears a beard to cover it up.

I'm not going to bother with his specific weight, height, and so forth. I have an ample vision of him without going into such quantitative details. And that's enough. Don't forget: this is a game. Only continue to invest time if you're having fun. Once it starts to get boring, finish up and get ready to play.

Xena. Her background led her to a life of destruction and hatred, but she managed to part the veil shrouding her mind from the truth of what she had become, and she struggled through many trials to escape her own evil and embrace the Greater Good. And still her adventures continue to shape her personality, especially when it comes to her best friend and adventuring companion, Gabrielle.

QUOTE

The Hero Sheet has a section for listing a typical quote from your hero, a statement or phrase that immediately conveys her personality. You aren't required to use this quote during adventures, but it should help to quickly remind you how to determine your hero's reactions to events occurring around her.

GEAR

Dinars (DEE-nars) are the accepted form of currency across the Ancient World. Most city-states mint their own coins based on the dinar standard, so you may find yourself in possession of Athenian, Spartan, or Corinthian coins (to name a few), but each coin carries the same value in all regions. You may, however, encounter difficulties with dinars in foreign territories (Phoenicia, for example).

You may wish to have your hero purchase clothing, weapons, and other assorted equipment to start off his adventuring career. (An unarmed, naked hero isn't going to get very far—unless he or she is particularly well-endowed. But let's not go there.) The third scroll of this series (entitled "The Ancient World") contains a section listing various items and their costs.

By the way, you shouldn't hoard your dinars—no one likes a miser. You should spend them with wild abandon, especially at the market. And if you're interested in some used urns, have I got a deal for you—I'll even through in the ashes free of charge!

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Well, I've already established that Triton's father was killed by a Gorgon shortly after Triton's birth, and that Triton wants to avenge the death.

Seems like Triton's going to be a pretty dour fellow. I could change this element of his background, but I do like it, so instead I'm going to throw in a few other aspects that lighten him up a bit.

First of all, to cope with his father's murder, Triton developed a deep sense of humor, eventually becoming known as the town prankster. His love of practical jokes never left him to his adventuring companions' great chagrin.

Although I could continue to devise other facets of Triton's personality, I think that's enough for me to be able to play him competently. Besides, I'm anxious to embark on an adventure and I know I'll be slowly developing his complete persona over the course of the games. You, however, should feel free to write as little or as much as you want. Remember, once it stops being fun, move on.

SALMONEUS'S HERO

Two hundred dinars?! That's it?! We're paying retail for this, you know! Whoever designed this part of the game must really be a stingy bast wait, that was me.

Oh, there you are. Well, I've got 200 dinars burning a whole in my pocket, so let's go shopping. After reviewing the prices in Scroll III, I've decided to purchase the following equipment: bow (50 dinars), sword (75 dinars), 20 arrows (10 dinars), quiver (15 dinars), 50' of rope (5 dinars), 50 marbles (2 dinars), and I'll keep the remainder (43 dinars) as liquid capital. I can always spend it later.

I'm kidding. I'm kidding! (Mostly.)

All heroes begin with 200 dinars. See the next scroll, "Salmoneus's Practical Guide," for adventuring gear and associated costs.

HERO OPTION: SPECIALTIES

Heroes may opt to specialize in a particular aspect of a skill. For example, a bard may choose to focus on telling epic poems (as opposed to tragedies or comedies). By spending Character Points, the hero can acquire the *epic poems* specialty of the *storytelling* skill. Specialties are indicated thusly:

base skill: specialty bonus

For example, *storytelling: poems* +2D.

Specialties yield a bonus (+1D, +2D, +3D, etc.) to skill rolls for that specific type of action. When our bard recites an epic poem, therefore, she receives a bonus to her *storytelling* action roll. She receives no bonus for any other type of storytelling.

A hero may have a Specialty in any skill. For example, a hero may select an *Ares* Specialty in the *Pantheon* skill, denoting a particular expertise in matters relating directly to the God of War.

Heroes can buy Specialties at any time at a cost of three times the new die code bonus. For example, to initially purchase a Specialty at +1D costs three Character Points (3 * 1 = 3). To increase that Specialty to a +2D bonus costs an additional six Character Points (3 * 2 = 6). When jumping Specialty bonus levels (i.e., from +1D to +3D, from +5D to +8D), you must include in the total cost the Character Points required for each level. To increase a Specialty from +2D to +4D, for example, costs twenty-one Character Points, nine to improve from +2D to +3D plus twelve to improve from +3D to +4D (3 * 3 + 3 * 4 = 21).

The *Hercules & Xena Roleplaying Game* has two types of Specialties: General (as discussed above) and Special Moves, which apply specifically to combat maneuvers.

SPECIAL MOVES

Everyone has heard tales of Hercules during which he grabs Iolaus by the hands and swings him around, creating a ring of destruction which no thug can penetrate. Or how about Xena's ability to run across the heads of her foes or to put the pinch on a downed ruffian to extract information?

Heroes the world over have developed unique Special Moves that, in addition to aiding them during battle, also contribute to their famous (or infamous, as the case may be) reputations.

In game terms, you can think of a Special Move as a Specialty with a few extra aspects. Each Special Move has the following defining elements:

Base Skill: The skill to which the Special Move bonus applies.

Difficulty: The value or opposed roll that must be overcome to successfully accomplish the Special Move. Note that opponents may choose to not resist the action (i.e., they do not make an opposed roll), in which case the Move succeeds automatically.

Effect: The description of the Special Move's results if successfully performed (the action roll beats the difficulty).

Consider the entries below as a starting point. Feel free to generate your own Special Moves unique to your hero. As always, check with your Game Master before attempting to use the Move in play (don't just spring it on him on the spur of the moment). Doing so avoids having to halt the game while you explain how the Special Move works.

BLOW TORCH

Base Skill: *Marksmanship*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total
Effect: The hero sprays a flammable liquid from her mouth through a source of fire, creating a jet of flame that ignites any flammable materials in its path and causes 6 points of

damage to its target (a single individual or object). If the hero fails to hit her victim and has rolled more hydras than chakrams on her *marksmanship flaming liquid* roll, however, she has managed to burn herself, suffering 6 points of damage.

CHEST STOMP

Base Skill: *Acrobatics*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 1
Effect: The hero leaps through the air, striking her opponent squarely on the chest with both feet. The target suffers half damage and is nocked down (must spend the next action getting to his feet).

DOUBLE ARROW

Base Skill: *Marksmanship*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 2
Effect: The hero may fire two arrows at once (i.e., both are knocked at the same time). A successful hits scores double damage (both arrows strike the target).

HEAD BASH

Base Skill: *Fighting*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total
Effect: The hero smashes his head into his opponent's, causing a base damage of 3. Inflicting 5 or more points of damage results in the adversary falling unconscious for a number of exchanges equal to the effect value.

HEAD RUN

Base Skill: *Acrobatics*
Difficulty: 3
Effect: The hero may stand, walk, or run on the heads of a group of people. Increase the difficulty by 2 if more than half of the individuals are actively attempting to cause the hero to fall.

JUMP KICK

Base Skill: *Fighting*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total
Effect: The hero leaps vertically into the air and kicks two targets within point-blank range. Note that the hero generates a single attack roll and compares that total to the defense totals of both opponents (the hero may fail to strike one or the other or both of his adversaries).

KNOCK DOWN

Base Skill: *Fighting*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 1
Effect: The hero strikes her opponent so hard that he falls to the ground. The opponent only suffers half damage, but must spend the next action getting back to his feet.

MISSILE CATCH

Base Skill: *Dodge*
Difficulty: Opponent's attack roll
Effect: The hero snatches an oncoming missile out of the air before it strikes its target.

OPPONENT TOSS

Base Skill: *Lift*
Difficulty: Opponent's weight (see the *lift* skill entry) or opponent's opposed *Strength* roll (if spending an action to resist)
Effect: The hero heaves an opponent away a number of feet equal to the effect value times five. (The hero may opt to take a second action, incurring normal multi-action penalties, to throw his adversary at other opponents. The hero uses *hurled weapons body* to attack.)

PIN

Base Skill: *Hurled weapon, fighting,* or *marksmanship*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 2
Effect: The hero pins his target to a nearby object (usually a wall or door). Note that the opponent suffers no damage, but must make a *Strength* roll against the hero's attack total to extract himself from the pin.

THE PINCH

Base Skill: *Fighting*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 2
Effect: The hero deftly scores a hit on a particular pressure point on her opponent's body. Blood flow to the affected area (arm, leg, throat) is effectively cut off, causing the target of the attack to lose the use of the body part until the flow is restored (which does not require a second roll, although the individual who restores the blood flow must have the pinch as a Special Move). The opponent may make a *willpower* roll to resist the effect of the pinch.

QUICK DRAW

Base Skill: *Hurled weapon, fighting,* or *marksmanship*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 2
Effect: An unreadied hero (i.e., a hero with no weapon in his hands) may unsheathe or otherwise bring to bear and use his weapon without a multi-action penalty. Failure means the hero has readied his weapon, but missed his target on his first attack.

SWING STRIKE

Base Skill: *Lift*
Difficulty: Swingee's weight (see the *lift* skill entry) + 1
Effect: The hero grabs his companion by the arms and swings him around, swatting their adversaries with the feet of the swingee. The swinger must make *fighting* rolls each exchange. All opponents who come within point-blank range must make *dodge* checks against the swinger's *fighting* total to avoid taking half damage and being knocked down (must spend the next action getting to his feet).

WHIRL-A-PUNCH

Base Skill: *fighting*
Difficulty: Opponent's defense total + 1
Effect: The hero spins around, her arms stretched out to either side. Opponents who come within point-blank range must make *dodge* checks against the hero's *fighting* total to avoid taking half damage and being knocked down (must spend the next action getting to his feet).

HERO OPTION: ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

If you decide you want to spend more time developing your hero's background and personality (or just want to reflect these elements of her nature through game mechanics), you can opt to select Advantages and Disadvantages.

Each Advantage and Disadvantage has an associated "starting skill dice modifier." This value, whether positive or negative, affects the number of skill dice (base of 10D) you assign to your hero. This option therefore gives you more flexibility in designing a hero since you can choose to increase or decrease his level of experience (skill dice) based on various personality factors.

In game terms: choose an item, write it on the Hero Sheet, record the associated die codes, add up the die codes (which can result in a positive *or* negative number), and determine how many extra or fewer skill dice that hero receives (positive value = extra, negative value = fewer). For example, a hero with an addiction (+3D) and extraordinary memory (–1D) would have 12D (10D + 3D – 1D) of starting skill dice to distribute.

Addiction (+3D): The hero cannot go more than one day without drinking, gambling, etc., i.e., satisfying his addiction. Failure to do so results in lowered metabolic rates, thereby reducing the hero's attribute scores by 2D. After one week (more or less at the Game Master's discretion), the hero has defeated her addiction. If she ever partakes of the formerly addictive activity in the future, she has a 67% (rolling a chakram on 1D) chance of becoming addicted again.

Argumentative (+1D): This hero constantly plays the devil's advocate. She rejoices when an exploitable situation arises, arguing though she sometimes agrees with her adversary. The argument becomes a game, a strategic contest of wills.

Blackouts (+2D): During high pressure situations, this hero has a tendency to blackout for several minutes. She has no recollection of this lost time. In game terms, the hero blacks out for 3D minutes (roll three dice and count the number of chakrams) whenever she rolls the Eye of Hera.

NAME	STARTING SKILL DICE MODIFIER
Addiction	+3D
Argumentative	+1D
Blackouts	+2D
Blessed	–2D
Center of Conversation	+1D
Compulsive Tendencies	+3D
Contacts	–1-3D
Curse	+3D
Debt	+1D to +3D, depending on the size of the debt
Delusions of Grandeur	+1D
Direction Sense	–1D
Extraordinary Hearing	–2D
Extraordinary Memory	–1D
Extraordinary Sight	–2D
Extremely Competitive	+1D
Fallback Plan	+2D
Fanatic	+3D
Hallucinations	+3D
Hides Emotions	+2D
Low Self–Esteem	+2D
Medical Problem	+3D
Migraine Headaches	+2D
Motion Sickness	+1D
Nightmares	+1D
Noble Birth	–1D
No Self–Confidence	+2D
Obsessive Tendencies	+2D
Paranoia	+3D
Pathological Liar	+1D
Phobia	+1D
Physically Impaired	+3D
Poor Memory	+1D
Procrastination	+1D
Released Convict	+1D
Reputation	+ or –, 1–3D
Sixth Sense	–2D
Skeleton in the Closet	+2D or more
Sworn Enemy	+1D (individual)/+3D (group)
Targeted for Assassination	+3D
Wanted for a Crime	+2D

Blessed (–2D): This hero is, for some reason, closer to a particular god than most (the deity must be specifed during hero creation). An appeal for divine intervention will be received more favorably from this hero. (The Game Master makes a secret Wild Die roll. Rolling the Thunderbolt of Zeus indicates that the god in question has chosen to respond in some way, dictated by the Game Master).

Center of Conversation (+ 1D): This hero feels the need to always be in the middle of every conversation. And why not. He always knows exactly what to say—at least, that's what he thinks.

Compulsive Tendencies (+ 3D): At any time, the hero may decide to do or say something that she would not normally do or say under the circumstances. For example, during a conversation with a head of state, the hero might blurt out, "Your wife is much uglier than I expected."

Contacts (–1-3D): You must specify the type of connection at hero creation: underworld, political, business, etc. A –1D contact is a cut above Joe Athens, but can still provide valuable information from time to time. A contact worth –3D would be a powerful magistrate, criminal, king, or warlord, who may offer assistance within his particular sphere of influence. If killed, the contact is lost forever.

Curse (+ 3D): This hero either inherited or brought upon herself a curse. The player must decide the specifics of the hex, but known curses include uncontrollable shape-changing, a violent reaction to something the hero loves, and constant failure at a given task.

Debt (+ 1D to + 3D, depending on the size of the debt): This hero either inherited this debt or borrowed a substantial amount of money. She has a time limit for repaying the loan.

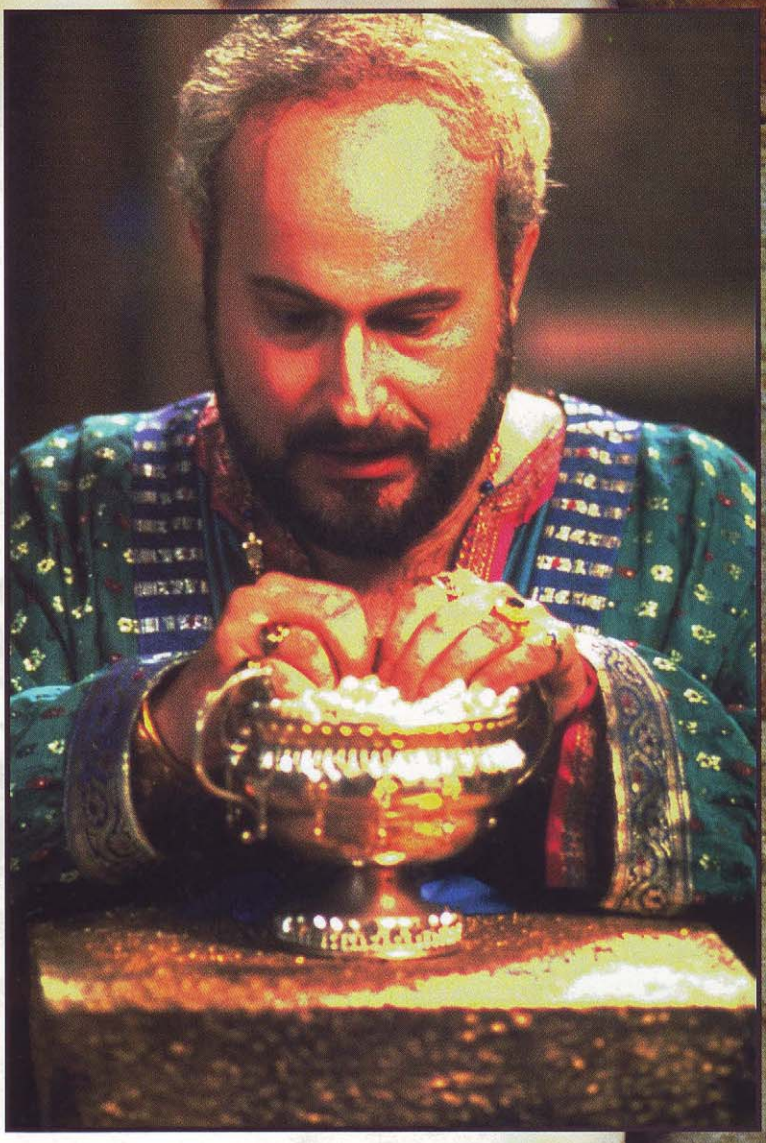
Delusions of Grandeur (+ 1D): The best thing to ever happen to the world. That's how heroes with this Disadvantage view themselves. No one can surpass their prowess—ever.

Direction Sense (–1D): This hero rarely gets lost, possessing a bonus of 1D to all rolls pertaining to navigation and such.

Extraordinary Hearing (–2D): The construction of this hero's sound collectors (ears, usually), has increased his ability to distinguish between similar sounds, determine the direction of the source of those sounds, and pick up whispers from a distance, giving him a + 1D bonus to *perception* rolls requiring the sense of sound.

Extraordinary Memory (–1D): This hero can recall long ago events or esoteric facts with ease. In game terms, she gains + 1D to all *remember* skill rolls.

Extraordinary Sight (–2D): The shape and genetic makeup of this hero's eyes enable her to see three times as far as a normal member of her species, giving her a + 1D bonus to *perception* rolls requiring the sense of sight.



Extremely Competitive (+1D): To this hero everything is a competition. She always wants to race the other heroes to the battle, put herself in more danger than anyone else, and slosh down the most drinks. She cannot turn down a challenge.

Fallback Plan (+2D): This hero cannot function unless she has devised a backup plan for every situation she puts herself into. This applies to everything from combat to relationships.

Fanatic (+3D): This hero holds to a philosophical ideal, the source of which may be a sect, a nation, or a person. She will always defend this ideal, even trading her life for its preservation.

Hallucinations (+3D): At random times, this hero begins having delusions. He cannot tell when something is truly occurring or just a figment of his imagination. The Game Master has full control over this Disadvantage.

Low Self-esteem (+2D): This hero has a low opinion of herself. She constantly berates herself, harping on her bad qualities.

Medical Problem (+3D): This hero suffers from an ailment that requires she take medicine every day to treat the illness. The player and Game Master should work together to develop the specifics of the problem, the appropriate medicine, and the ramifications of failing to take the medicine.

Migraine Headaches (+2D): The hero has a 33% (rolling a hydra on 1D) chance per day to suffer the unrelenting pain of a severe migraine headache. In game terms, the hero receives a −1D penalty to all of his attributes for the remainder of that day.

Motion Sickness (+1D): Whenever this hero rides a creature or a vehicle, she must make an *Endurance* check against an Easy (2) difficulty or immediately begin to shake and vomit, giving her a −1D penalty to all actions undertaken while still riding.

Nightmares (+1D): Almost every night, this hero suffers from horrible nightmares, usually related to an unsatisfied issue in his life, though not necessarily. As a result, the hero needs 10 hours of sleep per day. Failure to get the required amount of rest results in a 1D penalty to all skill and attribute rolls for that day.

Noble Birth (−1D): This hero fell into luxury—born into a wealthy, perhaps noble, family. She wanted for nothing, attending the best schools, ordering servants around, and having everything she desired. The hero begins play with double the amount of funds normally given to starting heroes.

No Self-confidence (+2D): The hero has no confidence in himself. Whenever he has to perform an important task (making an accurate shot, negotiating with a hostage, et cetera), he has a 33% (rolling a hydra on 1D) chance of losing confidence. If he fails this roll, he reduces his chance of success in the current endeavor (−2D penalty to the action).

Obsessive Tendencies (+2D): Whenever this hero decides on a course of action, she cannot help but become totally focused on that action, ignoring all other issues in her life.

Paranoia (+3D): Everyone wants to destroy this character. At least, that's what she believes. She must constantly look over her shoulder, check every inch of her sleeping environment, and scrutinize every acquaintance. She never knows when her enemies will strike.

Pathological Liar (+1D): This hero cannot stop himself from lying constantly. No matter what the situation, he is compelled to exaggerate, fib, and outright lie. His practice conning people gives him a +1D to all *bluff* attempts.

Phobia (+ 1D): The die code of this Disadvantage varies depending on the level of the hero's fear (with a maximum of + 3D). At + 1D, the hero avoids the object of his fear as often as possible, but has no problem dealing with it when the time comes. At + 3D, the hero will never put himself in a situation where he has to cope with his fear. If he does wind up in such a situation, he freezes and remains unmoving until the object of his fear subsides. Fears include heights, water, certain creatures, darkness, open spaces, cramped spaces, magic, thunder, lightning, and so on.

Physically Impaired (+ 3D): The hero suffers from a problem of the body. He may be blind, deaf, or mute (or any other impairment you can devise).

Poor Memory (+ 1D): Heroes with this problem have trouble remembering. In game terms, the hero suffers a −2D penalty on all *remember* skill rolls.

Procrastination (+ 1D): This hero always puts everything off. Even when something cannot wait, he still lets it go until it's too late.

Released Convict (+ 1D): Sometime during this hero's life he was convicted of a crime (which he may or may not have committed). After serving a jail sentence, he was released and now must battle the stigma against ex-convicts.

Reputation (+ or −, 1−3D): "Youæyou're the one who destroyed the orphanage with a catapult when you were sieging Oropos!" "Aren't you the fellow that finally captured Sinon?" "Didn't your father fight at Ulysses' side at Troy?" This hero has an abnormally inflated Fame rating (5 Fame per 1D of Advantage or Disadvantage) because of events in her past, whether good or evil. Game Masters must be careful if a hero chooses a high level of fame or infamy, as it will color the way almost everyone relates to her.

Sixth Sense (−2D): This hero has an innate danger sense. Thirty-three percent (33%) of the time (rolling a hydra on 1D) an alarm goes off in her head when she comes within a few seconds of a dangerous situation. The Game Master rolls this check secretly and alerts the player when it is successful.

Skeleton in the Closet (+ 2D or more): This hero has elements of his past that he does not want anyone to unearth. The player should choose a specific "skeleton" and tie it in with the hero's history. No matter what, he must never reveal this secret. It will bring harm to either him or those he loves.

Sworn Enemy: This hero has for some reason targeted a specific person or creature (+ 1D) or a species (+ 3D) of creatures as her direct adversary. Whenever he comes in contact with such a being, he immediately attacks.

Targeted for Assassination (+ 3D): Someone has put out a contract on this hero's life. The assassin could be anyone and could strike at anytime.

Wanted for a Crime (+ 2D): A nation, city-state, or culture has declared this hero a criminal. The hero may or may not have committed the crime he has been charged with, but nevertheless, the authorities have begun their search for him.

DEEDS

As your hero adventures across the Ancient World, he accomplishes many deeds, whether good or bad, with varying levels of impact on his surroundings. A hero's reputation bears a great deal of importance on the reaction of others toward him—that of common citizens as well as that of the gods themselves.

You can keep track of your hero's accomplishments in the section of your Hero Sheet entitled Deeds. Your Game Master will tell you what to list and when to list it, but here's a preview.

Each Deed falls into one of three categories—Minor, Major, or Colossal—depending on the level of impact on a particular deity. Furthermore, a Deed may be considered negative (–) or positive (+) with regard to the god in question. For example, helping Ares recapture his godhood would be a positive Colossal Deed in Ares view and would be listed thusly:

+Colossal: Ares. Helped restore Ares' godhood.

Destroying one of Athena's sacred owls would be a negative minor Deed.

–Minor: Athena. Killed one of Athena's owls.

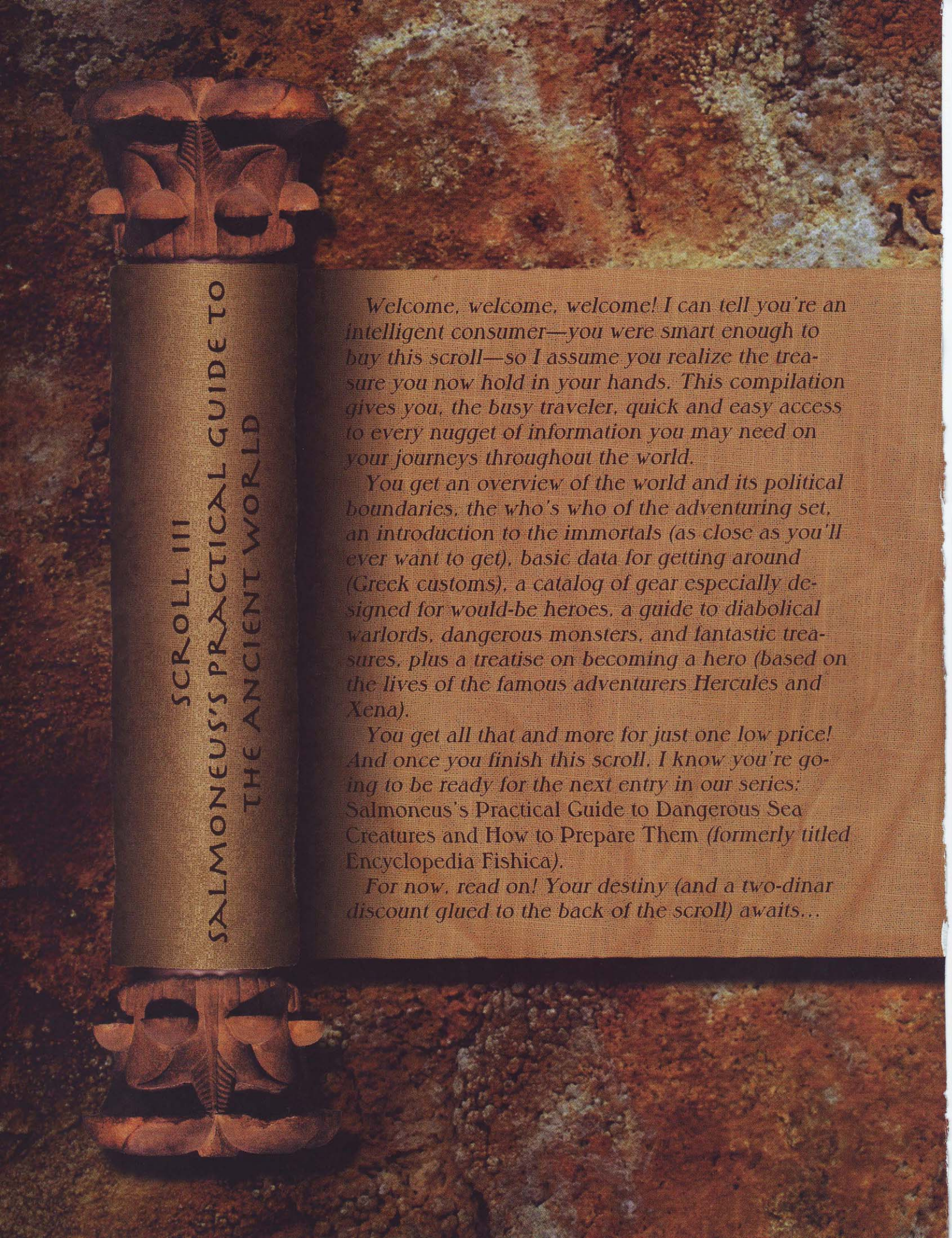
As you continue to journey throughout the Ancient World, you will encounter deities time and again, and their reactions to you will be based primarily on your previous experiences with them and their fellow gods. Be careful always, for sometimes helping one deity may hinder another, thereby accruing two Deeds (one positive and one negative) for a single accomplishment. Damned to Tartarus if you do, damned to Tartarus if you don't (and that's the way Hades likes it).

IMPROVING SKILLS & SPECIALTIES

As your hero ventures forth, making a name for herself throughout the Ancient World, she gradually increases her expertise in various skills. The more activity she undertakes, whether fighting monsters or solving puzzles or whatever, the more quickly she improves in those areas.

So, of course, I have devised a way to reflect this gathering of experience in the game. Part of your reward for successful adventuring—given by the Game Master—comes in the form of Character Points, which, in addition to their use as extra dice for skill attempts (see "Character Points" above) may also be spent on improving skill and Specialty dice. The equation that determines the cost of additional dice is the same for both skills and Specialties: three times the new die code equals the number of Character Points.

For example, to increase a skill from 3D to 4D costs twelve Character Points (3 * 4 = 12). To increase a Specialty bonus from +3D to +6D costs eighteen Character Points (3 * 6 = 18).



SCROLL III
SALMONEUS'S PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE ANCIENT WORLD

Welcome, welcome, welcome! I can tell you're an intelligent consumer—you were smart enough to buy this scroll—so I assume you realize the treasure you now hold in your hands. This compilation gives you, the busy traveler, quick and easy access to every nugget of information you may need on your journeys throughout the world.

You get an overview of the world and its political boundaries, the who's who of the adventuring set, an introduction to the immortals (as close as you'll ever want to get), basic data for getting around (Greek customs), a catalog of gear especially designed for would-be heroes, a guide to diabolical warlords, dangerous monsters, and fantastic treasures, plus a treatise on becoming a hero (based on the lives of the famous adventurers Hercules and Xena).

You get all that and more for just one low price! And once you finish this scroll, I know you're going to be ready for the next entry in our series: Salmoneus's Practical Guide to Dangerous Sea Creatures and How to Prepare Them *(formerly titled* Encyclopedia Fishica*).*

For now, read on! Your destiny (and a two-dinar discount glued to the back of the scroll) awaits...

LAY OF THE LAND

No, this section doesn't cover the topic your mischievous mind has conjured up. We're discussing the geography of the Ancient World—at least, the part of the world that concerns you the most at this point.

Greece rests at the center of the Ancient World, a widespread collection of kingdoms, federations, colonies, and city-states. To the south lies Egypt, to the west Gaul and Brittania, to the north Scythia, and to the east, Phoenicia, Judea, and Chin, to name but a few. Not to forget the thousands of islands scattered throughout the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas.

Limestone mountains dominate the countryside, dividing the land into wide fertile plains in Attica, Boeotia, and Thessaly, with smaller tracts scattered throughout the rest of the mainland. The prevalence of tall mountain ranges has created many barriers, both geographical and political, since the narrow valleys and infrequency of passes make land travel extremely difficult. Thus the need for sturdy entrepreneurs willing to brave the unforgiving roads and harsh weather of the long haul from one trading post to the next. (I have to replace my shoes three or four times per trip! Just think about that overhead! Gives me a headache just thinking about it.)

Greece has no central government, acting more like a loose league of economically linked fiefdoms than a politically aligned republic. Therefore, you should expect skirmishes along disputed borders, battles over philosophical ideals, even full-scale wars erupting out of unrequited love or severed romance. If anything remains constant in this evolving world, it's that conflict lies around every turn.

No matter which region you journey through, tread carefully. The Ancient World holds many dangers for the inexperienced and the veteran adventurer alike. As soon as possible, determine who controls the lands you travel and which laws are enforced therein—even a little information can save your life. If you don't believe me, just give it some time (for example, I'm sure you didn't know that you can't deduct certain types of "entertainment expenses" from your taxes—I know, what kind of world do we live in when a man can't trade dinars for a massage... seriously, it was just a massage... no, really).

For your edification, I've procured a map of the Ancient World from a little known cartographer named Vespucites. He has this bizarre obsession with exploration beyond the Greek world—gods know why anyone would want to leave this civilized and economically vital area, but *whatever*. All I know is it allowed me to pick up this chart for a modest fee (a savings which I, of course, passed on to you).

HEROES & ROGUES

Many adventurers travel across the world, but only a few have recently earned the attention of the populace at large. While I don't have space here to cover every one of these men and women, I'll start you off with introductions to some of the more prominent members of the hero set. (The following excerpts come from the official biographies of the individuals in question—now I just have to get them to sign this waiver....)

Heroes are funny. I mean, they hate to talk about themselves, not to mention their horrible marketing skills. I have managed to glean the information below from various sources, but I found it difficult to nail down the details of certain events. Otherwise, eveything from this point on is 100% accurate.

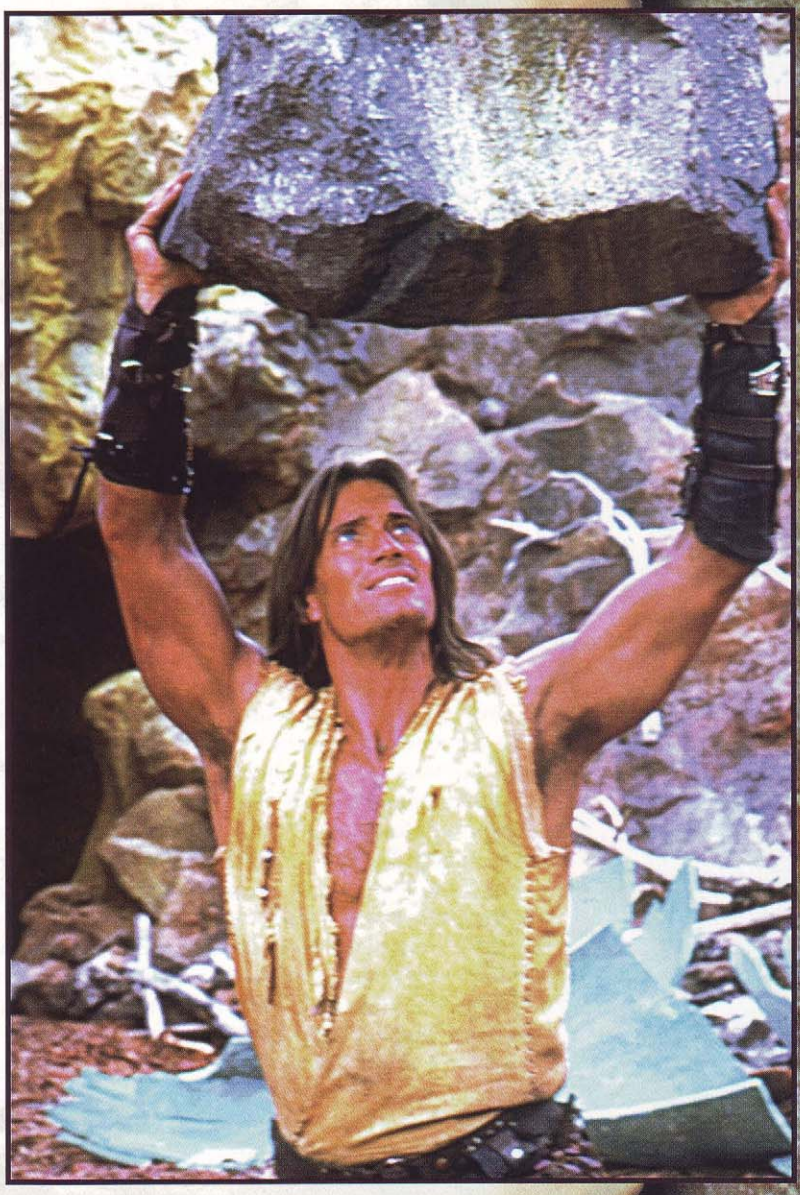
Note: Specialties appear in parentheses within the skill lists, base damage values appear in parentheses after each weapon, and protection values appear in parentheses after armor.

HERCULES

Type: Hero
Race: Half-human, half-god
COORDINATION 3D
Hurled weapons 8D, marksmanship 7D (bow +2D)
ENDURANCE 4D
Resist disease 7D, resist poison 6D, run 11D, swim 8D
REFLEXES 3D
Dance 6D, dodge 10D, fighting 15D (brawling +4D), ride 11D
STRENGTH 4D+8
Climb 6D+8, leap 10D+8, lift 17D+8
AWARENESS 2D
Animal handling 5D, hide 4D, perception 11D, remember 8D, search 5D, track 12D
CHARISMA 3D
Bluff 5D, command 8D, flirt 7D, intimidate 4D, persuade 10D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
Cultures 6D, first aid 5D, geography 10D, history 5D, legends 6D, monsters 13D, navigation 9D, pantheon 14D, reading/writing 8D, smithing 10D, speaking 12D, streetwise 7D, survival 11D

METTLE 3D
Stay up 7D, willpower 9D
Body Points: 25
Character Points: 35
Fate Points: 12
Fame: 72
Speed: 30
Gear: Jerkin, breeches, arm guards (1), boots
Special Powers:
Great Strength: As a gift to his son, Zeus imbued Hercules with strength far beyond that of mortal men. Hercules receives a +8 bonus to any *Strength* or *Strength*-related skill roll.
Vulnerabilities: None that we have noticed...well, maybe his big heart.
Special Moves: Too many to list.

Many years ago, Zeus, King of the Gods, took human form and romanced a beautiful young woman named Alcmene—behind his wife Hera's back. The result of this tryst was a baby boy, half mortal and half god, who possessed a strength far greater than any man. Alcmene named her son Hercules.



Hercules found it difficult growing up without a father, but Hera's anger prevented Zeus from spending as much time with him as he would have liked—at least, that's the explanation Zeus clings to. For most of his youth, Hercules harbored anger toward his estranged father, believing—and rightfully so—that the King of the Gods had abandoned Herc and his mother after having had his "fun."

Under the tutelage of Cheiron, the great Centaur warrior, Herc and his cousin Iolaus learned the art of war and the way of the true warrior, who fights not with anger, but with a sense of justice and compassion. Mind you, the young heroes get into their share of trouble, but that is a tale for another time.

Years later, as Hercules journeyed through the world seeing the sights and performing good deeds, he met and fell in love with Deianeira. Together they helped free Prometheus from his icy cage by returning to him the Eternal Torch, which Hera had stolen from Mount Ethion in an attempt to destroy mankind (she's really got a chip on her shoulder about mortals, doesn't she?).

Herc settled down to the farmer's life with Deianeira, and the two produced three children: Aeson, Klonus, and Ilea. During this time, Hercules and Iolaus undertook a number of adventures, but throughout, the son of Zeus had found that he loved his family more than the excitement of his quests.

Hera, still holding a grudge against Hercules for the actions of his father, decided to strike once more at the hero. Realizing that her attempts to destroy Hercules himself had so far proven fruitless, she directed her next attack at the one thing Herc valued most: his family. The wicked Queen of the Gods cast fireballs from the heavens that eradicated Deianeira, Aeson, Klonus, and Ilea in the blink of an eye.

Hercules was filled with rage and shouted to the sky that he would make Hera pay for her actions for the rest of his life. But the loss devastated Hercules, and he turned his thoughts and emotions inward, preferring to grieve alone. Even Iolaus, his closest friend, could not shake him from his despondency.

After burning down his home, Hercules set off on a quest to destroy Hera's seven temples. Along the way, he refused to come to the aid of those who asked his help, but eventually, he saw the error of his ways and joined the battle to slay the she-demon of Ister.

Since then, Hercules journeys the world, most often with Iolaus at his side. Other times, he finds himself the somewhat reluctant companion of Salmoneus, Autolycus (the King of Thieves), and various other mortals. After foiling Xena's plot to assassinate him, he helped the Warrior Princess recognize the Greater Good and resurrect herself as a force against evil.

XENA

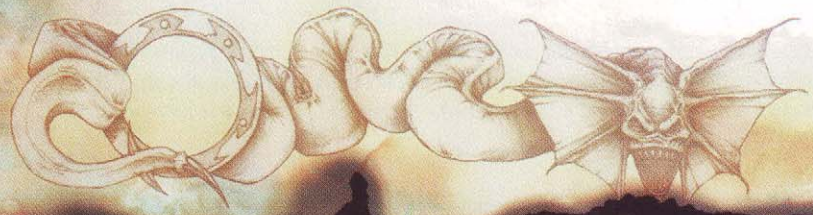
Type: Warrior Princess
Race: Human (as far as she knows)
COORDINATION 3D
Hurled weapons 7D (chakram +5D), marksmanship 5D
ENDURANCE 3D
Resist disease 5D, resist poison 9D, run 6D, swim 5D
REFLEXES 5D
Acrobatics 11D, charioteering 9D, dodge 8D, fighting 12D (chobos +3D, sword +4D, whip +2D), ride 13D, sneak 7D
STRENGTH 2D
Climb 8D, leap 7D, lift 5D
AWARENESS 3D
Animal handling 8D, conceal 5D, hide 5D, perception 11D, read lips 4D, remember 7D, search 6D, track 9D
CHARISMA 3D
Bluff 9D, command 14D, flirt 8D, intimidate 10D, persuade 7D, singing 11D
KNOWLEDGE 2D
Astrology 4D, cultures 7D, disguise 11D, first aid 15D, gaming 7D, geography 10D, history 9D, leatherwork 8D, legends 7D, monsters 7D, navigation 12D, pantheon 10D, philosophy 8D, reading/writing 9D, speaking 8D, streetwise 12D, survival 13D
METTLE 3D
Battle cry 12D, stay up 9D, willpower 11D
Body Points: 24
Character Points: 26
Fate Points: 8
Fame: 54
Speed: 30
Gear: Chakram (4), long sword (4), breast dagger (1), whip (0), boots, metal chest guard (1), leather body armor (2), gauntlets & arm guards (1)
Special Moves: Blow torch +5D, chest stomp +4D, head run +3D, jump kick +6D, the pinch +5D, whirl-a-punch +3D (and many more)

The Warrior Princess has lead a grim life laced with fear and hatred and goodness and hope. A lesser woman may not have survived the plights that have befallen this village girl from Thrace. Only Xena had the strength of will and heart to escape the dark path that was leading her straight to Tartarus.

As a young girl, Xena found her home of Amphipolis under siege by the forces of the warlord Cortese. Xena and many of the villagers escaped as Cortese's raiders razed the entire town. Her brother Toris had abandoned them, but her mother Cyrene and her younger brother Lyceus stayed with her as she rallied their meager forces and struck back at Cortese's army, pushing the warlord back and reclaiming the village. Unfortunately, Lyceus was killed in the battle, leaving only Xena and her mother to rebuild their lives.

But Xena had found a sense of power in war, and she realized that she could not return to the life she had known before Cortese's attack. Leaving her mother to operate the family tavern, Xena blazed her own trail—one of destruction and death. Raiders and mercenaries from across the world sought her out so that they might have a chance to join her ruthless and invincible army. She conquered kingdom upon kingdom, region upon region. In a short span of time, Xena had become the opposite of the innocent girl from a few years before—for the most part.

Over the years, Xena perfected her warrior skills. She traveled far and wide, from Chin to Britannia, encountering many people who would profoundly influence her life, even if she did not realize it at the time. Two in particular stand out: M'Lila and Lao Ma. These two powerful women offered Xena much: skills to aid her in battle against her enemies and, more importantly, against the dark side of herself. Unfortunately, Xena chose not to heed the subtler aspects of her mentors' teachings—until much later.



During this time, Xena and her fellow warlord Borias...well...mated, producing a son whom Xena named Solan. She left him to be raised by the Centaurs so that no one would learn of his existence. It would be nine years before she saw the boy again.

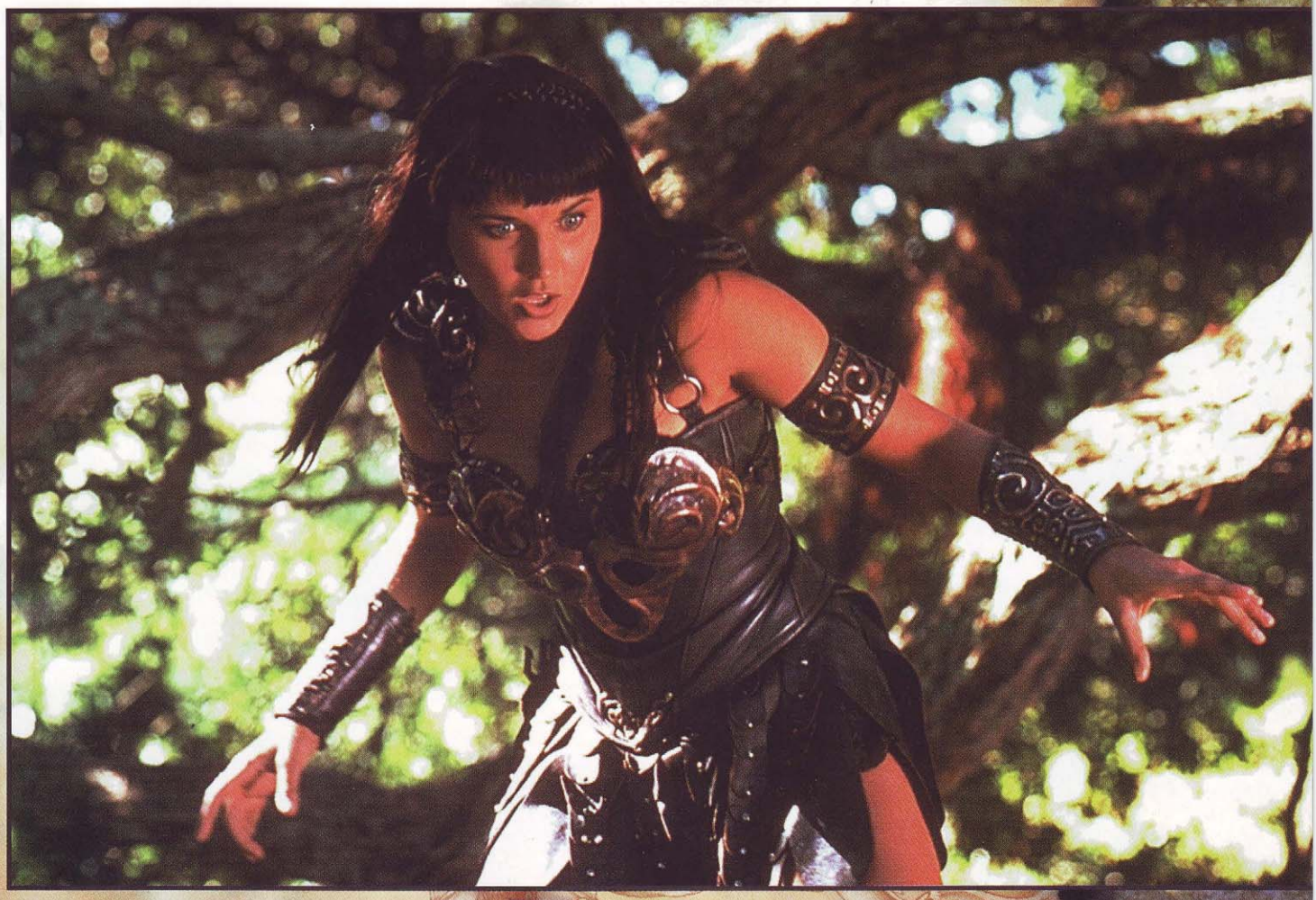
Throughout this dark period of her life, within her heart still burned the flame of goodness. She had just buried it so deep that it would take a miracle to restore it to full luminescence. That miracle came in two parts: a baby and the mighty hero Hercules.

Xena's personal code prohibited the killing of women and children, a tenet which her lieutenant Darphus chose to ignore. Clinging to this ideal, she took her first tentative steps toward the Greater Good, suffering the sadistic punishment of the Gauntlet, the price for leaving her army. Xena remains the only person ever to have survived this aspect of the Warrior's Code, during which two rows of warriors pummel the victim with clubs until she emerges from the corridor of torture.

Shortly thereafter, Hercules pointed her toward the path of the hero, and though hesitant at first, she finally began to understand and accept what M'Lila and Lao Ma had tried to teach her many years before.

Since then, she has come to rely a great deal on her best friend and companion, Gabrielle—not to forget her faithful horse, Argo—as she tries to restore her soul by dedicating herself to fighting for the Greater Good. The struggle does not go easily, for many—gods and mortals alike—refuse to recognize the changes she has made in her life. At times, these individuals even tempt her to return to her old ways. But luckily, with the help of Gabrielle (and the memories of M'Lila and Lao Ma), she has so far managed to avoid that fate.

The issue of Xena's father remains a mystery. Many years ago, her mother's husband, Atrius, returned unexpectedly from war for a single night, during which Xena was conceived. Shortly after Xena's birth, Atrius told Cyrene that the child would have to be sacrificed, an act that her mother could not permit. To save Xena, Cyrene killed her husband. But the story does not end there. Xena has begun to suspect that Ares himself may actually be her father. At this point, however, she has no proof and, more importantly, no real desire to find out.



IOLAUS

Type: Hero (a.k.a. Sidekick)
Race: Human
COORDINATION 4D
Hurled weapons 7D, marksmanship 7D (bow +3D)
ENDURANCE 3D
Resist disease 4D, resist poison 5D, run 8D, swim 7D
REFLEXES 4D
Acrobatics 5D, charioteering 5D, dodge 8D, fighting 11D (brawling +3D, knife +1D, sword +2D), ride 6D, sneak 7D
STRENGTH 3D
Climb 7D, leap 5D, lift 5D
AWARENESS 2D
Animal handling 4D, conceal 4D, hide 5D, perception 7D, remember 7D, search 6D, track 7D
CHARISMA 2D
Bluff 4D, command 5D, flirt 3D, intimidate 4D, persuade 5D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Cultures 5D, disguise 7D, first aid 6D, gaming 5D, geography 7D, history 6D, leatherwork 5D, legends 7D, monsters 9D, navigation 7D, pantheon 8D, reading/writing 7D, smithing 8D, speaking 9D, streetwise 8D, survival 9D
METTLE 3D
Stay up 5D, willpower 7D
Body Points: 22
Character Points: 29
Fate Points: 8
Fame: 52
Speed: 30
Gear: Jerkin, boots, necklace, earring, arm guards (1)
Special Moves: Knock down +2D, head bash +2D (and mastering new moves all the time)

Iolaus and Hercules have been friends for a very long time, forming a strong bond during their youth, solidifying their close relationship during the period they both trained under Cheiron's tutelage.

As an adolescent, Iolaus had a mischievous streak that tended to get him in minor trouble with his elders, but nothing too serious. He spent much of his free time practicing the skills of the warrior, readily mastering many different fighting styles in a relatively short span of time. He seems most comfortable with the knife, the sword, and the bow—not to mention his own fists and feet—but he has been known to pick up any nearby object and quickly turn it into a lethal weapon: a log, a torch, even a mug of ale.

Like his best friend, Iolaus has had his share of women problems—though not exactly in the same way. At times Iolaus envies his more famous companion, the one to whom the ladies flock whenever they arrive in a new town. Feeling he has few opportunities has lead him to jump into relationships sometimes too quickly. The most difficult for him being his "romance" with Xena, who had only lead him along in her plot to assassinate Hercules. Though he has since forgiven the Warrior Princess for trying to play a funeral dirge on his heartstrings, the painful memory of the incident will long remain with him.

As Hercules knows, Iolaus's loyalty and compassion alone make him one of the greatest warriors of all time, not to even mention his battle prowess. No matter how hard life seems to treat him, Iolaus always somehow manages to come away stronger and more resilient. And along the way he has done his part to help Hercules—who would not be the hero he is today without the assistance and the love of his best friend.

GABRIELLE

Type: Amazon Princess/Bard
Race: Human
COORDINATION 2D
Hurled weapons 3D
ENDURANCE 2D
Resist disease 3D, resist poison 4D, run 3D, swim 3D
REFLEXES 4D
Dance 6D, dodge 7D, fighting 6D (quarterstaff +2D), sneak 5D
STRENGTH 2D
Climb 3D
AWARENESS 3D
Conceal 4D, hide 4D, perception 5D, remember 8D
CHARISMA 4D
Bargain 5D, bluff 7D, flirt 6D, persuade 9D, storytelling 10D
KNOWLEDGE 5D
Astrology 6D, cultures 7D, disguise 6D, first aid 6D, geography 7D, history 7D, legends 8D, monsters 6D, pantheon 6D, reading/writing 9D, speaking 10D
METTLE 2D
Willpower 4D
Body Points: 20
Character Points: 18
Fate Points: 7
Fame: 27
Speed: 30
Gear: Quarterstaff (3), half-shirt, skirt, boots

Growing up, Gabrielle had always known she was different, that she was out of place among the mundanity of village life and destined for something far greater. Not that she didn't love her family and friends—she did and still does, very much. It was more of a feeling within her, there all the time, beckoning her to trust it and to follow her heart.

When Xena saved Gabrielle and her fellow villagers from Draco, Gabrielle felt something stir in her soul. She didn't consciously perceive it, nor did she even try to logically sort out her feelings, but she knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that her destiny lay with this beautiful and formidable warrior.

Of course, Xena wanted nothing to do with the young woman, and forbade her from accompanying her on her journeys. But mere words would not divert Gabrielle. After her family had all gone to sleep (well, except her sister), Gabrielle set out to follow Xena, leaving behind her father Herodotus, her mother Hecuba, her younger sister Lila, and her fiancé Perdicas.

Knowledge she had acquired through voracious reading and her silver tongue became her chief weapons at the beginning of her adventuring career, but over time she learned to fight with her staff right alongside Xena. A short stay with the Amazons provided her with even more warrior skills, though storytelling seems to have become one of her most impressive assets. But even though she managed to win a scholarship to the Athens Academy of the Performing Bards, she has instead continued to roam the world with Xena.

With her dying breath, the Amazon Terreis passed her Right of Cast to Gabrielle, instantly conferring on the young girl the position of Amazon Princess. The other Amazons have come to accept Gabrielle, and one in particular, Ephiny, has become one of her closest friends. No matter how much she enjoyed their company, however, Gabrielle still knew that she belonged with Xena, and so she left the Amazons behind.

Xena's and Gabrielle's relationship has grown stronger with each passing day, and there is no doubt that they each love the other even more than they would like to admit. As of late, however, situations have arisen that may cause problems between them down the road, but in my opinion, the strength of their bond can withstand anything so long as they both acknowledge the difficulties and take steps to deal with them.

SALMONEUS

Type: Entrepreneur
Race: Human
COORDINATION 2D
ENDURANCE 2D
REFLEXES 3D
Dodge 5D, fighting 4D
STRENGTH 2D
AWARENESS 4D
Conceal 5D, invent 5D (marketing strategy +3D)
CHARISMA 4D
Bargain 8D, beg 7D, bluff 9D, persuade 5D
KNOWLEDGE 4D
Cultures 6D, gaming 5D, geography 5D, reading/writing 7D, speaking 8D, streetwise 9D, trading 10D
METTLE 3D
Willpower 4D
Body Points: 21
Character Points: 14
Fate Points: 3
Fame: 19
Speed: 30
Gear: Robe, sandals

Brilliant. Good-looking. Charming. A master salesman. What else can I say about this intrepid entrepreneur?

Salmoneus first met Hercules during a stint as a toga-monger and has since blazed new marketing trails with his attempts at hero biographies, bubbly water, lost treasure recovery—and that's only the beginning. He travels with Hercules or Xena whenever their paths happen to cross, but spends the majority of his time on his own.

(This writing in the third person about myself is starting to get weird. Why don't we just move on?)

AUTOLYCUS

Type: Thief
Race: Human
COORDINATION 4D
Hurled weapons 6D, lockpick 12D, marksmanship 7D, pick pocket 9D
ENDURANCE 2D
Run 8D, swim 6D
REFLEXES 4D
Acrobatics 10D, dance 6D, dodge 7D, fighting 8D, juggling 7D, ride 5D, sneak 10D
STRENGTH 2D
Climb 8D, leap 5D
AWARENESS 3D
Conceal 9D, hide 8D, perception 6D, read lips 5D, remember 4D, search 8D
CHARISMA 3D
Bluff 7D, flirt 8D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Disguise 6D, gaming 5D, legends 6D, reading/writing 7D, scholar 4D (treasures +4D), speaking 4D, streetwise 7D
METTLE 3D
Body Points: 22
Character Points: 19
Fate Points: 7
Fame: 48
Speed: 30
Gear: Tunic, breeches, boots, collapseable grappling hook w/ pully system, lockpicks

The young Autolycus joined up with a traveling carnival at an early age, eventually performing as an escape artist. His dashing good looks and striking charm quickly made him one of the most popular attractions.

But something was missing. There was no thrill in his work. He'd mastered the job and wanted something with more...danger. After several false starts, he happened upon the criminal trade of thievery.

Over the years after leaving the carnival, Autolycus has again risen to the top of his profession, having recently become known as the King of Thieves (though no one seems to be exactly sure who conferred the title on him in the first place). While he is a lawbreaker and remains consistently practical with regard to his life, his friends have come to realize that he has a heart of gold.

For the most part, he would prefer to avoid physical violence—he doesn't want to disappoint the ladies by coming away with a hideous scar—relying on his grappling hook to help him escape any situations that might lead to a brawl. That's not to say that he can't hold his own—just ask Cleopatra....

JOXER

Type: Warrior...sort of
Race: Human
COORDINATION 3D
ENDURANCE 3D
Run 4D
REFLEXES 3D
Dodge 5D, fighting 4D
STRENGTH 2D
AWARENESS 3D
CHARISMA 3D
Beg 4D
KNOWLEDGE 3D
Geography 4D, history 4D, pantheon 5D, reading/writing 4D, streetwise 6D
METTLE 4D
Stay up 5D, willpower 5D
Body Points: 20
Character Points: 9
Fate Points: 2
Fame: 7
Speed: 30
Gear: Two daggers (2), long sword (4), helm (1), leather body armor (2)

Born into a ruthless family of vicious killers, Joxer tried his best to emulate his warlord father, but found he could never even hope to match his father's insatiable lust for blood like his brother Jett, who would eventually come to be known as the King of Assassins. We won't even mention his other brother Jace....

Once Joxer realized his discontent with his life, he decided to turn over a new leaf, to become a valiant warrior fighting for good (after Callisto refused to allow him to join her army). Xena and Gabrielle have reluctantly accepted him, even though he can be annoying when he puts his mind to it. Of particular importance to Joxer is Gabrielle, for whom he carries a raging torch. Gabby knows of his feelings and, though flattered, does not have an interest in pursuing that kind of relationship with him.

Even though his warrior skills leave a lot to be desired, the passion in Joxer's heart more than makes up for it. And who knows, maybe someday someone will actually sing his theme song—or even put it into some medium that can be purchased all over the world by countless millions of adoring fans....

I had you going there for a minute, didn't I?

IMMORTALS

Thirteen of the most powerful gods currently live on Mount Olympus (the tallest mountain in Greece, located in Thessaly and rising 10,000 feet into the clouds), but hundreds of other divinities exist elsewhere throughout the world. Each has particular spheres of influence and areas of interest—just make sure that you never find yourself in either of those two categories. If you do, you'd better hope Fortune is smiling on you, 'cause you're gonna need all the help you can get...

You'd think that the gods would have spent the past few thousand years becoming cultured, responsible, mature deities, working together to keep the world running smoothly and bestowing countless gifts upon mortals.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The gods act more like uncontrollable children blessed with amazing—and lethal—powers. They seek always to beat their fellow deities on every front, scheming and plotting, forming and breaking allegiances, all the while using mortals as pawns in their tangled political machinations.

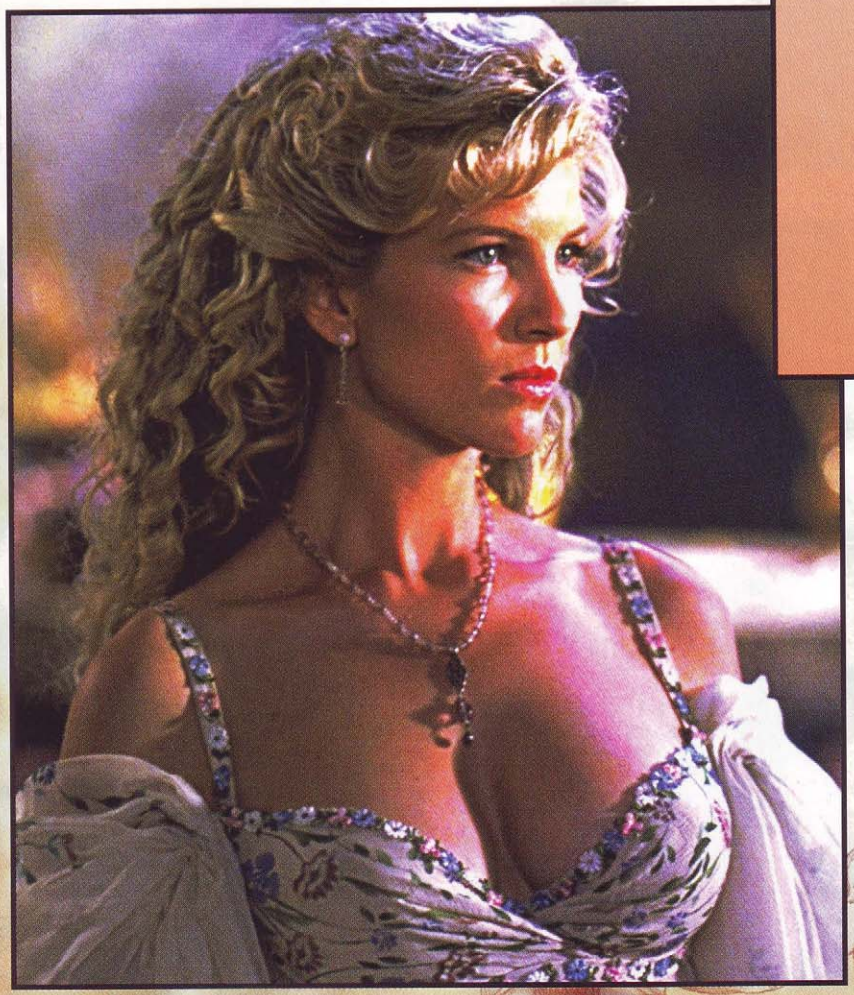
And humanity finds itself caught squarely in the middle—help this god and ensure the wrath of another. Damned to Tartarus no matter what you do. The only way to win is to stay completely out of it...of course, the gods would never allow such a thing. If they want you involved, you're involved, whether you like it or not.

My advice: Perform whatever little service they request, and then get the hell out of there! Don't ask for a reward (unless you have a particularly good one in mind), don't ask for a favor (unless you really need it), and, above all, never, ever ask what else you can do for them. I don't care if you're a hero or a layperson—and neither do the gods. They fear no one (then again, Hercules and Xena do seem to set them on edge—although, maybe that's jealousy, but you didn't hear that from me) and for good reason: they wield fantastic powers well beyond our comprehension.

Here's the rundown on the major players in the Pantheon:

APHRODITE

Pronunciation: af-roh-DY-tee
Realms & Powers: Beauty, fertility, love, sex

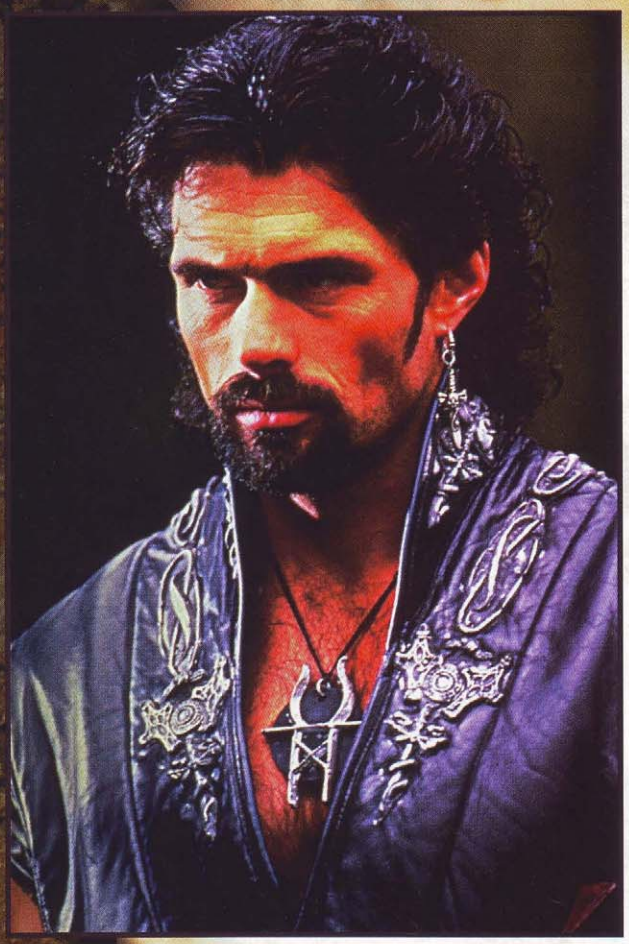


Joxer here. I don't think Salmoneus can quite capture the manly essence that is me, Joxer the Mighty. What you need is a little melody and the lyrics to the theme song of the greatest adventurer to ever walk the earth (that's me, for those of you not paying attention). Okay, everyone, sing it loud, sing it proud!

Joxer the Mighty,
Roams through the countryside;
He never needs a place to hide.
With Gabby as his sidekick
Fighting with her little stick,
Righting wrongs and singing songs,
Being mighty all day long,
He's Joxer...Joxer the Mighty!

(I don't hear you!)

Joxer the Mighty,
He's very tidy.
Everyone admires him.
He's so handsome it's a sin.
When things get grim
He'll take it on the chin
If you're in jeopardy
Caused by the enemy
Don't call the cavalry.
There's a better remedy
(Although he doesn't work for free).
He's every man's trusty,
He's every woman's fantasy,
Plus he's good company.
Look out, golly gee!
He's Joxer...
Joxer the Mighty!



APOLLO

Pronunciation: ah-POL-low
Realms & Powers: Healing, light, music, plague, prophecy

ARES

Pronunciation: AIR-ees
Realms & Powers: War

ARTEMIS

Pronunciation: AR-ta-miss
Realms & Powers: Archery, hunting, the moon, wildlife

ATHENA

Pronunciation: ah-THEE-na
Realms & Powers: Arts, citadels, cities, crafts, technology, wisdom

BACCHUS (DIONYSUS)

Pronunciation: BA-kis (dy-a-NIS-us)
Realms & Powers: Nature, mystic ecstasy, wine

DEMETER

Pronunciation: dih-MEE-ter
Realms & Powers: Agriculture, corn, wheat

HADES

Pronunciation: HAY-deez
Realms & Powers: The souls of the dead, the Underworld

HEPHAESTUS

Pronunciation: heh-FEST-us
Realms & Powers: Fire, smiths

HERA

Pronunciation: HEH-ra
Realms & Powers: Marriage

HERMES

Pronunciation: HER-meez
Realms & Powers: Fertility, good fortune, roads, merchants, thieves, oratory, literature, athletics

POSEIDON

Pronunciation: poe-SY-den
Realms & Powers: The sea, water, earthquakes

ZEUS, KING OF THE GODS

Pronunciation: ZOOS
Realms & Powers: Weather

CUSTOMS

Knowing the cultural traditions of any geographical or political region can ingratiate you to the local populace—even prevent you from perpetrat-

ing a *faux pas* that could bring a lynch mob right to your door. Below you'll find a few of the more common customs to give you a head start. After that, you're on your own. Just don't underestimate the power of knowledge—sometimes it can defeat even the mightiest of warriors.

THE HAND-CLASP

Friends and allies greet each other with the hand-clasp: right forearm against right forearm, hands firmly clutching arms. If you do it once, that's all the practice you'll need to get it right every time thereafter.

More importantly, the hand-clasp signals your affiliation with your fellow hand-clasper to all who witness the meeting. Never hand-clasp with your enemy except to initiate a truce or settle a dispute—otherwise you may be find yourself labeled an ally of your adversary, and that could bode ill for your continued health. (Get the point? Good, let's move on.)

THE FERRYMAN'S FARE

Charon, ferryman of the River Styx, demands payment for those who wish to cross into the realm of Hades. The standard rate currently stands at two dinars, but he has been known to charge more or accept something in trade (he has a fondness for pigs) when the mood strikes him.

As a result, most Greeks place a two-dinar coin under the tongues of their fallen comrades just prior to burial or cremation on the funeral pyre. Failure to pay Charon sentences the dead one to eternity locked in a state of flux between the Underworld and the World of the Living. This torturous existence usually drives the victim mad. More often than not, he or she soon returns to haunt those who left him or her to this terrible fate....

GEAR

You're venturing forth across the Ancient World, ready for your first encounter with a warlord, or a monster, or whatever diabolical ne'er-do-well dares to cross your path, when suddenly you run into a band of thugs who demand all of your dinars.

"Come and get it," you say, confidence oozing from your every pore. And then reach for your sword—

Which is nowhere to be found. The moral here: don't forget to purchase gear before you embark on your

adventuring career. And I'm not just talking about weapons. You also need armor, clothing, food, and other miscellaneous equipment. And if you act now, you can become a charter member of the Salmoneus Price Club. For an up-front fee of just 200 dinars, you get 10% off any in-stock item for the rest of your life! I know—how do I do it? Sometimes I even amaze myself. Well don't just stand there. Browse!

WEAPON STATISTICS

Each entry below includes one or more of the following elements:

Base Damage: The minimum amount of damage inflicted by the weapon upon a successful strike. The effect value of the attack roll (the difference between the roll total and the difficulty to hit) is added to the base damage.

Standard Price: The price of the item as determined by Salmoneus. Changes in supply and demand can, not to mention politics, can, of course, alter these costs.

Restrictions: Any requirements for or penalties incurred by the use of the item.

Some weapons may also have the following stat:

Weapon Speed: The value added to the *Reflexes* roll used to determine the order of attack during a combat exchange. The higher the weapon speed, the faster the weapon. (Note: This is an *optional* rule. Consult your Game Master to determine whether or not you will be using this statistic.)

ARMOR

If you have the dinars, you may wish to invest in armor—it can save your skin at some point. But be careful: while armor does provide protection against physical harm, it can also affect your reflexes and awareness.

To determine the effect of armor, add the protection values from all pieces worn by the hero (helm, shield, body armor). Each time a hero suffers damage, the number of Body Points lost from that injury is reduced by the total protection. For example, a hero with a shield and leather armor receives a blow from a mace that inflicts six Body Points of damage. Luckily for our hero, his protection total of three (1 for the shield plus 2 for the leather body armor) reduces the injury to three Body Points (6 Body Points of damage minus the protection total of 3).

ARM GUARDS

Protection: 1
Restrictions: Cannot be worn with body armor.
Standard Price: 25 dinars

Arm guards (or greaves) are most often made from strips of leather stitched together to form a protective covering that fits over the forearm. Metal versions (usually of bronze) provide increased protection (Protection of 2) at double the cost, and the added weight interferes with agility (conferring a −1D penalty to *Reflexes* rolls).

CHAIN MAIL BODY ARMOR

Protection: 3
Restrictions: −1D to all *Reflexes* skill rolls; −10 feet to Speed
Standard Price: 250 dinars

Chain armor consists of thousands of interlinked metal rings formed into short or full-length tunics and trousers. While the strength of the metal provides a higher level of resistance to damage than leather armor, the additional weight causes restriction of motion, slowing the wearer's reflexes.

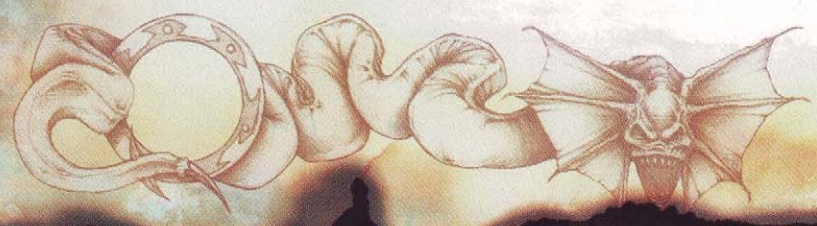
Repair typically requires the procurement of new rings, which can then be woven back into the armor.

HELM

Protection: 1
Restrictions: −1D to all *Awareness* skill rolls
Standard Price: 15 dinars

Helms come in all shapes, sizes, and construction materials. The most common version has a conical shape made from pieces of boar's tusk on a base of leather strips, with bronze guards running down the sides to protect the ears and cheeks. Helms may also have ornamentation such as horns, spikes, feathers, braids, or bones, but this depends entirely on the army issuing the helms or the individual's preferences and artistic flair.

Most helms either have an inner lining of fabric or are worn over soft caps to reduce the impact of blows to the head.



LEATHER BODY ARMOR

Protection: 2
Standard Price: 100 dinars

Leather armor's inexpensive price (compared to its metal counterparts), flexibility, and ease of repair make it the most popular type of body armor throughout the Ancient World. The bodysuit, jerkin-and-breeches, or half-top-and-skirt combination provides maximum coverage (mostly—check out Callisto if you ever get the chance) with minimum restriction of motion (definitely—you must've seen or at least heard about the "moves"), a benefit prized by lightly armed troops, thieves, and anyone else who requires as much mobility as possible.

The armor itself consists of patches of cured animal hide stitched together with durable rawhide "thread." The larger the patches, the more beautiful and therefore the more expensive the armor. Some suits can cost as much as 500 or even 1,000 dinars!

LEG GUARDS

Protection: 1
Restrictions: Cannot be worn with body armor.
Standard Price: 35 dinars

Leg guards—longer, wider versions of arm guards—serves to protect an individual's lower limbs. The size of the leg guard (stretching from ankle to thigh) makes a metal version ineffective—the added weight slows the wearer so much that the additional protection becomes meaningless.

SHIELD

Protection: 1
Standard Price: 25 dinars

Typically, only soldiers carry shields, though rumors say that the Amazons also bear shields (although of a lighter variety) into battle.

The most common type of shield is called the figure-of-eight: two curved pieces of wood fastened together to form a cross-shaped frame with bowed arms and covered with cured bull's hide. A band of leather circumnavigating the entire shield provides additional reinforcement and protection from damage.

Other shield shapes include round (also called the Argive shield or hoplon), elliptical, rectangular, and diamond.

STEEL PLATE BODY ARMOR

Protection: 5
Restrictions: −2D to all *Reflexes* skill rolls; −1D to all *Awareness* skill rolls; −20 feet to Speed
Standard Price: 1,000 dinars

Only recently has Ares allowed knowledge of steel to escape into the mortal world. The carbonization process turns ordinary iron into the strongest metal ever known. Steel plate armor can protect its wearer from strikes that would otherwise kill those wearing other types of protection.

But the increased resistance to damage comes at a high cost. Steel weighs many times more than its ferrous counterparts, slowing movement and reflexes and dimming awareness. And don't expect to sneak up on someone ever again. Wearing a suit of steel armor precludes such an action, except perhaps during a raging battle, when the cacophony of combat can mask the clanking of the interlocking plates.

One rumor I have heard from Hercules himself has

it that folk of Atlantis have developed a thin version of steel plate using an advanced alchemical process that renders the armor as light as leather while still retaining the same level of protection. If I ever get my hands on this miraculous metal, you can be sure it'll run in the 10,000-dinar range. But, wait. Hercules also mentioned something else about the "fate of Atlantis." I just can't remember what he said. I guess I'd better schedule a trip out there one of these days to check it out.

FASHION

I don't care who you are or what you do for a living: You have to look good! Whether you're an aspiring bard or a vicious warlord, you need to dress the part. What would you think of a warlord wearing hosiery? (Well, actually, that might be even scarier—but you get the point.) No, a warrior needs leather, spikes, chains, clunky boots, and things that go "ching" when you walk.

Below you'll find an assortment of the latest trends in personal adornment out of Mizrahus, the capital of the fashion world. Be fancy, be free, be fashionable!

BANDOLEER

Standard Price: 2 dinars

This leather belt hangs over the shoulder and diagonally across the chest and back and has dozens of loops to hold crossbow bolts, knives, sling stones, or any other small object (to a maximum of twelve items, depending on size). The bandoleer gives you quick and easy access to your death-dealing weaponry, and it looks really cool, too!

BELT

Standard Price: 1 dinar

We have a wide range of this accessory, whether you need to cinch that tunic or hold up those pants. Choose from: standard leather strap, cloth sash, girdle, or just plain rope. A belt might not seem important now, but you'll wish you'd picked one up when you come undone in the middle of a crowd.

BOOTS

Standard Price: 5 dinars

Boots come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from ankle-high, soft-leather traveling boots to knee-high, polished black leather, spiked, ass-kickers (you definitely don't want to be on the receiving end of that)!

CLOAK

Standard Price: 3 dinars

The cloak or himation is available in three main varieties. The tribon is a full cloak of dark, coarse wool. The chlamys, worn over the left shoulder and fastened over the right shoulder with a pin or brooch, leaves much of the right side exposed. The sisyra, made of sheepskin or goatskin, is cured with the wool or hair left on (which can lead to unwanted odors when it rains).

CODPIECE

Standard Price: 2 dinars

No, this isn't the thing you use to carry fish! It protects your...you know, your unmentionables. What? Don't give me that. You know exactly what I'm talking about. You're just trying to provoke me. Stop. I mean it. Look, if you don't cut it out, I'm going to kick you in the—

Now you see why you need a codpiece. (Good sales pitch, huh?)

DRESS

Standard Price: 10 dinars

The uncomplicated peplos (plain dress) covers the necessary parts, but says nothing about your personal style. For a few more dinars (20 and up), you can choose from the latest fashions or even commission your own one-of-a-kind dress (40 dinars).

GAUNTLETS

Standard Price: 10 dinars

This lovely pair of leather gauntlets fit over your wrist and lower arm, making a very hip fashion statement. All the warrior are wearing them. Don't miss out!

HATS

Standard Price: 2 dinars

Top off your wardrobe with one of our cool hats. The petasos, or traveler's hat, has a brim with a decorative shape and strap that claps under the chin—perfect for those rainy days on the road. The tholia, a straw conical hat with a wide brim, shields the eyes from the sun (typically a female favorite). And last, we have the kausia, a short, broad-brimmed hat intended to protect the wearer from both the sun and the rain—very popular in northwestern Greece!

JERKIN

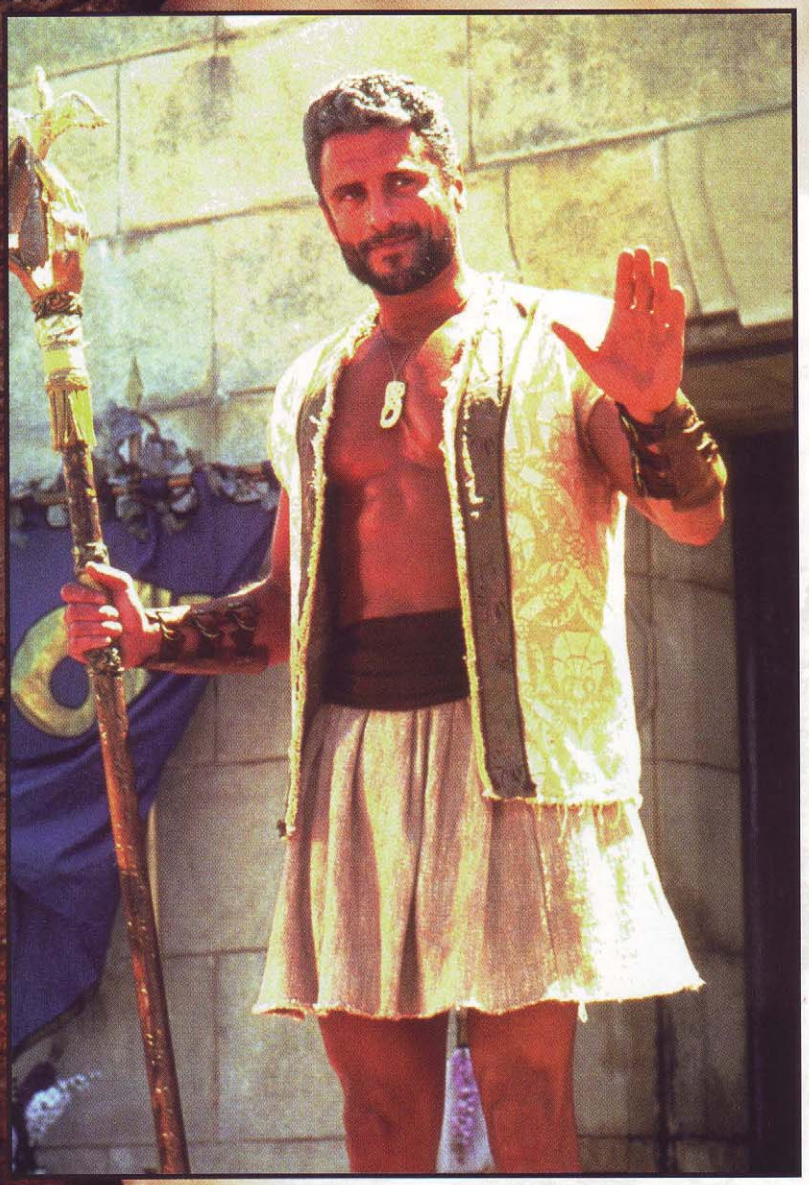
Standard Price: 8 dinars

You'll look cool in one of our goatskin (diphthera) or leather (spolas) jerkins (waist-length coats, for the fashion deprived). Dyed to your specifications (we'll do anything from "natural" to puice), your jerkin will make the perfect accessory to any outfit, for casual or formal occasions.

ROBE

Standard Price: 4 dinars

If you're looking for something comfortable and easy to wear, then the robe is for you. (It can also be used to hide your impressive weaponry, if you know what I mean....)



SANDALS

Standard Price: 1 dinar

Our leather sandals provide protection for your feet, but more importantly they're stylish! We've got dyes for every color under the sun—so come on in and get a pair of those gold sandals, you know you want them.

SHOES

Standard Price: 2 dinars

If you want something a bit more protective than the sandal, but nothing too over the top, then the shoe is for you. This type of footwear completely encloses the foot, defending it against the elements, the ground, and other people's feet.

For an extra five dinars you can also purchase our special miniature bellows and bladder attachment. Just pump it up until the shoe fits just right. We'd like to thank our recently contracted shoe designer, Nikeus, for this ingenious feature.

SKIRT

Standard Price: 4 dinars

The standard skirt comes in several types of fabrics, from simple cotton to silk (triple the cost). If you're looking for something in leather, check out leather body armor—you get that cool look plus protection!

STROPHION

Standard Price: 1 dinar

This undergarment gently holds up a woman's...particulars. Our latest design crosses the chest in an 'x' shape and comes complete with hidden interior pockets. The perfect gift for a warrior woman.

TOGA

Standard Price: 2 dinars

A current trend at trendy parties, the toga—made from a single swathe of woven fabric—wraps around the entire body, leaving only the lower legs and arms exposed.

TUNIC

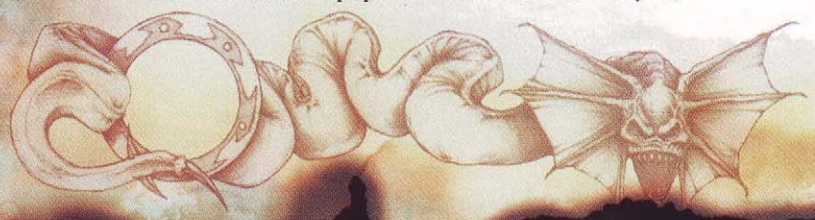
Standard Price: 6 dinars

You have your choice of our sleeved or sleeveless tunics, which both come with sashes or leather ties to prying eyes from getting a good look (of course, the sash or tie may be loosened...).

ZOMA

Standard Price: 1 dinar

The zoma is the latest in our line of loincloths, available for both men and women. Choose from dozens of dazzling colors. Styles: baggy, long and form-fitting, skimpy, and thong. (Note: we're currently out of stock on the ever-popular "what loincloth?" style.)



MISCELLANEOUS ADVENTURING STUFF

You never know what you might need when you're out adventuring, and so I stock many items that defy classification but can prove extremely useful on the road.

CANDLE

Standard Price: 2 for 1 dinar

Whether reading and writing late at night or just trying to get around in the dark, our fine selection of colored candles can help you out. Simply light the wick and the candle burns for hours! (Warning: Exposure to wind or water may cause the candle to malfunction. By purchasing this item, you waive all rights to sue should the candle experience such a breakdown in operation.)

GRAPPLING HOOK

Standard Price: 10 dinars

Boy can these things come in handy, especially when you're trying to break in through a window on an upper floor. Not that I'm condoning such behavior, I'm merely pointing out that you could use a grappling hook for just such an endeavor. (Note: Rope sold separately.)

Using a grappling hook and rope combination to scale a surface confers a +1D bonus to a hero's *climb* roll.

HAMMER

Standard Price: 15 dinars

"If I had a hammer...." I'd use it to drive a nail through a plank, or to batter a piece of metal into shape, or—in a jam—to knock somebody out, especially someone who wanted to stop me from doing one of the first two things.

The hammer has a base damage of one when used for attack purposes.

IRON SPIKES

Standard Price: 5 for 1 dinar

What do you do if you want to seal a door? Spike it! What do you do if you want to create some handholds for climbing? Spike it! What do you do if you want to hang somebody from their underwear? Spike it! What more need be said?

Using spikes as handholds confers a +1D bonus to a hero's *climb* roll.

MARBLES

Standard Price: 50 for 2 dinars

You'd be surprised how much fun you can have with a bag of marbles. And I'm not just talking about playing games. Next time you're fleeing from a horde of crazed thugs, drop a few bags worth of marbles on the floor behind you and watch what happens. After that, you'll never leave home without 'em.

Any individual who steps on marbles must make a fast-react *Reflexes* roll against a difficulty of three

FOOD & DRINK

Here's a quick list of various foodstuffs and potable liquids. (Not responsible for availability and price changes due to acts of Demeter.)

Item	Standard Price
Ale	1 dinar per gallon
Bread	1 dinar per two loaves
Cake	1 dinar
Cereal	1 dinar per pound
Cheese	1 dinar per wheel
Eggs	1 dinar per dozen
Fish	1 dinar per fish
Fruit	1 dinar per dozen (can be an assortment)
Gruel	1 dinar per two bowls
Meat (Pork, Mutton, Goat, Fowl)	1 dinar per meal
Milk	1 dinar per two gallons
Nuts	1 dinar per 100 nuts
Olives	1 dinar per 30 olives
Pastries	1 dinar per two pastries
Shellfish	1 dinar
Stew	1 dinar per bowl
Vegetables	1 dinar per dozen (can be an assortment)
Water	Free
Wine	3 dinars per gallon (1 dinar per glass)
Yogurt†	1 dinar per pound

† goatgurt

to remain on her feet (she must continue to make rolls until she escapes the area of marble infestation, moving one foot per roll).

QUIVER

Standard Price: 10 dinars

Got your arrows or bolts and no place to store them for travel? What you need is a quiver crafted from fine Corinthian leather. Water-proof and guaranteed to last a life time.

ROPE

Standard Price: 50 feet for 5 dinars

Get some hemp, twist it together, and what have you got? Well, there is that...but at the moment I'm actually referring to rope! Our standard-weight rope can handle up to 500 lbs. of pressure. For heavier rope able to withstand up to 1,000 lbs. of pressure, double the normal price.

SACK

Standard Price: 5 for 1 dinar

I don't care who designs your clothes, you can never have enough pockets. And what better kind to have than removable pockets! We've just slashed our prices on our entire stock of sacks. Get yours now and you'll never have to worry about where you're going to stash that loot! I mean, uh, carry your gear. Yeah, that's it.

TORCH

Standard Price: 3 for 1 dinar

Too hip for that wussy candle? Looking for something with more...well...flame? Pick up a pack of our bitchin' torches for your next foray into that catacomb/crypt/dungeon/sewer/cave/underground lair and you won't get caught in the dark.

WATER CLOCK

Standard Price: 45 dinars

What time is it? What time is it? Is that what your companions ask you every five minutes? Once again, Salmoneus provides for your needs. I've just obtained the rights to exclusively distribute these gorgeous Egyptian water clocks—accurate to within to twenty minutes per month. Makes an excellent Solstice gift.

If you plan to see the Seven Wonders of the World (or even to merely travel from one village to the next), you'll want to invest in transportation. We have a wonderful selection of items with locomotive capabilities, many of which can be used in tandem!

We even have a new payment plan: half down and a 25% loan for the remainder, payable monthly for the next four years. If you miss an installment, we simply send a bounty hunter after you to collect it—at no additional cost to you (unlike those plans from certain warlords that require you to pay for your own bounty)!

TRANSPORT

CARRIAGE

Standard Price: 100 dinars

This completely enclosed transport comes complete with four wheels!

Type: Horse-Drawn Carriage
Crew: 1 driver
Passengers: 4
Cargo Capacity: 500 lbs.
Cover: 5
Maneuverability: +1D

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

For those musicians out there, have we got a selection for you! Check out the list below for in-stock items and current prices.

Item	Standard Price
Castanets	10 dinars
Cithara (bass lyre)	50 dinars
Cymbals	15 dinars
Flute	20 dinars
Harp	75 dinars
Hydraulis (water organ)	100 dinars
Keras (Horn)	25 dinars
Lyre	40 dinars
Rattles	5 dinars
Salpinx (trumpet)	20 dinars
Syrinx (Pan flute)	10 dinars

Speed: 60
Armor: 3
Body Points: 50

CART

Standard Price: 50 dinars

Your standard flatbed cart. Horses not included.

Type: Horse-Drawn Cart
Crew: 1 driver
Passengers: 8
Cargo Capacity: 2,000 lbs.
Cover: 0
Maneuverability: 0
Speed: 50
Armor: 1
Body Points: 40

CHARIOT, RIDING

Standard Price: 75 dinars

The standard riding chariot carries one driver and one passenger, with a pair of horses required for locomotion (sold separately).

Type: Riding Chariot
Crew: 1 driver
Passengers: 1
Cargo Capacity: 250 lbs.
Cover: 2
Maneuverability: +2D
Speed: 80
Armor: 1
Body Points: 35

TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS

Type: A description of the vehicle or mount.

Crew: The number of individuals required for operation.

Passengers: In addition to the crew, the number of individuals the vehicle or mount can hold.

Cargo Capacity: The amount of weight the vehicle or mount can hold.

Cover: The amount of protection afforded individuals riding in or on the transport vehicle (the value is added to the difficulty to hit the occupants).

Maneuverability: A die code representing how well the vehicle or mount handles.

Speed: The maximum distance in feet the transport can travel during a combat exchange (a period of five seconds).

Armor: The transport's resistance to damage (treated as a protection value to resist damage).

Body Points: Like heroes, the amount of damage the transport can withstand before being destroyed.

Orneriness: The die code representing the mount's resistance to commands (acts as an opposed roll to ride or animal handling).†

† Applies only to living creatures.

CHARIOT, WAR

We have two models currently in stock:

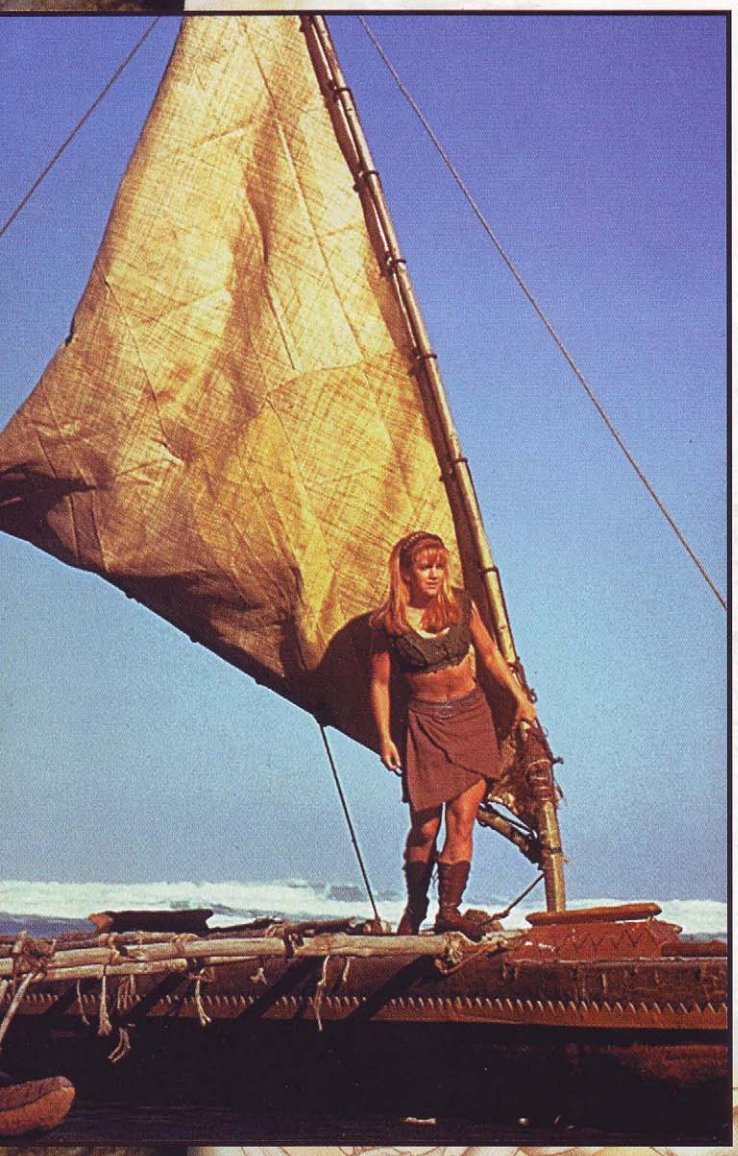
• Year-of-the-Gorgon Chevus *Thunder*. 4 horsepower. Enough room for one driver and one weapon wielder.†

Standard Price: 110 dinars

Type: War Chariot
Crew: 1 driver, 1 gunner
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 100 lbs.
Cover: 3
Maneuverability: +3D
Speed: 70
Armor: 3
Body Points: 50
† Four horses sold separately

• Year-of-the-Minotaur General Chariots *Dominator*. 6 horsepower. Enough room for one driver and two weapon wielders.††

Standard Price: 130 dinars



Type: War Chariot
Crew: 1 driver, 2 gunners
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 150 lbs.
Cover: 3
Maneuverability: +3D
Speed: 65
Armor: 3
Body Points: 55
†† Six horses sold separately.

HORSE

Standard Price: 30 dinars

Our stock of horses comes directly from the world-renown breeding and training stables in Boeotia.

Type: Mount
Crew: 1 driver
Passengers: 1
Cargo Capacity: 75 lbs.
Cover: 0
Maneuverability: +3D
Speed: 60
Armor: 0
Body Points: 25
Orneriness: 3D

MULE

Standard Price: 20 dinars

A mule is a mule is a mule.

Type: Mount
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 150 lbs.
Cover: 0
Maneuverability: +1D
Speed: 35
Armor: 0
Body Points: 20
Orneriness: 4D

PONY

Standard Price: 25 dinars

Our fine assortment of ponies have all been blessed by priests of Poseidon. You'll never fall off, guaranteed!†††

Type: Mount
Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo Capacity: 50 lbs.
Cover: 0
Maneuverability: +2D
Speed: 50
Armor: 0
Body Points: 20
Orneriness: 2D

††† All claims should be directed to your local priest or priestess of Poseidon. Not responsible for actions taken against you by Poseidon or any other omnipotent being after making such a claim.

WEAPONS

Violence won't solve every problem you encounter, but it can help you defeat marauders, raiders, pirates, thugs, bandits, monsters or any other entity seeking to cause harm to you, your allies, or innocent bystanders.

Below you'll find the widest selection of weapons throughout the Ancient World (and all available in a single catalog!). New shipments arrive weekly, so check our circulars for new killing things as often as you can. You never know when you're going to lay eyes upon that perfect weapon, one that just screams you.

BATTLE AXE

Base Damage: 5
Standard Price: 25 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 3

This double-bladed beauty measures a full two-and-a-half feet long, perfect for those opponents who always seem to be close but just out of reach. Give it a chop—you'll like it.

BOLO

Base Damage: 1
Standard Price: 30 dinars
Base Skill: Hurled Weapons
Weapon Speed: 4

The bolo consists of intertwined leather thongs that end in stones or other small, heavy objects. The wielder swings the bolo over her head and then hurls it at her target.

The bolo thrower may also choose to make a called shot (+2 to attack difficulty), targeting her opponent's ankles. A successful hit causes normal damage and trips the target, who must spend an action getting back to his feet.

BREAST DAGGER

Base Damage: 1
Standard Price: 15 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 6

What can I say about the breast dagger? Well, it works perfectly in situations requiring stealth or surprise attack, but you'll need...uh...ample...um...support so the dagger doesn't simply fall to the floor.

The dagger itself comes from a special smithy in Thebes that produces nothing but weaponry and ornamentation for the bosom. Crafted of finely wrought iron mined from the nearby Cithaeron Mountains, this lovely knife can come in handy when dealing with bandits or over-anxious lovers. A simple handle runs perpendicular rather than parallel to the blade, forming a stylized 'T' (the handle is curved to sit properly on the...the, uh...oh, you know where it goes).

BOW

Base Damage: 3
Standard Price: 50 dinars (arrows: 10 for 5 dinars)
Base Skill: Marksmanship
Weapon Speed: 3

Bows allow attack from a distance, often proving more accurate than javelins or slings. Most bows are constructed from a combination of wood, horn, bone, and sinew, with bowstrings of dried gut or sinew. The stave bow (the most common type) consists of a fairly straight yet flexible pole curved the last few inches at either end. (The Scythians have learned to create the more powerful compound bow—see "Scythian Bow" below.)

Arrowheads come with bronze or iron heads, depending on which metal costs less in the particular region of purchase. Steel arrowheads cost double the standard amount.

CHAKRAM

Base Damage: 4
Standard Price: 500 dinars (imported)
Base Skill: Hurled Weapons
Weapon Speed: 3

Chakrams originated in the East and have yet to become popular in Greece. And for good reason. Number one, they're expensive. And ß, you could lose a finger or even your whole hand if you don't catch it correctly (failing a *hurled weapons: chakram* roll upon return causes the catcher to suffer four points of damage—note that this means the wielder must take two actions to attempt to catch the chakram, thereby incurring multi-action penalties).

The chakram is a metal ring with a sharpened outer edge that can be thrown at an opponent or inanimate target. By ricocheting off objects, the chakram can be made to return to the thrower (the thrower must generate at least a total of two on his *hurled weapons: chakram* roll to cause the weapon to return to him).

CHOBOS

Base Damage: 3
Standard Price: 20 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 6

Known in some parts of the world as escrima sticks, these weapons, while seeming unimpressive, can cause massive amounts of damage in a short amount of time in the hands of a skilled chobos master. Xena herself recommends chobos (the very weapons she used to defeat the Amazon Queen Melosa).

CLUB

Base Damage: 3
Standard Price: 10 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 4

Amazingly, clubs come in many forms. You've got your simple wooden tree limb (heck, you can make one of those yourself—of course, you'll probably wind up giving yourself splinters [rolling the Eye of Hera], but hey, that's your choice). But then you've got your lacquered, aerodynamic wooden versions and even—for an extra 20 dinars—your tempered steel bludgeon (base damage of 4).

The club. The straight-to-the-point, no-nonsense big stick. It'll help *you* get your point across.

CROSSBOW

Base Damage: 5
Standard Price: 75 dinars (bolts: 1 dinar)
Base Skill: Marksmanship
Weapon Speed: 1

The crossbow or gastraphetes (gas-TRAF-iteez) consists of a powerful composite bow mounted on a stock, with a metal claw used to hold the bowstring in a cocked position and a trigger to release the claw and thereby fire the bolt. Reloading the crossbow counts as an action for combat purposes.

JAVELIN

Base Damage: 6
Standard Price: 40 dinars
Base Skill: Hurled Weapons
Weapon Speed: 2

The javelin is a spear constructed specially for throwing as opposed to its thrusting counterpart. The long shaft ends in a sharpened, metal head. Operating instructions: basically, you just chuck it.

KNIFE

Base Damage: 2
Standard Price: 20 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 4

Knives (or daggers, as they are sometimes called) are metal blades ranging from a few inches to a foot in length. A knife is one of those multi-utility items: you can slice, dice, chop, hack, or stab almost anything (though success depends entirely on the resistance of the object in question). In addition to its use as an instrument of war, the knife comes in handy for more trivial situations: cutting thread, gutting a fish, whittling stakes, carving food. Simply put, you just can't live without it.

Be aware that standard knives cannot substitute for throwing knives. Daggers designed for hurling have blades and hilts perfectly balanced for sailing through the air. Of course, the extra workmanship required to produce these more finely wrought weapons comes at a higher price (30 dinars). This time it isn't me—not that it ever was. I'm just saying...

LASSO

Base Damage: 0
Standard Price: 5 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 3

You take a rope and tie some complex knots and *voila*! You have a lasso. While lassos do not cause damage in and of themselves, they have the ability to "capture" the target and keep him, her, or it in check. Of course, depending on particular section of anatomy caught by the lasso, damage may be inflicted by cutting off the flow of blood or air (three points of damage per exchange if lassoed at the neck, one point of damage per exchange for any other area).

To extricate an individual from a taut lasso, the loop must be cut (consider a standard rope to have five Body Points with no protection).

MORNING STAR

Base Damage: 6
Standard Price: 50 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 1

In its most basic form, a morning star consists of a club with spikes driven through it, creating a very deadly weapon. Metal versions have the same look but have seemlessly joined parts that increase durability.

NET

Base Damage: 0
Standard Price: 15 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 2

The net has function similar to that of the lasso: an assault weapon intended not to inflict damage, but to render the target incapacitated. Individuals caught within a net must make a *Strength* or *Reflexes* roll against a base difficulty of 4 to extract themselves from their confinement.

QUARTERSTAFF

Base Damage: 3
Standard Price: 5 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 5

The quarterstaff—or staff, for short—is a simple pole approximately six feet in length and about three inches in diameter. Its light weight and low cost make it a staple weapon across the countryside, even with its reduced lethality compared to other instruments of war. In the hands of a skilled warrior, however, the staff can move so fast as to inflict heavy amounts of damage in a short time.

SARISSA

Base Damage: 5 (7 from a moving horse)
Standard Price: 50 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 1

Mounted warriors tend to favor the sarissa, or cavalry spear. Its increased durability and flexibility allow its to absorb the impact of attacks from a moving horse. Even so, the sarissa can crack under the strain (game mechanics: rolling the Eye of Hera during an attack).

SCYTHIAN BOW

Base Damage: 4
Standard Price: 150 dinars
Restrictions: Requires base *Strength* of 4D to operate.
Base Skill: Marksmanship
Weapon Speed: 2

The Scythian composite bow requires great strength to draw and fire, but it can inflict massive amounts of damage. The bow differs from the standard or stave version in that it is doubly convex: the segments above and below the hand grip are curved, lending additional resistance, and therefore additional firepower, to the weapon.

SLING

Base Damage: 3
Standard Price: 15 dinars (shots: 5 for 1 dinar)
Base Skill: Hurled Weapons
Weapon Speed: 3

Most slings have dried gut or sinew as their basic component. One of the sling fits around the wrist of the wielder, while the other is simple held in the hand. In the middle the sling widens, giving enough space for the shot to rest without falling out.

The wielder swings the sling around, building up momentum, and then releases the end of the sling, firing the shot at (well hopefully at) his target.

Sling shots are made of stone, baked clay, or lead, usually chiseled, molded, or smelted into a plum shape. Most sling throwers carve or otherwise imprint motifs and sayings into their sling shots ("Take that!," "Eat this!," and "Die!" among the most popular).

SPEAR

Base Damage: 3 (2 for bludgeoning)
Standard Price: 15 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 3

The spear. Lash a sharp head to a long shaft and there you have it: instant death! You can't go wrong with this ever-popular slashing, thrusting, ripping, cleaving, severing, tearing device—and you can even use the blunt end for bludgeoning! What more could you possibly need?

Plus, Salmoneus himself guarantees each and every spear![†]

Those wishing a weapon with more pizzazz may choose the "Prestige" model, which comes complete with ornamental hand-grip, feathers, motifs, and inscriptions, all to the customer's exact specifications. Of course, this version costs an extra 30 dinars—but, boy, can it make you look cool!

† Just bring in the broken spear, the receipt, proof of identity, diagrams showing how the spear was damaged, three witnesses, and a ten-dinar processing fee and we'll happily replace it with a slightly cheaper model.

SWORD

Base Skill: Fighting

Type	Base Damage	Standard Price	Weapon Speed
Short	3	50 dinars	6
Broad	4	55 dinars	5
Long	4	60 dinars	5
Serrated	5	70 dinars	4
Squiggily	5	75 dinars	5
Two-handed	7	100 dinars	2
Kopis	4	80 dinars	4

In the past, swords measured only one-and-a-half to two feet long, due to the weakness of the hilt joint. But master smithies from Mycenae have developed a new technique (involving a wider flange and a mutli-rivet tang) that provides a much stronger juncture and therefore allows for longer blades. Amazing!

Right now, we have overstock on every sword type: short, long, broad, serrated, squiggily, two-handed, and kopis (scimitar). Standard blades come in bronze or iron; for steel versions, double the cost.

TRIDENT

Base Damage: 5
Standard Price: 60 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 2

A trident resembles a huge, three-pronged fork with nasty barbed points. The weapon has a dual nature: it can be hurled or thrust, and therefore can handle many different combat situations.

WAR HAMMER

Base Damage: 4
Standard Price: 40 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 3

Imagine a hammer, and now make it really big.

WHIP

Base Damage: 1
Standard Price: 25 dinars
Base Skill: Fighting
Weapon Speed: 5

While the whip inflicts only minor damage, it can also act like a lasso, wrapping around an object or body part (causing three points of damage per exchange if wrapped around the neck, one point of damage per exchange if wrapped around any other area).

To extricate an individual from a taut whip, the whip must be cut (consider a standard rope to have eight Body Points with no protection) or freed from the wielder's grasp.

WRITING MATERIALS

Whether jotting down a quick note or forging expiration dates, you'll need access to various writing implements and something to compose on.

INK

Standard Price: 1 dinar per vial

Made from carbon mixed with a thin vegetable gum, our ink comes in blue, black, and red. One vial is enough to fill an entire scroll.

PAPYRUS SCROLL

Standard Price: 3 dinars

The Egyptians have mastered the art of papyrus-making, and we have managed to procure a large shipment of this precious paper just for you. Each scroll measures approximately four hands by eighty hands, but you can cut it into sizes of your choosing. (By the way, those spots are supposed to be there—don't worry about it.)

ROLLER

Standard Price: 2 dinars

Once you've filled an entire scroll, you'll need some way to preserve it. Just wrap your document around on of our wood and bone rollers, and you'll have not only an easy and safe method for storage, you'll also prevent people from putting their grimy fingers all over your parchment.

SCROLL LABELS

Standard Price: 1 dinar per pack of 25

Once you've got a decent selection of scrolls, you're going to start to lose track of which is which. That's where scroll labels come in. Just write an identifying word on the label, lick the adhesive on the back (not for too long), and then stick it in a convenient location on the scroll. (Oh, and make sure you get it right the first time—these things are a bitch to remove.)

VELLUM

Standard Price: 5 dinars

Only the most pale sheep and goats were slaughtered to bring you this fine vellum.

WRITING IMPLEMENT

Standard Price: 2 dinars

The standard reed writing implement comes with a set of mix-and-match heads of differing sizes for all of your correspondence needs.

TRUTH, LEGEND, RUMOR, LIE

The following section provides you, the beginning adventurer, with an overview of what you can expect on the road ahead. Think of this not as an exhaustive treatise, but rather as a brief collection of typical people, creatures, and items you may encounter. In time, you will come to expect the unexpected, using the information below as a foundation for the knowledge you will accumulate over a career. Let's just hope that this is enough to get you through the first few adventures.

You'll notice I've opted to adopt a more serious tone in the following passages. I've done so consciously, to impress upon you the dangers of the hero's way. Don't say I didn't warn you....

WARLORDS

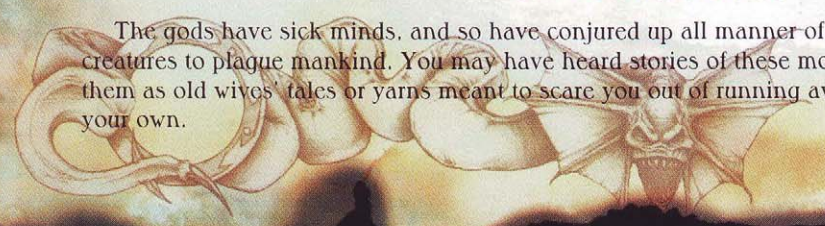
Dangerous. Evil. Powerful. These words all describe the typical warlord. These men and women are driven by an insatiable lust for power and are therefore willing to sacrifice as many of their underlings as necessary to solidify their holdings and dominate new lands. Most define the conquering of the entire world as their ultimate goal, but few would be satisfied even with that—if they ever managed to attain it.

What makes these brutes so dangerous is their keen intellect. They have risen from the ranks of common warriors to lead their fellows, a task which requires superior knowledge of tactics, politics, and discipline. Do not make the mistake of dismissing these fierce generals as maniacal despots or overzealous soldiers. No, these lords of war deserve more respect than that. Be warned: those who fail to believe this will quickly find themselves at the bottom of a shallow grave.

Some of the more infamous warlords have included Draco, Darphus, Cortese, and Xena.

MONSTERS

The gods have sick minds, and so have conjured up all manner of hideous, disgusting, and lethal creatures to plague mankind. You may have heard stories of these monsters in your youth and dismissed them as old wives' tales or yarns meant to scare you out of running away from home or wandering off on your own.



But they're all true—in fact, they're even worse than you could have possibly imagined. Here are just a few of the creatures you're likely to encounter.

HARPIES

These fierce and malevolent creatures can be found throughout the world—even on the Other Side where they guard Hades' castle in Tartarus. Half-woman and half-vulture, harpies have massive wings (providing them with the ability to fly) and razor-sharp talons (for tearing your face off). Be careful: once you get harpies, they're hard to get rid of.

HYDRAS

The spawn of the half-woman, half-serpent Echidna and the giant Typhon, the hydra has managed to propagate itself, or so the rumors say. And therefore, even though Hercules killed the original creature, more are said to have taken up lairs throughout the known world. Hydras have been known to have as many as seven, nine, or even fifty heads. Cutting off any one results in the immediate regeneration of two new heads. From what Iolaus says, the only way to defeat them is with fire.

MINOTAURS

I'll let you in on a little family secret: the Minotaur (the one in the labyrinth on Crete) was Herc's half-brother Gryphus (Zeus being the father of both of them). Hercules ended up killing Gryphus, whom Zeus had imprisoned in the maze a century before.

But a band of adventurers has recently returned from Thessaly, where they say they encountered an entire tribe of the beasts preparing for a war. Perhaps these were merely your average Centaur...but perhaps not.

SEA SERPENTS

If you're planning on sailing the seas, be prepared for hideous serpentine creatures that live in the depths of the dark ocean, breaking the surface only destroy anyone who dares to disturb their domain. While many sea serpents act at the behest of Poseidon, God of the Sea, some have been released from their service and now kill at will.

SKELETONS

Celesta escorts the spirits of the dead to the Other Side, leaving their decomposing mortal bodies behind. For various reasons, these remains can re-animate, whether by Hades' command or some other

means. While they may not seem too fearsome, remember that first of all, they're already dead, and second of all, some have been known to explode upon impact.

TREASURES

Your adventures may also bring you in contact with various mystical artifacts created by the gods (for who knows what reason). These items tend to create more problems than they solve, so you should make an effort to learn as much as you can from sages before you dare to invoke the powers of any given object.

AMBROSIA

The food of the gods supposedly carries the power to heal and, more importantly, to turn a mortal into a god. Some villains and treasure hunters have managed to steal a bit of this food for themselves, storing it deep underground in well-defended labyrinths or strongholds. Xena and Gabrielle used the Titan Key to infiltrate one of these complexes, where the Sumerians had hidden away their greatest treasures. The two adventuring companions have not revealed the location of the treasure vault...unfortunately....

BLOOD OF THE GOLDEN HIND

Killing a god is no small feat. In fact, many would say it's impossible. But the blood of the Golden Hind can quickly change all of that. According to various scholars, her blood contains a toxin poisonous to immortals, which will strike them dead on the spot provided they get a large-enough dosage.

CRONOS STONE

You don't want to get involved with this dangerous crystal. It appears to have the ability to control the flow of time and to transport people from one moment to the next, no matter how many days, months, or years separate the two periods. Although Hercules destroyed the one stolen by Autolycus, there may be more...

DAGGER OF HELIOS

The Dagger of Helios was recently purloined from a Temple of Helios, which had been displaying it and the Arc of Helios for worshippers as part of the World Helios Tour (the merchandising didn't go as well as I would have liked—no one seems to be interested in burning clothing or toys). What powers the dagger possesses remains a mystery, though some priests at the highest levels are said to have unlocked its many secrets...some say it acts as a key to a sealed vault containing Ambrosia.

HELM OF INVISIBILITY

Hades' Helm of Invisibility confers to the wearer the power to move about unseen. However, it doesn't allow him to pass through objects or mute the sounds of his movement. And if you ever encounter the Helm outside of the Underworld and not worn by Hades, something has gone horribly wrong. I suggest you recover it and return it to Hades (if you're up to the challenge) or run...fast.

ON BECOMING A HERO

You have undertaken a role that involves great risk, both to your physical being and to your emotional and mental faculties. The way of the hero will bring you to the brink of death—or even beyond. Are you up to the challenge?

I have relied on the adventures of Hercules, Xena, Iolaus, Gabrielle, and even Autolycus and Joxer to come up with a few words on what to expect from the hero's life. While all of these famed adventurers have their own areas of expertise, one theme runs through each of their personalities: they embrace the Greater Good.

While I have found trouble explaining exactly what the Greater Good is, I will do my best, especially since I feel it is one of the most important aspects of these heroes' lives. First, you must realize that you are part of a whole, a single element of an infinite existence, an individual and yet an integral part of everything else. If you can penetrate this concept, you will be well on your way to discovering truth, freedom, and joy (at least, that's what they tell me).

Second, you must have a warmth in your heart, a compassion for others coupled with a strong sense of right and wrong. While you will encounter various conundrums that give you cause to deliberate which is the correct path, you must ultimately look into your own soul to decide what is the morally and ethically appropriate decision.

Do not worry if this sounds foolish or makes no sense—I know how you feel. But I have it on good authority that it is possible for every being to find the Greater Good within themselves. Xena continues to point out that it took many years for her to learn this valuable lesson, and while she still must struggle to avoid succumbing to her former selfish behavior, her friends and her belief in the Greater Good have so far helped her to escape that fate.

Now sharpen that sword, polish those boots, and get yourself a sidekick, 'cause it's time to go adventuring. May Fortune smile upon you (from a distance, if you know what I mean)!

AMAZON

Name:

Race: Human

Gender: Female

Type: Amazon

Age:

Height:

Weight:

Physical Appearance:

JON DOLLAR

Background: You have been raised in the tradition of the Amazons. A warrior from birth, you have protected your tribe from various male enemies and have upheld the teachings of Artemis.

You have worked hard all of your life to ensure the safety of those around you. You are disgusted by the squalor in which Amazonians live. You don't understand how other women can stand to live with men.

One day, as your ashes burn on the funeral pyre and your spirit is sent free into the Elysian Fields, your name will be known among all of the tribes for the glory and strength with which you lived your life.

Personality: You resent the world around you for allowing men to become anything more than slaves. Any man who dares to confront your tribe is in for a surprise—a deadly surprise.

Goal: One day you will die gloriously in battle with the bodies of many men at your feet.

Quote: "A man has no place among warriors."

Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

Attributes & Skills

COORDINATION 4D
- Hurled Weapons
- Instruments
- Lockpick
- Marksmanship
- Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE 3D
- Resist Disease
- Resist Poison
- Run
- Swim

REFLEXES 4D
- Acrobatics
- Charioteering
- Dance
- Dodge
- Fighting
- Juggling
- Ride
- Sneak

STRENGTH 3D
- Climb
- Leap
- Lift

AWARENESS 3D
- Animal Handling
- Conceal
- Hide
- Invent
- Omen Interpretation
- Perception
- Read Lips
- Remember
- Search
- Track

CHARISMA 2D
- Bargain
- Beg
- Command
- Flirt
- Intimidate
- Lie
- Persuade
- Singing
- Storytelling

KNOWLEDGE 2D
- Astrology
- Cultures
- Disguise
- First Aid
- Gaming
- Geography
- History
- Leatherwork
- Legends
- Monsters
- Navigation
- Pantheon
- Philosophy
- Reading/Writing:
- Scholar
- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE 3D
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers: None

Vulnerabilities: None

Gear: Knife (2), ceremonial mask, spear (3), tunic, and hide boots.

Unique Possession:

Speed: 30

Body Points: 23

Character Points: 15

Fate Points: 1

Fame: 0

ARCHER

Name:

Race: Human

Gender: Male

Type: Archer

Age:

Height:

Weight:

Physical Appearance:

JON DOLLAR

Background: Born with the sight of Orion, you pledged your skills to the godly archer, Apollo. You have trained your entire life with the use of your bow. You can hit any target you can see...no matter the distance. Then one day you were tricked into killing a hart owned by the lord of your realm. Escaping into a nearby forest, you became a fugitive. Now you survive off the land and the small amount of dinars you can *persuade* out of rich travelers.

Personality: Your name has become a legend in your region. The poor and oppressed seek you out to help them fight back; the rich nobles want to hire you to fight their enemies. You only desire to end the rule of tyrannical monarchs. If that means working as a mercenary to get close to them...then so be it.

Goal: The day will come when the people will live freely and you will finally be able to put down your bow.

Quote: "Ho there! That sack of gold seems to be weighing you down. Let me help you with that."

Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

COORDINATION 5D
- Hurled Weapons
- Instruments
- Lockpick
- Marksmanship
- Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE 2D
- Resist Disease
- Resist Poison
- Run
- Swim

REFLEXES 3D
- Acrobatics
- Charioteering
- Dance
- Dodge
- Fighting
- Juggling
- Ride
- Sneak

STRENGTH 3D
- Climb
- Leap
- Lift

AWARENESS 4D
- Animal Handling
- Conceal
- Hide
- Invent
- Omen Interpretation
- Perception
- Read Lips
- Remember
- Search
- Track

CHARISMA 2D
- Bargain
- Beg
- Command
- Flirt
- Intimidate
- Lie
- Persuade
- Singing
- Storytelling

KNOWLEDGE 3D
- Astrology
- Cultures
- Disguise
- First Aid
- Gaming
- Geography
- History
- Leatherwork
- Legends
- Monsters
- Navigation
- Pantheon
- Philosophy
- Reading/Writing:
- Scholar
- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE 2D
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers: None

Vulnerabilities: None

Gear: Knife, quiver, bow, leather jerkin, breeches, gloves, and boots.

Unique Possession:

Speed: 30

Body Points: 23

Character Points: 15

Fate Points: 1

Fame: 0

GLADIATOR

Name:

Race: Centaur

Gender: Male

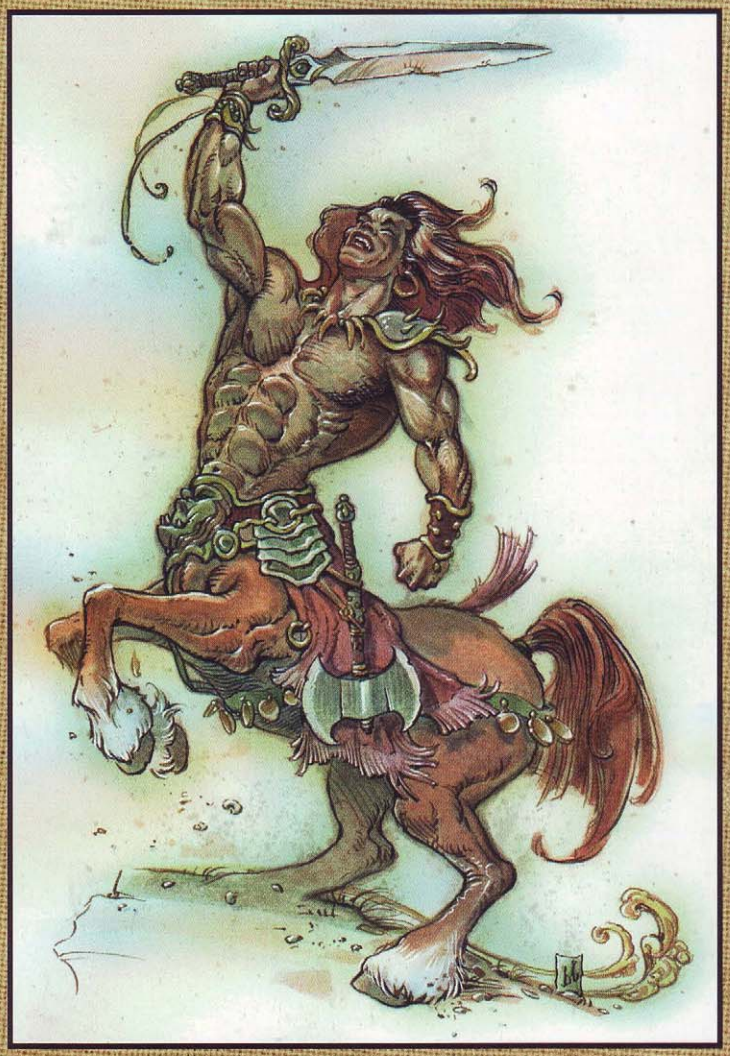
Type: Gladiator

Age:

Height:

Weight:

Physical Appearance:



JON DOLLAR

Background: You were born for battle. It is all you have ever known. Your parents were killed when you were relatively young, and a local merchant raised you as his own. Seeing the potential for prophet in your size and strength, he apprenticed you to one master warrior after another. When he thought you were ready he entered you in your first gladiatorial contest. A small venue, you won the contest with ease. Soon you earned the right to fight before larger and larger crowds. Now you battle in a great hippodrome, earning the respect of the crowd. Soon you will be champion and fight for the glory of the whole region.

Personality: You live for the crowds. Nothing means more to you—except for the battle. You know nothing outside of the arena. You are very naive when it comes to the world, but in a fight there is none greater.

Goal: To become the greatest warrior in the history of the world.

Quote: "You have met your better this day—prepare to die."

Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

Attributes & Skills

COORDINATION 3D
- Hurled Weapons
- Instruments
- Lockpick
- Marksmanship
- Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE 4D
- Resist Disease
- Resist Poison
- Run
- Swim

REFLEXES 4D
- Acrobatics
- Charioteering
- Dance
- Dodge
- Fighting
- Juggling
- Ride
- Sneak

STRENGTH 5D
- Climb
- Leap
- Lift

AWARENESS 2D
- Animal Handling
- Conceal
- Hide
- Invent
- Omen Interpretation
- Perception
- Read Lips
- Remember
- Search
- Track

CHARISMA 2D
- Bargain
- Beg
- Command
- Flirt
- Intimidate
- Lie
- Persuade
- Singing
- Storytelling

KNOWLEDGE 2D
- Astrology
- Cultures
- Disguise
- First Aid
- Gaming
- Geography
- History
- Leatherwork
- Legends
- Monsters
- Navigation
- Pantheon
- Philosophy
- Reading/Writing:
- Scholar
- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE 3D
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers: +1D to *Strength*/Bloodlust

Vulnerabilities: None

Gear: Glaive

Unique Possession:

Speed: 45

Body Points: 26

Character Points: 15

Fate Points: 1

Fame: 0

HEALER

Name:

Race: Nymph

Gender: Female

Type: Healer

Age:

Height:

Weight:

Physical Appearance:

JON DOLLAR

Background: Growing up in nature, you learned quickly how to heal the world around you. After years of tending to the animals and plants near your home, you saw your first human. There were two warriors locked in a great battle. After the victor had finished gloating and walked off, you tended to the fallen warrior. Bringing him back to health has made you see that humans cause so much pain throughout the lands. You soon left your home to bring what help you can to other humans, and the world that often suffers around them.

Personality: You are a peaceful soul. All you care for is the well-being of the world you live in. You are stubborn when you have to be, but your gentle touch can calm any savage beast.

Goal: By helping heal the wounds, you hope to share some of the peace you knew as you grew up.

Quote: "You are injured. Let me tend to you."

Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

COORDINATION 3D
- Hurled Weapons
- Instruments
- Lockpick
- Marksmanship
- Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE 2D
- Resist Disease
- Resist Poison
- Run
- Swim

REFLEXES 2D
- Acrobatics
- Charioteering
- Dance
- Dodge
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STRENGTH 2D
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AWARENESS 3D
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CHARISMA 5D
- Bargain
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- Command
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- Lie
- Persuade
- Singing
- Storytelling

KNOWLEDGE 5D
- Astrology
- Cultures
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- Geography
- History
- Leatherwork
- Legends
- Monsters
- Navigation
- Pantheon
- Philosophy
- Reading/Writing:
- Scholar
- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE 3D
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers: +1D to *Charisma*

Vulnerabilities: None

Gear: Robes, staff, healer's bag, bag of herbs

Unique Possession:

Speed: 40/20

Body Points: 21

Character Points: 15

Fate Points: 1

Fame: 0

THIEF

Name:

Race: Satyr

Gender: Male

Type: Thief

Age:

Height:

Weight:

Physical Appearance:

JON DOLLAR

Background: While the rest of your tribe spend their days tending to their flocks, singing songs of nature, and spouting poetry, you would rather be fleecing the nearby human villagers, picking their pockets, and generally robbing them blind.

Always good with your hands, you decided one day that a life of calm contemplation of nature just wasn't what you'd call excitement. So packing up what little possessions you owned, you slipped into a local village in the middle of the night and "borrowed" a few hundred dinars from the townsfolk. Deciding that this was a far better way to use your god-granted talents, you were off to the next village before anyone could catch you...er, that is, to spread your legend.

Personality: A true thief, you live off the means of your profession...the earnings of others. You are bold and brash, always one step ahead of the law. Never having been caught is making your legend grow, at least in your own eyes.

Goal: One day you will be able to say that you managed to work your "art" in every region of the world.

Quote: "Me, a thief? Come now, sir, there must be a better reason for me to be standing in your bedroom in the middle of the night...I'm open for suggestions."

Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

COORDINATION 5D
- Hurled Weapons
- Instruments
- Lockpick
- Marksmanship
- Pick Pocket

ENDURANCE 2D
- Resist Disease
- Resist Poison
- Run
- Swim

REFLEXES 4D
- Acrobatics
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- Legends
- Monsters
- Navigation
- Pantheon
- Philosophy
- Reading/Writing:
- Scholar
- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE 2D
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers: None

Vulnerabilities: None

Gear: Dagger, belt w/small bags, thief's tools, rope w/ hook, pouch

Unique Possession:

Speed: 25

Body Points: 22

Character Points: 15

Fate Points: 1

Fame: 0

Title

Name:

Race:

Gender:

Type:

Age:

Height:

Weight:

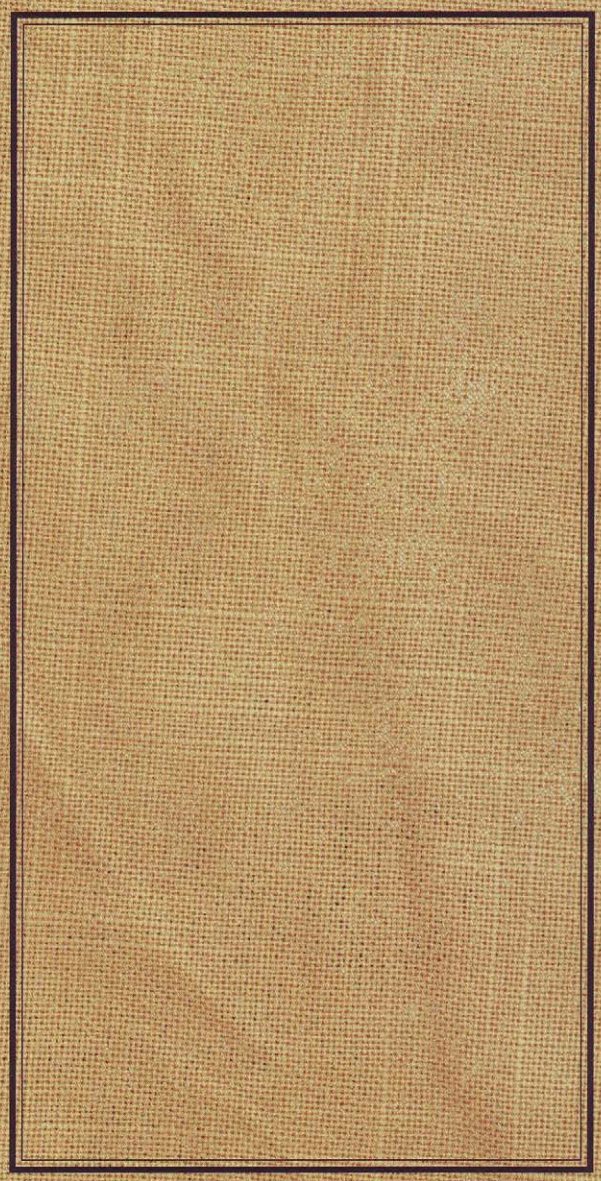
Physical Appearance:

Background:

Personality:

Goal:

Quote:



Advantages & Disadvantages:

Deeds:

ATTRIBUTES & SKILLS

COORDINATION
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ENDURANCE
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- Smithing
- Survival
- Trading

METTLE
- Battle Cry
- Stay Up
- Willpower

Specialties/Special Moves:

Special Powers:

Vulnerabilities:

Gear:

Unique Possession:

Speed:

Body Points:

Character Points:

Fate Points:

Fame:

COMING SOON

THE GAZETTEER

MYTHIC MONSTERS

INSTANT ADVENTURES

MINIATURE BATTLES STARTER SET

ANCIENT POWERS

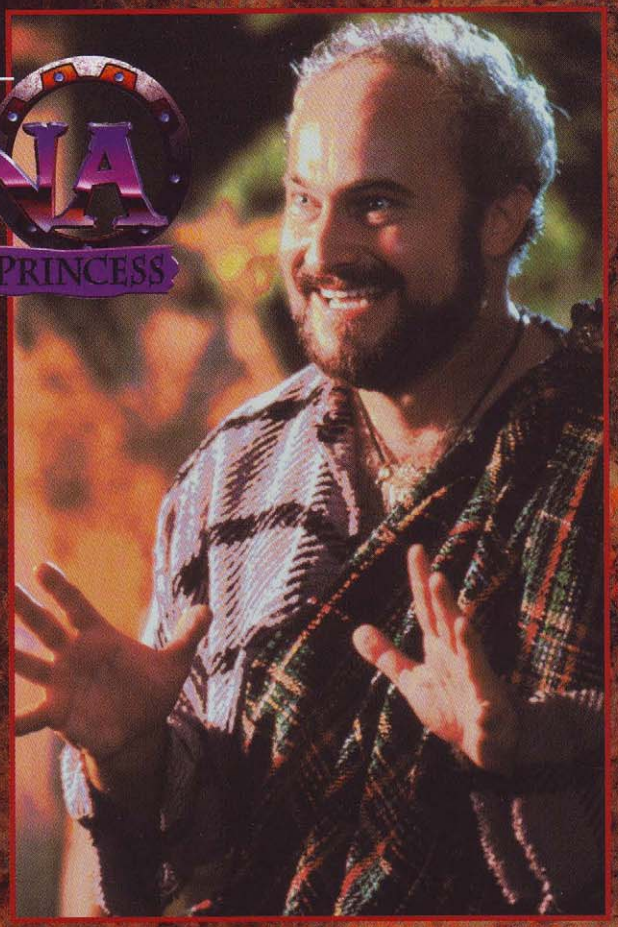
INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE GAME

TREASURES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

AND MORE

The HERCULES & XENA Roleplaying Game

THE LEGENDARY JOURNEYS ™ WARRIOR PRINCESS



A Game by George Strayton

IT IS A TIME OF MYTH AND LEGEND, WHEN THE ANCIENT GODS RULED HEAVEN AND EARTH AND PLAGUED MANKIND WITH SUFFERING. IT IS A TIME OF VICIOUS WARLORDS, HORRIFIC MONSTERS, AND TWISTED INTRIGUES. IT IS A TIME OF POWER, OF DANGER, OF PASSION. A TIME WHEN THE LAND CRIES OUT FOR HEROES!

WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN AGE OF MYTH! THROUGHOUT YOUR JOURNEYS YOU WILL DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THIS MYSTICAL TIME, CONFRONT HIDEOUS CREATURES, SEEK OUT LOST TREASURES, AND DEFY THE DEITIES WHO USE MORTALS AS PAWNS IN THEIR NEVERENDING POLITICAL MACHINATIONS. AND THAT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

THE SAGA OF A LIFETIME BEGINS HERE. ONLY *YOU* CAN DECIDE YOUR FATE. EMBRACE THE GREATER GOOD, OR TRAVEL THE DARK ROAD THAT LEADS TO TARTARUS. YOUR DESTINY LIES IN YOUR OWN HANDS....

BATTLE ON!

"I, Salmoneus, the world's greatest entrepeneur, have designed a truly bitchin' way to get rich—um...experience the fun and excitement of the Ancient World.

"Now get out paper and a pencil, crack open the book, and kickstart your imagination, 'cause you're about to embark on the adventure of a lifetime!

"Besides, did I mention that Hercules and Xena totally love this game? They play it *all* of the time! Well not *all* of the time, but whenever they aren't out chasing off the gods or defeating monsters or righting wrongs or helping others or....

The *Hercules & Xena Hero's Guide* includes everything players need to get started:

- **Complete Hero Creation Rules.**
- **Profiles of some of the Ancient World's greatest heroes.**
- **Information on the regions of the Ancient World.**
- **Detailed (well as detailed as I could get without being hurt — you should have seen what Ares said to me!) information on the gods.**
- **Descriptions of some of the types of people that inhabit the Ancient World.**
- **Lists of some of the many items available for purchase from other fine entrepeneurs such as myself (although if you buy them from me I will give you a *special* discount).**

WEST END GAMES®
36008

Disclaimer

Only one neurotic game designer with extremely tight deadlines was harmed during the production of this roleplaying game.

Well...not physically, but he did wander off muttering to himself about *things*.

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