

the  
**DUNGEONEER**  
10  
**Judges Guild**  
**A Private Hell**

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prod.  
84

Vol III No 2





# the Lab' Oratory

Well, HOWDY! Surprised? Shouldn't be. I told you that we'd be a-comin' out on time now that the Judges Guild is producing the DUNGEONEER. First, some general comments I'd like to make on letters and phone calls I've received: I know that many of you are missing issue 8. Please bear with me on this. For reasons beyond my control, it seems that a huge majority of post awful workers either love the zine and keep it for themselves or hate it so much they throw it away or the post awful's black hole increased in size and swallowed 'em up. At any rate, I am intending to do a complete remailing of issue 8, so everyone will be sure to have one. HOWEVER, this will have to be done at my own expense and on my own time so give me a break and don't bug me about it. I will remail as soon as I can. OK?

Most of the comments on issue 9 have been quite favorable. I do wish more of you would write letters, though, rather than call. It ain't that I dasn't wants ta talk ta yuz, but if you write, I can put your letters in the WORDS & WHIPS column.

Several of you have expressed a desire that we devote 1 or 2 issues a year (in both JG magazines) to games like RUNEQUEST, TRAVELLER, etc. Friends, it just is not possible to do this for many reasons which I won't go into here, BUT as I have said before, we DO want to publish articles on all the FRP games and YOU HAVE NOONE TO BLAME BUT YOURSELVES IF YOU DON'T SEE YOUR FAVORITE GAME discussed frequently. We can only print the articles you send us, so don't ask if we want articles on other games: the answer is YES—get busy writing and send them in!!! Once again—we try to balance out what is in each issue and our huge, new format gives us plenty of space for covering other games while maintaining our emphasis on D&D. Aside from articles on other games, we, also, need minidungeons of all types, and anything else you find of interest, most likely, will be of interest to others, too.

Some prepublication appologies: to GIL who sent another episode of LIFE ON MARS which seems to have fallen into our own black hole, so it is absent from this issue. To C.I.A. people because we have not yet received this month's CIA REPORT and will have to go to press without it (unless it gets here at the last minute).

Some post-publication appologies from issue 9: to Paul Jaquays for inadvertently leaving his article on CEREMONIAL MAGIC out of the table of contents (I presume you all found it anyway?) and to Bill

Seligman and Isaac Bonewits whose letters to each other concerning Bill's Magic article in issue 7 will not appear until next issue.

A sad note, too, is the departure of another fine fantasy fan publication: EVERMIST which has had to close its doors.

Hopefully, by the time you receive this issue, those of you who had back issues or Compendiums coming will have received them. Compendiums have just arrived, as I write this and will be going into the mails shortly.

We have received several comments about typos in the last issue. We are doing our best to catch as many typos as possible and will try to improve, but to be frank, we do not have the manpower nor time to have someone proofread. At the present time the Guild has between 60 and 70 projects which are somewhere in the planning and development stages. I am (desperately) trying to act as coordinator on these. Also, I am busily trying to program all of our business-required programs into our two new TRS-80s as well as put out a magazine every month and all the miscellaneous things that I do. This means that Penny is left with most of the typesetting for both the magazines and the projects and, personally, I feel she has been doing a TREMENDOUS job (especially since she has other jobs she does here, too). (If you had to put up with me every day—except the days when you would have to put up without me because I'm doing something else—you'd agree that she does a fantastic job, too.)

You may notice that we are printing in this issue (and the next issue of the JUDGES GUILD JOURNAL) the addenda/errata for Scrapfaggot Green product; this includes the missing maps. These addenda sheets have, also, been sent out to all stores and distributors with whom we deal directly, so you can get another copy there if you bought one from a store and you don't want to wreck your zine. We are, also, including the Manumission tables from the original City-State of the Invincible Overlord. This was left out of the revised edition as it was not necessary, but we have received several requests for this info and are, therefore, providing it.

We are, also, reworking our printing schedule and future plans for expansion and upgrading both magazines. Watch for us to get our full-color sometime later this year, although most of the internal color will probably be "fake" full color as we have been unable, yet, to get any assistance from KODAK

towards doing our own color separations. (The back cover of this issue is done in the "fake" full-color process.) There may even be a few surprises in store for you as we discover some new (to us, anyway) processes for doing artwork, etc.

The time has come for you to make yourselves known and counted amongst fans. We need to know IMMEDIATELY if you like or do not like the following serials: The Edge of the Galaxy, A Private Hell, Under Sky King's Light, Questing (by Arocho), Life on Mars—the continued lives of these serials within our pages requires your feedback so LETS HEAR IT!

The new format for the Monster Matrix which was tried in issue 8 met with wide approval. We will continue the usual Monster Matrix as it originally appeared, along with write-ups on monsters designed for any specific gaming system, and we will be adding to that coverage the new matrix which will be called The Monster of the Month. We hope to be starting this this coverage with the next issue.

As most of you are probably aware, the voting for the best fanzine for 1978 is open for The Charles Roberts Awards (wasn't it nice of them to use my first and middle names?) (actually my middle name is singular, but with all the typos I make, who am I to complain?). If you would like to vote for either the DUNGEONEER or the JUDGES GUILD JOURNAL or any other gaming fanzine, send your votes to any of the addresses which follow, but be sure to find out if we have been nominated first! If you wish to nominate us, send your nomination to: the Origins Committee for the Charles Roberts Awards, P.O. Box 282, Radnor, PA, 19087. Once nominated, votes can be sent to: P.O. Box 282, Radnor, PA, 19087 OR to 46 Carleton St., Oromocto, N.B., E2V 2C8, CANADA, OR to 2400 Seabright, Long Beach, CA, 90810 OR to "Finches", 7 Cambridge Rd, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 1HW, UK.

Time ta go now, so as I mosey on down to the old coral (reef that is) [or is that chorale?] I'll be wishin' al you young whippersnappers a hearty Ting Hoy, feather merchants! See ya next ish!

Charles Robert(s?) Anshell

P.S. Sorry, John, I couldn't resist.

P.P.S.: A few more matters have been brought up which really need some clarification in this issue.

If CIA report makes it here fast enough (it is in the grips of the mighty post awful) it will get included.

We have made a command decision to leave out the Questing comic strip from this issue and appologize to Aaron Arocho and you, kind readers, for this. The episode which was to appear in this issue will appear in next issue, so you won't miss anything. There are two reasons for this: 1) it will give Aaron a chance to get a little ahead of the publication and 2) many hours of works went into doing color overlays for full-color on two of the pages. As you can see, we do not have internal color with this issue. We will have it next issue. Rather than having all that work go to waste by printing the strip in B&W this ish, we are going to wait.

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Paul Jaquays: Front Cover, Back Cover, 12, 31, 33-37, 40, 49, 54, 59-61; Aaron Arocho: 5, 37, 48, 66; Robert Bingham: 40, 50, 55, Laurel Paley: 21; Beth Stocker: 46 Bob Bledsaw, Jr.: 47.

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### DISTRIBUTORS

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The following rates apply to both tD and tJGJ. For ads which are to appear in both magazines in consecutive months (same copy) multiply rate by 2 and subtract 20%. At the present time only B&W ad copy is being accepted. Sizes given allow for margins and galleys and may be filled with copy without any bleed. Full page: 7.5 x 10 inches, 1/2-page 7.5 x 5 or 3 3/4 x 10", 1/4-page 7.5 x 2.5" or 3 3/4 x 5", 1/8-page 3 3/4 x 2.5". Classified ads are same price as by column-inch=21.5 pica x 1" or about 60 words. Fan and Classified ads must be paid in advance with no discount on stated price (except that for running in both magazines). Commercial ad charges are due within 30 days of invoice. There is a 2% discount if paid within 10 days of invoice and a 5% prepaid discount. Discount for placement in both magazines is computed first and used as base for payment discounts, when applicable. Multiple run requests must be in writing to get discounts.

Size	1 or 2 times	3-5 times	6 times+
Full page	\$120	\$110	\$105
Half page	\$70	\$65	\$60
Quarter page	\$40	\$37	\$34
Eighth page	\$24	\$22	\$20
Per column-inch	\$8	\$7	\$6
Fan's "	\$4	\$3	\$2

### CONTRIBUTED COPY AND ART

The Judges Guild Journal and The Dungeoneer welcome all contributions of articles and art for inclusion in one of our columns or as separate articles. Reimbursement is made in the following manner: each contributor gets one free copy of the issue the material appears in. In addition, copy and art are paid for in store credit good for purchases of any product Judges Guild carries. Further, if you will accept credit good for only products Judges Guild produces, including subscriptions and retail products, (as opposed to these items and those of other manufacturers whom we carry), we will give you 10% more than the amounts indicated. If you do not wish credit, we will pay cash, but this must be requested! No 10% bonus on cash payments. All payments are made at the time of publication. All material becomes property of Judges Guild unless we reject it. We are working out a system of notifying you whether or not material is accepted. In the meantime, you can assume that if we do NOT intend to use it we will notify you. Copy and art not used will not be returned, however, unless a stamped, self-addressed envelop, with sufficient postage, is included. The current reimbursement schedule is as follows and is subject to change at future dates. Payment is made at the rates last published in either magazine. Unsolicited copy, serialized or not: 30 ¢ per column-in; Solicited, serialized material: 40 ¢ /c-in. Solicited, non-serialized material: 50 ¢ /c-in. ARTWORK: charcoals, full-tones and other works which must be half-tone screened: Small (1/2 page or less) \$5 each or a series of 6 for \$4 each, Large (more than 1/2 page, printed) \$10 ea or 6/\$9 ea. Inked line-drawings or works not needing half-toning: Small: \$6 each or 6/\$5 each; Large \$12 each or 6 for \$10 each. FULL COLOR, FULL PAGE (for cover or internal) \$20 or a series of 6 for \$15 each. Solicited, full-color covers: price will be set when we contact you.



This brings me to some other, very important news about the future of both The Dungeoneer and The Judges Guild Journal and Guild thingies in general.

All prices of other manufacturers goods which the Guild carries are subject to change without notice. We buy from over 50 other manufacturers and they do not all get together and raise prices at the same time. We do attempt to keep our advertised prices the latest ones in effect.

You should all be aware of the Guild's Guaranteed Sales Policy. If you do not like any item you have purchased—on arrival—you may send it back for full refund, credit or exchange. If items arrive damaged or with missing parts NOTIFY THE SHIPPER (Mail or UPS) IMMEDIATELY as well as us. We cannot put in a claim if you have not notified them. DO NOT SEND ITEMS BACK TO US unless we tell you to or if shipper comes to get them. KEEP ORIGINAL PACKAGING so shipper can inspect!

Starting with issue 11 of The Dungeoneer and with issue 15 (X) of the Journal/Guildmember installment we are increasing subscription rates. This is being done so that we can upgrade both magazines. The Dungeoneer will keep its full-color covers and include 68 pages of material (including covers) PLUS go to color on the inside. The Journal will be upgraded to full-color covers and will have 36 pages (with covers) too. These new subscription rates will go into effect as of MAY 1, 1979 for both zines. So subscribe or resubscribe now to save even more! New rates are as follows:

#### New Subscriptions

1 year (6 issues).....	\$15
2 years (12 issues).....	\$29
3 years (18 issues).....	\$43

#### Resubscriptions

1 year (6 issues).....	\$14
2 years (12 issues).....	\$26
3 years (18 issues).....	\$35

#### Lifetime Subscriptions

\$150

The Cover prices will be as follows: The Dungeoneer \$2.80 and the Judges Guild Journal \$1.50. Postal Surcharges are not included in the above but will remain the same as they currently are (see Publisher's Statement)

Now I know that we have raised the cover price on The Dungeoneer several times, but this should allow us the flexibility to continue to upgrade it for a while. Subscriptions currently in force are still being honored, so you haven't lost a single issue on currently running subscriptions. Further, The Dungeoneer contains at least as much material as The Journal and its installment. To see what a bargain you are getting: Even at the old cover prices 6 issues of The Journal cost \$4.80 and 6 installments averaged at \$21.00 for a total of nearly \$26 of material per year! With the new rates, which more accurately reflect our production costs, the over-the-counter price comes to nearly \$35 a year for which your subscription rate is \$15!!! Big Deal? Well then, consider the other prozines and fanzines on the market. They average 9-29% ads (the 9% is in

a zine devoted solely to its publisher's games). The Journal averages 8% with its installment and the Dungeoneer averages 16% ads. Both have a guaranteed maximum of 25%. As far as copy goes that means that The Journal and installment average 57-241% more copy and the Dungeoneer averages 11-140% more copy than the best of the other fanzine and prozines. Now if that isn't a bargain, I don't know what is!

One final word concerning color artwork submitted unsolicited: if you wish your work to appear inside the magazine, it will have to be done in fake-color process at the present time. Full-tone color work will be considered for covers and should not include any half-tone screening.

Now then, just what do we refer to when we say fake-color. Actually, there are two different levels we are concerned with. The colors involved are black (& white, of course), Process red (magenta), Yellow, and Process blue (cyan). The first level of use is simple four-color work where the colors are used in solids and screens but do not overlap, except for black lines. The second process is more complicated and involves using screens and angling the half-tone mediums so that where they overlap they create a new color. Essentially it involves making a "Fake" color-separation negative for each of the colors. We will adjust our reimbursement schedule for artwork to include these new categories, as follows: four-color overlaid line drawings \$14 for a large, \$7 for a small. Fake color-separations paid as for full-color work. In both cases, be sure to put registration marks on each overlay and label the overlay for the color it is for in the margin. While we will accept artwork in any size, it is very helpful if artwork can be used on a 1:1 basis and is no larger than 7½x10".

To avoid confusion let me state that we WILL still be using B&W artwork, so don't stop sending it in. Guess that about covers it. If there are any questions, just write. I'll be glad to answer 'em.





VALMOUS

# The Arcane Elders



RÖHCYL

by J. Mark Hendricks and Paul Jaquays



alph! Ralph! Are you there Ralph! Answer me you son of a short-haired. . ."

It was no use. Lute's corse, low whisper died off. He had gotten no answer for who knows how long. He didn't know if Ralph or Röhcyl or even that lumbering barbarian Thëoren were alive still. All he did know was that it was as black as pitch where he was and that it wasn't the void of darkness outside the entrance to the Halls of the Vakuabt Dead. His body told him that much. One doesn't feel pain in death, or so the legends his mintor had taught him said. And the pain he felt now was real enough. It seemed as if his whole body ached in some form or another. He couldn't move a muscle, the ropes bound tightly about his body saw to that. In fact, the ropes constricted him such that it even pained him to breath. Hurt though it did, he persisted in trying to raise an answer from at least on of the companions he prayed was still alive in the room with him.

Ralph! Röhcyl! By the Gods of Garth! Is on one there?"

"None that cares to converse with the likes of your, on master of the broken string and the faltering parry! You almost killed me in one of your fients! If I ever get out of this hempen chain that binds me, you may mot be so glad we were ever partners."

Lute was estatic. "I shall forgive you for your insults fur-foot out of my gladness to hear your voice. But what of the others? What happened? I remember a loud screaming, the bad breath of our enemies, gallantly fighting to save us all and then darkness, not unlike the darkness of where ever this is that we are."

Lute's voice had assumed that all too familiar high tone of self commendation, causing Ralph no small amount of discomfort wheich he readily expressed verbally through numerous coughs, groans and contemptuous "Humphs!"

"I can't tell you much," replied the hobbit, "I didn't see a whole lot more than you yourself did. I believe Röhcyl is alive, but I an certain that Thëoran is dead. Not even a barbarian could survive four poinsoed-tipped orc arrows to the chest."

Lute was slow to reply, and then softly, "If we should get out of this, I shall some day write a lay in his behalf. He was a brave. . ."

"I think his soul would rest easier if you kept your mouth shut musically on his account!" Ralph retorted. "He is dead. Let him sleep in peace."

"A fine thing for you to say about. . ."

"I'd prefer you both to stop arguing," moaned

a voice in the corner, "my head hurts enough as it is without youy bickering back and forth."

"Röhcyl!" they both exclaimed. "Oooo, it hurts to talk so loud."

"Then whisper. Are you both all right?"

"Except for these ropes I never felt better!" laughed the bard.

"I'm not in such good spirits," returned the hobbit drily.

"Neither am I," said the young mage. "I trust that between the three of us we can come up with a way out of this place."

"I'd drink to that were my hands fee to do so and I had the ale to boot," spoke the bard. "But hush now, I hear footsteps."

"Aye," confirmed the hobbit. "Porbably coming to check up on their birdies in the coop. Twere best to let them think that we're still out."

"That's easier than making them believe I'm alive and alert!" whispered Röhcyl.

"Good then," croaked Ralph horsely. "Don't let them know we're awake."

Slowly, as if with great effort and strength, the heavy wood and iron door of the room creaked open, letting in enough light to reveal not a small room but a great chamber and the four Orcs who had opened the door in the first place. Röhcyl stole a glance around the room quickly in hopes of not being seen and finding out where they were. The chamber was one of the burial rooms. The back wall against which he had been place held perhaps thirty or forty vaults for coffins. On the opposite side of the room were the remains of numerous biers, obviously ransacked and piled in the corner by the invaders. This left the majority of the floor space cleared off for what ever uses his captors might have in mind. His captors. Oh yes. As he brought his mind into focus he realized that one of the Orcs, the biggest and, as he judged correctly, the leader was speaking to his companions.

"Houk ouki namtolc! Navril wakut namen morwe trok-ul et ruhvet! Hahahahaha"

With those last words, they all began to laugh violently and move to leave the chamber. With one last sly glower at the threesome, he heaved the door shut and stomped off with his followers.

"What did he say?" whispered Röhcyl. "Orc is one language I never had much cause to learn. I can only make out a smattering of what was said. I do know he was talking about me though. What did he say?"

"You never learned Orc?" cried the bard incre-



dulously. Ralph whistled in disbelief. "Well I'll be the son of a toothless dragon! What languages do you know boy if you don't know Orc. Why that's one of the most important tongues to master, provided of course you want to survive in this world."

"Only to survive in your world good bard," replied the magic-user. "My needs are far different than yours and I never had any intention of putting myself in such a position to need the language."

"Well you need it now, but you haven't answered my question. What tongues do you speak, little master?"

Röhcyl noticed a touch of sarcasm in the bard's voice. "I speak the high tongue of dragon-kind, that of the griffen, the winged and unwinged horse which varies but a little, the tongue of the elves, dwarves, and three types of men are known to me, the speech of works magical is mine as well as the ability to communicate with all untongued animals and creatures by the use of my mind, and that is the hardest means of communication to master, but it too is mine."

Both Ralph and Lute realized that what Röhcyl had just told them was the plain and simple truth. He was not bragging, they were convinced that he was not able to do such a thing. To him, reciting his abilities was no more than stating the facts as they were, and that's exactly what bothered, and awed them. Was this really just a young boy, not yet a man by their standards, whom they were associating with? They had no idea of the extent of his power and at times they didn't really want to find out. He scared them. Maybe he was just a young magic-user, but something inside them told them that he would never be, indeed was not now, a person they wished to cross. Did he really know just what he was capable of doing? They might never find out the answer to that question, no matter how much they would like to. Whatever the answer, he was still their friend and they had a responsibility to him.

"Excuse my presumptuousness, young master Röhcyl, I see now you are better learned than I had thought," stated Lute. "I just can't help believing that your mentor made an error in never teaching you to speak some of the more...er...ah, common languages which one encounters in his travels. I must admit, some of the tongues you mentioned would be of no use to me as I never intend to be close enough to one of those creatures, while it lives, so as to have to speak to it, if you get my meaning!"

Ralph chuckled, "Me too!" And with that admission all three broke into a painful snicker.

"We mustn't laugh too hard," said Röhcyl, "it makes my ropes cut into my arms. But what did they say, Lute? It was about me wasn't it?"

Lute stopped laughing and an unseen look of gravity came over his face. "Yes, it was about you... they know you are a magician. That's why you are tied more carefully than either of us, and I doubt that I shall get out of these bonds by myself in less

than a fortnight."

"Oh!" sighed Röhcyl. "Anything else?"

"Yeh," piped the hobbit. "They were laughing because they have never known a magic-user who could do anything without his hands." Both he and Lute began to sound crestfallen.

"Don't feel so glum friends," whispered the mage, smiling softly, "I still have a few tricks hidden up my sleeve, no matter how tightly my arms might be constrained."

"What are you going to do," whined Lute bitterly, "think us out of here?"

"Precisely what I am going to do!" said Röhcyl in an emphatic matter of fact tone.

"Ralph, I think our friend has finally gone over the edge," whispered the bard, careful not to let the young mage hear him.

"I think you're right," came the low reply.

Had there been a light in the room, the two partners of fortune might have come to the conclusion that they had judged their companion a bit too quickly. Even as they spoke, Röhcyl's face took on a strange contorsion that none of them could see. Every muscle in his face constricted, every fibre in his neck taunt, every part of his body not restricted by the bounds straining, pulling, stretching in tension. Sweat began to pop out on his forehead, quickly spreading to cover the rest of his face. Yet none of these strange happenings were visible to any in the room, perhaps for the better.

"He's strangely quiet, wouldn't you say?" It was the hobbit. "I hope you haven't upset him. Maybe you should apologise, this isn't the first time you've put your boot between your teeth ya'know."

"You may be right. He is awful quiet." The bard kept up the low tone so that the young wizard wouldn't hear. Little did he realize that Röhcyl's concentration on his own activities made him oblivious to what went on about him.

"Röhcyl! Röhcyl..." the bard spoke out with contrition. He received no answer. "Röhcyl! I am trying to say I'm sorry if I said anything to ah...er..." his voice trailed off into silence. Still no answer. The stillness of the room lay like death over them. Suddenly an almost inaudible whirring noise came into the room as from nowhere and it seemed to come from Röhcyl's direction.

"Ralph, do you hear that noise?" asked the bard ever so quietly after a few moments.

"I do and I haven't the faintest notion of what it could be, but I don't like the sounds of it."

"Is that so?" came a distant sounding voice gruffly. "I should be pleased to hear it were I you!" And immediately, with the speaking of the last two words, the room filled with the brilliant illumination of a sparkling crystal sphere hovering over the middle of the room. There beneath the sphere, unconstrained by the cords that now lay in a heap in the corner, stood Röhcyl with a silver dragonette perched upon his shoulder.

"Do you wish to lay there, or shall I release

you?" asked the mage with a wry smile. "Well? Answer me and be quick about it. We haven't got all day if we wish to get out of here in one piece. . . and with the treasure." The last phrase he added almost as an afterthought.

"Of course we want out!" they both cried eagerly. Röhcyl nodded his head and the little dragonette set to work, quickly biting through the tightly fashioned knots that had, until recently held them all so securely.

"When you said you were going to think us out of here, well. . ." the bard's voice trailed off hesitatingly.

"Think not of it," said Röhcyl with a slight grin. "You could not have had any idea of what I might be able to do or not do in such a tight situation. My arms are still sore." Both of his companions nodded in agreement, vainly trying to ignore their friends poor pun.

"As much as we enjoy our freedom of movement, little master, we are not out of her yet. Or do you have, as I suspect, something else up your sleeve?" From experience the bard knew all too well that the shortest distance between two points is not always a straight line, especially with someone or something in between the other point you desire to reach! At that moment at least a dozen Orcs lay somewhere between them and their objective; Röhcyl's inheritance.

"Since you bring up the subject," began Röhcyl rather sheepishly, as if not really wishing to admit it, "yes I do."

Closing his eyes, he began to envision three of the Orcs which had left only a few moments before. Then picturing the faces of his companions and himself along side the others, he mentally rearranged the features of himself, Ralph and Lute to fit those of the Orcs. Finally, to secure his efforts, he mumbled a small spell to bind the illusion. Actually, this took no more than a few seconds and was over before the others realized what had happened, Röhcyl opened his eyes. Suddenly the dragonette squealed and then disappeared into thin air.

"I trust this should be sufficient to get us past the guards," Röhcyl said with a sly smile. "That is, provided we run into them.

"Or they run into us," retorted the hobbit sarcastically.

"Either way we have the advantage," returned the bard approvingly. "There remains but one flaw, the clothes. We may look like Orcs, and that's quite an improvement for you stubby, but some say that 'Clothes make the man', and we're not properly dressed for the occasion. . . if you catch my meaning."

Before Ralph could return Lute's insult, Röhcyl suggested that they rummage through the articles piled in the corner of the room near the shambled biers. In no time they had all three come up with rotting, musty old rags to pass for apparel, some rusted armor, two tarnished, yet passably used swords, a battle axe, a couple of shields and a few spears. Once their disguises were complete, Röhcyl faced his companions.

"Before either of you two say one word about the other's appearance let me say something, 'Don't!' "

There was a certain inflected tone of authority in his voice that for some reason neither of the other two wished to question.

"There is too much to be done without throwing insults at each other. Lute, you will have to do the talking if we encounter any of our . . . er. . . guests."

"Fine. But how do you propose to find the crypt of the shadow mage now, without drawing the attention of all our nasty friends out there? Surely you don't intend to continue as before?" asked the bard incredulously.

"That's correct. We're just going to walk around with our torches and read all the names on every vault." Ralph's voice seethed with derision. "If you ask me, we take off those Orcs one by one till they're all gone and then look around at our leisure." Lute glared over in the hobbit's direction.

"We can't. Not enough time," said Röhcyl. "As bad as the plan is we can't risk bringing the whole Orc company down on us. We have no idea of their strength. We're are just going to walk out of here and do what we can, we have no choice."

Swiftly, silently the party checked the doorway and slipped out into the hall. Röhcyl stood between Ralph and Lute holding the glowing sphere to see by, but with its light kept low enough not to attract attention. Lute edged along the north wall of the hallway until he came to a corner, the other two eased in behind. They had come to a passage perpendicular to the one they were in, both seemed clear of anyone. By unanimous consent they decided to continue down the way they had started. Quickly, they each crossed to the other corner where the two halls met and continued on. As they walked, Röhcyl continued to move the sphere up and down against the wall looking for inscriptions. He found none. Soon the passage turned north, but turned back east again after a few yards.

"Wait!" whispered Röhcyl. "I may have something." In the dim, greenish-gold light of the sphere he could vaguely make out a row of names stretching from the ceiling to the floor. Each name was spaced about three and a half feet from the one on either side of it and also had a short history concerning its bearer. Suddenly Lute, still in the lead, noticed another row about six feet on down the way.

"It must be a set of vaults," reasoned Röhcyl. "There could easily be a hundred men here, look at the way this wall stretches into the darkness, and notice how smooth it is. . . all marble." He was beginning to realize the enormity of their task.

"This may take awhile," said Ralph rather disconcertedly.

"Then let's get started," replied Lute coldly. He didn't like the situation any more than his partner did, but the tenseness of the situation was beginning to eat at his jocularity. In fact, each one of them had become a little more on edge as the minutes passed. The fact that they could be discovered at any moment continued to gnaw at the back of their consciousness. If caught again, the Orcs would be far more wary, eye



them more closely and show them less mercy. . . that is, provided they weren't killed. Of the two, the latter was the more probable outcome of another encounter. This thought they pushed to the farthest reaches of their minds possible and continued on their errand. The wall of crypts stretched for about twenty more yards and stopped. The hall turned around the end of the vaults, moved north about eight feet and then turned back to the west.

"This must be the other side of the vaults we just finished," whispered the bard.

"An exquisite expostulation of intelligence!" returned the hobbit.

"Stuff it stubby!"

"Shhhhhh! You two will bring them all down upon us!" whispered Röhcyl angrily. "Keep quiet and look." So saying they each began to scan over the various names on the wall. Presently, Lute sided up to Röhcyl to ask him a question.

"Say, young master, why of all places should anyone choose this place for a cemetery? It is no where near a town. . . was there a great battle here perchance?"

Obviously the bard was asking his simple questions in hopes of getting a tale out of Röhcyl. No matter what the occasion, where the place or when the time, if a bard can get a good tale to retell, (invariably adding a few of his own embellishments), he will go to the utmost pains to extract it from its owner. Lute was no exception. Indeed, when it comes to gaining a new story for his repertoire, there is no bard under heaven that doesn't become oblivious to his surroundings until he has what he wants.

"Yes, there was a great battle here, but not by chance," replied Röhcyl solemnly.

"Could you perhaps tell me more, good master?" asked the bard pleadingly.

"There is not much to tell. Once there lived in this valley a great mage, but he was old already when he came here. He had traveled far in hopes of removing himself of other realms, but wished to live his last years in anonymity."

"Anoni-who?" interrupted Lute.

"He didn't wish his identity to become known," answered Röhcyl.

"Ooooh," said Lute, giving a nod of understanding. "Please continue. Very interesting, very interesting indeed."

"The magician. . ."

"What did you say his name was again?"

"I don't know, Valmous never told me."

"Too bad. A terrible oversight." A slight note of disappointment sounded in Lute's voice. "Please continue." Röhcyl looked questioningly at the bard.

"The magician settled here and spent most of his time researching spells, helping the few people who lived in the area and studying philosophy. He was well liked by all who knew him, and did not seem to have any enemies. Unfortunately, he did. The one called the Shadow Mage, so called for he summoned dark things out of the shadows to do his bidding, came searching

for the old man in hopes of gaining vengeance upon him. Once he found his prey, he called forth his shadow servants to destroy his enemy. The Shadow Mage, however, had not properly ascertained the old man's power and so lost his servants. By the time he could summon enough to assault the magician, for these things take time to do properly, the old man had rallied the inhabitants of the valley, including those of the villages scattered about, to help him fight the intruder."

"Say!" interjected the hobbit testily. "Are you two going to stand there and swap yarns and make me do all the work, or are we going to try to find this crypt we're supposed to be looking for."

Lute started to shoo the hobbit off like one would shoo off a bothersome fly. He almost had the whole story and there was no way on earth he would let Ralph spoil it for him.

"Do not worry Ralph," said Röhcyl in a consoling manner. "The story is almost finished. When the Shadow Mage attacked, the old necromancer was ready for him. In short, all of his hellish minions from shadow were destroyed or driven back to their own dimension, but at the cost of many scores of lives. Those that died in the battle were buried here. The losses would have been greater and the Shadow Mage might have won but for the power of the old man, for it is said that the Shadow Mage was one of the mightiest magicians to ever walk the earth. You can imagine what the strength of the other must have had in order to defeat him."

"But what happened?" asked Lute excitedly. "You haven't finished the story. What happened to the two magicians?" A look of anxiety spread over Lute's face as if he worried that he would never hear the end of the tale.

"Once his army was gone he had no alternative but to face old necromancer himself. In years gone by he could have never withstood the old one's abilities, but now the old man had spent much energy in protecting his men from the full force of the warriors from the shadows. They cast great spells upon each other to no avail for they each had great defences. Finally, the energy they were drawing upon became so great and their spells became so powerful that they were destroyed. Indeed, my mentor told me that never in the time of man since have spells of such power been conceived. Whether they killed each other, or were killed by their own hand is not known, though I doubt it was more than memories, were buried along with the rest of the dead. But come, we must continue to look." So saying, Röhcyl proceeded to pass slowly along the corridor looking at the names.

"But why would your mentor put the stuff in the evil wizard's tomb?" queried Lute.

"I'm not sure, unless it would be to keep others away," answered Röhcyl absentmindedly.

"And why did he want vengeance on the old man?"

"I don't know," replied Röhcyl. "I couldn't even begin to guess. Valmous did that on occasion, tell a story and leave out what his hearer might think to be an important part. I remember asking the same

question. He just muttered something about letting the grevences of the dead stay that way."

They continued to search the names for their objective. Suddenly Ralph 'psst-ed' in order to get their attention. He stood in the middle of the narrow hallway pointing to the other wall. As they turned towards the hobbit, Lute and Röhcyl immediately saw what he wished to show them. There across the way from where they stood was a door. They walked over to it. It appeared to have no markings or designs on it, nor any on the area around it. There was only a heavy lock on the door. As near as they could tell, it had not been disturbed in quite some time. Ralph smiled at his companions.

"Would you like to see inside, good Röhcyl?" the hobbit asked with an impish grin.

"Yes I would."

In seconds the hobbit had fished a pick out of his pocket and began to fiddle with the lock. Ralph was very adept at his chosen profession and it wasn't long before the lock dropped open with a sharp metallic 'click'!

"My thanks," said Röhcyl with a bow. Ralph nodded in reply. Gently Röhcyl pushed against the door. It wouldn't budge.

"The hinges are rusted. We'll have to all give it a shove." Moving into place, they eyed each other anxiously and heaved with all their might. The door opened with a loud groan. Instantly they rushed in and pushed the door back in place.

"Damn!" said Lute. "If they didn't know where we were before, they will now."

They each knew that it would only be moments before the Orcs would be crawling all around trying to find out where that noise had come from.

"I can put a wizard's locking spell on the door, but I doubt it will be sufficient to hold them out if they use all their force."

"Do what you can and we'll look around," replied the hobbit. "Will you need the light?"

"No," said Röhcyl absently, handing the sphere to Ralph. The hobbit and the bard began to look around the room. Actually it wasn't big enough to call a room, it seemed to be more like the hallway they had just come out of. It lay ten feet end to end and was five feet wide. At the opposite end they found another door, only this one was marked and it **did** have strange markings on it. They both turned back in Röhcyl's direction and called him simultaneously. The young mage quickly came forward, a look of inquiry covering his face.

"Behold, good friend Röhcyl, another door. Perhaps this one will lead on to better safety," said the bard, sounding much more optimistic than he had a few moments before. Turning to the hobbit he added, "Well, what are you waiting for, get at it." The hobbit only glared at him in return.

"Yes," added Röhcyl, "lets get at it." He stared at the symbols and wondered at their meaning. He quickly concluded that, though he had learned some-

thing of archaic languages, this one would be indiscoverable without much study. By the time he had finished thinking these things over, Ralph had nimbly picked the lock. "Old, but well preserved. Definately dwarven work. Anything else would have rusted out like those hinges long ago." the hobbit seemed more than a little pleased with his accomplishment. "Dwarven locks aren't as easy to pick as you might imagine, especially ones as old as these."

"We shall never hear the end of this," said Lute, opening the door to let the others in. Once they were in the room Röhcyl took back the sphere and turned up the light so as to illuminate the entire room. He then moved to the center and set it down upon the solitary marble casket in the center. Actually, it was more like a four foot high oblong box. Lute stepped it off as six feet by three feet. Ralph was close by, but Röhcyl had moved back along the walls. Röhcyl stared in amazement at them, remaining silent. They were all smooth. . and had the same types of markings as the door. The room itself was not that big, perhaps twenty by twenty, but the high ceiling gave it a look of enormity, that and the shadows cast by the light of the sphere. Suddenly Lute who had been trying to remove the dust from the marble top and see if it too had any markings, called Röhcyl over.

"Röhcyl, lad. . .what did you say your mentor's name was?" His voice took on a tone of confused solemnity. The young mage walked over beside the casket.

"Why it was. . ." his sentence trailed off into silence as he stared at the markings engraved into the marble.

Here lies the Wizard

VALMOUS

Helper of the Weak, Friend to ALL

Slayer of the SHADOW MAGE

"Perhaps this answers why your mentor did not put your things here. He may not have wanted you to see this. At any rate, it raises more questions than I have answers for."

Röhcyl said nothing. He simply continued to stare at the letters. A thousand thoughts raced through his mind and were gone before he could mouth them aloud.

"I, too, have many questions," was all he finally managed to say.

All this time Ralph had been looking about the other walls of the room and come upon the real find. He summoned his two companions to share his discovery. They stared in amazement and joy. He had not found the crypt of the Shadow Mage, but the next best thing. . . a map of the entire complex. They all grew excited and started talking at the same time.

"Here is the crypt."

"And that must be where the Orcs are hiding out."

"Look, here's where we came in. But there is



also another way in, it has to be where those smelly devils gained entrance."

"It's not that far to get there, but what do those markings mean?"

"Must be a trap of some kind. We'd better stay clear of it."

"This looks simple enough, why don't we let the action cool down, those Orcs are probably still about, and then get the stuff?"

"Because the sooner I'm out of here the better I'll feel! That's why."

"Stow it, fuzz-foot."

"I think he's right. Let's do it and get back to the keep. Once we get what we came for, we'll go into town, hire a few adventurers and clean up this place."

That settled it. Once Röhcyl had spoken his preference, the vote was as good as decided. They gathered up their gear and moved towards the door. Soon they were back to the door which opened to the hallway. They all listened for the Orcs.

"Seems quiet enough," said the hobbit. "I think the way is clear. It won't be however, if we open this door."

"Not necessarily. I don't know why I didn't think of this before," said Röhcyl somewhat shamefacedly. He waved his hands over the door, muttered a few words and then he stood back. "Okey, let's give it a try."

This time it opened without so much as a creak. They checked the hall. It was clear. They gave each other a slight smile and started walking down the hall. Thirty yards on down the corridor they found the door to the crypt of the Shadow Mage, right where it was supposed to be. . . across the hall from the Orc's present lair. This little excursion had certainly not turned out to be any picnic. Ralph set to work on the lock. Still no sign of the Orcs they each thought. That was at least one good sign. Röhcyl mumbled a few words and waved his hands over the door. 'Click!' The lock opened and they entered without a sound. They came to the next door. Same thing. They had made it. The crypt of the Shadow Mage. The room was much the same as the one the other wizard's place of rest, except it lacked the writings on the walls.

"Well," asked Lute, "where is it?"

"You didn't expect to just come in and get it, did you?" asked Ralph. "Its hidden in here somewhere, no doubt. There's probably a secret cache in the wall and we look for it. Wizard's don't make it that simple for you, on one with the head as hollow as his gitar!" Ralph snickered, it was the first good one he'd been able to edge in for some time.

"He's right, Lute, we'll have to look for it." And look they did. They searched the walls, floor and ceiling as best as they could, but found nothing. Perplexed, they all sat by the casket and began to think. It didn't take long before Röhcyl rose to his feet with a laugh.

"What an ass I've been. Here we have looked in all the most unlikely places and we sit next to the most obvious." The others got up and stood next to him.

Slowly their eyes fixed on what he had been staring at, the casket. "It is so simple. If all that was left of the Wizards was memories. . ."

"Then what did they put in the casket?" said Lute, finishing his sentence for him.

They quickly started working at the massive marble cover. It took them a while, but it finally came off. There in the casket, just as Röhcyl had supposed, lay his inheritance. The Wizard's Staff, a newly woven Black Robe, a locked chest, three Swords (two long and one short), a small Coat of Mail, a large Tome, three sacks filled with Gems, and a small Jewelry Box. They each took a sword and discarded the ones they had. Then they took a sack of gems apiece and divided the rest of the goods. Röhcyl and Lute took the large chest, while Ralph carried the sphere to light the way. With treasure in hand, they headed for the door. Again the coast remained clear of any unwanted company.

"It could be night, and they've gone out to look for us or make a raid," suggested Lute.

"Let's hope that's it," replied Ralph.

Quickly, quietly, the threesome headed down the corridor as fast as they could. Still no one following. A few more steps and they turned the corner. Their luck was running with them this time. They were beginning to believe that they might make it. Another corner. Still not one sign of the Orcs. This was almost too easy. They stopped for a quick rest. Röhcyl and Lute were breathing hard by now.

"Almost there," gasped Röhcyl softly. They continued on. Third corner. Two, four six steps and they could see the 'X' Röhcyl had made to mark the secret stairway.

"This one is special," said Röhcyl. "You can pass through easy enough coming into the complex, but it takes a spell to get through the other way." He moved his hands and mumbled a few words, the wall began to fade away.

"Quickly! The spell only lasts a few seconds."

Immediately, they each grabbed their portion of the treasure and hurried through the opening just before it closed back. Setting everything down, they took a much deserved rest, free from worry over being caught or killed. It was a good rest.

"Now that's what I call earning your keep. . ." said the bard, shaking his head. Ralph and Röhcyl groaned at the poor joke, and prepared for the long trek up the stairs. Once back in the keep, they laid their prizes on the dining hall table, except for the great chest, scrounged about for some food and stumbled off to bed. Each slept long and deep. It was the sleep of complete exhaustion, but it restored their strength by the morning. Röhcyl's mind had been made up the day before in the crypts, go into town, hire some adventurers and clean out the vermin down there.

"But why not just blast them all with your Staff?" they had asked.

"Because it could blast us with it in such a closed place," came the reply.

So they set off the next day with a week's pro-

visions, a few small gems and close to five hundred pieces of gold between them. Their travel was swift and uneventful until the fourth day. It was then that they came upon a long traveler eating his mid-day meal by the side of the road they were traveling on. His dress was simple and worn through in places. He did not stand taller than Lute, but he was not much shorter either. He appeared to be a little older than the bard, but that was debatable. And he wore a long sword on one side, while keeping a hunter's horn on the other. As they neared, he spoke.

"Where are you headed fine sirs?" Lute answered, having been designated spokesman in case of meeting anyone on the road.

"We go to town to seek adventurers who desire a good fight and wish to let some orcish blood."

"Indeed, and do you pay well?" the stranger questioned.

"To each according to his skill and courage. . . we pay fairly."

"Aahh. . .that may be taken two ways, good sir. I might consider fighting for you if I may see the color of your money."

Lute dug beneath his cloak and pulled out ten gold pieces, inadvertently allowing the stranger to catch a glimpse of the overly large pouch he had tied to his belt. The stranger whistled shrilly.

"If that be your pay, I can get you an army!" Before any of them could move, the man had winded a loud long blast on his horn. As if from nowhere, two

score heads popped up, surrounding the trio.

"We've been watching you for some time now. I desired to see what you were up to before we acted. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Melkor the Thief and we are here to relieve you of your 'burdens' gentlemen. The purses, if you please." He laughed loudly as the three companions undid the sacks of gold about their waists.

"It seems to me," he said after a while, "that I should know you two from somewhere before," he said while eyeing Ralph and Lute. "But I can't quite place it."

"We contributed to your worthy cause once before," answered the hobbit sulkily.

"Yes!" he exclaimed gleefully, "and quite generously too as I recall."

"I'll say," mumbled the bard. As hard as this might be to take for Röhcyl, who was losing quite a bit of money all at once, it was even harder for the bard and the hobbit, who were experiencing the humiliation of being robbed by the same thief that had kept them from settling into a life of ease some years past.

"I see you have given most generously again, my friends," he said as he glanced over the sacks. "But I could not leave you destitute, I've turned into something of a soft touch since you saw me last." So saying he tossed two gold pieces to each of them and laughed. Then, on signal, three of his men came forward, picked up the sacks and departed as silently as they had ap-

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he answer to this threat was a simple one. None of the Green Berets even used a full clip, for the chattering guns were enough to spook the ones that weren't killed in the initial burst. They all got in some parting shots at fleeing figures, and Chambers got off one M-79 round that burst in the middle of a milling, confused knot. All told, three dozen still figures were heaped in the sand.

"Those are Orcs, Gentlemen," Chambers apologized, as he reloaded the M-79 "Thump Gun". "I once read the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien, and it has a lot of assorted little nasties like that in it."

During the next hour the Green Berets encountered half a dozen small groups of these Orcs, and slaughtered them with gunfire. The yield didn't justify the ammunition expenditure. Finally Big Ben said, "Less doan shoot at 'um 'less dey staht cummin' aftuh us."

Willis had known a surfer at Santa Monica that reminded him of Big Ben. A clown. A real clown, but he was so good on a surfboard that he could afford to be ridiculous on it and still ride it. He was so good that he made it look easy and simple, and some of the kelp-kickers around the beach declared that, by making it look so simple, by riding in backwards while reading *Playboy* and stuff like that, he got the other guys to try it and break their necks.

The vitality of the big man was amazing, and nearly matched his strength. He could last through the most grueling missions and still bounce back, fresh as ever, the next morning.

On a single mission, he had been hit by three bullets and a grenade went off within five yards of him, giving him four fragments in the arm and a thin trickle of blood running out of each ear. Yet, he was still able to carry Chambers, also wounded, seven miles back to American lines. Nothing the Viet Cong could do could stop him. Big Ben's statement that he "could take on fahve uh th' little shits 'n' teah 'em apawt," was no idle boast; Willis had seen him do it.

There was something unreal about Ralph Chambers, Willis decided. In fact, everything about him was unreal. He had been one of those teenage hoods in New York in the early '50's, the slick kind that formed chivalrous street clubs and fenced with switchblades, and harassed everybody they came across with pointless brutality.

Ralph even looked unreal, and not even the Green Berets had been able to change that. He was short but powerfully built, and handsome enough to be in the movies, with clean, rugged features, and cool blue eyes with bushy eyebrows and lashes long enough for a girl.

Ralph was the only Green Beret Willis had met that didn't look dangerous, and yet Big Ben had told him that Ralph was a holy terror in any kind of fight, from alley brawl in Saigon to a fire fight on the line. "Mebbe iss b'cause he doan lose his haid," Big Ben had said. "Some guys faght as wild as Ralphie, but his is sortuh cuntrowulled. He doan jus' go sprayin' th' lan'scape with ammo. Doan tangle with him."

Chambers was the easiest of them all to understand, and yet Willis wondered sometimes if he really even understood Chambers. If Willis had had a younger brother, he decided, it would have been a kid like Chambers. A good, clean-cut kid trying too hard to be a man. And Willis, as big brother, would have shown him a better way to be a man than running around with a street gang. Willis would have taken him to the beach and shown him how to surf.

The surf out at Santa Monica was *terrific*. Out there they came in, great blue hump-backed monsters, and when they hit the sand shelf they'd surge up twenty feet high. With their tops now in the wind and the spray blowing they came on, for a mile or more, with their slopes smooth and fast, giving you one helluva ride. Then when they curled and broke, they made a tube of water as smooth and perfect as blue steel. A tube so big all you had to do was crouch down on the board and race right through, water all around, completely, but not touching you. Then you broke out and rammed the board up and over and back for the sea as, behind you, the wave broke on the shore, with a crash that shook the land.

Big Ben caught a whiff of a really strange smell every now and then. It seemed to smell like gasoline, but lighter, not so heavy and oppressive.

Willis was able to specify the odor, but he didn't identify it for the others because he thought it was unimportant. It was methane.

Now the four men were entering a more rocky area, with formations of talus and loose slopes of scree, but sandy stretches of various breadth persisted. They hadn't seen any more Orcs for an hour or more, but knew that they were near and watching. It had been six hours since they had come out of the hole.

"Well, Ben" Gavan asked, "would you be objectin' to stoppin' an' having a bite to eat?"

The great rumbling black belly answered for Big Ben. He pointed to a commanding talus formation shimmering a few hundred yards ahead and said, "That looks lahk uh good spot tuh eat. We kin keep uh look-out fo' thuh li'l bastuhds f'um thuh top."

Five minutes later they sat at the top, facing out

at the horizon, breaking out cans of C-Rations. "Gawdamn," Big Ben griped, "ef dey wuz goan git us chow dey coulduh got sumthin' 'sides these Gawdamn C-Rats. Got 'nuff o' this slop in 'Nam."

"Aw, shit," Chambers laughed, "the Berets wouldn't be the Berets without some bitchin' form Big Ben." There was some muffled laughter around mouthfuls of C-Rations, which are really quite good unless taken as a steady diet.

Big Ben stopped laughing when he noticed something moving on the horizon. *Sumthin' even bigguh'n ol' Big Ben*, he observed.

Chambers sensed his giant friend's sudden wariness and asked, "What's a matter, Ben?"

The black man, his gaze not moving from the horizon, waved one hand at Chambers. "Git that glass telescope thang," he ordered.

"It's called a monocular, dumb shit," Willis teased, and handed him a small black cylinder with a strange twist to it. Now the other Berets, who by now would have been ready for any immediate danger, finally sensed something approaching. They all turned and saw what Big Ben did: a huge cloud of dust riding the horizon.

Big Ben held the monocular to one eye. "Gawdamn," he breathed in awe. He then handed the glass to Chambers and said, "Heah, Ralphie, y'all's thuh only college man heah. Tell us what that thang is. Looks lahk sum kinda Gawdamn big spiduh tuh ol' Big Ben, a'crawlin' at us."

Chambers took the monocular and peered through it. "Scorpion. Native to southwestern North America, particularly in arid regions. Their primary attributes are a pair of large pincers to catch and hold prey, a long jointed tail with a stinger to paralyze said prey, and tough chitinous armor completely covering its body to protect it from predators. They usually grow between one and three inches long. At about sixty or seventy feet, I'd say that was a rather large specimen."

Big Ben replied, "Well, y'all bettuh hope that bastuhd doan see us. 'Cause iss uh li'l too big fo' Big Ben tuh tangle with 'n' save yo' asses."

"Well, Ben," Chambers jabbed, "how much good is our heavy artillery gonna do us now?"

"Aw, shut up, smawt ass."

"Here, gimme the glass," Gavagan said. "A faint rumbling began to reach their ears as the Irishman took the monocular and held it to one eye. "God in Heaven!" he cried. "Look!"

There, on a stretch of sand below them, a deep furrow was being plowed by an unseen blade. The four Green Berets heard a loud, abrasive slithering at the lower end of the audible sound range. The sound slid up the scale in pitch and died away as the furrow, like the track of a snake, weaved off in the direction of the scorpion, the unseen blade accelerating.

"Worm-sign," Gavagan muttered, his face slack with horror. "I read the Dune trilogy by Frank Herbert.

Giant sandworm, called the Shai-Hulud or Grandfather of the Desert by the Fremmen desert people. Some o' them grow to be four hundred yards long."

The wormsign broke off about four hundred yards from the scorpion, around which there now seemed to be a turbulence in the sand. A dust cloud began to rise.

The scorpion had been approaching the Berets, and now was visible as a horror-shape with one long appendage arching up over its back. It was fully as large as a railroad diesel engine.

The cloud of dust rose into the air, shrouding the monster. The Berets could now barely make it out as a darker outline in the darkness, suddenly having trouble with its footing. Great armored legs flailed as the apparition found itself navigating the side of a slope, which hadn't been there a few moments before. The thing began tipping down to the right as a giant whirlpool of sand began forming there. Sand began moving in a current beneath it, faster and faster.

The fact that there was danger here finally penetrated the dim brain of the monster. It scrambled in awkward desperation to escape the whirling sand and dust, now filling the air for hundreds of yards around. Slowly it settled out of sight into the turbulence below.

A wide hole emerged in the sand, where the scorpion had last stood. The red skylight flashed in glistering red spokes from it. The edges contracted and expanded, and strange posts rose at these edges. The hole's diameter was at least twice the length of the scorpion.

It was the maw of the worm.

Slowly, sand fell in around its edges. The posts drew out of sight, the bottom fell out, and sand poured in, forming a cone-shaped depression a hundred yards across and fifty feet deep. The clouds of sand and dust began to settle.

"God, what a monster!" Willis exclaimed.

Chambers and Benyon had met in basic training in 1953. The gulf between their temperaments had suggested they would be an unlikely team. Neither one had been pleased when they had been assigned to the same shipment to Korea, to hear a sergeant say, "Ya went through basic together, huh? Okey, you two are buddies." With formidable misgivings, they went into combat together, and they treated each other with the politeness that substitutes for friendship.

Slowly, reluctantly, they discovered that their polar talents meshed to create a powerful team. Chambers attacked an enemy strongpoint like a mathematical problem, evaluating energy and strength against the enemy, against time. Big Ben pounded the enemy into submission with his uncommon strength and indomitable will.

The pair eventually began making forays into enemy territory on their own, without authorization. They mined roads, booby-trapped facilities, sniped at sentries (with a 100% kill rate), stole enemy communi-

ques, monitored radio broadcasts and "bugged" short-wave sets, tossed grenades into tents full of sleeping enemy troops, tape-recorded staff conferences, and in general ran a two-man guerrilla war. Their commanding officer would never catch them sneaking out at night, but often found them staggering in at dawn, or three days later. He didn't try to stop them.

Eventually they came to an unspoken mutual understanding. The CO would receive, by devious means, little tape reels and written estimates of enemy strength. When blocks of TNT began disappearing from Divisional Supply, Chambers and Benyon began finding bundles of demolition supplies and electronic bugging equipment, in their dugout, when they returned from their little "hunting trips." They left the war as Staff Sergeants.

Between wars, they stagnated in Fort Knox, Kentucky, the armor school, until their CO from Korea, asked for recommendations to the U.S. Army Special Forces, set things in motion to snatch them from obscurity and send them to Fort Benning, Georgia, the airborne school. They trained there for a year, then were sent to a Special Forces base in Okinawa.

Thanks to President Kennedy, the Special Forces survived the storm from the Pentagon, which threatened to turn them back into regular Army units. "Straight-leg," or non-paratroop generals, who thought the paratroopers were about as elite as any Army unit was supposed to get, wanted to disband the Special Forces, but the President defended these universally-trained units.

They were shipped out to Vietnam in the summer of 1964, and started "Cong Hunting" in earnest. Fanciful comrades came to refer to this team as The Rapier and the Mace. These nicknames caught the fancy of a correspondent for a magazine, *Soldier of Fortune*. The magazine is designed to appeal to the desire in men to go out and be a mercenary in a banana republic or something.

Chambers, The Rapier, was particularly suited to demolitions work, where the minute tactics of leverage and blast effect fitted his intellectual style. He could demolish any structure, using the absolute minimum of explosives by putting them in the right places and setting them off in proper sequence.

Big Ben would take over in hand-to-hand, in the few instances when enemy troops escaped Chamber's booby traps. He would pant and bull his way through hordes of little men, breasting a path like an inevitable machine of fate.

"Okey, boss, so what do we do now?" Chambers asked.

"We goan set raght down heah an' hassle this out," Big Ben replied. "OK, Ahrishman, that theah sand wuhm look lahk thuh nastiest nasty evuh. So how we goan keep it from eatin' us if we evuh git off this rock?"

"It hears us walkin' on the surface," Willis explained. "On rock we're safe, but it hears us walkin' on sand."

"Well, the solution is fairly simple," Chambers deduced. "If we run into a patch of sand, we walk around it."

"So whut y'all waitin' fo'? Hustle up an' eat them tasty C-Rats, boys, tahm's a-wastin'!"

In one minute, they were clambering down from the rock into the teeth of an Orc assault they hadn't seen gathering in the talus below. The few minutes immediately following were a nightmare of flying lead and flying arrows, for the Orcs had brought up some archers.

Willis stumbled out of the talus, squeezing off bursts in all directions, into an open area and began running. Three of the loathsome Orcs came out of a wide crevass on the left; a burst of fire cut them down.

He spotted a corridor in the rock ahead. He sprinted for it, minbly dodging the basketball-sized loose stone like he had dodged tacklers at Santa Monica High School a million years before.

Ahead he heard unearthly screams and he hesitated. The screams subsided and he cautiously crept forward, reaching into the shoulder satchel for a fragmentation grenade.

Suddenly, scrambling and clattering around a bend in the corridor, a dead Orc in each claw, stinger dripping blood almost directly over Willis' head, a scorpion came upon him.

Willis pulled the pin of the frag grenade and threw it before the scorpion could react to another potential meal. He spun and ran back into the clear area.

The blast tore apart the bodies of the Orcs and stunned the monster, knocking it back a short distance. Then, mandibles clicking and long sting jabbing with rage, it scrambled out into the clearing after its prey.

*There's one point in my favor,* Willis thought, *this bastard don't run as fast as a linebacker.* He ducked into the side crevass past the three dead Orcs, glancing back to check the progress of his enemy. The rocks he had easily dodged tripped up the scorpion, slowing it further. Then he saw he was in a blind alley.

*I'm a lot smarter than this thing, there has to be a way to out-fox it.* Then Willis saw his opportunity; up ahead was a poorly-supported boulder as big as a grain silo, dangling about ten feet above the corridor and supported only by loose rock and shale.

Out came the plastic explosives, detonators and wire. A huge mound of explosives on the shale, a detonator in it, and a wire from the detonator to a near-by rock outcropping completed the trap.

The scorpion paused to wolf down the three dead Orcs. *My, you've got quite an appetite, don't you?* He backed away from the tripwire and backed down the corridor, until his backpack was pressing against the end of the corridor.

*Hey, man, it's getting dark.* His train of thought expanded on this for a little while, as he attempted to avoid thinking about what would happen if the trap didn't work.

The monster was now about a hundred yards away, the stone column, about forty. As the scorpion



finished its repast, Willis raised the M-16 and snapped off a short burst at it. *Goddamn it*, he thought as the echoes of his firing resounded, *if I hadn't fired maybe he would have forgotten about me.*

The scorpion began rattling ponderously toward him, trying to find out where the sound had come from. It smelled Willis and came in at full bore, legs waving in the dim light.

Willis remembered later the reassuring *tink* as the pin slipped out of the detonator. It worked like a charm.

The tremendous blast almost knocked Willis off his feet, even as far away as he was standing, and threw the scorpion against the wall of the corridor. With immense majesty the huge boulder dropped like a pile driver, squarely on the monster's back. It stood there, perpendicular, for five seconds, as the creature squirmed beneath it. Then it slowly fell over towards Willis, filling the air with an awful rending, splitting noise as it fell. The monster's armor was being cracked open.

There was a resounding crash as it fell, crushing the scorpion's brain and sending it into nervous convulsions, the legs twitching, the stinger jabbing randomly all around the corridor. Willis waited half an hour for the nervous system to die. Finally there were weaker convulsions, dying away. At last there was a spasmodic twitch from a claw, a shudder that actually shook the boulder, and the scorpion was finally still.

During the half-hour of waiting, Willis had heard several small, vicious skirmishes faintly echoing to him; tightly-grouped bursts of automatic fire, punctuated by explosions. He hadn't heard any noise now for about fifteen minutes, and wondered if the three other men were dead, or holed up somewhere.

He pulled out his bayonet and fixed it to the muzzle of the M-16, then jogged toward the dead scorpion. The bright scarlet light in the sky had subsided to a dull red glow, and he could barely make out the giant pinchers, the legs thick as telephone poles, as he scampered up on top of the boulder and walked out to the far end. He could make out the splintered, bloody edges of the break in the armor, blacker than the rest of the blackness. Avoiding the break, he dropped down on the back of the scorpion, marveling at the size of the stinging tail. It curved up thirty feet over his head, tipped with an armored knob the size of a bushel basket, which was further tipped by a two-foot barb. The sting looked rather blunt, but would have been coming down with such force that it would have pierced inch-thick steel.

He hopped down to the ground and walked out into the clearing. The only way he could tell he was out was that the walls didn't block as much of the dark red sky.

Willis slowly picked his way along, stumbling and cursing as he encountered loose stone in the darkness. He found the spot where they had eaten; empty C-Ration cans, spent cartridge cases, and the wet blood of a dozen Orcs gleamed dully.

He made an educated guess and struck off to the right, down another crevass in the labyrinthine talus

formations. He found empty cartridges scattering the route, as well as numbers of dead Orcs. At one spot, he found it difficult to struggle through the piles of Orcs; these bodies were dismembered by an explosion, not merely shot full of holes. He knew what he would find at the far side of this concentration of carcasses. The broken pieces of copper wire, and a huge crater in the side of a cliff, indicated that Chambers had been around.

Then he heard the faint, far-off rattle of gunfire, and began running towards it. But the talus threw him off with echoes. He knew he was getting closer, when he ran into five squat figures and chopped them down with a burst from the M-16. When the echoes of his own firing died out he could hear Big Ben yelling at him, but he couldn't make out the words.

He began hearing gibbering sounds, low and guttural barks and mutters. The Orcs were talking to each other. Willis slaughtered one small patrol, evaded a big one, ambushed a sentry, and slowly drew closer to the sound of Big Ben's voice, which kept bellowing.

As he rounded a bend, he noticed some rusty, oddly-wrought ironmongery pounded into a steep slope of rock on his left. Curious, he began climbing it.

At the top, an Orc attacked him with a mace. Willis easily grabbed his assailant by one slimy arm and pulled it off the ledge. He heard the body fall to the rocks below, but didn't hear it get up.

He found himself on top of a fairly solid and even talus formation. A wide shelf curled around the formation to his right, and he stood on a ledge, which led from the shelf off into a dark tangle of rock to the left. The ledge was broken in several spots by crevasses, but these were narrow and easily stepped over. The tangled rock fragments were one gigantic boulder, split and shattered to form a dozen or more dark crevasses and nooks. *If I go in there*, he thought, *I'll never get out again. Too many places for the bad guys to hide in.* He turned toward the right, to the wide shelf.

The shelf curved around a tall cliff. He began edging along it, back hugging the rock face. Two more Orcs were at the edge, on their bellies and peering down. Willis had a feeling that if he killed these two, about two million more would come out of the woodwork. He edged past them without being noticed.

The shelf ended. Willis guessed that there wouldn't be much harm in it after all, and crept up to them, bayonet ready.

The first died quickly, the blade stabbing between the ribs and swinging around the spine to the heart. The other rolled over, grunting and drawing a sword. Willis almost took the Orc's head off, a vicious swipe to the throat severing the windpipe and four major blood vessels in an explosion of dark fluid. The Orc fell over the edge, gurgling blood. His companion followed him, propelled by a lusty kick from Willis.

Two bullets ricocheted at his feet and he hit the deck, trembling. *God, to go through all that and be killed by your own people!* he thought. After the panic in him died, his mind began working. *This ledge must*

*continued on page 20*



by Bill Paley

V



ight. Pain. Cold wet lapping on cheeks. Pain. PAIN!

Lilly opened her eyes. Hovering over her was her mule, nuzzling at her face. She sat up slowly, and groaned. Investigating under her chainmail shirt, she found no injuries, but many bruises. Testing her legs, she rose, and scanned the surroundings. The boulders were scorched in a swath from just beyond her "camp" to the border of the field. Picking her way carefully downslope, she reached the border of the bouldered region.

The scene was peaceful, but there were obvious signs of some horrible battle which must have raged while Lilly lay in a stupor. There were broken shields, bent swords, but nowhere was there any sign of bodies. Lilly peered downslope and sighted a large white warhorse, saddled, with a shield slung on it. She strode over to the beast, watching for anything else that moved.

The horse was shivering in terror. The Elf murmured soothing words and stroked the animal's neck until she felt that the horse would bear her. Climbing into the saddle, she headed the beast around the battle zone back to her camp. While the sun rose towards noon, she loaded her mule and started on her way up the valley, fearfully watching the sky and mountains around her.

The next two days passed uneventfully, though Lilly found herself weak with anxiety by the time she reached the high ridge and started back downhill. On the way, she examined the trappings of her new mount. The saddle had no identifying marks, but the shield was marked with an eye with a tear dripping from one corner on a light blue field. Lilly decided to keep it for her own use, without erasing its sign.

Finally, as she rode down out of the foothills, she saw a small town ahead. As she entered the outskirts, children and elderly humans stared at her, but she ignored their attention. The town was built on the banks of a tributary to the River Stillring, and so near the waterfront she found the town's one inn. She rode up to its stables and ordered the boy there to care for her beasts. The youth bowed, and lead the weary mounts into the building.

Armed and armored she strode into the inn. The innkeeper bartered with her for the cost of lodgings, but Lilly's heart wasn't in her dealings. The man was so pleased that he placed her in his Best Room, which had gone unoccupied through the winter.

Washed and dressed in clothing, a meal under her belt and a drink in her hand, Lilly later quizzed the innkeeper on matters of geography.

"It's to Thunderhold you're bound, eh?" he murmured. "Don't be using the Rorystone Road, then. There've been dragons spied flying over and the stage coach service has halted. It's all because that damn Ironhelm ain't satisfied with taking the town. Damn fool thinks he's A King Of Old, and he'll be trying to drive Analegorn, of hateful memory, and her young from Majestic Fastness. I don't know what . . . ."

"Yes, yes, thank you. Can I find passage to the right bank of the River?"

"Oh, but of course, milady. If you'd be wishin' that, for a mere one additional gold piece, I'd be pleased to arrange it, and pay the money down, no less. These riverboaters are ruffraff, and you'd be best served if one such as I, who can smell out the wheat from the chaff, if you catch my meaning, ma'am, were to. . ."

"Yes, yes, all right." She dug into her pouch. "Here's a gold piece." *Bebother these Men*, she thought, *Yammering as though I had any interest in what they say.*

She went to rest with the innkeeper's assurances that all would be arranged and ready for her by morning. Sure enough, dawn rose bright and clear on Lilly and her mounts, boarding a river raft. The raftsmen were skilled and the trip was rapid, and soon Lilly found herself on the shore. Almost directly north lay Thunderhold.

Riding cross-country, she kept popping up on top of hills so that she could keep sight of the road to her west. She had decided to ride until her arrival at the town, rather than camp out again. Thus, as the sun lowered in the west, she paid less attention to her surroundings, and more on spurring on the great warhorse.

Finally, she reached the ford across the Rocky Rapids. She could see the way to Thunderhold and she reigned in her horse to take in the sight. She gazed at its turreted spendor for a long moment, for it was the largest city she had ever seen.

She was jerked out of her rapture by a blur of movement in the corner of her eye. "What? Trolls!" she dug herspurs into the horse, and the beast responded, dragging the mule along. Lilly glanced back at her two pursuers. They were keeping pace. Terror raced through the girl's mind. Well over a mile to go, riding exhausted creatures, while two rested monsters loped along behind. "Oh, may your strength last!"

## VI

Sombo woke suddenly, and knew that it was magic which had forced him to sleep by the throbbing headache it had left him. Ignoring the wave of pain and vertigo it caused him, he stood up to investigate his surrounding. He stood at one side of a 10' by 10' room. There was a straw pallet, a pail, a jug and a candle. Finally, there was an oaken door with a shut grill. The pail and straw both smelled as if they had not been changed for a decade. The jug held fresh water, which Sombo downed quickly.

Suddenly the youth realized that he still had, not only his money pouch, but his dagger! "Perhaps I've been left here to simply sleep it off," he thought. "I guess I should wait." He sat down again on the straw, and reviewed his spells.

Footsteps outside his door brought Sombo out of his reverie. The door squealed open to reveal three soldiers in chain, heavily armed. "Gimme da dagga, keed," ordered one of them.

Sombo handed it to him hilt first, and soon found himself being marched up a long spiraling staircase. At the top, one of the troops knocked respectfully at a door.

"Who comes?" a mirthful voice was heard to say.

"Ellajah, sir, with the prisoner."

"Enter."

The guards opened the door and ushered Sombo in. The room was large enough to fill the tower, with windows looking out over the jungle. There were several bookcases, and tables loaded with nearly every item that Sombo had ever seen, from a pin to a sword, and from a loom to a hoe. In the center of the room stood a medium sized man with bright red hair. He was dressed in leather, covered by a bright green cloak.

"Approach me, young man," he said smiling. "What did you mean by your statement when you first cast eyes on my tower?"

"I, uh, um, was sort of, uh, dreaming, sir. About someday when I'm a, ah, an important magic-user." Sombo started sweating.

"I see. You were playing the conqueror. What do you intend to do, to become one who is important?"

"I seek someone who'll teach me."

"And where will you find such a one?"

"I was thinking to find one such in the City State."

"Ha-ha! you're far from that chaotic mess! You have a sea to cross between here and there! Do you walk on water?"

"I have not that power. I was certain that there were fishing villages. . . ."

"Fishing villages? Near the Strait of Clashing Rocks? You must be jesting my young friend. No, there are no boats near here. You must rework your plans, boy."

"I cannot go west. I cannot go east, without drowning. South is the wrong way. I shall go north."

"And drown there too. Untutored you are, but

perhaps by starting lower you will gain the more power in the future. The City State is your desire? Sleep again, then boy."

As Sombo fell, the mage laughed uproariously. "A jest indeed! Ellajah, bring me the other prisoner! And prepare the chariots. We go to the seashore!"

Hours later Sombo woke with a start, water splashing all about him. Under him he could feel heavy scales. He was tied, sitting upright on the dorsal spine of a Sea Monster! Sombo stared in horror, praying to Mastack not to let the beast dive. Turning, he saw that the monster was headed east, and shore was in sight. The creature raced up the surf partially onto the beach, then reached for Sombo. The youth consigned his soul to the kingdom of fairies, when he noticed that the huge pinchers were not rending flesh, but snipping rope. He was then lifted and placed carefully on the sand. As he stared in shocked amazement, the monster winked, turned away, and dove.

Feeling himself he found clothes, dagger, and money pouch. Counting out his money, he found himself short several gold pieces. "So strange. . . ."

## VII

Lilly's heart pounded with a thunder that seemed as loud as that of the hooves of her great war horse. The safety of the city of Thunderhold was close, and yet the Trolls had begun to gain on her. She could hear their snarling laughter close behind her. She felt certain she had met her doom, only slightly advanced along her path to glory.

Just as Lilly was about to rein in and meet her fate, a flurry of flaming arrows shot towards her from ahead. "Ride on," she heard a dwarven voice call. With a final burst of energy, her mount pounded past a line of dwarves wearing the insignia of the Border Warders of Thunderhold. The Trolls could be heard snarling defiance at the crack troopers, but disappeared into the brush at the next flight of arrows.

As Lilly calmed her panting animals, an officer marched up to her. He was arrayed in jeweled armor, with splendid dwarven workmanship glowing in every detail.

"We could not allow such beasts leeway into our lands," said the officer. "However, you are not welcome here. You may stay the night, but you must leave on the morrow."

Lilly pondered this and said, "Is it not true that the Dwarven King needs soldiers to realize his dreams of reuniting the once glorious city under the Majestic Fastness with the people of the long beards? I carry the sword as a warrior and would fight under his banner."

The officer scowled. "None of your pointy-eared race are wanted. This is dwarven business and will be set right by dwarves." He turned and stamped off.

The dwarves barely spoke to her that night, but fed her from the stew they had prepared. Soon the soldiers slept. Lilly sat watching the stars and hummed



to herself an old nursery tune about the pride of dwarves. As dawn approached she decided to boldly ride down the Rorystone Road and on to the lands of the Invincible Overlord. Men would hire her, even if dwarves would not.

The dwarves ignored her as she saddled her horse and left their camp. She rode onto the stone highway, and headed south.

Strangely enough, she encountered no beasts anywhere along the Road. Each night she stopped well off the Road and dreamed of the glories to come.

On the fourth night, she arrived at the town of Haghill, and she decided to take room at an inn, as she was tiring of the salt meat and hard biscuits she had as travelling food. The innkeeper burred delightedly at the sight of her and ushered her into the common room.

"Milady, there be here a group of warriors, strongly thewed and well armed who have questioned me on their chances of being hired as mercenaries. Surely a soldier such as yourself, with your obvious experience, would be pleased to array yourself in a more. . . .

"Take me to them, then," said Lilly.

At a table in the rear sat three Men armored in chain shirts, sword armed. One rose and greeted the elven lass. The armor could not hide bulging muscles, and the fellow had an air of self-confidence about him which convinced Lilly to trust him immediately.

"I am called Robert the Bold, and these are my companions, Ev and Ralf. Our captain and most of his force have been scattered across the land, and I fear many are now merely mouldering bones in the wilds. We seek employment as sell-swords, and our terms be three silvers a week, plus room and board. No questions asked."

Lilly considered. A small mercenary band would gain hire much faster than a single elven warrior. "Agreed," she smiled and tossed a gold coin on the table, "Here are your first week's wages." The soldiers cheered and called for a round of ale.

The evening passed in merriment, but the morning found the group up early, riding out on the road. The innkeeper informed them that the road passed through the Mermist Swamp, but that just beyond, less than a day's travel ahead, lay the Invincible Overlord's City. Bidding him farewell they rode off south.

The Mermist Swamp was as dismal as the innkeeper had promised. Clouds of flies oppressed the riders, and strange smells caused them to gag or sneeze. The elven lass rode with bow strung and in hand, and kept a wary eye on the underbrush closest to the road.

Suddenly humanoid shapes stepped from out of hiding, bow armed.

"Halt and raise your hands!"

## VIII

Finally, after shivering from both terror and cold, Sombo took his bearings and marched north,

along the coast. He stayed near the water's edge, both because the sand was hard packed along the surf, and because the sound of the pounding waves reassured him. He hummed to the beat of the tide, repeating a hymn to Mastack and then began to review his spells.

As night was falling, many miles north of his landing point, Sombo saw the lights of a village, and the fishing boats pulled up on the sand. He stumbled wearily past huts, hovels, and a splendid temple, until he found the town inn. The innkeeper quickly traded him cash for a pallet and a meal, and soon the boy slept.

After an early morning bath, Sombo came downstairs to eat a hearty breakfast, intending to move on immediately. In the commons, he found a group of wagoners, a gaggle of barmaids, and two men in black cloaks conversing in low tones. No one had seated themselves near these two, and everyone in the room were strict in keeping their gaze far removed from them.

As Sombo fell to his breakfast, one of the prettier lasses sashayed up to his table.

"Hello, honey, I'm Sarra," she said.

Sombo looked up at her and felt a stirring deep inside. "Hi, my name is Sombo. Would you like something to eat?" he replied, mentally reviewing the contents of his purse.

"Oh, I've had breakfast. . . that's not what I'm in the mood for, dear. May I sit down?"

Sombo immediately offered her a chair, but was shocked silly when she gently cuddled up in his lap. Not knowing quite what to do, he giggled.

"What is it you do, deary?" she asked.

"Uh. . . I. . . uh. . . I do magical spells," he replied. "I've just come across the strait."

"Did you now! Why, you must be a powerful mage to do such a thing." She appeared to think for a moment. "Why you might. . . ." her voice dropping to a whisper, ". . . e'en be able to defeat Morthor Cof, the slimy so-and-so."

"Who is that?" Sombo whispered as well.

"See the man in black with his back to us?"

Sombo nodded. "Well, he's an awful man who has been ruling this town by murder and terror. He killed me mum, he did."

Sombo thought long and deeply and in a small voice he chanted the words of a spell. Sarra felt rather than hearing or seeing the pulse of magical energy leaping from the lad to the dark form across the room. She jumped out of his lap, knocking Sombo under the table as, with a roar, Morthor Cof spun away from his table. He paced up to her, and slapping her savagely across the face he shouted, "DIE." She collapsed on the floor and lay still.

Turning to the other cloaked figure the evil cleric shouted, "Guard the door, I go for my guards." He then stormed out of the inn.

In the confusion immediately after, Sombo crawled out of the commotion and up the stairs. One window faced the stable's yard. The lad carefully low-

ered himself out the window, and, hanging at full length, dropped to the ground. As he rose, he could hear the tread of armed men, on foot and on horseback, and he raced into the cover of some bushes.

Soon he heard a chorus of screams, both those of men and women, and soon the inn glowed with flames. Suddenly, a slim form performed the same feat that had only moments before saved Sombo. The humanoid shape soon dove into the brush inches away from the young mage. Sombo drew his knife but quickly put it back—for this was the stable boy. Sombo and the boy, Ral, exchanged names, and the boy begged Sombo to let him join on the wanderings ahead of the mage. "There's no more place for me here but a grave, sir." Sombo agreed, glad for the company.

As darkness fell, the two youths slipped away, quiet shadows in the night. For a full night and day they marched without rest. Once clear of the town's patrols, they set out for the City State of the Invincible Overlord. They were two weeks on their way, sighting but once, anything out to the ordinary. The fourth night they noticed five reptile-like birds with strange, obscene looking feathers. The two hid, and were not observed.

The youths saw the smoke rising from the city from miles away. As they approached across The Mermist Marshes, Sombo and Ral both were awed by the mighty appearance of the great fortified city. They approached the gate and were stopped by the guards.

After a bit of wrangling, they paid six coppers for entry and passed through into the bustle, noise and smells of the city. They wandered all over the city their first day, buying some clothes, and a bow and arrows for Ral. That night was spent sleeping on a backstreet, with one on guard at all times.

In the morning, the youths entered an inn just off a main road. The food was not of the best, but it was hot and plentiful. As they ate they listened to the conversations of the warriors and traders around them.

One aged warrior in particular caught their attention. After a stirring tale of a battle with a floating eye with snake eyes attached, the elderly swordsman cackled; "We were led by an elven lass who was so powerful that we all had no fears. She said she'd return someday. I was just sitting at the Gate of the Gods, and, in she rode, on a warhorse, well-armed. Ah, she was a pretty one she was. Brave and nasty. She rode right in, chose three soldiers, and off we were on a series of adventures like bards sing! Another ale!"

Ral and Sombo exchanged glances. "How sounds this to you, sir?" asked Ral.

"If our luck holds, perhaps we, too, may find an elvish mentor to lead us," Sombo answered. "... After breakfast."

Finishing their meal the two left, heading straight to the Gate of the Gods, facing the Mermist Marshes. There they sat down to wait.

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ΛΗΥΡ ΙΒ ΚΙΓΨΥ ΨΦΨ ΡΗΨΨΧ ΘΗ ΝΧ ΓΗΨΡΑΚΑΓΨΗΝ ΙΜΚΨ

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*A Private Hell from page 16*

*be in line of sight of at least one other Green Beret. A Beret must have seen movement up here, and I really don't blame him for shooting at anything that moves. He bellied up to the edge.*

There, twenty feet below and fifty feet away, were three black figures. From their size and bulk, Willis knew that they were Green Berets.

Huddled at the base of that talus were about two dozen Orcs, with more creeping up by the minute. All were down low, out of sight of the Green Berets.

Partly to protect his comrades, and partly to let them know he was on their side, Willis planned to flush them out. He pulled out two frag grenades with his left hand and grasped the M-16 in his right. With his right hand, he pulled the pins. He threw them both in one sweep of the arm, letting them go a fraction of a second apart from each other. (As he loosed his grip

on each one, their handles flew off, arming them. The pins did not set off the timers, but only held the handles on and kept them from setting the timers off.) As the grenades fell he brought the M-16 to his shoulder, thumb flipping the selector switch to full automatic fire.

At the first blast, he started shooting. The blasts were only a split second apart, but he killed two between them. Willis' lead kept ripping into them as they scrambled to their feet and ran. *Die, DIE, you bastards!* As they ran, the three other Berets were able to see them and opened fire, adding to the slaughter.

All told, the Orcs left behind half a dozen corpses. One of the silhouettes on top of the rock—by far, the biggest one—waved at him, and Willis waved back.

Then something, some sixth sense, told Willis that something was coming up behind him.

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ΩΑ ΛΚΨ 2 ΦΨΨΧ ΨΑΡΗ ΚΗΨΑΚΧ ΡΨΗΧ ΨΑΓΨΚΦΡΑΞΨ ΓΨΓΑ

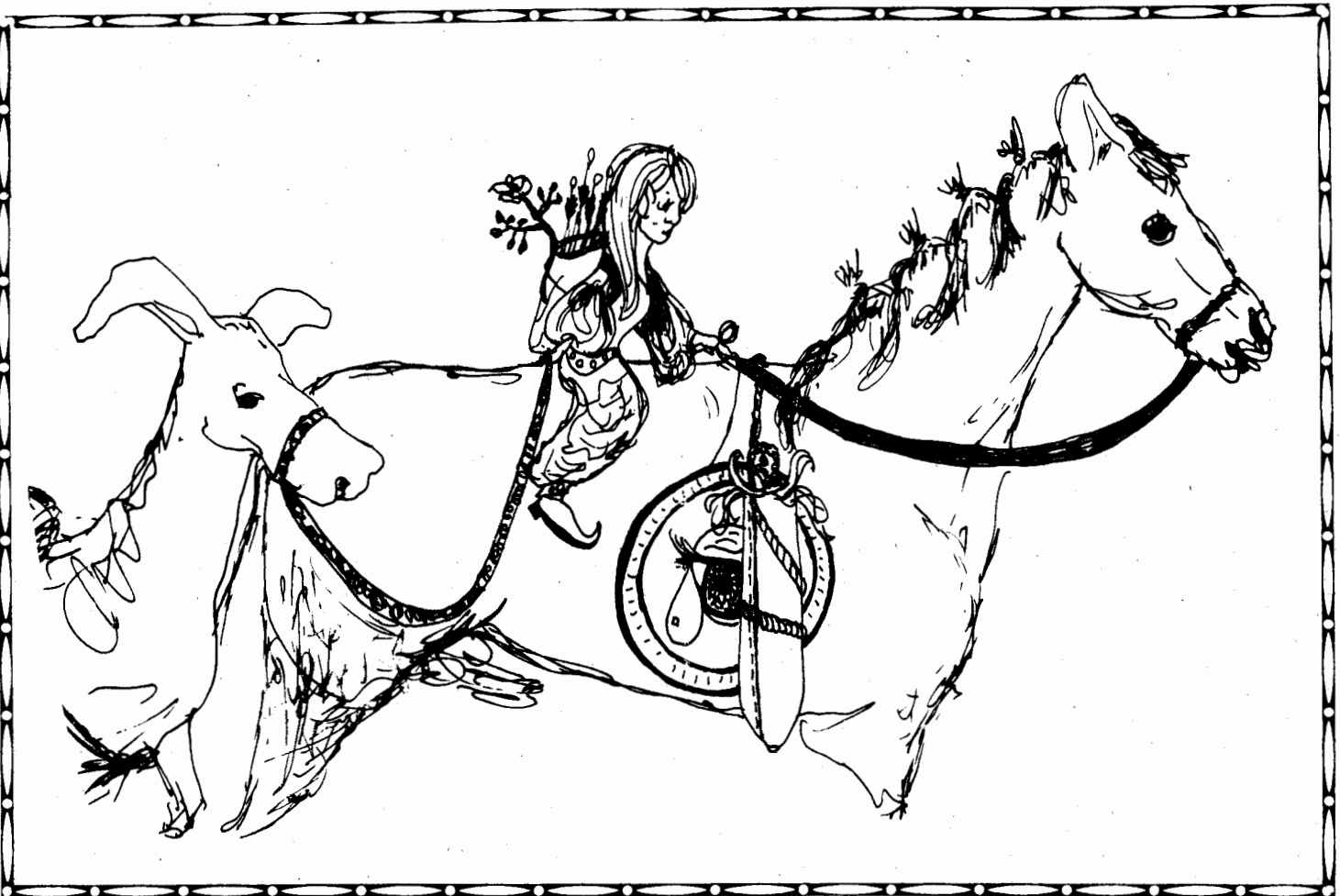
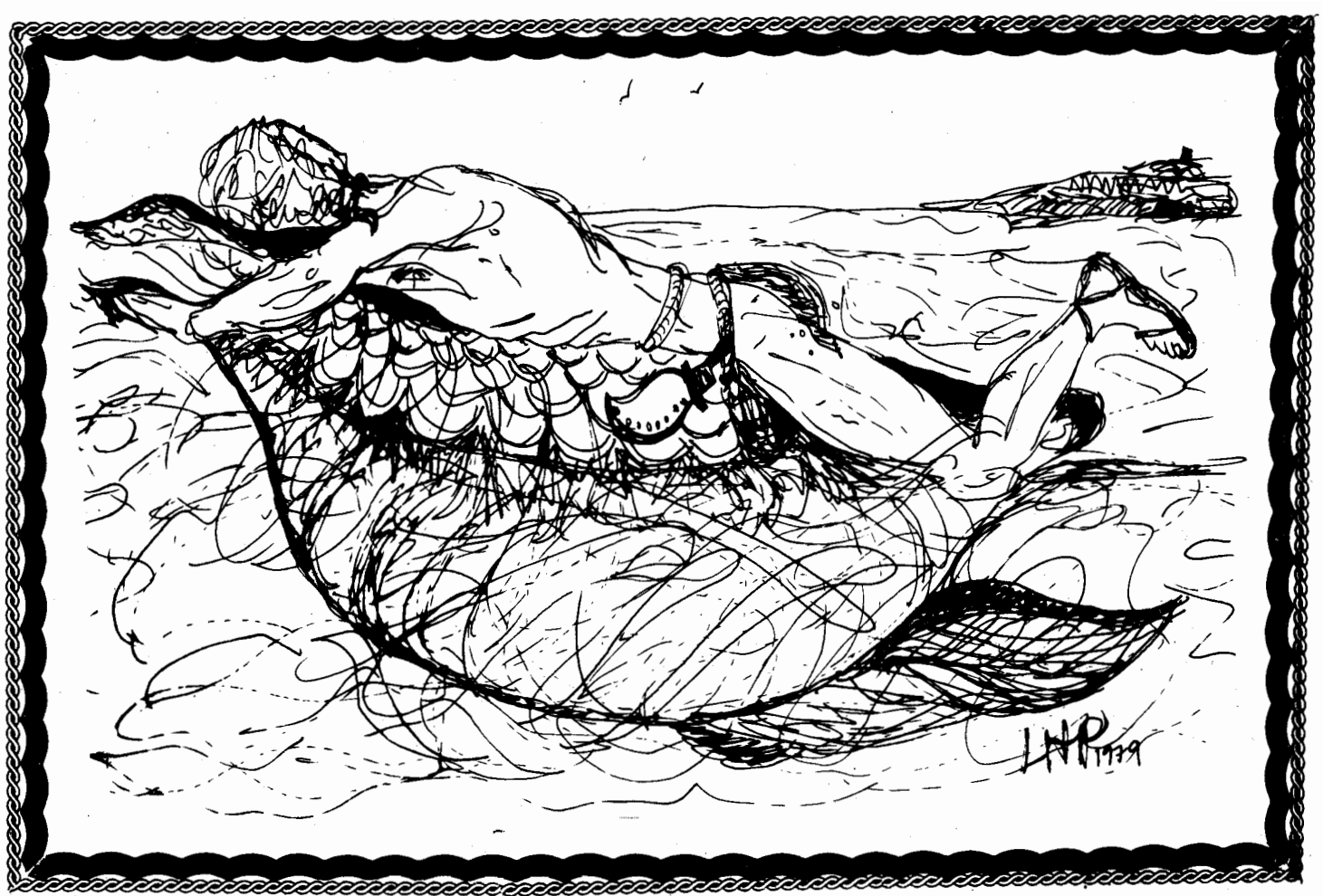
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*Arcane Elders from page 12*

peared. RöhcyI, Ralph and Lute stood in the middle of the road staring off into the forest, vainly trying to see where the men went off to. It was no use. They were stuck. It was at least forty against three, they only had six gold pieces to their names and they were three and a half days journey from either town or the

keep. It might take some time to remedy this situation, thought RöhcyI. He wasn't about to let anyone get away with that much money without a fight. After some moments of silence he looked at his two friends.

"Well, gentlemen, it looks like we have our work cut out for us."





## A New and Radically Different Skills System by Bill Seligman

In an article in *Dungeoneer* No. 7, I introduced a magic system that allowed players to make up their own spells, rather than picking them off of fixed lists prepared by a DM or, more likely, some game company. In this article I propose to extend this principle to skills as well. Thus, as I eliminated the distinctions between fixed character classes as Mages, Illusionists, Clerics, Druids, and so forth, I shall now eliminate the distinctions between such character classes as Thieves, Rangers, Assassins, Paladins, and their ilk. This, in turn, can leave us with a system with only two character classes—those who choose to have skills or spells (since there is no reason why a character cannot choose to have both if he/she is willing to pay for it) and those who don't—Fighters.

And, with the addition of a few extra rules stating that those who choose to gain neither a skill nor a spell for a given level get extra fighting ability instead, we wind up with a system with **no character classes whatsoever**. Each player merely plays his/her character as he/she chooses within the restrictions of the character's characteristics.

As can be seen with a little thought, a system with no character classes will require re-definition of combat, experience point, magic items, etc. It is fortunate that the author has already prepared such rules, but due to space limitations these will have to wait for later articles. However, now that the reader knows where the author shall be leading him/her, let us proceed with the skill rules.

### The Start

The author plans to generalize these rules to a great extent, so that DMs with their own favorite character generation systems can use it with little or no modification. For example, the formulae in the previous article about magic were based on rolling characteristics on 3 6-sided dice. Other DMs may not do this—in fact, the author prefers to use 3 10-sided dice with this system. Thus the reference, “the maximum possible characteristic rolled”, means 18 with 3D6 (=3 6-sided dice) and 30 on 3D10 (=3 10-sided dice, pronounced “three dee ten”).

Also, the creation of skills by the players is heavily dependant on their characteristics, and many DMs have added or modified the standard characteristics used. The “sample system” that I shall use here is the one I use when DMing—the six basic characteristics found in the *Dungeons & Dragons* rules rolled on 3D10. But if I write the system up properly, another DM desiring to use all or part of the system will have no problem adjusting it.

To allow players to use this system, the DM must establish what characteristics he/she plans to have the characters use and what each characteristic represents. The following is an example from the author's universe:

**Strength:** This relates to weight-lifting or moving

heavy objects, obviously. It also relates to combat—mainly to how much damage is done if a weapon hits, but also with hit probability to some extent. Strength is the only characteristic to have nothing to do with magical ability.

**Intelligence:** This does not relate specifically to IQ or any other such intelligence tests, but it does relate to noticing minute details, such as detecting things by sight alone. It also relates to searching for a given something. In combat, Intelligence relates to the use of tactics, that is, commanding less than 100 men in a large battle, and less than 10 men in a small battle. This skill is heavily related to magic, as it represents the character's ability to handle the strange logics, the unusual languages and tongues, and the remembering of strange, magical rituals.

**Wisdom:** Wisdom is more of an interpretative skill—to realize that that small knob or indentation signifies a trap, or to be able to understand a strange language or inscription based on the languages one already knows. This characteristic also relates to detecting things, but mainly things that are hidden or not obvious in some unusual way. In combat, this skill relates to strategy, or the commanding of large numbers of men in battle, usually over a 1000 in a large battle, or over 100 in a small battle. This skill also relates to being able to track someone through the wilderness (or dungeon), and, to some extent, diplomacy. This skill also heavily relates to magic using, mainly in being able to reason and deduce signs from the gods, demons, etc., and deducing what strange ritual or rites are necessary to perform a spell.

**Constitution:** This skill is most closely tied to internal vim and vigor, but relates to everything in which good body condition or something bodily is involved, like trying to hear through a thick door, or see in the dark. In combat, this skill usually relates to how much damage one can take. As far as magic is concerned, this skill relates in the character's ability to resist magical spells, in addition to being able to resist disease and extremes in the environment such as cold, heat, etc.

**Dexterity:** If it has to do with speed or movement, it usually relates to Dexterity. Dexterity also relates to manipulating items, such as opening locks or removing traps. Anything involving tactile detection, such as feeling for that small bump that indicates a secret compartment in a box, also involves Dexterity. In combat, Dexterity is mainly concerned with the ability to wield a weapon, and with hit probability. As for magic, Dexterity is the characteristic concerned with those mystic passes in the air, the somatic portion of the spell, and being able to aim the spell correctly. In fact, aiming anything, from a sling to an arrow, is related to Dexterity.

**Charisma:** Of course, this skill relates to one's own personal looks. But it also relates to ego, since usually the handsomer one is the more pleased with

oneself one is. One of the most important aspects of this characteristic leadership—the ability to lead men in battle, in a dungeon, or whatever. It also relates to charming and seductiveness. Charisma also has to do with diplomacy, behavior, and along with Intelligence the ability to discover and adapt to the customs of others. As far as magic is concerned, Charisma relates to the “political pull” one has among the gods, demons, etc. and the likelihood that one will get a spell if one asks for it.

For any special characteristics that the DM uses, he/she must make up their own description as per above themselves. Naturally, the DM should feel perfectly free to alter the above descriptions as he/she desires.

Unlike spells, there is no particular classification of skills. Each skill that a player wishes to “research” (or rather, learn) will consist of one or more characteristics being used. The characteristics used, their value, the number used, and whether or not the player already has skills using those characteristics determine the cost, the time, and the danger of learning the skill.

### Determining and Specifying Skills

Like spells, skills must be created by a player with assistance from the DM. The player goes to the DM with the skill that he/she would like to have. The DM then breaks down the skill into what characteristics the skill makes use of. The DM then assigns the cost and time to learn the skill, and determines the Danger Factor in learning the skill. Rolling percentile dice, the DM finds out if the player has received the skill. But before this, both the DM and the player must discuss or be aware of the precise use of the skill and its limitations, so that there will be no controversy in using the skill during an expedition. So far, this is just like the spell system the author has previously introduced. Here is one major difference, however—the cost, time, and danger of learning the skill is independent of the level of the player or the “level” of the skill, except insofar as the player may already know skills that, in relating to the skill desired, reduce the cost, time, and danger of learning the skill.

Suppose in the author’s campaign there is a player who wishes to have the skill for Detecting and Removing traps. The player would come to the author and state this desire, and the author would break down the skill as follows:

“I would judge this to be a three characteristic skill. First of all, Intelligence is needed to determine how the trap should be removed. Wisdom is needed to detect the trap in the first place. Dexterity is needed for the removal of the trap.” (Actually, this DM has found that the players only need the DM to break down the skill when they are unfamiliar with the system or the methods of the DM. When they become familiar with it, usually they can break down the skill themselves, checking over the breakdown with the DM before implementing it.)

The player might respond, “O.K. Are there any restrictions that I should be aware of?”

And the DM might very well reply, “Well, while you would have the chance to detect traps on lock, on doors, or similiar small to about man-size items, you would, of course, not be able to detect any magical traps. Your skill would effectively be limited to locating the trigger element of a trap on something, and disengaging that trigger, and not “removing the trap”. For example, if the trap was a stone block that fell on you if you opened a door improperly, you would perhaps be able to detect the gizmo that allowed the block to fall and remove it. Of course, you wouldn’t have moved the stone block above you at all.”

Player: “Great. That’s pretty much what I had expected. Well, how much will it cost? I have never learned a skill like this one before, in fact, this is my first skill.”

DM: “The cost of the skill is 3000 GP, and it will take you four weeks to learn. Let me know you Intelligence, Wisdom, and Dexterity, and I’ll see if you learn the skill.”

As in magic spells, the player has the chance not to accept the skill if, upon hearing the characteristic, cost, and time requirements, he/she does not want to do so. But, as in the magic system, whether or not the player wishes to try to learn the skill, the decision is made for him/her once the DM rolls the dice to see if the player gets the skill. Then the player must spend the time and money necessary whether or not she/he gets the skill. To save wear and tear on the player’s nerves, it might be better for the DM to roll to see if he/she got the skill after the time and money have been spent.

### Using the Skill

The probability for the use of a skill to be successful is as follows: for each level the player has had the skill add 10% to the probability of the skill succeeding, beginning with a 10% chance upon first gaining the skill.

If this seems harsher than the spell use system, it is, but keep in mind one thing: with spells, for each use per week that the spell-user gets s/he must research the spell again. When a skill has been learned, it can be used an infinite number of times per day. This does NOT mean that a player can, for example, use Open Locks an infinite number of times on one lock each day. In fact the attempt may be made only once since it is assumed that the player is giving it his/her best shot. However, if there were an infinite number of locks, the player could try to open each and every one of them once without restriction or diminishing of use of the skill except by fatigue rules the DM uses.

### Cost of Researching a Skill

This cost represents acquiring whatever materials are necessary to perform the skill and finding and paying a teacher to teach it to you. If no teachers are available, then the cost includes teaching it to yourself (cost of books and time). If you are on a desert island, you can’t learn any new game-relevant skills except, perhaps making a fire by rubbing two sticks together, and the like, but that’s all you’d need to know anyway.

$COST = (\text{Number of characteristics used}) * 1000 \text{ GP.}$

That's it! Of course, there is an addendum--in counting the number of characteristics, you can count a characteristic more than once if the characteristic is used for two different things or more. A somewhat light-hearted example: if a player chose a skill like Listening Through a Wall Covered With Yellow Mold, the player would use Constitution twice--once because hearing, being an aspect of the body, is represented by Constitution, and the second time because being resistance to the effects of Yellow Mold is also represented by Constitution. Don't worry, there'll be more examples of this below.

### Time Needed to Learn a Skill

Learning anything takes time, and the more complex the skill, the more time it takes to learn it. The minimum amount of time it can ever take to learn a skill is one week (except in instantaneous research, see below). The minimum amount of time it takes to learn a skill totally unrelated to any skill learned before is two weeks.

$TIME = 1 + (\text{Number of characteristics used in skill}) - (\text{Number of characteristics used in ONE other skill that are used it the same way as the skill being learned})$

The answer is in weeks. The weeks taken out must be consecutive, and they cannot be used to do any game-significant activity like dungeon adventuring or whatnot--the character disappears for those weeks.

As for what the author means by that long second factor--say a player has a skill called Removing Traps, which uses Dexterity and Intelligence as described earlier. The player wishes to learn a new skill called Detecting and Removing Traps, which in addition to using Dexterity and Intelligence in the same way as the former skill also uses Wisdom. So the time it would take to learn the new skill would be only 2 weeks rather than 4. Note: it is the responsibility of the player to keep track of what skills are used for a given skill and how. It is in theory possible to learn a skill which uses exactly the same characteristics in the same way as a skill previously learned, which would make the time to learn that skill one week. This author cannot think of an example, but the system is set up for that possibility.

The cost of learning a skill does not go down due to previous skills unless the player is replacing the skill rather than learning a new one, but more on that below.

### The Danger Factor

This factor is going to be the thing that the players are going to misunderstand and dislike most. But there are very good reasons for it:

- a) the REAL Reason. It is absolutely necessary in terms of game balance.
- b) the justification of the above reason. Hit points are not just a indication of physical damage. They represent an array of factors--luck, fatigue, physical condition, health, practice, etc. Spending time in a dusty room reading up on a skill and then practicing it in private has the potential of making you weaker, not stronger especially (or perhaps, therefore) if you do not get the skill.

Whatever the reason, the plain and simple fact is that if one does not get the skill, one gets a loss in hit points. If this happens, the learning process has failed and the player does not get the skill, although he/she may try again. The damage taken is  $TIME - 1$  in 10-sided dice. If this turns out to be zero, hurray! The player sustains no damage. (For those who poltzed at "10-sided dice", it should be pointed out that the author uses 10-sided dice. Those DM who use a different kind of dice should adjust accordingly.) Thus, if a player spends 10 weeks to learn a skill and fails, then he/she gets 9D10 in damage.

This damage is PERMANENT. No magic spell will restore it except Wish, and if the DM is using the author's magic system then that spell must be researched by someone before it can be used. If the player's character is killed (too much dust and not enough sun can do nasty things to you) then, if ressurected, that player has only one hit die.

The Danger Factor, or the chance that learning the skill will fail, is:

$\%DF = \frac{\text{the maximum possible characteristic rolled}}{\text{the average of all the characteristics involved}} * K$

Which, as the astute might notice, is the extended case of the Danger Factor in researching a spell. K, for skills, is always equal to 4, except when attempting instantaneous research or learning which is discussed below.

"The maximum possible characteristic rolled" is a phrase defined earlier in this article. "The average of all the characteristics used to define the skill (and take the value twice if a characteristic is used twice, etc.), add them all up, and divide by the number of characteristics used in determining COST.

For example, if two characteristics used in a skill have the values 10 and 14, then their sum is 24, and since two characteristics are used, we divide by two to get the average, 12.

Full examples of determining COST, TIME, and %DF are given for both skills and spells at the end of this article.

### Materials for Skill Learning

It is assumed that when a character starts to ad-



venture, he/she has just graduated from some school or has just left some mentor or has just been taught some tribal knowledge or whatever, so that they are able to research both skills and spells, or go for extra fighting ability (the last to be defined later). The materials that the players have for spell research as been defined in the earlier articles.

For skills, the learning materials are hardly so complex or expensive. They are essentially a set of books containing information for which any skill might be deduced, and the names of a few good teachers in the nearest town.

These books are fairly expensive (about 500 GP worth) but they are hardly scarce. Most Adventuring-type Guilds have copies of these books as do the well-stocked libraries. The demand for them is not high, so it is unlikely that they will be stolen or that the player will find anyone willing to buy them, but if so, they will usually be able to get access to another set. One player can even use another player's set as long as that player can read the language that they are written in.

**IMPORTANT:** Even though, unlike the magical item research materials, the skill learning materials are interchangeable, it is not, repeat NOT permitted for one character to teach another a skill (at least, for free). They must either pay the teacher what the skill costs or find another teacher. Note that the teacher must eschew adventuring or any other game-significant activity for as long as his/her pupil does. And if the player loses hit points, so does the teacher—an equal amount to the player's loss.

If a player tries to teach each other skills below COST, they will be assassinated by any local adventurer's guild that would not like competition, since most of these guilds provide their own teachers. Since both skills and spells are available to all who have the materials and the education, and since almost all player characters are affiliated with guilds in some way (paying for tuition in exchange for future membership, "you may never come out of the dungeon unless you join us," etc.) they cannot escape the notice of being taught by another player in the wilderness or whatever. Guild dues are discussed in the next article, but briefly they are included in the character's upkeep which is 1% of his/her experience points in GP, minimum 100 Gold pieces, monthly.

### A Minor Revision

Before this author goes on to discuss the replacing of skills and spells and instantaneous research, there is one minor change that must be made in the magic system in *The Dungeoneer* No. 7, in the Danger Factor section of the article. First of all, if the research fails, the character does not get just 1D6 damage. (That was written before I switched to a D10 hit point system). The character receives MAX (S-M, O) of damage in D10s. (That MAX function and whatnot is defined in *The Dungeoneer* No. 7). If the value of the function is zero, hurray! No damage done.

Also, the  $\frac{54}{I+D+C}$  factor needs to be changed. It

should be "the maximum possible characteristic rolled" over the average of all those characteristics the DM feels are directly involved in spell research. This author, rather than using Intelligence, Dexterity, and Charisma, now uses Intelligence, Wisdom, and Dexterity, setting aside Charisma for Divine Intervention and Instantaneous research and the like. The formulae will still work, however, for those who use 3D6 to roll their players' characteristics, and wish to use Intelligence, Dexterity, and Charisma as the determining factors. The rest of the formula and the definition of K are fine as is.

### Replacing Skills and Spells

It is possible to learn or research a skill or a spell (when referring to both processes, the term the author shall use from now on is "to gain an ability") that is so close to an ability already gained that only a minor change may be made to the already gained ability to obtain the new one. When one does so, one can entirely replace one's knowledge of the old ability with the new one. This is called Replacement.

While the nature of Replacement is more logically described in this article, the reason why Replacement would be desirable for a player must wait until experience is discussed in the next article, assuming Chuck Anshell is bold enough to publish more of my system.

Let us begin by considering a character who already has a spell called 9-die Fireball and wishes to research one called 10-die Fireball. It is quite obvious that the nature of the spells are extremely close. Therefore, the author as a DM might say that to research the 10-Fireball spell the player would have to take only two weeks to research and cost 25% of the cost of researching the 9-die Fireball (depending on other factors, of course). The player would then have to research more 10-die Fireball spells if he/she wanted any.

However, if the player wishes to use Replacement, he/she would spend the same amount of time and money. But the result would be that the player's knowledge of the 9-die Fireball would vanish and the 10-die Fireball would take its place, that is, for every 9-die Fireball spell the player once had he or shee would now have a 10-die Fireball spell. The only penalty involved in Replacement is that, for the Danger Factor,  $K=6$  for Replacement researching.

One must be careful here! If the player then wished to research 11-die Fireballs, he would not then pay 25% of the cost of researching the 10-die Fireball. Rather, he/she would pay the fraction of the cost of the spell that the Replacement started out with. But this is really basic common sense on the part of the DM.

The same thing applies with skills—if one is researching a skill very similar to a skill already learned or an extension of a previous skill (such as extending Remove Traps to Detect and Remove Traps, see above) then the DM may allow Replacement of that skill in

the same manner. However, the probability of the skill succeeding is not the same as that of the older skill. Rather, it is the average of the success probability of the older skill and that of the new skill (10%). So, if the player had the skill Remove Traps which he had a 40% chance of success at the level he/she was at, and the player wished to Replace that skill with Detect and Remove Traps, the chance of success assuming the player got the new skill would be 25%, and would increase by 10% for every level that he/she owned the skill, as for a non-Replaced skill. The value of K in determining the Danger Factor here is the same as for spells, that is,  $K=6$ .

The DM must always use his/her discretion with Replacement, even more so than with ordinary researching. A little bit of thought will reveal methods that players will try to use to get around the DM's setting of COST and TIME for a spell. Since players might eventually get around to reading this article, the author shall not discuss these methods here, but DMs, be careful!

### Instantaneous Research

When COST is figured for gaining an ability, usually it is in Gold Pieces. However, one can sacrifice other things too in order to gain an ability if one is desperate enough. One thing that a player can give up is Experience Points. Although a thorough discussion of this must await the next article, one can use the opportunity to use EP rather than GP to perform instantaneous research. (Other things one can sacrifice are hit points, centimeters of height, and years to live, although the DM should use his/her discretion here. Of course, such sacrifices cannot be mixed, i.e., the player has to pay for the spell, if he/she so chooses, entirely in hit points or in Gold Pieces or whatever.)

The purpose of instantaneous research is as follows: assume the player has made up a justification for a spell but hasn't had the money or the inclination to submit it to the DM yet. Suddenly the player finds him/herself in a situation that is extremely deadly, but as it happens the spell that the player was planning an altar dedicated to Ofeekenofee, the God of Gnolls, and shortly thereafter a spell Mass Destruction of Gnolls (or suddenly finds him/herself capable of making up the justification for that spell very quickly.)

Rather than letting the player's last thought be, "Gee, I should have researched that spell," the author might allow the player to perform instantaneous research. In that case, COST is figured out in Experience Points just as it would be figured out for Gold Pieces. TIME is in mell rounds instead of weeks. The player can only justify the spell using materials on hand. The Danger Factor, K, is 100, but IN THIS CASE ONLY whether or not the player gets damaged, he/she gets the spell. They will only not get the spell if they are killed. If the player gets damaged, the amount of hit dice damage done to him/her is the same as the level of the spell being instantaneously researched, independent of the level of the player or any other factor.

There is no re-researching in instantaneous research—you get the spell for any number of times you wish to throw it, for as long as it lasts.

The length of time that the player can keep the spell is equal to his/her level in hours. After that, the spell goes away, leaving the player nothing but a loss in hit points, experience, and possibly his/her self-respect. There is nothing to prevent the player from more formally researching the same spell later, but there will be no bonuses available for having done so.

In the above example, the player being attacked by 100 Gnolls is not alone. So he justifies the spell to the DM this way, "Once one of my fellow adventurers has slain a Gnoll he'll toss the body back to me. I shall use the law of association to carry those factors that caused the death of the Gnoll to all the other Gnolls within a six-hex radius of me. I don't think that duration is a factor here, since once I've killed the Gnolls their death is not going to wear off." (The DM disagrees, but since in this case the player can throw the spell any number of times, it is irrelevant and the DM does not mention it.)

The DM responds, "The spell is 15th Level—no objections, since I'm being generous. I'd normally call an instant kill type spell of 20th Level or more. Since you are 8th Level, it will cost you 7000 Experience Points, which will send you down a level. It will take you 14 melee rounds to set up the spell, so I hope the other players can hold out for you that long. Since the Danger Factor of this spell, with  $K=100$ , is greater than 100%, I won't bother to roll it. You take 15 10-sided dice of damage. (Rolling the dice—). Well, I see you survive. If you can live for 14 more melee rounds, you'll have the spell for 8 hours, and I hope you can find good use for it."

Something similar can be done with skills, where the number of characteristics involved determines how many dice of damage is received, the player's level times 10 is the percentage of success of the skill, and the player's level is the number of hours the skill lasts.  $K=100$ , still. I leave the gory details up to the reader.

### In Partial Conclusion

Aside for some minor details left for the next article, this ends the discussion of the skills and spells system. Next article will discuss experience, combat, and what one gets if one does not choose either a skill or a spell.

This author has learned that a DM must be very careful in assigning levels, cost, and time to an ability. The formulae and facts given here should only be considered a guide, since there are time and circumstances where the Law of Balance is more important than MAX ( $S - M, 1$ ). Remember, since the level of a spell is the level of the user who, in your opinion, should be able to first gain and use it, and since a player who researches spells or skills only of his/her own level will never be damaged by the Danger Factor, it is up to you to set up a rational guide for the level and powers

of skills and spells. If done properly, you will have a skills and spells system that despite this article will truly be of your own design and suit your style of play.

Specific questions or any other suitable points about the system may be presented to the author, Bill

Seligman, 667 Rugby Road, Brooklyn, N.Y., 11230. General comments and opinions should be sent in to *The Dungeoneer*. Insults and similiar irrelevancies should be kept home and admired.

Here are some guides, tables, and examples for using the system presented thus far.

Here is a list of values that K can attain and under what circumstances when computing the Danger Factor.

K= 0	Never.
K= 1	When researching a spell for the seventh time or more and there are five spells that the player had already researched that relate to the current spell, or similiar unlikely circumstances.
K= 2	When researching a spell for the seventh time or more.
K= 3	When researching a spell for the fifth time or more.
K= 4	When researching a spell for the third time or more, or when researching a skill.
K= 5	When researching a spell normally, for the first time.
K= 6	When researching a skill or spell for Replacement.
K= 10	When researching into Ultraviolet or similiar powerful areas of magic when within the restrictions set up by the DM for such research.
K= 20	When doing any sort of magical research against the will of the gods, demons, or whatever entities are responsible for the player's magical powers.
K= 50	When researching into Ultraviolet or similiar powerful areas of magic when outside the restrictions set up by the DM for such research.
K=100	When attempting instantaneous research.

Remember, whenever there are five or more spells the player is researching that relate significantly, in the DM's opinion, to the current spell being researched, K is reduced by 1 for every five such spells that the player has, not counting the current spell being researched, of course.

As an aid for those who are trying to get an idea of what spells should be classified under what color of magic, below is a table of spells as have been presented in the D&D books, and what color of magic, in the author's opinion, they belong under. The names of the spells only are listed, and they have been taken from *Men & Magic*, *Greyhawk*, *Eldritch Wizardry*, *D&D Basic Set*, and *Strategic Review No. 4*. Spells for Magic Users, Clerics, Druids, and Illusionists are listed, although which is which is not.

Infra-red	Red	Orange	Yellow
Cure Light Wounds	Hold Portal	Protect Evil	Charm Person
Animate Dead	Magic Missile	Shield	Sleep
Magic Jar	Knock	Invisibility	Ray of Enfeeblement
Reincarnation	Strength	Wizard Lock	Hold Person
Simalacrum	Haste	Explosive Runes	Slow
Clone	Bless	Protect Normal Missiles	Suggestion
Astral Spells	Death Spell	Remove Fear	Silence
Speak With Dead	Geas	Remove Curse	Charm Monster
Cure Serious Wounds	Power Word Spells	Anti-magic Shell	Hold Monster
Raise Dead	Remove Curse	Repulsion	Feblemind
Restoration	Cure Disease	Prismatic Wall	Mass Charm
Green	Quest	Blue	Mind Blank
Growth/Plant	Blade Barrier	ESP	Prayer
Charm Plants	Finger of Death	Magic Mouth	Body Control
Speak with Plants	Dispel Exhaustion	Clairvoyance	Paralyzation
Massmorph		Clairaudience	Blindness
Locate Plants		Wizard Eye	
Warp Wood		Wish	
Plant Door		Gate	
Pass Plant		Holy Word	
Hold Plant		Precognition	
Anti-Plant Shell			
Transport Via Plants			
Turn Wood			

<b>Purple</b>	<b>Indigo</b>	<b>Ultra-violet</b>	<b>Brown</b>
Detect Evil	Floating Disk	Detect Magic	Web
Invisible Stalker	Levitate	Invisible Stalker	Infravision
Dispel Evil	Fly	Detect Invisible	Monster Summoning
Hypnosis	Rope Trick	Disintegrate	Purify Food and Water
Psionic Blast	Dimension Door	Permanent Spell	Snake Charm
Id Insinuation	Teleport	Aerial Servant	Speak with Animals
Emotions	Telekinesis	Energy Control	Growth/Animal
Confusion	Pass Wall	Dimension Walking	Insect Plague
Fear	Word of Recall	Molecular Rearrangement	Create Food
<b>Earth</b>	Control Weather	Molecular Manipulation	Speak with Monsters
Darkness	Reverse Gravity	Mind Bar	Conjure Animals
Resist Cold	Phase Door	Etherealness	Locate Animals
Wall of Stone	Meteor Swarm	Aura Alteration	Creeping Doom
Wall of Iron	Time Stop	Telepathic Projection	
Move Earth	Maze	Probability Travel	
Earthquake	Predict Weather	Spectral Forces	
Heat Metal	Control Temperature	Shadow Monsters	
Conjure Elemental	Weather Summoning	Alter Reality	
Animate Rock	<b>Fire</b>	<b>Water</b>	
Transmute Metal-Wood	Dancing Lights	Water Breathing	
Transmute Rock-Mud	Light	Wall of Ice	
<b>Air</b>	Continual Light	Ice Storm	
Lightening Bolt	Pyrotechnics	Lower Water	
Cloudkill	Fireball	Part Water	
Wind Walk	Resists Fire	Create Water	
Obscurement	Wall of Fire	Conjure Water Elemental	
Call Lightening	Conjure Fire Elemental		
Protect:Lightening	Faeire Fire		
Control Winds	Produce Flame		
Conjure Air Elemental	Produce Fire		
Wall of Fog			
<b>Lore</b>	<b>Shape-Shifting</b>	<b>Illusion</b>	<b>Alchemy</b>
Detect Magic	Enlargements	Audible Glamour	Neutralize Poison
Read Languages	Polymorph Self	Dancing Lights	Poison Preparation
Read Magic	Polymorph Others	Ventriliquism	Potion Preparation
Locate Objects	Transmute Rock-Mud	Mirror Image	
Dispel Magic	Transmute Stone-Flesh	Phantasmal Forces	
Find Traps	Polymorph Any Object	Hallucinatory Terrain	
Know Alignment	Shape Change	Projected Image	
Contact Higher Plane	Turn Sticks to Snakes	Hallucinatory Forest	
Legend Lore	Animate Objects	Gaze Reflection	
Symbol	Animal Growth	Chaos	
Commune	Change Self	Color Spray	
Find the Path		Blur	
Commune With Nature		Prismatic Spray	
Non-Detection			
Misdetection			
True Sight			
Vision			

Along with the Color Magic Classifications are a few others that might prove useful. Note that presence on this list does not mean that the spell must be allowed in one's universe, nor even the author's endorsement of the existence of the spell in his campaign. This is simply a list of spells to be found in the D&D books under the author's classification system. Because there are several spells that relate to more than one category, there are duplications in the listing of the spells. In fact, many spells are not listed under all the classifications that may apply to them. The spells are not listed in any particular order according to level or otherwise.



## Examples

From the Author's own universe, Argothald, here are a few examples of spells that were created by players and how they were justified. Also listed are some common skills many of my players have asked for, and how I adjudicated them.

A Water-type equivalent of a Fireball: In his own room, the player obtains some water and causes the separation of the water into Hydrogen and Oxygen and then allows them to re-combine explosively. After they have done so, the result will still be water, but water that at one time was involved in the explosion. He mixes this with more water, thus causing the explosive property, by the Law of Contagion, to apply to yet more water. When the player wishes to use the spell, he flings some water at his foe, and reunites the explosive property that the water once had with the water as it is now. BOOM! at the time the player requested this, he was first level and wished a first level spell, and so asked for one that would do 1D5 damage (roll a 10-sided die, if the number rolled is greater than five subtract five from it) for a range of 3 hexes (10 meters).

Another player wasn't too sure if he wanted to go into Cold Magic or Fire Magic and chose this interesting spell so he would not have to commit himself: At all times, the party would carry at least one torch. By the law of Polarity, the heat of the fire of the torch also contains the essence of Cold. The player used this cold to infect his metal dagger, allowing it to do double the damage it normally did, (1D10 instead of 1D5) for one turn, or rather, one combat situation. Later on, this spell could be associated with Heat, Cold, Fire, or Magical Weaponry, so it did indeed offer him a lot of options as far as spell development went.

A basic Charm Person Spell: Snakes are well known for their ability to mesmerize creatures by staring at them. So this player took ground-up Snake Eyes and mixed them with water, using the Law of Contagion to spread the mesmerizing property of the Snake Eyes with the water. She diluted this further with more water, still using the Law of Contagion, so that while the water became in fact pure with no ground-up Snake Eyes in it, it still bore the magical contagion of the Snake Eye's properties. When she wished to use the spell, she would use the water like eyedrops, giving her eyes the mesmerizing properties of the snake's. This being a first level spell, it affected only one individual, from one to five hit dice, at a range of three hexes. That person could still defend him/herself, so there wasn't any hit bonus if someone attacked him/her, but would not attack anyone him/herself and would just stand still.

Take note here of the materials the players needed to take into the dungeon with them to use the spells. The first player needed to take down only a water flask, as did the third player. The second player needed only a dagger and a torch to make his spell work, and these they were likely to have with them all the time! Of course, it was also implicitly

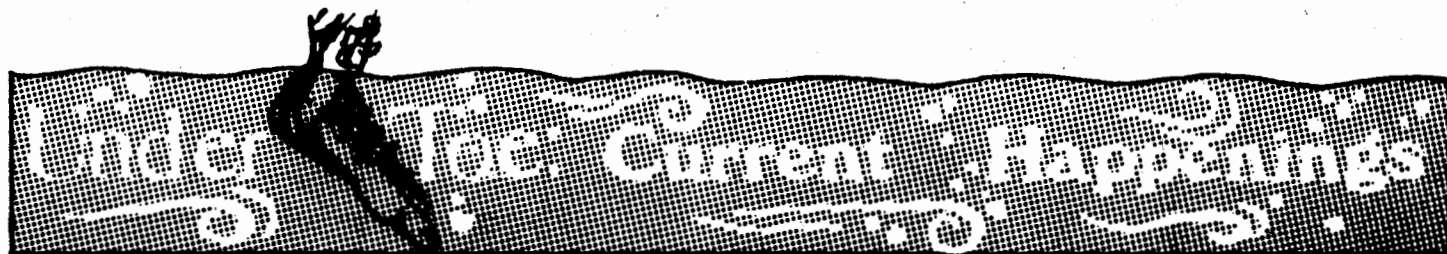
assumed that the player had had to go through some sort of ritual to gain these spells, and carried some sort of reminder of it with them (e.g., if the ritual required some special symbol drawn on the floor they copied on a sheet of paper, or an amulet, or on their sleeves, so that they could re-establish the ritual by the Law of Similarity and not have to do the whole thing over again.)

As for skills--aside from the basic thief-type skills, which are really no problem to justify, there were some more unusual ones like:

Expertise with some weapon, either for extra damage or extra hit probability. I stated that extra damage related to Strength and extra hit probability related to Dexterity. If they chose that skill, each level they hadn't yet achieved it I would roll to see if the skill had succeeded. If it did, they would do 1-5 points extra damage or get 1-10 extra hit probability (the reasons for this will become clear in the next article.) However, I made a restriction--should they get the skill or not, if they chose for more expertise with a weapon, they would have to use that characteristic twice to get an additional die of damage or hit probability, and for the third time, thrice, and so forth. (This was to prevent them from trying to get the skill every time they had one week free, since the characteristic used is used exactly the same way for each skill, and thus falls under that example I could not think of earlier for the TIME Factor.) Thus, they had a 10% chance of getting this expertise when they first got the skill, 20% the next level, 30% the next and so on, until they actually got that extra die of combat ability.

Increasing one's characteristic. That I ran pretty much as above. You select what characteristic you wish to alter, and select a second characteristic whose value would be dropped by one when the increasing characteristic increased by one. Thus the skill depended on those two characteristics. Each level they possessed the skill, I would roll to see if the characteristic change worked. If they wished to do it again, they would have to use at least the characteristic they planned to increase twice (although not the decreasing characteristic if they wished to sue the same one again) and so forth. They could never increase any characteristic above 30, and if they decreased one below they died.

One interesting skill was researched by someone that bears repeating by itself. Called Cliffhanger, it depended on Wisdom and Charisma. The player would start telling a very interesting story, lulling the foe to relaxfulness. When the player reached the cliffhanger of the story, the party would attack, and thus gain surprise on the foe. I even allowed for two attack turns of surprise if the foe rolled a normal surprise roll. The skill could only be used once per opposing foe or party, could not last more than three turns of having them sit there listening to a story (since if not attacked, the foe would not attack either) and could affect five people at most of three hit dice or less, with a range of 3 hexes.



**COASTCON(SF)** MAR 9-11  
at: Biloxi, MS  
Larry W. Reese  
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P. O. Box D-182  
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registration: \$10  
guests: George R. R. Martin, Meade Frierson

**NORWESCON(SF)** MAR 23-25  
at: Airport Hyatt House  
Seattle, WA

Norwescon  
Box 24207  
Seattle, WA, 98124  
registration: \$8, banquet: \$6.50  
guests: Phillip Jose Farmer, Loren  
MacGregor. Toastmaster: Elizabeth Lynn

**LUNACON '79 (SF)** MAR 30-APR 1  
at: Sheraton Inn, LaGuardia  
New York, NY

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1171 E. 8th St.  
Brooklyn, NY, 11230  
registration: \$9.50  
guests: Ron Goulart, Gahan Wilson  
Art show: Cynthia Levine  
140 Broadway, Apt. C-6  
Lynbrook, NY, 11563  
Dlr room: Steve Rosenstein  
P.O. Box 149  
Parkville Station  
Brooklyn, NY, 11204

**MONCON III (SF & WG)** MAR 30-APR 1  
at: West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV

MonCon III  
Student Organization Wing  
Conference Center  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV, 26506  
registration: \$10, checks made out to  
WVU Foundation  
guests: Joe Haldeman, Marc Miller

**ORANGECON '79 (SF)** MAR 30-31  
at: Orlando, FL

OrangeCon 79  
P.O. Box 15072-B  
Orlando, FL, 32858  
(enclose SASE)  
registration: \$12  
banquet, Norton Awards, etc.

**NOVACON (WG & SF)** MAR 31  
at: Oakland University  
Detroit, MI

Paul Wilkeson  
(313) 377-2020  
guests: Alan Dean Foster, Chuck Anshell,  
Paul Jaquays

**SPRING REVEL (WG)** MAR 31-APR 1

at: American Legion Hall  
735 Henry St.  
Lake Geneva, WI, 53147  
Joe Orłowski  
Spring Revel  
P.O. Box 110  
Lake Geneva, WI, 53147  
registration: \$2, no game fees  
guests: all of TSR

**INTERCONTINENTAL** APR 18-23  
**BACKGAMMON TOURNAMENT**

at: The Aruba Concorde Hotel & Casino  
Aruba, Netherland Antilles  
info: Kate Wattson or  
Louise Goldsmith  
American Backgammon Championships  
Suite 1006  
575 Madison Ave.  
New York, NY, 10022  
(212) 486-1489  
\$25,000.00 added prizes  
entry fees: beginner \$50  
intermediate \$150  
Championship \$250

reservations: \$575 incl. air fare from NY  
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**GAMEFAIR (WG)** APR 20-21

at: Illinois Central College  
East Peoria, IL

**QUEEN CITY'S** APR 20-22  
**WARGAMING CON**

at: Hartwell National Guard Armory  
Cincinnati, OH  
G. Benitez  
637 Elliot Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH, 45215  
(513) 821-8135

**WEST POINT CON II (WG)** APR 28-29

at: US Military Academy  
West Point, NY  
Cdt. Jacob Kovel  
Co. H-4, USCC  
West Point, NY, 10997

**TIPPECANOE (and** MAY 4-6  
**Fantasy, too) (WG)**

at: Ramada Inn  
I-65 and State Rte 26  
Lafayette, IN  
John Hill  
P.O. Box 2071  
W. Lafayette, IN, 47906  
guests include: Gene McCoy, Duke Siefried,  
Tom Shaw, Don Greenwood, Bob Blake,  
Gunther Rothenberg, Lou Zocchi, Dean  
West

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(613) 745-2073

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**MICHICON VIII (WG)** JUN 1-3

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MDG-MICHICON  
2616 Kenwyck  
Troy, MI, 48098

**ORIGINS (WG)** JUN 22-24

at: Widener College  
Chester, PA

**WESTERCON 31 (SF)** JUL 1-4

at: Marriott Hotel  
Los Angeles, CA  
Westercon XXXI  
Box 5785  
Mission Hills, CA, 91345  
(213) 838-0297  
\$10 registration  
guests: Poul Anderson, Don C. Thompson  
toastmaster: Jerry Pournelle

**CONEBULUS 2 (SF)** JUL 7-9

at: Syracuse Hilton  
Syracuse, NY  
Carol Gobeyn  
619 Stolp Ave  
Syracuse, NY, 13207  
(315) 471-7003  
registration: \$6  
guests: Ben Bova, Tony & Suford Lewis

**DARKOVER 2 (SF)** JUL 13-15

at: Brooklyn, NY  
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Armida Council  
P.O. Box 355  
Brooklyn, NY, 11219  
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guests: Marion Zimmer Bradley, Jacqueline  
Lichtenburg. Writers workshop limited to  
15 persons given by Marion Zimmer Bradley  
contact address above.  
art show: Mitch Botwin  
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Dlr room: Steve Rosenstein  
Terra Nova Enterprises  
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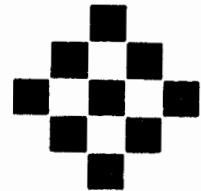
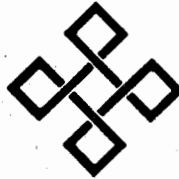
**GENCON XII (WG)** AUG 16-19  
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 in or after April contact  
 Joe Orlowski  
 GENCON XII Coordinator  
 P.O. Box 756  
 Lake Geneva, WI, 53147  
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**GREAT LAKES CON(WG)** SEP 7-9  
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 not printed too clearly in this area)

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1800 Saruman's.f.-axes  
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Jeddak/Zodanga &  
Axtar  
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1318 Dwvs w axe/shld  
1319 Dwvs firing bow  
1320 Dwvs atknw spr  
1321 Orc light Inf. w bow  
1322 Orc lct. inf. w spr/sh  
1323 Orc w glaive  
1324 Orc w spear  
1325 Japanese Ogre  
1326 Ogre w shld/club  
1327 Centaur w spr/shld  
1328 Centaur firing bow  
1329 Gnome w axe  
1330 Gnome w spear  
1331 Legn. o Dead/archer  
1332 "attacking w spear  
1333 "w sword  
1334 "w spear & shield  
1335 "mounted w lance  
1340 Unicorn  
1341 Pegasus  
1342 Orc archer  
1348 Orc w 2hnd axe  
1354 Mummy w coffin  
1356 Wargs  
1357 Wrr Maid w swd/bw  
1360 Maid on Sacrific tble  
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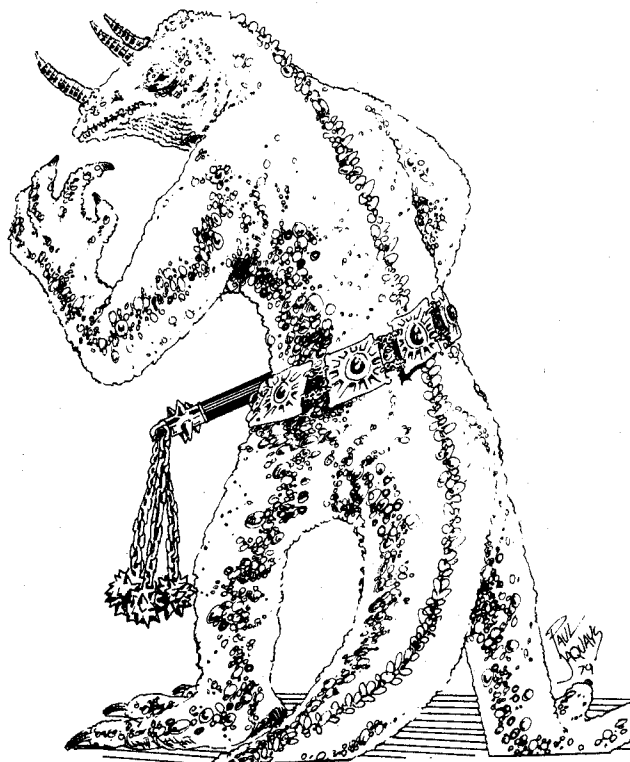
# monster matrix



## Half-Ogres by Alex Muromcew

No. Appearing..... 3-24 These are the bastard  
Armor Class. .... (Skin) 7 children of Ogres and luck-  
Move..... 12" less maidens. They stand  
Hit Dice..... 3+1 7 - 8½ ft. tall and are very  
% in Lair..... 20 strong. They are quite in-  
Treasure ..... Type D telligent. Usually wandering  
Damage..... Special about, they are greatly  
sought after as mercenaries.

Otherwise they live as adventurers. They often wear chainmail and wield broadswords in one hand and clubs in the other (they disdain shields). The leader of such a group will be quite powerful (Level V - VI) and it is not uncommon to encounter a group of high level Half-Ogres.



## Zergon's by Randy Toutz

No. Appearing.... 1-100 A Lizoid creature standing  
Armor Class. .... -2 7' tall and possessing 18(00)  
Move..... 6" strength. They are highly  
% in Lair..... 48 intelligent; one in ten  
Treasure ..... 3 x E being a magic user Level  
Hit Dice..... 17 1 - 12, one in twenty  
being clerical Level 1 - 6.  
Attack by weapon only.

## Loombar by Rick Elleman

No. Appearing..... 1 - 4 First a little background; I  
Armor Class. .... 5 use a rather strange variant on  
Move..... 12" the Four-fold Path; and  
Hit Dice..... 7 these creatures are a type  
% in Lair..... 5 of low-power Devils (my  
Treasure ..... Type I Law-Evil version of De-  
Damage..... Blow 1-8 mons).

..... Bite 2-12\*  
..... Hug 5-20

Simi-intelligent

\* Please note special powers

These slightly bizarre creatures will attack anything they can see, with ferocity, until nearly dead or unless obviously over-matched. This is somewhat

difficult to do as they have a high (70%) immunity to spells, are totally immune to attacks from silver weapons, and take only half-damage from other weapons. Clerical Light will blind them for 1 - 3 turns and Cure Wounds will do double the appropriate number of dice as damage, this being so totally opposed to their nature.

They are formidable partially due to their special powers. They always see in the dark and can see anything Invisible or camouflaged without difficulty. They can command up to 3D6 of undead, skeletons and zombies only. Their bite passes a venom which will paralyze unless a save vs poison is made. Looking into their eyes disturbs the looker so much that they

are more difficult (10%) to hit for 3 turns. When in defeat or fleeing they can Teleport infallibly to their lair or Gate themselves back into the Hellworld. They can cast Darkness 3 times a day, Confusion 1 time a day, and Deception (friends are enemies and enemies are friends) 2 times a day.

They appear somewhat similar to a gorilla, but are easily told from them. They are a little over 7 feet tall, have a wedge-shaped body, very short legs, arms long enough to have a 7' reach, and a hump-shaped head down between the shoulders. The head is totally immovable, possessing no visible ears, large scarlet eyes, and a slash of a mouth full of teeth. The hands are covered with a very tough skin, as it moves by placing them on the ground and swinging between its arms; their grip is nearly unbreakable. The legs are too short to walk on very well, but they can hop around on them in battle. The brain is buried in a honeycombed mass of bone between the shoulders and is nearly impossible to hit. Due to this the creature will pause for one melee round before initial attack or beginning a

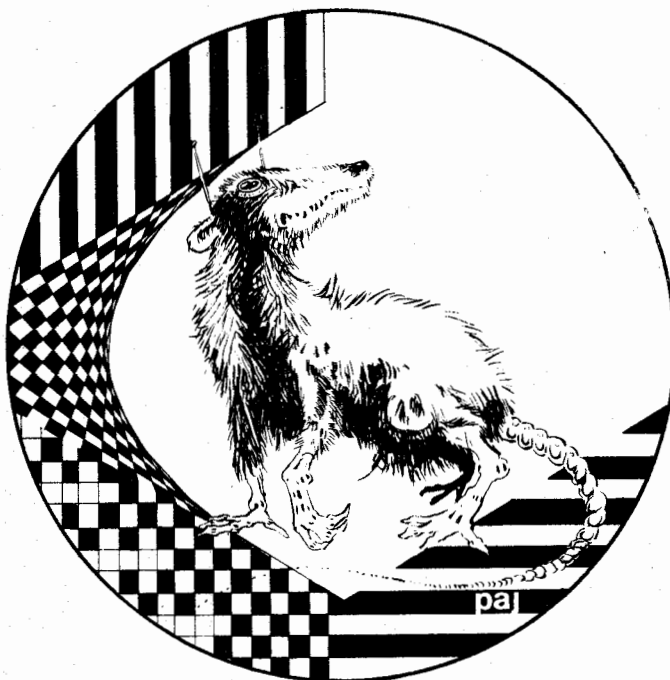


persute, too great a separation of brain from sensory equipment. Flat black hides allow hiding in shadows as a 10th Level Thief. Greed usually causes them to attempt to take their treasure with them if they are forced to flee their lair.

#### Electric Rats by Randolph King

No. Appearing . . .	20-200	Any hit has a 65% chance
Armor Class . . . . .	7	to induce a short circuit.
Move . . . . .	12	There is a 35% chance if
% in Lair . . . . .	20	a short occurs, it will
Treasure . . . . .	None	only effect the area hit
Damage . . . . .	Bite 1-3	(A head hit will not des-

stroy the creature!). If a waterskin is emptied on one a short occurs with a 25% chance. In my universe, magic and electronics are mutually exclusive, totally incompatible; thus only material spells (i.e. Fireball, Lightning, Monster Summoning, etc.) will effect them. 30% of the rats in any pack are real Giant Rats.



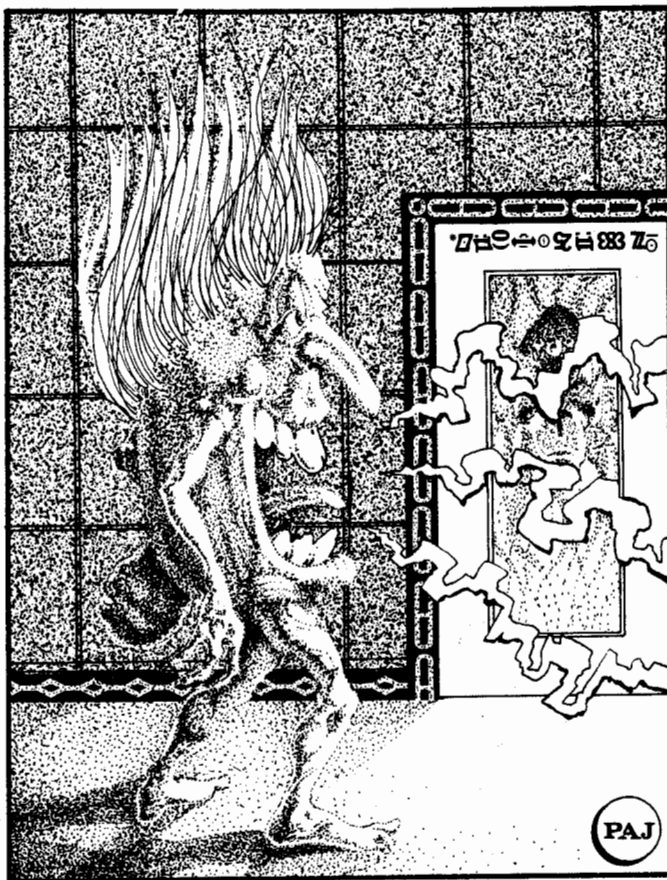
#### Blaps by Tom Johnson

No. Appearing . . . . .	1-2	When this monster sees
Armor Class . . . . .	3	you, he screams very shrilly
Move . . . . .	18"	until you give him suffi-
Hit Dice . . . . .	2D20	cient money to calm him
% in Lair . . . . .	Nil	down for a while. He in-
Treasure	Almost anything	creases chances for a wan-
Damage . . . . .	Nil	dering monster by 3 times

for each one. (Instead of a 1—it is now 1 - 3 on a 6-sided dice.)

They always carry a large sack with treasure in it. They don't wear armor but are very Dexterious and fast. Monsters come in two turns if noise is not stopped, if monsters are rolled. Roll for how long he'll keep quiet, 1D6 = number of turns of movement.

Created from magical Clay, which will not harden, by an evil High Priest to guard his treasures. Some have escaped and roam about at will. If wandering monster is rolled 20% chance it is a Blap.



**Reflector Beast by W. A. Barwick, Jr.**

No. Appearing.....1	It's magic-sensitivity en-
Armor Class.....9	ables it to reflect any
no armor or shield	single spell thrown at it.
effective AC 3	It's dexterity enables it to
due to Dex	aim the spell in any direc-
Move.....6"	tion it so desires, usually
Hit Dice.....8	back at the thrower. If
Treasure.....Magic	two spells are thrown
Damage.....1 Strike	simultaneously at the crea-
with each hand	ture, it can reflect just
per melee round.	one (it's choice) away.
No critical hits	Against a Detect Evil spell,
Intelligent	the creature is able to re-
Align.....Very Evil	fect back the alignment of
Speaks..Lawful, Neutral	any member of it's choice,
Chaotic	from the party that throws
Dexterity.....18.00	the spell. Thus, the beast
Highly Magical	is often able to mix with
sensitive	high level parties and get
	the drop on them.

The monster resembles a huge playing card, six feet tall, on four legs, with four arms.

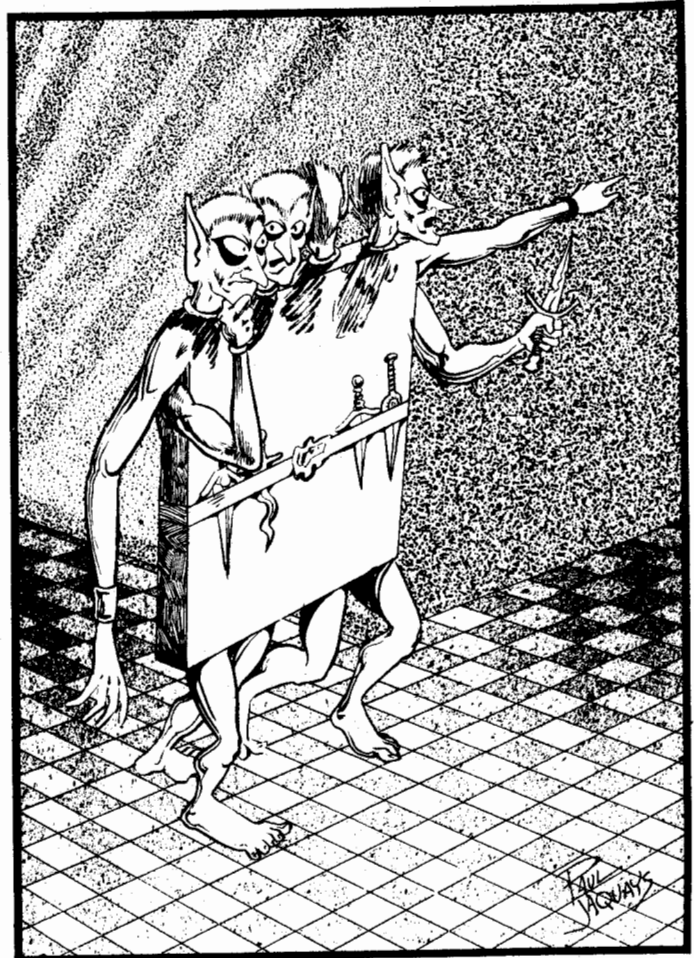
The beast has four heads (that can each swivel 360 degrees), is ambidexterous, has an expertese with each hand, and can use all four hands simultaneously and independently in combat, thanks to it's heads which can concentrate individually. Each hand uses a long thin dagger (1 - 4 hits) with which it stabs, parries, and fences, with +3 hit probability and +3 damage (resulting in 4 - 7 hits). It can engage four other people simultaneously in combat. It carries a total of twelve daggers, but throws them (not more

than eight of them), only if the party attempts to flee. It has +5 hit probability for missiles.

If attacked by weapons and magic simultaneously, the creature gets a choice as to whether to use it's dexterity on the magic and reflect the spell, or to use it's dexterity to lower it's armor class and avoid the weapon attack.

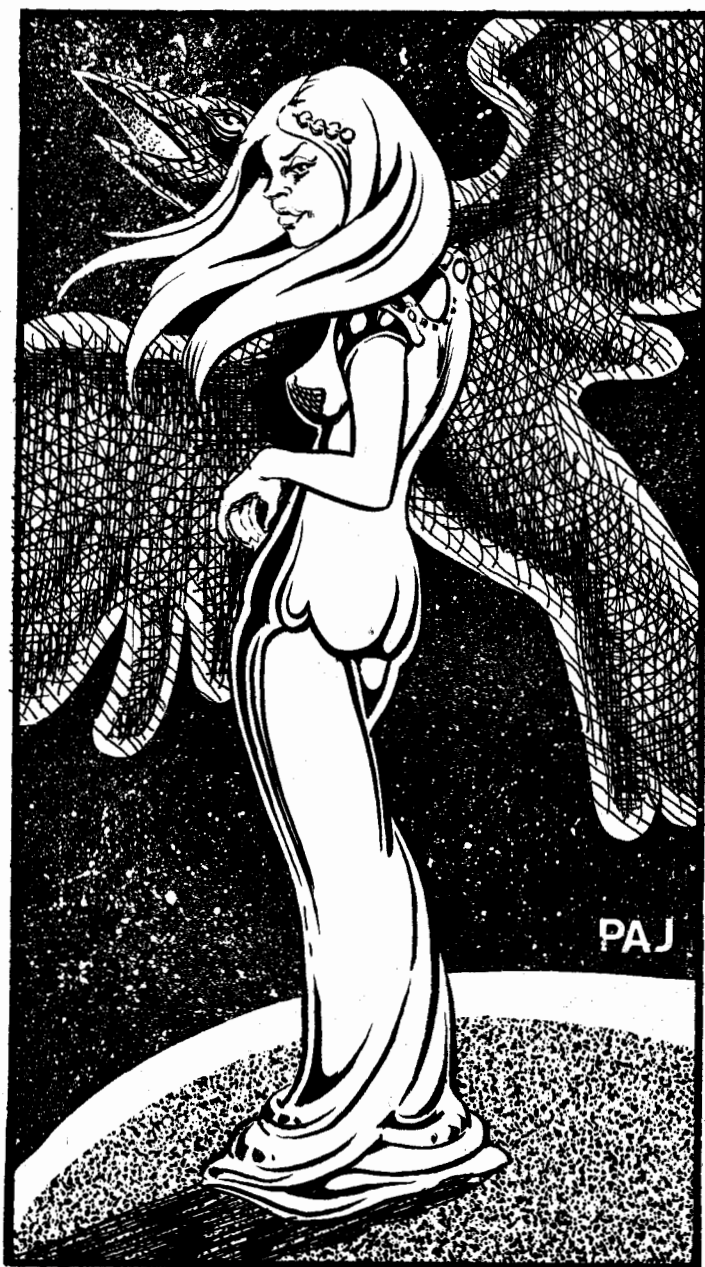
It cannot be surprised, nor be attacked from "behind" since it has effectively two "fronts".

It's treasure is a chest with at least one exotic magical item, preferably one not found in the *Greyhawk* nor *Blackmoor* listings.



**SITH by Scott Johnson**

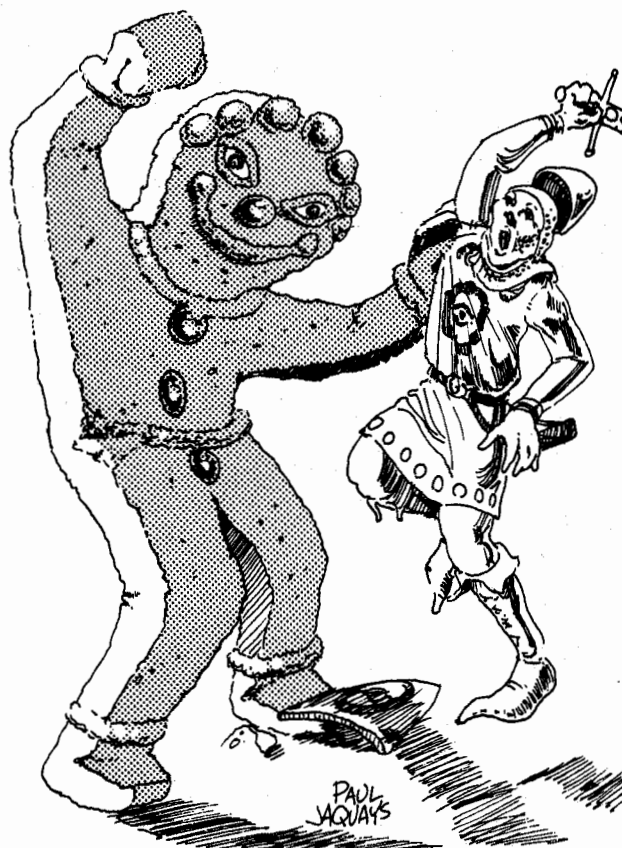
Number appearing...1-4	These evil Vampiric be-
Armor Class.....9	ings appear only at night.
Move.....9/18	They appear in the form of
% in lair.....10	Beautiful girls with long
Treasure.....A	blond hair and long dresses.
% carrying.....80	They wear these dresses to
Treasure carried is:	cover their hooved feet.
... 50% 1-10 jewelry	When they appear they act
.....10% 1 magic	very compromising to all
Attack.....1 Bite	men in the group and then
Damage. Drain 1 lvl/turn	when they get a chance
Hit dice.....3	they bite. They gain all the
	charming effects of a female gorgeous witch doing a
	horid beauty spell ( <i>Dragon</i> No. 3, pg 10). They also
	have the ability to shape change into a Raven.



*Sith*

#### GINGERBREAD GOLEMS by Scott Johnson

No. appearing . . . variable      Well, it seems there was this Wizard that was going to have a big party so he told his Ugly to make lots of Gingerbread cookies and a wax Golem to use as a candle. Now, the Ugly had something else on his mind at the time and he put the Gingerbread in the Golem mold. After the necessary spells were cast and the Wizard found out what had happened, he turned the Ugly into a pound of butter and left him in the sun. A while later, the Wizard found that the Golem had gotten stale and was now pretty tough. The Wizard was so happy that he turned the Ugly back and rewarded him. He doesn't have to eat with the dogs anymore. Now, he has his own bowl.



#### Slime Men by Jon-Pierre Pazevic

No. Appearing . . . . .	1-12	These creatures seemed to have evolved from a type of symbiotic green slime. They inhabit cold and clammy places. Their acid touch is strong enough to melt metal after 5 hits, and melt +1 enchanted metal after 10 hits. If only partially damaged, the metal will harden and retain its normal abilities.
Armor Class . . . . .	4	
Move . . . . .	6"	
Hit Dice . . . . .	6	
Damage . . . . .	2 touches 4D8 acid damage	
Treasure . . . . .	Type D no scrolls or maps	
Alignment . . . . .	Neutral	

#### THE BANSHEE by Scott Johnson

Number appearing . . .	1-3	The name of this monster is used to scare children. They are seven feet tall, have webbed feet, long straggly hair, a single projecting tooth and only one nostril. If this being is ever caught by a human being she must grant her captor a wish. She tries her best not to get caught and emits a blood-curdling scream. This wail is equal to a fear spell and if the saving throw is made it acts as a confusion spell. The banshee lives near rivers and collects dead man-types to decorate her lair.
Armor class . . . . .	5	
Move . . . . .	9"/27 (water)	
% in lair . . . . .	25	
Treasure . . . . .	1	
Attack . . . . .	2 claws	
Damage . . . . .	1-6/claw	
Hit dice . . . . .	4	



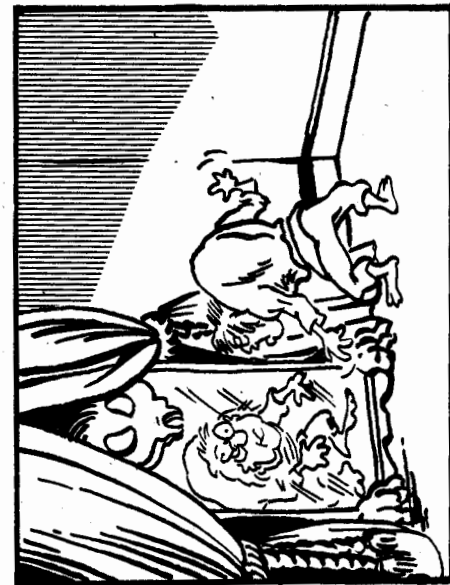


Slime men

Banshee



991 2 1979



Creepy Friends

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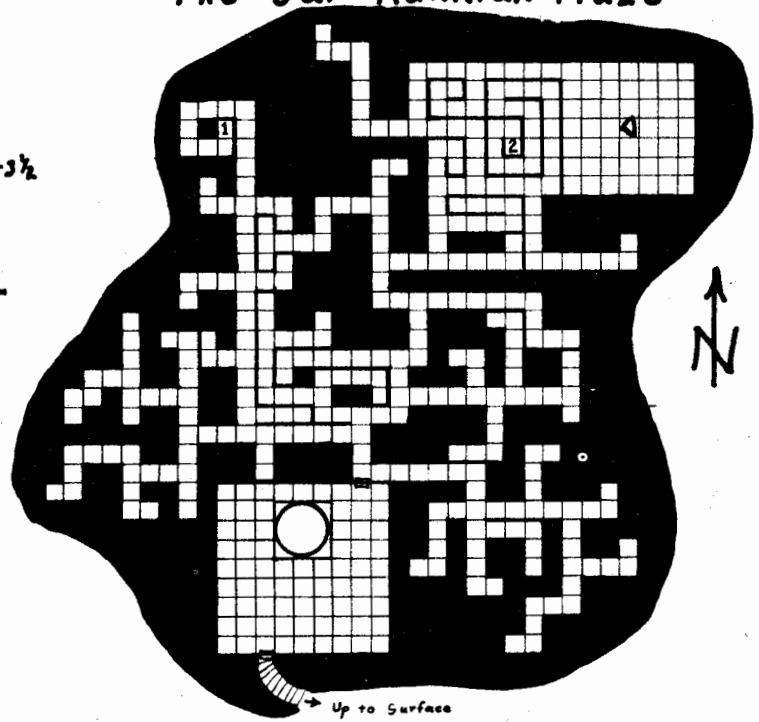
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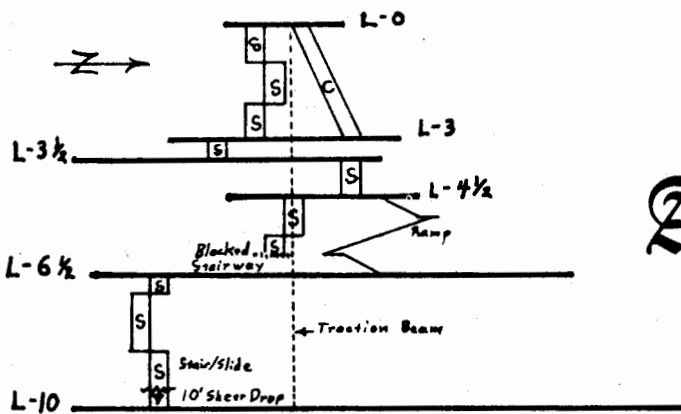
at your left turn a leaf: you'll  
 find ways, report being  
 'ra doosy' or 'gooday',  
 'hooray, hooray'.



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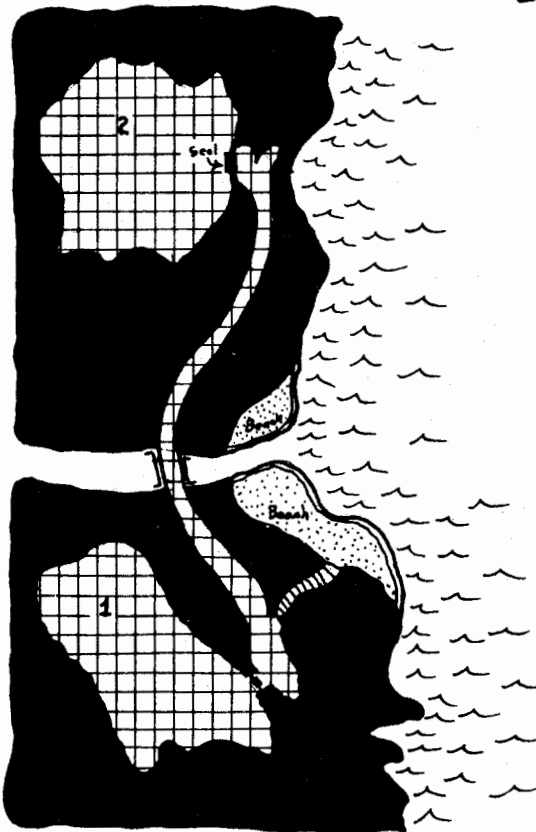


## Akberh's Tower Level Relationship



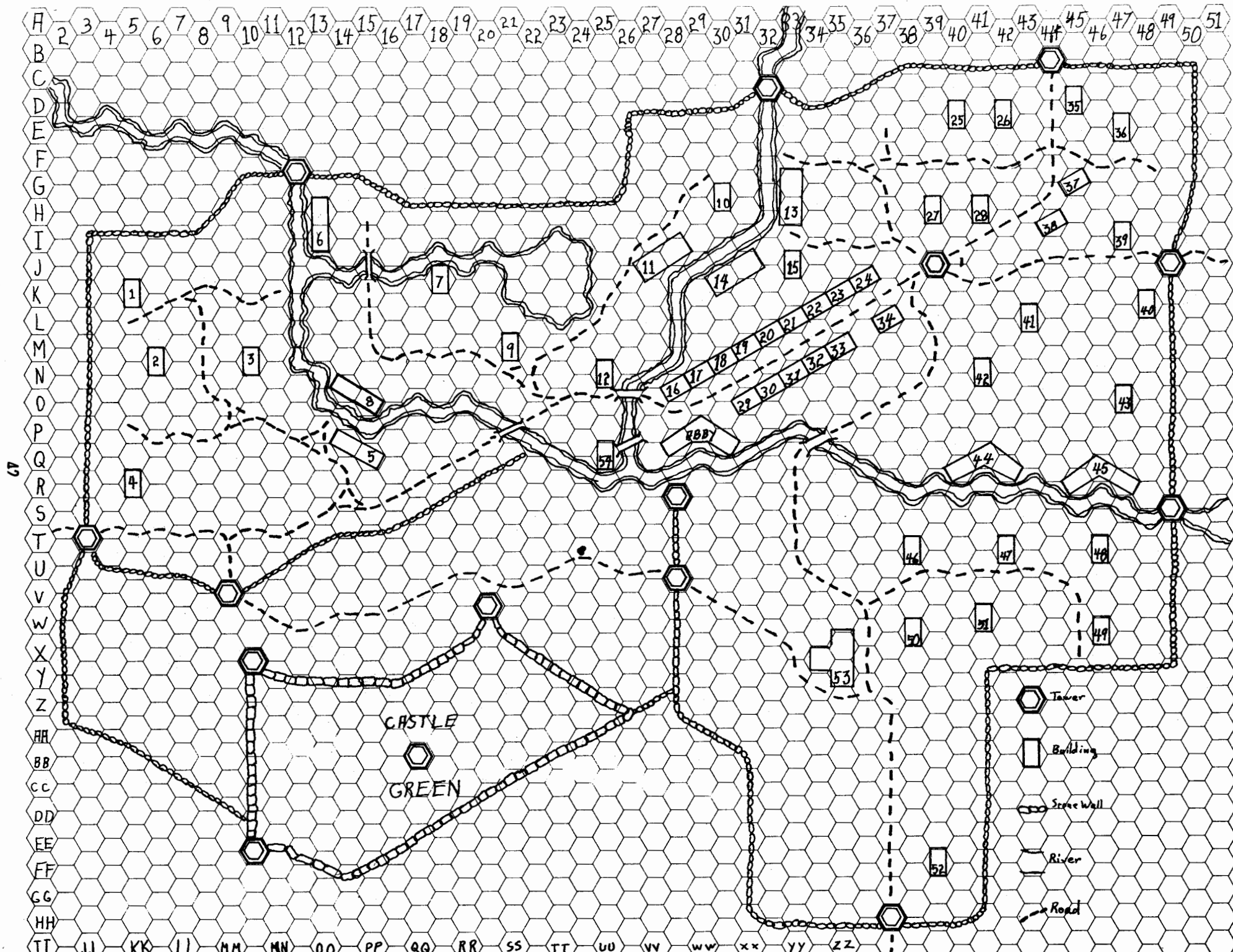
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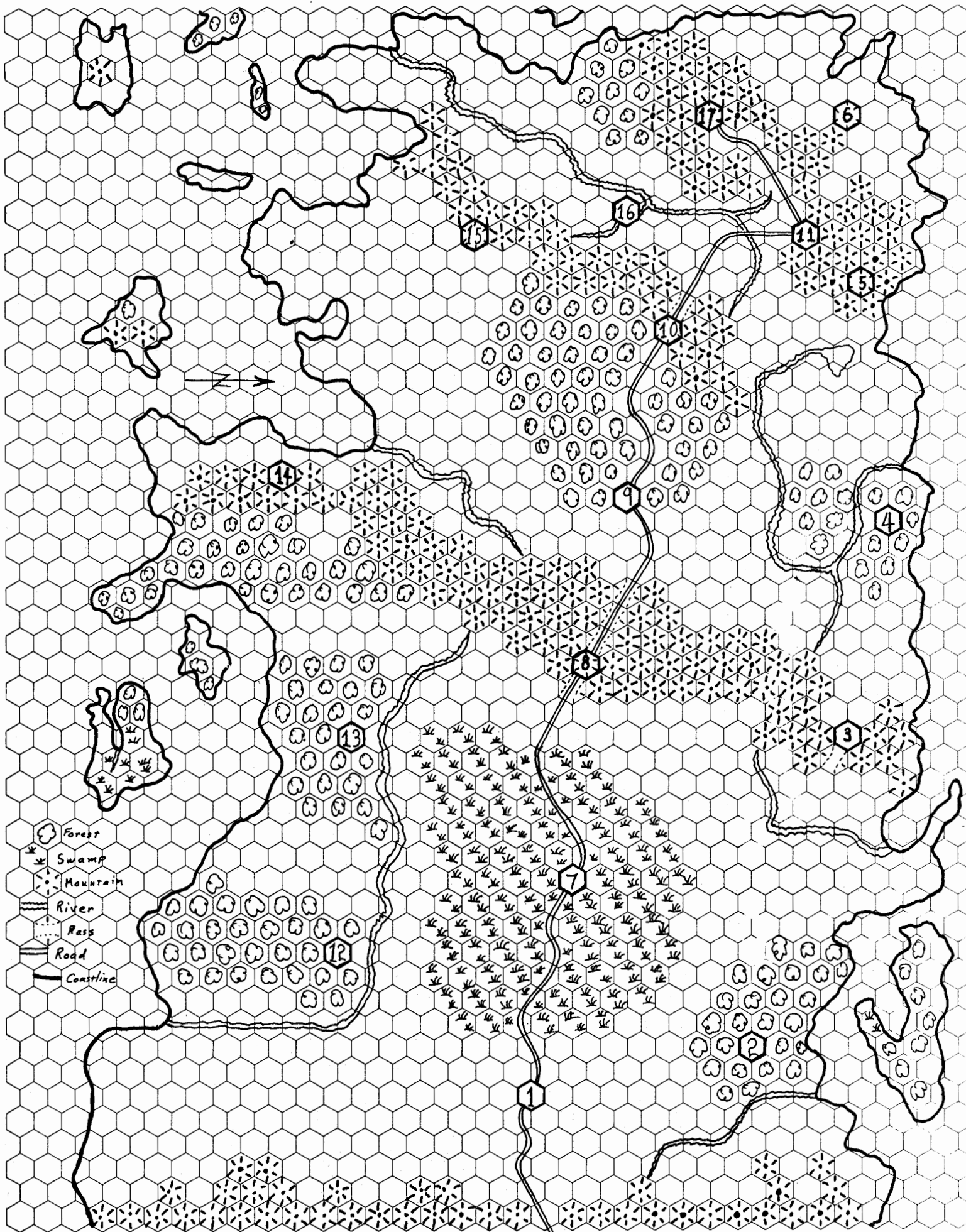
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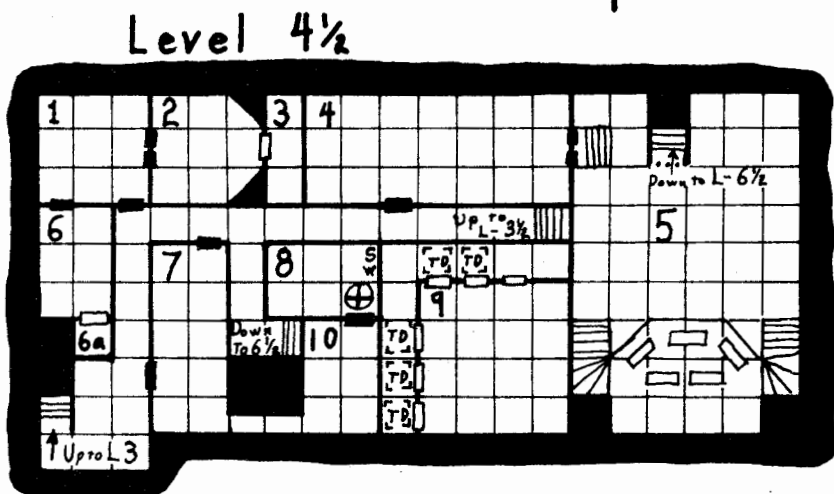
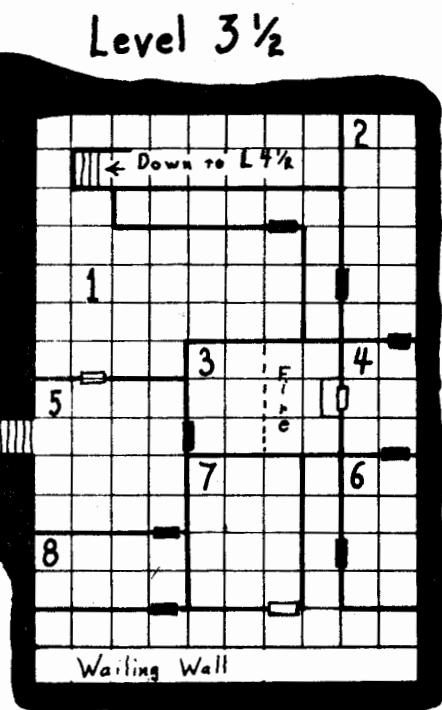
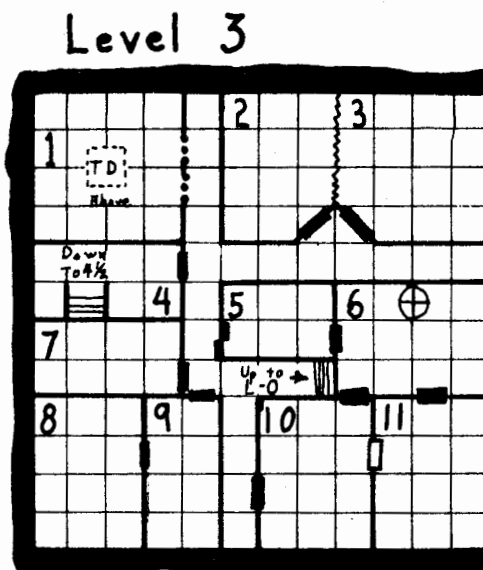
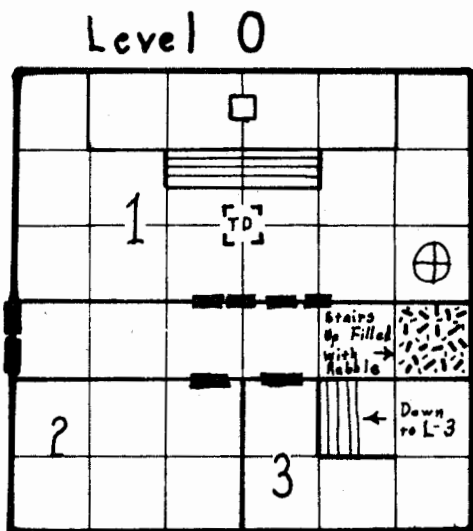


⊕ Traction Beam

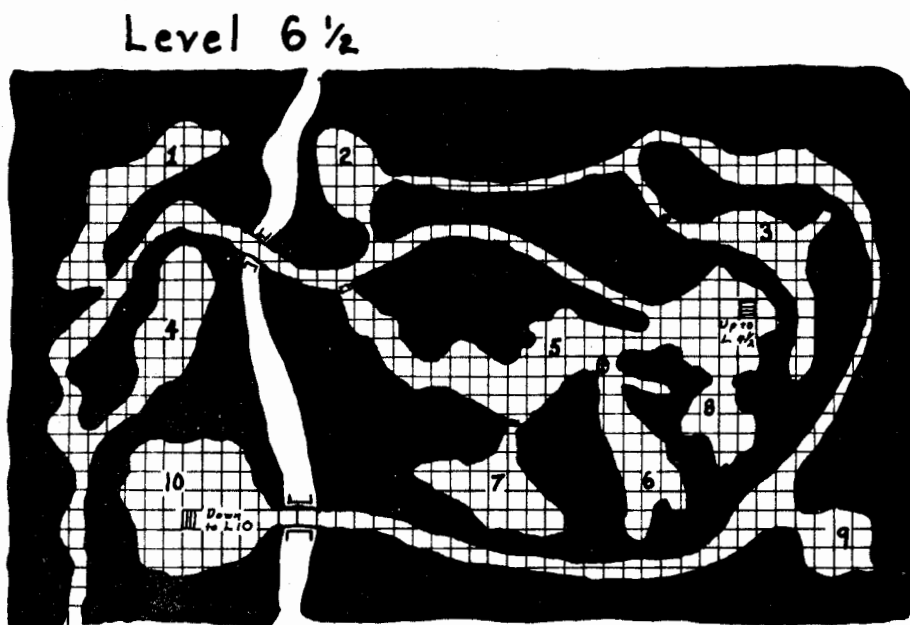








- Normal Door
- Secret Door
- Trap Door
- Shifting Wall
- Barred Opening
- Traction Bar



Each Square on the Drawings equals 10 feet



# NAME GENERATOR

by Rusty Lamont

On some occasions, while playing in a campaign, I find a lack of ingenuity on the Character Name Battlefront. After ransacking my mind for a time, the only name that comes to mind is Gglyxle, Yryl, etc. So, in the interests of D&D'ers everywhere, I have compiled a Name Generator. Hopefully the average wargamer will make a fine name for a fine character.

001	Shan/kati	136	Vares/team	272	Pary/ayla	405	Ma/wahlur
004	Mag/rorik	139	Gane/singh	275	Gal/koh	408	Kamar/agoth
007	Gor/rodhi	142	Galen/loch	278	Galpar/meeron	411	Zan/atha
010	Ko/rok	145	Yrk/chalum	281	Zog/rent	414	Zaaod/acher
013	Kold/kur	148	Elri/anr	284	Jheb/cromb	417	Vul/herol
016	Kod/yrsa	151	Melni/gurd	287	Zuag/hnwn	420	Kris/ralet
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037	Santh/goda	172	Dyv/hosru	306	Lem/ardo	441	Yl/dis
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052	Gand/thay	187	Eld/uagirs	321	Kyl/arkan	456	Khurd/wrath
055	Kri/leof	190	Nar/hanara	324	Grog/yrkoon	459	Yob/aan
058	Seth/awl	193	Etri/yedaka	327	Ram/ric	462	Hagg/hnau
061	Og/kolb	196	Ade/kome	330	Andro/bon	465	Nost/arнет
064	Ogua/cyr	199	Ger/peace	333	Tor/karayd	468	Nostra/koth
067	Par/kelb	202	Deka/encken	336	Dar/ormyr	471	Septe/thar
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073	Skik/choon	208	Shek/orm	342	Rhul/igorgan	477	Toc/allka
076	Skal/gle	211	Kikk/kolder	345	Val/cymorill	480	Jath/moral
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082	Tor/chitar	217	Drachm/beric	351	Quar/ckhir	487	Vla/ling
085	Sha/tar	220	Mina/siric	354	Quaz/gora	490	Dom/lesian
088	Mel/arack	223	Den/ersten	357	Quarm/orra	493	Taz/thanquar
091	Melec/eloso	227	Denar/lennin	360	Kyr/annis	496	Omer/thamkar
094	Bay/ygia	230	Lant/anth	363	Kuyr/eld	499	Kopt/udor
097	Zar/koth	233	Ts/stri	366	Siem/arr	502	Ankh/kag
100	Zark/hitai	236	Nyb/astrian	369	Vald/ridge	505	Rhod/dak
103	Ameer/kelos	239	Gwah/anron	372	Jac/aden	508	Zama/mnet
106	Tre/ython	242	Dag/anrom	375	Bard/erah	511	Kha/kyll
109	Crom/rascus	245	Sath/rist	378	Bardyl/ekah	514	Dhar/par
112	Annw/maric	248	Acher/seth	381	Aith/ekah	517	Vish/radaar
115	Llyr/toum	251	Yara/guast	384	Ant/kkar	520	Cham/dar
118	Rhiah/dhya	254	Bahar/arset	387	Avtin/rachm	523	Juh/lornha
121	Cul/rocero	257	Yanai/litsta	390	Baor/mina	526	Dar/orha
124	Gond/ghra	260	Yezn/stoen	393	Dhii/narius	529	Phri/ban
127	Nere/ram	263	Got/orth	396	Dyos/antr	532	Pyx/norious
130	Chx/baksh	266	Gotar/hant	399	Dy/otha	535	Nic/makal
133	Xar/ksh	269	Par/elek	402	Elh/yberg	538	Hro/makal

541	Ska/hoomal	655	Than/rhu	769	Han/runedeth	883	Heu/ogar
544	Ror/lnar	658	Yed/tol	772	Aryl/xel	886	Rhu/bbal
547	Frod/ramel	661	Kom/mris	775	Zoph/ylon	889	Erie/bhael
550	Rok/nokar	664	Cink/ymrist	778	Zor/brak	892	Tol/agir
553	S'kur/gorken	667	Menc/bec	781	Elor/bda	895	Ymr/wazir
556	Yrsa/lonmall	670	Jasu/rye	784	Lob/kai	898	Str/uatha
559	Adh/mall	673	Dis/strag	787	Honor/hurdisan	901	Ose/keroon
562	Bei/relei	676	Neg/crag	790	Tem/isan	904	Oster/itra
565	Kra/walith	679	Lan/sig	793	Tek/yob	907	Yryl/emas
568	Malen/aalbek	682	Lag/ose	796	Mira/goth	910	Erlen/batl
571	Ara/froi	685	Dem/ugin	799	Mino/iamus	913	Kyr/uke
574	Gar/gundia	688	Mon/terland	802	Mik/tradamus	916	Raed/andar
577	Cle/arth	691	Shalt/yrer	805	Afgor/gundus	919	Wyn/lyrz
580	Nar/oror	694	Jen/ohm	808	Clon/resias	922	Jar/larz
583	Tal/odor	697	Jaa/lenstar	811	Lor/oct	925	Aub/roghe
586	Pleiad/duki	700	Gren/anant	814	Gwall/ath	928	Ber/moth
589	Ar/lando	703	Gyr/yrth	817	Maal/mite	931	Cyon/droqyne
592	Bak/yndt	706	Gyrl/aederle	820	Gorf/hiram	934	Zuag/esh
595	Sab/narr	709	Bohn/aia	823	Norg/ian	937	Khow/tor
598	Styg/eamer	712	Carn/yndon	826	Yar/dog	940	Gahr/ardak
601	Sin/tramod	715	Mark/ar	829	Tre/zim	943	Bak/kardak
604	Mol/orgoh	718	Mar/sharl	832	Gra/mer	946	Khurd/rhul
607	Oric/anuin	721	Koth/auber	835	Nilan/kopt	949	Vian/alkis
610	Ork/deth	724	Kot/uber	838	Leyn/nkhma	952	Gar/rullian
613	Vanr/aithnard	727	Hai/ber	841	Pnar/mandias	955	Xalt/yra
616	Sig/nard	730	Dwa/col	844	Beam/hkan	958	Py/simak
619	Asg/weadin	733	Dwall/yone	847	Stram/khan	961	Skel/aldr
622	Amr/wadaen	736	Comm/ron	850	Mor/ama	964	Khit/jak
625	Metem/strin	739	Kaz/raal	853	Anui/nuzin	967	Chi/dylak
628	Gall/ork	742	Kazaz/kale	856	Xel/balor	970	Rawel/ithles
631	Shem/erin	745	Grey/loor	859	Deth/juhad	973	Stroe/antis
634	Khos/um	748	Cak/oen	862	Cath/areet	976	Ksl/tinyk
637	Yan/land	751	Sole/rath	865	Caer/nixos	979	Fror/thus
640	Yaz/an	754	Beth/eric	868	Astr/icor	982	Zeb/baor
643	Kush/euren	757	Betham/histin	871	Rork/roar	985	Zyg/hiiis
646	Pel/liard	760	Eu/trag	874	Pev/tarzaal	988	Yrl/yos
649	Pros/orgol	763	Quasi/ash	877	Aum/arza	991	Ral/ledh
652	Zuag/riel	766	Dak/deth	880	An/parar	994	Bask/arthal
						997	Byr/vul



# SPACE: THE GAMING FRONTIER

by Bill Paley

There are on the market now many science fiction role playing games. Each one may have good and bad points to it, however, this article is not meant as a review of these games. Instead, it is a discussion of the genre and style of preparation and play of these games.

One of the most important points is that the Game Master (GM) must have a good mental grasp of the assumptions behind the game system he chooses. This includes interstellar travel: Is it by space-warp jump? Warp-bubble travel? Interdimensional shifts? Random chance? The GM must also understand the basic natural laws of motion, or else simplify them in a manner which will not "disorder" the rules system. How is energy generated? What is gravity? Will Magic work? Psionics? How do economics work?

Basically, the difference between space fantasy and medieval fantasy is that in space fantasy the adventurer travels from star to star via starship, while in D&D or its brethren, the adventurer travels on foot (or horse, or perhaps sailing ship) from dungeon to dungeon. However, just as dungeons can be simple caves, or enormous warrens, the planets can be prepared as a planet with diverse climates, lifeforms, social systems, etc. or as a series of one planet—one climate—one government—one adventure each.

The major choice that a GM has when he sets up his universe is "Am I going to prepare whole galaxies, or am I going to prepare a few planets?"

If he chooses to prepare hundreds of star charts, the point of his game will tend towards ship vs ship encounters, although occasionally there will be on-planet adventures. The players will spend their time

racing to the farthest stars.

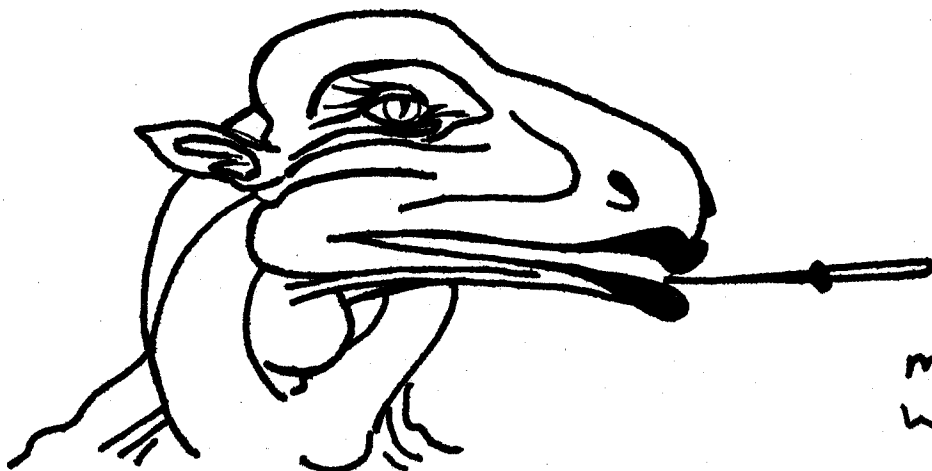
If he chooses to prepare a few planets, his players will be forced either by edict of the GM (due to lack of preparation time) or by events to remain in the region of space so prepared. However, each planet will have a great deal of depth. This type of preparation is more likely to produce character vs non-player character (NPC) interactions.

Of course, much preparation is possible in either case, but they each require a great deal of working, the one in starmapping and the other in planet planning. No matter what, it behooves the GM to have prepared at least one political structure/social system within which he will allow the players to interact.

Of more minor interest are points such as the elements in the metabolic cycle of the prime race which may affect the planets they will explore for use, the number of races the players will have to choose from and the differences from human norm, how many major languages there are, etc.? These are trimmings that add flavor to the game.

Finally, there can be a background theme to the game. The movie *Star Wars* gives one possible theme, that of revolt against tyranny, but at the same time there are choices such as those indicated by *Battlestar Galactica*, the desperate search for a lost world against a hostile universe, or those suggested by Poul Anderson's *Nicholas Van Rijn Stories*, exploration and growth of trade empires. Once a theme is chosen, the scenarios should come easily to an imaginative GM.

Whatever you as GM may choose, these games can be as imaginative and as fun as any medieval fantasy campaign. Give it a try!



THESE NEW  
MAKE-UP ITEMS DO  
WONDERS FOR MY  
COMPLETION!

KB  
578

# Half-Ogres & Anti-Paladins

by Paul Nevins

Often in the progress of an extensive campaign, unusual character types are helpful in maintaining interest in the game. In response to this need I have introduced into my campaign two more types of fighters.

The first of these two is the half-ogre. Ogres are known to commonly take human prisoners, so the evolution of this type is no more difficult to explain than that of half-elves or half-orcs.

As a character or NPC the half-ogre has a distinct set of characteristics. Strength is the main advantage of the half-ogre, average strength for a half-ogre is usually in the 17 or 19 range. Most player characters who choose to be fighters and roll a percentage chance of being a half-ogre are given a natural 18 strength plus a percentile roll. Half-ogres also have high constitutions usually in the range of 13 - 18 so the judge may have to adjust this in certain cases or just roll a six-sided die. However, half-ogres also have distinct disadvantages as rarely do they have abilities greater than 12 in any of the other categories. Half-ogre magi will of course be somewhat better than other half-ogres in these other categories. Alignment for half-ogres is usually chaotic of one form or another. An adult half-ogre will generally be from 6½ to 8½ feet tall, this makes them rather impressive in bars since most people do not see humanoids of this size every day.

Half-ogres have been extensively play tested in my game and seem to work surprisingly well, and the players love to play them.

The second type of fighter character is one that until recently I just assumed that everyone used. This character is the anti-paladin. They are very much simi-

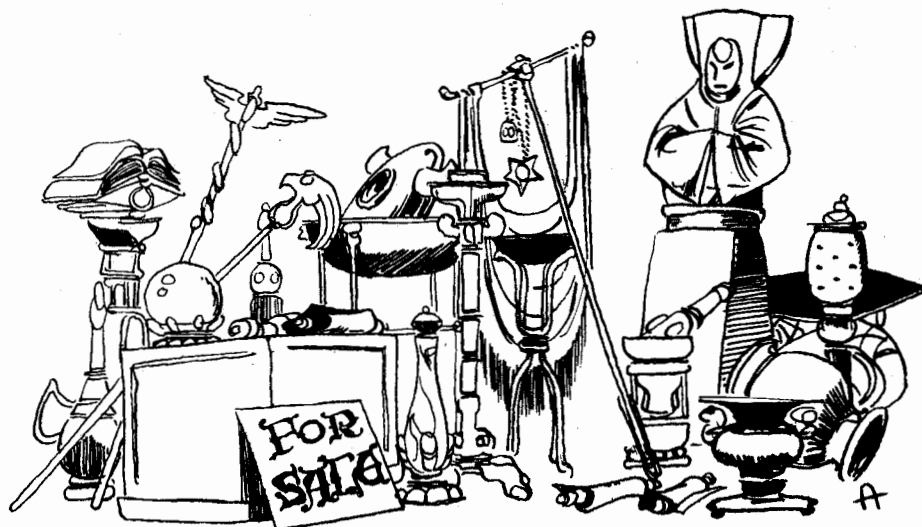
lar to the Daemons of George Sommer in the Aug/Sept JG Journal and so are perhaps just an alternate form of the same character. They are simply the opposite of a paladin.

Anti-paladin must have natural charisma and other minimum scores just as a paladin, this is because a large part of their power is in deception. This is especially true in their relations with other people where they are seldom suspected of their crimes because of their stunning looks, in fact they are often thought to be actual paladins until it is far too late.

As members of a group of wanderers, anti-paladins have a tendency to grow bored looking for something nasty to do and wind up slaughtering the rest of the party. They are even more fun in cities where they can start entire crime waves and, if done carefully enough, never be suspect, this is the ultimate challenge to many players. In this endeavor they are aided by the ability to do damage by laying on of hands and their ability to cause disease. They receive anti-clerical powers in the same way that paladins receive clerical powers.

The anti-paladin is a tremendously deadly and exceptionally fun character, particularly if the player has an incredibly disgusting sense of humor. Due to the nature of the character the entire life of the anti-paladin must be secretive and he may never have friends (that live for very long) as he will hoard all treasure and magical items he can get his hands on.

For the original idea of the Half-ogre my thanks to Chris West of Elk Grove, Illinois. He may not think much of my interpretation of the idea, but, thanks anyway.





# THE LORDS OF VALAR

The following is a list of names and addresses of DMs across the country. If you would like your name included, just let us know. The list will appear in both The Dungeoneer and The Judges Guild Journal. For purposes of making it easier to find those DMs in your area, we are dividing the country up into the following, arbitrary regions: NorthEast: CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT. SouthEast: AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV. MidWest: IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI. SouthWest: AZ, AR, CA, CO, HI, NE, NV, NM, OK, TX. NorthWest: AK, ID, MT, ND, OR, SD, UT, WA, WY. Other: All APO and FPO, Guam, Puerto Rico, Canal Zone, Virgin Islands and all Foreign.

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## Effects and Uses of Poison

by Steve Marsh

Poisons can destroy cells by mere contact (as sulphuric acid at 16 N will) or they can alter the way cells function. Hemotoxins affect the blood, neurotoxins the nervous system, etc. Poisons can also be described by the secondary results they have (some cause paralysis, some blind, some stop the lungs, etc.)

This essay will list poisons alphabetically and describe them\*.

**Acid, Acetic:** Distilled from vinegar. 2 ounces is the lethal dose. It acts by disrupting the body's electrical system and has some caustic effects. Detected by a burning feeling on lips. Takes ½D6 hours to kill. Can be neutralized by applying a base. Symptoms are burning (as with all acids); weak, rapid pulse; shallow breathing; convulsions and collapse.

**Acid, Boric:** Condensed from volcanic fumes. 1 ounce of crystals (looks like salt) is the lethal dose. Acts caustically on digestive tract and disrupts body electrochemical system. Symptoms are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, cold sweat, weak heart and collapse.

**Acid, Hydrofluoric:** (Often found when following medieval universal solvent recipes). If used, treat as universal solvent.

**Acid, Nitric:** (aqua fortis) A powerful solvent of organic tissue and very corrosive. ½ ounce is lethal dose. Same symptoms as above and also yellow stains (dissolved tissue). Time to death is ½D4 hours.

**Acid, Sulfuric:** (vitriol) A powerful acid. 1 quart when thrown on the skin, one ounce if consumed. Causes burning. 1D6 hours to death. Can be neutralized. Acid symptoms.

**Aconite:** (wolfsbane) ¼ounce is fatal. An alkaloid that causes nausea, vomiting, weak pulse, and general collapse. Pure (crystal) form slays in 2D4 minutes, liquid essence in 1D4 hours.

### Alcohols . . . . .

**Antimony:** A metal that is silvery and brittle (similar to arsenic). It causes general imbalances of the system, shock, bloody vomit, spasms and collapse followed by death in 1D50 hours after taking a dose of one ounce (unrefined salts). Has a metallic taste. It is countered by treating for shock and dosing with tea.

**Arnica:** (leopard's bane) It is an alkaloid found in the flower. ½D6 flower heads is a lethal dose causing nausea, vomiting, weak pulse, pallor and lowered temperature followed by death in 1D100 minutes.

**Arsenic:** Oderless and tasteless 1/30th of an ounce is the usual fatal dose. Speed of death is determined by method of administration taking from 5 minutes to 5 weeks.

**Atrophine:** (belladonna) Alkaloid, 1/50th of an ounce causes death after showing rapid pulse, flushed skin, rapid, then slow respiration, collapse and coma. Death takes 1D100 x 10 seconds. Oderless but with a very bitter taste. \*The lethal dose corresponds to that which will kill at the rate 1st levelers will miss their saving throws.

**Cantharides:** (Spanish Fly) A lethal dose of 1/20th ounce causes a burning sensation in the mouth and throat followed by nausea and vomiting; abdominal pain and bloody diarrhea; then delirium and collapse. Unless successfully treated with emetics and mucous restoration it causes death in 1D10 hours.

(Note: most deaths by poison are modified (in time span) by the constitution modifier for hit points, minimum time span being one unit.)

**Chloral Hydrate:** (knockout drops) A lethal dose of one ounce (with the characteristic odor of bananas or pears) results in sleep within 4D6 minutes followed by nausea, and vomiting; then heart weakness and heart failure (often after reawakening) within 1D6 hours after ingestion. Treated with an emetic of strong tea, stimulents (coffee) and artificial respiration/heart.

**Chloroform:** (included) 1½ ounces taken internally (or less when inhaled) of this sweet, heavy liquid results in a slow/weak and irregular pulse, dilated pupils, weakened breathing, heart fails 2D10 minutes. Treated by stimulents, artificial respiration/heart/(inhalation: 1D6 minutes).

**Cocaine:** This colorless powder is useful to check bleeding/pain but a lethal dose of ¼ ounce results in restlessness, cold sweat, dry throat; followed by euporia, rapid pulse; then weak pulse/breath, convulsions and coma. 1D20 hours. Treated by strong tea, vomiting, medicinal charcoal, ammonia, and chloroform (for the convulsions).

**Cyanide:** With the characteristic smell of bitter almonds it prevents the normal processes of oxidation and paralyzes the respiratory center of the brain. Death follows from 1/100 ounce. 3D6 seconds elapse with normal dose, if saving throw made there will be headache/dizziness, shortness of breath and convulsions, coma, and collapse.

**Digitalis:** (fairy gloves or foxglove) 4 prepared leaves causes nausea, vomiting; diarrhea and gut pains; headache, weakness, poor vision; pulse goes wild with any effort. Treated with strong tea, absolute quiet and rest for 1D4 days, warmth and artificial respiration. Death follows exertion after 1D6 minutes.

**Ergot:** Used by midwives to check bleeding in the womb, a dose of one ounce will usually prove fatal causing abdominal pain and diarrhea, itching and tingling in the skin; heart pain and slow and weak pulse; spasms and convulsions; coma and death within 1D4 hours.

**Formaldehyde:** One ounce of embalming fluid will cause nausea, vomiting; reddening of eyes and lips, cold and clammy skin; burning throat and mouth; collapse and death in 1D4 hours.

**Hydrogen Sulfide:** (organic gas) is a deadly poison—as effective as cyanide (tho easily detectable by the smell of rotten eggs) and it causes sudden unconsciousness and death; dizziness, nausea, greenish face, convulsions, coma and lung failure if save is made. Treated by warmth and artificial respiration (if save is made).

**Mercury Compounds:** (red cinnabar) 1/10 ounce causes a variety of weakening symptoms, death follows in 1D4 days due to exhaustion from continuous vomiting and diarrhea.

**Methyl Salicylate:** (wintergreen oil) 1-2 ounces will cause rapid breathing, nausea, vomiting, thirst, headache, irritability, followed by delirium and hallucinations; convulsions, coma; death by respiratory failure.

**Mushrooms:** (toad stools) In a dose of 1-3 will cause gut pains, vomiting, diarrhea and (!?) constipation, cold, clammy, jaundiced skin, convulsions, coma, death within 1D6 hours.

**Nicotine:** Derived from tobacco, the pure oil will kill in doses of 1/10 ounce in 1D4 periods of 15 minutes by tremors, palpitation, headache/dizziness, collapse and coma due to respiratory paralysis. A dose of 1 ounce kills in 1D10 minutes by nerve and lung paralysis. Treated with tea, vomiting, charcoal and other stimulants. Smells of tobacco and is bitter.

**Opium:** (and its derivatives) ½ ounce of pure opium (prepared) causes drowsiness, lack of muscular power, stupor, death by coma. Treated with potassium permanganate, strong coffee, keep awake but do not weaken by excess exercise. Takes 1D10 hours.

**Phosphorous:** 1/20th of an ounce will cause death in 1D4 days by corrosion. It has a garlic taste, causes pain, diarrhea, headache, weakness, collapse/death. Treated with baking soda. Saving throws add 1D4 days. A second throw after that time indicates survival.

**Potassium Permanganate:** Used to counteract phosphorous, alkaloids, and cyanide. At times it results in poisoning (dose that poisons varies from 1/20 to ½ ounce) and death in 1D100 minutes from general collapse.

**Sewer Gas:** See hydrogen sulfide.

#### **Spiders and Snakes:**

**Snakes:** American pit vipers and the viperidae causes shock (pain, giddiness, irregular heart) and hemorrhage; also death of blood cells. Time for death varies. Flanidae (cobras) poison causes paralysis (due to action on nerves) causing death when the lungs cease to function.

**Spiders:** Small spiders venom causes rise in blood pressure, great pain, nausea and vomit. Death occurs in ½D5 hours, recovery in 1 - 2 days. Large spiders (giants) also do digestive fluid damage and death is in ½D6 minutes and involves convulsions and great pain. Recovery in 1 - 2 weeks.

**Snails:** Only the conus snail has a venom affecting man. Its venom jams and causes muscle relaxation killing as soon as it reaches the heart (2D12 seconds) or causing weakness in the limb for 1D8 hours. Dose is about 1/10 of a gram.

**Slimes:** (Actually the red tide organism) a nerve toxin that in unprepared form (from seafood) brings death in 1D12 hours. Preparations are much faster (but very hard to make) and are heat resistant. Critical dose is very, very small. (Actually jelly fish) Shock, hemorrhage and respiratory failure. Speed varies from 2D20 seconds (sea wasp) to several hours. Repeated exposure usually results in lessened immunity. (Actually prepared mushrooms) These have a delay of 12 to 30 hours and then death in 1D6 hours.

**Seeds:** Castor oil beans (you were right!—they aren't good for you), often used in trial by ordeal. Only poisonous if chewed. If so, only one is needed to kill by vomiting, diarrhea, and collapse and heart failure caused by acute hemotoxin (blood cells die). Pater-noster Pea (Jequirity) is similar with only convulsions and hemorrhages added. Many seeds contain cyanides (almonds, etc.).

**Strychnine:** Derived from the seed of the nux-vomica it is a bitter crystal. 1/30 of an ounce easily slays starting with shuddering, chest tightening, spasms, rigidity, weak/rapid pulse and fatal convulsions starting about 15 minutes after ingestion. Death follows as soon as convulsions begin (1D20 minutes later). Chloroform for convulsions, strong tea, and potassium permanganate.

**Turpentine:** Often administered in resin wines (favored in Greece). 6 ounces will slay with vomiting, diarrhea and shock. Treat with black coffee.



That is a start. I left out Hemlock, Mandrake, ground glass (which clinical tests has proven not to poison), powdered diamond/adamant (which causes internal hemorrhaging and death in 1D4 months) and Urea just to name a few. And just to jog your minds I'll mention Hellebore, Rubarb (leaves), and acid of sugar. Also many types of honey are poisonous.

### Poison Prevention

**Tasters:** Either they die from the poison or are trained to recognize poisons.

**Magics:** Such as serpentine goblets that detect the presence of poison.

**Beozoar:** Gall stones of cattle—supposed to add to give second saving throw.

**Mithridatigum:** The universal antidote for poison. Contains gentian root, hyssop, clarified butter, nutmeg, Illyrain iris, temple incense, myrrh, spikenard, balm, frankincense, bitumen, red earth (from the isle of Lenmos), honey of laurel, opium, dried viper flesh plus certain other ingredients (determined by the stars of the inhiher) to bring the total number of ingredients to 62. An ounce is a dose. Each batch is 62 ounces (one of each). Also known as theriac and treacle (the venetian brand). Some use against disease and other such.

### How to Use the Preceeding List

There is little way to list all common poisons save in a large volume. This short paper covers some of the better known poisons and some that are representative of their class. To adapt to a gaming situation consider the dose given (as prepared with medieval alchemy) to be that which will kill a healthy, large, full grown man (the average fighter). It will kill in the rough percentage indicated by saving throws.

For those of greater than average constitution apply the bonus to hit points to both the saving throw and the time to take effect. The inverse is true of low constitutions. Also use the bonus to hit from strength.

In some cases (usually double the dosage given) the result is almost always fatal. In such the saving throw represents (among other things) a disinclination of "zzap—you're dead!" type results. It also represents such things as the 1/3 reaction of snakes when biting men to use no poison (tho 1/3 of the time they inject all they have) and similiar things.

For unlisted, but poisonous, encounters:

**Plants:** Roll a D6. 1 - 3 alkaloid, 4 - 6 other.

The react on will be similiar to a chosen plant as given. above.

**Animals:** This depends on the type of animal. Usually variations on snake venoms are appropriate.

For large or caustic animals (such as some dra-

gon mythos) various acids are appropriate. Poison breath is usually hydrogen sulfide (or HCL—rapid death 1D6/cc).

Note that most poisons disrupt the body, take periods of time, and are such that they will leave a person weak for several hours (at least) afterwards.

Another useful 'poison' for animals is any one of many bio-organisms. Most of these are heat sensitive (being protien complexes) but very effective.

For use on blades, and other weapons (such as curae) require that the user be an assassin or risk accidental self poisoning at every opportunity.

I hope that I have been able to express the actual methods that poisons use and their effects. The view given in much literature does not apply to the real world.

For Mythical Poison:

This is an insidious substance that slowly overcomes the body. Violent excercise and sweat can force it from the pores—usually in the form of a nauseous green liquid. . . .

This acts instantly, slaying the unfortunate and leaving no trace. . . .

The shock effects of most poisons (which if the body survives results in a successful save) are somewhat suitable to the XD6 points damage, ½ damage if save system. Or, the old TSR system: Death by shock, weakness (half damage) if save; fits well.

To adjust for levels improve saving throw, alter time spans, and add one unit to the required fatal dose (thus 1st level requires 1 ounce of unrefined antimony salts, a 2cd 2, 3rd three ounces, etc.) with each unit below fatal +2 to saving throw.

For Alchemists, I would allow the refining of one poison per level with safety (replace a potion type). Consider the "poison potion" not as a crock but as one of the above—determine which from the one that nearest matches the appearance given by your potion appearance tables. To medieval man poison was one of the greatest treasures.

On availability: In most realms poison was outlawed and poisoners slain. It remained a lucrative and rather demanded service none-the-less. Treat similiar to assassins guilds.

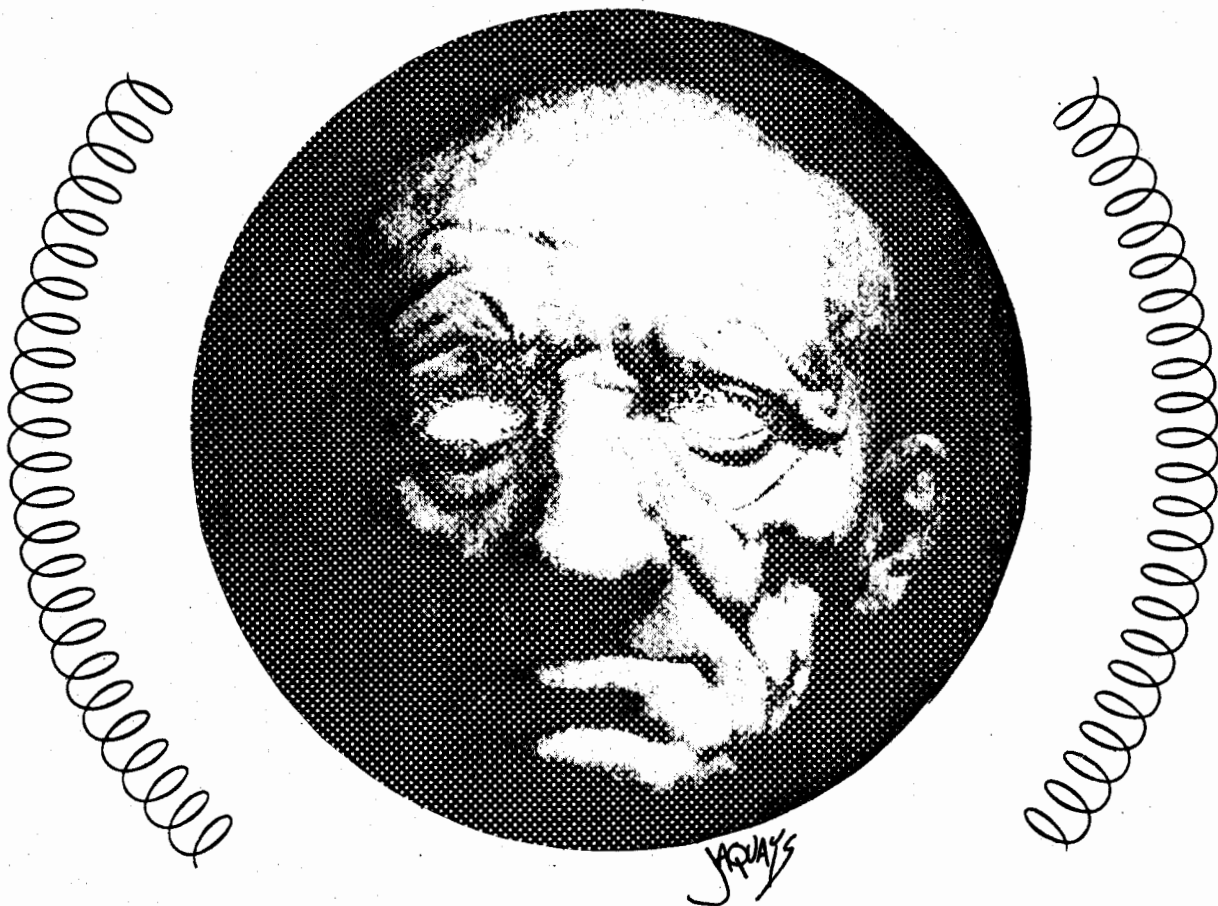
This is by no means the definitive over-view of poisons—just an attempt to present a few of them for fellow gamers who would like to add a bit more to their campaigns.

### Partial Bibliography:

*Poisons*, 1970 by Bodin and Cheinisse. (History and catalogue).

*Poisons* Second Edition, 1958 by Brookes and Jacobs (Recognition and Treatment—Classic).

*Poisoning Misadventures*, 1970 by Jenson (Examples and Histories).



## Nose Wet or No Sweat

**Tricks and Traps**  
by Bill Paley

**Weretrap** - Magically place silver bear-traps, invisible. It may be tripped on a 1 - 4 (D6) by a were beast, but it cannot be tripped by a non-were. Causes 1 - 6 D10 damage.

**Signs on wall announcing a ceiling trap in orcish** - just beyond it is a pit trap.

**Pit trap with illusion** thrown to look like a huge balck pudding. Bottom of pit has a slide leading down tow levels.

**Signs on the wall next to a door** stating that a mage is hiring warriors at 100 GP a day, through this doorway. Mercenaries and poorly treated hirelings may abandon the party. Room has a charm person (+4) spell, and they will stay and guard it forever.

**Horde of Orcs dancing in a huge cavern** that appears to have a very high ceiling. Actually, ceiling is six feet high.

**Room of another Plane:** Room is open to Etherial Plane, and a variety of beasts from said plane are gathered there.

**Throne of Life (so marked):** Person who sits on it glares with light. Light goes out, a baby lies bawling on the throne. Age--six months. Some resemblance to original fellow (Actually an illusion). The real fellow is four levels deeper in a cell, naked. The equipment ends up in a treasure room.

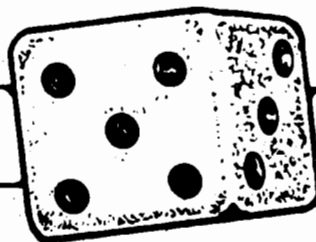
**Party is followed by several pairs of lighted eyes,** DM reminding them occasionally. No effect--except anxiety, of course.

**Warning the party of evil,** highly amused laughter at random moments will drive a party insane.



Robert K Bingham  
18/12/78

# THE DIE IS CAST



## The Movie--The Lord of the Rings

by Bill Paley

On a brightly glowing red background, figures appear, and the evil tale of the One Ring unfolds. Each step of its history rolls past, from Sauron to Isildur to Smeagol to Bilbo. Then the scene changes to a great crowd of hobbits eating, drinking, partying. **The Lord of the Rings** has begun.

Tolkien's fantasy classic has for many years been the Flying Dutchman of Hollywood. There had been several attempts at preparing a screenplay, including one by Stanley Kubrick of "2001: A Space Odyssey" fame. Finally Ralph Bakshi, the creator of **Wizards**, **Fritz the Cat**, and other animated motion pictures, was given permission by United Artists, who owned the movie rights, to write the screenplay for an animated version of the Trilogy. Peter S. Beagle and Chris Conkling were given the assignment.

Tolkien fans have been in many cases apprehensive about the upcoming film. There are so many facets affect the events in the books, that many felt a Hollywood production would cut out much of the complexity so as to fit into a two-hour format. In a sense this did happen. However, it was not the butchery that would have been necessary to compress three books into two hours, since they plan on sequel(s).

Certainly some events have been excised--such as Old Man Willow, Tom Bombadil and the Barrow Wight. However, there is the addition of Gandolf's meeting with (and detention by) Saruman (who often seems to be called Aruman for some reason). Although I was unhappy with the removal of various scenes, I can understand it, for the movie was at times lethargic and could have become downright dull but for judicious clipping. This was caused by the wilderness trekking

of the fellowship--all you DMs must know that cross-country hikes haven't quite the thrill and tension of a dungeon expedition.

Another fear of the middle-earth lovers was that the characters would be mangled or move comical than those they imagined. Again, some characters do not quite seem to act or be the way I imagined, but all are at least kin to my mental images. This was made possible by one brilliant stroke--whenever possible they retained the dialogue as it is written in the original books.

The finest point about this film is the animation. No matter how often you may have seen Clutch Cargo, Mickey Mouse, Yogi Bear, Woody Woodpecker, or any other cartoon series, you will not be ready for the effect of this style of animation. It is a totally new and engrossing experience. In fact Bakshi feels that "real" as opposed to "realistic" is the manner in which this style should be described. Along with this innovation was the first use of slow motion animation which was used to good effect several times during the film (although it was also used in a scene with blood and gore spattering which I think they could have spared us). If only for the animation I would recommend viewing this film.

This film takes place during the events chronicled in **The Fellowship of the Ring** and part of **The Two Towers**. The characters are scattered from Faugoru to the borders of Mordor. I anxiously await the sequel, for even though I know what happens next--I was impressed by the visions that have been brought to the screen. Go see it!!

## 4th DIMENSION.....by TSR

To be honest, it is hard for me to decide how to start this review so perhaps it would be best if I simply state my reactions as they occurred. Nice box, but another chess-type variant? Maybe. Hummm. Several small plastic pieces and what certainly appears to be an undersized board inside. Rip-off? Humm. doesn't appear to be too much to the rules, either. Well lets try it.

Game 1-- just a few, simple rules to remember. Nothing much to think about it seems. Bing! Zap! Zip! about five or six minutes later game is over. This is too fast, can't possibly be right. Lets pay closer attention to what we're doing here!

Game 2 -- Seems to be much more here than meets the eye. At times it appears that there is no positional advantage at all, then for 1/2 or perhaps 1 whole turn there is. Forty minutes later the battle is over..

Verdict -- Don't let *4th Dimension's* apparent simplicity fool you. Yes, it can be played by younger generations without the ability to plan strategy. Yes, it can be played blitzkrieg. Yes, it can be played with much time spent deciding strategy. Surprisingly the small size of the board and playing pieces presented no problems, even for those of us who had rather large hands, in fact, the game would not really be improved by using a larger board and pieces. *4th Dimension* may not be a game for everyone, but neither are chess or



checkers. If, however, you like chess, or even Stratego or games along those lines, definitely give it a go. It certainly has some unusual, new, interesting aspects to it (some of which I want to explore some more) and can be fun to play. C.R.A.

**THE APPRENTICE 3** . . . . . ed. by Dave Berman

By the time you read this I am sure that many of you will have seen the latest issue of *The Dragon* in which Mr. Gygas expressed his views on *The Apprentice 2*. In this issue Mr. Simbalist (creator of C&S) expresses his views. I am afraid that the twain shall never meet. The two articles are representative of the dichotomy which exists in swords & sorcery FRP. Personally I can see much logic in both sides of the argument. I also see much emotionalism in both sides of the argument. This is neither good nor bad in and of itself. If you are in agreement with Mr. Gygas's views then *The Apprentice* is not the fanzine for you. If you agree with Mr Simbalist and Mr. Berman, you will find it an interesting fanzine.

*The Apprentice* like *The Dungeoneer* tries to print a dungeon in each issue. As I fully know, you can't please everyone all the time when it comes to such things. The best thing is to get hold of an issue or two and check it out for yourself. It is certainly

attempting to increase its quality, and that, in itself, amongst fanzines, is unusual. C.R.A.

**ICERIGGER** . . . . . by Alan Dean Foster

"Ethan Fortune was a simple salesman—knowledgeable and civilized . . ." Such is the stuff heroes are made from. Common man in an uncommon situation. Mr. Fortune goes wandering about the space ship he is passenger on at a time when passengers are supposed to be asleep and ends up getting kidnapped when he discovers another kidnapping in progress and doesn't react fast enough. Unfortunately (or, possibly, fortunately) his arrival manages to delay things enough that the survival boat the kidnappers are using gets caught in the 'diversionary' explosion they set and lands, uncontrolled, in the wild, unknown area of a frozen planet.

The action of this book continues on, built around the attempts of the kidnapped victims, who are now without kidnappers, to get back to the established base on the planet—one which the locals do not know the whereabouts of—and how they help the locals out in the process. It is a fast-paced book in most places and certainly is one that any Foster fan will want to read. Lots of 'ancient'-type battle action and some minor intrigue. This is the fifth printing. It is a Del Rey book, published by Ballantine (27799). . . . . \$1.95

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### Runequest: A Review

by Paul Jaquays

Usually, a long time fantasy role-playing (FRP) gamer's reaction to the marketing of a new FRP game is one of two. Either its "Oh, wow! A new FRP Game!" or "Oh, no! A new FRP game!" My personal reaction is usually the latter. Basically, in the few years that I have been fantasy role-playing, I have seen a lot of "radically new" fantasy gaming systems spring up that are really nothing more than a rehash or compilation (read as "complication") of what has gone before. To add injury to insult, these games have been oft-times decorated with crummy art and poorly printed so they could either sell cheap or be ready for unveiling at the next major gaming convention, in hopes that the hype on it will be great enough to sell the game sight unseen.

However, after reading through Steve Perrin's (et al) new game, RUNEQUEST, I will staunchly defend it from those who would put it into the aforementioned category. It is a game with a fresh outlook, logical development of characters and balance of power between the players and their antagonists.

Published by the Chaosium, RUNEQUEST is in effect a role-playing version of their Dragon Pass series of games that includes WHITE BEAR AND RED MOON, THE NOMAD GODS and the yet-to-be-released SHADOW DANCE. The mythos is that of the world of Glorantha, whose Eldritch history is delineated in the opening pages of the booklet. This gives the

reader an insight into why certain game systems are as they are. In this sense, RUNEQUEST differs from many FRP's that give the player a cross section of multiple mythologies without attempting to explain of a character's financial resources. But to improve, this expenditure is very necessary. The second anomaly that may be discovered is the lack of structured "levels" of experience. A character starts out as an adventurer with little or no trained skill and only his native ability. But by increasing his power and other abilities in magic use, combat, stealthfulness and instruction, a character may become a Rune Lord, Hero or even a Superhero.

The combat system works as a cohesive unit. It combines many systems that have been unsuccessfully "scotch-taped" onto some existing FRP games. As expressed before, combat is worked out as a percentage. A character has a given chance based on his training, to both strike and blow and defend himself from the same in a given melee round. Each weapon or shield possessed by the character will probably have a different hitting or defending potential, determined by the amount of expertise gained or learned in the use of that particular weapon. All "to hit" probabilities are worked out in advance of actually playing and will be the same until further expertise is gained.

Armor does not lower the percentage chance of hitting. Rather, it absorbs some of the damage given by any blow that lands (players of TUNNELS AND

TROLLS or THE FANTASY TRIP game series will be familiar with this). In addition, a shield or weapon may be used to parry or block the oncoming blow. Damage that is not absorbed by armor or weapon will be placed on the body by hit location (a system, that while cumbersome in other games works quite well here). Because a character may be using a different type of armor on different body parts this becomes a curcial determination. A blow that is absorbed by a character's ring mail would go through a leather cap.

All in all, the mechanics of the combat system, including how or why anything or any creature exists in relation to the mechanics of the game. As such, one will not find Tolkienian dwarves fighting Greek Chimerae in early Renaissance armor while taking the names of Norse gods in vain.

A character beginning the game will find himself in a late bronze, early iron age civilization, where pure, unalloyed metals are not available or usable by the uninitiated as they are magical in nature. As in most all games of this type, the character's statistics are rolled on six sided dice. Each character determines his strength, intelligence, power (the measure of a character's magic use ability and also his favor with the gods), constitution (this is also the character's hit points), dexterity, charisma (leadership ability only, not one's looks), and size (a determination of a character's physical mass. This characteristic is never full described other than as an abstract number and could use a chart to expand upon it.).

Like in all games, a character's abilities affect his capacity to perform certain tasks. Since all combat, magic, stealthful activity, etc. are expressed in functions of a percentage, combinations of certain abilities add or subtract from a character's base chance of performing any given activity. The first shocking situation that a traditionalist role-playing gamer may discover is that there are no "classes". That is to say that there are no distinct fighters, magic users, clerics, thieves or assassins. A character may become, one, any or all of the above, limited only by his desire, cash flow and bad dice rolls. Each skill within a certain discipline, such as magic, thieving or fighting, is learnable in percentage increases by paying so much coinage to an approved instructor (or by learning from experience in a stress situation.) to learn or improve a desired skill. Instruction takes a great deal of game time and uses up much strike rank (who strikes first), critical hits, fumbles, and ability that is increased by training and combat (not by weightlifting gold pieces) is very reminiscent of combat done at Society for Creative Anachronism Tourneys that I have attended.

Other skills may be learned in much the same way that fighting is learned. Usually a character must join a particular guild as an associate member to learn an ability particular to that guild, such as learning the formulation of blade venom from the Alchemist's Guild, or map making from the Free Sages, or any of the numerous skills available from the Thieves Guild. Each guild costs so many silver lunars (standard of coin exchange on Glorontha) to join and

additional outlays of cold cash to learn individual skills.

As mentioned before, magic use is available to all who can pay the fee to learn it from the Rune Mages. Basic magic is battle magic, powerful and costly in power points to cast. Power is the ability to use spells. Spells are cast by a point system that temporarily drains a character's power when cast. Spells are also cast on a strike rank that determines if it, another spell, or a weapon would come to bear first. The majority of battle magic spells are different from D&D spells and similiar to WIZARD spells in that they are more concerned with acutal combat, adding to or subtracting from abilities, hit points, etc. on friends and enemies. Aside from the ability to cast spells, power is also the ability to resist spells. As a character casts spells his resistance to an enemies spells is reduced proportionately.

Two unique features of the RUNEQUEST magic system are spirits and rune magic. Spirits are disembodied souls that can range from those of small animals to those of the mightiest gods. They can be used by characters to further their own pursuits. However, unless aided by the Rune mages, obtaining a spirit can be a tricky endeavor, possibly ending in death or possession. Once a spirit is bound and captured, it may be used by the character to store spells or power the spellls that a character casts.

Rune magic is magic performed in alliance with a god. To gain such an alliance, the character must join a rune cult where he is taught the secrets of Rune magic, that is magic that is powered by the diety served. Rune magic costs a permanent (but regainable) loss of power points to learn; however, it then takes no points to cast. Rune magice is usable only by Rune lords and Rune priests. Each cult is symoblized by one or more ancient runes (there is argument as to which is the oldest) that are used in conjunction with the casting of this powerful magic.

The Gloronthan monsters are basically role-playing versions of the Dragon Pass critters. Monsters are treated in much the same way as human characters in that they have strength, intelligence, power, etc. scores and special abilities as per humans. In essence, each monster can be a player character if so desired. This could be cumbersome in working up an adventure; but, average statistics are provided and it is suggested

that "referee specials" of various creatures be created to add spice. The monsters themselves range from a variety of trolls, to dream dragons (the real ones are above mere worldly matters) and anthropomorphic ducks (ala Howard The).

On a different track, there are some drawbacks that exist in the game and hopefully they may be cleared up in future printings. The first is the physical quality of the text. The booklet is typeset, but many of the charts and tables are done on a standard typewriter. This is not bad in and of itself, seeing that it makes the reader immediately aware of what he is looking at; but in a few cases the quality of the type

approaches unreadability. This is especially true in the pull out center section where the majority of the booklet's charts are reprinted in a reduced size. The second stop on my fault-finding junket is again not with the mechanics of the rules but with the implementing of them. The text seems to be aimed at being read by someone who may not have the slightest idea of what a fantasy role-playing game is about. However, a beginner could not, without extreme difficulty, "map out" a campaign or adventure on what guidelines have been given to him or her in the rules. That is to say, in an attempt to avoid hard rules on how to set up a campaign and merely provide counseling on the matter to the referee, no suggestion of how to actually draw up an underground or wilderness adventure is given. Referring someone to prepublished maps or scenarios is a copout of the worst kind, especially if the beginner isn't too hot about the idea of spending a lot more dough on a hobby he is not very deep into yet. Beginners need a lot of help. I know. I once was one.

Besides the aforementioned and a few horrible typos (c'mon guys, you can at least proof the sales pitch on the back page and spell your name right) there is very little wrong with RUNEQUEST. In fact there is a lot of right that can be said for it. Very few games provide a running example of how their system works in practice. Through RUNEQUEST,

the reader follows the activities of Rurik and his comrades. The stories are short, interesting and informative. Through them the rules are given flesh. Although the whole booklet is rather text heavy (pages and pages and pages of un-illuminated text. There ought to be a law against that sort of thing!) the illustrations by Luise Perrin are of good to excellent quality and are in the spirit of the rules. The overall physical quality of the rules booklet (excluding blatant types) is of very high quality. The cover itself, again by Luise Perrin, is crisp and attractive, making good usage of two color printing. Another plus, that probably should have been mentioned sooner, is the inclusion of a copiable character sheet designed for use with the RUNEQUEST rules.

For those players of FRP games who are not firmly entrenched already into a single gaming system and refuse, either for reasons of stubbornness or lack of time to devote to more than one system (I know how this can be), I highly recommend RUNEQUEST. Whether or not you play it on Glorontha or a design world of your own is of no matter. The game system will work equally well for both.

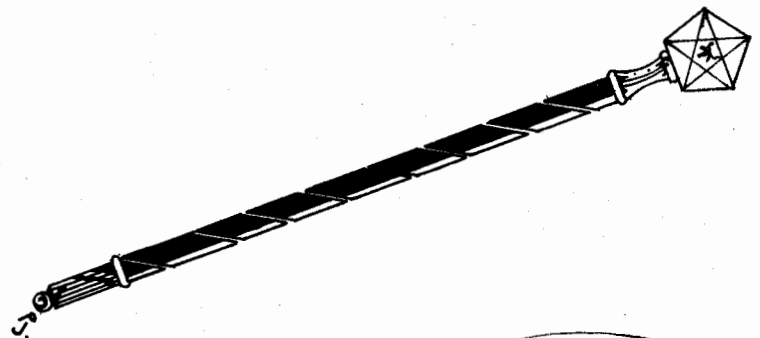
RUNEQUEST, designed by Steve Perrin, Ray Turney, Steve Henderson and Warren James with illustrations by Luise Perrin is available for \$8.00.

# The BOOTY BAG

## Pentacle Staff

by Jon-Pierre Pazevic

This staff, usable by clerics and magic users, allows them to control 1 - 4 demons at any one time, and their resistance to magic will not help them, although they still get a magic saving throw. The demons controlled will function as if under a charm-monster spell.



## Ring of Undead Summoning

by Jon-Pierre Pazevic

This group of rings calls forth 1 - 4 undead of the ring's type, once per week. They will obey the users commands. If the undead is killed, they return to the ring to be used the next time.

Iron - Skeletons  
Copper - Zombies  
Silver - Ghouls

Gold - Wights  
Electrum - Wraiths  
Platinum - Mummies



## Ring of Anti-Undead Summoning

by Jon-Pierre Pazevic

As above, but when Undead are summoned, they will attack the wearer of the ring.

# WORDS AND WHIPS

Dear Chuck,

Here is a few comments on *The Dungeoneer*. The cover is excellent as is all the artwork of Paul Jaquays, and back cover is interesting.

Arcane Elders is doing fine under the guidance of J. Mark Hendrick. A Private Hell by Bryan Hinnon, the dialogue is in idiom which is always hard to follow if your character speaks with an accent or in idioms. It is far better to say they speak with an accent or in idiom than to show it. Otherwise the story has some good ideas. Under Sky King's Light by Bill Paley is excellent.

We could slip the strips. I like Paul Jaquays when he does serious artwork.

Aaron Arocho needs to check his material. Several bad mistakes; Hero appears at top of page 26 without his shoes, but he has them on in the next box. Hero appears at bottom of page 27 but he is not released by the monster until the top of the next page. He does not belong in that scene. The story isn't good either, we don't get to know the Hero and we really don't care about him.

Lovely Dryiad and good picture by Aaron Arocho on page 29.

Mark Goldberg's article is good. E. Gary Gyax made a attempt to revive "War of the Empires" but it did not get off the ground. FBI had already done this type of thing better.

Gil does a nice job on artwork for review of "Quag Keep". Maybe a chance of sequel but little chance of getting the original rewritten. I doubt if Andre Norton would do it. She lives in Florida, but she is up in years and does not get to Conventions anymore due to illness.

The article on government in Traveller would have done better if it had be called just that instead of ?. The writer apparently did not get around much to play other games or he would have noticed that quite a few D&D games, Runquest, Judges Guild, are

using government with some success and it is of some importance to the players.

Paul Jaquays had an excellent idea with Ceremonial Magic, but he does not have far effect. It is confusing. Could factor roll for spell points be intelligent plus level; I 12 Mage +3 (his level), then take 4D7 dice roll, the amount or take a Klutz. Roll it on 1D6. 6 would mean the spell does not go off, the spell points are lost and Mage gets no other penalty. If he succeeds in rolling, the spell points with the dice, he then takes off the spend spell points and spell goes off.

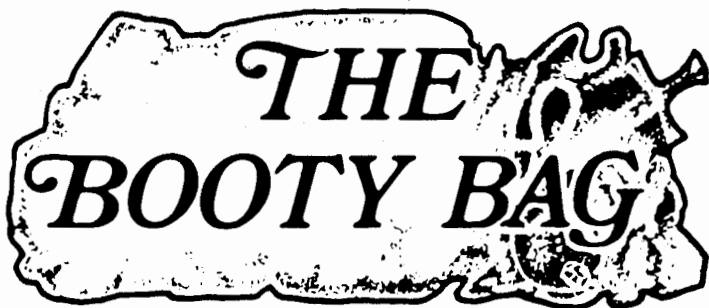
Monster Matrix is good. Sometime you ought to get someone who understands "Spaceships and Spacemen" to explain it to the readers who don't know the game so they can understand what your writers are talking about in regard to it. It looks like a really interesting game.

I liked the Booty Bag. I had usually mixed up a mess of artifacts. Those I had run into are a bit of a job to run. Eldritch Wizardry is confusing. Most people don't know how to play them right and they usually end up messing themselves up properly. Good history system.

Shadow Giants was well done. Morkendaine was well done. The best dungeon there because it was complete with history and most things explained. Running to the books for this and that can be a problem.

Judges Guild Journal had good covers front and back. The dungeons were good, many with fine ideas. Some should have taken a cue from Morkendaine and used the alignment of various characters to profit or cause problems for the players. A player should be taught early not to judge everything on face value and not to fight every thing in sight.

M. R. Gamignani



Sling of David

by Jon-Pierre Pazevic

This magical item does 1 - 4 points to any monster, but when hitting any True Giant it receives +3 hit probability and does 5 - 50 points of damage.

Page 22: "Ceremonial Magic"

The aim of this system is to allow the casting of any level spell by any magic using character. These spells can be one of those already delineated in the game rules or can be a special creation of the character.

To cast a spell, a character must invest a minimum of energy points equal to the spell to give a 30% chance of success. Energy points are gained at a rate of 3 points per level by standard magic users and 2 points per level by standard clerics. All other character types gain spell points at a rate of 1 per level. Each character has a beginning energy point total equal to the sum of his Strength and Constitution.

By investing double, triple, quadruple, or quintuple the amount of energy required, the caster can raise his chance of success. If a spell caster is unsuccessful in casting a spell, he takes damage equal to (Loss of Control - Step 1)  $\times$  1/3 the level of the spell attempted. Also, all energy applied to the spell is lost as if the spell was successful.

If a character's Strength or Constitution is reduced below 2, that character will be unconscious until those points are regained (4 per day or 1 every 6 hours). If both factors are reduced below 2, the character will die.

Correction: Loss of control, Step 3, should read: Loss of Control by 5 factors - spell backfires. Take 1D6 of damage and lose energy as per 4 times the spell level. Caster receives spell effects if successful.



+4 From Behind

The magic is cast by summoning up a demon or netherworld creature and controlling it while it performs the required magic.

This system may be used within almost any game system employing strength, constitution, and character levels.

Page 33: Monster Matrix: Sart'o

Line 4 should read "They will absorb all energy from sources within a 50 meter radius."

Paragraph 3 should read:

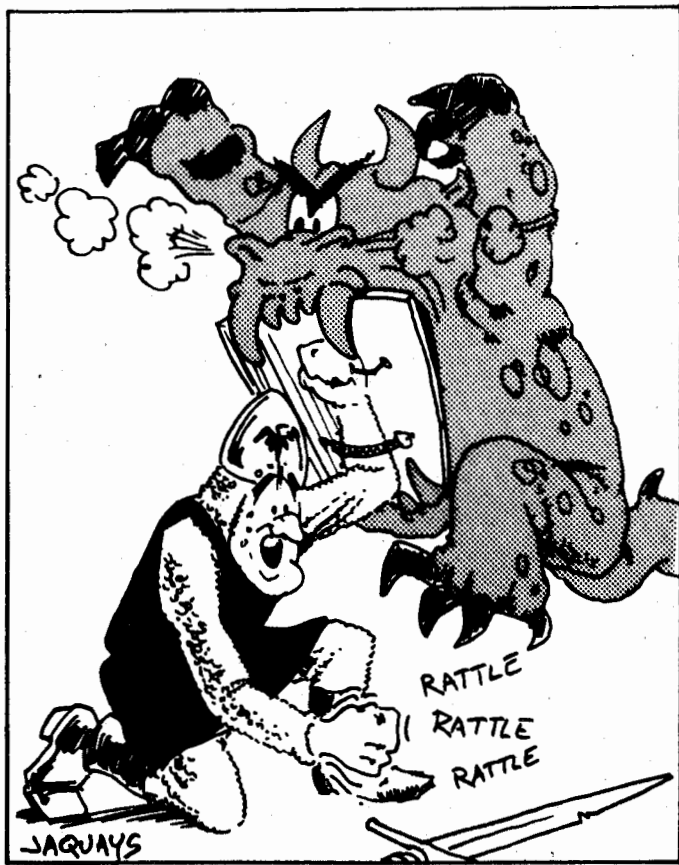
"If within 50 meters of a drive pod, they will absorb all the power in the pod and explode for 5 dice of damage to those within a 10 meter radius. The drive pod will also be drained until recharged, removing that much power from the ship."

Paragraph 4 should read:

"Close Attack Strength: 30 +D6, Hits: 12 +2D6. Size: 1 meter tall, 2 meters long. If the creature takes a hit from an energy weapon, instead of taking damage, it will absorb, half the amount of hits given and add them to its hit points.

Page 50: Morkendaine

It is suggested by the designer, that referees eliminate the multiple doses from potions found in the dungeon. From recent experience, he has discovered that it is not wise to be so free with gifts.



61 C'MON.... BABY NEEDS A 16 OR BETTER TO HIT!



# Pyramid of Ra-Dok

by Patrick Westfall

## History

The Pyramid of Ra-dok is located on the sea coast, with the sea east of the Pyramid and on the other sides are just flat green grasslands for miles with a few stomes sticking out of the ground that reminds the people that once a city had surrounded the pyramid.

The city that once stood around the pyramid was known for it's fabulous riches, some people even called the city "The City of Saphires", but the real name of the city was Tor. All that is left of the city are stones and the pyramid. The lands around the city were once a vast desert, but that was before the great flood.

The pyramid of Ra-Dok was built by the King, King Rad-Dok the Evil, of the City of Tor. The King, known as "The Evil One" and "The Burner", prayed to Anubis and anybody found praying to another god or just displeased him in any way would become a human sacrifice to Anubis, thus his nicknames. The King died, childless, two months after completion of the pyramid. He was buried with his two bodyguards and his personal advisor (all three still very much alive at that time).

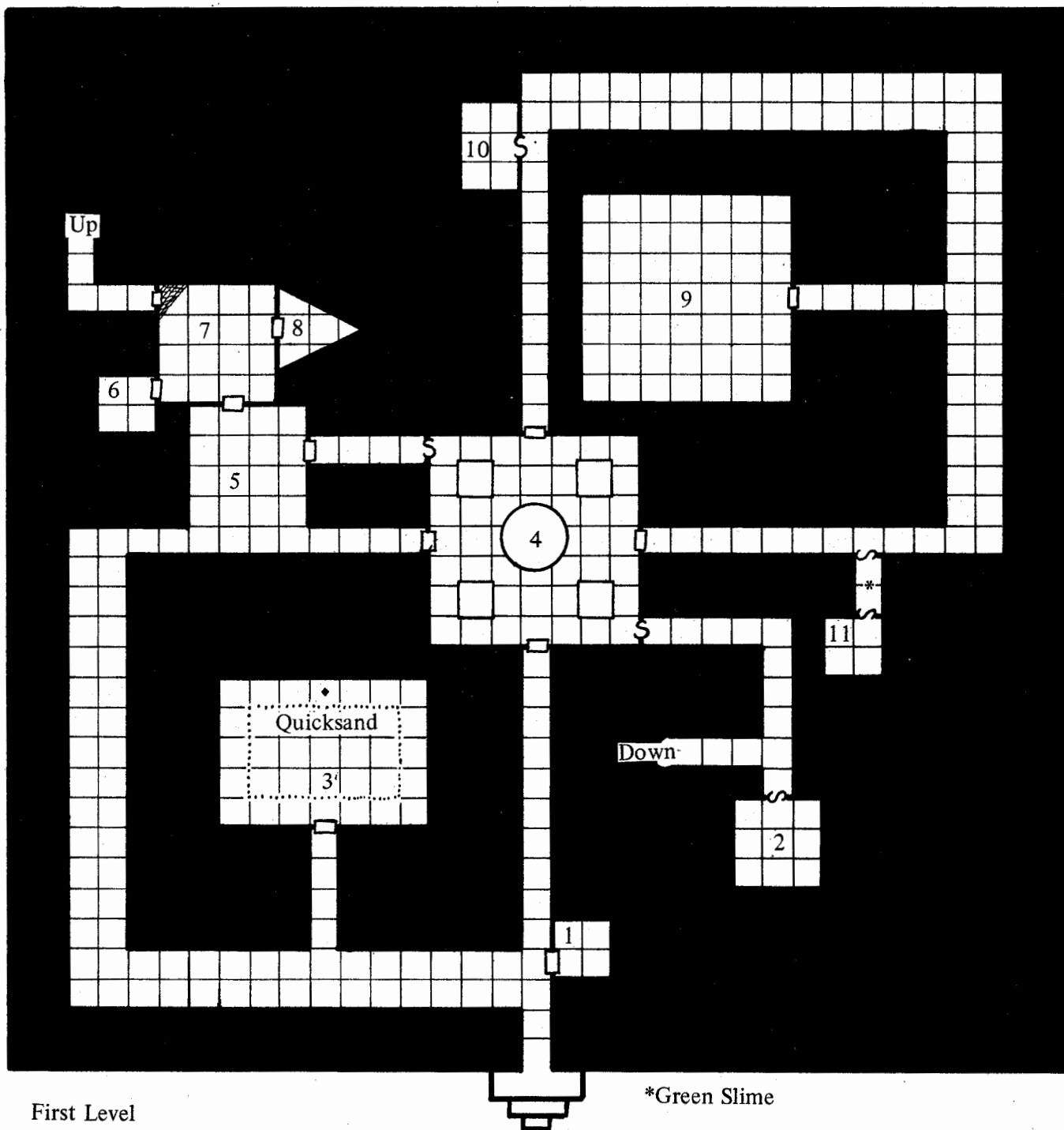
The townspeople after the burial went down to the sea coast and started praying to Neptune to cleanse the City of Tor of it's evilness. The next day a tidal wave hit wiping out the whole city and leaving nothing but a few stones and the pyramid. The land all around the area soon became green and peaceful.

Since the great flood people have gone in, but few have returned. The few that have returned have told about it's wonders and it's beauty. The ones' that are still living are rich. They also tell the need to take care about wandering around inside the pyramid.

## 1st Level

Door will only open with a ST-60 and has written on it in SPHINX "Only the dead may walk"

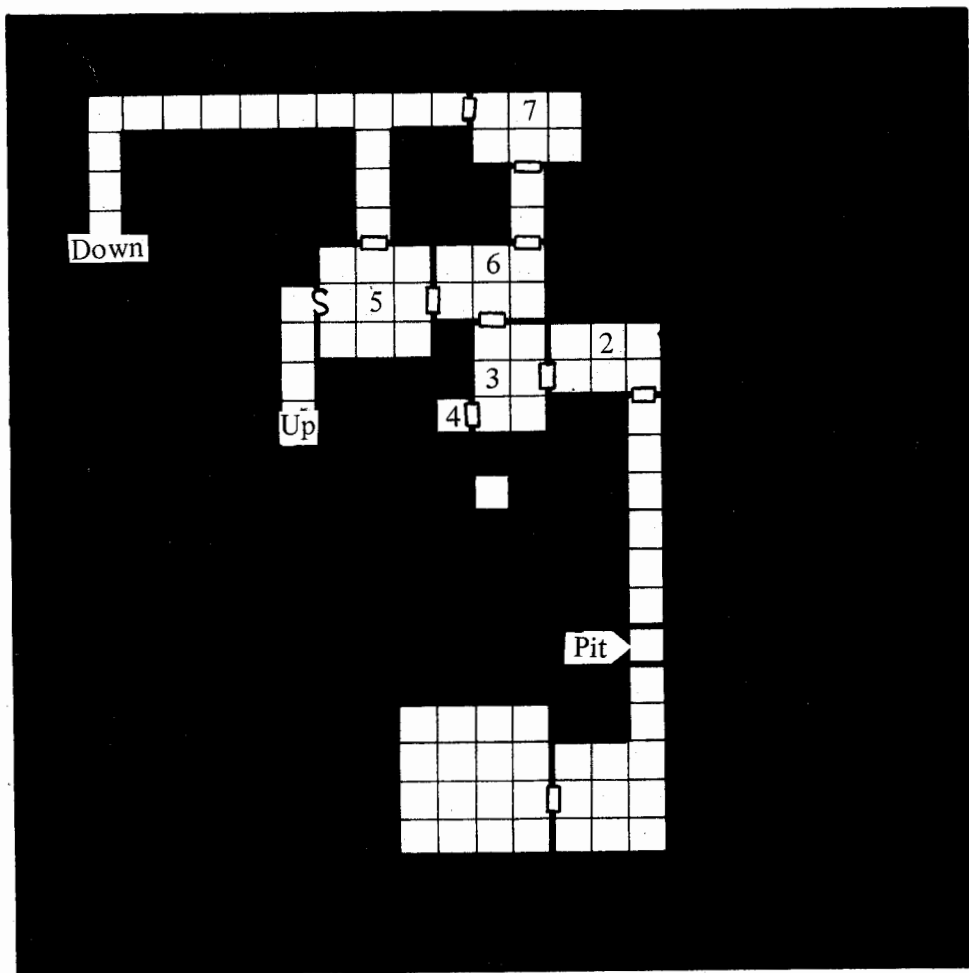
- 1) 10 Zombies, AC 8, Swords, HTK 9, 8, 11, 9, 9, 2, 11, 12, 11, 8. In the room is a chest containing 600 CP and 10 SP.
- 2) This room is a cobwebbed vault, laying on the floor is 1 CP and 2 GP. The Copper Piece is a Demon Amulet and written on it in demon is the Demon's name "Jaglor", Type II, AC -2, HTK 49.
- 3) There is a Will-o-the-Wisp shaped like a diamond on the other side of the room. AC -8, HTK 53. There is quicksand as the floor in this room except next to the wall which is normal sand.
- 4) This room has a platform with a beam of light hitting it, coming from the point of the pyramid, which is a Gem worth 100,000 GP, anybody touching this Gem dies (no saving throws). This Gem brings in the **Sunlight** and **Moonlight**. If sunlight beam is going, standing on the platform cures diseases and heals all lost hit points. If moonlight beam is going (save vs disintegrate with a -6 on saving throw) will be gone for good. There are 4 giant Lion Statues in the room facing the platform. Written on the doors before entering the room is "DARE ENTER" in Sphinx and "THE WAY OF THE SUN AND THE MOON, THEY WILL END ALL TROUBLES FOR YOU."
- 5) Old wrapping room with coffins.
- 6) Sealing room.
- 7) Large cobwebs hiding a door.
- 8) Empty Room.
- 9) Written on the door in Undead is "OFFERING TO ANUBIS, ALL PRAISE ANUBIS". In this room is a statue of Anubis, before the statue is 30 pieces of Jewels and a Sword +1, good, no powers, also a Scroll of Protection against Air Elementals, and a map leanding to Room 11. Anybody not saying Anubis, 2 skeletons will attack, AC 7, HTK 1, 2. Also anybody taking anything will die if they do not praise Anubis or they must have a Remove Curse thrown on them. They will die in one day.



First Level

\*Green Slime

- 10) There is a chest containing a 100 Electrum and 10 Platinum Pieces.
- 11) This room contains a Sword +1, +3 vs Green Dragons, Neutral, the sword speaks neutral, Green Dragon, and Elf. Has a double effect Detect Magic, and a Detect Sloping Passages. INT 10, Ego 12. There is also a Potion of Clairvoyance, 2 doses. Label is in Lammasu.



2nd Level UP

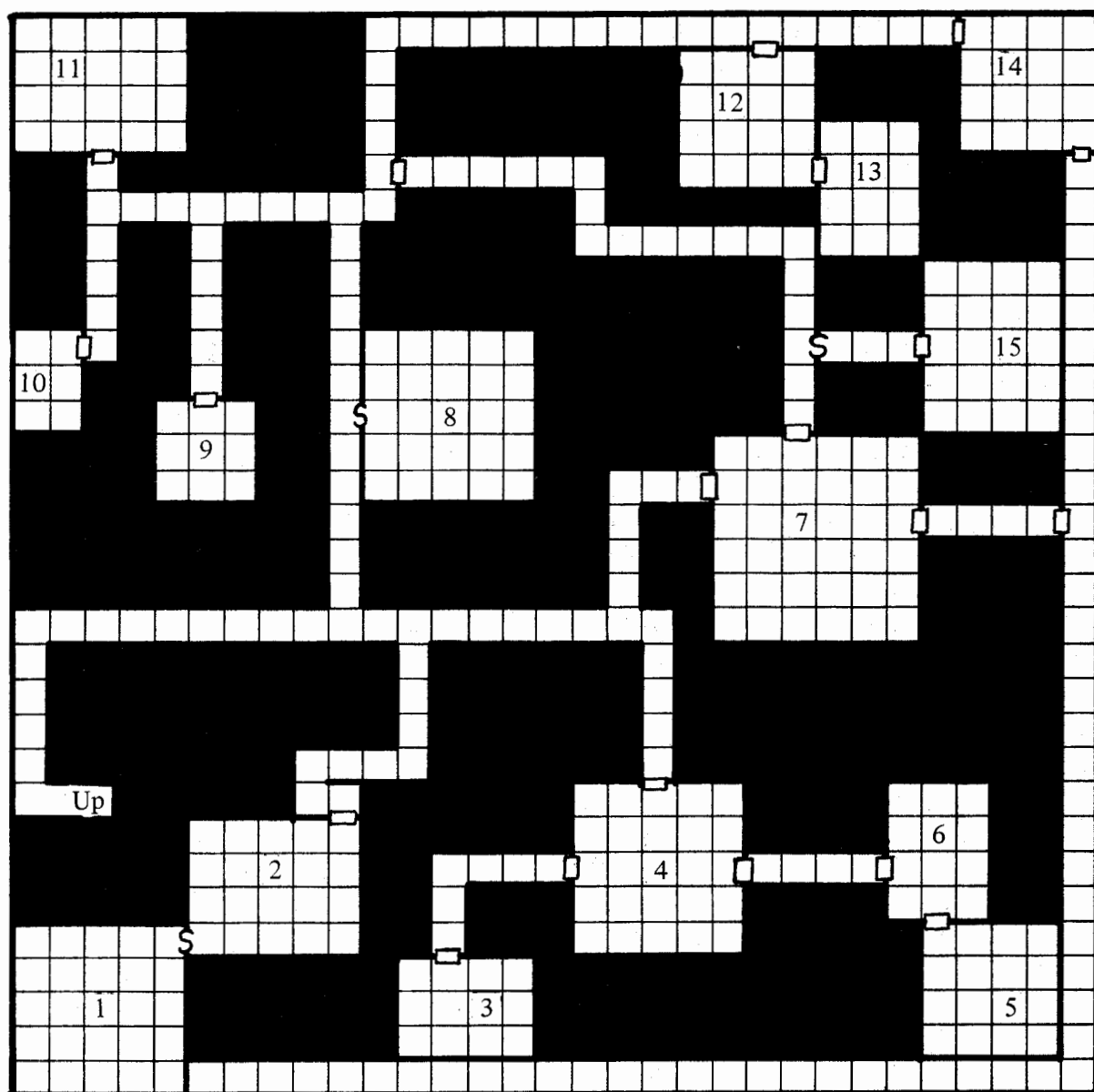
### 2nd Level UP

- 1) This is the Advisors Tomb with his remains in it, and also a couple of chests containing 1,000 CP and 2,000 GP, 37 Gems, and 3 potions that are unmarked (diminuation, healing, speed (F)). There is a silver seal on the door worth about 10 GP.
- 2-5) These rooms are empty.
- 6) There are 25 Zombies here. AC 8, Swords, HTK 8, 11, 9, 9, 5, 16, 9, 13, 16, 7, 15, 9, 12, 7, 15, 8, 7, 14, 11, 11, 8, 10, 10, 5, 7.
- 7) There is a huge wooden chest containing 2 Rust Monsters, AC 2, HTK 28, 23, also in the chest is a Potion of Oil of Slip.

### 2nd Level BELOW

- 1) This is the lair of a young adult Blue Dragon, AC 2, HTK 40. His lair contains 81,000 SP, and 20,000 GP.
- 2) There is a Suit of Armor containing Ochre Jelly, AC 8, HTK 33, also 400 SP, and 50 GP.
- 3) In this room almost dead Burglar (ungrateful).
- 4) Empty Room.
- 5) 2 Carrion Crawlers, AC 3, HTK 17, 14.

- 6) 3 Skeletons, AC 7, HTK 1, 4, 3.
- 7) 6 Heros, AC 4, Swords, HTK 27, 25, 21, 14, 29, 18. They have among them 600 SP, and 50 GP.
- 8-9) Empty Rooms.
- 10) 4 Giant Ticks, AC 3, HTK 20, 17, 19, 18.
- 11-12) Empty Rooms.
- 13) 2 Salamanders, AC 5/3, HTK 42, 46.
- 14) Rod of Resurrection 10 charges left in it, it is being used as a hinge for the door.
- 15) Cloak Room for Priest, cloaks are all black except one which is black with a white hook. It is a cloak of Protection, +1.

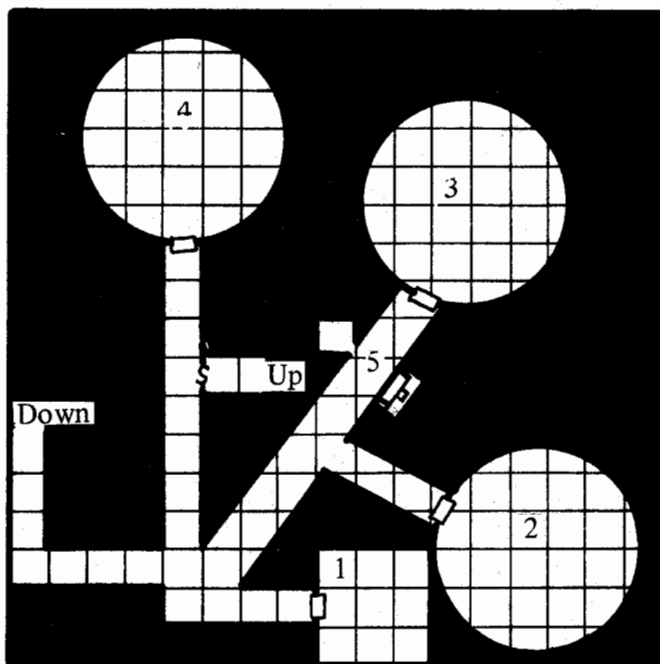


### 3rd Level UP

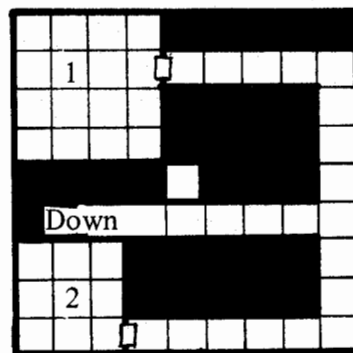
- 1) Magic mouth on the door says in common "Turn back now while there's still time". This alerts 9 Mummies, AC 3, HTK 21, 28, 14, 19, 19, 26, 12, 32, 15. There is 9 Gems among them in the room.
- 2) There is an 11-headed Hydra, AC 5, in this room.
- 3) There are 5 displacer Beasts, AC 4, HTK 20, 24, 32, 10, 29, with a chest containing 400 SP and 100 GP, next to the chest is an old worn out broom (Animated broom, AC 6, HTK 12).
- 4) 1 Giant Scorpion, AC 3, HTK 28. Ready to strike anybody coming through the door. On the back side of the room is a scroll of protection against undead and a sword +1, +2 vs M.U. and Enchanted Monsters, Good, Detect Evil, Sloping Passages, Detect Magic, INT 9, Ego 9.
- 5) This is a trap that pushes the person or thing through the opening in the wall and the body will land on the platform on the first level, due to the heat of the ray there will be 2 dice of damage done and 10 dice of damage done by the fall, can not get off spell before hitting the platform.

### 4th Level UP

- 1) Gold seal on the door worth 100 GP. This is the Tomb of King Ra-Dok, the Evil. The King and his 2 bodyguards are mummies. All 3 are fire-resistance. AC 3, Ra-Dok has 36 HTK, 2 body guards have 35, 27 HTK. There is a chest with 4,000 SP and 2,000 GP, 7 Gems, 1 Jewel, Potion of Heroism, and a Ring of Weakness. Ra-Dok Crown has powers of I-C, Q; II-S; III-J,G; V-M (Eldritch Wizardry).
- 2) 4 Jars with 4 wraiths, one in each, AC 4, HTK 21, 29, 26, 28.



3rd Level UP



4th Level UP





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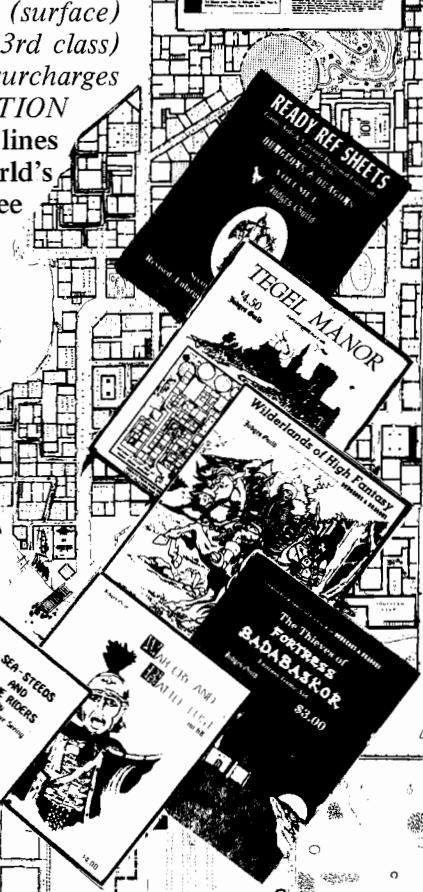
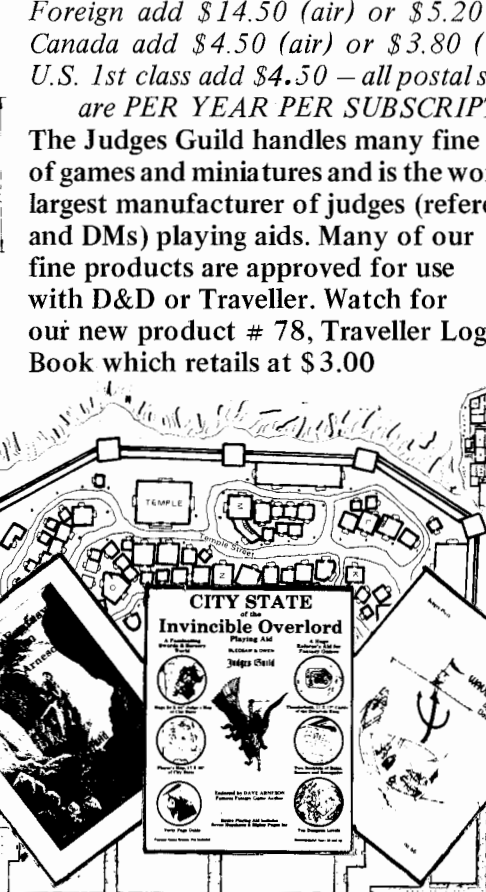
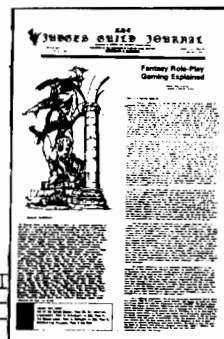
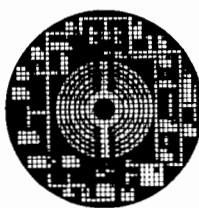
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