

THE DUNGEONEER

11

Judges Guild



"Carry out the sentence," growled the old man.



Under The Sky King's Light

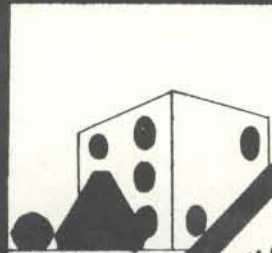
May - June

\$2.80



WATCH FOR JUDGES GUILD AT OUR BOOTH AT:

GEN CON



University of Wisconsin-Parkside
August 16-19, 1979



Dealers . . . Seminars . . . Boardgames!
Giant Dungeon and D&D[®] Tournaments!
Miniatures . . . Role Playing . . . New Game Releases!

**Everything You Ever Wanted
In A Game Convention And MORE!**

\$10.00 Pre-Registration Fee Before July 25-\$15.00 At Door
For More Information Contact: GENCON XII, POB 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147



WELCOME

TO ADVENTURE

UNDREAMED OF



You are further invited to become a regular, continuing part of *The Dungeoneer*. By subscribing now, you'll never have to risk missing an issue.



To avoid creating unsightly holes in your *Dungeoneer* collection, check out the subscription rates in the Publisher's Statement on page 2.

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

The *Dungeoneer* is owned by Chuck Anshell and is published by Judges Guild, 1165 N. University, Decatur, IL, 62526. It is published bi-monthly on alternate months with *The Judges Guild Journal* which is owned and published by Judges Guild, 1165 N. University, Decatur, IL, 62526. Guild-member subscriptions include *tJGJ* and installments or retail products. Subscriptions to either *tD* or *Guildmember* (not both together) are as follows: New Subscribers: 1 year (6 issues) \$15, 2 years (12 issues) \$29, 3 years (18 issues) \$43. Renewal subscriptions are: 1 year \$14, 2 years \$26, 3 years \$43. Lifetime subscriptions to either are \$150 each. Lifetime subs include 1st class postage. Regular subs go out bulk mail unless postal surcharge is included. U.S. \$4.50 (1st class). Canada \$4.50 (air) or (\$3.80 (3rd class). ALL FOREIGN SUBS ADD: \$14.50 (air) or \$5.20 (surface) except Canada. These postal surcharges are PER YEAR PER SUB. The *Dungeoneer*-The Adventuresome Compendium of Issues 1-6 is \$2.50. Foreign orders \$4.80 (includes air mail). All other back issues of either magazine are available as separate issues. No foreign cash or checks accepted. All foreign money orders should be made out in U.S. Currency. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH THROUGH THE MAIL. Checks and money orders for subs should be made out to: Judges Guild. Which subs you are ordering should be clearly stated.

DISTRIBUTORS

The following are distributors for both the *Judges Guild Journal* and *The Dungeoneer*: Judges Guild; The Armory, 3424 Jan Ellen Dr., Baltimore, MD, 21208; Balboa Game Co., 630 Willow, Long Beach, CA, 90806; Games Workshop, 1 Dalling Road, Hammersmith, London, W6 0JD, UK; Midwest Game & Hobby Shop, RR2 1142 S 96th Ave., Zeeland, MI, 49464; Nagdam, FTZ #23, 901 Fuhrmann Blvd., Buffalo, NY, 14203; The following are distributors for the *Judges Guild Journal* only: Coulter-Bennett, 12158 Hamlin, North Hollywood, CA, 91606; Heritage Models, 9840 Monroe Drive, Bldg. 106, Dallas, TX, 75220; The Compleat Strategist, 11 E. 33rd St., New York, NY, 10016; Delaware Valley Hobby Distributors, 701 Ashland Ave., Fullcroft, PA, 19032; Gambit Games Store, 687 Market St., San Francisco, CA, 94105; Import Marketing, 4681 S. 83rd East Ave., Tulsa, OK, 74145; MCP, 1030 W. Ellsworth, Denver, CO, 80223; Nans Toys & Games, 1385 Galleria Mall, 5015 Westheimer, Dallas, TX, 77056; Shea Associates, 204 Walnut, Bloomington, IN, 47401; The following are distributors of *The Dungeoneer* only: Fantasy Games & Hobby Sales, 2376 Letart, Muskegon, MI, 49441; CS&D, 731 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO, 80209; Ingo Baschek, D-4660 Gelsenkirchen Buer, Arenfelsstrasse 12, West Germany; Fandom II 604-360 Bell St., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

ADVERTISING RATES

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



the Lab' Oratory

Hello, again! This column will be rather short this time in order to facilitate printing all the letters and my answers to them. However a couple of things do need to be said. Please watch for Judges Guild at the following Cons: GAMEFAIR, GENCON, MICHICON. We, also, hope to be at ORIGINS and several other cons. Watch for future issues of tD and the Journal for further updates.

We owe a huge apology to Thomas McCloud. A recent ad inadvertently went out with his name as author of *Under the Storm Giant's Castle* listed as Tim instead of Tom. Rest assured, his name is correct in the product, but it seems that Tim is the name of his son whom he recently lost. Our apologies to Tom for the unnecessary pain this error caused.

Chuck Anshell

WORDS & WHIPS

Dear Chuck,

I received issue 10 the other day. Thank you very much. Thank you for your review of *The Apprentice*. *The Dungeoneer* is truly an excellent magazine and I would be most grateful if you could uphold your quality as you have up to now. *The Apprentice* owes its being to your magazine. I was sitting in the tent-trailer, recuperating from a marathon session of FRP and leafing through my tD collection, when Richard Best and I thought we could do better. (you must admit that the inside of the first few issues were a bit messy.) Although Richard lost interest, I carried on and am now sending out the fourth issue to the printers. You will notice that the contents of *The Apprentice* are modeled after tD, with a serial, editorial, news, new rule systems, etc. Thanks again!



Table Of Contents

May-June, 1979

Issue 11

Editor: Chuck Anshell Asst. Editor Penny Gooding
Assitant Editor Mitch Johnson

FEATURES:

Contribution Requirements.....	6
Thoughts on Lightning by Jim Ward.....	20
Creating a Computer Game & Swordsman by Bill Pixley.....	21
Faith by Tom McCloud.....	34
Wet Navy Meets Space Fleet (Traveller) by Bill Paley.....	39
On Magic.....	
Bill Seligman and P.E. I Bonewits.....	45
Maramis the Elf by Ronald Pehr.....	50
Wilderness by Bryan Hinnen.....	52
Creepy Critters by Aaron Arocho.....	42

SERIALS:

The Arcane Elders by J. Mark Hendricks.....	10
Questing by Aaron Arocho & Paul Jaquays.....	14
A Private Hell by Bryan Hinnen.....	18
Under Sky King's Light by Bill Paley.....	26

COLUMNS:

The Lab'Oratory' by Chuck Anshell.....	3
Words & Whips.....	3
Booty Bag: Helms by Ronald Pehr.....	32
Nose Wet? or No Sweat! by Tom Cooper.....	31
Monster Matrix by Scott Johnson.....	43
The Die is Cast.....	37
Mini-Dungeon (for TFT) by Paul Jaquays.....	55

ART CREDITS:

Paul Jaquays: 1, 8, 9, 24, 36, 43, 40, 49, 55, 56, 57, 64. Aaron Arocho: 2, 14-17, 23, 42. GIL: 53-54. C. England 25, 38 All Color added to B & W by Paul Jaquays

ADS:

The Dungeoneer 1, GenCon inside front cover, JG inside back cover & 64, CHAOSium 7

The following columns were left out due to space limitations, but will return: Under Toe, Torchlight, Lords of Valor

©1979 by Judges Guild and Charles R. Anshell. All rights reserved. No portion of this magazine may be reproduced, in whole or in part, without permission except for brief passages used for review or other uses allowed by copyright laws.

Although my magazine doesn't look like much against [current] tD, I believe I am still in a position to give a few valid opinions and suggestions. First, drop all of the serials except "Arcane Elders" and scrap the comic strips, especially "The Edge of the Galaxy". Jaquays has too much talent to be wasting it on that strip. By having a large white border on the front cover, tD appears to be smaller than it really is. Unless there is some technical reason against it, I must stress that a bled cover would improve sales a good deal. Humor and puns are nice, but if you want to keep classy I'd take a bit of informality out of the editorials. You can be friendly without added dialect. After including so much beautiful artwork, the reader should not have to be subjected to pp 21, 40 (l.r.), 46, 47 and 50 of issue 10. As well, it was stated in issue 9 (the first produced by JG) that tD would be independent of the Guild . . . wait a moment, that's not true. I think I remember reading somewhere that tD would not become a house-organ of JG. The logo of JG on the cover of issue 10 was easily as large as the lettering of tD. As well the errata sheet for Akbeth's Tower should be in tJGJ where it belongs.

Your new price of \$2.80 is either astounding or a typographical error. I'll agree that tD is worth it; the browsing customer isn't going to buy a copy to find that out, though. Good luck with the new price.

[In reference to JG:] Finally, congratulations on one of the fastest growing (and rightfully so) companies to appear in the strategy games field and your most excellent and highly praised product line. By constructing a world and not just an underground labyrinth you have helped the hobby reach the point where people are dealing with a planet and not just a dungeon . . . you have expanded the consistency of play without damaging the creativeness [of the GM]. Best Wishes,

David Berman

We (Paul, myself and the Guild) are very pleased that tD has inspired others to start fanzines. I guess a real compliment is that Paul, the originator, first owner, publisher and editor has continued to provide artwork and insure the continued success of tD and, now, even works for Judges Guild full-time. How many former owners later become employees of their own creations? The Apprentice seems to be improving with each issue. Putting together a fanzine is not all it's cracked up to be. It involves a lot of work and sacrifice and improvements don't always come easy. In reference to the fiction in tD I would like to say that we, also, receive a lot of commentary which is favorable. We don't publish just any fiction. If some were submitted by a big-name author, it would probably get published, regardless,

but the fan fiction is chosen because of its applicability to gaming. We have a lot of other short fiction standing by, awaiting the conclusion of our serials by Bill Paley and Bryan Hinnen. It is important, too, to keep in mind that a vital function of a fanzine is to provide an outlet for publication of previously unpublished authors and artists. We try to do this in a manner which aids gaming and our readership. As to the cartoon Edge of the Galaxy: sorry to disappoint you, again, Dave, but There are too many who love it, for one thing; there are too many of us who delight in the "in" jokes about Paul, myself, and our friends—people who got tD going in the first place; and there is Paul, himself, who doesn't agree with you about it wasting his talents. It provides an outlet for him from the humdrum routine of things, in addition to which it is, technically, a much harder format than pen and ink—which is why we pay the same rates for 'fake' color as for full-color. Not all amateur artists are as good as Paul or Aaron Arocho. If you didn't like the items you listed, consider what we turned down. Much art does await publication, here, too. Not all art is of a thoroughly professional quality, but, again, we are a fanzine. We can only print the best of what is sent to us and we do only print those whose art shows promise. Art styles differ considerably. Not everyone likes all styles of art. We hope to provide a broad base of styles from as many amateur artists as possible. As to my editorials—well, I am me. Sometimes I get very serious and other times I am so satirical I can't stand myself. If from time to time I, also, get folksy, all I can say is I am the editor and I decide what goes in and what doesn't. Take me as I am. If you like me, great, I can always use more friends. If you don't like me—I'll change what I can but I won't be someone else to do it. [I know that you didn't intend it that way and I hope you realize that I'm not at all upset with your comment although it may look like it in print.] As to tD being a house-organ: 1) I made the decision to put the errata sheets in tD. I did it because I felt it would be a service to my readers who had purchased Of Skulls and Scraphaggot Green. They did, also, appear in the Journal. The reason for the logo being so big was less altruistic: I ran out of enough letters in the larger size press type for the title. I was unable to get more here in town. The JG logo was the smallest on hand. Again, it was decision to go rather than hold things up. Our covers are printed by a different printer than the one who does the inside pages. Last bled cover we gave him he made changes on without notifying us first, then did not reduce it quite enough so part of the title got chopped off when the second printer put the covers on and trimmed the book. Until we get these matters well in hand, we are't going to do another bled cover. One final word—about the new cover price: yes, we are aware that it is high in some respects.

The fact is we make about 1 cent per copy at the old price when discounted for distributors. These are, currently, more than 3-times the subscription sales. This means cover prices had to be raised, etc. Moral: more subscribers and more store sales means more copies, less printing & labor cost/copy, etc. and we can make further increases in quality and/or quantity of material included. Increased quality & quantity means more subs and more dealers, etc. SUBSCRIBE!!!!

Fellow Dungeon Masters,

I would like to say just how much I enjoy your magazine. I hope to contribute a few of my own dungeons and ideas. One of the ideas includes some computer programs in BASIC. Since the Radio Shack computers are selling so well, and the fact that a lot of hobby computers have BASIC for a language is good reason to have this in your magazine.

Bonum Fortunum
(Matt Rings)

Thanks for the kudos, Matt. We will be looking forward to seeing your material and computer programs. Most people are unaware that there are over 50 BASICs currently going around. Fortunately, most of them are easily converted to the others (the program in this issue by Bill Pixley, for instance is easily converted to Radio Shack Level II Basic). One reason we chose the TRS-80 was its general popularity and the fact that RS is going out for more Business business. Please see, also, the new information on submission policies and reimbursement elsewhere in this issue.

Dear Chuck,

A few comments on tD 10. Bill Paley's remark that "in space fantasy, the adventure travels from star to star in a spaceship, while in D&D . . . the adventurer travels . . . from dungeon to dungeon" struck a sensitive nerve with me.

I agree that that is what the rules are set up for, and work best with, but there is, after all, a good deal more between dungeons than between stars: or there ought to be! I have spent the last two years or so searching for an acceptable substitute for dungeoning. The blithe assumption that the Gilded Holes we have ever with us is annoying.

Of Rusty Lamont's name table I can say that it is better than the one I once put together, but it suffers from the lack of an obvious linguistic base. Once I get organized, say in another five years or so, I will have name tables for each national group in my campaign (and much else besides) so names will

have some connection to the background.

Steve Marsh's poison list seems useful, though, surely, in a magical society there are stranger poisons. Not to mention useful drugs: such as the one which keeps imprisoned magicians from teleporting out! A slight fuzziness around the gestures . . .

I note a total lack of Gamemasters from this area in your list. [see new list next issue]

RUNEQUEST! does indeed seem to be most promising. My APA-zine, *The Wild Hunt*, has lately had a lot of comment and background material on it. There are some holes in the rules: an article in TWH 39 (early May), for instance, will discuss what "Bronze Age" armor and weapons should really be like. Tin was very rare, so giant metal weapons and cheap metal armor should not be available. Also, since bronze is not iron, greatswords, chainmail, etc. have mechanical difficulties.

Bill Seligman's skill system is balanced but I am not convinced that it is reasonable. I can't really see paying for skills with hit points.

Mark Swanson

Mark, please send more info on the con you mentioned so we can list it. I talk with Bill Paley frequently. He is well aware that much goes on between dungeon adventures and did not mean his comment the way you seem to have taken it. For that matter, why shouldn't there be as much adventure onboard ship between planets as there is on a planet? Some of the best SF written has never seen a planetary surface.

Dear Chuck,

The new tD is a sheer Joy! Get rid of the fiction though! [Will some of you whom I have talked to over the phone who say you love the fiction please write 3/4-CRA] It may be good, but I never read it. The dungeons are the real bonuses of the zine. Please keep this feature at all costs. I just love 'em.

David Govaker

Dave, if you aren't reading the fiction, you are really missing out on some good stuff! As I said above, the fiction is there because it is pertinent to gaming. There are a lot of good ideas for tricks, traps, treasure and monsters in the fiction. They show how a good campaign can be run. They show how to implement rules and playing aids into your campaign. And more! Hope you change your mind and go back and catch up on the serials. I think you may just change your mind.

Gentlemen:

I very much like the new look to tD. Think it's a good idea to present more material on other games. As much as I like D&D, there are many other fine role-playing games and other types of games that deserve to have material on them published.

I've finally managed to muster incentive to force myself to do a couple of art pieces for possible inclusion in your magazine. It's amazing how the prospect of monetary gain motivates a person.

Sincerely,
Brian Wagner

CONTRIBUTED COPY AND ART

Both of the magazines and Judges Guild welcome all contributions of art and copy, whether for use as articles, items for one of our columns or for use as possible projects. We, currently, pay some of the highest rates for copy in the industry and in SF&F fandom in general. Some of our rates are higher than professional magazines in the SF&F area. Certain restrictions **MUST** apply to submissions. Letters for the W & W (letter) column in tD may be handwritten but must be legible and are **NOT** paid for. All other copy submitted after May 1, 1979 **MUST** be typed. Copy typed on a standard pica typewriter should be double-spaced. Copy typed on a standard elite typewriter should be triple spaced. Margins should be at least one inch wide, all the way around the page. It is, also, helpful if copy is on white or light colored stock rather than a heavy pink or brown stock, particularly if artwork is, also, included. We are now producing gaming aids for several companies. Many of them will not accept projects for approval if they do not follow these guidelines. This is because it is very hard to properly edit copy which does not conform. As all projects are accepted conditionally on approval for use with the appropriate game system, these guidelines **MUST** be adhered to for any projects submitted. Some leeway may be given for magazine copy or projects not requiring outside approval, but this format is preferred by us, for the same reasons. Computer print-outs of programs should be on plain white paper if at all possible. Considering that listing formats are, generally, not controlled by the user, we will not hold computer programs to the above guidelines. We also accept artwork for publication which is of a SF&F nature or gaming nature. Artwork is paid for according to the schedule below. If you are unfamiliar with 'fake' color techniques you may write to us for a sheet of general instructions on the process and possible reference materials. Copy or art is accepted unless you hear otherwise from us. This does not mean it will get into the next issue! If you wish to be sure that your copy or artwork has reached us you should send a SASE postcard with it or send it certified, etc. Rejected copy or art will not be returned unless accompanied by an

appropriately-sized SASE. Accepted material becomes property of The Dungeoneer or Judges Guild. B & W artwork should be done on stock no thicker than heavy index stock, if at all possible. This makes it easier for the printer. Full-color artwork must be sent out for separations to be made (at this time) and should be submitted on a flexible medium if at all possible to facilitate a faster, computer-scan color-separation process. All color artwork (full-color or 'fake' color) should be drawn 1:1. If it is a full page size, without bleed, it should be 7¼" x 9½". Where color is to bleed to the edges (color covers the full 8½x11 page) the artwork should extend at least ¼" over the 8½ x 11 size, all the way around. Keep in mind, in either case, if the artwork is to be used as a cover there will have to be areas available for lettering where either black, white, magenta (process red), yellow or cyan (process blue) letters will show up and not interfere with the artwork. We would prefer that most of the color work submitted at this time be done in the 'fake' color process, however. Reimbursement rates for copy and art are as follows: **COPY**: Unsolicited copy, serialized or not: 30 cents/column-inch (20.5 pica or 3.5" x 1"). Solicited, serialized material: 40 cents/c-in. Solicited non-serialized or recognized professional writers: 50 cents/c-in. (about 1 c/word) **ARTWORK**: charcoals, full-tones or other works requiring half-tone screening: small (½ page or less when printed)=\$5 each or a series of 6 for \$4 each large=\$10 each or 6/\$9 each. Inked Line Drawings or works not requiring half-toning: small=\$6 each or 6/\$5 each. large=\$12 each or 6/\$10 each. **FULL COLOR OR FAKE COLOR, FULL PAGE** (for cover or internal) \$20 or 6/\$15 each. Other sizes of color work or solicited color work will have prices set when we contact you. Payment is made for artwork based on number of pieces accepted from the artist, prior to the publication of any one piece. Payment is made at the rate applicable for the size of the picture as it appears in the finished product or magazine, regardless of original size. Each picture being paid for separately. All payments for artwork and/or copy being made at the time of release of the magazine. Above payment rates **DO NOT APPLY** to artwork or copy submitted or used as products (i.e. other than in the magazines).

Two Friends Return. . .

ALL THE WORLDS' MONSTERS II

(*agarrett, air shark, akadus, alacorn. . .*) The second volume of this well-known FRPer-designed and FRPer-tested series is back in print at last! (*amanga, anaswami, aquazombie, archghoul, axebeak. . .*) About 250 monsters range from the absolutely terrifying to the totally ridiculous: there are beasts here to make high-level characters sweat and zaney creatures strictly for comic relief—whatever you need for your campaign is here! (*barghest, barluk, bionic bat, battle spider. . .*)

Alphabetically arranged, profusely illustrated, indexed by letter, level, and volume. Included are Steve Perrin's rules for more realistic (and interesting) melees, and Ken St. Andre describes statistics conversion to the *Tunnels & Trolls* system. (*blind worm, blood-rose, blue crusher. . .*) Second printing: 8½ x 11, 128 pages, saddlestitched, \$8.95 postpaid. Edited by Jeff Pimper and Steve Perrin. (*bobalynx, bomb monster, cockroach that ate Cincinnati. . .*)

AUTHENTIC THAUMATURGY

The classic study of magic in role-playing! Complete consideration of the necessary fundamentals for creating your own system or improving someone else's, by the only human holding a college degree in Magic. Many charts and illustrations cover psychic terminology, methods, and abilities, the laws of magic, what

spells are, the use of everyday objects for magical purposes, and much more: a complete sourcebook of the occult written specially for fantasy gamers! Second edition: 7 x 8½, 100pp., saddlestitched, new cover by author, illus. by Carol Rode, \$7.95 postpaid.

Play-Aids

This on-going series of play-aids is paperbound, 8½ x 11 inches, saddlestitched to lay flat when open, uniquely colored, sturdy, and inexpensive. The source packs of pre-rolled characters in particular allow the hurried and the harried to effortlessly extend the flexibility of the RuneQuest system to the utmost. Valuable as references and guides, these play-aids can be game-savers when a campaign takes an unexpected turn. Each title is complete in itself, but applicable only to the RuneQuest FRP system. New titles appear regularly.

Scenario Packs:

Balastor's Barracks—dangerous underground adventure, \$3.00.

Apple Lane—two beginning scenarios and background, \$4.00.

Source Packs:

Trolls & Trollkin—154 characters, \$2.00.

Scorpion Men & Broos—99 characters, \$2.00.

Millitia & Mercenaries—84 characters, 12 warhorses, \$2.00.

CHAOSIUM
box 6302 Albany CA 94706
write for free catalog

Cover Picture for "Under Storm Giants Castle",

also "Morkendaine" Illustration.







The Arcane Elders



by J. Mark Hendricks



alph shot a questioning glance towards Röhcyll. The young mage had been right about their work being cut out for them, the question was 'What kind of work?' It would be an extremely difficult task to follow the fleeing thieves, even for experienced trackers such as Lute and Ralph. The hard forest floor beside them would not leave many tracks and the brush lay so thick that one of Melkor's men could still be watching them without being discovered. On the other hand, the three and a half day journey back to the keep would be no easy jaunt. More than once had Lute drawn his dwarven blade to let the blood of shrubs and bushes, a fact that gave him no little irritation. Though Röhcyll had taken them by way of a decently defined trail, it had obviously not been travelled for some months, at least not since the summer before because no one had cleared the now well developed spring growth. As Ralph continued to look at Röhcyll, he sensed Lute moving about off to one side. Röhcyll seemed lost to the present. He continually stared in no particular direction, nor did he focus on any particular object. The halfling, just beginning to fathom the depths of Röhcyll's ingenuity, speculated at the possible thoughts racing through the boy's head at that time. In the past few weeks Röhcyll had often surprised both of his friends with some new capability or trick, sometimes just to observe their reaction and at others out of necessity. Had Ralph really known all that Röhcyll was contemplating at that moment he would probably have been torn between astonishment, curiosity and sheer terror. As it was, he only had his own surmises to go on. He turned towards Lute who had managed to perch himself halfway up a fairly tall tree in hopes of determining more precisely the direction taken by Melkor and his band of brigands. Ralph suddenly became aware that the bard's plan had not met up to expectations.

"Damn!" muttered Lute in a barely audible voice. "They vanish like will'o'the'wisps!" The agitation in his voice grew with every syllable. "If I ever get my nimble fingers around his scrawny

neck I'll make him warble a tune to wake the dead...if he doesn't join them first!" Lute emphasized his last sentence with the appropriate hand movements, a wide grin crossing his face with the final twist.

Ralph smirked. "You mean sinewy neck, and if I'm any judge of character you'd be waiting to jump him from behind. As for that song to wake the dead, you do that already."

"If you weren't so small I'd..."

"Enough," said Röhcyll softly. Both halted and faced the youth. Röhcyll had spoken quietly, but with a determination that by now they had learned would not yield. "There is too much to think about without your distractions. Obviously, it is useless to go on into Garth as we have no money left to get men with. Therefore we shall return to the keep without delay."

Lute started to raise his hand in objection, but Ralph stayed him. Lute quietly acquiesced.

"May we eat first young master? I have no heart to travel as famished as I am," said the bard.

"It is well," replied Röhcyll. "But we must be quick about it. We will not be returning by the same road and there is far to go yet today."

Lute and Ralph exchanged disquieted glances, but held their peace.

"The way is shorter, though wilder, and perchance we can cut off a day's travelling I deem we should bide the dangers."

"What dangers?" both asked with surprise.

"We shall only know that when we encounter them," the mage replied curtly. Then, the mischievousness only apparent in his eyes, he added, "But, I have heard tales..." He let his voice trail off without finishing his sentence.

"What sort of tales?" queried the bard anxiously.

"Only the usual ones told about dark forests." Röhcyll's reply showed a certain air of nonchalance which the others did not quite know how to interpret.

Lute pressed for more information. "But what kind of usual stories? There are stories you

tell common folk," and here he began to count upon his fingers, "and the stories you tell city dwellers, and stories you tell adventurers, and stories you tell somebody completely different." By now he was almost indignant. "You always change the story to fit the audience!" and there-with added sweeping arm movements to ventilate his agitation.

"Thank you for an informative lecture on bardic theory," said Ralph bowing low, "but that doesn't help the situation. Please let me try," he continued, turning from the bard, whom they both had been watching, to face Röhcyll again.

"Now, these tales that you have heard, do they speak of men, monsters, or magic, and if so, what sort?"

Röhcyll fought hard not to let his amusement show upon his face as he replied. "I do not recall much of the tales and even if I did of what account are the fables of men contrived to awe the simple?" Röhcyll's voice expressed his self-assurance and pride. "Besides, we three are strong enough to fend for ourselves. So then, come with me and we shall prove whether or not these stories be true. Let us eat now and begone. We have far to travel to as I desire to stay the night at a certain glade in the woods."

After they had finished their midday meal in silence Lute looked to Röhcyll in one last attempt to entreat him to return to the keep via the road they were on. Röhcyll would not hear of it. Once he made up his mind the matter was settled.

"Well, if this is truly what the young master desires, then let us be upon the road." With that he rose, shouldered his pack and motioned Röhcyll, also rising, to show the way. Immediately the young mage headed into the forest to the south of the road. As Ralph and Lute closed in behind the bard turned to the halfling and said, "Here we go again," in a resigned tone of fatefulness.

The little group headed deeper and deeper into the woods. The farther south they traveled, the closer the trees came together and the denser the underbrush grew. More than once they were forced to cut their way along the path which Röhcyll had chosen for them. Yet, the young mage continued to find and follow animal trails no wider than his own handspan. Behind, he could hear Lute continually muttering various exclamations about 'that boy' and 'his surprises'. He smiled. It was good to surprise them once and a while. It kept them off guard. For Röhcyll, it served as a vital factor in their relationship. During the years of his apprenticeship under Valmous he seldom had occasions to meet and interact with other men. His only knowledge of human behavior came from being

with Valmous or talking with him on the subject. In short, his first-hand information was sorely lacking. He knew it and intended to do something about it...at the expense of his friends. Of course if there was any real harm in what he was doing, it was only that he siezed the most of his opportunity in an advantageous situation. Consequently, Ralph and Lute were unwittingly acting as the youth's guinea pigs while he endeavored to learn all the ways of men: their subtleties, their virtues and their faults; this he accomplished not only by observation, which he realized was one-sided, but also by conversation. Most of the time during their travels together, Röhcyll had continually asked about what Lute and Ralph had seen of the world. That is why Ralph and Lute began to get anxious after two hours of walking, since Röhcyll still kept quiet. Finally, Lute broke the silence.

"Good Röhcyll, we have continued to beat our way through this bug-infested forest for quite some time now and you haven't spoken. You seem to know where you are going, and please do not misunderstand me," he said, his voice beginning to falter, "for I doubt not your skill, indeed I am most surprised thereby, but are you sure that we are going in the right direction?"

"No," came the soft reply.

"Well, if you're sure then...NO?!" Ahgast, both Ralph and Lute stopped where they were. "Then why are we going this way?" demanded the halfling.

"Because I believe it is the way...and I am expecting guests ere night fall."

"What sort of guests?" asked the bard.

"You shall see," responded Röhcyll with a not so pleasing, and perhaps slightly wicked, smile. "You shall see." With that he broke out into a hearty laugh and headed deeper on into the forest.

For the first time since they had met up with Röhcyll, Ralph and Lute had begun to question his intentions. As puzzled as they were, they found it hard to believe that the youth would subject them to all that they had gone through just to kill them. If he had wanted them dead he could have done that long before. Or could he? Each silently contemplated what was quickly turning into an utterly bewildering situation. Still they treaded on in silence. Röhcyll sensed the thoughts of his two friends yet held his tongue. 'They need to believe in me,' he thought. As the day wore on they made good time, all things considered. Towards late afternoon the forest began to thin out a bit and the going became easier.

"We must move faster now if we are to reach the glade before dark," stated Röhcyll. His companions shrugged their shoulders with indifference

and pressed on after the boy. Finally, with dusk preparing to settle in upon the forest, the company came to the edge of a small oval clearing. With what light they had left, the three weary travellers viewed the area.

"This is the place," said Röhcyll.

"Shall we make camp?" asked Ralph.

"No my friend, there may not be need," replied Röhcyll. "Stay here." So saying Röhcyll moved towards the center of the glade. Lute and Ralph looked on hesitantly and then both suddenly remembered the youth's mention of 'guests'. Fortunately, Röhcyll was too far off to hear the heavy sigh and 'Its been nice known' ya' pal,' from back at the edge of the woods. It would not have mattered, he was now absorbed in his task. Taking off his robe, the one Valmous had made him, the mage began to mutter a few rhymes and move his hands over the robe. Then, having finished his incantations, he picked up the robe at the neck and began to swing it overhead. Ralph and Lute stared in amazement as they saw the outer fringe of the robe catch on fire as it circled over Röhcyll's head.

"Has the boy gone mad?" Lute questioned, turning to the halfling. "He's going to ruin that new robe! And that's the one his master have him as inheritance. To think we fought all those Orcs for him to burn up"

"Quiet o singer with the head as hollow as his gitar! He knows what he is doing, be sure of it."

"That's what worries me!"

"Me too."

Röhcyll continued to make the robe encircle the air above him. After a few minutes he ceased to swing the robe in a circle, bringing it down behind him and again fastening it about his neck. By the time the robe had stopped flying about above the young wizard, the flame had died out. He called for his two companions to join him in the middle of the glade.

"I take it that you just summoned your 'guests'?" queried Lute hesitantly.

"Yes," replied the youth, "they should be here in a few moments."

"How?" asked the halfling. "If they are close enough in the forest to see your signal they would be here immediately. If anyone in the mountains saw you it would take days to reach us."

"Not necessarily," returned Röhcyll with an amused gleam in his eyes.

Lute leaned over to Ralph and whispered, "I like this less and less."

"I'm not thrilled by the situation either."

"Well, I've finally succeeded in getting you two to quit bickering," said Röhcyll folding his arms on his chest. "But I'm not so sure I like the

price."

Lute and Ralph stared at him incomprehensibly, waiting for him to continue.

"I've kept you guessing all day, at least since the robbery, about my actions and intentions. Indeed, when I stretch out my mind to your own, I can sense your fear and apprehensions. . . and your doubts about me. Little wonder. I had hoped that you would still believe in me no matter what occurred. I now see that such a hope was foolish on my part. Forgive my childish pranks, I merely wished to test your reactions. But I fear I have done so at the cost of our mutual trust and fellowship. What may I do to remedy the situation?"

Before either one could reply to Röhcyll, he turned to face the western edge of the glade as if concentrating on some point above the trees.

"I believe our guests are about to arrive. Do you see those two black dots?" he asked pointing off in the direction he faced. "That's them!"

Indeed, there were two black figures, barely visible, off in the distant horizon, racing towards them at an incredible speed and getting larger with each passing moment.

"What could they be?" asked the halfling.

"Dragons, gryphons, large bats, hippogriffs; it could be one of any number of man and halfling eating monsters!" replied Lute nonchalantly and chuckling softly, a chuckle that soon turned into a sob as he yelled, "MOTHER!!!"

Röhcyll turned on him in anger, "Silence fool! Do you want to live or not?"

Lute and Ralph both nodded their heads very vigorously!

"Then keep quiet!"

Röhcyll turned back around and began to mutter. Both of his companions recognized his speech as a type of illumination spell. By now the glade was completely dark. Röhcyll called the others closer.

"Whatever else, we must stay together."

As he spoke a small ball of light grew out of the top of his walking staff. "This should guide them to us presently."

Even so, as he finished speaking the two shapes glided over the glade about a hundred feet over them. They were definitely horse-shaped.

"Hippogriffs?" asked the bard shakily.

"No, pegasai." Both of the mage's companions heaved sighs of relief. "The older one was raised by my master and I from a colt. It had hurt its wing. She stayed with us much of the time, usually all winter, but she did take off on occasion when it suited her fancy." The pegasai circled down into the glade.

"The little one doesn't look to be more than

a colt."

"Probably born this past winter, Lute."

"Then how did you know that there would be two?" asked Ralph. "This colt has been born since your master sent you out on your own."

"It was mentioned in one of the papers Valmous left behind, where he knew I would find it. I must say, the information was handy."

"So we see," replied the bard.

Röhcyl walked over to the pegasai who had just landed a few feet from him, putting himself between them and his companions. As he approached, the mother pegasus slowly stepped forward and began to nuzzle the youth. He responded by gently stroking the large animal's neck and whispering softly into its ear. Ralph and Lute stood by and watched the interaction of man and beast, obviously astounded at the boy's ability in handling the pegasus. After a while he turned and walked toward the small colt and did the same as he had done with its mother. Finally he turned and spoke to his friends.

"Approach very slowly and remain calm. Chelawn and her as yet unnamed son bid you peace and prosperity...and have generously consented to bear us to the keep... tonight!"

You mean..."

"Yes Lute. You and I shall share Chelawn's back and Ralph shall have the colt."

Both of his friends were still sceptical as to all that was happening.

"Fly? On them?"

"Is something wrong, Ralph?" They are quite gentle. Just be sure you hold on tight. Okay?"

"Rest assured good Röhcyl that he shall hold on tight. He'll hold on for dear life itself."

"No less than you, you...you hoarse harper!" retorted Ralph indignately.

Ignoring the halfling's outrage he continued, "Stubby here's afraid of heights. He'll probably keep his eyes closed the whole trip."

Röhcyl grinned widely, things were back to normal.

"Be quick now, we must mount and begone. I fear we are being watched, but I'm not sure." In a matter of seconds all three had mounted and secured themselves. Less than five minutes after they had landed, the two pegasai were once again airborne, but this time winging their way to the keep of Röhcyl. They had only been flying about two hours when the moon came up and illumed the valley beneath them. Recognizing one of the meadows below as being safe enough to land in, Röhcyl urged Chelawn down in order to give the pegasai a chance to rest. After having refreshed themselves in a nearby brook and rested for an

hour, the pegasai were again ready to continue. Just before mounting, Lute, who had been avoiding Ralph because of the halfling's fear of high places, gave in to the temptation to needle him about the flight; but before he could say anything Röhcyl intercepted him. He only said one word, but it was sufficient.

"Don't!"

The bard hung his head and replied, "You are right, I shall keep silent." Therewith he got up on Chelawn while Röhcyl went over to help Ralph up onto the colt. Moments later they were again in the air and heading south. About an hour or so before midnight they spotted the lonely spire of the keep and rejoiced. It was not long before they had landed inside the confines of Röhcyl's fortress, taken care of the horses, eaten a bite or two themselves and gone off to bed.

Pulling themselves out of bed mid-morning, Ralph and Lute came down to the dining hall for breakfast. Röhcyl sat in his usual place at the head of the table and was in the process of finishing his own meal when they walked in.

"Good morning. I trust you slept well."

"It is impossible to stay under your roof and not sleep well, Röhcyl," replied the bard.

"Let's eat," chirped the halfling hungrily.

"I'm still not used to only three meals a day."

"Eat your fill friends and listen to my plan."

Both Ralph and Lute stared intently at their host as they sat down to chilled fruit, warm bread, cold meat and beer.

"What sort of plan?" asked Lute, knowing full well that that was the sort of question you always regreted asking afterward with the young mage.

"To get my money back, of course. I worked it out yesterday while we walked."

"Nothing would please us more than to give Melkor a bit of his own stuff."

"Good!" said Röhcyl, leaning closer to his friends, "here's what we'll do."

For the next day and a half, they made preparations, put together supplies and outfitted the pegasai with bridles and makeshift saddles. Ralph and Lute remained in good spirits the entire time, seldom letting a cross sentence pass between themselves. In fact, they had even forgotten their apprehensions and fears concerning Röhcyl. Their whole bent was toward avenging themselves on Melkor. It consumed their every waking thought. Neither one of them had looked forward to any previous adventure with such sheer delight and intense joy as they did this one. Two years before Melkor had robbed them blind. He had left them their weapons, but taken all they had of value, leaving them with



TO CURSE the DARKNESS

PAUL JAQUAYS
WRITER/EDITOR
LETTERS/COLORS

AARON AROCHO
AMAZING ART





THE MOON ILLUMINATES
BOTH GARDEN AND
GUTTER... LARCENY
AND LOVE...



FOR SOME,
THIS IS A NIGHT
OF NEWFOUND
LOVE...

THIS AMULET... WHY
DO YOU WEAR IT,
MY LOVE??

BECAUSE IT IS
BEAUTIFUL...
BUT...



... IT'S ACTUALLY
A CHARM TO WARD
OFF EVIL.

FOR OTHERS, THE NIGHT
HOLDS TREACHERY AND...

PREPARE
TO DIE!!

YOU MOUTHLESS
SPAWN OF UNKNOWN
... UUNNNHH...

AMBUSH!!

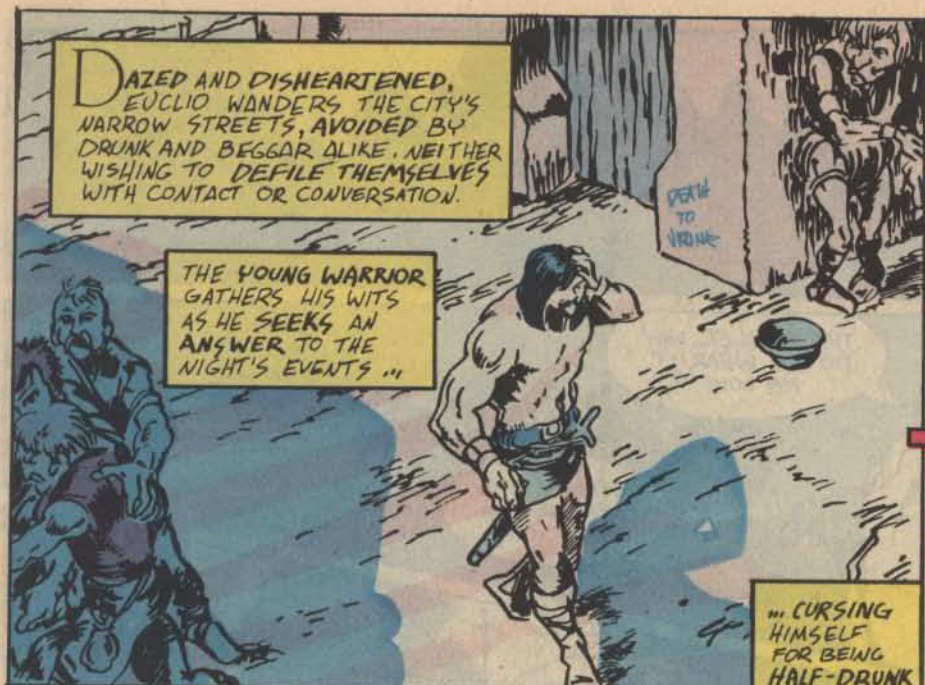
HO! WHAT'S
THIS?

THE CONFLICT IS
MERCILESSLY CUT
SHORT...



EUCLIO!!
WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE TO HIM? OH!
IN ASTA'S NAME
LET ME GO!
EUCLIOOO!





DAZED AND DISHEARTENED, EUCLIO WANDERS THE CITY'S NARROW STREETS, AVOIDED BY DRUNK AND BEGGAR ALIKE, NEITHER WISHING TO DEFILE THEMSELVES WITH CONTACT OR CONVERSATION.

THE YOUNG WARRIOR GATHERS HIS WITS AS HE SEEKS AN ANSWER TO THE NIGHT'S EVENTS...

...CURSING HIMSELF FOR BEING HALF-DRUNK WHEN SOMEONE NEEDED HIM.

EUCLIO'S REVERIE IS ABRUPTLY BROKEN...



IT'S THE ROBED ONES!



GAZE ON YOUR DOOM, NIGHT DEMONS, YOU'LL NOT ESCAPE THIS TIME!



THE MOON WANES...

THE NIGHT GROWS OLDER...

...AND STILL HE WANDERS.



THE ASSAILANTS HAVE FLED, BUT THEIR VICTIM, A SURLY NORTHERN ADVENTURER, REMAINS.



YOU... MAN OF THE EAST YOU'RE NOT ONE OF THEM THE BLACK ROBES... WHICH WAY DID...

MY WOMAN... SHE'S...

BY THE BULL'S BONES... MY HEAD ACHES!



FOLLOW ME... IF YOU CAN!

THE GRIM PAIR RACE THROUGH NIGHT DARK ALLEYS, CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF THEIR QUARRY...

INTENT ONLY ON VIOLENCE!

EUCLIO AND HIS COMPANION EASILY OUTDISTANCE THEIR FOES, COMING UPON THEM BY SURPRISE!

HOLY MEN... YOUR GODS CAN'T SAVE YOU NOW!

PRIESTS!

EUCLIO! THESE DEMON SPAWN ARE STINKING PRIESTS!

FIND YOUR LADY EAST MAN...

...AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME...

THE DAY HASN'T COME WHEN I CAN'T HANDLE A DOZEN EUNUCH PRIESTLINGS BEFORE BREAKFAST!

THANKS FRIEND, AND GOOD LUCK!

THE GRIM PRIESTS DIE AS THEY FIGHT... IN SILENCE.

O' REVERED SHOLA, WE SEEK THY DIVINE GUIDANCE!

ACCEPT THIS OUR...

LIKE A JUGGERNAUT, EUCLIO CHARGES ON... HEEDLESS OF OPPOSITION...

NO!

SACRIFICE !!

4

NEXT Feast of the Beast-King



A PRIVATE HELL



By Bryan Hinnen

CHAPTER IV

Willis rolled over and away as two arrows broke on the rock where he had been laying. Two orc archers reached to reload behind him, and three more were in different stages of the draw. A long burst from the M-16 slew all five, but one of them was able to launch its missile before being mown down.

The rusty arrowhead cut open his left sleeve at the elbow, dragging its painful, slicing edge all the way up to his shoulder. *Dammit, he thought, I wonder if the bastards use poisoned arrows.*

He had to ignore the wound as more of them came pouring around the bend, issuing blood-curdling cries. Two more short bursts were all the clip held; Willis cursed and scrambled to reload.

They were still coming. The Green Beret tried to keep a cool head as he switched to semi-automatic fire: *Don't waste your ammo, you aren't likely to get resupplied wherever the hell you are. Make every shot count.*

The impact of three well-placed high-velocity bullets shoved three of the savages over the cliff. The other two that Willis could see turned and ran.

Willis leaped to his feet and followed, determined to make his position secure. As he rounded the bend he saw the two fleeing orcs run into a dozen more coming the other way, and one fell over the edge with an unearthly howl. There was a bull-like roar from one of the orcs coming up, and Willis had an irrelevant thought: *do these things have officers too?* The remaining orc that had been running was apparently motivated to great deeds by the bellow from the rear, and turned towards Willis again. Now they were all coming for him.

Ignoring arrows that splintered on the rock face around him, Willis calmly took aim and blew all notions of bravery out of the orc's head with a bullet. It fell off the ledge, another came up, and he drilled a hole in a second head.

They just kept coming, and he switched his target area; five more ran up to the same spot and fell in succession, one shot through each rag-bound chest doing the job admirably. He felt an arrow tug at his pack from below, so he dropped to the prone firing position and started experimenting.

By the time Willis had reached the end of the clip, it had developed into a sport. He'd shoot an attacker in the hip to spin it around, then blow away the back of the skull. He'd drill one through both knees that would still agonize its way towards him, goaded on from behind; after letting it struggle almost to within sword-swinging range, he'd swing

out with the fixed bayonet and sweep the victim off the ledge.

The tenth one he killed was wearing a gaudy headdress and a silver-embossed leather tunic (*by God, they do have officers!*) that gleamed in the near-blackness as it clasped its chest and fell. Leaderless, the orcs now decided that a frontal assault was too costly, and the few left at the top of the crude iron ladder now turned and started pushing their way back down. There were cries of protest as a small scuffle arose at the ladderhead. Willis sent three more of them tumbling from the jam at the summit, and as the hammer clicked on an empty chamber, everyone decided that enough was enough.

Willis quickly reloaded again and switched to full automatic fire, hosing down the tightly packed mass on the ladder, working from the bottom up. By the time the spray of lead had reached the top, his last victims could see what was coming and were jumping sixty feet onto the piled corpses below. They at least stood a chance of surviving such a fall; they were so much dead flesh if struck down by this terrible, unknown weapon. He raked over the orcs that had harassed him with arrows through the entire shoot, then nipped at the heels of some miscellaneous bystanders running for cover.

Suddenly, he heard the *clank* of metal on stone at a distance. Turning and reloading again, he rose to a low crouch. *There it is again!*

He ran around the bend and saw two of them standing at the far corner of the broad rock shelf, bows drawn. They were ready for him, and an arrow flew as he ducked back beyond the bend. *This has happened before, he thought, in 'Nam. They won't be expecting me to jump right back out from cover.*

He sprang back out and chopped them down with a three-round burst; but now there were a few more behind them, crawling on their bellies towards him. As he watched two more poked their heads up over the edge. A pair of short bursts caught all of them, and he rushed up to the spot.

He saw ropes dangling from a pair of grappling hooks, and realized what was going on. Swaying back and forth on the ropes were several dark figures, with several dozen more waiting below. He sliced the ropes with his bayonet, much to the dismay of the orcs climbing up them, and tossed the grapples to the center of the shelf.

It occurred to Willis that, throughout both of the attacks on the shelf, the other three Green Berets hadn't fired a shot. *Maybe they're all dead. If they are, I'm up a creek with no paddle in a wire canoe.* He ran over to his vantage point over their position

and looked down. Yes, there was Big Ben waving at him, and the other two were apparently all right as well. Then Willis realized that the cliff face curved so much that the ends of it were out of their field of fire, and they couldn't help him. *Looks like it's gonna be a long night, Willis.*

He headed back towards the iron ladder that the orcs had pounded into the cliff, pulling out his demolitions gear. He was intent on getting rid of at least one weak spot in his defenses.

The ladder was booby-trapped so that the next orc to reach the top would blow the upper half of the ladder, with its passengers, right off the rock face, dropping bodies and rubble on those below. *End of Achilles' heel*, he thought grimly.

Then Willis wondered, *why are those slimy bastards so set on taking this shelf and leaving the others alone?*

He went over to the other end of the shelf and rigged another tripwire, set to plastic explosives that would drop tons of rock and debris if a grappling hook was thrown. When he returned to his post, his eyes came to rest on the huge boulder below that had become his comrades' roost for the night, and he realized why he was the orcs' center of attention.

If they had been able to get a few archers up onto the shelf, they could shoot down at the three Green Berets with an unobstructed line of fire, to drive them down into the small army that had been gathering at the foot of the boulder. In spite of Benyon's renowned proficiency in hand-to-hand combat, a field in which Gavagan and Chambers were no slouches, they would never have come out alive.

Willis had probably happened along just after the orcs found the place, pounded a ladder into the rock face, and sent word for archers to come up. *At long last, I'm the right man in the right place at the right time.*

After about half an hour of guarding the others' positions, Willis heard two closely-spaced explosions, one from either side, followed by loud screams and minor rockslides. Then there were moans, barked orders, and footsteps pattering off into silence.

An hour later he heard the sound of metal being hammered into rock: *ping, ping, ping, pang, pong, punk. . .* a silence. . . and then the series of *pings* again. He checked it out, found an orc team hammering a new set of ironmongery into the rock where the old one had been blown away, and quickly terminated the operation with a pair of 5.56mm messages.

Upon returning, Willis noticed some activity in a rock-strewn gully leading off to the right of the boulder below him. Unfortunately, nothing stayed in view long enough for him to get a clear shot.

Finally, more by accident than by his skill as a sniper, a pair of gleaming red eyes appeared zeroed in

on his line of fire, and he got the shot off before they disappeared. Now the gleam died away into the total blackness of the ravine, and he heard the body fall.

Willis had stayed awake as sentry, letting the other three sleep; he had two spots to cover that they couldn't, and so he would have had to stay awake anyway. For that reason he offered, by hand-signals, to stand guard all night, and Big Ben had gratefully accepted.

With the report of his M-16, however, they were awake and scrambling into a three-point area defense. Chambers happened to have the gully in his arc of fire, and the M-221 grenade launcher slung under the barrel of his M-16 gave an ominous *thump*.

The blast yielded shrieks and flying bodies; the other half of Chambers' over-and under weapon sang a deadly tune, chopping at everything that was outside the blast radius of the grenade. While he was firing, Gavagan and Benyon were forced to tightly hug the surface of the rock. Arrows whirled close over them as archers sighted them in, black against the recently congealed blood of the sky.

From his vantage point above, Willis was able to locate a few of the archers and lay down suppressing fire. The wicked sounds of ricochets chased the orcs to cover, and Big Ben took the opportunity to elbow his way over to Chambers.

"Lissen, Ralphie!" Benyon whispered. As the echoes of Chambers' gunfire died away, sounds came to them down the sinking, undulating ravine: shouts and bellows of raving officers, war-chants and screams of hyped-up troopers in the mood for sadistic murder that were understandable in any tongue. "They's gettin' up uh mass chawge, Ralphie. Hunnerts uhf 'em, they's gettin' readeh."

Ben spotted something moving below, a scout for the orcs, and killed it with the last three rounds of his clip. He reloaded the M-16 and grimly shoved a clip into the Colt .45, then looked up at Chambers. "Y'all readeh, Ralphie?"

The slighter man, five feet six next to seven feet two, fished a powerful lantern out of his pack. "Like the Frozen Chosen all over again. Yeah, ready as I'll ever be."

Behind them, the scarlet-haired Irishman was registering more and more momentary glints of red eyes. *Dammit!* he thought. *Much more o' this an' I'll go 'round tha bend.*

Suddenly, from both directions came walls of orcs with whirling scimitars, gleaming dully, eager to drink blood. A tumult of horrifying battle cries nearly drowned out Gavagan's shout, desperate and almost cracking with hysteria: "*Here they come!*"

From their invisible, invulnerable box seats in another plane of existence, the demons of hell cackled with glee as they watched the battle joined below.

— *To be continued*



Some Thoughts on the Speed of a Lightning Bolt

by James Ward

For a very long time now many Judges and Players alike have maintained the idea that all things being equal when a wizard and a fighter round the same corner in a dungeon, pity the poor wizard because he will never get his spell off in time! Since I usually always play magic users in any given game, this concept naturally had me worried. Then, Eldritch Wizardry came out and the magic users life was given another chance.

Within those pages is a short section on the melee round, and "never has so few pages done so much for so many magic users." I myself upon first and second reading, just passed this section off as more stuff to slow down a game, and went on to those magic items that are truly deadly. After using the melee round chart in my game, I realized that they have great potential for all the down-trodden and unarmored arcane masters.

Take any given fighter with a dexterity of 15 and any given magic user (able to cast lightning bolts and taking one) with a dexterity of 15 and make them round corners at the same time with 40 feet of space between, now use the chart. Adjusting for dexterity gives us a zero. The magic user does not have his spell ready and it is a third level spell, so the chart says he has a -2 in getting it off and he was not surprised so he falls under the -5/-1 1 section and gets the bolt off in the fourth phase of the round, and may the fighter not make his magic saving throw! The strong (and most likely vicious) fighter is wearing platemail, giving him a -6, and is using a large shield (because his type usually does), and gets a -3 for that. He was carrying a torch so his weapon was not at hand or ready, but the chart does not provide for penalties for drawing his weapon (which is not fair, but that's life) and he was not surprised either, so has a -9 which puts his turn in the fifth movement phase. Notice, that I am not even counting the section on movement and its affect on turn segments, because it is only a matter of a fraction of a phase and not worth bothering with.

After taking all things into consideration, that magic user is going to blast the fighter to smithereens! Even if the fighter is not dead, let us say that he is at least wounded 50%. The fighter gets his turn and usually hits any given magic user. The next melee turn the magic user does

nothing but run (if he lives and is not wounded that 50%), and his new dexterity score is in the 0/+4 column. The fighter on the other hand still has the -9, gets a +2 for his weapon in hand, and now has that -4 because he is wounded. His new dexterity rating is -11 which puts him on another scale and he strikes in the sixth phase while our good friend, the magic user, is running like the wind in the third phase!

Then we come up against those Conan types! The mighty fighter that wears little or no armor, preferring speed and quickness in battle, to the security of a metal "tin can". It is possible to still come out on top if the magic user is smart. We give the Conan in our example a dexterity of 18, leather armor, and that large shield (he likes to carry this around because he doesn't feel the weight). The magic user in this case will also have a dexterity of 18, but all other things will be the same. The mighty fighter now has a -2 for the leather, a -3 for the shield, was holding that torch so has a 0 for his weapon, and is not surprised. Now he is moving in that fourth movement phase and ready for an easy kill! The magic user having fought Conan types before knows he has got big troubles and cannot afford to let the fighter get simultaneous chops, switches his tactics and uses a first level spell. This gives him no minus's of any type and he moves in the third movement phase. The choice of spells is a tough one, because he can use the charm person or the magic missile. The charm person is great, if it works, and that is a big if! The magic missile spell is good, because the arrows have a good chance of hitting the lightly armored fighter and if they wound him past the 50% or 75% mark that is a plus for the magic user the next round. Thought must be given to the number of arrows sent out. The wizard type that sends more of those magic missiles should choose it over the charm spell, but the little magic user should possibly favor the charm spell.

In the second example, the magic user was a 13th level wizard and he pitched the arrows with all of them hitting. The fighter didn't seem to be bothered by them and slashed and hit the magic user. The next round naturally the magic user ran for his life, but at least he made the fighter bleed a little bit.



On Creating a Computer Program for Gaming by William Pixley

Having recently created a computer game ("Swordsmen"), I was asked to give my insight on how to create a computer game and how to avoid the problems that arise in doing so.

First, before you even consider what your program is to do it is absolutely necessary to learn a computer language. While this can be achieved by reading book(s), most Community Colleges offer a cheap way to learn your chosen language in their various computer language courses. Such courses offer the additional pluses of having an expert to ask for help (the teacher) and provide you with very inexpensive computer time. From the language you should concentrate on the random function and its uses (this will probably be how your program will decide how the computer reacts), as many of the decision making terms as you can, the arrays, and how to create a subroutine. Due to its simplicity and its wide use in many home computers I would suggest Basic as a language to learn. All of the examples I give will be in Basic.

After learning the language well (in my case, after 15 weeks of a computer class), you must decide what you want the program to do. In my case I made the mistake of trying to do too much by having the program randomize the location of the shield and where the computer is to swing its sword. While this could be done, it so expanded the program so much that I dropped the idea of a shield. Remember that as a beginner you should keep things as simple as possible. Later once the program works you can change it by the additions of sub-routines.

Next you need to prepare a detailed flow-chart. A flowchart is a chart showing the flow of the programs information and actions. The flowchart allows you to write the program with ease. Do not be overconfident and think you do not need a flow-chart. I skimped on mine and spent several extra days debugging because I did not have a flowchart to see what went where when.

Now you write the program, which is easy, if you have written a good flowchart. You run it and are now prepared for the hard part, debugging the

program. Unless you are very good or very lucky on a program, the length of most gaming programs you better expect to make corrections. One way to debug or make corrections is to put aside your flow-chart and create one off of the program. Then, compare the two flowcharts and see if you followed your original chart when you made the program. If they still are the same then play computer and follow the actions of the computer over the program. In other words, read each line at a time and do what the computer would do. If faced by a minor problem in which you can't see why it is doing such as it is, put in print statements to find what is the variable in its present state. Example: I had in my program the problem that the computer never tried to parry. So I placed a print statement after the random variable which showed me that on the time it came up with 7 (my parry command statement) it would return for a new number. Knowing that if not otherwise stated that a variable on my computer is 0 or $x(7) = 0$ and realizing that if $x(Z) = 0$ that I had instructed the computer to pick another number (or target spot on its opponents body). I found that I needed to reverse two lines. Also, it is a good idea to save your program under two names so if you totally mess up one you have another you can work on. Besides once you have gotten it into finished form its a good idea to have an extra copy in your computer if you ever sign off without resaving the program.

Suggestions on Creating a Gaming Program

- 1) KEEP IT SIMPLE!!
- 2) Keep your line numbers spread out so you can add new lines easily. Example:

10 LET X = 1

20 LET Z = X + Y

30 PRINT Z

40 END

By such spacing, you can add the needed line 15 - LET Y = 1.

- 3) On my computer (one of the larger Honeywells) RND (-1) was needed to create a random number that was always different, however on other CPU's it is RND (0). Be sure you know your machines idiosyncrasies.
- 4) Two dimensional arrays is one off the best ways to do movement.
- 5) Remember a computer is a dumb machine. On its own it cannot make "sensible" decisions, so ask yourself, if the way you have it make decisions is fair to it (is the machine too easy to beat). Give the machine as many options as you have and give it the easier to play sides. Example: Do you let the machine swing more often for a killing blow as you let it try to wound.
- 6) Expect mistakes that it would seem impossible to make - misspelling a word or leaving out a line. The longer a program is the more "silly" mistakes you must expect.
- 7) Save your program twice to prevent accidentally losing it.

Example Program

- 1) What is it to do? It is to create a gambling situation where you bet your die roll will beat the houses.
- 2) Flowchart the program INT (RND (-1) * 6 + 1) gives a number from 1 to 6.
- 3) Write the program from the flowchart:

```
10 PRINT "AT EACH ? INPUT AMOUNT  
YOU WANT TO BET"
```

```
20 LET R = 1500
```

```
30 LET Z = INT (RND (-1) * 6 + 1)
```

```
40 LET M = INT (RND(-1) * 6 + 1)
```

```
50 INPUT V
```

```
60 IF V = 9999 THEN 170
```

```
70 IF Z=M THEN 120
```

```
80 PRINT "YOU LOST"; V ; "YOUR  
TOTAL IS"; R-V
```

```
90 LET R = R-V
```

```
100 IF R = 0 THEN 150
```

```
110 GO TO 30
```

```
120 PRINT " YOU WON"; V; "YOUR  
TOTAL IS"; R + V
```

```
130 LET R = R + V
```

```
140 GO TO 30
```

```
150 PRINT " YOU ARE BROKE"
```

```
160 STOP
```

```
170 PRINT "GAME IS OVER"
```

```
180 END
```

- 4) Next debug the program—for example, if you are loosing to easily you might want a new line 65 PRINT Z, M to temporarily check to see if you win when you are supposed to. If not, you can check the program out by checking the if then statements. If still nothing seems wrong check for "silly" errors.
- 5) Once you have gotten the main program working expand on it. For example: create a subroutine to let the computer bid back at you.



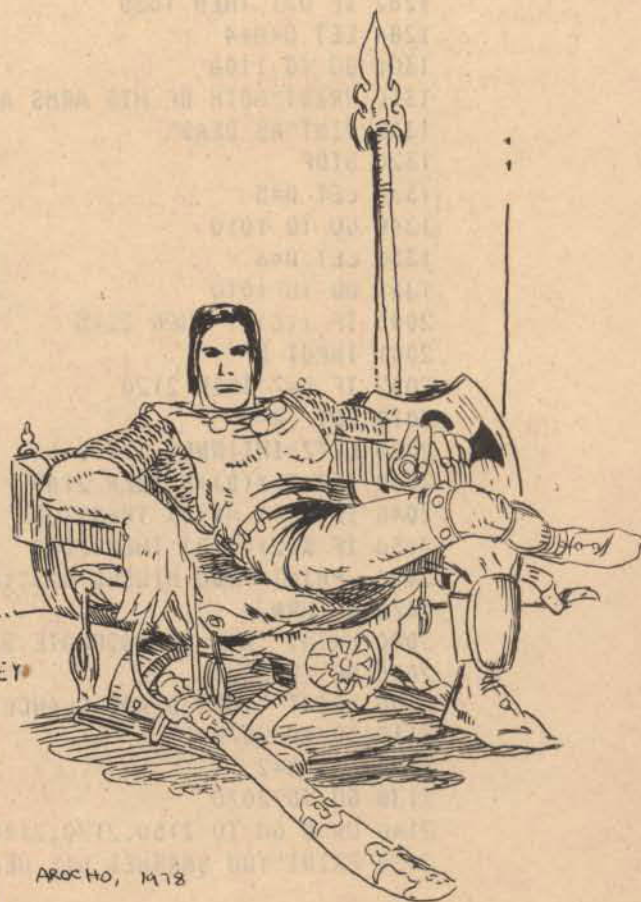
swordsman

by Bill Pixley

```

2 LET D=0
3 LET B=0
4 LET S=0
5 LET T=0
7 LET F=0
10 DIM A$(20),X(20),Y(20)
15 LET R=0
20 PRINT "SWORDSMAN IS A GAME OF MAN VS. COMPUTER BY "
22 PRINT "WILLIAM PIXLEY"
25 PRINT "IF YOUR SWORD ARM IS HIT THE OPPONENT GETS A FREE"
26 PRINT "HIT WHILE YOU PICK UP SWORD WITH OTHER HAND"
30 PRINT "YOU AND AN OPPONENT GLADIATOR MEET IN AN ARENA -EACH OF YOU HAS A"
35 PRINT "SWORD, A HELMET, AND A BREASTPLATE"
40 PRINT "TO STRIKE HIM INPUT THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS AT EACH ?"
60 PRINT "1 TO SWING AT THE HEAD"
70 PRINT "2 TO SWING AT THE TRUNK"
80 PRINT "3 TO SWING AT THE LEFT ARM"
90 PRINT "4 TO SWING AT THE RIGHT ARM"
100 PRINT "5 TO SWING AT THE LEFT LEG"
110 PRINT "6 TO SWING AT THE RIGHT LEG"
120 PRINT "7 TO TRY TO PARRY HIS BLOW"
125 REM TO ENTER THE STRING
130 FOR J=1 TO 8
140 READ A$(J)
150 NEXT J
160 FOR I=1 TO 6
170 READ X(I)
180 NEXT I
200 FOR Q=1 TO 8
210 READ Y(Q)
220 NEXT Q
230 LET C=INT(RND(-1)*2+1)
240 IF C=1 THEN 290
250 GOSUB 1000
270 GOSUB 2000
280 GO TO 250
290 REM BY WILLIAM PIXLEY RCC MATH 131
300 GOSUB 2000
310 GO SUB 1000
320 GO TO 290
330 STOP
1000 LET D= INT(RND(-1)*9+1)
1001 REM THIS PROGRAM IS BY WILLIAM PIXLEY
1002 IF Y(6)=1 THEN 1330
1004 IF Y(5)=0 THEN 1350
1006 IF D=9 THEN 1260
1010 IF Y(D)<=1 THEN 1000
1020 IF X(4)=1 THEN 1280
1030 REM DONE ON DEC. 20TH 1978
1040 LET S=0

```



```

1050 LET Z=INT(RND(-1)*10+1)
1060 IF Z+T>Y(D)+R THEN 1150
1070 IF Z>= D THEN 1130
1080 IF 4>=D THEN 1110
1090 PRINT "HE MISSED YOUR";A$(D-2);A$(8)
1100 RETURN
1110 PRINT "BREASTPLATE STOPS HIS SWING";A$(8)
1120 GO TO 1100
1130 PRINT"YOUR HELMET STOPS THE BLOW";A$(8)
1140 GO TO 1100
1150 PRINT"YOUR HIT"
1155LET T=T+1
1160 ON D GO TO 1070,1170,1190,1190,1210,1210,1210,1210
1170 PRINT "YUOR HEAD IS SMASHED IN";A$(7)
1180 STOP
1190 PRINT"YOUR STABBED IN THE GUTS,YOUR DEAD";A$(7)
1200 STOP
1210 PRINT "YOU ARE WOUNDED IN THE";A$(D-2);A$(7)
1215 LET Y(D)=0
1217 IF D=6 THEN 1240
1230 GO TO 1100
1240 LET Y(6)=1
1250 GO TO 1100
1260 LET S=2
1265PRINT"HE TRIES TO PARRY YOUR SWING"
1270 GO TO 1100
1280 IFX(3)=0 THEN1310
1282 IF U>1 THEN 1030
1284 LET D=D+4
1300 GO TO 1100
1310 PRINT"BOTH OF HIS ARMS ARE WOUNE WOUNDED-HE IS AS GOOD "
1315PRINT"AS DEAD"
1320 STOP
1330 LET D=5
1340 GO TO 1010
1350 LET D=6
1369 GO TO 1010
2000 IF Y(6)=1 THEN 2215
2001 INPUT D
2002 IF D=7 THEN 2120
2010 LET R=0
2020 LETZ=INT(RND(-1)*10+1)
2030 IFZ+B>X(D)+S THEN 2140
2040 IF X(1) =X(D) THEN2100
2050 IF X(2)=X(D) THEN 2080
2060 PRINT "YOU MISSED HIS";A$(D);A$(8)
2070 RETURN
2080 PRINT "HIS BREASTPLATE STOPPED YOUR BLOW";A$(8)
2090 GO TO 2070
2100 PRINT "YOUR BLADE GLANCED OFF OF HIS HELMET";A$(8)
2110 GO TO 2070
2120 LET R=2
2130 GO TO 2070
2140 ON D GO TO 2150,2170,2190,2190,2190,2190
2150 PRINT"YOU SMASHED HIS HEAD IN AND WON";A$(7)

```



```

2160 STOP
2170 PRINT "YOU PIERCED HIS HEART AND HE IS DEAD" : A$(7)
2180 STOP
2190 PRINT "YOU WOUNDED HIS " : A$(D) : A$(7)
2195 LET B=B+1
2196 LET X(D)=0
2197 IF D=4 THEN 2205
2200 GO TO 2070
2205 LET X(4)=1
2207 GO TO 2070
2215 IF Y(5)=0 THEN 2230
2216 IF F>1 THEN 2001
2218 LET I=I+4
2220 GO TO 2070
2230 PRINT "BOTH OF YOUR ARMS ARE GONE-YOU ARE AS GOOD AS DEAD"
2240 STOP
3000 DATA "WILLIAM", "PIXLEY", " LEFT ARM", " RIGHT ARM", " LEFT LEG"
3002 DATA " RIGHT LEG", " CROWD ROARS", " CROWD BOOS"
3010 DATA 7,8,5,5,5,5
3015 DATA 7,7,8,8,5,5,5,5
3020 END

```





by Bill Paley

IX



t those words, instead of raising their hands, Lilly and the mercenaries all reached for their swords, but the voice continued, "Make no hostile moves. Six bows are strung and nocked, aimed at your vitals."

Lilly replied, "Come out of the brush then, you highwaymen who are brave enough to waylay travellers in the very shadow of the walls of the City State. Show yourselves so that we know what manner of men you are."

"Men," laughed the voice, "Ha, ho-ho! Come out, then, my brethren."

Out of the brush stepped six elves, with bows aimed towards the mercenaries. "Your pardon, my lady," spoke the elf who had spoken before from hiding, "but several elven maidens have been waylaid lately and sold into slavery here in the City State. We are a vigilante group, stopping all we suspect as slavers."

Robert the Bold replied, "I'll not let my sword be tainted with the stink of slavery. . . nor will I allow my men the same. This upon my word as a warrior and upon my sword."

"I trust them enough to hire them," said Lilly. "We come to seek adventure and to stretch our sword arms here in the City State."

"If I may, milady, I would be honored to conduct your company through the gates of the City and offer lodging in my humble home. I am called Visson, and besides the lore of sword and bow, I am somewhat conversant in the magical arts. Your party does not appear balanced to me, with overwhelming force of arms, but weakness in the healing arts and in magery. Would my weapons, material and immaterial, find a place in your train?"

Lilly noticed a fluttering in her chest. None of the elves of her town had been so eloquent or so masculine. For his part, Visson was an older, more experienced elf and had been among humans for some time. He was immensely attracted to the proud, powerful elf maid before him. Thus, both were pleased when Lilly agreed. "Besides," thought

Visson, "if those mercenaries had intended to be-slave her, it would now be impossible." He felt reassured by this.

"A moment," he said and then whistled in a rapid series of notes. Almost immediately a light horse, fully saddled, stepped onto the road and approached Visson. As he mounted his horse, the other elves wished them well. With a wave, the band followed him up the road towards the City State.

Lilly recalled the awe with which she had viewed Thunderhold, yet that great dwarven city would fit into a corner of this mammoth fortress. Lilly saw the smoke of hundreds of cook fires rising to the sky, and recognized her own hunger. It was well into the afternoon, with no food since breakfast, and so she spurred her horse into a trot.

Soon they approached the city gates. Visson called out a "Hallo" to the gate officer who saluted them through. After passing through the gate house, Lilly stopped in the road inside, staring about at the shops and the humanoid peoples, scurrying about their business.

Her attention was suddenly drawn to a pair of humanoid—no, Men, albeit a little young—approaching. They were dressed similarly and both appeared very excited. The taller one called out to her, "Elven lady, hold and hear me!"

"Who calls on me and why?"

"I am called Sombo, and I am a mage from the lands of Altania to the south. This is my man, Ral." At this Ral grinned and bowed. "We have heard tales of the adventures and riches that follow in the wake of warrior elvish maids. Our powers are not minor, though we both have much to learn. We desire to join your group."

At this, Visson spoke, "I have spells enough to guard the safty of this group. What use would the repetition of spells be between us?"

"Oh elvish master of the arts, how do you know that I do not know a spell or two which are unknown to you?"

"There is but one."

"And so?"

"It is known as," he whispered, "Charm Person."

"Not only is this spell known to me, but I have used it successfully," bragged Sombo, remembering one unsuccessful use as well.

At this Visson mumbled a spell giving him the power to read minds, and, concentrating strongly, chose Sombo's mind among the many nearby. He recognized that Sombo was telling them the truth, and so reported to Lilly.

Lilly nodded and said, "Follow us, barbarian. We will find horses and quarters for you."

Sombo and Ral followed as the men and elves on horseback turned up a cobbled street, Visson leading. He took them to a stables where they left the five horses to their oats and water. From there they travelled on foot deeper into the city.

As they walked, Visson told them of tricks and traps of the city. He told of the hiding places of footpads and assassins; of gangs of sailors who would impress likely looking lads into the crews of their vessels. He told of rampaging goblins and drunken soldiers. Thus, when trouble did strike, all but Visson were on their guard.

Out of the darkening sky suddenly came the flapping noises of a group of small flying beasts. They were among the intrepid band as quickly as they were noticed. As one, the mercenaries formed a circle, swords out and up, around Lilly. The four of them soon had swatted down some five of the stirges when the main group shifted away.

In the meantime, Sombo had muttered and waved his hands with the result of about a half-score dropping out of the sky. All but three fled after this.

These three had latched onto Visson, one after another. Weakened, he stabbed at them with his dagger, scoring kills on two of them. Gasping for help, he fell to his knees. At this, Robert the Bold rushed up, and, barehanded, tore away the cruel beast. He, growling, broke its neck and flung it in to a nearby trash heap.

While Lilly bound Visson's wounds, the humans carried out the execution of the sleeping members of the flock. The gory task finished, Robert the Bold lifted Visson in his arms and carried him the few remaining blocks to the house wherein he resided.

Before the humans bedded down to sleep, Lilly spoke to Sombo. "Mage, I know not what powers you have, nor how they compare to the powers we will face, but know you that you have my thanks and my respect."

With this Sombo bowed, and so was forged their friendship.

For the next several days, Visson was confined to his bed, recuperating from blood loss. Lilly stayed near him throughout, giving a pay advance to the mercenaries so that they could wench and drink to their heart's content.

Sombo and Ral, on the other hand, wandered about town listening to tales. Sombo was refused admission to the Sorcerer's Guild, and so they gathered their information from drunken chatter in inns. One piece sounded true, or at least more true than the other bragging tales and whispered stories of hoards of gold and demon guards. One aged man spoke after a jesting song about a wenching party along the Redoubt of the Dead, saying, "you should not banter thus about the evil place. The Overlord and his ministers from ages past still rule the depths of that tomb, and guard well the treasures within. Mock them not, or beware they come for your heads!"

At this statement, silence lay across the room until a new group of soldiers entered, bawling a raucous tune. Sombo and Ral spent the rest of the week learning what they could concerning the Redoubt of the Dead.

Reporting to Lilly and Visson, Sombo could only tell them that in the territory of the Wild Orcs of the Purple Claw was a tumbledown fort under one wall of which was the burial chamber of a past Overlord, and that there was rumored to be great wealth still guarded by the former ruler and his staff.

The group decided to go exploring. After Visson's recovery (and the mercenaries as well, from hangovers), early one morning they mounted horses and rode to the ferry. Sombo and Ral were proud of their new horses, and showed their pleasure with big smiles.

Their smiles dimmed, though, once entering Orc territory. Soon they observed the Redoubt of the Dead, in view of the Conqueror's River. In the center of the crumbling wall was a dark hole with stairs leading deep into the earth.

"Gentlemen," called Lilly, "One of us must remain with the horses. Are there any volunteers?"

Sombo replied, "Ral will, won't you?"

The boy nodded, stringing his bow, and loosening his arrows. He climbed up to the highest point remaining on the crumbling wall, and began scanning the forest around the ruins.

The horses hobbled, nibbling at grasses in the area, the band formed up, lighting torches. With Robert the Bold and Visson in the lead, Lilly and Sombo next, and Ral and Evas rearguard, with jaws set, with weapons at hand, they bravely marched down into the darkness.

The smoke from their torches and their own shadows soon blotted out the sunlight glowing from the top of the stairs. There was a musty stillness in the air, and, considering the proximity of the Conqueror River, a strange dry, dusty feel to the tomb's atmosphere. The flagstones underfoot, though ancient, appeared nearly unworn. Deeper they climbed when suddenly Lilly stopped them, raising her forefinger to her lips. A deathly silence crept about them, for the crackling of their torches and the sounds of their breathing.

Signalling them into motion again, Lilly led them down the stairs until their sudden end in a pit opening into darkness. Peering into the gloom, Lilly thought she could see the floor about ten feet down. Once informed of this, Robert the Bold shouldered his way to the edge, and grasping the stone, lowered himself to the floor below. Then, one by one, he helped down the rest of the party.

While the band was being lowered into the catacombs, Lilly prowled around the room, testing floor stones and ceiling arches, and tapping the walls. Once down, Visson began to do the same, starting from the opposite wall moving towards her. By the time the entire party was down, the two elves had investigated to their satisfaction. The only exit from the room was that directly opposite the staircase. They quickly reformed in their line, stirring the deep dust on the floor.

Lilly crouched by the door and once again she signalled her companions to silence. That was exactly what she got, on both sides of the door. She then stood and pulled it open, sword drawn. All she found beyond was a thirty-foot-wide corridor running straight away from them to the limit of the light shed by their torches. Though her infravision was dazzled by the light, Lilly did not close the door behind her to allow its use. She waved her gang to follow and marched into the hallway.

Again, the floor of the ancient catacombs was deeply covered with undisturbed dust, yet the stonework looked newly tooled. Both elves examined the walls and floors as they passed, but they noticed nothing odd. Soon they came to a T-intersection of corridors.

"Whither shall we go now?" whispered Lilly. "We have no map, nor goal."

"Why not to the left, for it is the hand of the heart, and of life," replied Sombo.

There was a murmur of agreement from the group, and they started off down the left-hand opening. Once again, they padded slowly down a long corridor, ancient but unworn.

Finally, on the edge of the area lit by their

torches, a door came into view on the right wall. Once again, they cautiously listened, but the burial catacombs were as silent as a tomb. Cracking the doors open, they entered a medium-sized room which, as they soon found out, was totally empty.

Sitting down for a short rest, the group discussed the rumors they had heard about the dangers of the place. "If it is such a dangerous place, where are the dangers?" asked Lilly. "Could it be that by entering this tomb that we have received a curse?" The mercenaries shifted uneasily at this suggestion, but Visson shook his head and replied, "No, Lilly, we have not penetrated far, and the treasures and their guardians must be much deeper within the complex."

A few minutes later, the band of adventurers stepped out of the room. Surprisingly, they decided to retrace their steps and try a new direction. They moved quickly back along their dusty tracks until they reached the exit corridor, and lighting fresh torches, they continued into new stretches of hallway.

This time, however, they found no rooms along the same length of corridor as they had traversed before. Becoming much bolder, they argued noisily, and then turned about and trotted back to the door to the room they had previously entered. They stopped again for a few minutes rest, and then plodded forward into the unexplored darkness.

Very suddenly, their torches illuminated a chamber into which their corridor ran, and out of the left wall of which ran another corridor. In the undisturbed dust of the floor lay several obviously long-dead corpses in surprisingly well-preserved armor and carrying weapons of similar quality. Robert the Bold asked no one in particular, "I wonder how they died, and how long ago." With that he stepped into the chamber and froze with horror!

As soon as his foot had passed through the doorway, the dead men began to move, rising at grotesque angles, clutching weapons. They rose in total silence and lumbered soundlessly towards the terrified mercenary, staring at him with dead eyes. Their armor and weapons gleamed in the torchlight, and the gasping adventurers could smell the foul corruption of their rotting flesh.

Ev, Ralf and Lilly, with weapons drawn, shouted to Robert, "To us! Join our shield wall!" Ev added a pithy curse in Altanian.

Robert shook himself, and scurried back into the corridor. Just as he passed through the doorway, a crash of metal was heard, and a cloud of dust rose in the air. Once again there was a group of armed and armored cadavers scattered on the

chamber's floor.

"By the power of Mastack," cried Sombo. Visson shook his head, "No, more likely the power of Vngorrak." Sombo, after a moment's reflection, stuck his arm through the doorway. Immediately, the zombies began to rise, crashing to the stone floor once again when Sombo withdrew his arm. "Well, my friends, how does one kill something that is already dead?"

Visson, counting to himself, said, "Even were we to count you as a warrior, mage, which you are not, we are outnumbered by these hellbeasts. We cannot pass this point without fighting and perhaps dying."

The mercenaries grumbled about the difference between facing live opponents and those somewhat dead. Lilly was herself very confused, not knowing quite what to do. Finally she came to a decision. "We haven't the necessary powers to force our way into the treasure chamber. Although I do not care to retreat before the first guardian that we meet, we can return to town safely and mount another force some other time. Let us go now." With that she turned and began walking back to the stairway.

There was no incident of any type until they stepped out onto the surface. Ral rushed up to them with arrow nocked, "Orcs, I saw Orcs!"

Immediately the group drew their weapons while Ral chattered out his report, "Four Orcs came into the clearing ten minutes ago, saw the horses. Three ran off, but I shot the other. I'm sure they'll be back soon. . . ."

Visson began barking out orders. The group quickly gathered and mounted their horses and galloped off to the ferry landing. They took up defensive positions while waiting for the ferry, but apparently the gods were smiling, for they saw no Orcs, and were soon away across the water. They were back in the City State by night fall.

XII

The two merchants were rocking in the middle of the street, roaring drunk. They were bawling a bawdy song at the top of their lungs, in three differed keys between the two of them. Finally, on the last chorus, one of the men collapsed in a heap while the other swayed uncertainly above him.

At that moment a slight, quick-form separated itself from the shadows. Running silently, it reached the still conscious drunk, and belted his besotted head with a dagger handle. As he slid to the cobblestones, the thief quickly emptied the money pouch of the sleeping man, checking expertly for

jewelry and important papers. Repeating the performance on the clouted one, the thief once again gained a number of coins. Quickly she slipped back into the shadows.

"Ninety-two silvers," she thought. "I still can't afford to join the Guild."

Delirious slipped from shadow to shadow, evading anyone who still walked abroad, until she reached her room near the Plaza of Profuse Pleasures. Watching the women plying their trade on the streets and alleys nearby, her thoughts turned towards memories of her mother, working at the same trade.

Delirious had been a mistake, a fact of which her mother constantly reminded her. The two were constantly at odds, especially once the youngster entered adolescence. Her mother insisted on having Delirious enter the profession, but the young girl decided that she would best make her living at other work. Tavern work or seamstress were never even considered. Delirious wanted to become a thief.

Just when she had saved enough gold to pay the required initiation fee into the Thieve's Guild of the City State of the Invisible Overlord, her mother had the bad grace to die, being stabbed to death by a drug-crazed gnoll. The cost of vengeance and burial used the full amount of the inheritance (such as it was) and most of her savings. Thus, even though triply dangerous, being liable to injury from victims, the guards, and Guildmembers if caught, Delirious had taken to thievery to make the money necessary.

Her mind cleared of these thoughts as she was entering her room. Dawn had begun to tinge the horizon, when she felt a tug at her sleeve. There stood an older girl, once a playmate, now a member of the ranks of women who were available around the Plaza.

"Delirious, I have news which I beg that you'll attend to seriously."

"Speak, Leetha."

"I . . . I had a customer only a short time ago. He is a member of the Guild of the Assassins. He warned me that if a certain young lady does not cease her unlawful activities, without paying the required fees and tithes, the agency to which the funds are owed will hire an assassin to eliminate the competition."

"And what of me?"

"You are the person of which they speak."

"I cannot pay them."

"Delirious, if you need to gather funds to pay for initiation, I can arrange a meeting for you which will pay well over the required amount."

"My thanks for the offer, Leetha, but you

already know that I will not do this. Worry not about me! Go now, you need your beauty sleep, or you will not gain any riches." With this, Delirious kissed the painted lass on both cheeks and smiled. Leetha grasped the thief's hands in both of hers, nodded gravely, and then turned and disappeared.

When she was gone, Delirious began a fit of shivering. "I must leave the City for a time, to gather funds for my initiation." She sat down and pondered on possible plans, and soon fell fast asleep.

In the late afternoon, Delirious awoke, and put together her possessions in a backpack. Slinging it over her shoulder, she left quietly out the back door of her building. For the first few blocks, she pretended to shop, checking the wares on carts and at stalls, and looking over the merchandise in front of small stores, but she was actually watching to see if she was being tailed. Satisfying herself that she was not under hostile observation, she wended her way by street and alley to an inn that she had chosen, to find herself an adventuring band... The Green Goblin.

She entered the bustling common room of the inn just as the evening crowds began. This particular inn was a favorite of the elves of the City State, as well as being a hang-out for mercenaries and barbarians. Delirious felt certain that she would find a group to join on their travels. So it was with a light heart that she scanned the crowded tables.

At most she saw three or four mercenaries or barbarians (or both) at any table, although there was one off to the side at which sat two obviously newly arrived barbarians, three mercenaries, and two elves, male and female. However, at the bar there was one big barbarian, coming towards...

"Hullo, lass be you hungry? Innkeep! A platter of stew and Tarshian wine for the hungry lady!" A tall, very drunk, battlescarred man grinned toothily at her. "Come with me, I've a table over here."

Delirious smiled when she saw his bulging money belt, and followed to his table. She found herself seated at a table next to the table headed by the elvish pair. As she sat down, a tavern wench set food and drink on the table. The thief smiled at the big warrior and asked, "How many drinks have you had?"

"I've had three or four," he said, "why?"

"Well I've got to catch up," she replied. While he was roaring with laughter, she spilled most of the wine on the floor, and made a show of drinking the rest. The warrior was impressed by her apparent drinking prowess, and ordered nine more drinks, six for Delirious, and three for himself. In

short order, using various tricks, she soon had the man snoring under the table, sans moneybelt.

Finishing her meal, Delirious once again looked around the room. Most of the customers had left, but for a few individuals at the bar. However, the table headed by the two elves still hold the same complement as it had earlier in the evening, and they appeared to be deep in conversation. She heard the words "...zombies...", "...Orcs...", and others and she came to a quick decision.

Delirious stepped right up to the table and said, "You are a band of adventurers, are you not? Planning your raids? I have a desire to leave the City State, and I know that my abilities will be most useful to you."

At this, the male elf glared at her and said, "We have no need of women," which got him a punch from the female elf. She turned to Delirious and said, "My name is Lilly. We are indeed a band, and we are trying to decide what our next step should be. I am curious, though. What skills have you that we might find useful?"

"I am a fine lockpick, an above average wall climber. I am quick of hand and fast of tongue."

Visson muttered, "A quick tongue bites sharper than a sword, betimes."

"O pointy-eared master, do you not trust yourself in the presence of a maiden?" replied Delirious. Lilly giggled as Visson turned red.

Robert the Bold quickly interjected, "Some of the finest warriors and brightest strategists in the armies of the West are women. Why not, milord and lady?"

Looking around the table, Lilly saw Ev and Ralf give thumbs-up, Ral blushed, and Sombo bowed his head respectfully. Lilly then turned back to Visson, with raised eyebrow.

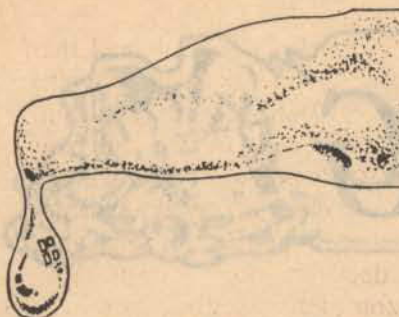
"All right," he said, "but no good will come of it." He pointed at Delirious, "Do you no foul deeds, hear me, or I'll slit your throat!"

Delirious curtsied gracefully, and then sat down between Ral and Ralf.

As introductions were exchanged, a man dashed in the Common Room, shouting "Sport, Sport! Six goblins are torturing Leetha the Wanton two blocks west!" Quickly, the bar emptied, frenzied betting already beginning.

Delirious was up quickly, saying, "My friend is in need; I must go to her. I will return soon." Turning away she rushed out.

Robert looked at Ralf and Ev, and the three rose. "With your permission, miss?" Lilly looked fierce. "We shall all go." The table cleared of men and elves in a flash.



Nose Wet or No Sweat

by Tom Cooper, Jr.

A potion that actually has ochre jelly or green slime in it.

In the lower levels of a dungeon you could have a treasure chest guarded by a 6th to 9th level Dancing Sword which attacks anyone who opens the chest.

Have chests that when they're opened trigger a slide that leads the party to the lair of the guarding monster.

Have a fairly good scroll that also has an undetectable suggestion spell thrown at the reader (-2 on the Strength), such as attack his fellow adventurers, attack the 1st monster encountered, and so on.

A chest that swings open to reveal a set of stairs underneath that lead to a monster's lair where the real treasure is.

Have a chest that appears full of gold but is actually yellow mold.

A brothel deep underground that is run and staffed by succubi who are in humanoid form (watch out for their kiss!).

Warnings on walls to scare players away from easy treasure.

Have a room that looks like it's full of dung, but is actually black pudding.

Have rooms that have little (3 foot high) statues of gold, silver, or copper, which animate when players enter, and offer help or try to trick the players. They could go along with the party and further help or hinder them.

Have rooms that cause one random member of the party to change alignment.

Have rooms that heat up or freeze in 1 - 4 turns and require strength 18 to open the door out.

Death Carnival: the players find themselves in one of three events. 1) Dodge the Knives: 3 knives are thrown at the player. Dexterity of 9 or less, a 6 is needed to dodge knives. Dexterity of 10 - 13, a 5 or a 6 is needed. Dexterity of 14 - 16, a 4 - 6 is needed. Dexterity of 17 - 18 a 3 - 6 is needed. 2) Tightrope of Death: players must walk across a vat of boiling oil, chance of falling off same as above, roll 3 times. 3) Tame the Lion: players go into a cage where a lion waits. The players would have nothing but a chair and a whip which cause one point of damage, and no armor. The player must subdue the 3HD lion (knock it down to one hit) or die trying. When (and if) the players survive, they should be paid handsomely and sent on their way.

Have Invisible Stalkers which attack and kill only non-player hirelings of the characters, and can't be attacked themselves.

Lava room. When players enter the door slams shut and the floor begins to slide open, revealing lava beneath. Give the players 1 - 6 melee rounds to try to get out.

The Yellow Pool of Turia. When players walk in they see a LARGE jewel on the far side of the room. A yellow pool lies between however, and it is alive. If a player tries to wade across (the only way to get to the jewel) after two melee rounds he is trapped and the pool eats away his flesh and sucks the player down in 1 - 4 turns. There is no way to save a person once he is caught, but the pool can be destroyed by fire. By the way, the jewel is an illusion!!

Have rooms which cast feeblemind spells at magic-users, thus making them useless.

Have rooms of anti-gravity. When players enter all gravity ceases and they rise to the roof, then gravity returns and they fall, taking one die of damage.

Rhyming room. Have an impregnable monster ask each player an elephant joke, if the player can't answer he loses one magical item.

The BOOTY BAG



Helm of the Sun

Helm of the Sun

An elaborately worked golden helmet set with rubies, emeralds, and sapphires. It will appear obviously valuable, and might be worth as much as 100,000 GP if you could find someone to buy it. It raises the Strength, Intelligence, and Dexterity of a wearer by 1. As for any other non-protective helm, there is a 1 in 6 chance that any hit score was on the helm—smashing it on a 20, and devaluing it by 1000 GP x points of damage on any other hit which will also knock it off.

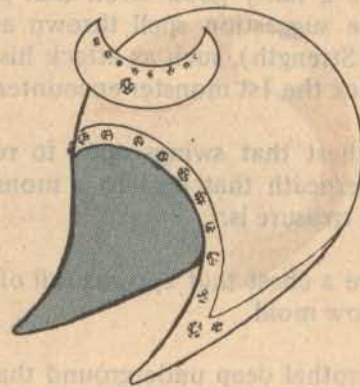
Helm of Mercury

A plain, smooth, unadorned golden helmet. It may appear to be bronze or brass to anyone but a goldsmith or armorer, and might be worth as much as 20,000 GP. It confers the ability to Detect Secret Doors, Detect Invisible, Detect Traps. It is non-protective.

Helms of the Planets

by Ronald Pehr

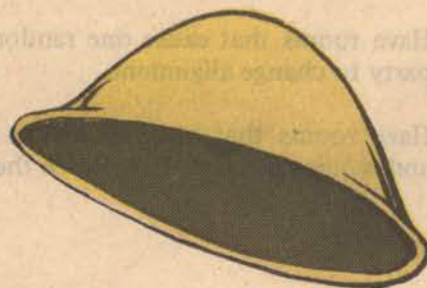
Helm of the Moon



Helm of the Moon

Plain, smooth helmet of silver, set with diamonds, it will appear obviously valuable, and might be worth as much as 25,000 GP. It raises Wisdom, Constitution, and Charisma of a wearer by 2. It is a non-protective helm.

Helm of Mercury



Helm of Venus

Helm of Venus

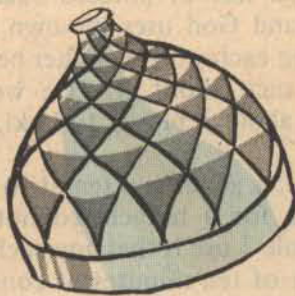
A plain, smooth, unadorned silver helmet. It may appear to be tin or steel to anyone but a silver-smith or armorer, and might be worth as much as 5,000 GP. It raises Charisma +6. Non-protective.



Helm of Mars

Helm of Mars

A rusty, iron helmet with no monetary value beyond its iron content. It confers +3 to hit and +3 damage with any weapon in addition to whatever bonuses the wearer or weapon already have. It acts as a regular, protective armored helmet. If worn by a Cleric or Magician it will allow them to fight with any type of weapon at +3 to hit and +3 damage, but they will not be able to use any magic while wearing the helm.

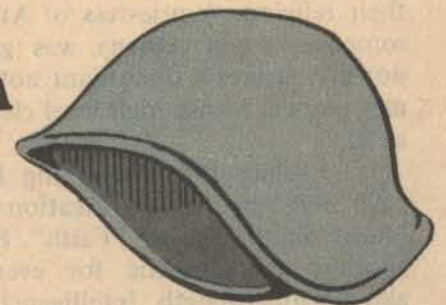


Helm of Jupiter

Helm of Jupiter

A plain, smooth, unadorned helmet of Mithral. Only a Dwarf would recognize it. Anyone else will believe it is silver—worth perhaps 100 GP—tin, or steel. Its true worth is 20,000 GP x the exchange rate between gold and Mithral. It is a +2 protective helmet and allows the wearer to detect any economically valuable substance which has no other worth (e.g. gold, jewels but not whale oil or costly fur garments) within 60' and know the exact value.

Helm of Saturn



Helm of Saturn

A plain, smooth, unadorned helmet of lead. It appears to be lead and has no intrinsic worth beyond the lead content. It screens the wearer from ESP, Magic Jar, and Telepathy. It confers the ability to Speak with the Dead and the language of any Undead. It renders the wearer immune from Undead life draining but not from physical damage an Undead causes.

Faith

An Alternative to Clerical Spells

by Thomas A. McCloud

TSR's Dungeons & Dragons is an excellent game, but one element has bothered me from the start: the system of "spells" for clerics. The purpose of a priest in the real world is to intercede with God. This is often done with ritual, but the fundamental effort is either supplication or praise—in a word, prayer.

Now I confess to being a Christian, and it is a basic Christian doctrine that anyone can pray. I shall not belabor the point, but I suspect you have at least heard the quotation: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matt. 17:20)

Such, of course, is not the case in the world of TSR's rules. There a 1st level cleric has no powers, a 2nd level cleric can "cast" the 1st level "spells" of Cure Light Wounds, Purify Food & Water, Detect Magic, Detect Evil, Protection/Evil, or Light. Furthermore, the 2nd level cleric is limited to one such spell per day. A third level...but I won't go on, you probably know the rules as well as I do. The point is that each "spell" is narrowly defined, and each cleric is limited to specified spells. You may feel that this systematization is appropriate, I do not.

Another anomaly which annoys me is seeing clerics perform miracles that have nothing to do with their religion. A priestess of Athena "resurrecting" someone, when Athena was goddess of wisdom, not life, strikes a discordant note. Worse yet, I have met players whose high level clerics had NO religion at all.

Feeling that something had to be done, I have developed a modification of the rules which hinges on the use of "Faith". Faith in my game is another characteristic for every character, right along with Strength, Intelligence, and so forth. For most characters it indicates the strength of their belief in their religion, whether it be Christian, Islamic, pagan, satanic, or whatever. For atheists and agnostics it is a measure of their disbelief and doubt. It is rolled on three six-sided dice like any

other characteristic, except for clerics and paladins. For clerics, initial Faith is at least equal to Wisdom. For paladins, initial Faith is at least equal to Charisma.

Most characters remain static in Faith. But clerics add 1 - 6 points of Faith for each advance in level, and paladins add 1 - 4 points of Faith for each advance in level.

During the play of the game any character, other than an agnostic or atheist, can pray for a miracle. The prayer must accord with the being to whom it is addressed—a prayer for healing asked of Satan dragged one character straight into Hell; prayers to God for wealth or power aren't even considered. The prayer need not be phrased exactly. Prayers are not wishes and God uses his own infinite wisdom in answering each prayer. Other beings may not be quite so nice about it. One would want to be very careful about a prayer to Loki, the Norse god of mischief.

On the other hand, a genuine attempt to put before God one's desire for a miracle cannot be tossed off lightly. The rule I use is that any such attempt takes a minimum of ten minutes of concentrated prayer. This affects the game in two ways. First, it takes prayer out of melee—praying a monster dead has been made to take too long. (A rule found to be necessary when some characters prayed a beholder to death. Second, the ten minute rule helps justify another rule on prayers: anyone seriously asking for a miracle has a 50% chance of being called into the clergy. (Or being made a paladin, if that seems more appropriate.) This may create a split class character, in which case accumulated experience is divided equally into the new classes and the character's level adjusted in each. Hit points are adjusted to which ever of the new levels is most favorable.

In any case, when the character who is praying finishes percentile dice are rolled. If the roll is equal to or less than the character's faith, then a minor miracle is granted if it will answer the prayer. However, if the roll is 00 (which represents 100), the dice are rolled again. If the second roll is also

00, then a major miracle is granted, and the character becomes a saint. (A saint has a God-given Faith of 100+.)

Now you may well ask what the difference is between a major miracle and a minor miracle. A minor miracle is one which is in harmony with nature, a major miracle is one which is not. Some examples will explain.

Quickly healing an injury is a minor miracle since the body naturally heals itself, although it does so more slowly. Note that "quickly" does not mean instantly, I assume one minute per hit point, and the prayer takes ten minutes anyway.

Advice from God is a minor miracle, since inspiration is a natural phenomenon. This is useful for detecting magic, detecting evil, finding traps, and so forth.

Dispelling magic is a minor miracle, since magic is unnatural by definition. Removing a curse depends on the nature of the curse. The curse which prevents someone from shedding a Robe of Powerlessness can easily be broken with a minor miracle since being able to take off a robe is certainly in harmony with nature. On the other hand, if a curse has aged someone, as does the Staff of Withering, to remove the curse would require aging backwards, which involves something very unnatural.

Other miracles may also depend on circumstances, sometimes being minor, sometimes being major. Take for example a request for light. If the cleric is in a dark room, but light can be provided by having a door fall open "accidentally", that involves a minor miracle. Or outdoors, if blowing away clouds will reveal the moon that involves a minor miracle. Even the spontaneous combustion of a torch can be considered a minor miracle. But if there is no reasonable source of light, then light from nowhere requires a major miracle.

Major miracles, those not in harmony with nature, include such Dungeons & Dragons "spells" as Turn Sticks into Snakes, Animate Object, Hold Person, and the most crucial of all miracles: resurrection.

To give characters a better chance at surviving, I use the rule that anyone down to zero hit points is not dead, if the amount by which they are below zero is less than their constitution and they have been into negative hit points for less than thirty minutes. Thus a character with a Constitution of 10 who had 7 hit points and then took 16 hit points in damage can be healed with a minor miracle. But if he takes one more point of damage, or goes untreated for a half hour or more, he is dead. This "30 minute" rule is actually quite independent of the use of Faith, but they work well together.

It is important to limit the number of prayers tried for a given miracle, but no more than three prayers by different persons for the same miracle will be considered. Without this rule the players just keep rolling the dice until they get what they want.

A few loose ends remain to be tied, and I have an anecdote to relate.

One obvious loose end is the matter of clerical magic items, like the Rod of Resurrection, or the Book of Exalted Deeds. In my dungeons such items function quite "normally", that is, TSR's rules are used. Clerics may also use any other magic item normally permitted to them. There are those who would argue that the Judeo-Christian religion is totally against magic ("Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Exodus 22:18) but I take my cue from C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia (The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe)* etc.) in which magic and a form of Christianity achieve an actual affinity.

Another loose end is the matter of restricting clerics to blunt weapons. The rule comes, I presume, from the actual medieval nonsense that held that a cleric could fight, and even kill, but was not supposed to "shed blood". A sword cut and, therefore, "shed blood". Of course this is ridiculous legalism, but in any event it was a part of medieval Christianity. No such rule ever applied to the ancient Priests of Mars, the Roman god of war. Nor, so far as I know, has it ever applied to imams of the Islamic faith, or clerics of any other religion. So in my dungeons it is applied to Christian clerics only.

Other religions have other restrictions in my dungeons. Most of all, miracles granted by a god must be within that god's power. Venus, for instance, does not grant wisdom. Loki does not grant calmness. To this other restrictions are added. I will not let a pagan priest use a cross against a vampire, even if the cross IS 'sovereign' against vampires of all religions. A priestess of Kuan Yin, the Chinese goddess of mercy, would not be allowed any weapon, blunt or not. Each god or goddess has to be considered separately. Obviously this is beyond the scope of this article.

Several of the effects of the variation of the rules discussed here appear in the true story of Attila, which I will now relate.

Attila is a character rolled and played by Bill Buhnerkempe, one of my regular players. Attila was originally a barbarian who climbed the long, hard ladder to sixth level in dungeons run by other DMs before he came to my world. He worshipped Pan, the Greek god of forests, flocks and shepherds, whose form is that of a satyr, but that was no handicap to a fighter in my world.

Then Attila got killed by the death touch of Satan in a melee which took place in Hell. (Now that was an interesting adventure.) The other characters won the fight (Satan was not destroyed, just knocked to a lower level for awhile) and got down to the business of recovering. They could not heal Attila with a minor miracle as I ruled that death from Satan's death touch was immediate and total, when it worked. (Attila had gotten, and failed, a saving throw.) They tried for a while to resurrect him, but no one could roll the necessary 00-00. (This happened before I added the "rule of three" but 00-00 is a tough roll.) Two characters had managed to polymorph into platinum dragons. (Which is the main reason they won the fight.) That gave them two 5th level Raise Dead, and two 7th level Raise Dead fully, spells—I ruled that the clerical abilities of Bahamut, the real platinum dragon, were magical in nature, not miraculous. These they used up on other casualties.

Eventually they got out of Hell with Attila's body, and went back to the magic user of Kemble who had sent them on the adventure in the first place. Being a magic user he could not resurrect anyone, so he performed a reincarnation. The dice were rolled, I checked by reincarnation tables, and Attila came back as a satyr. This was delightfully appropriate for a follower of the god Pan. (Another character got reincarnated as a nymph, but a quick high level spell kept anything from happening.)

On another day, on another adventure, Attila, the 6th level satyr whose god was Pan, decided to pray for the healing of a wounded friend. Attila's faith was 11, but the percentile dice rolled 04, so Pan appeared—only to tell Attila that healing was not in Pan's department. The dice were rolled again, the result was less than 50, so Pan told Attila that he was now a priest of Pan, gave him a set of pipes,

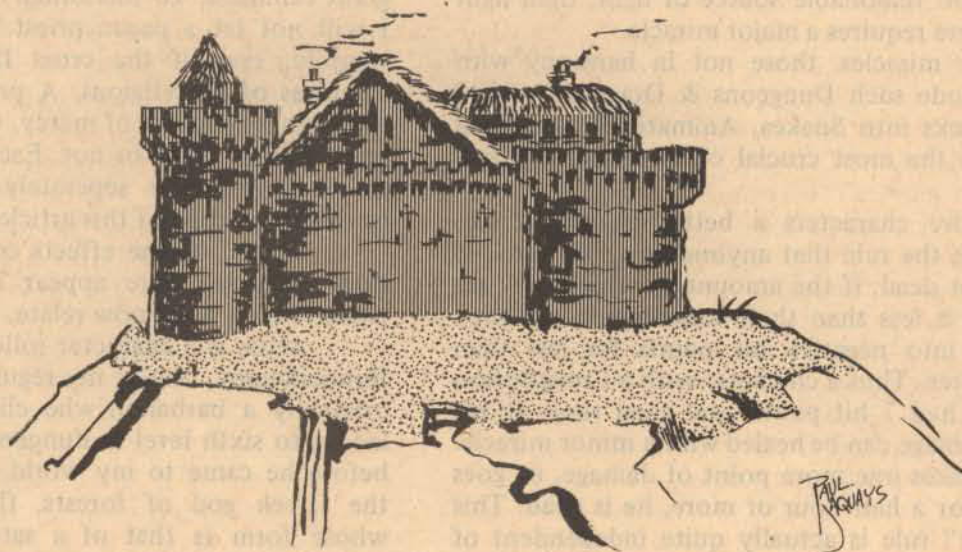
and left.

Now some adjustments had to be made. Attila's new duties did not prevent him from fighting, so he was now a fighter/cleric. Since his occupation was now split, so were his experience points—making him a third level fighter and a fourth level cleric. Bill (Attila's player) raised the question of blunt weapons. Taking a satyr as the proper form of a follower of Pan, I consulted the *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Monster Manual*. There it says: "A satyr normally attacks by butting with its two sharp horns. They will occasionally (20%) make use of magical weapons." Using that for rationalizing a substitute weapons restriction I ruled that a priest of Pan could use any magic weapon, but no non-magic weapon except that which was a natural part of its body. Attila had other magic, but no magic weapon.

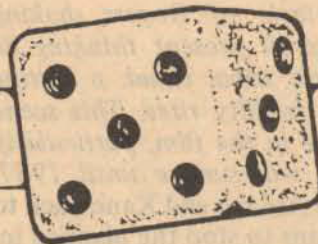
This anecdote is not quite done. Later in the same adventure, the group drew from a very special Deck of Many Things. Others drew marvelous advantages, but Attila drew a card which read: "Magic will never work for you again." The poor guy had to give away a Gem of Kemble, Additive Bracers of Defence +7, a Ring of +3 Protection, a Ring of X-ray Vision, and a Bag of Holding. Now he is a fighter/cleric, and can only fight with his two horns.

Attila's story has been a bit long, but it shows the effects possible with the variations of the rules which I use.

TSR's original D&D system for clerics, with its spells and its levels and its strict limitations, does provide a good playable game. But it does make clerics into a kind of magic user. The rule of "Faith" I have outlined here is working quite well in my dungeons. It might work well in yours. Try it and see.



THE DIE IS CAST



by Bryan Hinnen

Glen A. Larson, **Buck Rogers In the 25th Century** (PG - Universal): a film that seems to use a comic book as its script.

The use of old standby comic book heroes by CBS (*Wonder Woman*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Spiderman*) has excited some comic book enthusiasts and dismayed others. Hollywood's answers, *Superman* and *Buck Rogers*, have probably disappointed all of them.

Hollywood has allowed audiences to be able to laugh at Superman, but it seems to want us to laugh at Buck Rogers. The script is pathetic, giving Rogers a string of Groucho-style one-liners and even resorting to slapstick at one point. Daniel Haller's direction allows five talented main actors to either become hard-nosed heroes, seductive ladies (or, in the case of Erin Gray, both), or vaudeville comedians.

Aside from that, it's a pretty good flick. Special effects are by John Dykstra, a name that has come to be synonymous with excellence. The acting, when it occurs, is good. The background music is a bit spastic in places but it doesn't really detract from the overall effect.

Perhaps I shouldn't be so critical. *Buck Rogers* is about a five on a ten-point scale if the viewer is looking for good science fiction; if one is expecting comedy, it's about a seven-pointer. Dykstra saves the film for science fiction and comic book fans.

Believe it or not, it does have a plot of sorts. Rogers (Gil Gerard) is launched in a one-man deep-space probe in 1987 that goes off course, cryogenically freezing him and lengthening the trip from five months to five centuries.

He is picked up on his return by the flagship of an alien star empire, the *Draconia*, on its way to Earth on an ostensibly diplomatic mission. The *Draconia* is commanded by Kane (Henry Silva), born on Earth and now a commander in the Imperial Fleet. His filibustering is given no further explanation in the film, so who am I to conjecture?

Kane is repeatedly being accused of incompetence by Princess Ardana (Pamela Hensley), a headstrong fleet commander hungry for her first

victory.

The *Draconia* is actually out to conquer Earth, and her armaments are a big secret. Rogers is suspected of being a spy, and is thawed out and sent home. A homing transmitter is planted on his ship to show the *Draconia* the way through Earth's protective force field.

In a space fighter strongly reminiscent of *Star Wars'* X-wing fighter and *Battlestar Galactica's* Viper, Col. Wilma Deering (Erin Gray) intercepts Rogers before he vaporizes himself on the force field and guides him through the entry channel. This is where the rush to make up for production delays is most glaringly apparent. The fighter's cockpit is an exact duplicate of the Viper's.

In a futuristic Earth city, Rogers is finally forced to believe that he has been a popsicle for five hundred years by a city councilman (Tim O'Connor), a Frisbee-sized super-computer named Dr. Theophilus, and a midget android named Tweekey. Don't touch that dial; it gets better.

The transmitter is found, and now Rogers is convicted by a Frisbee-computer council of being a spy for the "space pirates" that have been plaguing interstellar traffic. Deering arranges for him to verify his story of armaments on board the *Draconia* by accompanying her and a squadron of fighters to the incoming dreadnought on a real espionage mission. The ship launches its own fighters while the Earthling squadron is on board, and they charade a pirate attack on the *Draconia*.

In a space scene that science fiction film goers will think they've seen somewhere before, there are five Earthling fighters; the Mongol-styled Imperial warriors destroy four, leaving two (Rogers and Deering, of course). Four "pirates" are launched by the *Draconia*; Rogers destroys seven. The film splicers must be using New Math.

Kane and Ardana come to Earth to conclude a bogus treaty of mutual defense against the pirates, and a reception is held. It appears that ballroom dancing is scheduled to make a comeback in the 25th century, until Rogers convinces the musician to play disco.

The resulting spectacle of Rogers shaking booty with Ardana leaves all present thinking he has displayed some ancient tribal ritual: a mating dance perhaps, or spring fertility rites. This scene is the most ridiculous one in the film, particularly its conjecture that disco will survive until 1987.

Rogers accompanies Ardana and Kane back to the Draconia, where he plans to stop the planned invasion of Earth. And even though the script doesn't deserve it, I'm not going to reveal any more of the plot. But a sixth-grader could predict the conclusion.

Hensley's interstellar-seductress costumes and Gray's played-up good looks make one wonder whether this is also Hollywood's answer to *Charlie's Angels*. As in *Star Wars*, the androids are in there with the comic relief, in a film that needs everything but.

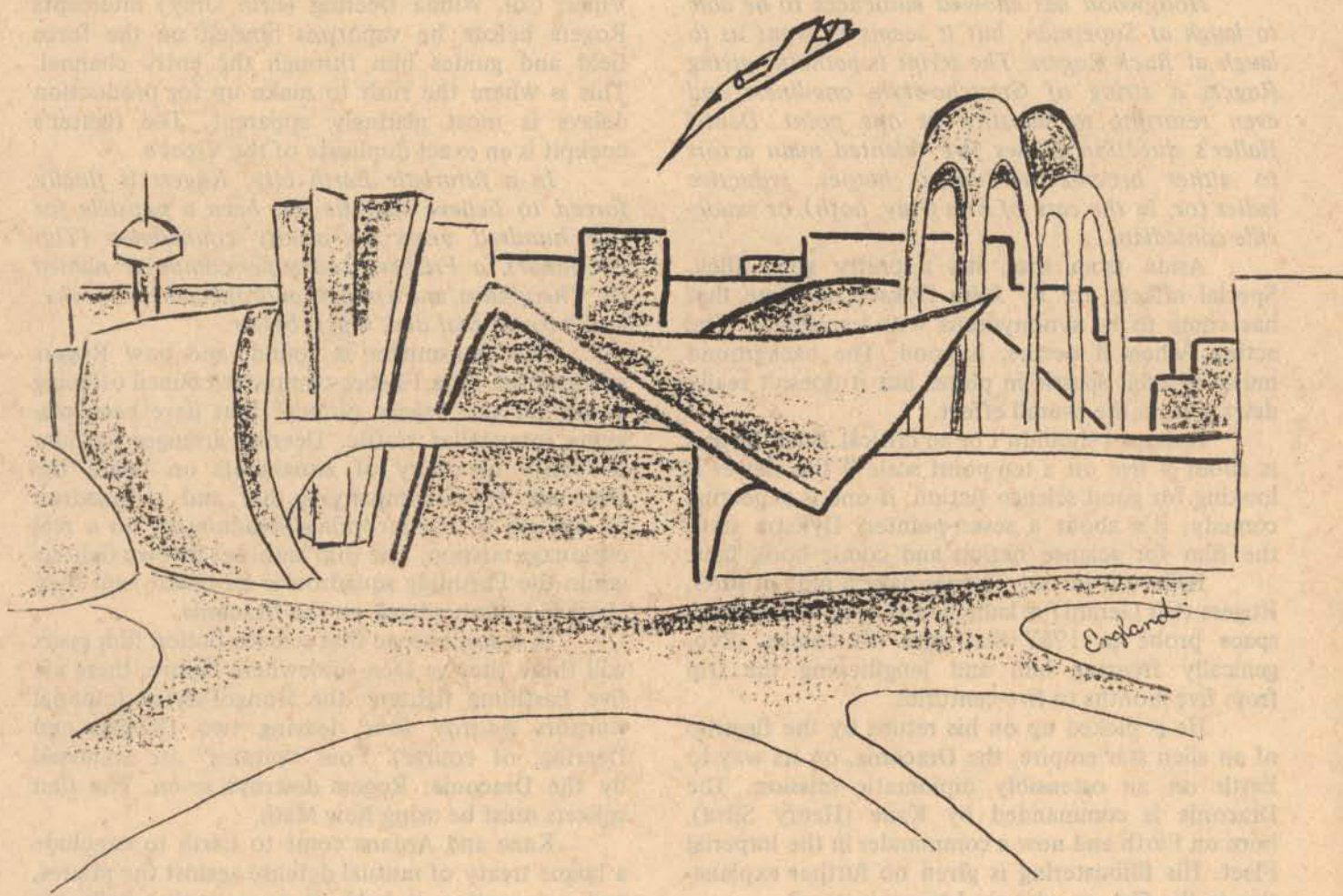
Strong points in the script are hard to find. One thing that it may have over other science

fiction movies is a little more political intrigue interjected between the deep-space dogfights and fancy hardware.

As previously mentioned, Dykstra's special effects steal the show. He got everything built and "flying" before being called away, to come up with something spectacular to bail out the *Battlestar Galactica* series. The city and warships are therefore predictably amazing.

But his assistants painted in the blast effects on the footage to show explosions during battle scenes, and so even this aspect of the film is marred by such things as fiery explosions and burning in the vacuum of space.

The pilot film *Battlestar Galactica* was excellent, and at least the special effects of the series are good, in Universal's collaboration with ABC. This writer hopes that Universal will continue to put out quality science fiction films without letting a lame duck impede them.



**THE WET NAVY
MEETS
THE SPACE FLEET
OR MERCENARY-style Charts for Nautical Force Command
in TRAVELLER**

by Bill Paley

As many of you already know, GDW has added another rulebook to the *Traveller* series of rules for Science fiction RPG (role-playing games) called *Mercenary*. The book describes charts for the preparation more fully of characters with mercenary skills from that portion of the Army called the Ground Force Command. The first paragraphs of the book describes the Army as being divided into three forces, one on the ground (covered in *Mercenary*), one in the air, and one in the water. Assuming that your primary planet has water, a player may desire a naval character as well as any other. Thus, I have prepared a series of charts and skills similar to those found in *Mercenary*. Where charts are the same as those in the aforementioned book, it will be so stated; look it up in there. Basic Training is the same as in the book.

Military Occupation Skills (Table 1)

	Support	Submarine	Surface	Air/Sea	Coast Guard
1	Small Craft	Mechanical	Forward Quarters	Small Craft	Brawling
2	Ship Engineer	Ship Engineer	Small Craft	Flight	Electronics
3	Small Craft	Breather Gear	Cartography	Breather Gear	Jack-o-t
4	Mechanical	Electronics	Missile Ordnanceman	Small Craft	Bribery
5	Electronics	Missile Ordnanceman	Communications	Cartography	Missile Ordnanceman
6	Medic	Cartography	Ship Engineer	Mechanical	Cartography
7	Computer	Computer	Computer	Flight	Small Craft

DMs: '+1' if world is tech level 8+.

Support: Supply and repair services all over the ports of the planet.

Submarine: Submersible warvessels.

Surface: Gunboats, large warships, assault craft, merchant vessels.

Air/Sea: Aircraft built for rescue, surveillance and patrol. Also used for undersea rescue and salvage teams (Without the aircraft, of course).

Coast Guard: Small patrol craft usually used as police patrols although capable of anti-submarine and small unit combat.

General Assignment (Table 2)

	Support	Submarine	Surface	Air/Sea	Coast Guard
0	Command	Command	Command	Command	Command
1	Command	Command	Command	Command	Command
2	Command	Command	Command	Command	Command
3	Staff	Command	Command	Command	Staff
4	Staff	Staff	Staff	Staff	Staff
5	Staff	Staff	Staff	Staff	Staff
6	Special	Special	Special	Special	Special
7	Special	Special	Special	Special	Special

DMs: '+1' if Education 8+; Officers may take '-1' "Bucking for Command".



Special (Table 3) (NCOs and Enlisted Men)

For Officers, see Mercenary.

(See note at end of article)

- 1) Cross Trug (any service within Nautical Command)
- 2) Specialist school (See Table 4)
- 3) Commando School (See Mercenary)
- 4) Recruiting
- 5) Flight School (See below)
- 6) OCS (See Mercenary)
- 7) OCS (See Mercenary)

DMs: +1 if Intelligence 7+.

Specialist School (Table 4)

Flight School: Toll 4+ to gain these skills –

Flight, Cartography, Missile Ordnanceman, Computer.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1) Medic | 4) Communications |
| 2) Electronics | 5) Mechanical |
| 3) Computer | 6) Ship Engineer |

Unit Assignment (Table 5)

	Support	Submarine	Surface
2	Combat	Combat	Combat
3	Base	Combat	Combat
4	Ctr. Insr.	Patrol	Trug
5	Base	Trug	Patrol
6	Base	Patrol	Patrol
7	Base	Base	Base
8	Base	Patrol	Patrol
9	Trug	Trug	Patrol
10	Ctr. Insr.	Patrol	Trug
11	Base	Combat	Combat
12	Combat	Combat	Combat

	Air/Sea	Coast Guard
2	Combat	Combat
3	Combat	Trug
4	Trug	Trug
5	Trug	Patrol
6	Base	Base
7	Patrol	Patrol
8	Patrol	Patrol
9	Trug	Patrol
10	Trug	Trug
11	Combat	Trug
12	Combat	Combat

In terms of receiving a Purple Heart for wounds, Combat Assignments only (except support in a Counter-Insurgency base).

Assignment Resolution (Table 6)

Support:	Trug	Base	Combat	Ctr. Insr.
Survival	Auto	Auto	4+	5+
Decoration	None	None	10+	11+
Promotion	(7+)	(8+)	7+	8+
Skills	7+	None	8+	9+
Submarine:	Trug	Base	Combat	Patrol
Survival	3+	Auto	6+	4+
Decoration	None	None	6+	10+
Promotion	(8+)	(7+)	5+	8+
Skills	6+	None	6+	9+
Air/Sea and Surface:	Trug	Base	Combat	Patrol
Survival	3+	Auto	5+	4+
Decoration	None	None	7+	9+
Promotion	(6+)	(8+)	8+	10+
Skills	7+	None	6+	8+
Coast Guard:	Trug	Base	Combat	Patrol
Survival	3+	Auto	6+	4+
Decoration	None	None	5+	9+
Promotion	(7+)	(8+)	6+	7+
Skills	6+	None	5+	7+

DMs: For Survival, MOS skills +2 or better gives '+1'; For Promotion, Education 8+ or Social Level 8+ gives '+1' (cumulative).

When a character rolls a skill, he may choose to roll on his MOS table, on Navy Life, on Vessel Table (if he is in Coast Guard, Surface, or Submarine services), on NCO Skills (if he is E3 or higher), or on the Command or Staff skill tables in *Mercenary* if he is a commanding or staff officer.

Additional Skills (Table 7)

	Navy Life	NCO Skills	Vessel
1	Brawling	Missile Ordnanceman	Forward Observer
2	+1 Strength	Mechanical	Small Craft
3	Gambling	Cartography	Missile Ordnanceman
4	+1 Dexterity	Missile Ordnanceman	Breather Gear
5	+1 Endurance	Mechanical	Missile Ordnance
6	+1 Endurance	Cartography	Breather Gear
7	+1 Strength	Leader	
8	+1 Social Level	Leader	
9	+1 Social Level	Administration	
10		Instruction	
11		Administration	

DMs: Navy Life: +1 if junior commissioned officer, +2 if field grade, +3 if general.

NCO Skills: See *Mercenary*.

Ranks are the same as in *Mercenary* (since this is the army running the fleet).

A number of new skills are added to the lists now available, and others may be redefined. These are Small Craft, Ship Engineer, Breather Gear, Missile Ordnanceman, Cartography and Flight.

Small Craft: Gives the character the ability to handle small boats and launches. Improved skill indicates improved handling under dangerous conditions. Includes rafts, canoes, row boats, motor boats and small sailing craft.

Ship Engineer: Gives the character repair abilities with the vessel's systems, and the ability to run and maintain the vessel's power plants.

Breather Gear: Gives the character the ability to use underwater breathing equipment, scuba gear, mechanical gills, re-breather gear, etc., as used in a water environment. Any level of expertise with breather gear gives ½ skill level with Vacc Suit.

Missile Ordnanceman: Gives the character the ability to repair, maintain, fuel and launch ground-to-ground, ground-to-air, air-to-air, air-to-ground, etc., missiles weapons. At RE+3, they may maintain and fire starship's missile weapons as if with Gunnery +1.

Cartography: Gives the character the ability to navigate around the planet using maps, and to identify his position with minimal identifying terrain. "Bump-of-direction", but he must have seen a map first.

Flight: Gives the character the ability to pilot any propeller driven aircraft at Flight +1. At Flight +2 or better jet- or rocket-powered aircraft may be flown.

NOTE: Commando School and Flight School results gives the character the choice of transferring to the Ground Forces Commando Units, or (if in Flight School) the Nautical Forces Air/Sea Units, or to join the Aerospace Control Command in one of their flying forces.

Hopefully, this will give you a well-rounded Nautical character—so that when your spacemen visit a port city's wharf area, you have something other than thugs to meet them.



Creepy friends

Monster Matrix

RAG GOLEM by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing...	Variable	One day, Lotza Lint,
Armor Class.....	4	Clarence the absent minded
Move.....	8"	Wizard's ugly, was to wash
Attack.....	By Weapon	Clarence's clothes. Now,
Damage.....	By Weapon*	when Lotza finished, he
Hit Dice.....	9	couldn't find a basket to
* Plus Fire		put them in, so he just

stuck them in the nearby unused golem mold. When Clarence came down, he thought it was a golem that he had forgotten to make, so he performed the necessary spells and made the first Rag Golem. He didn't know what to do with it so he told it to go change the oil in the lanterns. When it came back, he forgot that golems don't smoke and offered it a cigarette. After two days, he and Lotza finally got the flame out. Clarence was overjoyed! He now had a golem to heat his castle. These golems caught on quick (get it—caught on!) because they would burn for about two days doing damage like a fireball when they hit and if they get soaking wet, they can pull people, etc. against their bodies and suffocate them.

TARANTULA by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing.....	1-4	These spiders live in jungles and are relatively
Armor Class.....	6	slow. They are poisonous
Move.....	6"	and make good pets because if they are treated
% in lair.....	35	right, they will treat you
Treasure.....	C	Right. They are used by
Attack.....	1 Bite	some tribes as steeds.
Damage.....	1-6 Bite*	
Hit Dice.....	4	
* 3-18 point poison		

LONG LEGS by Scott Johnson

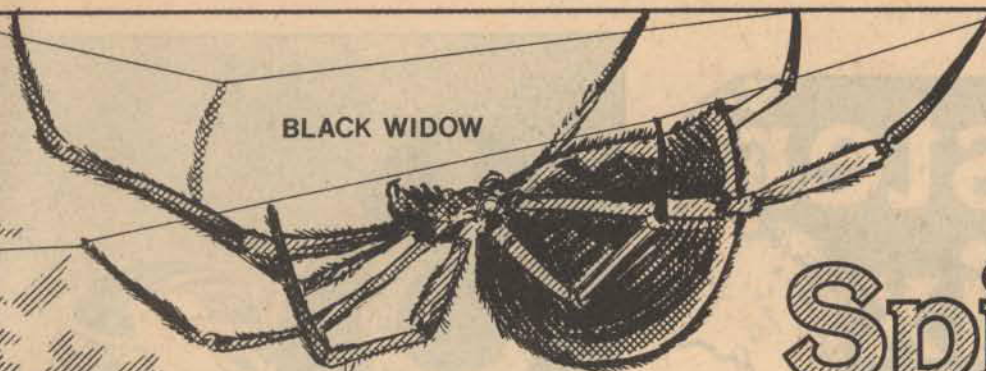
No. Appearing.....	1-5	These spiders are harmless
Armor Class.....	5	and their only defence is
Move.....	21"	their speed. They roam the
% in lair.....	None	the plains and meadows
Treasure.....	None	and are used as steeds
Attack.....	None	by meadow elves.
Damage.....	None	
Hit Dice.....	2	



PAJ

Giant Spiders

BLACK WIDOW



BLACK WIDOW by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing.....1	Black Widows are found in
Armor Class.....4	the woods where they can
Move.....18"	put up webs between the
% in lair.....90	trees. They usually hide up
Treasure.....A x 2	in the foliage of the trees
Attack.....1 Bite	and wait for something or
Damage.....1-6 Bite*	someone to get caught in
Hit Dice.....4	their web. Then they rush
* 5 - 30 point poison	down and wrap up the vic-

tim in a cocoon of webbing and drain his body of blood. If the party is surprised, they walk right into the spider's web. There are other kinds of spiders that make webs, but they are not poisonous. These spiders are more common.

TRAPDOOR SPIDER



TRAPDOOR SPIDER by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing.....1	These spiders dig a hole in
Armor Class.....6	the ground and build a
Move.....18'	hinged door on it. When
% in lair.....100	they feel vibrations, they
Treasure.....A x 3	speed out and grab a vic-
Attack.....1 Bite	tim and then retreat back
Damage.....3-18 Bite	into their lair to devour
Hit Dice.....4	their prey. If the party is

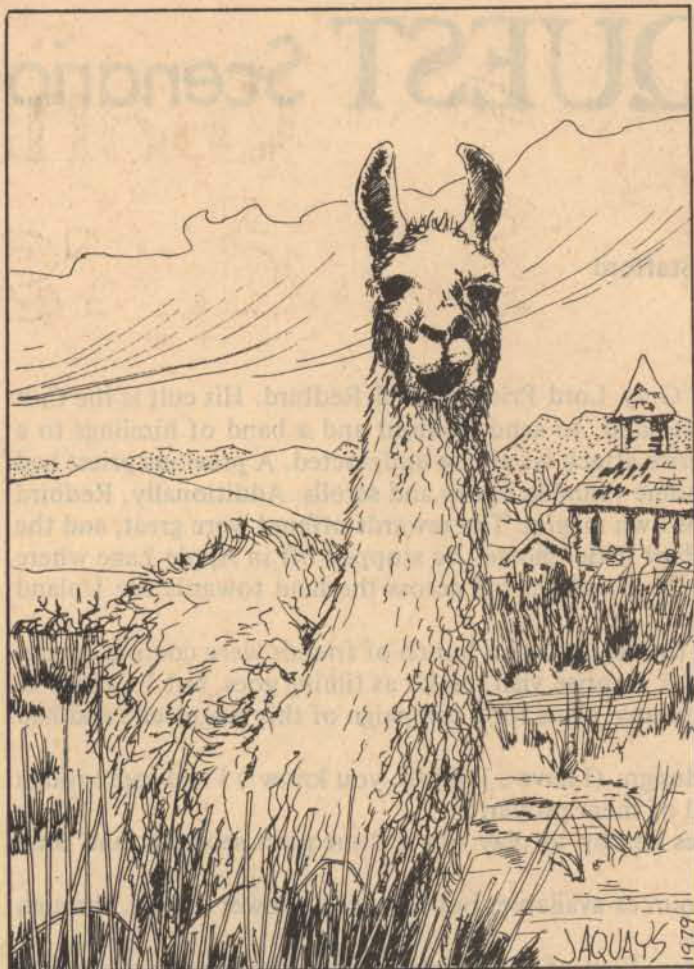
surprised, someone falls through the doorway and then the party is no longer surprised. They live mainly in clear terrain.

LONG LEGS



TARANTULA





ACID SPITTING LLAMAS by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing.....	1-8	These animals are known
Armor Class.....	7	to roam the plains and it
Move.....	18"	is rumored that a special
% in lair.....	None	breed with a head at
Treasure.....	None	both ends of its body
Attack.....	1 Spit/1 Bite	lives in the jungle. When
Damage.....	3-18 Spit,	spitting, they often aim
	1-4 Bite	for the eyes.
Hit Dice.....	3	

BLUE MEN OF THE SEA by Scott Johnson

No. Appearing.....	1-20	These short little mermen,
Armor Class.....	6	colored blue all over, are
Move.....	15"	very mischevious. They are
% in lair.....	10	often known to steal trea-
Treasure.....	F	sure off ships but the Cap-
Attack.....	1 Javelin	tain can usually (75%)
Damage.....	Javelin 1-6	trick them into getting
Hit Dice.....	1/2	their treasure back. These
		Leprachauns of the sea
		have the power to cause storms and use Javelins about
		the size of arrows.



A Quick RUNEQUEST Scenario

by Greg Stafford

THE BACKGROUND

One of the characters in my campaign game is a Grey Lord Priest named Redbird. His cult is the Cult of Lhankor Mhy, God of Knowledge, and they had decided to send Redbird and a band of hirelings to a very dangerous place on the off-chance hope that a surprise attack would be undetected. A previous priest had been killed there, and the cult was in need of recovering some valuable books and scrolls. Additionally, Redbird was seeking a particular candle with a black flame for his own magics. The rewards offered were great, and the temple at Jonstown made it cult business, leaving Redbird little choice. He stopped off in Apple Lane where he hired some local boys and some travelling mercenaries, and set off across the land towards the Upland Marsh which enveloped the dread Howling Tower.

So much for the campaign history. The truth was that Rudy and a bunch of friends were coming up and wanted to play out some Redbird adventures. This was a surprise visit, as far as timing goes, but I wanted to do something too. Trouble was that I had not drawn up any plans for a campaign of this magnitude and had nothing immediately ready to play.

What to do: My time is limited, even for game design. (I have a job too, you know!) I had some rough ideas, but I didn't have the time to follow through on all of them properly.

Fortunately I had several ready reference sources nearby to play out a Runequest scenario, and only 1 out of 3 were from CHAOSIUM!

First, I needed a floor plan. There are dozens of sources available, but I wanted a tower setting. Through luck or fate, I came up with Judges Guild *Citadel of Fire*.

Of course, I had to meddle with it for my campaign. First of all, I couldn't spare the time to altering all of the creatures within it to RQ! statistics, and the denizens as depicted in the text did not suit Redbird's quest. Since it was known to be a lair of the undead and an outpost for Delecti the Necromancer, I simply aged everything in the temple for ten centuries or so. Since the adventure was limited to a tower, and the tower was in a marsh, I had no need to worry about the underground aspects.

LEVEL A

Some of the changes which I made were to petrify all the animals in the stable (room 1). They could only be revitalized by striking them with a Magic Whip of Life, which could be found upstairs in the Alchemist's chambers. There was a chance the party would stumble upon a mess of snakes in Rooms 2, 3, and 5. I took the snake stats from the *Balastor's Barracks* source pack. Room 4, accessible only from above, housed a beautiful succubi chained to the wall by iron chains. (I had no stats for her. The only character who saw her died from wounds shortly afterwards anyway).

LEVEL F

Redbird and his friends then surprised me. I expected them to cautiously proceed along the way upstairs. Instead, Redbird boldly deduced that the best chances of finding the items were to go right to the top, so they barrelled along up the stairway and emerged loudly into the top floor.

I had no stats for the spirit which I knew lived there. A mighty Spirit of Darkness inhabited the room, settled upon the many-metalled throne and bound by Delecti to remain there and guard the key to the tower. But I hadn't yet decided how to handle it!

I threw together some Shades quickly, tossed out a Great Troll for trouble and made up stats for a huge giant with unlimited magical power. The party would have been killed except that a duck critted the giant demon twice and made it fall down. Then the survivors fell downstairs into the party fighting the vampires.

LEVEL E

When the first bellow of anger came from the demon upstairs, the rear guard for Redbird's party became aware of noises from the hallway below. This was Room 4, but quickly there appeared two vampires from Room 3, engaging the rear guard.

These vampires were old natives, and it was their job to keep the Alchemist straight and make sure he didn't flee. I took their stats from *Balastor's Barracks*. They are killer vampires, and it was more than luck that the party managed to knock them into smoke and drive them out. The party then fled into Room 3 for cover, and found themselves attacked by Wyvern Zombies!

After scattering the vampire coffins, the party settled down to heal. The next morning, the party proceeded cautiously downstairs.

LEVEL D

Level D is where the Alchemist lives. I left Room one as an old, and long-abandoned warehouse area, fallen into dust and grime. I changed the Pool from Room 2 to Room 3, which was the laboratory. This was a virtual treasure house for any priests or treasure-seeker, if they could only find the truly valuable items among the clutter. I rolled on the *Citadel of Fire* Meditating Table (page 9) to see what the Alchemist was doing. Then, when it proved he was a twidiot at mind after all, the party checked over the chambers. Here, each full hour of searching allowed each member to make one Spot Hidden Roll. If they were successful then they rolled on 1D100 to see what they found.

To determine what this particular marvel might be I used the *Little Soldier Games Book of Treasure*. There is a list of 100 legendary or mythical items listed and whichever of these were rolled I made up some variation to fit into the known campaign. Some were changed because they did not fit the context, and were replaced by some necessary prop for the game. For instance, No. 27 was changed from the Chariot of Mannannan to the Black Candle, which Redbird did not find. In general, the treasures which the players did find were very toned down from the book version. No. 83, for instance, was changed from the Silver Bell of Loneghrin which summoned a batch of Paladins into a silver bell which summoned a Spirit which would give 1d8 points of healing when it rang. Use once.

Some others found a curious half-skeleton wired together on a table and, seemingly, plated with metal. Redbird took this, not quite thinking of its consequences.

However, the party did not stay long. They heard noises upstairs and decided to flee with some metal bones, a silver bell, and a batch of potions.

LEVEL C

I omitted the whole of Level C from my tower, fearing that exploration of the rooms would take too much time to play, and also that populating them even with dust would take too much of my time.

LEVEL B

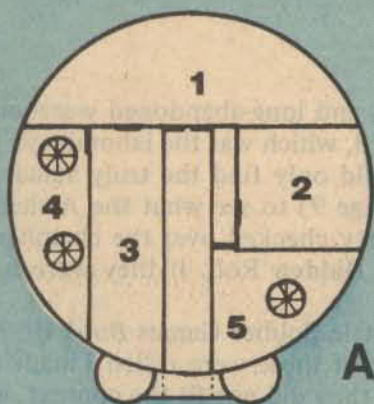
In Level B the party cautiously stepped out of a statue of Orlanth, which hid the spiral stairway, into Room 1. There they discovered the meaning of the metal bones when a batch of skeletons attacked them, some with reinforced bones which did not immediately break when the armor was penetrated! Some members of the party decided to check out alternate routes and stepped into the hallway.

Hallway 3 had a spirit bound into it which would attack the first living being to enter it. It did, and the person who fought it briefly glimpsed the succubi mentioned earlier before dying.

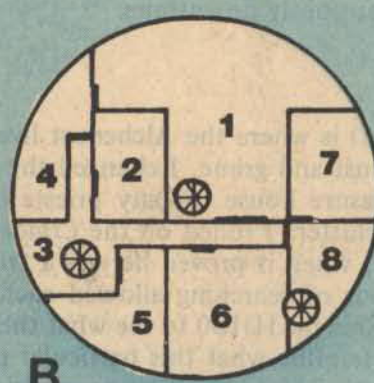
Room 6 also had a denizen, and the party was beset by a zombie giant activated by their noise. After much melee and mayhem to both parties the giant dragged itself off without legs just as the shaman appeared to answer the noise.

Room 4 housed the shaman. I would have used the stats for the broos shaman in *Balastor's Barracks* if I had needed them. The shaman was watching over the corpse of the Lhankor Mhy priest that Redbird sought, which lay in the roasting coals of the old cooking pits of the room. When the party recognized the shaman and did not detect life down the hole where the rhino-rider warrior fell, they ran over the broken bones of the vanquished skeletons, found their way to the stable, and fled with gratitude for having preserved their lives.

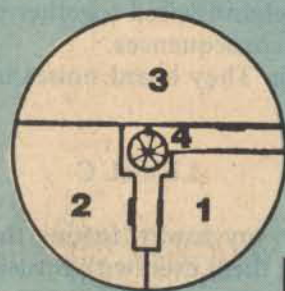
So ended the first adventure at the Howling Tower. The place has grown some and changed as my mythos overtakes it, but the seeds were sown upon fertile ground with generous sources.



A



B



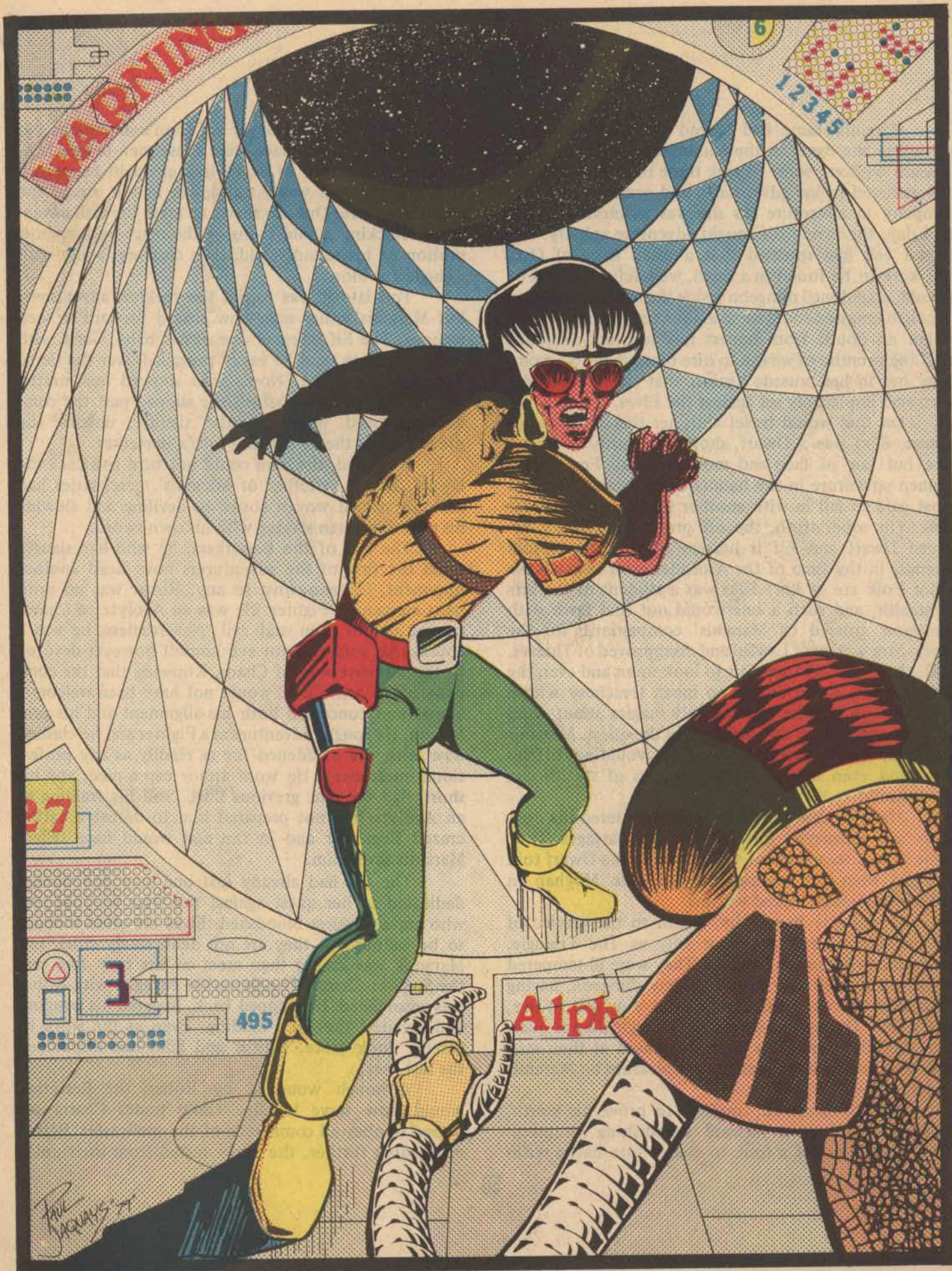
D



E



F



The Legend of Marmis the Elf (XIII)

by Ronald Pehr

Maramis' fame had spread far. Many came to her where she dwelt in the haunts of men. Some came to learn wisdom, some to seek trade for the wealth she had gathered in her adventures, and some to go in her company in adventure for she was accounted lucky. This day, the lovely Elf sought adventure aplenty. Her crystal ball had revealed that a small tribe of Orcs still were to be found in a small, well-defended area of the old, abandoned dungeon inside the mountain. These Orcs had amassed some small amount of precious coins, stolen no doubt from honest travelers, and Maramis used the promise of wealth to hire brave men to accompany her in her crusade against that hated race who were ever implacably set against the Elves.

On that would travel with her this day was not a man. Silki was a Dwarf, short and sturdy as all her race but fair of face and most graceful. Few Dwarf women adventure in the haunts of men, and Silki was most gald to fall in with another woman of the Elder Folk. (In sober truth, the oft proclaimed rivalry between Dwarf and Elf is hearsay born of tavern-told legends. In the time of the Ascendency of Man, all the Elder Folk are as kin) Silki was a student of the arts of stealth, and such a one would not find favor with the most trusted of Maramis' companions, for the Cleric Stra was most Lawful and disapproved of Thieves. Still, the Dwarf girl was fair to look upon and even the haughty Stra could detect no mean treachery within her soul - though he cast his holy magics about - and he was content that she join them in the quest. Maramis was glad, for she liked the Dwarf yet would not offend Stra, and even a beginner in the arts of stealth can prove useful.

Maramis and her party set out, entered the dungeon, and journeyed through the dark passages. They came at last to a door of wood, which the Dwarf told her had been but recently painted over. Mayhap an unforeseen menace lurked within?

It was so! Berserkers, sworn to the service of the mysterious entity known only as The Triangle, had come to live in the dungeon. They were ill-tempered at their enforced stay in the gloomy dungeon, having been sent to "go within bring what you will to live, and wait." Those who serve The Triangle do not question, but the Berserkers were displeased at their stay and now prepared to vent that displeasure on Maramis and her allies.

One of her men, anxious to prove his worth, immediately charged forward brandishing his mace. This was the act of a fool, to charge into battle with-

out heed to the situation or aid from companions. No willing targets for a mace were these men before him. Though their armor of heavy leather might be stained and ill-kept, each was most skilled in the use of the sharp hand-axe. One advanced to meet the rash adventurer, blocking a wild swing of the mace with a short motion of his round shield, then cleaving fatally with a single axe blow.

Too late it was to aid the reckless adventurer, but Maramis' other men now surged forward to seek revenge. The Elf invested one of her band, Garif, with Magic Strength, and he easily prevailed over the fierce Berserker he faced. Now, Silki showed her mettle. As the human men clashed, she slipped past the combat unnoticed. Moving softly, silently, unseen, she drew a sword then stabbed it into a Berserker.

Wounded, the man could not turn to attack the Dwarf. Brutus, another of Maramis' mercenaries had cast his net of woven cords, be-deviling and slowing his adversary then slaying with his own sword.

The last of the Berserkers, he who had slaughtered the first of the adventurers now faced another opponent. Unbeknownst to any, Robar was no ordinary mercenary Fighter. He was an Acolyte of Chaos, serving deities grim and evil. Nevertheless, he was a courageous soul and not evil himself however devoted to the ultimate way of Chaos. Knowing that the company of an Anti-Cleric would not have been welcome, Robar had concealed both his alignment and his profession. He sought adventure as a Fighter and he clashed now with the maddened foe as readily as any professional mercenary. He wore armor cap a pied, and his short flail brought grievous hurt. Still his training as an Acolyte had not prepared him to defeat a battle-crazed Berserker and in the end would have fallen. Maramis saved him.

The Elf had already lost one man and though dedicated to her quest against the Orcs was not one who craved useless bloodshed. Elves are often thought to be callous but they are not deliberately cruel, and Maramis was kinder than most of her race. She cast the Spell of Charm. The Berserker engaged with Robar was ensorcelled. He stepped back, lowered his weapon, and awaited the Elf's bidding. Even as the work of sorcery took place, Brutus and Silki had dispatched the last foe.

Although wounded by Robar, the Berserker would now serve loyally. Those under Charm are bound to obey all commands of the spellcaster. Before proceeding further, the party rested from their quick

but bloody battle. Garif had also received wounds and the holy offices of a Cleric were now called upon. Stra intoned the sacred words and did perform a Cure. In not much more time than he had taken the cuts, Garif was healed!

They came at last to the Orc's domain. By dint of his Magic Strength, Garif battered down the portal which the Orcs had placed across this passage of the dungeon. At the end of a short narrow corridor beyond the shattered door were five Orcs. They were ranged about a catapult which had been set to guard the corridor. Loaded and aimed, it guarded the only entrance into the Orc's camp. The party fell back around the turn in the corridor as Silki rushed forward. At the flurry of movements, the Orcs fired the catapult. Set to discharge against men, or other Orcs, the catapult missile sailed harmlessly over the Dwarf, breaking against the far wall. The Orcs, furious at their hasty mistake which had disarmed their prime defense, rushed forward. But now Silki was not alone! Even as the giant bolt had shattered and fallen at their feet, the other adventurers had rounded the corridor once more and attacked.

The Orcs screamed as they died, the sound calling forth their protector. A huge Ogre lumbered around the corridor turn beyond the catapult. Even he was no match for the determined Fighters. On this quest, Maramis had brought with her an enchanted spear, captured from another tribe of Orcs that she had campaigned against. After her men had killed all but one Berserker, and she had placed the last under Charm, she had given the spear to him. Each of her men had their own favored weapon and she herself did not fight with mortal steel as she was dedicated to the Necromantic Arts.

The Berserker bore up under the hurt of the Ogre's powerful fists, and thrust with the enchanted spear. This was far more effective than the Berserker's hand axe would have been against the long-limbed monster. The Ogre could not batter the spearman enough to prevent vital thrusts, and was slain.

Around the turn in the corridor from whence

the Ogre had come was a cistern. In this, Maramis had seen in her crystal, were gold and silver coins. What Maramis had not seen was that another catapult guarded the cistern, and was manned by a crew of Orcs and already loaded. Maramis and one of her men, a hired archer, were in range even as they saw it. The archer knelt, drawing bow to begin picking off the crew, but he could not prevent the catapult from being discharged directly toward where the Elf now stood.

The missile touched her shoulder, tearing away her cloak by the impact. Yet, she felt no pain and was unharmed. She knew then that the mysterious amulet she wore - of which she knew naught save that it had an enchantment placed upon it and that two previous owners had died grisly deaths - had acted once more to defend her, saving her even from the heavy, speeding catapult bolt which should have thrown her to the floor at least and might have crushed her bones.

Now, the rest of her men engaged Orcs guarding the cistern as the catapult crew hastened to reload. Again, in the press of battle, Silki was able to work herself behind the foe and began attacking Orcs from behind. The Orc guards were pushed back, now too close to the catapult for it to be fired. The men slew those Orcs, and the crew of the catapult now charged since their siege engine was useless. But, though more Orcs appeared, hastening toward the sounds of battle from another part of the dungeon camp, there was no stopping Maramis' men. The Clerics fought as skillfully as the Fighters. The Berserker tore through Orcs in his battle rage.

Soon, all were dead. Brutus had been brutally clawed in the melee and was senseless and bleeding on the ground, but Stra once more invoked holy miracles and his wounds were healed and he arose. The coins were removed from the cistern, loaded into sacks which the party had brought, and the triumphant party returned to the city as quickly as they could bear the weight.

And Maramis was acclaimed for her victory, and praised as a leader of men, and her fame spread far.



Wilderness

by Bryan Hinnen

This writer, for one, is repeatedly amazed at the number of fantasy role-playing gamers, *D&D*, *EPT* or otherwise, who have never had an experience outside a dungeon or other indoors/underground complex. It seems that wilderness adventures have been sorely neglected.

Granted, in *The Lord of the Rings* one of the most exciting passages is the descent into the Mines of Moria by the Fellowship. But there are also the pursuits of Frodo and the Hobbits by the Nazgul, the attack on the Fellowship at Amon Hen by the orc war-party, the encounters with Old Man Willow and Tom Bombadil in the Old Forest, the encounter with Treebeard in Fangorn Forest, the events at Lorien, and of course the battles of Helm's Deep and Minas Tirith. I also consider the encounter with Shelob in her lair and with the Barrow Wight as part of a wilderness expedition, simply encounters with monsters in their dens.

Remember that, in ancient and medieval ages, as well as in some futuristic or post-holocaust games, the world is sparsely-populated wilderness with tiny, scattered hamlets (unless you have a nomadic culture dominant in the area) built around a mill or smith, and perhaps a few large cities many weeks' travel apart such as London, Rome, Alexandria, Babylon, and Byzantium. Tremendous fortification works and catacombs that dungeoneers revel in are few and far between.

Remember, too, that even if a "dungeon" can be located by the adventurers it would entail a long and arduous trek to reach the forbidden gates. To reach the secret back door of Moria, the Fellowship traveled many weeks from Rivendell; Tolkien had originally intended the chapter on the ascent of Carathras to be much longer than the version which finally reached print, as the original manuscripts at Marquette University bear out.

So, to retain the true flavor of a swords and sorcery era, wilderness expeditions are necessary. A few DMs complain that they already have enough work to do in the excavation and population of a dungeon, without having to create a wilderness area. Herein I will describe the method I use for mapping out and "running" a wilderness, and hope to prove that it really isn't that difficult.

The basis for my wilderness is the map system of the Judges' Guild.* The Guild uses a hexagon system, which is perhaps the best balance between fairness of movement and ease of playability, filing

**I think I should note that it was the maps that brought me to the Guild, not the Guild that brought me to the maps. Nobody pulled my string for a plug of Guild products. If they weren't good I would not use them, or recommend them to you.*

and mapping. A square, checkerboard grid makes for easier cataloguing ("Town of Freehelm? That's row C, column 14 on the map"), but a diagonal movement by a party can result in unrealistically fast cross-country travel. From square center to square center in a horizontal or vertical move is one unit, but a similar diagonal move is 1.414 units; assuming movement is figured in terms of squares moved rather than units moved, a diagonal move would be the equivalent of a haste spell.

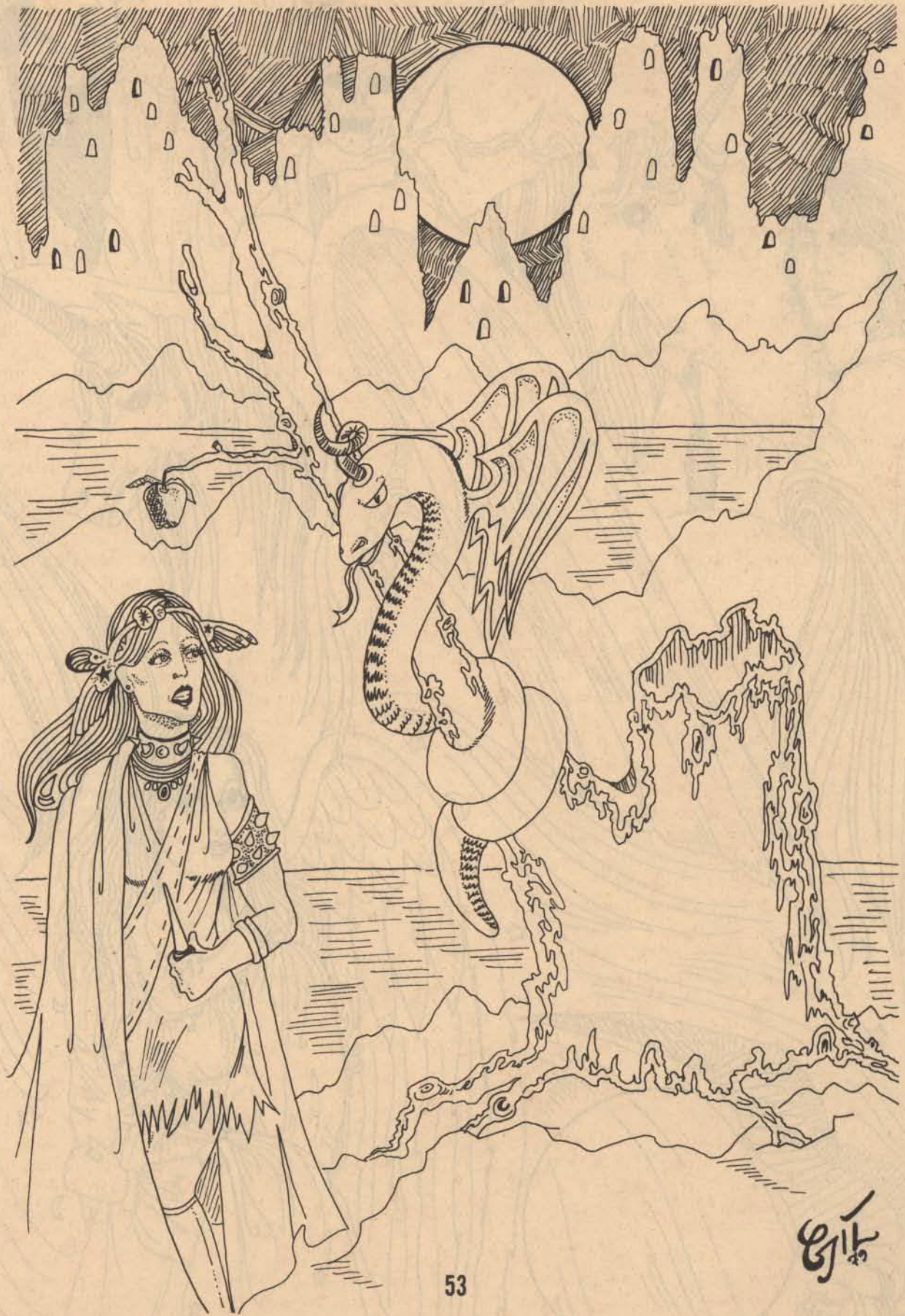
The Guild uses hexes that represent areas five miles across, and the DM is supposed to list everything in the hex for the mapper when it is entered. Personally, I find fault with this. Since movement rates assume straight-line travel as much as possible, the party moves down the center of the hex, and apparently can see and accurately map terrain and other features as much as 2½ miles away on both sides. On desert, tundra, prairie or the ocean, I can go along with that. But in narrow mountain passes and dense jungles, with possible weather conditions inhibiting visibility, the party would be lucky to be able to accurately recognize and map things as far away as half a mile.

Therefore, my hexes are a mile across. With such sheltered, smiling conditions as flat-as-a-board terrain and unlimited visibility, the party will be told the terrain types as far as three miles away and any settlements will be apparent from two miles off.

The one-mile hex system has another advantage besides mapping reality. A five-mile area is a lot more likely to have more diverse terrain in it than a one-mile area, so I feel safer putting a single terrain symbol in each hex to represent the terrain and its effects on movement. The system also better simulates the difficulty of completely covering any area, whether in searching or detailed mapping.

I use reduced hex sheets for mapping, that have hexes about ¼" across. A pad of 100 sheets will cost around \$2. For data I use narrow-ruled paper; this means a shorter stack of paper to lug around, as well as conservation of trees. Fine-point felt-tip markers of assorted colors, like Bic Bananas, are ideal for the mapping.

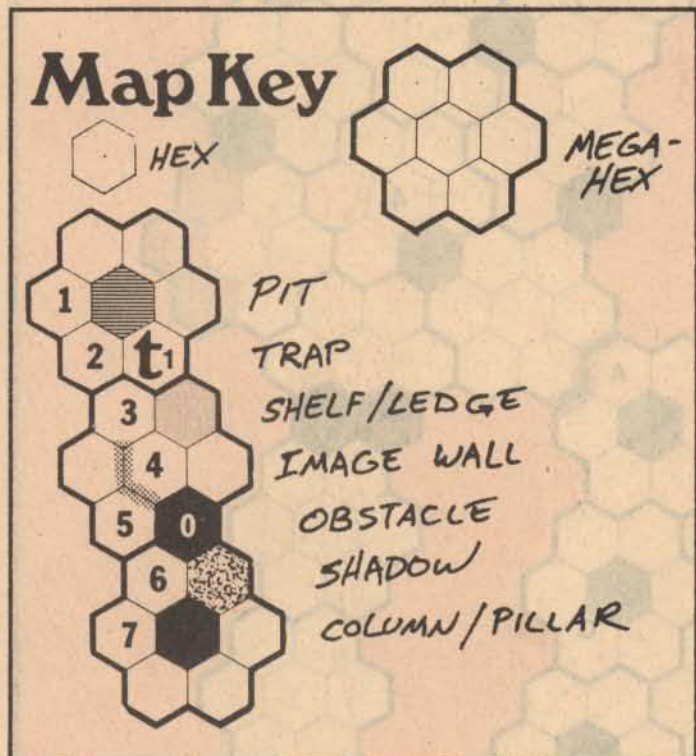
[Observant metric malcontents may have noticed by now that I've been using such terms as "inch" and "mile" (suitable recoil at such obscene language). I explain by noting that this is a *medieval* campaign we speak of, and though I might be even more accurate by using cubits or barleycorns or something, I will continue to use the English-type measurements rather than meters, liters, and grams, because the Middle Ages were dead and gone before metrics were even thought of. So be braced for similar assaults on metric dignity, for this article is riddled with them throughout.]





The Lost Lair

by Paul Jaquays



The goal of the quest is the dragon's lair, in which some fairly powerful magic items are kept. 4 - 6 characters with some experience under their belts should be able to tackle this adventure. As the monsters in this dungeon will fight to the death, but will try to attack with surprise and from behind whenever possible.

Comments on this adventure would be greatly appreciated.

NOTE: The soler is a small gold coin. The Judge may insert the generic words "gold piece" if so desired.

There has been a recent trend in many fan and pro gaming magazines to print completely worked out fantasy adventures for use with the popular Dungeons and Dragons rules system. This trend tends to overlook the rules systems available from other manufacturers. "The Lost Lair" is a small attempt to reverse the narrow outlook of many magazines. This adventure is designed for use with Metagaming's fantasy rules system **The Fantasy Trip: Melee and Wizard**. Because the current available rules for this system tend to stress arena-style combat, this author has taken the liberty of including

several variant rules to add to the roleplaying flavor. The additional rules mainly include terrain effects on combat. None of these variants are to be assumed as hard and fast or approved by Metagaming and Steve Jackson. This adventure was written prior to the release of **IN THE LABRYINTH**. If that game should be released before the publication of this adventure, then the referee is advised to follow any rules stated in that system in preference to the author's.

The maps for "The Lost Lair" have been created by using reduced versions of the **Melee** and **Wizard** mapboards. Patronize the people who have made this game possible, Metagaming, Box 15346, Austin, TX 78761.

Map Key

- 1) **Pit:** A 1 hex pit is approximately 10 feet deep and will do 1 dice +1 of damage to any character falling into it. A megahex wide pit is approximately 30 feet deep and will do 3+3 dice of damage to any character or creature falling in. All creatures are assumed to land in the prone position. Once standing up, it will require 2 turns per depth of 10 feet to climb to the top. Giants and Dragons will require 1 turn per 10 feet of depth. A climber may have only a dagger in readiness. Snakes, wolves and bears may not climb out of pits.

For the purpose of missile combat between creatures in the pit and on the surface, treat an unshielded creature as having all rear hexes and a shielded creature as having all side hexes (except for one rear hex). Missile combat may only be made from a hex that touches the edge of the pit. Damage done from missile fire into a pit is +1 due to nature of exposed areas. Missile fire against a climbing creature is assumed to be as against a rear hex.

Jumping over a 1 hex pit is similar to jumping over a fallen body. A roll of 6 on the die indicates that the creature has fallen into the pit.

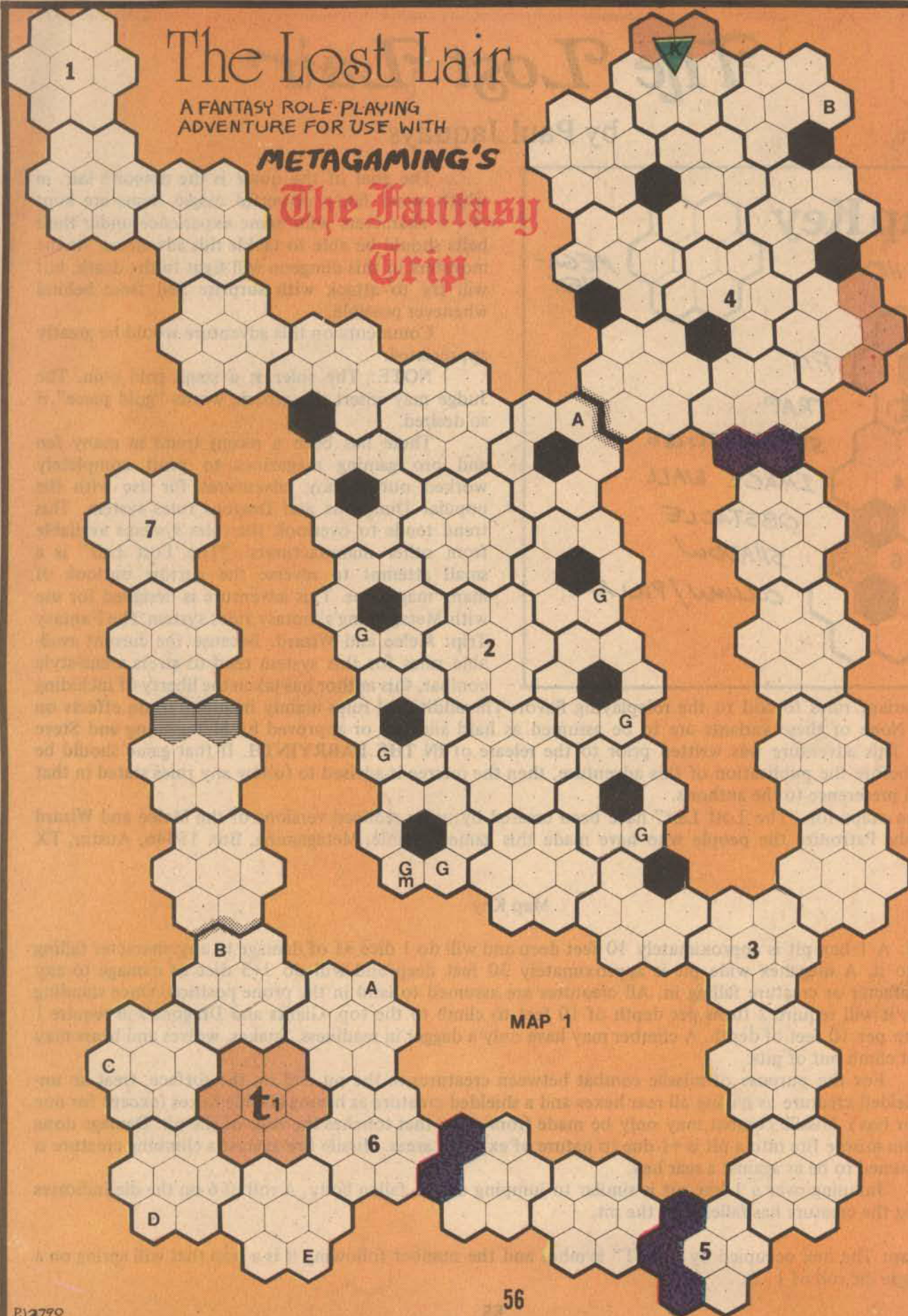
- 2) **Trap:** The hex occupied by the "T" symbol and the number following it is a trap that will spring on a single die roll of 1 - 3.

The Lost Lair

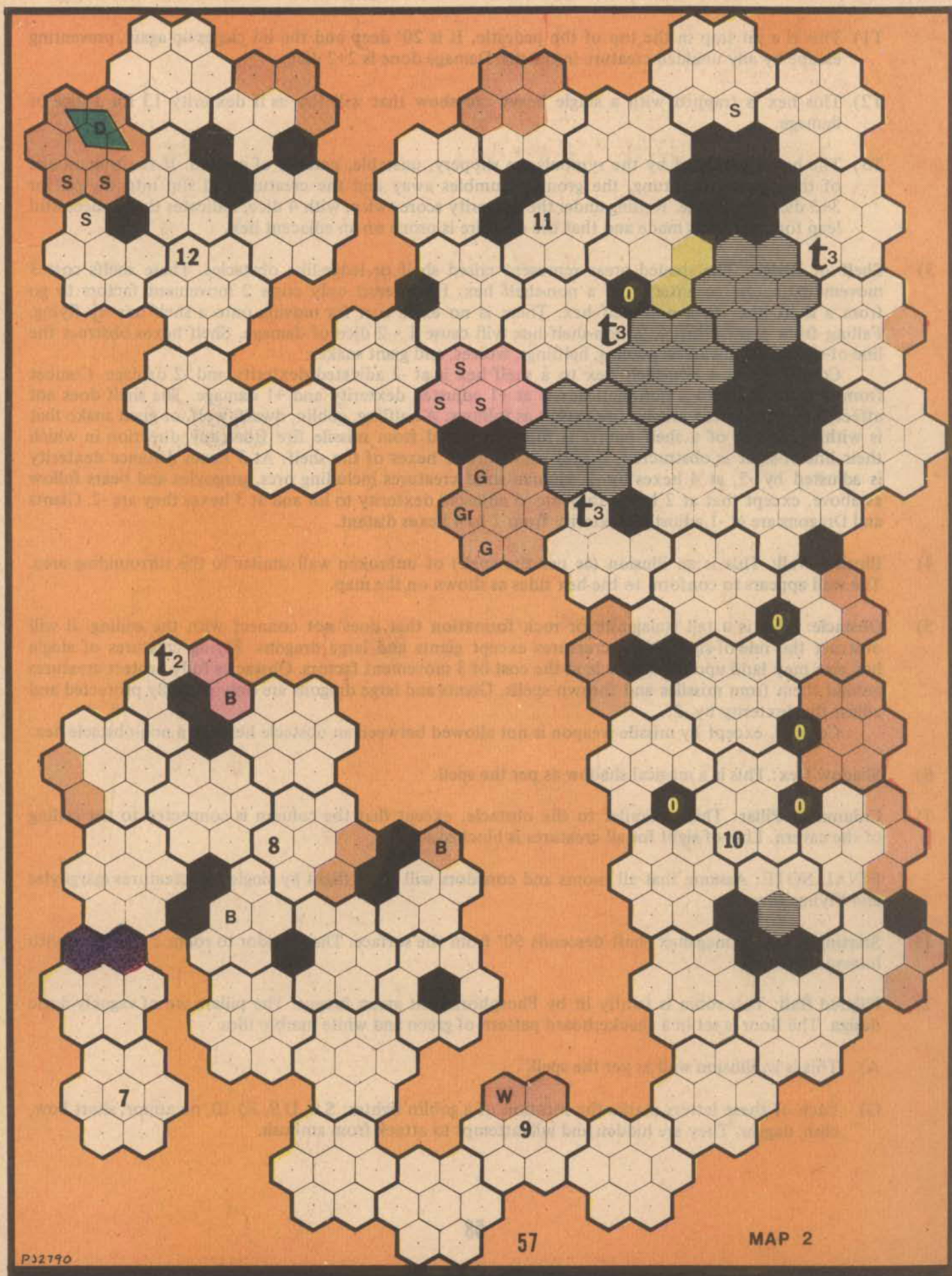
A FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING
ADVENTURE FOR USE WITH

METAGAMING'S

**The Fantasy
Trip**



MAP 1



T1) This is a pit trap in the top of the pedestal. It is 20' deep and the lid closes up again, preventing escape by any unaided creature in the pit. Damage done is 2+2 dice.

T2) This hex is trapped with a single heavy crossbow that will fire as if dexterity 13 for 3 dice of damage.

T3) The hexes indicated by the symbols are slippery, unstable, patches of ground. If the trap on one of these hexes is sprung, the ground crumbles away and the creature will slip into the pit for 3+3 dice of damage. Rolling under the dexterity score twice, with 4 dice, indicates that a successful leap for safety was made and that the creature is prone on an adjacent hex.

- 3) **Shelf or Ledge:** The shaded areas represent raised shelf or ledge-like obstacles. These shelves cost 3 movement factors to enter from a non-shelf hex. However it only costs 2 movement factors to go from a shelf hex to a non-shelf hex. There is no extra cost for moving onto a shelf hex by flying. Falling from a shelf hex to a non-shelf hex will cause 1 - 2 dice of damage. Shelf hexes obstruct the line-of-sight of all dwarves, goblins, halflings, wolves, and giant snakes.

Combat from a non-shelf hex to a shelf hex is at -2 adjusted dexterity and -2 damage. Combat from a shelf hex into a non-shelf hex is at +1 adjusted dexterity and +1 damage. The shelf does not affect the exchange of missile fire except as follows: A halfling, goblin, dwarf, wolf, or giant snake that is within 2 hexes of a shelf hex(s) is fully protected from missile fire from any direction in which their line-of-sight is obstructed, if they are within 2 hexes of the shelf. At 3 hexes distance dexterity is adjusted by -5, at 4 hexes by -2. Human sized creatures including orcs, gargoyles and bears follow as above, except that at 2 hexes they are -5 adjusted dexterity to hit and at 3 hexes they are -2. Giants and Dragons are at -1 adjusted dexterity from 2 to 4 hexes distant.

- 4) **Illusion Wall:** This is an illusion (as per the spell) of unbroken wall similar to the surrounding area. The wall appears to conform to the hex sides as shown on the map.

- 5) **Obstacle:** This is a tall stalagmite or rock formation that does not connect with the ceiling. It will obstruct the line-of-sight of all creatures except giants and large dragons. Flying creatures of single hex size may land upon an obstacle at the cost of 3 movement factors. Obstacles fully protect creatures behind them from missiles and thrown spells. Giants and large dragons are only partially protected and adjust the dexterity by -2.

Combat, except by missile weapon is not allowed between an obstacle hex and a non-obstacle hex.

- 6) **Shadow Hex:** This is a magical shadow as per the spell.

- 7) **Column or Pillar:** This is similar to the obstacle, except that the column is connected to the ceiling of the cavern. Line-of-sight for all creatures is blocked.

FINAL NOTE: Assume that all rooms and corridors will allow flight by single hex creatures (gargoyles and Flying Wizards).

- 1) **Starting Point:** A megahex shaft descends 50' from the surface. The corridor to room 2 is littered with human skeletons.

- 2) **Pillared Hall:** This room is faintly lit by Phosphorescent green fungus. The pillars are of vaguely doric design. The floor is set in a checkerboard pattern of green and white marble tiles.

A) This is an illusion wall as per the spell.

G) Each of these letters marks the location of a goblin fighter: S 9, D 9, IQ 10, no armor, short bow, club, dagger. They are hidden and will attempt to attack from ambush.

Gm) This is the location of a goblin wizard. He is S 10, D 10, IQ 12, no armor, wizard's staff, Spells: Staff, Blur, Slow Movement, Drop Weapon, Confusion, Summon Wolf, Fire, Trip, Dazzle, Sleep, Summon Bear, Illusion.

Each goblin carries five (5) gold solers (coin of the realm) on his person.

- 3) **A Parting of Passages:** Standing at this point (right on the number 3) is an image of a giant. It will make threatening gestures until it is dispelled.
- 4) **Grod's Lair:** A two hex shadow blocks vision into this chamber. Sitting on a shelf at the far end of the cavern is the giant Grod (K). MA 10, S 30, D 9, IQ 8, no armor, club for 3+3 dice of damage.
 - B) This is the location of Grod's bear, Grungey. MA 8, S 30, D 11, IQ 6, armor 2 hits, claw: 2+2 dice of damage. Grod is protecting a large shield that is of lightweight construction and give no dexterity minuses.
- 5) **Shadowed Fire:** Hidden in the shadow hexes is a wall of 3 hex fire.
- 6) **Room of the Gargoyles:** The shelf in the center of the room appears to have a 10' tall statue of a man standing over the Trap symbol. It is an image and will disappear upon touch. What will then be seen is magic broadsword that lowers the strength required to wield it to 10 and adjusts the user's dexterity by +1.
 - A) An image of a gargoyle.
 - B) A gargoyle, MA 8/16, S 20, D 11, IQ 8, armor 3 hits, fist 2 dice of damage. Behind the gargoyle is an illusion of a wall.
 - C) Illusion of a gargoyle. See B for statistics. Will attack as a real gargoyle.
 - D) This is a real gargoyle. See B for statistics.
 - E) Illusion of a gargoyle, as C above.

T1) See Map Key 2.

The gargoyles appear to be stone statues until a creature is in an adjacent hex. At that point all creatures will attack (gargoyles, images and illusions).

- 7) **The Point Where Maps One and Two Connect:** Hopefully self explanatory.
- 8) **The Three Bears:** This is another cavern-like room. It is illuminated dimly by glowing fungus. The room has several shelves in it.
 - B) Each of the three "B" locations represents a bear. MA 8, S 30, D 11, IQ 6, armor 2 hits, claw: 2+2 dice of damage.

T2) See Map Key 2. 4 bars of gold (worth 20 solers each) are bait for this trap.

- 9) **Wierd Wizard:** Sitting on the shelf is an old man (w). He is a very powerful wizard who has gone off the deep end, so to speak. He will sit there and cackle at all who pass by him. He will ask for gold and if any pass by him without giving something of value to the old man, he will wait till backs are turned toward him and then start blasting with very powerful lightning bolts (no less than 5 Strength points per spell). S 30, D 13, IQ 14, no armor or weapon. Spells: Blur, Drop Weapon, Fire, Trip, Summon Myrmidon, Dazzle, Sleep, Summon Bear, Reverse Missiles, Destroy Creation, Fireball, Invisibility, Lightning. He has on him a magic coin that will add half the characters current strength score to his total strength.

- 10) **The Long Cavern:** A cavern as in room 8, lit by glowing fungus.
- G) The two "G's" are the location of a pair of normal gargoyles. MA 8/16, S 20, D 11, IQ 8, armor 3 hits, fist 2 dice of damage.
- Gr) This is the location of a gargoyle wizard. Statistics as above, but with the following spells: **Magic Fist, Blur, Slow Movement, Drop Weapon, Image.** Note: If at least two strength points are used on the **Magic Fist** spell, it can be used to push characters into pits. Rolling under dexterity twice on three dice will indicate the character took only damage and did not fall into pit.
- T3) See Map Key 3.
- 11) **The Great Cavern:** This is an extension of room 10.
- S) Each of these letters represents a single giant snake. MA 6, S 12, D 12, IQ 4, no armor, bite 1+1 dice of damage.
- T3) See Map Key 3.
- 12) **The Dragon's Hall:** This is the lair of a small dragon (D) and 3 snakes (S's). Small Dragon: MA 6/16, S 30, D 13, IQ 16, armor 3 hits, breath 2 dice and claw 2 - 2 dice of damage. Snakes: MA 6, S 12, D 12, IQ 4, no armor, bite 1+1 dice of damage. The dragon is guarding a +2 dexterity short bow and 10 +1 damage arrows, a wand that contains 50 Strength points that can only be used for a **Summon Bear** spell, and a dagger that will cast a **Dazzle** spell when drawn from its sheath up to a total of 3 times per day. Also there are 200 gold solers and three gems worth 20 solers each.

ARCANE ELDERS from Pg 13

only enough silver to last a few weeks. Fortunately, he had not noticed Lute's sword nor assessed its value or he might have left them defenseless also. Long their grudge against this thief had festered within, with no hope of cure. Now they were about to prick the boil of hatred with the lance of revenge and the anticipation tasted sweet to their expectant hearts. Röhcyl had set the hour of departure for just after lunch on the second day. The next day, having finished his noon meal, Röhcyl excused himself to make last minute preparations and sent the others out to ready the pegasai and secure the supplies to their saddles. Ralph and Lute stood by the animals, ready to leave, when Röhcyl reappeared. He now carried a bundle under his right arm and had exchanged his walking staff for the one Valmous had fashioned for him.

"I've been studying its powers for the last day and a half," he said as he approached them.

"We wondered as much, since we've seen so little of you," replied Lute.

"I'd have thought you'd not notice my ab-

sence the way you two have been working. I didn't know it was in you."

"Neither did we," answered Ralph.

"Amazing what determination and purpose can do to a man," added the bard.

"Do I detect a note of sinister enjoyment in your voice?" asked Röhcyl, grinning, finally comprehending just how delighted with the adventure they were.

"You do indeed!" they both replied cheerfully.

"This means much to both of you doesn't it?"

"Young master," answered Lute, becoming quite serious, "had we not been robbed by Melkor we could both have retired from the adventurer's life as VERY wealthy men. You see it all started when we stole the dragon's hoard out from under his sleeping hide. . . .

"Continue the story on the way," interrupted the suddenly intrigued youth as he mounted Chelawn.

"This promises to be interesting."

"I'd sure like to hear this one," thought Ralph as he urged the winged colt into flight.

on magic

Dear Bill:

I am sending a copy of this letter to "The Dungeoneer" so that it can be printed along with any reply you might think appropriate. Naturally it's in reference to your article in the March-April '78 issue on "A New Magic System".

First of all, let me say that I was immensely flattered that you chose to base your magic system on my first book *Real Magic*. I have since found out that it was also one of the research sources used in constructing *Chivalry & Sorcery*. But by one of those "coincidences" that happen so frequently in the history of ideas, your article came out at the same time as a new book by myself, *Authentic Thaumaturgy*, specifically designed to apply traditional occultism and modern parapsychology to the construction of fantasy game magic systems.

I think you and Charles have both been sent review copies of A.T. by this time (if not let me know, or tell Greg Stafford at the CHAOSium). As you no doubt have seen, if people thought your system was complex, wait till they see mine! And yet both our systems are eminently playable.

Some comments on your article: There are a couple of other Laws of Magic that I have isolated in the last few years that don't appear in R.M. (which will be republished next year, by the by). The Law of Perversity: if anything can go wrong, it will—and in the most annoying manner possible (this is also known as "Murphy's Law" and is based on the Anti-psi powers). The Law of Unity: every phenomenon in existence is linked directly or indirectly to every other one—past, present or future.

Your invention of Infrared Magic is a clever one. I can't see any connection to traditional occult color codes, but the dead have to be handled in the games somehow and pale blue isn't as dramatic.

In my system each magic user has to create his or her own spells based on their personal psi talents, magical artifacts, training, etc., with minimal input from the referee. Your system gives the ref far more control. Both approaches need experimental play to see which is the best for any particular group of players.

I'm not sure I agree with your position that mages cannot teach each other spells. After all, in real world magic this sort of thing is done all the time. If the learner has the right psi talents and other resources, she or he should have no trouble at all learning a spell invented by someone else.

I definitely disagree with all the systems that have set limits on the number of times a magic user can cast a given spell. I like your ideas about schools

of magic and researching procedures (except for sacrifices—they aren't always necessary in real magic), but I have never understood the idea of paying money to learn a spell—unless it's a matter of bribing teachers or buying books. But spells need practice, not multiple researching!

Your Danger Factor is a good idea, though I don't think such damage should be permanent if the mage is still alive (though a weakened mage might need to have someone also do the healing spells).

Your section on specializing in particular sorts of spells is very good, though I would allow the first two items that you disallow (though not with any very high factor of benefit).

The whole idea of "Levels" of spells is a messy one and I'm not really sure we need the concept at all. Time will tell.

It should not really be that difficult to convert from any of the old magic systems to either yours or mine. I imagine a group of players could do it in one evening's conference. Your comments about advantages and disadvantages are pretty accurate for my system as well as your own. But then all we're asking is that players exercise as much imagination and preparation as the typical referee does.

Although I can't answer many letters individually, I would be interested in hearing from people who are trying our two systems (as well as others). I don't think anybody will ever come up with a One True Right and Only Way that will be accepted by all players of fantasy games. And that's good.

Right now I'm collecting and writing material for *The X-Rated Supplement*, which will include materials "too immoral" for sale to kids but which adult players may very well appreciate adding to their game universes (D&D, C&S, EPT, or any of the other fantasy games). Naturally it will contain materials about the use of sex and drugs in magic which were impossible to include in A.T. Hopefully we'll have this out by next spring at the same time as the new paperback edition of *Real Magic* comes out. People who would like to send ideas or articles for the XRS should send them to me, c/o The CHAOSium, Box 6302, Albany, CA, 94706. I do not want this project limited to input from the West Coast players.

In the meantime, experimentation will go on with all our varied magic systems and eventually two or three major variations will come into common use. This should simplify confusion at conventions and tournaments considerably. Till then, don't pick up any wooden pentagrams.

Thaumaturgically Yours,
P. E. I. Bonewits

Dear Isaac,

Upon receiving your letter, I was filled with trepidation about opening it. Would it contain a curse or a lawsuit? To my pleasant surprise, it contained neither—it was actually a note of constructive criticism with no malice born towards me for borrowing your system in any way. I only hope Gary Gygax is as pleased when I attempt to print this system of mine in some salable form.

To respond to your comments: yes, I did receive a review copy of A.T.. Unfortunately, I do not have it with me, as a friend “borrowed” it, moved away, and did not return it as yet. I’m sure I’ll get it back eventually, but until then I have a fairly good memory of what your system was like and how it compared to mein. (Incidentally, although my system was published after A.T. was released, I had written it up and sent it in to the Dungeoneer about a month before I knew that you were going to publish the REAL MAGIC system in a game format.

I am sure that the lack of those two laws of magic in my article is not a large loss—the DM will be able to make for them, and the law of Unity is implied in the law of Association, anyway. Nevertheless, if and when I revise the article, I shall include them, with your permission.

True, I had to come up with Infra-Red magic out of the blue. But there are still aspects of magic (such as Polymorph spells, or Elemental spells) that are not covered by the Colors of Magic. Those areas simply have to be dealt with separately. I have already sent in an article to the Dungeoneer dealing with all the spells published by TSR so far and what classifications they belong in. Hopefully by the time this letter is printed there (if ever) it shall already be in black and white. One could extend this principle further for the spells not covered, e.g. Microwave Magic, Radio Magic, Gamma-ray Magic, X-Ray Magic, etc. but this seems both superfluous and a touch ridiculous.

To me, both of our systems give the DM an equal amount of control over the spells the players develop. (Surely you do not let the players calculate the chances of their spells succeeding?) I do not have the DM calculate such chances, merely the Cost, Time to develop, and the Danger of learning the spell. Above and beyond that, except where it would interfere with the game, the player is on his/her own.

As for mages teaching other mages spells: in designing my system, I was not terribly motivated by “real” magic, but by game balance. Since I require my players to pay for their spells if they research them, if I allowed them to teach each other spells, they would probably not charge each other or try to think of ways to get around both the risk and the cost of acquiring a spell. Hence, I simply forbidded it.

And this regulation is not without parallel in the “real” magical world as well. I am sure that (for example) if you asked on of your colleagues for a Curse, and the person responded, “Well, I get a picture of the person I hate most—Richard Nixon—surround

myself with images and the color (Purple) of the profession I hate most—politics—fill my mind with those images and fire” that you would not be able to use that spell without some substantial alteration as is—if you don’t especially hate politics or Richard Nixon. I justified this rule by saying that since each spell has to be individualized that to use another’s spell that was designed specifically for that person is dangerous. Therefore it is better to design and research your own.

Set limits on the number of times a mage may cast a spell—this is where our two systems differ the most, and where I had to make the decision in favor of game environments and playability being more important than the actual “real” facts. Allow me to explain—I do not like Klutz Factor systems (where, in casting a spell there is a chance it will fail and/or backfire) because of the kind of game I and most of the players I have come in contact with like to run. When they set up a strategy or method of solving a problem, they would much rather that it failed because they were insufficiently clever, or they missed a vital clue, or did not consider a certain piece of strategy on the opponent’s part, not because some die roll randomly destroyed their entire strategy.

Therefore, in my game I try to have as little totally unpredictable and random die rolls as possible. My combat system (hopefully to be the third article in the series I am writing for the Dungeoneer) is designed so that the players, by looking at their opponents, can determine their combat ability, albeit roughly, and have some real idea of their own combat potential. And thus my magic system is designed so that the only chance that a spell will fail is that if it is mis-aimed, or the opponent makes his/her saving throw. The spell will go off, however, and will not backfire or have no effect unless it was poorly chosen for the situation the players are in.

Thus, the whole business of TIME, COST, and the Danger Factor is derived. Since there is little real chance that the spell will fail, the player must be forced to take other risks and play for the spell is other in other ways than the possibility that it will backfire.

The concepts, game-wise, that I use to justify the Danger Factor and payment for the spell as written (the damage, if received being permanent and the payment in thousands of GP) is this: rather than in the “real” world, where the energy to perform spells is accessible to all if they have the ability to use it, in the entities the DM feels like defining) like a bank account. The player pays a certain amount of money to open an “energy account” which they can draw upon at regular intervals. If they wish to enlarge this account (to throw the spell more than once per interval) they may do so.

But in establishing this account, there is a chance that the player will do something wrong, or offend the “gods”, or be careless, or all the above, and be struck back by the very energy they are establishing the account for. Thus they are damaged. The damage is

permanent because: (A) Game reason—the damage done is a permanent drain on one's life-force that be survived, but never reversed (this is the LAW OF TIME, one not included in the usual magical laws but very useful for DMs).

(B) The real reason—it is necessary for game balance. A spell-user who wishes to be powerful and successful must make risks now and then. The Danger Factor damage rule insures that eventually—unless the spell-user is extremely careful (and therefore will not be very successful)—he/she will get damaged. And this is necessary to balance the spell-user with other characters who do not go heavily into spell use or who choose mainly to be fighters. Since hit points are a measure of one's ability in physical combat, it is only right that one who devotes him/herself to magical combat, who will in turn be better at magical combat than a fighter. I hope that this answers all your questions in this area.

As for the specialties—well, in those which I disallow but which you allow, let me point out that any spell can have in it ingredients that are ground up by mortar and pestel. Rather than giving a player a chance to make every spell related with practically not real specialization, I'd rather force the players to think a little bit more. And as for spells affecting only those people with last names beginning with 'S'—would allow spells affecting those whose last names begin with 'B'. or spells affecting only those with three initials in their name? More seriously, a person's real name is not the one of the birth certificate, although it may be part of it. By knowing that your name is Phillip Evans Isaac Bonewits, I certainly cannot totally control you with this knowledge, neither could you I just be knowing my name is William Glenn Seligman. Much more information is required. Therefore, I do not regard the first letter of one's last name a sufficient descriptor of an individual to affect them in any degree, and thus do not allow it as a magical specialization at all.

As for the concept of Levels—your treatment of the subject in A.T. I shall leave to the complete review of the book I am printing up for ALARUMS & EXCURSIONS (mainly because there is some doubt at this time about the continued publications of The Dungeoneer). However, I can justify the existence of levels for game reasons—having a more quantized estimate of one's increasing abilities is useful both to the DM and the player, it gives one more of a sense of progressing, etc. Besides, the level concept is a useful one in trying to estimate what kind of creatures one should put in a dungeon and is judging one's combat ability.

And in the "real" magical world, even if there are only five ranks, are there not degrees of expertise within these five ranks? Could not one subdivide them to form the "levels" which are standard within a Fantasy Role-Playing Game context? Actually, the word "levels" is a porr one, and in further descriptions of my new gaming system I plan to use the term "Rank" where levels of characters were used, "Order" where

levels of spells were used, "Type" where kinds of magical items were used, and "Floor" where levels of the dungeon were used. Thus a level becomes a device to tell if a surface is horizontal or vertical.

No, it really is not that difficult to convert from the old system to yours or mine, and it is extremely easy to convert from my system to yours and vice versa. I hope there will be a substantial number of people who will enjoy playing characters in both. I have already received a letter from a fellow who is going to use my system, and for every letter I recieved I am sure that there are twenty others too lazy to write. I am interested in what kind of response you are receiving.

I have already sent in the Charles Anshell the second article in a hopeful series of articles on my new system. The second article deals with Skills, and eliminates the distinctions between character classes such as Rangers, Paladins, Thieves, etc. It should be usable with either your system or mine, as while the two use the same rules the Spell rules and the Skill rules do not overlap.

I am afraid that I probably shall not be purchasing nor using the X-RATED SUPPLEMENT. I am against the use of drugs, or even applying it to a game situation, and as for sex, I have enough troubles trying to get a bunch of teen-agers to play D&D on Saturdays while they keep wondering why they are wasting their time doing this when they could be doing something more exciting. Perhaps in twenty years when their sex urges die down somewhat, but not now. However, I am looking forward to the next edition of REAL MAGIC, which I hope will bring up-to-date some points made in the first edition.

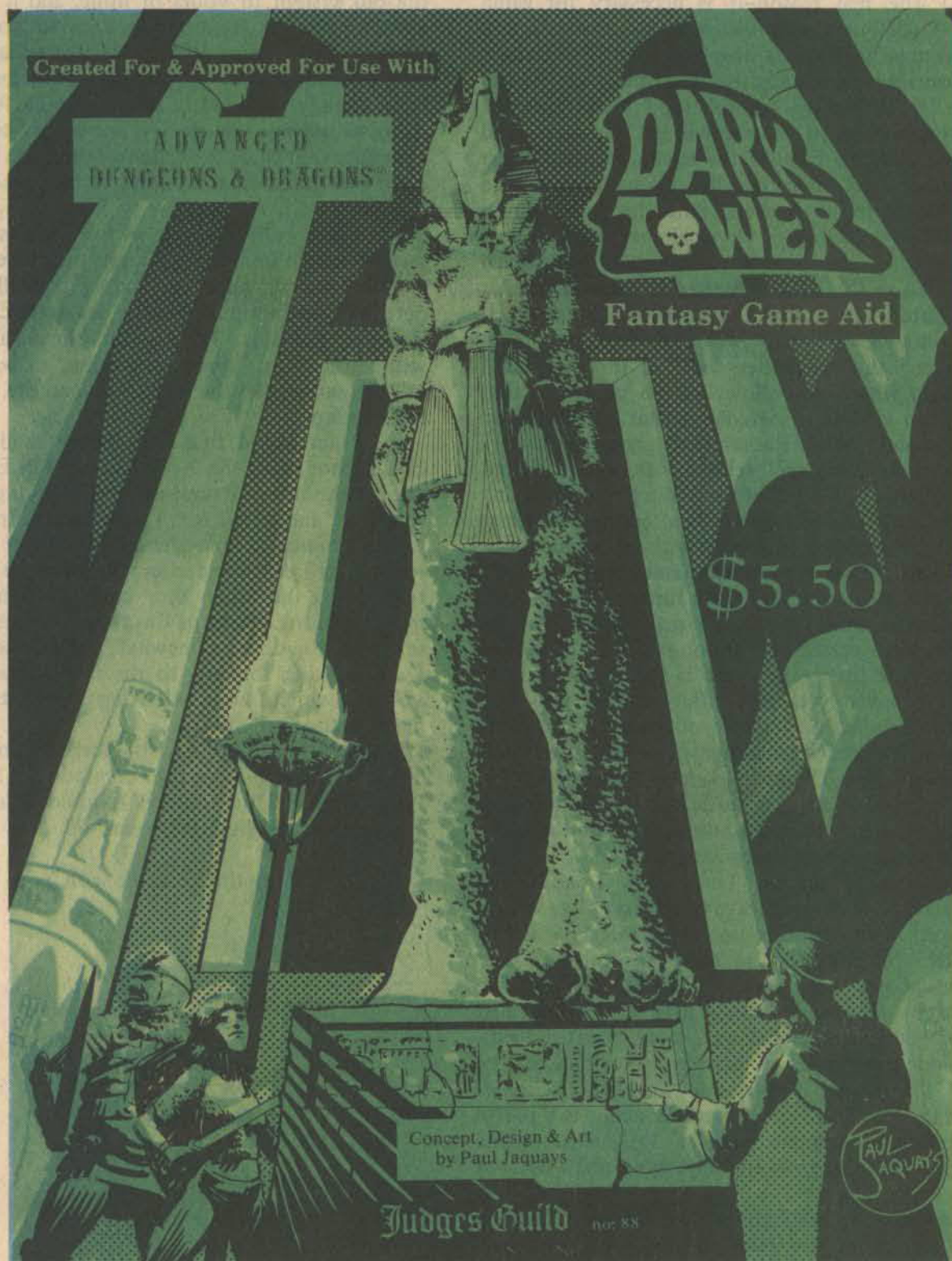
You feel that two or three major versions of our systems will come into common use? How powerful a Wish spell did you use? It couldn't have been that strong—your less than 100 years old.

May the Force be with You, More or Less,
Bill Seligman



Now Available From

Judges Guild



YOU AIN'T EVER HAD IT SO BAD—
and that's incredible, indeed!

BOOTY LIST

The Booty List is a listing of Fantasy and Science-Fiction gaming items which you can order from the Judges Guild. Most of them are produced by us, too. Your orders are processed the same day we receive them. We ship via both U.S. Mail and UPS so P.O. Box holders please give us a street address so that we may ship by the most economical means. Minimum order is \$2.00 for games, rules and game-aids. Orders including miniatures have a minimum of \$10.00 but may include items other than miniatures. There is no postal charge for U.S., Canada, APO and FPO addresses with the exception of Frazetta items. Frazetta prints require a \$1 charge for each 1 to 6 posters. Foreign orders will be sent via surface mail unless the Foreign Air Surcharge is added: \$3 for each \$5 of items ordered. We will refund any excess postage. Illinois customers must ADD 5% Ill. SALES TAX on all purchases except magazines and subscriptions. Subscription items are items sent out as a part of the guildmember subscription. Non-subscription items are optional and must be ordered separately. Subscriptions may not be back-dated. Issues become back-issues as they are published. If we are unable to back-order an out-of-stock item we will issue a credit memo. Miniatures will be back-ordered only if the total of out-of-stock items exceeds \$10.

* = Approved for use with D&D

! = Approved for use with AD&D

† = Approved for use with Traveller

NA = Not Available

1	34 x 44 City-State map (4 sections)	\$4.50
2*	135 Dungeon Tac Cards	\$3.50
4	17 x 22 Player City-State Map	\$.50
5	Six charts—men attacking(as avail.)	\$.50
6	Six charts—Chainmail system (as avail.) . .	\$.50
7	Six monster attacking charts (as avail.) . .	\$.50
8	Dungeon levels 1-5 (as avail.)	\$.50
9	17 x 22 Judges City-State map	\$.50
10	NA Guide to City-State bklt (as avail.)	\$3.50
11	NA D&D Starter pack (items 1-8 as avail.) .	\$20.00
12	NA Original City-State of Invinc. Ovrlrd . . .	\$9.00
13	NA Deluxe Starter pack (12 + D&D + dice) .	\$19.95
14*	Ready Ref Book	\$2.99
15	Thunderhold maps	\$1.00
16	Thndrhld bk & ready ref chart (as avail.) .	\$2.00
17	Thndrhld Dungeon level 1-4	\$.50
18	17 x 22 C/Solo Judges campaign map . . .	\$1.50
19	17 x 22 C/Solo Players campaign map . . .	\$1.50
20	Booklet K & ready ref sheets (as avail.) . .	\$2.25
21	Journals I, J, K (as available)	\$.25
22	Journal L (as available)	\$.30
23	17 x 22 Tegel Manor Judges map	\$2.00
24	11 x 17 Tegel Manor Players map	\$1.00
25	Booklet L & character shhet	\$2.50
27*	Tegel Manor Installment & Jnl L	\$4.50
28*	Judges Shield	\$1.98
30	11 x 17 TM Judges map (as avail.)	\$.75
31	City of Modron Maps	\$1.00
32	Booklet M	\$2.50
33	Journal M	\$.60
34*	Modron Installment & Jnl M	\$3.50
36*	Character Chronicle Cards	\$1.98
37	First Fantasy Campaign	\$7.98
38	17 x 22 FFC Judges map	\$1.50
39	17 x 22 FFC Players map	\$1.50
40	Adult JG T-shirt, S, M, L (as avail.) . . .	\$3.75
41	Child JG T-shirt, S, M, L (as avail.) . . .	\$3.25
42	Guildmember Buttons (as available)	\$.25
43*	Barbarian Altanis/Glowworm Steppes . . .	\$5.50
44	17 x 22 BA/GWS map (specify jdg or plyr)	\$1.80
45	Journal N	\$.80
46	Wilderlands Hex Sheet	\$.80
46x4	Wilderlands Hex Sheets	\$3.00
47	Campaign Hex System	\$2.50
48*	Wilderlands of High Fantasy	\$8.50
49*	Valon/Tarantis (O)	\$5.50
50	17 x 22 V/T maps	\$1.50
51	Journal O	\$.80
52*	Thieves of Badabaskor	\$3.00
53	Journal P (7)	\$.80
54*	52 + 53	\$3.50
55*	GenCon IX Dungeons	\$3.50
56	Journal Q (8)	\$.80
57*	55 + 56	\$4.00
58	Journal R (9)	\$.80
59*	Village Book I	\$2.75
60*	Castle Book I	\$2.75
61*	Island Book I	\$2.75
62*	Revised C/Solo	\$8.00
63*	Citadel of Fire	\$3.00
64	Journal 10 (S)	\$.80
65*	63 + 64	\$3.50
66	Sea Steeds and Wave Riders	\$6.50
67*	Fantastic Wilderlands Beyonde	\$8.00
68	War Cry and Battle Lust	\$4.00
69	Flotilla One	\$5.00
70	Journal 11 (T)	\$.80
71*	Frontier Forts of Kelnore	\$3.00
72	70 + 71	\$3.50
73	The Dungeoneer Compendium of 1-6	\$2.50
75†	Traveller Referee Screen	\$2.50
76*	Dragon Crown	\$1.75
77	Journal 12 (U) Special Holiday Issue . . .	\$2.00
78†	Traveller Log Book	\$3.00
80*	Of Skulls and Scrapfaggot Green	\$4.50
81	The Dungeoneer 9	\$1.75
82	Journal 13 (V)	\$1.50
83	WMR, Part I and Jnl 13	\$5.75
84	The Dungeoneer 10	\$1.75
85	The Dungeoneer 7 (5½ x 8½)	\$.80
86	The Dungeoneer 8 (5½ x 8½)	\$1.25
87!	Character Codex	\$4.50
88!	Dark Tower	\$5.50
89†	Starships & Spacecraft for Traveller . . .	\$5.50
90	Journal 14 (W)	\$1.50
91	WMR, Part II and Journal 14	\$5.75
92*	Wilderlands of the Magic Realm	\$8.50
93*	Under the Storm Giant's Castle	\$3.00

