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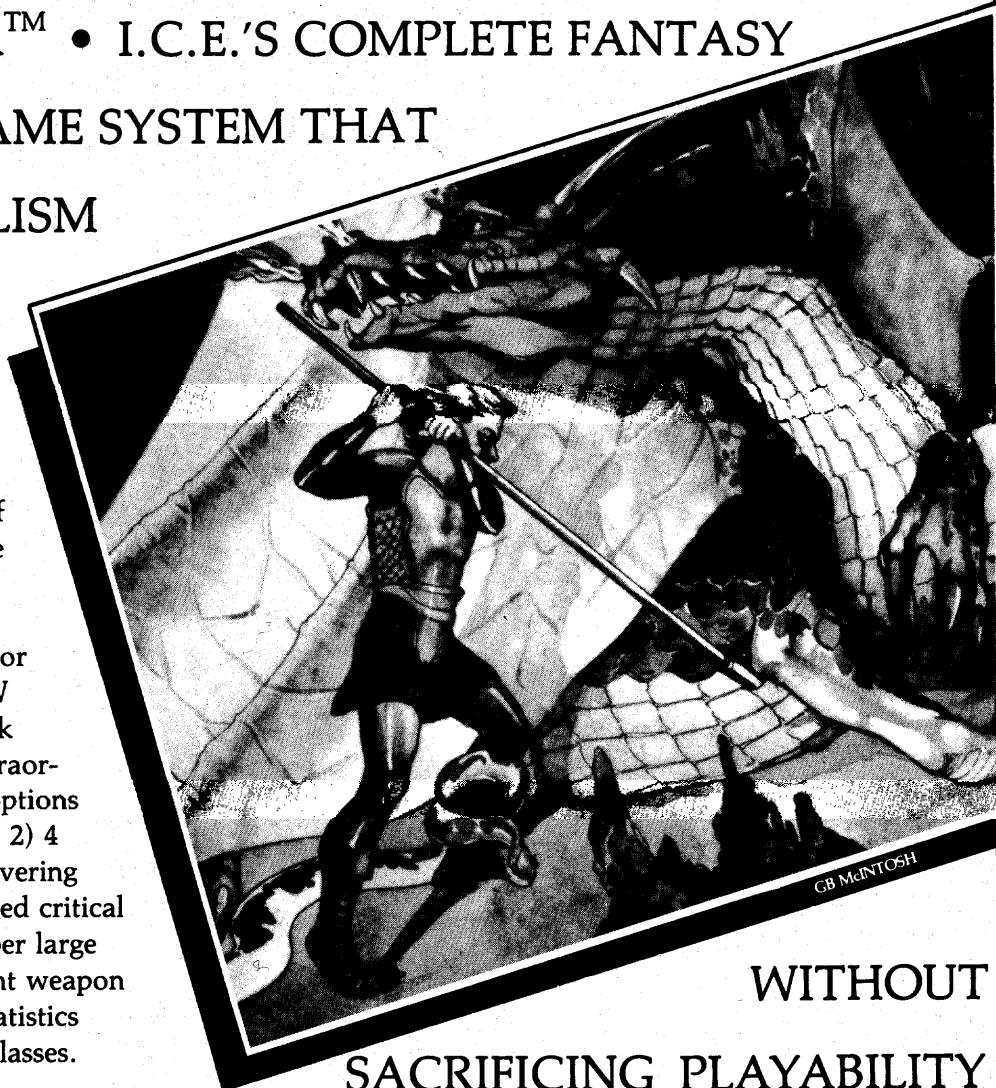
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## Drawing the line

With equal amounts of regret and relief, we've come to an important decision. The AD&D™ adventure in the center of this magazine is the last winner from the Module Design Contest that will be printed in DRAGON® Magazine.

That decision is going to make a lot of people unhappy — especially the winners in the categories we aren't going to publish — but it's a decision we had to make.

After looking over the entries in all of the unpublished categories, we've come to the conclusion that we can't afford to take the amount of time that would be necessary to develop them into publishable adventures. We have chosen winners, and we'll notify all of them by mail within the next few weeks. In those letters, we'll do our best to explain to them, individually, why their entries were good enough to win but not good enough to print.

How can this happen in some categories but not in others? Well, there wasn't a really drastic drop-off in quality; in fact, many of the modules we *have* printed needed a lot of development work to turn them into the versions you saw. And, with the publication of this magazine, we've finally run out of manuscripts that we thought could be salvaged in the limited time we have to accomplish that task.

We're not trying to embarrass anybody, and we certainly aren't trying to set ourselves up as all-knowing authorities on the art of module design. (If we *were* that good, we'd be publishing all the winners, and I wouldn't have to write this column.) We're simply trying to be straight with you, and we don't expect to be praised for that, but we hope you'll all understand.

Will we hold another contest? Yes, in all likelihood, and maybe not too far in the future. But first we're going to see if we can shake some good-quality adventures out of the world at large. (See the small announcement elsewhere in this issue.) And if we do decide to stage another contest, we'll go into it with the hope that we haven't turned anybody off with this decision. We *do* appreciate and respect the effort that every contestant put forth; it's impossible to look at a 50-page manuscript and a set of laboriously drawn maps without feeling gratitude and, sometimes, sympathy for all the hours that went into finishing that entry. Judging the entries was never easy, because practically every module we received contained a truckload of good, imaginative ideas. But making those decisions on the modules themselves was a piece of cake compared to making the final judgment about where to draw the line.







omposing a high-level adventure us a high-level creative task. When characters have gobs and gobs of experience under their

belts, they have a multitude of options and opportunities to take advantage of at any given time. It's not easy to design and produce a module for such characters that is challenging without being impossible to "beat," and that's the main reason why you haven't seen very many high-level modules in this magazine. But now is the time, and "The Ruins of Andril" is the place. It occupies the center 16 pages of this issue, and it is the winner in category A-3 of our Dungeon Design Contest. The module was designed by Ian Melliush of Nepean, Ontario — yet another in the long line of Canadian contestants who have won top prizes in the contest.

Among the other highlights of this issue are contributions by first-timers. Our chilly cover is the work of Steve Peregrine, who may be familiar to veteran readers from some interior artwork he did for us a while back. In the lead feature position inside is "Taking the sting out of poison," an exhaustive essay by Chris Landsea designed as a followup and improvement to the articles we've previously published on the use of poison in the AD&D™ system. In contrast to that is "Living in a material world," a long article on a topic we've never covered before — material spell components. Its author is Michael Dobson, and the good job he did on this article had a little to do with the fact that he's been hired as a member of the games editing staff at TSR.

Letters from our readers take up more space in this issue than in any other previous magazine. An extra-large "Out on a Limb" section is joined by the first edition of "The Forum" — three pages devoted to giving you, and you, and you, a way to get something off your chest and into the minds of the people with whom you have so much in common. Keep those letters coming, so we can keep "The Forum" going strong and lasting long.

In the AD&D world, the automobile is a magic item beyond the comprehension of even the mightiest wizard, but characters can still have horsepower. Pete Mohney's article offers a system for incorporating chariots into your campaign, and Roger Moore's description of Cu Chulainn gives hot-shot charioteers somebody tough to contend with.

Contributing Editor Ed Greenwood has favored us with a lot of "ecology" articles in recent weeks, and we expect you'll be seeing several of them in print during the months to come. We decided to publish his manuscript on the basilisk right away, to get the toughest one out of the way first. Why was this one so tough? Well, to be on the safe side, we did the editing with our eyes closed. . . . --KM



## 'You botched up'

Dear Editor:

I am a DRAGON Magazine collector, so to speak, and I constantly take modules out of the issues. It works out great! You have always managed to put modules in the center of the magazine, for easy removal, and exclude articles within the module, for neatness. Well, you botched up in #79 with *Wacko World*. I can only say that these modules are great and I'd like them to look that way. It's a bit distracting when you have just begun a module and you've got these little space ships on the opposite page.

Rob Cathcart  
Incline Village, N.Y.

*Like an old philosopher must have said once upon a time, the best way to find out if someone likes what you're doing is to stop doing it. Several people scolded us for printing advertisements inside the Wacko World module — something we've never done before and I hope we'll never have to do again. Because of the large number of ads we had to print in that issue, we were forced to "steal" from the module space to get a few of them in and prevent the rest of the magazine from being overcrowded with advertisements. The whole thing was brought about by a strange set of circumstances that we don't expect to have to contend with on a regular basis. — KM*

## 'How can I get . . .'

Dear Dragon,

I have been studying the works of J. R. R. Tolkien, and I would like to know if there is any way that I can acquire new or used back issues #1, #5, #13, #20, #29. I would greatly appreciate any information you may have.

Larry Gayler  
Thermal, Calif.

Dear Dragon:

How would I be able to (if at all possible) get ahold of the second and/or third place modules from section T-3 of your latest contest? Perhaps you could put them on sale for DRAGON readers for (something) like \$2.00. Think about it!

Kevin O'Hara  
Rochester, N.Y.

*We get an armload of letters like these every month — and it pains me to say it, but there's nothing we can do to solve any problems like "Where can I get issue so-and-so?" or "Can you send me this article (or module, or picture, or whatever)?"*

*I wish, for the sake of all of you (and for the sake of our corporate bank balance) that we could satisfy every request for an old issue or a module contest entry. But either we haven't got what you want (in the case of back issues) or we simply can't publish what you want.*

All of the old issues of DRAGON® Magazine

that are sold out will almost certainly never again be available for sale from TSR or from Dragon Publishing. Your best bet — perhaps your only chance — to pick up an old issue is to get a seat in the front row of an auction at a gaming convention and bring along a loud voice and lots of money. Usually a few single issues, maybe even a collection or two, are on the merchandise list of an auction at any good-sized convention. Or, watch the advertisements in gaming magazines for someone to announce that he's selling old copies, or for a merchant who has somehow acquired a few way-back issues. But please don't ask us — we haven't got 'em and we don't know where to get 'em.

The answer's a little different in the matter of module contest entries, but the bottom line is the same. Obviously, we have the modules in our possession, and maybe someday we'll publish other high finishers from certain categories. But in the meantime, we can't give them out to anyone who wants to see what one of them is like. If we ever did that — even once — and word got around, I shudder to think how many more requests we would get. And, of course, if you honor one request, you have to honor them all. I hope you can all understand, without forcing me to go into painful detail, why we can't honor any requests of this sort.

Just in case it isn't already clear, I'll also point out that we cannot provide photocopies of old articles, either. Even if there isn't something illegal or unethical about doing that (and there probably is), we can't start doing such a thing — another dangerous precedent. If it was legally and financially permissible for us to supply photocopy reproductions of out-of-print articles upon request, and if it ever became general knowledge that we were doing, or condoning, such a thing, we'd have to hire another staff member just to keep up with all the "reprint" requests.

So, please save yourselves the expense and frustration of asking for old issues, unpublished modules, old articles, or anything else that we don't have the authority or the ability to sell or give away. Please do feel free to tell us if you'd like to see an article reprinted in a future "Best of" anthology — that's a different matter altogether, and we want and need your advice when it comes to planning which features will go in those collections. — KM

## 'Over-powered'

Dear Editor:

I'd like to point out (as I'm sure many other readers will) that Arthur Collins misinterpreted the relation of psionic attack and defense points to ability points in his article (issue #78). According to the Players Handbook, one ability point is made up of one each of both attack and defense points, i.e., 100 attack points and 100 defense points equal 100 ability points. As a result, his Psionicist class is vastly over-powered. The "Ability factor" multiplier in Table II should be halved to adjust the class's abilities to more



reasonable levels. As they stand now, Psionics have twice as much power as they need.

Robert M. Schroeck  
Princeton, N.J.

*I was surprised to get this letter — from one of the other authors who contributed to our psionics section in issue #78 — and even more surprised at what I uncovered after a little investigation.*

*I can't find a passage in the Players Handbook section on psionics that backs up Robert's contention. The text, in fact, says the opposite: "Psionic ability is double psionic strength, . . . One-half of psionic ability is attack strength, one-half is defense strength." In other words, Arthur seems to be right, and Robert seems to be the one with the misinterpretation.*

*Well, that explains why no one else wrote in to tell us about Arthur Collins' "mistake." Then I checked out Robert's article, "Overhauling the system," and discovered that he had incorporated his misinterpretation into his manuscript — and, worse yet, we didn't catch it. He says that 25 points of psionic ability is equivalent to 25 points of attack strength and 25 points of defense strength. Based on my understanding of the rules, that's wrong. Fortunately, the error doesn't ruin the reasoning behind Robert's proposal for "overhauling the system"; all you have to do to make his suggestion consistent with the rules is change "25 points" to "50 points" in a couple of places, so that his hypothetical first-level psionic character is still endowed with 25 attack points and 25 defense points.*

## 'Only suggestions'

Dear Editor:

Those who have read the works of Michael Moorcock will be aware of the opposite forces of Law & Chaos. We live in a time on this earth when Law is predominant; logic smothered magic to such an extent that most humans refuse to believe the latter exists. Several of your knowledgeable contributors seem occasionally to suffer from this unhealthy disease, for instance Mr. Greenwood who, in his, article concerning the Planes of Hell, after stating that Stygia is cold went on in parentheses to add: "Why the swamp and river Styx do not freeze is a mystery to one accustomed to conditions on the Prime Material Plane." Surely he could realize that in a fantasy world Chaos is going to be present to a larger extent than in our own; laws of physics, chemistry & biology just do not exist as we know them, and the fact that the river doesn't freeze is going to be the least of the worries of a Hero entering the 5th plane of Hell!

I must admit to providing a rather trivial example in this case (others include the recently discussed problems of falling damage, boat speed and the "logic" of language) but it does get my point across: the majority of gamers (and writers) seem absorbed in the Law side of the balance and fail to realize the strength of Chaos. This leads to another point — the obsession gamers seem to have for rules. This can be demonstrated in your "Out on a Limb" section, with letters usually taking one of the following formats: "I don't agree with this rule. In my campaign, . . ." or "The article was very good, but I found two mistakes . . ." or "As a professor of Cytoplasmicology, I can tell you that . . ."

This can prove tedious; after all, the articles are only suggestions, and surely if the reader doesn't like certain aspects he/she can alter them without creating a hassle (in other words, *not* do what I'm doing now!). Many argue that rules

and more rules are necessary to promote playability. This may be true, but then again some of the most playable games are also the most boring. It seems to me that some gamers want AD&D wrapped in an imagination-proof web of rules, which defies the game's original intention.

James Douglas  
Wellington, New Zealand

*I heartily applaud what James says about articles being "only suggestions" — a point that yours truly makes in a couple of other ways elsewhere in this letters column. I share his apparent disdain for people who take an article to task because it doesn't describe the way they would do something, or because it contains a "mistake" or two (which may be an error of fact, but is just as often a simple difference of opinion or interpretation). I like to think we don't take ourselves too seriously, and I think we'd all be none the worse off if the people who read the magazine would feel the same way — KM*

## 'Shoddy work'

Dear Dragon:

I was, to say the least, sorely disappointed with DRAGON #79. In my opinion, DRAGON has been sliding slowly downhill ever since the new typeface was introduced in #73. Issue #72 was a wonder: We were treated to an official new character class, the piercer article which started a plethora of "The Ecology of . . ." articles, a thoroughly satisfying piece on gems which put the DMG to shame, an informative article on barbarians, color pictures, and other wonders.

Next issue, you introduced a disgusting, unreadable typeface, but my complaints were allayed by your expansion to 96 pages and by a series of relatively successful articles, especially the "Nine Hells" features in #75 and #76.

Then, issue #79 arrived. Sons of Slaadi! Here we are, back at 80 pages. Here we are, printed on flimsy paper that I feared would rip if I turned the page.

What is going on? On page 2, you talk about the new technology at TSR's Graphic Arts Services department. Does that include Grade-Z paper? Where was Larry Elmore's Snarfquest? Where were the last 16 pages?

I can understand that Gary Gygax is probably very busy on the Players Handbook II, and is therefore not sending more "Sorcerer's Scroll" articles. Perhaps you decreased the magazine's size to avoid increasing the price. If this is the case, raise the price and go back to 96 pages. I would be happy to pay a higher price for DRAGON if you continue to provide excellent articles. (Heck, some of your issues have been many times more useful than some of TSR's modules, which run for \$6 or so a shot.)

On the other hand, if these problems stem from your "new technology," I think a lot of gamers can do without these changes. Changes should be for the better, and I was gravely disappointed to see such shoddy work from a magazine I've grown to respect and look forward to.

Jay Fry  
Setauket, N.Y.

*This kind of letter is always hard to answer without sounding like either a martyr ("Gosh, we're doing our best") or an arrogant snob ("How can you dare complain?"). But I'll try. We've been a little paranoid about printing "only" 80 pages in several recent magazines — but even at that size, this is far and away the*

*biggest magazine of its kind, and it isn't priced any higher than the others. The page count of the magazine is directly related to the amount of advertising space that our clients buy; we'll be able to stay at 96 pages (or more) if and when our advertising lineage remains consistently high. We changed to a lighter-weight paper because it saves a lot of money and — despite what Jay says — doesn't seem to hurt the physical quality of the product. Anybody who thinks that saving money is a dumb thing to do can back that up by sending us all of theirs.*

*Snarfquest is back, as you've already seen. We skipped a month for the simple reason that we knew #79 was going to be "only" 80 pages, and we wanted to give you three more pages' worth of articles. It is correct to assume that Gary Gygax is busy, because he always is. I hope he'll find time soon to start contributing to the magazine again, but in the meantime we're not exactly ashamed of the material we have been using to fill these pages.*

*If you find yourself in agreement with what Jay is saying, we not-so-humbly invite you investigate how this magazine stacks up, in size and content, against the others on the market. Try to be objective — but don't expect us to be. — KM*

## Aids for old rules

Dear Editor:

I have been playing Dungeons & Dragons for over three years, and find the game and the available playing aids for it excellent. My newest group of players and I have been playing for about a year and a half and we use the original rules or Collector's Editions, finding them more restrictive in many ways than the advanced rules. I am puzzled because I can't find any playing aids, modules, etc., which use these rules. I am wondering why this is and if you will come out with any playing aids which use these rules.

Fred Bradbury  
Saugus, Mass.

*The main reason why we publish virtually no playing aids or adventures specifically for the D&D® game is that people generally don't contribute manuscripts on that game. And that's because the D&D game doesn't really lend itself to expansion or variation like the ADVANCED D&D® game does. As we've said many times before in many different ways, the D&D rules are more like guidelines and suggestions, and the AD&D™ rules are more like actual rules, of the unbreakable or unstretchable sort. In the case of the D&D rules, it's difficult to suggest how to do something in a different way when there aren't any hard and fast rules on how to do it in the first place. The AD&D rule system is much more detailed and more specific to begin with, so altering it or expanding upon it is easier to do.*

*Although the vast majority of what we publish is written and designed specifically for the AD&D game, the two systems are similar enough that the ideas from an AD&D game article or adventure can be easily modified for use in a D&D campaign — which, we assume, is what people like Fred do a lot of the time when they can't find articles or playing aids specifically designed for the D&D game.*

*People who prefer the D&D Collector's Edition rules or the original D&D rules in the blue booklet are more or less on their own, because those versions of the game are not being actively pro-*

(Turn to page 86)



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# Taking the sting out of poison

Another view  
on how to use  
toxic cocktails

by Chris Landsea

## Introduction

Why another article about poison?

That's a simple question with no quick and easy answer. For many players of the AD&D™ game, the information in the rules about poison is sufficient. For others, the articles previously published by DRAGON® Magazine have added to the "poison system" and made it fine for their purposes. But for others still, the definition and use of poisons needs further work. In the final analysis, the answer to the "Why another article" question is this article itself.

For instance, nothing of any substance is mentioned in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* about antidotes, contact poisons, poisonous gas, and monster venoms. Even poison potions need more explanation. On page 20 of the DMG, the section on poison types notes that "Poison potions must be ingested." But, on page 127, the description of poison potions implies that the potion could be used as an insinuating or contact poison as well as an ingestive poison. This shows a need for a revision of that section of the rules, at least.

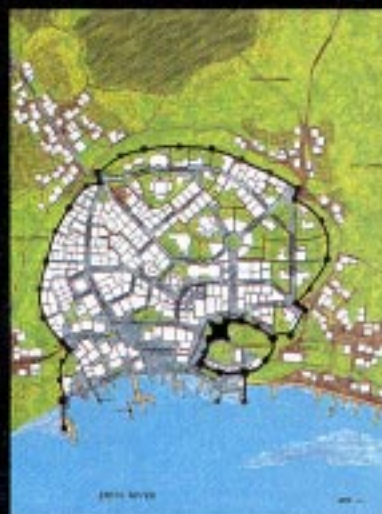
Charles Sagui's article, "Poison: From AA to XX," in the December 1979 issue of DRAGON Magazine (reprinted in the *BEST OF DRAGON® Vol. II* anthology) was an excellent exercise in overhauling the rules on poison. He presented a wide range of poisons in four major groups, included the interaction of the Assassins' Guild into the distribution of poison, described the amount of poison per vial needed to coat a weapon, told how antidotes work, and showed how silver and magic weapons do not work with poison. All of these points were not mentioned in the DMG and are worthy of some consideration.

However, Sagui's system has some flaws. First, the prices are unreasonably expensive. In the DMG, the "A" insinuating poison would do 15 hit points of damage and cost 10 gp. A comparatively potent poison in Sagui's system would cost 1,800 gp. This discrepancy is present throughout all of the different poison strengths and types that he describes.

Second, his poisons are too dangerous to the user. No one in his



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right mind would use these poisons unless he had a god-like dexterity. An assassin with a 15 dexterity using the Sagui type of contact poison on his sword would most likely be poisoned by his own weapon within 3 rounds. And a character with a dexterity of 13 or less using that poison has at least a 50% chance of poisoning himself by simply pulling his sword out of its scabbard! Poisons, though they should present some danger to the user, should not be so dangerous that no one would consider using them.

Third, although Sagui's system explains how much damage per round is done, nowhere does it say how long the poison needs to take effect. Some poisons are instantly effective, but most are not.

Fourth, all poisons listed in the Sagui article require a saving throw with no adjustments. In other words, a saving throw against a poison that does 1-3 points of damage is just as easy (or difficult) to make as a save against a poison that causes instant-death.

Fifth — and this is probably the most important reason why further revision is needed — page 81 of the DMG states that insinuating poison does either full or no damage. Sagui's article states, "If a saving throw is made against poison . . . , the-victim takes half the rolled damage." In other words, there is no chance to escape all of the poison's effects, and this provision should be in the rules because (as explained on page 81) it is in accordance with the spirit and the intent of the AD&D game system. Altogether, Sagui's article is an honorable attempt at expanding the rules on poison, but it does not entirely conform to the existing system.

The March 1982 issue of DRAGON Magazine contained Larry DiTillio's article, "Poison: The Toxins of Cerilon." DiTillio proposed a more "realistic" system that did try to clear up uncertainties that others had ignored. For example, he was the first to include an onset time for each poison — a much needed detail. He also described greatly varying effects of poison, from insanity to paralysis, as well as damage and death — a total of fourteen effects.

Ironically, DiTillio's poison system has two problems which are nearly the opposite of certain aspects of Sagui's system: no set cost for either poisons or antidotes, and no mention of possible danger to the user. Without these two points, a complete and workable system cannot be produced. DiTillio also limits the effectiveness of his poisons to just humanoids and normal animals. Against other creatures, the poison has no effect. While it is true that many monsters are immune to certain types of poisons, a poison-user should not be prohibited from employing poisons against the majority of creatures encountered, at least for no apparent reason. DiTillio's article, although it did suggest highly imaginative varieties of poisons, could not function successfully as a complete system of poisoning.

The remainder of this article is based on one large assumption followed by several smaller ones. It is assumed that the rules in the AD&D game on poison and poisoning are in need of reinforcement and reorganization, and it is further assumed that improvements can be made to the poison system that will conform to the AD&D world as expressed in the rules. This new system should include a detailed but easy to use explanation of the five different groups of poison, instructions for obtaining and using monster venom, a method of throwing ingestive poison, a comprehensive plan of antidotes, and a suggested plan for poison usage by characters — which is where the discussion will begin.

### Poison usage by characters

In the AD&D world, there are five separate groups of poisons: ingestive poison, insinuating poison, contact poison, poisonous gas, and monster venom. The first four types can be bought in any large town or city. These poisons are manufactured, for the most part, by and for assassins. The Assassins' Guild in each town controls the local use of poison. Assassins therefore have unlimited use of poison — providing, of course, that they can pay the cost of obtaining the poison. All non-assassin characters (excepting paladins and non-evil clerics, who cannot use any type of poison, as stated in the Players Handbook) may buy ingestive, insinuating, or gas sleep poisons only, providing that they pay 1,000 gp per level per month to the local Assassins' Guild for this privilege (except for thieves, as explained below). This payment is in addition to the cost of the poison itself.

Assassins use all forms of poison with an effectiveness that gives

intended victims an additional +1 on their saving throws. Specially trained assassins (DMG, page 20) can use poison so well that their victims receive no additional bonus to their saving throws. All other character types use poison (of any sort they are eligible to employ) at a reduced effectiveness which allows their victims +2, in addition to any other penalties or bonuses, on their saving throws.

Magic-users are allowed to buy, in addition to sleep poison, insinuating poison of type AAA (20 vials a year) and type AA (10 vials a year), providing that they pay their monthly dues to the local Assassins' Guild. Thieves, since they are more akin to assassins, need only pay 500 gp per level per month to be able to buy any sleep poison and insinuating poison of type AAA (30 vials a year), AA (20 vials a year), and A (10 vials a year).

Just because almost everyone is allowed to buy poison, even if it's "only" sleep poison, does not mean that all characters *should* buy and use it. No character of good alignment would use any type of poison without endangering his standing in that alignment. Even lawful neutral characters would quite possibly have alignment problems from using poison, for to do so would be in violation of the (usually) unwritten law of society which says that only assassins may use poison. Evil characters would unflinchingly use poison, since they have no reservations about causing pain and suffering to others. However, evil clerics may find it very difficult to put insinuating sleep poison on their blunt weapons.

Characters might try to get around the rule about the limited poison market by having an assassin buy the more effective poisons for them. To combat this, the DM must consider the assassin's loyalty to the Assassin's Guild. A lawful evil assassin would never consider going against the rules of his guild. He would promptly turn this subversive information in to the Guildmaster, who would deal in his own way with the problem. The neutral evil assassin would only consider the deal if the guild, as a whole, was weak and unorganized and if he could make money from the deal. The chaotic evil assassin would always consider such a deal (especially if he has a low wisdom), and might cooperate. However, because of his chaotic nature, he might turn-in the character to the guild or even attack the character with the poison that the character wished to obtain. Dealing with assassins of any alignment is a particularly dangerous business.

All creatures normally affected by poison will be affected by any of the poisons mentioned in this article. Creatures that can only be damaged by silver and/or magic weapons cannot be harmed by normal weapons that have been envenomed, because no wound can be made by the normal weapon, and thus the poison can never enter the creature's system. However, envenomed silver or magic weapons can affect most creatures. Undead creatures, demons, and devils cannot be affected by sleep poisons at all, but elves and half-elves can be put to sleep by these poisons. (Their resistance is mainly against forms of magical sleep). Monks, at 11th level and higher, are immune to all forms of poison. Demons and devils, though most poisons fully affect them, have a resistance against poison gas so that it does, at most, half damage. In addition, the DMG (page 81) stipulates that certain creatures are resistant or immune to certain types of poisons in special circumstances; the DM is obligated to rule on what constitutes a "special circumstance" when the occasion arises. Other than the noted exceptions, all creatures who eat poisoned food, are struck by envenomed weapons, touch a poison-trapped chest, or breathe poisonous gas must roll a saving throw to negate or partially negate the effects of the poison, or else be subjected to the full effect of the poison — no matter how strong or weak the afflicted creature is.

### Holy and unholy waters

Holy water and unholy water are known for their special corrosive effect upon the enforcers of evil (such as undead, demons, and devils) and the minions of good (such as paladins, devas, and lammasu) respectively. The DMG adds in the glossary (page 228), almost as an afterthought, that these waters are "useful . . . to slow the effects of poison." The following details will be helpful in defining that statement in game terms.

Holy and unholy waters have separate, but not opposite, effects on poisoned creatures who drink them. Holy water acts as if the drinker was the beneficiary of a slow poison spell cast by a 1st-level



cleric, and the effect has an onset time of 2-5 (d4+1) segments. (In other words, the effect has a duration of 1 hour, and the holy water must be administered within 1 turn minus 2-5 segments of the time of poisoning to have the desired effect.) Effects of multiple applications of holy water are cumulative with respect to duration; a double dose will make a creature poison-resistant for 2 consecutive hours, as long as the second dose is administered before the first one wears off. This beneficial effect works on evil creatures as well as non-evil ones; however, the holy water will also have its usual harmful effects on an evil creature who touches it or consumes it; thus, evil characters and creatures will not voluntarily use it and will avoid it if possible.

Unholy water acts as a poison enhancer. If one vial of unholy water is ingested by a poisoned creature before the poison has taken effect, it will cause the remaining amount of the onset time of the poison (any type) to be halved. Additional vials of unholy water consumed before the onset time expires will cause the poisoned creature's saving throw to be taken at a -1 penalty (cumulative) for each vial ingested beyond the first. Characters of good alignment will not use unholy water and will avoid it if possible. Even though their effects are not opposites, holy and unholy waters will neutralize each other on a vial-for-vial basis when being used to affect a poisoned creature in the above-described manner.

Ingestive poisons

These are poisonous substances in a liquid or powder form that are only dangerous when swallowed. Normally they are added to food or drink. Occasionally characters use them as missiles and attempt to throw the poison containers into the mouths of monsters (as detailed below). Ingestive poison comes in one-dose containers —about 4 oz. apiece. This type of poison, in comparison to the others, is relatively inexpensive. Generally, they have a long onset time, and some damage is done even if a saving throw is successful. All ingestive poisons placed in food or drink leave telltale signs. These signs, no matter how slight, give the targeted creature a chance to detect the poison before he is affected (as detailed below). The accompanying table lists ingestive poisons and the statistics that govern their use. Each type (AAA, C, S, etc.), has three different strengths, for which are given various adjustments on the victim's saving throw.

In this table and the ones that follow, the saving throw adjustments given in the first three columns for each type are in addition to any bonuses or penalties already allowed to victims, including the bonus related to the character type who is administering the poison (+1 for untrained assassins, +2 for non-assassins).

"Onset time," usually expressed in rounds or segments (1/10 of a round), is the amount of time that passes after the poison is ingested or contacted and before the effects of the poison begin to be felt by the victim; this is usually a random number within the stated range,

INGESTIVE POISONS

Type	Cost (gp) per dose/ Saving throw adjustment			Detect, active search	Detect, no search	Onset time (rds.)	Run time	Damage, fail save	Damage, if save
	Strength 1	Strength 2	Strength 3						
AAA	5/+4	10/+2	25/+0	80%	40%	2-20	3hp/rd	3-18 hp	½
AA	1 0/+4	25/+2	50/+0	60%	30%	1-2	4 hp/rd	12 hp	0
A	10/+4	25/+2	50/+0	60%	30%	2-8	3 hp/rd	3-36 hp	½
B	50/+2	100/+0	250/-2	40%	20%	2-5	4 hp/rd	4-48 hp	½
C	100/+2	250/+0	500/-2	20%	10%	1-2	6 hp/rd	6-60 hp	½
D	500/+0	1,000/-2	2,500/-4	4%	2%	1/10	10 hp/rd	Death	25 hp
E	1,000/+0	2,500/-2	5,000/-4	4%	2%	1-4 hrs.	1 round	Death	30 hp
S	100/+2	250/+0	500/-2	20%	10%	1-4	1 round	Sleep, 3-18 rds.	Slow, 3 rds.
R	500/+2	1,000/+0	2,500/-2	10%	5%	Special	1 round	Death	0

Types AAA through E are damage-causing poisons of the standard sort, varying in potency and damage potential according to type and strength. Type S is a sleep-inducing poison that causes the victim to be *slowed* if the save is made.

Type R ingestive poison is a three-part poison which can be added to food or drink. All three stages must be applied to the victim within 1 month, and the victim must only roll one saving throw, after the third stage is applied. If this save is successful, the victim takes no damage; if it is failed, the victim will die. The onset time is 1 to 10 days after the third stage is administered. For pricing purposes, each dose contains all three stages.

but it may be a constant amount of time for certain poison types. "Run time" is expressed either as a constant length of time or as a number of hit points per round, and represents the duration of the poison's effect. The specific run time can usually not be known until after the amount of damage to be taken is determined; for instance, type AAA ingestive poison causes 3-18 (3d6) points of damage per dose ingested and has a run time of 3 hp/round. If a victim is determined to take 7 points of damage from one dose, the damage will be subtracted at the rate of 3 points per round for two rounds, with the final point being lost in the third round after the poison takes effect.

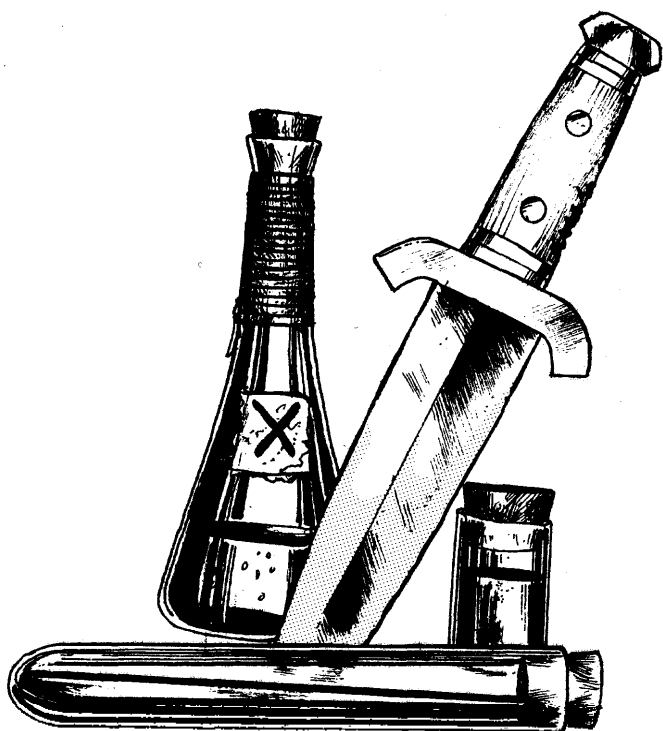
Ingestive poisons (as well as monster venoms and, to some extent, contact poisons; see those sections) all have different characteristics. Some are fairly easy to detect; others are nearly colorless, odorless, and tasteless. That is why the probability to detect different poisons varies. Generally, ingestive poisons of relatively weaker potency are easier to detect. The chance to detect poisoned food, if actively searching for the poison, is twice as great as the chance to merely accidentally discover poisoned food or drink. The intelligence of the person or creature being poisoned is also a factor in being able to detect the poison, as spelled out in the following paragraph. A highly intelligent creature would be more liable to wonder about a slight change in the taste of food than a non-intelligent creature would. If the creature being poisoned has encountered the same poison before, the chance is greater for detecting and recognizing the poison for what it is.

Intelligence as a factor in poison detection: Non-intelligent creatures (intelligence score of 0) have a -40% modifier to their chance of detection. Those of animal intelligence (score of 1) can detect at -30% ; semi-intelligent (2-4) at -20% ; low (5-7) at -10% ; and creatures of average intelligence (8-10) have no modifier. On the other end of the scale, very intelligent creatures ( 11 - 12) can detect ingestive poison at a bonus of +5%; high intelligence (13-14) at a +10% bonus; exceptional (15-16) at +15%; genius (17-18) at +20%; supra-genius (19-20) at +30%; and godlike (21+) at +40%.

Any creature that has encountered the same poison before, regardless of intelligence, gains an additional 25% to detect. (Treat all results of 0% or less as no chance to detect, and all results of 100% or more as automatic detection .)

"Hitting" with ingestive poisons

How often are you able to feed a monster in a dungeon? Most adventurers are not going to sit down and enjoy brunch with a troglodyte. Though unlikely, it is not impossible to trick some monsters into eating poisoned food. How about offering a hungry-looking rust monster some spiked spikes? Or, if you're being chased by a purple worm or shambling mound, take out the canned shrieker that you luckily remembered to bring along and drop it on the floor after spicing it with some delectably deadly herbs.



Those are, like it says, *possible* uses of ingestive poisons against monsters. But a more likely way of using them (including the sleep versions) is to hurl those vials into the monsters' jaws. The general rule is that to be able to throw a poison vial into a monster's mouth, the player must state beforehand that his character is trying to do so, and then the character must score a missile hit against the monster at an armor class four places better than the normal armor class of the monster, because of the difficulty of hitting such a specific and (relatively) small target. (This also assumes that the target creature is stupid enough, or angry enough, to be standing or approaching the thrower with its jaws agape. Creatures with at least moderate intelligence will realize what's about to happen just before the vial is thrown, and will probably close their mouths immediately. And obviously, this tactic will not work at all against creatures with no "mouth" as we know it.)

Example: If Herman the second-level fighter wished to throw a vial of sleep poison (only ingestive poison and monster venom will work) into Tug the bugbear's mouth, he must score a missile hit upon an armor class of 1 instead of the bugbear's normal AC5. If Herman had a 16 dexterity ("1 to hit with missiles) and was 15 feet away (in a dungeon, medium range -2 to hit; see DMG, page 64), then he would need a roll of 19 or better to successfully throw the poison vial into Tug's mouth. Then, if Tug failed his saving throw vs. poison, he would fall asleep, right? Well, maybe. If Herman remembered to unstopper the vial before he threw it, then no problem. But if the vial was still stoppered, then for Tug to be affected by the poison, the delicate vial must fail a saving throw against a normal blow. Otherwise, all that will happen to Tug is a stomach ache caused by swallowing the vial whole.

#### Insinuating poisons

These are also known as blade venoms. They can be used only to coat weapons in order to give the weapon more damage potential. Insinuating poison is bought in 4-oz. doses, but only in liquid form. Generally, swords, pole arms, arrows, darts, and the like can be coated with poison. Blunt weapons (such as those used by clerics) cannot be envenomed.

This type of poison, since it is water-based, can be washed off. However, prolonged use of this poison can be dangerous. Every time an envenomed weapon is sheathed or unsheathed and during every round the weapon is used in combat, there is a chance, depending

on the wielder's dexterity, that the character could be nicked by his own weapon and affected by his own poison. If a character using blade venom is determined to have nicked himself accidentally, then a normal saving throw vs. poison is required — and accidental poisoning does count as one full usage of the poison (see below).

When a character draws an envenomed weapon, in every round when the weapon is being used, and when a character puts the weapon back in its sheath or scabbard, the DM should roll to see if accidental poisoning occurs. The chance is 15% for those with a dexterity of 3 or less, 12% for dexterity 4, 9% for dexterity 5-6, 7% for dexterity 7-8, 5% for dexterity 9-14, 3% for dexterity 15-16, 2% for dexterity 17-18, and 1% for dexterity 19 or higher.

Each 4-oz. dose of insinuating poison can coat a various number of different types of weapons; in some cases, multiple doses are required to completely cover a blade. The table below should be used as a general guide:

Weapon	Coats/dose	Weapon	Coats/dose
Dart	6	Short sword	1
Arrow	4	Scimitar	1
Spear head	3	Broad sword	½
Pole arm	2	Long sword	½
Hand axe	2	Bastard sword	½
Dagger	2	2-hd. sword	1/3

These figures mean that the same dose of insinuating poison could coat six darts or one-third the blade area of a 2-handed sword. To properly and completely envenom a 2-handed sword, three vials of insinuating poison are needed, no less (no more, either, for extra poison will not stick to the weapon; it will quickly drop off).

Any weapon that requires one dose or less to be fully envenomed must be completely covered, or it will provide no poison damage whatsoever. For weapons that require more than one dose to fully coat them (i.e., the broad sword through the 2-handed sword), partial coating does the following:

- 1) If less than half of the blade is covered, the weapon is so ineffectively envenomed that the poison will have no effect.
- 2) If half or more of the blade is coated, but it is not completely covered, the victim of a hit from this weapon gains an additional +4 on his saving throw, and the poison will be used up after just one hit (or evaporated after one full day).

On normal weapons (steel or iron, not magical), insinuating poison evaporates fairly quickly; on the first day that the poison is in use, very little evaporates and it does full damage. After one full day, evaporation loss takes its toll, and the poison does only half damage. After two full days, the poison and its extra damage are completely gone. Each hit on an opponent by an envenomed weapon has the same effect as one day of evaporation: The first hit does full damage, the second hit half damage, and the third hit no damage. No damage would occur from the poison after partial evaporation *and* partial usage (such as after one full day and one hit). Partially evaporated or used E, F, G, or S insinuating poisons would not give half damage (what would be a half-death?), but instead the victim receives a bonus of +4 on his saving throw. Magical and silver weapons do not hold insinuating poison as well as normal weapons do. (Magic weapons slowly "burn off" the poison, and blade venom simply does not stick very easily to silver weapons.) Therefore, an envenomed weapon which is silver or magical will only do poison damage on the first day after it is coated, and only on the first hit; however, this blow will always cause damage, with no saving throw allowed to the victim in such a case.

Magic swords that possess unusual capabilities (i.e., intelligence) and are of good alignment will not allow themselves to be envenomed without taking some sort of counter-measure, and they will unmistakably communicate this feeling to the holder of the weapon before that character makes any attempt to use blade venom. A good-aligned, intelligent sword held against its will and forced to "swallow" blade venom may cause an "accident" to happen to the unfortunate character who insists on trying to coat the blade.

As stated in the Players Handbook (page 29), "Poisoned weapons used run the risk of being noticed by others." Normal envenomed weapons have a 10% cumulative chance per round of being



## INSINUATIVE POISONS

Type	Cost (gp) per Strength	dose/Saving Strength	throw adj. Strength	Onset time (rds.)	Run time	Damage, fail save	Damage, if save
AAA	10/+4	25/+2	50/+0	1-8	3 hp/rd	3-12 hp	0
AA	25/+4	50/+2	100/+0	1	4 hp/rd	8 hp	0
A	25/+4	50/+2	100/+0	1-6	5 hp/rd	5-20 hp	0
B	100/+2	250/+0	500/-2	1-4	5 hp/rd	5-30 hp	0
C	250/+2	500/+0	1,000/-2	1-3	5 hp/rd	5-40 hp	0
D	1,000/+0	2,500/-2	5,000/-4	1	5 hp/rd	5-60 hp	0
E	2,500/+0	5,000/-2	7,500/-4	1/10	10 hp/rd	Death	0
F	2,500/+0	5,000/-2	7,500/-4	1-2	1 round	Death	0
G	5,000/+0	7,500/-2	10,000/-4	1/10	1 seg.	Death	0
S	250/+2	500/+0	1,000/-2	1-2	1 round	Sleep, 3-18 rds.	0

detected, as stipulated in that rule. In addition, silver and magic weapons which are envenomed have a 15% cumulative chance per round of being detected due to their special nature.

The sheathing of weapons has a considerable chance of totally or partially removing the insinuating poison placed on the weapon. Normal weapons that are fully coated and then sheathed have a 40% chance of a partial loss of poison from being sheathed, meaning either half damage or +4 on victim's saving throw. Normal weapons with poison that is partially evaporated or partially used, and silver or magic weapons that are fully coated, have a 33% chance of losing all of their poison effectiveness due to sheathing.

### Contact poisons

These are poisons that cause damage upon contact with the

unbroken skin. They cannot be used on weapons, and are most generally employed in traps. Contact poison is made in either a powder or a liquid form. This poison, like ingestive poison, blends in with its surroundings; for example, gold powder contact poison may be placed on a few gold coins, or a grease-like liquid may be applied to a lock or a hinge.

Unlike insinuating poisons, contact poisons evaporate very little, if at all. However, they do slowly lose their effectiveness over a period of time. When first applied, contact poisons are 100% effective with respect to damage potential. One month after its application, the contact poison becomes 80% as effective as it was at its original strength. From then on, its power decreases by 5% per month until one year after application, at which time it is at 25% of its original effectiveness. After a year and a half, the contact poison is reduced

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CONTACT POISONS

Type	Cost (gp) per dose/ Saving throw adjustment			Detect, active search	Detect, no search	Onset time (rds.)	Run time	Damage, fail save	Damage, if save
	Strength 1	Strength 2	Strength 3						
A	25/+4	50/+2	100/+0	40%	20%	2-8	3 hp/rd	3-12 hp	0
B	100/+3	250/+1	500/- 1	30%	15%	2-8	4 hp/rd	4-24 hp	1-6 hp
C	250/+2	500/+0	1,000/-2	20%	10%	1	6 hp/rd	6-36 hp	3-12 hp
D	1,000/+1	2,500/-1	5,000/-3	10%	5%	1/10	10 hp/rd	Death	25 hp

to 10% effectiveness, and two years after application, the poison's damage potential is gone. Type D contact poison causes death automatically during the first month after application (if, of course, the saving throw is failed). After that, damage for failing the saving throw vs. Type D contact poison is calculated by using 50 hit points as the base number for damage potential.

The same system used for detecting ingestive poison is used for checking for contact poison. Intelligence and previous experience with the same type of contact poison do help in detecting this poison.

Each dose of contact poison can coat various objects in different amounts. Below are listed some common articles that could be coated with contact poison, and the extent to which one dose will cover them:

Article	Coats/dose	Articles	Coats/dose
Needle	8	Doorknob	1
Coin	5	Shield handle	1
Gem	3	Lock	1
Dagger hilt	2	Helmet	1/2
Sword hilt	1	Robe	1/3
Chest handle	1	Suit of armor	1/4

Any object that is not completely coated with contact poison will, in many circumstances, have a chance of not causing any poison damage. This chance is equal to the percentage of the surface area that is covered with poison. For instance, one dose of contact poison used on the outside of a suit of armor will coat the armor over only 25% of its surface area, so that there is only a 25% chance of an intended victim touching the armor where the poison is applied. This chance for no poisoning only applies when the object is just touched briefly and only in one or two specific locations (such as when the armor is grasped in one or two hands and held or lifted; if the victim touches the armor repeatedly, or runs his hands over it, the poison will always be contacted). Also, this chance does not apply if, for instance, the *inside* of the suit of armor is coated and the armor is put on. The poison will do its normal damage in such a case, since there is no way for the victim to avoid touching the poison even if it only extends over a portion of the inside surface area.

Contact poisons may only be bought by assassins, and only assassins and thieves (if a thief can somehow obtain the poison) may set mechanical traps using contact poison (for example, a chest with a poisoned-needles trap, as mentioned on page 20 of the DMG). Mechanical traps involving contact poison do not allow characters to detect the presence of poison directly, but, of course, trap detection is allowed.

Poisonous gases

The fourth and last type of poison that can be bought on the open market is poisonous gas. Poisonous gas is bought as a liquid in a 4-0oz. vial, which contains one dose. Upon exposure to air the poison turns to gas which will expand to fill 125 cubic ft. (5' x 5' x 5'). Up to 6 size S creatures, or 4 size M creatures, or 2 size L creatures can be affected by one dose. Combinations are possible (1 L and 3 S, 2 M and 3 S, etc.). If less than the maximum number of creatures is affected immediately, the noxious vapors will remain in the 125-cubic-ft. area until air movement (*gust of wind*, for instance) causes them to dissipate, until the maximum number of creatures is reached (if others move into the area), or until 5 rounds have elapsed since the gas was released; at that point, the poison's effectiveness is lost. A creature may not be affected by the same dose of



poisonous gas more than once; moving out of the affected area and then back into it does not increase the damage suffered. As with contact poisons, any mechanical trap using poisonous gas must be set by an assassin or a thief.

When using poisonous gas in melee, one major problem must be overcome: how to set it off. The most logical way is to unstopper the vial and quickly toss it toward your enemies. That's a good solution, unless the heads of your enemies are more than 5 feet off the ground. (The area of effect of the gas cloud is 5' x 5' x 5') and since the vial will fall to the floor and the gas is heavier than air, the poison cloud will not rise high enough to affect the breathing apparatus of a very tall humanoid creature.) One possible solution would be to toss or place the stoppered vial on a ledge or other elevated place and then try to break it with some sort of missile; the gas will



## POISONOUS GASES

Type	Cost (gp) per dose/ Saving throw adjustments			Onset time (rds.)	Run time	Damage, fail save	Damage, if save
	Strength 1	Strength 2	Strength 3				
A	100/+4	250/+2	500/+0	1-6	3 hp/rd	3-12 hp	0
B	250/+4	500/+2	1,000/+0	1-3	5 hp/rd	5-30 hp	0
C	1,000/+2	2,500/+0	5,000/-2	1-2	5 hp/rd	5-50 hp	0
D	5,000/+0	7,500/-2	10,000/-4	2-5	6 hp/rd	6-72 hp	½
E	5,000/+0	7,500/-2	10,000/-4	1	10 hp/rd	Death	0
S	1,000/+2	2,500/+0	5,000/-2	1-4	1 hp/rd	Sleep, 3-18 rds.	0

disperse starting from a higher point, and would affect taller victims before the cloud settles to floor level.

### Monster venoms

This term describes all poisons extracted directly from venomous monsters. This venom is exceedingly valuable because it can be used as ingestive or insinuating poison — two weapons in one. But obtaining monster venom is not an easy job. Poison from a giant scorpion and venom from a giant poisonous snake are high-priced and hard to locate. To buy them in the marketplace, even in a large town, would be almost impossible. It is possible for characters to

take the poison from the monsters themselves; however, normal combat damage will most likely destroy the monster's poison sac and the character's hopes of obtaining the poison along with it. Destructive spells (such as *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and flame strike), if used indiscriminately, will practically ruin any chance for the recovery of venom. Killing the monster with blunt weapons in a normal combat situation will enable characters to collect its venom 50% of the time.

If a monster is incapacitated before being killed, characters stand a greater chance of being able to collect its venom. An incapacitated creature, for this purpose, is defined as any creature that is magically *sleeping*, being *held*, or otherwise helpless. Good spells for this

## MONSTER VENOMS

Type	Available doses in monster	Cost (gp)/ dose	Detect, active search	Detect, no search	Saving throw adj.	Damage, fail save	Damage, if save	Onset time (rds.)	Run time (rds.)
Ant, gt.	1	250	40 %	20 %	0	3-12 hp	1-4 hp	1	1
Centipede, gt.	½	1,000	50 %	25 %	+4	Death	0	2-5	2-5
Couatl	3	6,000	30 %	15 %	0	Death	0	1	1-4
Eel, weed	1	3,000	70 %	35 %	0	Death	0	2-5	1-4
Frog, poisonous	½	1,000	80 %	40 %	+4	Death	0	2-5	2-8
Imp	1	5,000	50 %	25 %	0	Death	0	1-2	1-4
Masher	5	6,000	20 %	10 %	0	Death	0	1-6	1
Medusa	3	4,000	80 %	40 %	0	Death	0	1	1-8
Naga, guardian	4	5,000	40 %	20 %	0	Death	0	1-4	1-4
Pseudo-dragon	1	5,000	50 %	25 %	0	*	0	1-3	1-4
Purple worm	7	5,000	70 %	35 %	0	Death	0	1	1-3
Ray, pungi	5	5,000	60 %	30 %	0	Death	0	1	2-5
Ray, sting	2	6,000	30 %	15 %	0	**	0	1-3	1
Scorpion, gt.	3	10,000	50 %	25 %	0	Death	0	1/10	1/10
Snake, amphis.	3	7,000	80 %	40 %	0	Death	0	1/10	1
Snake, poisonous	5	7,000	40 %	20 %	0	Death	3-18	1-2	2-5
Snake, spitting	3	4,000	80 %	40 %	0	Death	0	1-3	1-3
Spider, gt.	5	5,000	40 %	20 %	0	Death	0	1-4	1-2
Spider, huge	3	3,000	50 %	25 %	+1	Death	0	1-6	1-4
Spider, large	2	2,000	60 %	30 %	+2	Death	0	2-5	2-5
Spider, phase	6	10,000	10 %	5 %	-2	Death	0	1-3	
Spider, gt. water	3	4,000	70 %	35 %	0	Death	0	2-4	1-3
Toad, poisonous	3	5,000	40 %	45 %	0	Death	0	1	
Wasp, gt.	4	6,000	20 %	10 %	0	***	0	1-4	
Wyvern	6	5,000	70 %	35 %	0	Death	1-6	1-6	1-3

\* — State of catalepsy 1 to 6 days, 25% chance to die.

\*\* — Paralyzed 5-20 turns and 5-20 hp damage.

\*\*\* — Paralyzed 2-5 days, then death.

purpose are *hold monster*, *command* (if you know the monster's language), and *sleep*. Successful assassinations and backstabbing (if that single backstab kills the creature) also count as rendering the creature incapacitated before death, because the killing blow is well-aimed and the victim is essentially helpless to prevent the blow.

As a set of general guidelines, the DM can use the following list to help moderate the chance of recovering venom from a poisonous creature that has been vanquished:

Monster is . . .	% Chance for slayer(s) to recover venom
Wounded and killed by sharp weapons and/or destructive spells; not incapacitated before death.	10%
Wounded and killed by sharp weapons and/or destructive spells; incapacitated when it had 1% to 50% of its full normal hit points.	35%
Wounded and killed by sharp weapons and/or destructive spells; incapacitated when it had 51% to 99% of its hit points.	60%
Wounded and killed by sharp weapons and/or destructive spells; incapacitated when it had all of its hit points.	85%
Wounded and killed by blunt weapons only; not incapacitated before death.	50%
Wounded and killed by blunt weapons only; incapacitated when it had 1% to 50% of its hit points.	65%
Wounded and killed by blunt weapons only; incapacitated when it had 51% to 99% of its hit points.	80%
Wounded and killed by blunt weapons only; incapacitated when it had all of its hit points.	95%

A successful roll means that all of the monster's venom can be recovered; failing the roll means no venom can be recovered. (This is strictly an all-or-nothing deal.)

Of course, monster venoms vary as much as monsters do. Many different kinds of poison can be recovered. The price given on the accompanying table is what an NPC would pay for it on the black market. The Assassins' Guild will buy monster venom, but only for no more than half the listed price — and the guild will not sell monster venom to anyone. Also, characters should know (or they will soon be made aware) that selling poison to anyone besides the Assassins' Guild is a risky business; the guild doesn't like anyone interfering with their monopoly on poisons.

All of the rules that apply to ingestive and insinuate poisons apply also to monster venoms when they are used in the same manner. The great weapon potential of monster venoms is balanced by their inaccessibility and the danger in obtaining them, whether they are purchased or procured by combat.

#### Antidotes

The purpose of an antidote is to counteract poison in a victim's system; antidotes do *not* restore hit points already lost because of poison. Antidotes are always in liquid form when used, and are always ingested. They come in 4-oz. doses, just like poisons do.

Antidotes come in five basic types, corresponding to the five types of poisons: anti-ingestive, anti-insinuate, anti-contact, anti-gas, and anti-venom. All antidotes except for anti-venom can be bought from any major alchemist. Generally the cost of the antidote is the same as the Strength 1 variety of the poison type it counteracts. Each type of antidote neutralizes a set amount of possible damage, roughly equivalent to the average amount of damage that the same type of poison causes. Stronger antidotes may sometimes, but definitely not always, neutralize weaker poisons. The cost per dose of each type of antidote, the damage it prevents, and the chance that the antidote may neutralize a weaker poison are given in the charts on the facing page.

Be Ye Witch, or Be Ye Magistrate, it makes no difference. All are suspect

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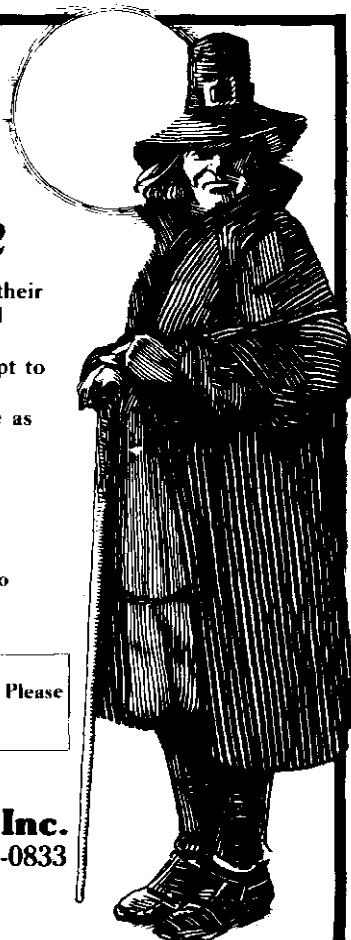
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# ANTI-INGESTIVE ANTIDOTES

Type	cost/ dose	Damage prevented	Other poisons neutralized
AAA	5	10hp	none
AA	10	12 hp	none
A	10	20 hp	AAA (25%)
B	50	25 hp	AAA (45%), A (20%)
C	100	35 hp	AAA (60%), A (35%), B (15%)
D	500	50 (death)	AAA (70%), A (45%), B (25%), C (10%)
E	1,000	Death	none
S	100	Sleep or slow	none
R	500	Death	none

# ANTI-GAS ANTIDOTES

Type	cost/ dose	Damage prevented	Other poisons neutralized
A	50	10 hp	none
B	100	20 hp	A (25%)
C	500	30 hp	A (45%), B (20%)
D	2,500	40 hp	A (60%), B (35%), C (15%)
E	2,500	50 (death)	A (70%), B (45%), C (25%), D (10%)
S	500	Sleep	none

Lesser antidotes do not affect, in any way, stronger poisons. If an AAA insinuate poison is determined to do 12 hit points of damage (the maximum), and the poisoned creature takes an antidote for AAA insinuate poison before any damage is realized, he will still suffer 2 hit points of damage. But if an E insinuate poison causes 10 hit points of damage per round until death and the poisoned creature takes an E anti-insinuate before or after some damage has been taken (it matters not which), he will lose no more hit points

# ANTI-INSINUATIVE ANTIDOTES

Type	cost/ dose	Damage prevented	Other poisons neutralized
AAA	10	10 hp	none
AA	25	8 hP	none
A	25	15hp	AAA (25%)
B	100	20 hp	AAA (45%), A (20%)
C	250	25 hp	AAA (60%), A (35%), B (15%)
D	1,000	35 hp	AAA (70%), A (45%), B (25%), C (10%)
E	2,500	50 (death)	AAA (75%), A (50%), B (30%), C (15%), D (5%)
F	2,500	Death	none
S	250	Sleep	none

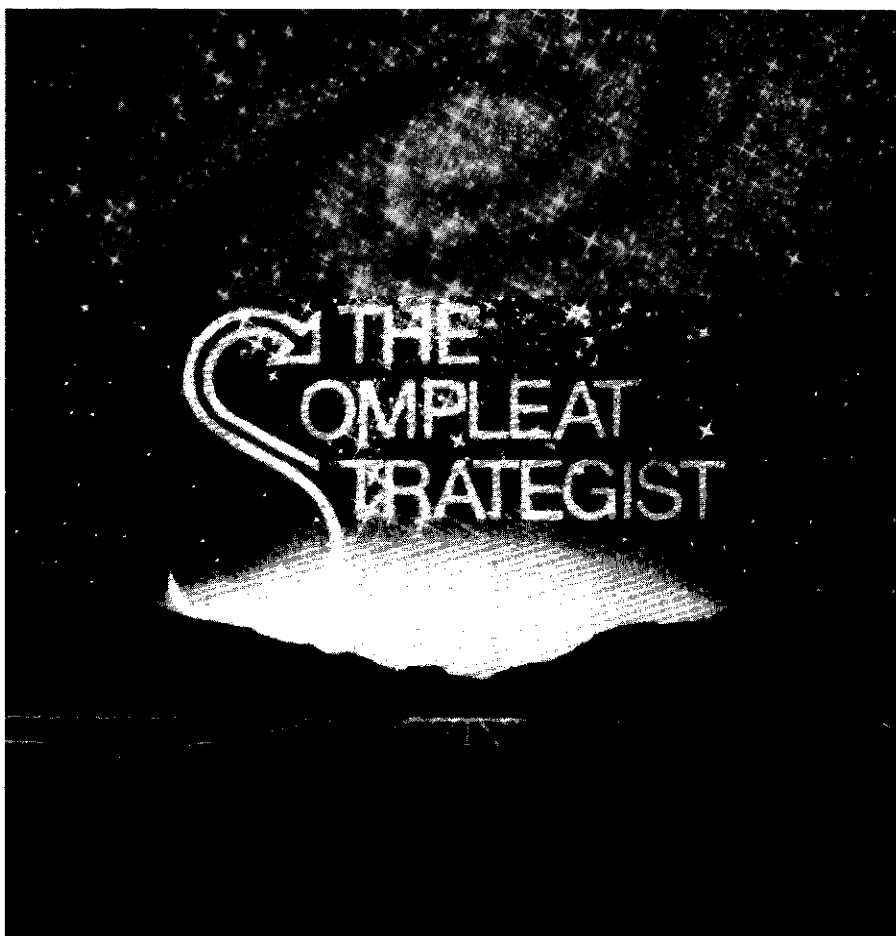
Note: Type G insinuate poison has no antidote.

# ANTI-CONTACT ANTIDOTES

Type	Cost/ dose	Damage prevented	Other poisons neutralized
A	25	10 hp	none
B	100	15hp	A (25%)
C	250	25 hp	A (45%), B (20%)
D	1,000	50 (death)	A (60%), B (35%), C (15%)

from that time onward, unless he had more than 50 hit points remaining at the time the antidote took effect. In that latter case, he will (in effect) keep taking damage until reaching 50 hit points, and will recover from the poison with 50 hit points.

Antidotes are good against only one poisoning, even if the victim makes a successful saving throw. Antidotes can be taken in advance of the poison encounter; they will retain their potency for up to 3 hours, or until they neutralize a poison. The onset time of antidotes



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is almost immediate: 1 segment is needed to open the vial and drink its contents, and the antidote takes effect in 2-5 segments, just like a potion. Death-causing poisons which do not do a specific amount of damage per round and are neutralized by an antidote before the run time is completed will cause no damage to the afflicted creature.

Each type of anti-venom is good only against one specific type of monster poison. For a skilled alchemist to create one dose of anti-venom (and only a very accomplished alchemist can do the job), one dose of the poison it will protect against is needed, along with money equal to the cost of one dose of that poison. If anti-venom is administered and takes effect before the run time of the monster venom is completed, then no hazardous effects occur to the poisoned creature.

### Poison potions

As stated in the DMG, "A poison potion is simply a highly toxic liquid in a potion flask." Therefore, while the flask itself may radiate magic (at the option of the DM or according to circumstances), the contents of such a flask are not magical. Poison potions either contain liquid ingestive poison or (rarely) monster venom. Taking only a sip from a poison potion can sometimes set off its effects, depending on the poison's strength (see below). To determine what poison the potion is, roll on the table below and, if needed, on the subtable. (Note: The detectability aspect of a poison is not considered when testing a potion of poison to determine its contents.)

Die roll	Type and strength	Chance of effect from one sip
01-06	AAA-1	10%
07-11	AAA-2	20%
12-15	AAA-3	30%
16-21	AA-1	15%
22-26	AA-2	25%
27-30	AA-3	35%
31-36	A-1	20%
37-41	A-2	30%
42-45	A-3	40%
46-50	B-1	30%
51-54	B-2	40%
55-57	B-3	50%
58-62	C-1	40%
63-66	C-2	50%
67-69	C-3	60%
70-72	D-1	50%
73-74	D-2	60%
75	D-3	70%
76-78	E-1	60%
79-80	E-2	70%
81	E-3	80%
82-85	S-1	40%
86-88	S-2	50%
89-90	S-3	60%
91-00	Roll on subtable, next column	

### Subtable

Die roll	Type	Chance of effect on sip
01-08	Giant ant	10%
09-15	Poisonous frog	10%
16-23	Giant centipede	20%
24-30	Large spider	30%
31-37	Huge spider	40%
38-41	Weed eel	30%
42-47	Giant water spider	40%
48-52	Medusa	40%
53-57	Spitting snake	40%
58-61	Wyvern	50%
62-65	Poisonous toad	50%
66-69	Giant spider	60%
70-73	Pungi ray	60%
74-77	Purple worm	50%
78-80	Pseudo-dragon	60%
81-83	Guardian naga	60%
84-85	Imp	60%
86-87	Couatl	75%
88-90	Masher	75%
91-93	Sting ray	75%
94-96	Giant wasp	75%
97	Amphisbaena snake	60%
98	Poisonous snake	75%
99	Giant scorpion	80%
00	Phase spider	90%

Poison potions normally contain one dose (4 oz.). Poison potions can be sold to an NPC for the full listed cost (see poison tables) or to the Assassins' Guild at half the listed price.

### Final words

Characters' saving throws against poison should be made in secret by the DM unless the character has prior knowledge of the poison (such as if he witnesses a blade being envenomed before it strikes him). In non-exceptional cases, the character should not know that he has been poisoned until the poison actually takes effect at the end of the onset time.

The use of this system is, of course, optional. It may not be important to go into this much detail in a campaign where characters only use poison infrequently. But, since poisonous monsters are always poisonous, the section on monster venoms may be useful to almost anyone.

It has been repeatedly stated in this article, directly and indirectly, that only assassins have the ability and the "permission" (in the context of the AD&D social and ethical structure) to use poison frequently and effectively. The Dungeon Master is honor bound to simulate this by making poisons difficult for most characters to obtain and employ, and by creating penalties and dangers to be coped with by those who try to disregard the "laws" of poison use. ♪

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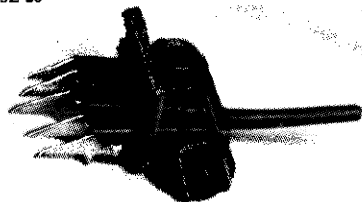
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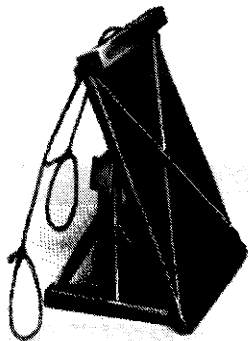
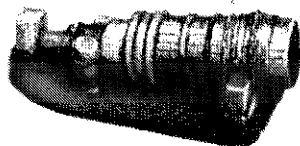
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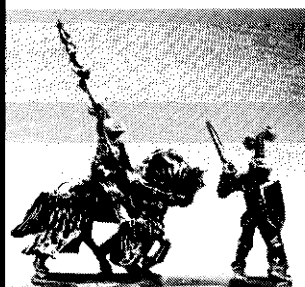
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# In the Cleft of Queens



"And you," the girl Lealu shouted to her fiancé, "tell us daydreams of dragons instead of earning my bride's fee!"

"She truly loves you," Ramm's mother said sourly. Her mouth pursed down as she watched her son's face flush.

"Mother, Lealu —" He reached for a corn cake set to cool on the stone hearth of the small cottage, only to have his mother slap his hand away.

"In the Cleft of Queens," he repeated, "a

dragon is about to hatch. Can't you understand? Why else would the beasts show themselves? A thousand years have passed." He pulled a green scale from his pocket and displayed it before them. "Lealu, do you wish to be snatched?"

"Like a corn cake?" the girl replied mockingly.

"And devoured?" Ramm finished, ignoring her sarcasm.

He thought of her walking alone at sunset

over the rolling plains as the herds came home. Scowling, he pushed back his curly red hair with a fist.

Abruptly, the wooden door of the cottage jerked open, and Putii, Lealu's father and headsman of the village, stormed in. He shook Ramm's shoulder. "You fool! Three times this season you've been away from your post! The sluice gate is open; the mill pond, empty. Dav's lettuces — gone! He has lost two weeks' labor and priceless seed."

Ramm stammered, "But — dragons! Over the Tame Lands!" He again thrust out the curved, iridescent scale. Putii ignored it.

*Fiction by Esther M. Leiper*

"Ramm, I warned you thrice," the old man continued. "You are no hunter. As a herder, you let the flocks scatter while you study ant hills. You cannot even guide water through a trough!" He paused. "Whipping has not helped, nor words. Nor" — he glanced at Lealu — "has love. She is no longer for you. I banish you and strip you of your name."

Lealu flung herself forward, but Putii thundered, "Daughter, be still! His mouth is stuffed with words as a crow is stuffed with corn. Crow steals the substance of our people. So let him be called."

Ramm's flush subsided, leaving him pale despite his tan. That Putii dared! Why, all the folk loved his tales and his singing, Ramm told himself furiously. He could even pen letters at need!

Fiercely, he tugged the girl from his mother and kissed her. "Hear me!" he urged, his voice gathering strength. "Call me what you like. Yet, headsman, I swear I shall return to claim my true name — and Lealu! If you marry her to anyone else, I shall bring the dragons upon you all!"

Ramm rushed to his sleep alcove, hands shaking with rage and excitement. He took his lyre, flints, hunting knife (which was newly sharpened only because he'd been whittling stick animals for little ones), and a string of dried fruit which he hung around his neck. He was indeed a Singer; it was about all he was good at doing, and now he must prove himself and his worth.

The sun was westering when Ramm nodded curtly to his mother, met Lealu's violet, tear-washed eyes, and turned his steps to the winding cliff trail that penetrated the fierce Serpent Mountains.

As he walked, he allowed himself a fistful of daydreams. Dragons were said to guard great hoards of jewels. Perhaps he could win a bride-fee for Lealu, and make up to Dav for the loss of his lettuces as well. In that instant, with the play of the late sun turning his flaming hair to gold, freedom turned to music upon his lips. He was almost light-hearted, but his backpack was loaded and lumpy. Shrugging his shoulders, he attempted to shift the heavy flints he bore.

There was an odor to the Cleft of Queens that a traveller had once told of to the small boy Ramm had been.

"A bad smell?" He was wonder-eyed at the stooped, cloaked man with the snapping black eyes.

"No, lad, an untame smell, if you follow me. A fire smell — ozone and ash. Ah, not dirty. There's nothing purer than a dragon; mark that, boy. They gnaw clean the bones they eat — gnaw clean and calcine in the iron furnaces of their bellies. Ah, sterilize dry as the pale carcass of the moon."

There was a light of truth in the old one's words, though the yellow of madness dwelt in his eyes as well. He was a wizard long past his powers, who claimed to have once tended a dragon egg in a far country.

Ramm believed. It was the right of a Singer to believe. He thought of the wizard now as he trudged along. He would have learned more, had not the elders frightened the old fellow with stones and threats and driven him off.

But the old lore books in the sand caves had taught Ramm most of what he knew about dragons and the wild lands. It was not comfortable lore. Dealing with the great beasts was, of course, very simple. You either charmed them, or they ate you. It was recorded that they hated stammering or any show of fear, yet bravery merely amused them. Cold, hard, bold, blatant — dragons were the Guardians of the Ancient Art of Rhetoric.

Would they hear his song? Even let him begin it? Or would his bones lie white as the corpse of the moon?

For three nights Ramm asked himself these questions as, rolled in a thin blanket, he tried to sleep against the stony breasts of the slopes. By each nightfall he was higher up, lowlands spreading below him, vast black sky above him. The middle ground, bearing the small incandescent spark of his soul, seemed small indeed.

On the fourth morning, with his belly gripping his rib cage (his dried fruit was gone, and scant was the bread and cheese his angry mother spared him), Ramm came to the fabled Cleft of Queens and slung down his load.

He had imagined the great slit of rock at trail's end, and the sight of it had visited his dreams. Solitary wanderers who approached this far dared venture no further. Yet beyond the granite doorsill lay Ramm's oath and the safety of all the lowland valley. He wondered if Putii knew his last threat to be bluster: he could never destroy his own village.

But the dragons were stirring. He must make sure they would not harm the Tame Lands. He forgot the weariness in his back. Was he not a bearer of flints — gifts beyond price to the great beasts he sought?

He reviewed his lore yet again. Young dragons were not born with the gift of fire. Their small talons had to grow agile before they could light the black caves of their bellies. And then, Ramm chuckled, just as in seasoning a skillet, each of the dragons had to develop a tolerance for heat and greater heat as they aged.

No, hunger for humans did not drive the dragons from this hidden valley, their immemorial home. When they emerged to awe the elders and terrify the peasants, they did not search for babies. A baby was the merest unsatisfactory mouthful compared to the great shaggy mammoths and bison, their natural prey. They searched for flint. If they failed to find a source, they grew angry and frightened — and thus terribly dangerous, so the old tales agreed. At the advent of a new dragling, Ramm hoped they would be particularly anxious to ensure a supply.

"I deliver flints," Ramm cried aloud to test his voice. "And I am a Singer."

"Singer — singer," the echoes flew back at him.

"I can charm the feathers off a pigeon" — so his mother had said — "or the ribbon from a maiden's hair!" (But Lealu would have tittered her scorn indeed at this claim.)

Ramm whistled softly as he tuned his lyre and prepared his song. Then he marched forward into the narrow pass that led to the cleft's inner recesses. Sheer granite rose all about; rocks had been scorched and seared and bristled by great fires. The shards of debris at his feet were heat-blasted. He controlled his shuddering and peered upward to the great ledges that broke the cliff face.

There! Oh, dazzling the queen dragon glittered, her green scales catching sunlight and throwing it back in emerald flakes. The other ladies were grouped about her — seven or eight vast forms — while draglings (one born every thousand years, and he saw three) scabbled and quarreled in a stone pit clawed from bare rock. Great piles of scorched bones — some as high as a house — met his eye, as did heaps of skulls, human and animal tumbled together. In the cleft's exact center, more dazzling than the bones, was a white marble dome as high as Ramm's chin. This was the queen's newest egg.

With a chill of wonder and fear, Ramm saw that even now the egg pulsed and quivered. His heart thudded. He had figured out the old calendars correctly! The newest dragling was nearly ready for the skies of Earth!

Now was his moment. He marched, the flints heavy at his back. And as he came forward, each dragon turned her long neck toward him, tongues darting out as if to catch the essence of human, and whiffs of acrid smoke escaped from furnace lungs.

Now, he must sing!

A trill emerged from Ramm's mouth that was as sweet as the South Wind, keen as the North Wind, mild as the West Wind, and attar-spiced as the Wind from the East. He sang his Dragon Song, the song he had spent his life preparing; indeed, his whole life now depended upon it. Truth and flat-tery, rhyme and sound pattern — the words flew from his soul to his tongue as his fingers called forth glib music from his lyre.

*Oh, creatures so gleaming  
Of bright brain and bone,  
Oh, creatures of glitter,  
Immortal as stone —*

*Oh, creatures whose flame eyes  
Shadow-banners unfurl  
With blinking of diamond  
And winking of pearl —*

On and on he went. It was a chant, a prayer, a ballad, a story. It told of vast treasures and great deeds. The tune insinuated itself along the hard green hide of

every old beast and youngster there. The queen lowered her flexing neck and cocked her vast head to see him out of one great eye, red as the color of sunset.

Ramm sang, and as he sang, he thought, "That superb orb. I shall look in her soul's window though I die."

This was what the lore books forbade above all, with no reason given. Yet, how else to know a creature than by the eyes, those inward-leading globes? He lifted up his clear, sharp young face as, finishing his song, he heaved his heavy pack at arm's length before her.

Hissing gently — but her breath was turned so as not to scorch — she watched him inscrutably, while the draglings crowded close, jostling and poking at each other, each half as big as the leaders' meeting-lodge.

Dwarfed in the beasts' great shadows, Ramm spread out his flints, his vision dazzled by swift-shifting sunlight striking the creatures to jade perfection, and their huge claws hooked to living rock brilliant as faceted crystal. Now the queen's breath, heated but bearable, floated around him with a scent like marigolds. It made him homesick for Tomorrow, that land not yet known.

But still he stayed canny. His life was at stake, as was Lealu and all the world he loved. He had flattered the queen's treasured memories of ancient power and dominion. Now he must flatter her pride of fertility and plant some hints concerning the future. By cunning, he must make his people safe.

"Madam," he said, bowing so low he saw the blasted vines on the ground where the draglings practiced with their inner fires, "I was taught that the eye of a dragon is the world's seventh elemental mystery, following air, earth, water, stone, sky, and shadow. Yet" — and he bowed again — "now I realize your limpid disk is indeed the world's premier mystery, for it hides all elements. Fire is in it, and the dew of tenderness. Clouds are reflected in it, even as myself.

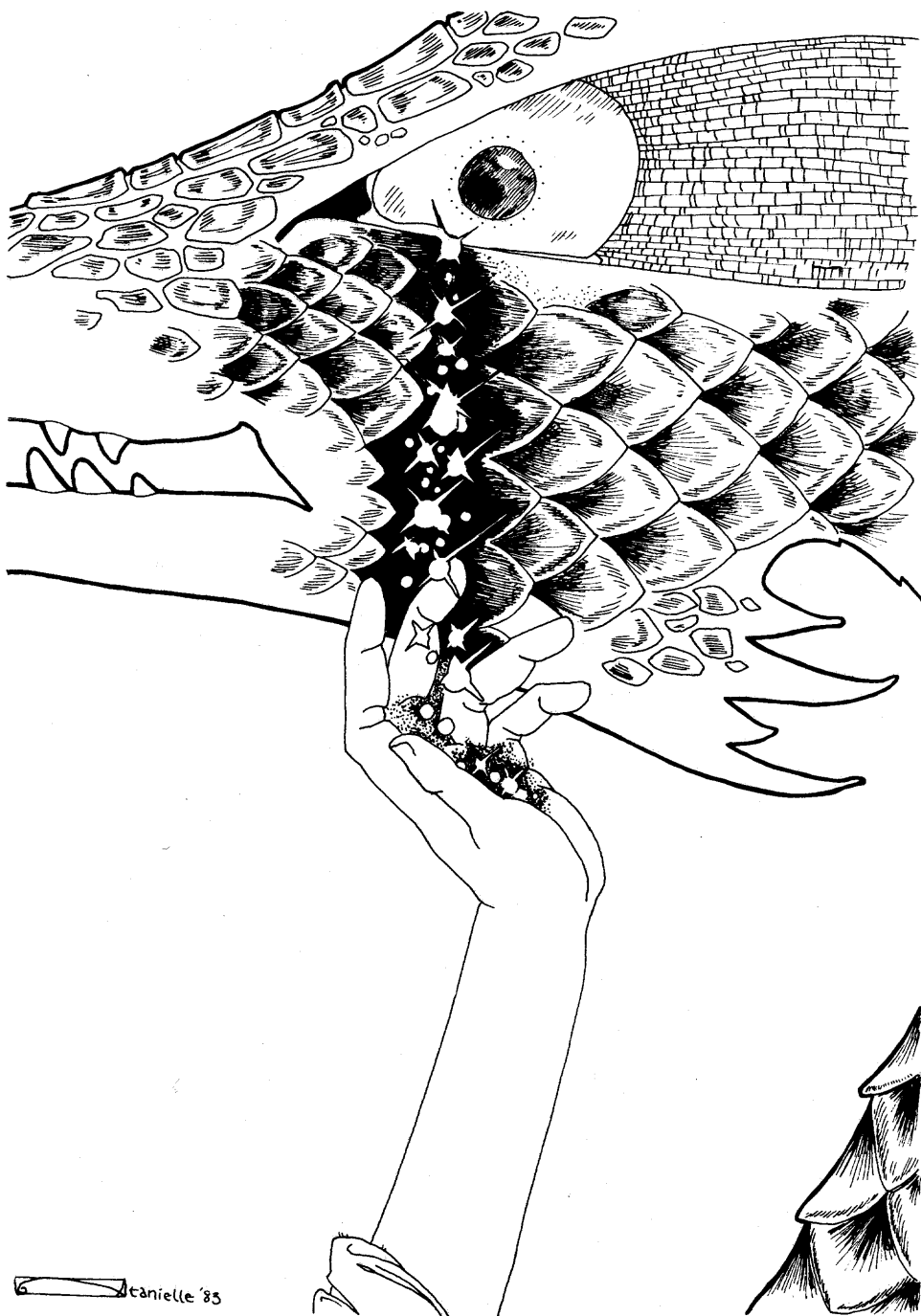
"The past and the future are contained there, grown perfect and small as costly miniatures. Oh, how can we fragile beings dare to look?"

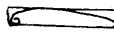
He cast his gaze away for an instant, hoping to see piles of gold coins or other evidence of dragon wealth, but couldn't.

"Furthermore," he added hastily, for he feared losing the thread of his eloquence, "an eye's oval, as an egg's oval, is the shape of the Earth. The wisest believe the Earth itself is a dragling waiting to hatch, to split asunder and take its place with soaring wings among the limitless stars."

Heart quivering as his lyre, the young man awaited the effect of his praise. He willed himself to move no muscle, for the draglings were now scant feet away from him, stirring a few charred bones about with their talons. To his eyes, they appeared insatiably hungry.

"I have brought you flint," he said at



 Danielle '83

last. "I have brought the gift of life to your bellies, the gift of fire."

These were wrong words — the first wrong words Ramm had spoken.

"We do not need gifts," hissed the queen, and her heat-bearing breath singed the gold hair on his outstretched arms. "We fly where we desire and seize what we choose! Where is your land of flints?"

Ramm did not hesitate. Not for all the worlds strung like pearls across the skies would he reveal that he found his flints in these very mountains where the dragons made their home. So he said, "On our beaches, my kind gathers shells that hold the colors of the sun and moon. We name these shells Dragoneyes, to do you honor, and we trade them for the fire-stones — trade across the sea; trade with the red-manes in the tall ships."

Now this was a lie, cunning in two ways.

First, it contained flattery; and secondly, it put the flints safely beyond the dragons' direct reach. Dragons, as Ramm well knew, are terrified of water — large bodies of water. Dragons die in water — a loathsome, agonizing death, as dreadful as burning is to other creatures. A dragon will not risk flying across water unless in direst peril and at a very great height.

"A learned man who designs maps claims," Ramm continued, "that over the highest mountains of the world, where the sky comes down and scrapes the iron frost from those sunless peaks, there is a way to the land of flints, and a rocky path that leads to the back of the moon itself."

So Ramm spun a tale. He talked of flints, the glossy smoothness of them, the banded color of them, and their fire-creation in the



volcanic belly of the earth. He told how sparks from the sky-god's flint lit the stars in the Beginning. And his tale inspired a fire within his huge listeners, a cold fire, a fire of lust.

First, the queen must hatch her egg that even now trembled from the force of new life within it, and that youngest dragling must grow till it could keep up. This would take a hundred years or more. Meanwhile, the grown dragons would forage over the Wild Lands as always.

Yet a year would come when the dragons would recall — for their memories are excellent — Ramm's words and, wheeling high together, would fly off on that long quest. He hoped he'd sown well this seed of wanderlust which would mature beyond his son's son's time. Let the dragons fly to the moon where, it is said, opals — those cool, incandescent jewels — lie in the round craters for the taking.

When Ramm finished his tale, the queen's eyes were rimmed with diamonds — a dragon's tears. As she exhaled an immense sigh of pleasure, she blinked; and Ramm, stooping with a swift, lithe gesture, seized the jewels as they fell.

"Lady," he cried, "no longer can I stand the intensity of your presence. I beg release."

He was straining his luck and he knew it. But he also had the diamonds. Once more he began his Dragon Song of praise:

*Oh, dragons, oh wonders  
So great to behold —  
As swift as the sunfire  
All blessed with red gold,*

*Oh splendors, oh marvels,  
I bid you farewell.  
May you keep safe without me  
In the lull of my spell.*

*And may you quest surely  
For kingdoms of flint  
Where the sun falls like gold  
In new coins from the mint.*

*May your draglings grow iron  
In the caves of their lungs;  
May their bellies be furnaces;  
Sweet be their tongues.*

As Ramm finished the last verse, the queen spoke again, and it was immediately clear to him that his song had gained her favor. "We have needed what you brought us. You shall ride on my back down to the Low Lands. It will be a signal of honor, and your people will call you Dragon-Tamer." She chuckled, a deep sound rattling warmly in her throat, and as Ramm heard the sound he realized anew what powers these ancient wise ones possessed.

"You are a brave man," she said, and her voice was like the sighing of a winter breeze passing through a forest. "Not in a thousand or two thousand years has a man

brought us our desire. Flint, the starting stone. It used to be given freely in the former days, and there was talk — yes, even Rhetoric — between my kind and yours. Do they think you very brave?" She waved a great claw beyond her rim of mountains.

Ramm knew when to be truthful, so he shook his head. "They banished me. If they think at all, they think I have thrown my soul to you and shall not be seen again."

The queen nodded. "That is Man." She lowered herself to her spiny knees. "Now mount. Your bravery deserves reward. Besides flint, little manling, you have given us yourself."

In a daze, Ramm did as he was bidden; and with a rush, the great queen launched herself into the air, and there was a scent all about Ramm like marigolds, a scent clean as a snow-tanged autumn morn.

The other dragons disappeared below him, as did the gleaming egg. Wind whistled at his ears, and he was briefly an eagle. Beneath him spread great peaks, and afar to the horizon stretched the blue haze of all the Wild Lands, while from above poured giddy, sun-painted air. Ramm dug his toes between the scales of the queen's shoulders and felt the rhythmic workings of her unfolded wings beating the air currents around him.

Sooner than he could believe, however, she circled lower over the Tame Lands, and

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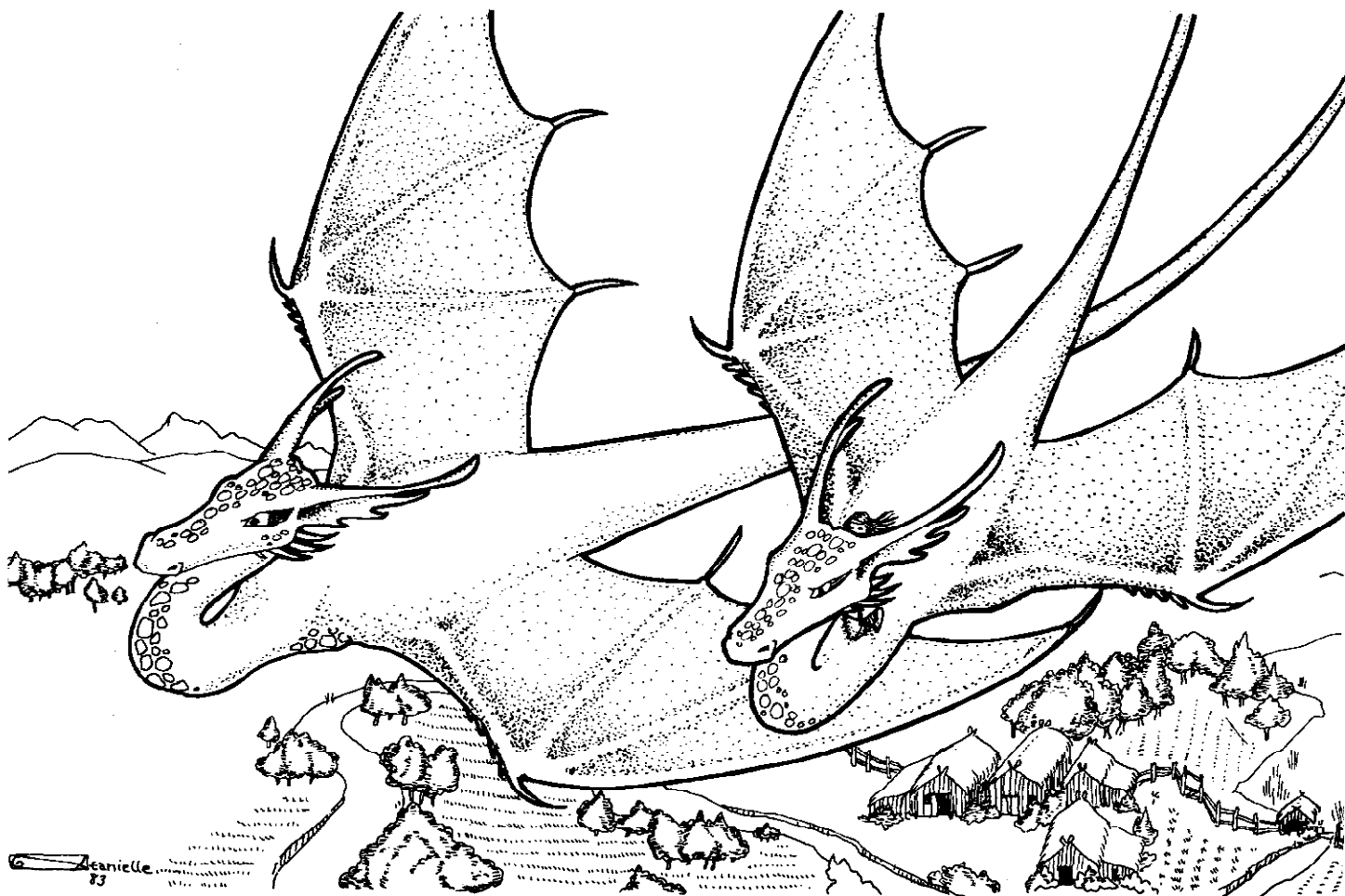
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the young man pointed out the little clutter of houses that was his village. Even from the heights, he saw tiny stick figures with their mouths gaped open, pointing, then fleeing in panic.

He grinned. So, at last they were taking dragons seriously! Their fright boded well for the impressive manner of his return.

The queen snorted and eased down on a rocky knoll that overlooked the planted fields. Her shimmering wings quivered into stillness, spanning seventy feet from tip to tip.

Ramm, though his legs were unsteady, vaulted from her back. He flung up his arms to signal his countrymen forward. Slowly, awestruck, they came; his mother

was among the foremost, with his beloved Lealu clinging to her arm.

And Ramm preached from that rocky knoll how the dragons desired flints and friendship. The queen opened her great jaws and blew a puff of flame into the clean blue air. Little children clapped their hands, but strong men shivered and stepped clear of her dark shadow stretching long in the failing afternoon light.

Now Ramm drew forth his pouch and juggled a diamond or two. Lealu darted forward with a cry of delight and hugged her man before them all.

"Who dares call him Crow?" she demanded. "Who shall not welcome him back to his home?"

"About my lettuces . . ." a slow, hesitant voice began. Ramm looked into the eyes of old Dav, shaded now against the sun. Ramm tossed him a diamond, and the crowd stepped forward in wonder as it fell at the old man's feet.

It took a jewel on a jewel on a jewel to satisfy old Putii, but satisfied he was at last; and Ramm had a handful left over, saving some for his children and their children forever.

And it is told even today how Ramm will sing you the Dragon Song whether you want to hear it or not, and he will talk of diamonds and the moon and the queen and scorched bones till you shake in your boots from wonder.

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# The Forum: a new feature

## Observations and opinions from our readers

### EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first installment of a new feature in DRAGON® Magazine, one which we hope will serve our readers in two ways. "The Forum" is a place where we can print your opinions and observations, about articles that we've published or about other subjects or issues of a more general sort. From now on, the "Out on a Limb" letters column will be reserved for short letters, primarily those that ask direct questions requiring a response, and "The Forum" will be the home for long letters containing detailed commentary or criticism. Forum letters will not be accompanied by direct responses, although as time goes on their questions and criticisms may be "answered" in some other place and some other way in the magazine.

As a writer, you don't have to be as concerned any more about whether your letter is going unnoticed. We do read every letter we receive — honest! — but until now we haven't had a convenient way of getting many of the long ones into print, to "prove" that we got 'em and that we aren't reluctant to share them with you.

And, as a reader, you now have an opportunity, more than ever before, to find out what sorts of things are on the minds of the other people who share your interest in DRAGON Magazine. Not everyone who has an opinion or an idea also has the confidence, or the time, or the skill to form that idea into a publishable article manuscript — but that doesn't necessarily mean they shouldn't be printed anyway. And that's what "The Forum" is all about. Here, printed just the way they were written, are the thoughts that this issue's writers want to share with you.

\* \* \* \*

I really must protest the general philosophy of the article "Be aware and take care" (DRAGON #79). The level of caution and precaution advised in that article may be conducive to efficient game-playing, but can only hinder good role-playing. For one thing, if I were to believe that the guidelines Mr. Pulsipher offers were of value, then they should be followed for every character. But these suggestions are so activity-restrictive (You should always . . . , etc.) that I would end up playing the same character over and over. Worse yet, that character would be a paranoid, neurotically cautious, pessimistic cretin with a reputation for irrational behavior.

The "Whom do you trust?" section shows not only the paranoia of Mr. Pulsipher's characters, but a flagrant display of illogic. What happens when a char-

acter drinks holy water of the opposite alignment? Nothing, unless the character (or "ringer") is somehow endowed with the power of an Outer Plane, or the Positive or Negative Material Plane. It's just not powerful enough to detect the subtle energies of Prime Material alignments. And since they'd probably taste the same to everybody (though evils might find good holy water too sickly sweet, and goods might be a little more revulsed at the taste of evil holy water), you couldn't really tell by their facial expressions. And putting those manacles on that farmer would be more likely to make him distrust you. Or at least wonder whether or not he was better off in the dungeons of the Evil Count What's-his-face.

Magical sleeping bags? If it weren't for that, the section on camps wouldn't be too bad for a specific character. If this form of caution is in character for the fighter or whatever that you've created, then by all means go ahead. Otherwise, it's a bit too much like work. Besides, you could probably sleep in your armor, it'd just be incredibly uncomfortable. If your character will put up with this sort of self-abuse, fine. I believe most fighters would, unless they were in plate mail or weren't very adventurous anyway.

The section on "playing" the DM, while falling just short of cheating, is hardly in the spirit of the game. Using the tactics outlined here would cripple any chance of role-playing on the players' parts. If the characters had a hard time with a given monster, they would probably comment on it to one another afterwards. If they had an easy time, they would be grateful to their gods. They would not be constantly complaining about their lot to the all-powerful deity known only as "DM." Anyway, it's fairly obvious to the DM whether or not the characters are having a hard time, based on damage taken, length of melees, etc. Carping about imagined hardships would put me off fudging in a minute, and if it kept up they might find themselves up against more than they can handle, so they can tell the difference in the future. I usually only kill people when they've done something stupid, and that fits the bill.

Lastly, and most importantly, the really good role-player is self-limiting. This means that if a certain action seems in character or simply the logical outcome of a given situation, then even if that action might hurt the character's chances for survival slightly (I don't expect ultimate sacrifices from anyone), the player will take that course of action. For example, if I was playing a fighter of near-barbarian temperament, and I thought this guy would be proud of and like to show off his battle-scars, I might

have this character disdain clerical healing for all but the most grievous of injuries, so that he has natural scars to show off. Another example might be a *Champions*-style martial artist, who after a failed kick is struck by an attack. If it seems likely that the attack hit in the leg, the player might assume that using the legs for kicking would be quite painful and therefore inaccurate. The character might refrain from using his martial kick at least for the duration of the battle or until it can be tended to, settling instead for the lower-damage martial punch.

Let me make it clear that I am not completely opposed to Mr. Pulsipher's article, lest people think that I prefer characters who charge blindly into danger with no precautions and as many limitations as humanly possible. Many of the ideas in the article were good ideas, but all of them should not be used by any one character or group. Adventurers should be as varied as any other group. Some will be cautious, maybe in the extreme, and others will be equally careless. The important thing is that they should be individuals, and their players should be concerned with role-playing, not milking any given situation for every last copper, while pursuing a paranoid obsession with minimizing damage.

Mike Mrozek  
Ferndale, Mich.

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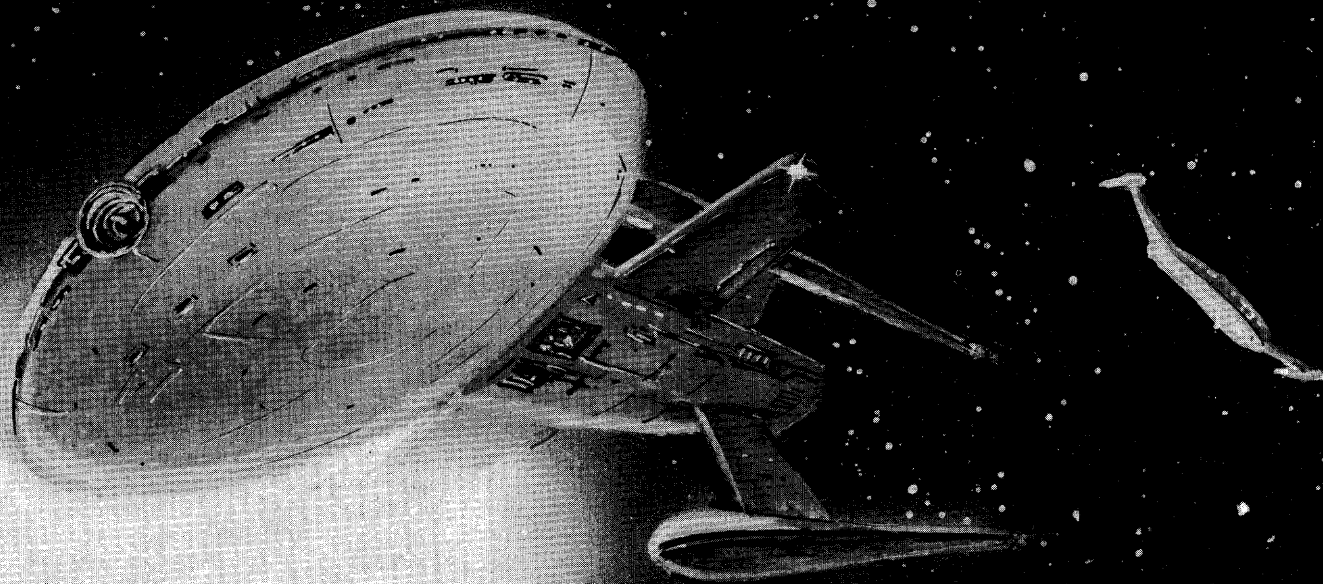
While rolling up a friendly neighborhood arch-villain this afternoon, inspiration struck. What would happen if I gave this 7th level assassin a single level of experience as a fighter first? I tried it. The result produced a staggeringly powerful NPC that exposed a serious flaw in the current "Character With Two Classes" rule.

As many players realize, at low levels the fighter is one of the most powerful classes around. In fact, a first-level dungeon party can be composed entirely of these and realize no noticeable difficulties. Most fledgling magic-users, thieves, and even clerics are kept going only by the promise of far greater things to come. Why, resourceful players may reason, should the entire party not begin as fighters and switch to the desired class after one level? The DMG's "cheating" methods for generating abilities usually provide the high stats required to do this. It sounds okay, but look at the results:

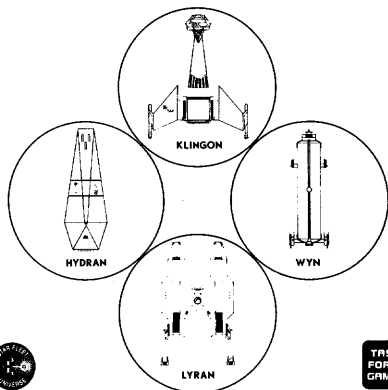
1. Non-fighter characters normally restricted to 18 strength could receive scores of 18/50, 18/75, or even 18/00!

2. They would receive four "starting weapons" immediately, as well as a gamut of others upon beginning their new class a

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mere 2,000 experience points later. As if this weren't enough, they would ever after fight at only -2 for non-proficiency.

3. They would be able to obtain high hit-point scores at low levels (why fight a giant rat when you can take on a hydra?), throwing the game off balance.

4. Upon reaching so much as second level in their new class, things would get really out of hand. The now non-fighters would be able to carry all sorts of extra goodies normally restricted to fighters to prevent other classes from becoming self-made godlings. I have nightmares of sword-swinging clerics who sport girdles of giant strength, or of the warlock with two javelins of lightning, a +3 battle axe, and a rod of lordly might stuffed in his pack, "just in case."

This isn't the only situation, either. What about the monk with but one level of magic-user experience who discovers a wand of fire in some forgotten crypt. . . ?

Most players, including my own, have not yet discovered this overly effective strategy, but you can see my problem. Minimal levels of experience in a class can bestow such advantages that the whole "Two Classes" threatens to fall apart. Is there any way to correct this rule, or to dilute some of the superhumans it creates? What about allowable weapons? Should a two-classed character be permitted at all?

David Hutton  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

\* \* \* \*

The Psionicist articles (#78) were very well thought out and researched. However, I have three comments/criticisms about them. First, the grand discipline of Restoration. I have no problem with the first two abilities this grants, but the power to force undead to return to their home planes did not seem to fit. Semantics aside, the description of this power does not mesh with the other two. It seems like a very limited combination of probability travel with the spells to return other-planar creatures to their home planes. This could be fitted in with the other two powers if it were rewritten in the same vein as the other two. As it stands, it resembles Banishment with a little teleportation thrown in.

The second point deals with the discipline of Endowment. This is an excellent rendering of the power-assumption ceremonies in the Deryni books. However, there is an easier way to test for the possibility to assume powers. Simply follow the procedure described in *Camber of Culdi* and *High Deryni*. A potential test may be made by using a shiral crystal. The person to be tested goes into a trance under the direction of the Psionicist. Then, in that state, he or she tries to make the crystal glow. Simply have the character roll the save described for Endowment. If the character makes the save, Endowment can be used with no save needed. If he or she fails the save, there is no need to waste the energy it requires for Endowment.

The third point also deals with Endowment. In the description of this discipline, it states that when a person is Endowed with psionic abilities, he or she starts with one minor discipline. This does not correspond with the books, but this must be because of game balance. I do not think it would upset game balance too much, though, if the person were to receive the number of disciplines he or she would have had at that level. This would allow them to gain several abilities at once, rather than having to wait a lot longer to earn the requisite number of experience points to advance another level. At high levels, assuming power would not give the advantage that it should, since it takes so much longer to advance. This procedure is designed to cure that.

William L. Collins  
Sandwich, Mass.

\* \* \* \*

I believe the article by Mr. Schroeck in issue #78 has pointed out a major problem in psionics; specifically, low level characters automatically getting their full calculated value of psionic points rather than going through a system of controlled progression. I would like to present this idea for general consideration.

According to page 3 of Eldritch Wizardry, "Psychic Potential" is gained at 10% increments, plus or minus a bonus or penalty as determined by a d% roll. Putting things together with some modification, the table could read as follows:

Psychic Potential	
D% roll	Rate of progression per level
01-10	4%
11-25	5%
26-50	6%
51-75	10%
76-90	11%
91-99	12%
00	13%

This table may be usable in the current psionic system. For illustration, let's say a character has a calculated psionic ability of 200 points. As Mr. Schroeck has suggested, this would be a "goal." How fast will the character progress toward this goal? We make a d% roll on the table given above. Let's say the d% roll comes up 55. The character will get 10% of 200 points, or 20 points, each level, half for attack and half for defense. Any fractions can be rounded up or down as the DM desires.

Psionic points can fluctuate with changes in wisdom, intelligence, or charisma. On the other hand, the rate of progression can remain as a fixed value or be adjusted up or down to follow any such fluctuation. If the initial point acquisition is low, it might prevent usage of a discipline at 1st level. I would not expect this problem to have much effect on game balance.

Ed Zmitravich  
Meadow, Utah

\* \* \* \*

I just have to make some corrections to "The Ecology of the Beholder" (issue #76).

As should be obvious of any creature described as an omnivore, beholders are not at the top of the food pyramid. Granted, few would dare to attack beholders — a large red dragon, perhaps, or a small flier like a stirge if we assume the beholder's eyestalks are unable to aim at the beholder itself, a quite likely condition given the deadliness of some eyes and in accord with the picture; the stirge could sit atop the beholder and drink a full meal in fair safety — but the beholder is an inefficient killer, unable to kill with any regularity any very large prey.

The beholder is slow and its spell powers are of limited range. Any creature not surprised at close range will simply stay too far away to catch. So it must surprise from ambush. Nor is the victim apt to be big, since in that case only one eye (death ray) is useful (killing and leaving something to eat) and big creatures have good saving throws, after which they can leave, or try to kill the beholder at their option. (No sensible predator is going to risk odds of even 100-1 in a battle to the death, so the beholder would leave the big stuff alone.) In net, the beholder attacks small and medium game, preferably under 2500 gp weight and under 4 hit dice.

The range of the beholder is also limited by its nature. In any open territory, the beholder is extremely limited in its ability to get close enough to attack anything, and also limited in being able to get away. Anything armed with a missile weapon can consider the beholder a safe target, at best able to delay fire while the attacker repositions himself out of spell range. The only safety would be to levitate out of sight, which would still leave the beholder hungry, and a flier such as a dragon would still have the upper hand. Only in swamps, dungeons, or maybe heavy forest where the maximum range of missile weapons would be less than maximum spell range could the beholder have a chance.

This forbids the given means of reproduction. A beholder forced to travel to some distant peak would be lucky to survive the trip, having to flee from every band of orcs and just about everything else. Food would be just about impossible to find. Now, the salmon puts up with such difficulties (which are usually fatal for it) because the kids are safer and can feed better. But the baby beholder would face the same problems as its parent and would be even less likely to survive.

Naturally, beholders act in a more sensible way. Note that maximum hit points are almost twice minimum. When the beholder reaches the maximum, it divides in two, producing two minimum hit point beholders. A supply of food is first accumulated, then eaten as the shell splits. The two "babies" continue to eat as their shells harden

(Turn to page 68)

# The ecology of the basilisk

by Ed Greenwood

From an untitled tome in the library of Sulphon of Waterdeep, signed "Rhaphodel, Sage of Sages": (AD&D™ game notations and other comments added by the author appear in *italic inside parentheses*.)

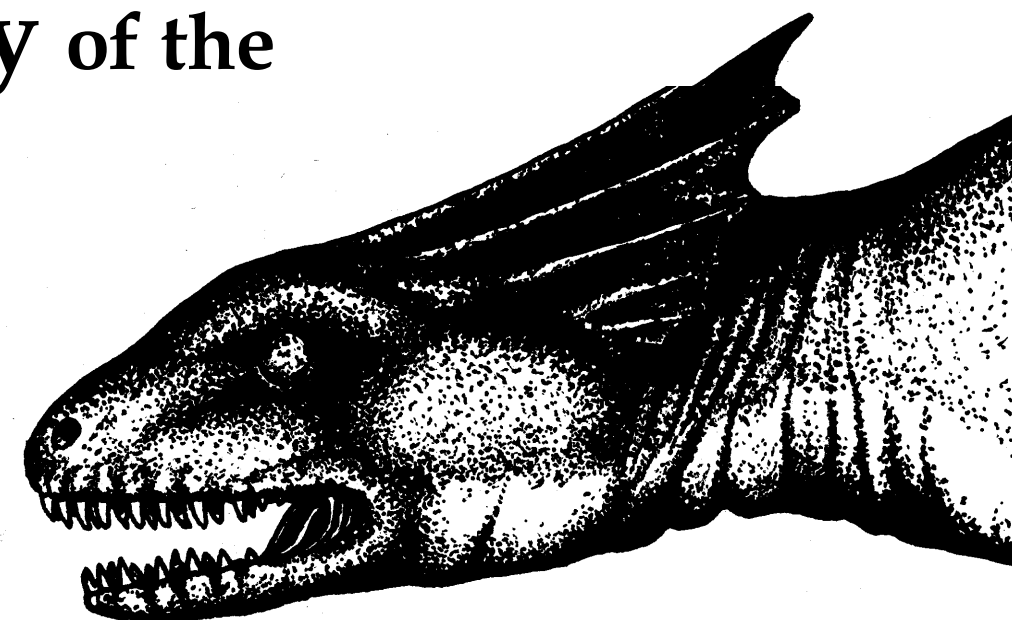
Know, O sage, that a creature often asked about is the dreaded basilisk, whose gaze turns one to stone. It behooves a sage to wax wise and eloquent about this beast, for therein lies the seeds of much respect for yourself and your learning.

The basilisk is a large, reptilian brute that is both slow and stupid. It is feared for its infamous gaze, which can at will turn creatures (including both fish and fowl) who meet it to stone. So much any half-wit can tell you, but mark well the words that follow, for here is set down all that is known of the truth about the gaze of the basilisk.

Precisely how the creature's gaze works is a mystery; most learned observers agree that the creature's eyes emit a radiation that if absorbed by the eyes of other creatures — or even itself, if its gaze is reflected back upon it — causes an inexplicable chemical change in the bloodstream, altering living flesh to stone. (*Stoned creatures are immediately paralyzed, unable to speak, see, or feel. They will become unconscious from lack of air at the end of 1 round, but until then are capable of mental — i.e., psionic and some magical — activity. Any spell or device supplying air, or removing the need for it, such as a necklace of adaptation, will allow continued mental activity, with a cumulative (intelligence score +1% per turn) chance of insanity due to helplessness and total isolation.*)

Clothing, accoutrements, and the like carried or worn by victims are not affected, despite some wild tales to the contrary. Beings who through natural ability or the use of magic are in *gaseous form* are also apparently immune to the effects of the basilisk's gaze. (*The use of invulnerability potions allows a saving throw vs. petrification at +2. Any rings or cloaks of protection being worn add their bonus to the saving throw.*)

A basilisk has two translucent eyelids, somewhat like the membranes covering the eyes of a frog, that can at will cover each of its eyes: an upper eyelid, which drops from above, and when thus closed overlaps an inner, lower eyelid, which rises from below the eye. With the upper and lower eyelids



covering the eyes, a basilisk can see up to 15 man-lengths away (9" in AD&D scale) in normal light, much as men do. Each eye's lids operate independently of each other, and are controlled by the creature; it need not blink at all, if no irritants get into its eyes.

When the upper eyelid (only) is drawn back, a basilisk's eye sees up to 18 man-lengths away (11" in scale) on the prime material plane, with the benefits of both ultravision and infravision. Or, by concentration, it can scan the astral plane, seeing up to 12 man-lengths distant (7" in scale), or the ethereal plane, seeing up to 18 man-lengths away. A basilisk cannot see on more than one plane at once, but unless they are actually fighting or hunting in one particular plane, basilisks tend to flick their gazes from plane to plane every minute (*every round*), and thus remain aware of their surroundings in all three planes.

When its inner, lower eyelid is also drawn back — and both eyelids can be raised and lowered again in less than five seconds — a basilisk's gaze petrifies all who meet the stare of one of its eyes on the prime material plane, slays all who meet its stare on the astral plane, and turns ethereal creatures who meet its gaze into inanimate, insensible "ethereal stone." Note that a basilisk's eyes are on opposite sides of its head, and thus it commands a very wide field of vision (*a 260-degree arc*), and can conceivably stone creatures to either side of it — two, in total in the same minute.

Fortunately for those who encounter it, the basilisk is not particularly energetic or cunning, and it simply will not comprehend the properties of a mirror or other reflective device if such is maneuvered into position, and will readily "stone" itself if such precautions are successfully applied.

Petrified creatures cannot be eaten by basilisks, and they will therefore strike with their petrifying gaze only at creatures who by size or aggressive behavior seem threat-

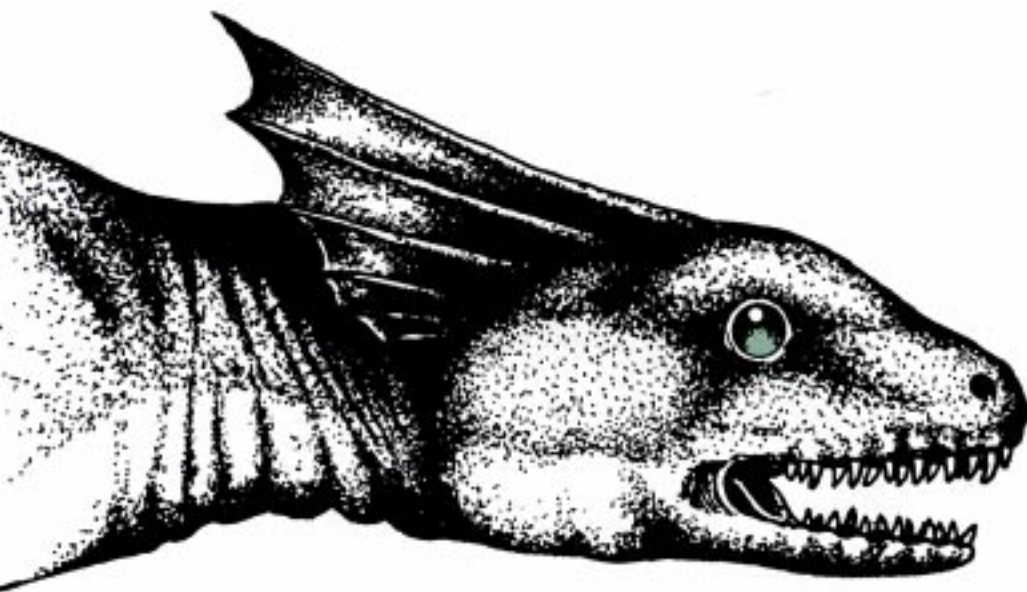
ening to them. Petrified victims are subject to all of the effects that stone normally suffers. (*These effects include chipping, frost damage and other weathering, attacks from a horn of blasting, etc., and these may well destroy the unfortunate individual. Contrary to some fireside yarns, stoned people who are chipped or shattered do not bleed. Petrification does not otherwise slay creatures, who are held in a sort of suspended animation, or "stone sleep." Protective devices retained by a petrified victim — a cube of frost resistance, for example — will continue to function.*)

Basilisks eat all types of small creatures (including both fowl and fish), carrion, and some berries. They cannot eat or physically attack creatures not on the prime material plane, and apparently only use their gaze attacks in a defensive manner with respect to creatures thereon. It should be noted here that some sages dispute this point. Further research, dangerous though it is, will be necessary to remove all doubt as to the powers of the basilisk on the astral and ethereal planes, and possible prey it may seek from those planes.

Basilisks instinctively avoid looking directly at other basilisks, and they never deliberately use their stoning gaze on one another. They can recognize fellow basilisks by both sight and smell, and although their sense of smell is not noticeably keen with respect to hunting down other creatures, it is sufficiently acute to distinguish between individual basilisks; i.e., mate and young are readily discerned from strangers.

Any basilisks encountered will be solitary hunters, a mated but hunting pair, a nesting pair, or a pair with grown but immature young still sharing a lair. Such young often accompany their parents for up to three seasons, until they are ready to mate, whereupon they leave their parents and each other to seek out their own mates. Basilisks mate for life, and by instinct breed every four summers — usually in water,





which helps to support their slow, heavy bodies. One or two days after mating, the female lays a cluster of greenish-white eggs (from 1-8), each about the size of a man's fist. Basilisk eggs have soft, warm, stretchy surfaces, and they withstand crowding or even gentle handling and tumbling without harm; they cannot break the way a duck's or hen's eggs will shatter in similar circumstances. A basilisk parent often picks up an egg in its mouth to carry it, drops it in a new location or to defend itself, or rolls eggs about with its snout — all without doing the eggs any damage. After laying its eggs, a basilisk mother covers them in cool sand or half-buries them in cool, wet mud. The eggs are almost always (95% chance) fertile, and if they survive the nesting period of four to six weeks (31-50 days), they will hatch into miniature basilisks, 4 to 9 inches long, who have full gaze powers at birth. During the nesting period, the parents do not eat, all the while growing more and more irritable and fanatical in the defense of their nest and its surroundings. Hatchlings grow quite rapidly, reaching man-size in length (from nose to base of tail) in 4 to 6 months after they are born. During this growth period,

their parents hunt intensively with them and for them.

Like other reptilian creatures, basilisks are cold-blooded. They derive much of their energy from the heat of the sun, and spend much time sunning themselves on rocks or heights to gather this heat. (They will also often creep up to campfires at night for the same reason.) But unlike most reptiles, basilisks can tolerate a fairly wide range of temperature, and can also store heat efficiently in their coiled digestive organs; thus, they remain active on warm or mild nights, even in early spring or late autumn. (Basilisks who live deep underground always have ready access to volcanic heat — and if these subterranean creatures are kept from this heat source for any longer than a day, they will grow sluggish and ultimately perish within another three days.) Like their smaller kin among the lizard population, basilisks can regrow lost limbs and tails within 1 to 4 months, provided they have an above-average supply of food during this time.


Because of its fearsome petrifying power (which, it should be noted, is permanent; affected creatures are not freed by its

"wearing off"), the basilisk has long been a source of fascination and magical power to men. Mages and alchemists have found two parts of a basilisk eye particularly useful: the internal pupil, lens, and fluid of its eye which are used as ingredients in potions, spell inks, and the making of items (such as *eyes of petrification*) concerned with petrifying creatures; and the inner membrane or eyelid of the creature, used likewise in magic concerned with protection against petrification. Other parts of the basilisk are sometimes tried for such purposes, but with little or dubious success. An intact eye might bring as much as 1,000 gp from an alchemist; parts of it, such as the eyelid or fluid, up to 400 gp each. Prices vary with demand, of course, as with all rarities, and have been known to reach ten times these amounts.

Various individuals have attempted to use basilisks as guardians, usually chained in a particular location, and fed by hooded attendants, or led about by them with a collar and several chains. This tactic can be effective, but eventually fails more often than not simply because of the nature of the beast and its powers. Basilisks are stupid, lazy, and often asleep. If they feel secure — they are not intelligent enough to remain constantly vigilant if no obvious threat is afoot — then they will not look about and repeatedly scan all three planes, and at such times they may be slain or hooded from the rear without great danger to the intruder or interloper they are supposed to be guarding against.

And even if a basilisk guard is successful in its stoning attack, the victim is impossible to interrogate (or rescue, if the wrong person is petrified by accident), and difficult to move out of the way — except by the use of expensive spells and magic items. If more than one basilisk guard is used in the same general area, they inevitably stone each other when tricked by cunning intruders, and starving or beating the beasts does not improve their drowsy indolence or lack of alertness. They are simply too stupid to be trained where to go or not go, or to distinguish between acceptable victims and persons who are not to be petrified. Despite all this, intact basilisk eggs usually bring up to 500 gp each, and a miniature young one is worth as much as 700 gp. Mature, less tractable specimens usually carry a price of 450 to 500 gp.

The effective petrifying range of a basilisk's gaze seems to be a function of how keen the eyesight of its victim is; although this tends to be only up to about 5 man-lengths distant (3 " in scale), cases have been reported of wizards employing *wizard eye* spells being stoned by basilisk guardians, and persons employing *crystal balls*, *eyes of the eagle* and similar devices being petrified at great distances.

At present (*the time of Rhapsodel's writing is unknown*), little else is known of the nature of a basilisk's gaze. The foremost authority on the subject is widely believed to be the sage Krammoch. of Baldur's Gate. 



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# FIGURE FEATURE



## CASTLE CREATIONS

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*Mercenaries, Spies & Private Eyes™ figure line*

*Pictured: Police, Mobster, Secret Agent*

*Sculptor: Russ Coddington*

The growing need for historical and contemporary law enforcement personnel and lawbreakers has spawned yet another figure line, this one from Castle Creations. The first seven blister-packs released feature three figures each in such themes as secret agents, mobsters, police, mercenaries, terrorists, and private eyes. The fashions are accurate, and the poses suggest sort of a tense readiness, rather than the usual "gun-'em-down" or blase stances. Suggested retail price: \$3.00 per set.

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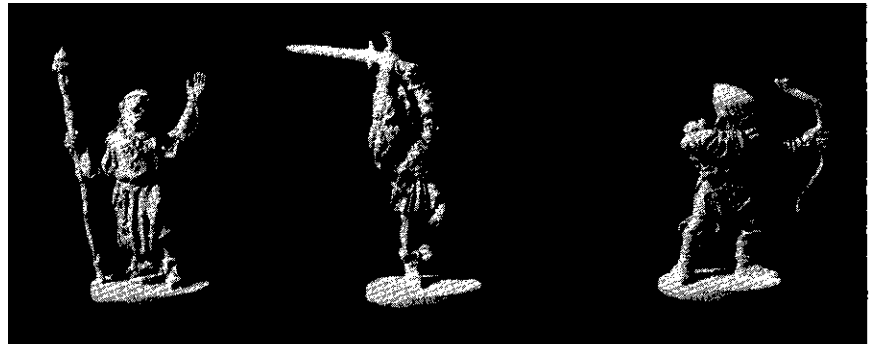
*Fantasy Lords™ Figure Line*

*Elves of the Sylvan Brotherhood*

*Pictured: Elven Magic-user, Pathfinder, Archer*

*Sculptor: Andy Chernak*

Elves, one of the most popular and most often requested figure genres, are the subject of a new 13-piece set from Grenadier. This is a top-notch collection of the "fair folk" and displays incredible imagination and detail. The embroidery and designs on the elven clothing are based on arboreal themes and are suggestive of the richness that one associates with fantasy. The animation is exciting and anything but average. Included in the set is a three-piece assembly of unicorn, mounted elven archer, and gear. Suggested retail price for the set: \$10.00.



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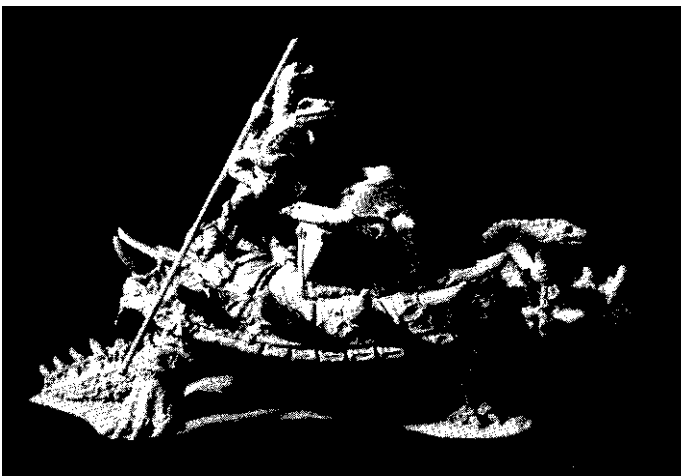
*Reptiliads Figure Line*

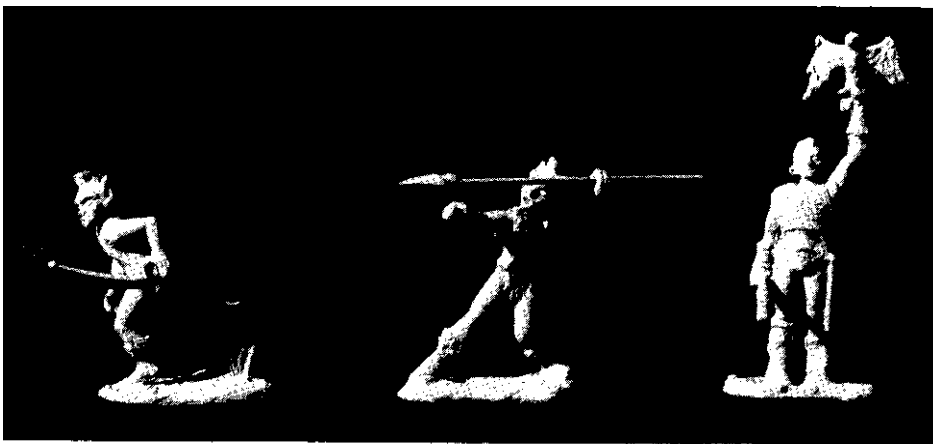
*Pictured: War Turtle (left);*

*Shaman, Rear Rank Pikeman, General (facing page)*

*Sculptor: Bob Murch*

One of the most extensive lines to be released in recent memory is the Reptiliad series by this Canadian company. This line of blister-packs features lizard men (the Reptiliads) and their allies the Gilla-Worms. There are presently 25 items in the line, ranging from footsoldiers to war turtles (sort of the fantasy equivalent of armored cavalry). The detail is great, and the line is highly unusual in concept. What really tops it off, though, is the Reptiliad History Book which describes the society's history, social customs, and military systems, and includes conversion rules for miniature games and a color guide for painting the slimy little warmongers. Suggested retail prices: War Turtle \$14.00, Pikeman \$1.00, Shaman and General \$1.25 each.





# DARK HORSE DESIGNS

P.O. Box 633

Boise ID 83701

*Barbaric Elf with Sword, Barbaric Elf with Spear, Hawk Adventurer*

One of the "new kids on the block" is Dark Horse Designs, whose initial entries are quite impressive. As is obvious from the figures shown here, Dark Horse's designs tend toward unusual themes, like elves that are more barbaric in appearance with their extended ears and Mohawk haircuts. Most of the initial releases are quite animated and should add a nice touch to most fantasy collections. Suggested retail prices: Barbaric Elves \$1.10 each, 2-piece Adventurer with Hawk \$1.25.

# TAG INDUSTRIES

Crimson Dragon Miniatures

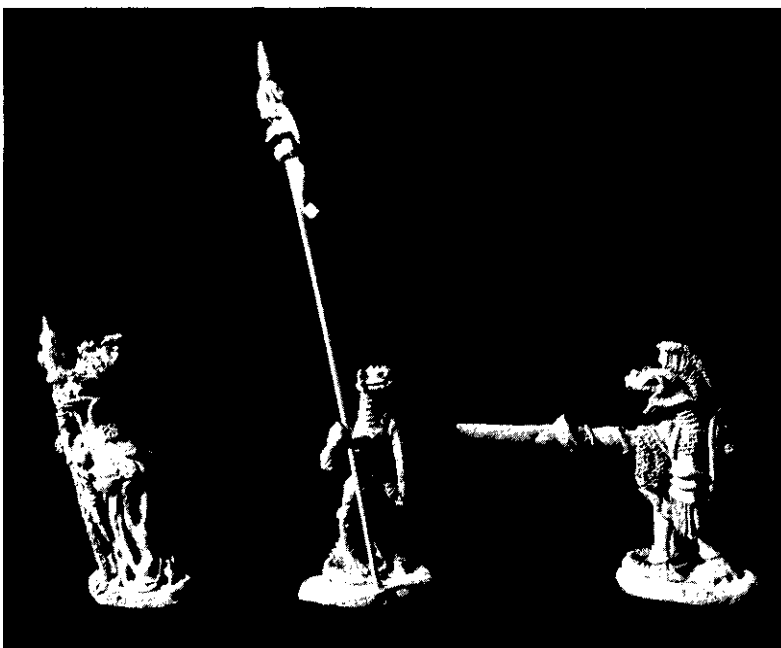
316 Main St.

Castalia OH 44824

*Kebhesenut, Messenger of the Gods, and Fighter/Mage*

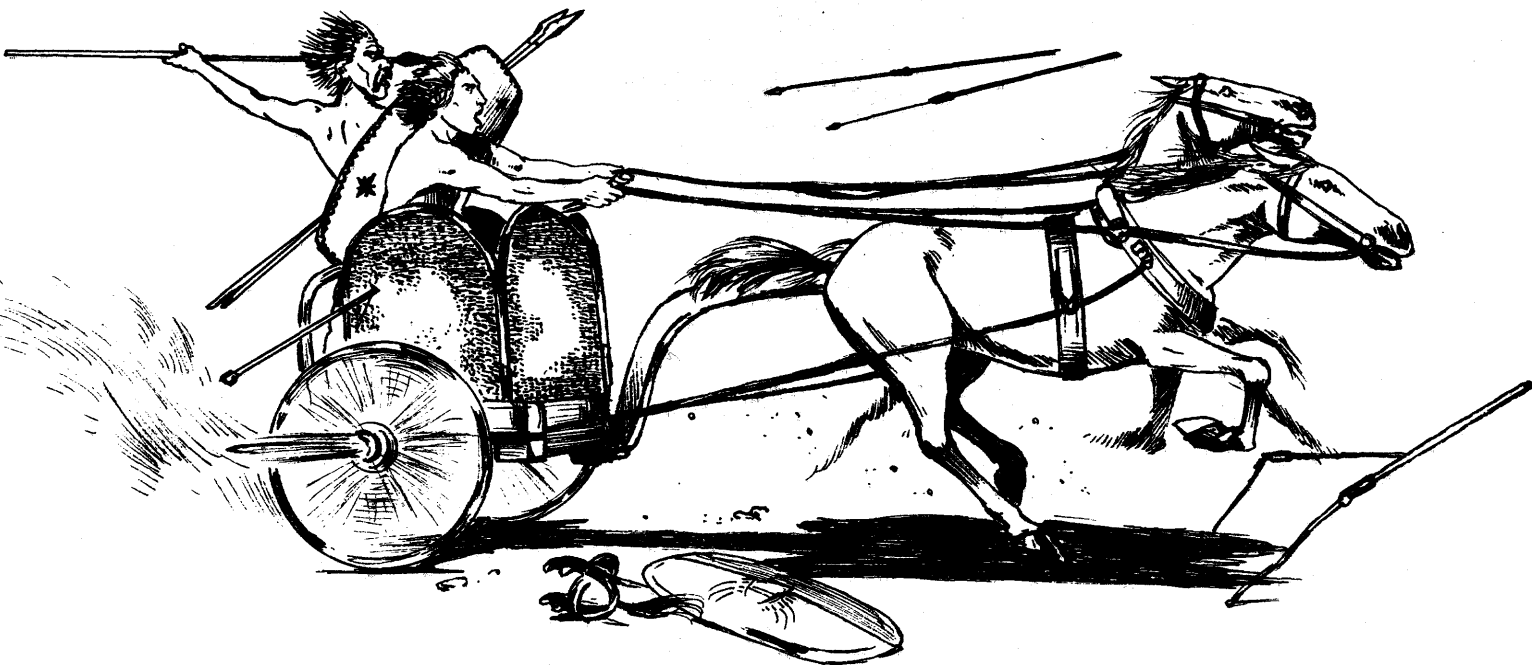
*Sculptor: Chris Atkins*

Crimson Dragon Miniatures is another "new kid" this time around, and this initial line is also impressive. Miniatures companies seem to be working harder these days, and this company is no exception. Though it sizes out at around 30mm or 35mm scale, this line offers good detail and some nice touches (like the fighter/mage's armor and magical sword). What is most noticeable about the line is the company's fearlessness in casting *big* figures. The Messenger of the Gods is nearly 40 mm tall, and looks like he could be from some fantasy pantheon as he towers over most other figures. Suggested retail prices: Kebhesenut \$1.50, Fighter/Mage \$1.25.



*Text by  
Kim Eastland*

*Photos by  
Scheibe Studio*



# Chariots for characters

## Adapting ancient vehicles for AD&D™ play

by Pete Mohnhey

The development of chariots changed the nature of combat during the early history of mankind. The same thing will happen to an AD&D™ campaign that incorporates chariots. Individual soldiers and warriors are much more mobile, and more formidable, when they sally forth into battle in a chariot pulled by one or more powerful horses. But, at the same time, charioteers can be vulnerable to perils that footsoldiers don't have to worry about.

### A brief history

Archaeologists and historians have uncovered evidence that chariots existed as long ago as 2,000 years before the start of the Iron Age. The wheeled vehicle was probably invented in the Tigris-Euphrates River area about 3500 B.C.; about 500 years later than that, two-wheeled vehicles appeared in Mesopotamia. Wheeled vehicles, including the chariot, spread through Asia and Europe and as far away as Sweden and China during the next 17 centuries.

The Greeks were using chariots for battles and for racing before 800 B.C., most notably in the Olympic games and at Delphi. Greek racing chariots were light, fragile constructions that were easily smashed in collisions, often leaving the drivers badly injured or killed. These chariots were built light for speed, and to make the inevitable crashes even more spectacular; the races were a popular spectator sport in those times. Celtic peoples introduced the

chariot to the British Isles in about 500 B.C., completing the spread of the chariot throughout the civilized world.

The construction methods and materials used in chariots varied greatly depending on the use the vehicle was to be put to. Almost all primitive chariots had wheels made of two or three "pie-slice" segments of wood fastened together with transverse wooden struts. The edges of these wheels were studded with copper nails, or (especially after 2000 B.C.) fitted with bronze rims. The wheels either turned independently on a fixed axle or spun together on a rolling axle.

The domestication of the horse around 2000 B.C. had a profound effect on warfare; now chariots could be pulled by animals that had great mobility and maneuverability. (Until that time, chariots had been drawn by onagers, a breed of wild ass, or some similar animal.) The invention of the spoked wheel and the streamlined, semi-circular chassis, both of which probably took place in India, further improved the combat usefulness of chariots by making them lighter (no more solid wheels) and faster (less wind resistance).

At the same time, chariots became heavier to better withstand the ravages of battle. Earlier vehicles were so light as to be flimsy, usually consisting of a floor of wooden planks or woven leather strips enclosed by a wicker dashboard. As they developed into military machines, chariots began to carry bronze plaques on the front

and sides for protection from attackers. The Celts carried heaviness to an extreme, using metal (sometimes inlaid with enamel) for the axle, the draft pole (the rod projecting from the front of the chariot, to which the horses were hitched), and the side boards, and often also using metal in the construction of the wheels.

The military chariot was generally used only by officers and the wealthy, because of the expense of construction and maintenance of such sophisticated vehicles; this was particularly true of chariots drawn by more than one horse. The earliest battle chariot carried a spearman and a driver, and was seldom actually used for fighting. It was primarily a method of rapid transit to, from, and across battlefields. It was easier for an armed warrior to mount and dismount from a chariot than from a horse, and the presence of a driver meant that the warrior-passenger didn't have to worry about steering or stopping, and was free to concentrate on the more urgent matter of engaging and defeating the enemy.

The art of charioteering was refined more and more as time went on. It didn't take too long to discover that a warrior could impart greater velocity to hurled weapons (primarily spears and lances) if they were tossed in the same direction the chariot was going. Men on foot, of course, could be trampled by horses or run over by the wheels of a chariot. (This tactic was best employed against unarmed men, because a



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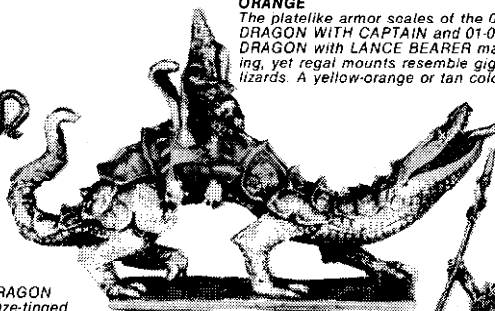
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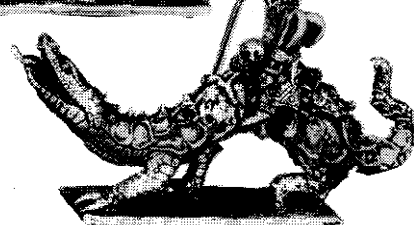
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victim with a weapon stood a good chance of being able to disable a horse when the chariot got close enough.) British war chariots had sword blades extending from their axles, to cut the legs out from under the Roman footsoldiers they were used against.

#### Chariots in the AD&D world

For AD&D game purposes and for simplicity, chariots are of the most advanced sort, and come in three types: one-horse, two-horse, and four-horse chariots. Building a chariot requires the services of a carpenter, an armorer, a wagon builder, and a horse trainer. Depending on the campaign milieu, the carpenter and wagon-builder roles may be combined in a chariot-builder specialist, but the costs and time associated with construction would not significantly change. Used chariots and trained horses may or may not be easy to find, again depending on the campaign.

One-horse and two-horse chariots are usually drawn by heavy warhorses. Four-horse chariots are usually drawn by draft horses harnessed abreast of each other, because of the teamwork required to pull the vehicle and the general superiority in endurance of draft horses over the long haul. Four-horse chariots are more often used as cargo carriers — actually, they resemble nothing so much as an ordinary cart or wagon — than as battle vehicles, since they are much less maneuverable than one-horse and two-horse chariots.

Below are three tables that contain statistics on chariots in the AD&D game. The carrying weights assume movement no faster than the given movement rate; movement is reduced in an inverse proportion to the extra weight carried, down to one-half normal movement when carrying a load of twice the given weight. Beyond that point, horses will be so severely slowed by the weight that they will be unable to draw the chariot at all for any length of time. When charging, the horse(s) drawing a chariot can move at 150% of the rate given; thus, a one-horse chariot drawn by a heavy warhorse could move at 15" when charging.

A chariot starting from a stationary position can "walk" through a turn with a radius only slightly greater than the distance from the horse's nose to the axle. A chariot already in motion can turn through a maximum arc as described in the third table below. The sharpness of the turn (the expanse of the arc the chariot can turn through in one round) depends on the chariot type, the amount of weight being pulled (which affects the movement rate), and the speed of the vehicle at the time the turning maneuver is started. For example, a non-encumbered four-horse chariot drawn by heavy warhorses moving at full speed (15") can turn through an arc of 90 degrees in one round, which means it could make a circle of 60" circumference in four rounds' time. This circle has a radius of about 9½" — not a very sharp turn, at the scale of

1" = 10 yards. The same chariot can make a sharper turn in less time by sacrificing speed; at one-quarter of its full movement rate, the vehicle can make a 180-degree turn in one round and can turn in a circle of 7½" circumference in two rounds. This circle has a radius of about 1.2", or 12 yards.

#### Chariot movement rates

Type	LWH	MWH	HWH	DH
1-horse	16"	12"	10"	8"
2-horse	20"	15"	12"	10"
4-horse	24"	18"	15"	12"

#### GP weight carryable at normal movement

Type	LWH	MWH	HWH	DH
1-horse	5000	6500	7000	8000
2-horse	10500	14000	15000	16500
4-horse	16000	20500	24000	26000

#### Degrees turnable per round, by speed

Type	Chg.	Full	3/4	1/2	1/4
1-horse	120	180	240	300	360
2-horse	90	135	180	225	270
4-horse	60	90	120	150	180

The "weight carryable" table assumes non-magic armor equivalent to plate mail on the front, back, and sides of the chariot. The "weight carryable" figures are in addition to the weight of the vehicle itself, so that a one-horse chariot drawn by a light warhorse is able to carry a pair of 200-pound men (driver and warrior), plus their armor and gear, with a few pounds' worth of carrying capacity left over. A chariot adorned with lighter armor, or no armor at all, would be able to carry more weight — up to the limit of the structural strength of the chariot, of course. The carrying capacity of a leather-armored chariot would increase by 2000 gp per horse (4000 gp for a two-horse vehicle, 8000 gp for a four-horse vehicle), while a non-armored chariot made of a material like wicker would afford an extra 2200 gp weight per horse while enabling the chariot to retain the movement rates given in the first table.

#### Construction and training

Normally, chariot building will take about one month. The cost of constructing the chariot alone is 250 gp for a one-horse vehicle, 500 gp for a two-horse vehicle, and 750 gp for a four-horse chariot. These costs do not include horses, harnesses, barding, and other accoutrements.

The construction time can be reduced by one day for each 10% addition to the original construction cost; however, no more than one week can be taken off the construction time in this manner without a loss of quality and/or stability in the finished chariot. For each day less than three weeks that it takes to finish a chariot, there is a 5% chance (cumulative) that the chariot will have a serious breakdown whenever it is driven over rough terrain or into battle. (The chance is 10% for a construction time of three weeks minus two days, 15% for three weeks minus three days, etc.) This

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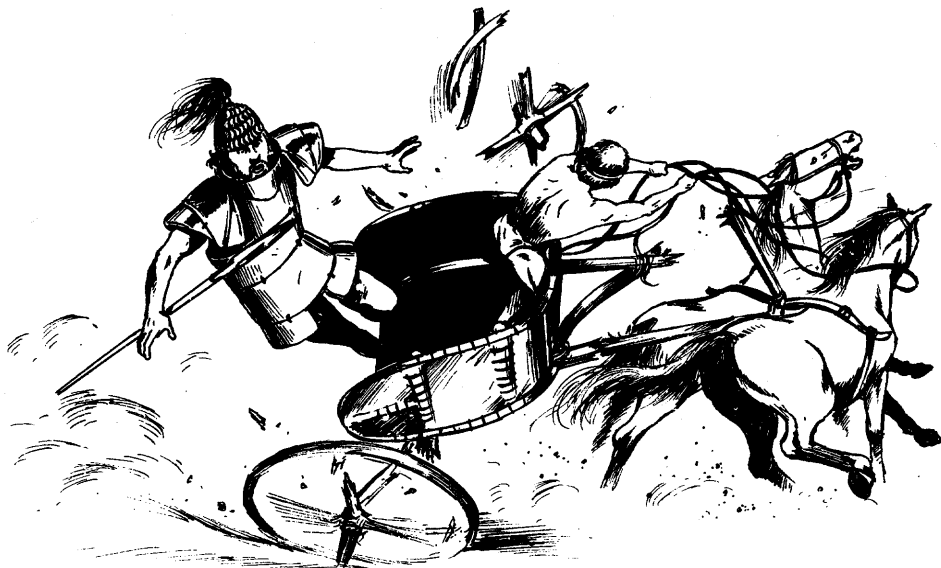
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breakdown might be relatively minor, such as the loss of a piece of armor plating; more probably, it will be something major, like a broken axle or draft pole, or the loss of a wheel. Any of these last three mishaps would almost certainly cause a wreck and injure the driver and any passengers.

A chariot-builder who is skilled and honest may provide characters with some good advice on what kind of vehicle is best suited for the terrain over which it will be driven.

A one-horse chariot can cross any terrain that a heavy warhorse can cross while carrying a rider and equipment, except for soft ground [chariot wheels would get bogged down] or narrow passages (such as a trail through a swamp). A two-horse chariot is similarly limited, and can move at only one-half normal rate in mountainous areas, heavy forest, and similar rough terrain. A four-horse chariot may only be driven over hilly, plain, scrub, and hard-packed desert

terrain (wind-blown sand dunes would not allow passage), or on a well-kept road or track.

A chariot can be built with carrying places within easy reach of the driver and passenger for various weapons, and may also have special minor modifications such as scroll-case compartments, hooks and niches for oil flasks, and the like. A friendly chariot-builder will include "options" like these at little or no extra cost if they are requested before construction has begun. Other more lavish or more unusual modifications, such as hidden compartments and gaudy decorations, can be built in but will add at least 20% to the construction cost and at least an extra two days to the building time.

A character who has bought a chariot or paid to have one constructed must spend at least one week "per horse" learning how to drive the vehicle with proficiency (i.e., four weeks for a four-horse chariot). Many variables can affect the cost and time of this training, such as the level and skill of the teacher, the level of the pupil, alignment differences between the two, racial adjustments, and so forth. A figure of 50 gp per week would serve as a base training cost, to be adjusted as the DM sees fit.

#### Weapons and warfare

The spear and javelin have historically been a charioteer's favorite weapons. Hurling weapons gain exceptional striking

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power when used from chariots, translated as a +2 bonus to damage if cast forward (in the direction the chariot is moving) at a target while the chariot is at full speed or charging. Note, however, that the weapon does not gain a bonus "to hit" when used in this manner — and the DM may even assign a *penalty* "to hit" for a character who has not practiced hurling a weapon from a moving chariot, or for someone who is attempting it in battle for the first time.

Other weapons may be employed from a chariot, but it may be difficult to use them effectively. Missile weapons (which can be used only if the weapon-wielder is not the driver) have a -2 penalty "to hit" when fired from a chariot moving at half to full speed, and a -4 penalty "to hit" when fired from a charging vehicle. One-handed striking and thrusting weapons may be swung at nearby opponents at the normal "to hit" chance — unless the wielder is also the driver, in which case he must take a -4 penalty "to hit" because he must keep the reins held in his other hand. Two-handed weapons like pole arms, battle axes, and huge swords can only be used by someone other than the driver. If the driver decides to drop the reins and use any weapon to attack, he suffers a -2 penalty "to hit" in addition to any other penalties that apply, because he is no longer able to control the direction and speed of the chariot.

A charioteer using a thrusting weapon such as a lance, a held spear, or certain pole arms gains a +2 bonus "to hit" against opponents in range of the thrust, and the weapon will do double normal damage if it hits while the chariot is charging. Note, however, that these rules only apply if the thrusting weapon is used in a thrust, not if it is swung at an opponent. Also, there are special problems involved. If an attack of this type scores a hit, the weapon must save vs. normal blow, or the shaft will break and the weapon will be useless thereafter. (Treat the shaft as "thick wood" on the saving

throw table, unless it is made of a different material.) The character using the thrusting weapon must roll his "open doors" chance to avoid being hurled from the chariot by the shock of the impact — assuming that he is holding onto the chariot or is otherwise anchored inside it in the first place. A free-standing driver or warrior who scores a hit in this manner will always be thrown from the chariot, whatever his strength. The use of a thrusting weapon in this manner will always allow the wielder the first attack against a target on foot, regardless of initiative rolls.

If he desires, the chariot driver may use a medium or small shield while holding the reins with his other hand; no penalties will apply to the driver in terms of his ability to drive or his capability to defend himself in this manner.

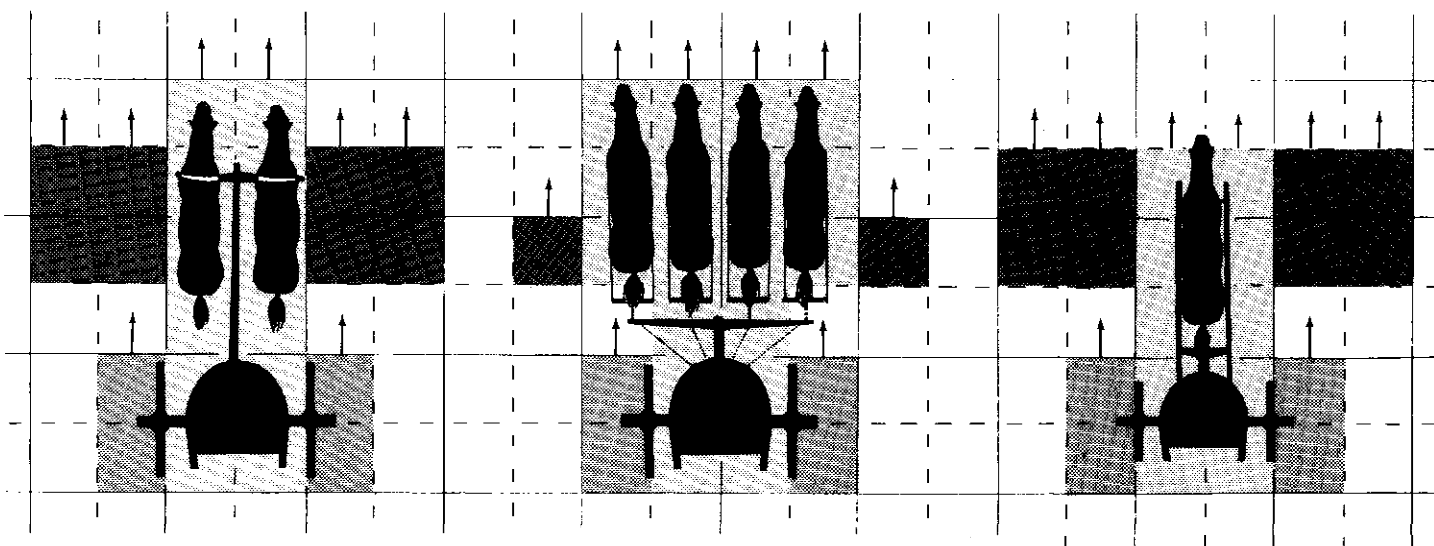
In addition to their actual, physical combat usefulness, chariots can serve as a psychological weapon against certain opponents. Any creature of less than 1 hit die or smaller than size M that also has at least low intelligence must make a morale check or flee toward a place of safety when "greeted" by a charging chariot, losing any attack it would have otherwise been allowed in that round.

The horse(s) pulling a moving chariot can — and usually will — trample any low-lying creatures in its path. This group includes, but is not limited to, snakes, small animals, and men or humanoids who are prone. Against creatures and characters who are essentially helpless to prevent the trampling, the DM should allow one automatic hit (by kicking) appropriate to the type of horse involved, plus an additional 1-3 kicks (only 1-2 for a one-horse chariot) that are rolled as normal attacks. In addition, the chariot gets one run-over attack (rolled as if the driver had attacked the victim) which will do 3-12 points of damage if it hits. Because of the many variables involved, the DM must moderate the out-

come of trampling attempts against men, humanoids, or other creatures who are not prone and helpless; unless deafened, blinded, or otherwise incapacitated, a target will usually be able to sidestep the onrushing horse(s) as long as the target is capable of movement. A target that doesn't sidestep quite far enough may be hit by short blades attached to the outside of the chariot's wheel hubs. Each blade does 2-5 points of damage if it hits, again making the attack as if the driver of the chariot was rolling to hit.

Opponents who use good tactics do have a chance against a chariot. Monsters of average intelligence or higher, especially humanoids and other creatures who can use missile weapons, will often attack a chariot's horse(s) in preference to the driver, in the hope of upsetting the chariot. If any of the horse(s) pulling a chariot sustains damage equal to one-third or more of its original hit points, the animal will panic, and other horses, even if uninjured, may follow suit. The driver has a 10% chance per level of experience to be able to bring the horse(s) back under his control, and if that doesn't happen, the chariot will crash. A chariot crash will do 1-8 points of damage per 6" of speed (round down) to the driver and any passengers. If a horse is seriously wounded (more than 50% hit-point loss) or killed and the driver does manage to maintain control of the vehicle, the best he will be able to do is bring the chariot to a stop, and it cannot be driven any further until a fresh horse is hitched up.

The accompanying diagram shows top-down views of what each type of chariot might look like, with shaded areas indicating the effective ranges of various attacks that can be effected by the occupants and the horses. As in all situations involving rapid movement, the DM must keep careful track of the locations of all characters, animals, and vehicles involved in a confrontation to determine if and when combatants are within striking distance of one another. ♣



This simplified schematic drawing shows how much area a chariot take up (small squares are 2½' on a side) and the areas that are vulnerable to certain attacks from chariots. "Lance" is the area where a charioteer can strike with a medium lance (12' long); "trample" is the area in which victims can be overrun, and "sword" is the area to either side of the chariot itself where a driver or rider can reach with a long sword or other similar hand-held weapon.



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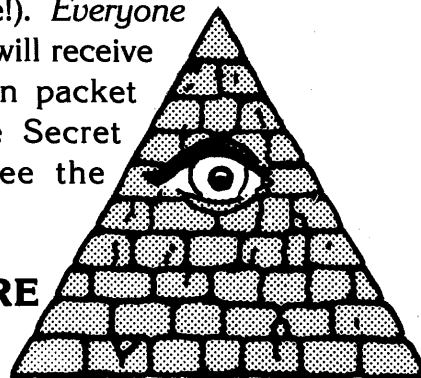
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# Cu Chulainn

by Roger Moore

**22nd-level ranger/12th-level illusionist, with special bard abilities**  
ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic good*  
HIT POINTS: 147  
ARMOR CLASS: -1  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2/1 (4/1 if berserk)  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type (+8) (or +30 vs. "giant class" humanoids)  
HIT BONUS: +3 in addition to weapon bonus (+5 if berserk)  
MOVE: 15" (on foot)  
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil  
STRENGTH: 20  
INTELLIGENCE: 17  
WISDOM: 15  
DEXTERITY: 19  
CONSTITUTION: 18  
CHARISMA: 19 (2 if berserk)



Cu Chulainn was the offspring of the Celtic deity Lugh and a mortal woman named Dechtire, the sister of Conor, king of the Ulaoid people of northeastern Ireland. His incredible talents and capabilities manifested themselves when he was very young; as a boy, he slew a great hound that belonged to a smith named Culainn and then offered to serve in its stead as a cattle herder until an equally good hound could be found. After that, he was known as Cu Chulainn ("Hound of Culainn").

At the age of seven he left home to be tutored by the finest bards, poets, and warriors of Ireland and Europe. He learned magic and warfare from them and became his teachers' greatest pupil. An Amazon queen taught him to use a special weapon called the Gae-Bolg, a spear-like device with many barbs, and he became so proficient with it that he could cast it with his feet if his hands were occupied. Cu Chulainn proved himself to be utterly fearless, attacking any opponent with complete confidence and incredible skill. At the age of seventeen he defended the entire city of Ulster single-handedly against a great army commanded by the evil queen Maeve. He slew many warriors in single combat, and also in attacks against many lower-level fighters all at once. The invading army was turned back, its morale broken and its greatest fighters slain.

Cu Chulainn is a tall human, nearly 7 feet in height, and is extremely beautiful of face and form. He has seven fingers on each hand, seven toes on each foot, and seven pupils in each eye. His cheeks are tinted red, yellow, green, and blue. His hair is reddish gold, dark at the roots and lighter at the ends. Beautiful satins and silks make up his garb, very tasteful and rich in design; at any time he will be wearing jewelry worth 4,000 to 10,000 gp.

As a member of the Knights of the Red Branch of Ulster, he is sworn to the protection of that city and all its people. His code of honor and ethics is absolute and unbreakable (though he is an individualist on the battlefield), and if he takes an oath to accomplish something he will do his utmost to fulfill it. He is faithful to his companions and will treat even his enemies with honor if they seem worthy of it. Cu Chulainn hates to be thought of as having even the slightest trace of cowardice, and will go to incredible lengths to correct such an opinion. If he is treated in a fashion that is not deemed honorable by the standards of his Celtic homeland, he will readily challenge the offender to single combat.

When facing a large number of armed soldiers or a single powerful warrior, Cu Chulainn may go berserk in battle. When he does so, he undergoes a transformation brought about through the use of his illusionist abilities (i.e., *veil*). He becomes incredibly monstrous in appearance, his body and face greatly distorted and demonic. In this state Cu Chulainn is mad with battle frenzy and completely

uncontrollable. All of his friends avoid him when he is in this condition, wisely choosing to wait until he "cools off" — quite literally, for when he is berserk, Cu Chulainn emits a terrible amount of body heat, sufficient to melt snow and ice for a 10-foot radius around himself. In his battle fury he will strike four times per round, gain an additional +2 bonus to hit, and will fight until the enemy is vanquished. After recovering from this frenzy, he will rest for 3-30 days. In combat, Cu Chulainn prefers to go after opposing leaders first, particularly the commanders of the army.

Cu Chulainn is skilled with the broadsword, two-handed sword, spear, sling, lance, darts, javelin, throwing disks (as darts, 1-4 damage), dagger, and scimitar. He possesses a special type of scimitar that can be thrown like a boomerang out to 9" range, doing normal scimitar damage if it hits; it will return to him (whether it strikes or not) in the same round. His special spear, Gae Bolg, is +2 to hit and does 6-24 points of damage because of Cu Chulainn's skill and the many barbs on it. He wears a red +3 *cloak of protection* given to him by Manannan Mac Lir, the Celtic sea god, to augment his normal armor, which consists of many layers of leather and waxed cloth (base AC 7). He also employs a *helm of fear* that causes all enemies in a 3" range to save vs. fear or flee. His large red shield has a razor-sharp edge (1-6 points of damage per round as a weapon).

Cu Chulainn travels in a special war chariot pulled by two horses, one grey and one black, that both have the characteristics of a paladin's warhorse. The chariot is driven by his faithful servant Laeg, a 10th-level ranger/12th-level illusionist. Cu Chulainn's favorite tactic against large armies is to have Laeg make the chariot and its occupants *invisible* while they charge into the center of the massed enemy soldiers. The chariot has special 3-foot-long scythe blades extending outward from the wheel hubs that do 2-7 points of damage to anyone caught by one of them.

Cu Chulainn is hardly averse to adventuring into new places, taking his charioteer and equipment with him on long journeys to do some good for his king and his city. He will take many provisions and a large number of weapons (at least 2-8 of each type he is skilled with). Cu Chulainn does not always think of warfare, however. For amusement he enjoys chess and draughts, and he is able to use a stringed instrument or sing to raise morale and inspire ferocity in his allies (though he will only rarely do this). He is also much of a ladies' man, although he gives first preference and is loyally devoted to his wife Emer.

Cu Chulainn strongly dislikes magic-users; he knows he is doomed to be entangled by contradictory *geases* and be slain before he reaches age 30. Anyone who casts a hostile spell in his direction will automatically trigger his berserker rage, and will be attacked in preference to any other enemy facing him.

He may cast his illusionist spells while wearing his armor, but it is unlikely that he will use many of them in combat. The DM may assign spells to him as desired, but the following ones are suggested as typical: *audible glamor* (x2), *change self*, *light*, *phantasmal force*, *blindness* (x2), *blur* (x2), *improved phantasmal force*, *continual light*, *fear* (x3), *dispel exhaustion*, *emotion* (x2), *chaos* (x2), and *veil*. Spells usable by Cu Chulainn by virtue of his level as a ranger may be chosen as desired by the DM.

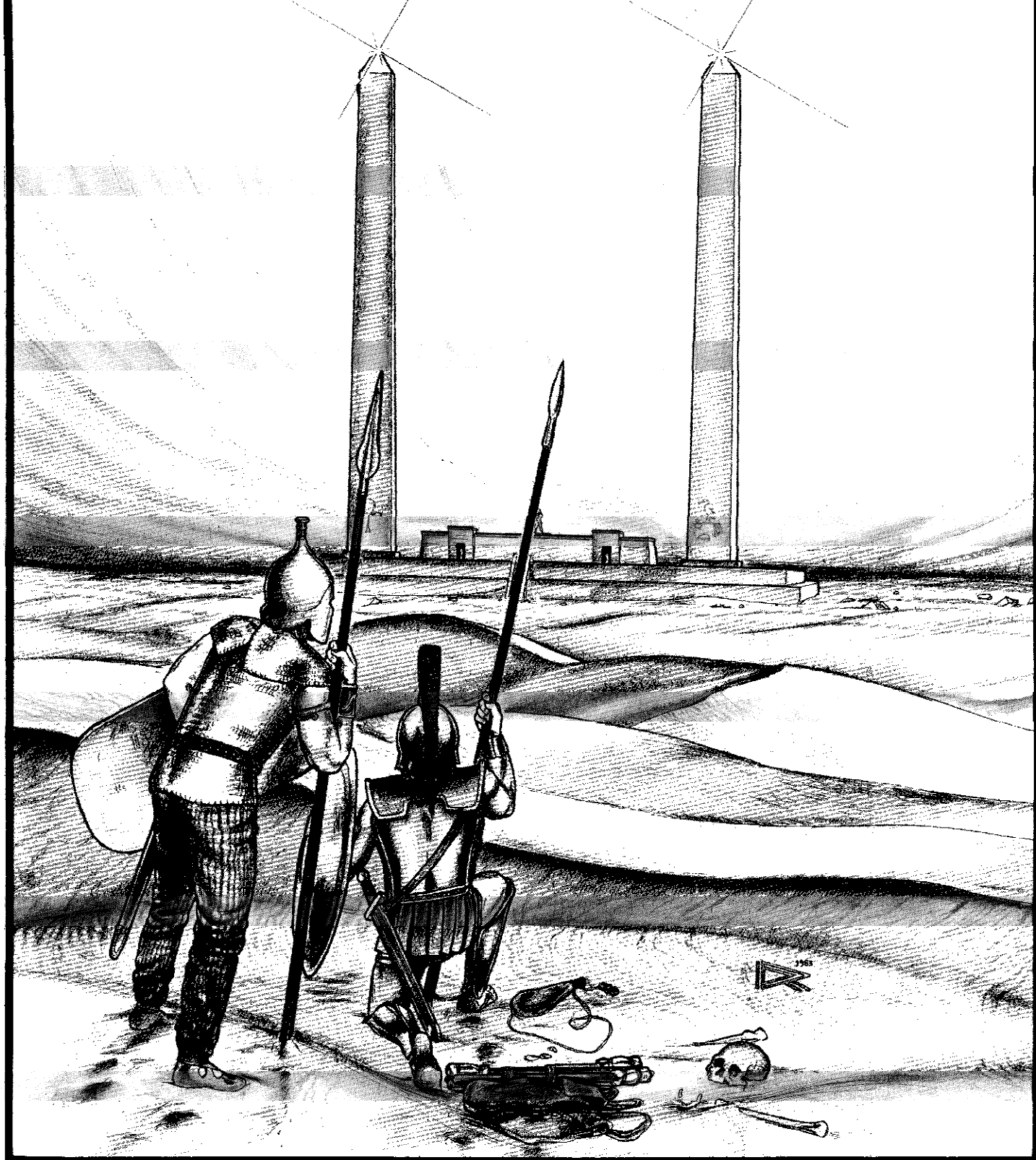
In battle, Cu Chulainn relies on his charioteer for *dispel exhaustion* and *emotion* spells to aid him, as well as *invisibility* spells for the horses and chariot. Laeg may also cast *audible glamor* to increase the noise of the chariot's approach and let enemies know they are coming.

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# The Ruins of Andril

*An AD&D™ adventure for 4-8 characters, levels 8-11*

*First place, Module Design Contest  
Category A-3*

*Designed by  
Ian Melliush*

# The Ruins of Andril

"The Ruins of Andril" is an adventure for the AD&D™ game for 4 to 8 characters, each of 8th to 11th level. They may be of any class or race allowed; it is recommended that at least one thief, one cleric, and one magic-user be in the party. As with all higher-level adventures, the players should prepare their characters carefully beforehand, particularly if they have numerous spells or magical items at their disposal.

## Players' introduction

At the entrance to a mountain pass, surrounded by tropical forests and tilled fields, is the tiny village of Ruatha. Lying on the end of a local trade road, Ruatha offers little to most adventurers. There are rumors, however, that beyond the mountains lie the ruins of an ancient city, surrounded by desert waste.

As with all such ruins, tales circulate of great treasures to be found there. The problem is, according to these tales, that the treasure is only "available" once every two years — for reasons no one knows. Rumor has it that the time is now at hand for the ruins to be entered again. These rumors note that few have ever returned from the ruins, most treasure-seekers instead becoming trapped within them.

The adventurers are assumed to have arrived in Ruatha at the start of this scenario. They may have arrived separately or together, and may cooperate as a group or compete in a race to get to the ruins and whatever treasure lies within them. No one knows what dangers are ahead, but the adventurers are among the most powerful there are in this land; if anyone can get into the ruins and out of them again, they can.

## The village of Ruatha

The adult population of Ruatha numbers scarcely more than 100, with four times as many children. Farming is the major occupation. The village has only one inn, of low quality and exorbitant prices.

Because Ruatha is a closely knit community, newcomers will be immediately obvious as such to everyone. Villagers will watch everything the party does, spreading gossip about them daily. The first thing all villagers will think (correctly) is that the adventurers are here to find out about the ruins beyond the mountains. Adventurers may find it disconcerting that everyone seems to know so much about their business. Worse still, the villagers will try to make ridiculous profits from talking to the adventurers, as detailed below.

## The legend of the ruins

Villagers in Ruatha are generally familiar with the history of the ruined city. They know that wandering adventurers have paid

well in the past to hear details of the legend. They also know that few people return from the ruins, and this means gold gone to waste if they give information for the promise of payment when the treasure-hunters return. Thus, all villagers will either subtly or bluntly insist on being paid before they give any information on the ruins beyond the pass. Typically, townspeople will demand outrageous prices (about 20-50 gp) for even the smallest scrap of information, but are willing to bargain downward if the adventurers balk at this.

Dungeon Masters should give away bits and pieces of the legend as characters talk with the townspeople. Under no circumstances should the characters learn all of it at once. What follows is essentially true; if the adventurers take enough time and spend enough money, they will learn all of these facts — though a few unscrupulous people might alter the truth in various minor ways.

Ten centuries ago (the legend goes), the land beyond the mountains was lush and fertile, a tropical paradise fed by a mighty river. In the center of it stood Andril, a city-state of exceptional wealth and influence. A theocratic government made up of the priests of a god of knowledge (the Egyptian god Thoth, as described in the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia) ruled there for many years. On their orders, a great monument was constructed in the center of the city as a shrine and a symbol of the government's power. Though not a true temple of Thoth (the main temple was several blocks away), the monument was regarded as holy, and it housed a number of clerics and religious aides.

The wealth that Andril gained was also its downfall. Its people became ever more grasping and hungry for gold. The knowledge that the priests gained from their deity was misused by the populace in terrible ways, and they fell away from their leaders. In time, dissension arose among the priests themselves. Some of their number turned from the god of knowledge to work the will of an evil deity contacted through their magics. The evil priests were ultimately cast out of the temple and monument of Thoth, and they plotted revenge. Civil war broke out within the walls of Andril as the evil priests summoned formidable monsters from other planes to lead the fight against their brethren.

The war lasted only a day. In that time, the city was laid waste by magic and rioting. In an awful curse, the priests of knowledge invoked the terrible power of their god. They caused the forests and fields around the city to wither away; the river was dried up in hours, and a wind sprang up to spread dust across the land. Few people survived the disaster. A desert known as the Sea of Dust now extends for

five miles around the ruins, keeping most people far away from the ruins even to this day.

Worse yet, the ruins are cursed so that magic will not reveal the secrets of Andril without a penalty. The nature of this special curse is not well understood by the people of Ruatha, though they know it exists.

Most people have learned, from the experience of others, to avoid the Sea of Dust; monsters inhabit the desolate land and prey upon wayfarers as well as each other. However, it is well known that every two years the monument of the ancient city — the only building spared destruction in the war — rises up out of the dust and sand. It remains in view for several days, then sinks back into the dust for another two years. It is believed that the god Thoth himself is responsible for the rising and falling of the monument, though for what reason no one can guess. The wisest sages say that it serves as a reminder that the anger of a god is nothing to trifle with.

A few adventurers, lured by rumors of the hoard of magical and monetary treasures supposedly hidden within the monument, have arrived during the times the monument is visible. Many of them have entered the monument and never returned. Some have escaped only at the last moment as the building was sinking into the dust again, taking with it companions who could not flee in time. The few adventurers who have escaped tell of living statues, of companions who vanished into thin air, of monsters from the outer worlds, and of a man who cannot be slain. Because of the obvious danger, no non-adventurers will dare approach the monument or even get near the Sea of Dust.

## Encounters

There are two outdoor encounter areas that the adventurers need be concerned with: the mountains and the Sea of Dust. While the Sea of Dust is strictly avoided by the villagers, some local hunters roam the lower reaches of the mountains and use the pass to get game. Few monsters inhabit the region, most having left to find places with more prey and treasure.

The mountain pass is four miles long and rather narrow. A party that is on foot and lightly encumbered (able to move at normal rates) can negotiate the pass in half a day (4-6 hours) of hiking. In any other case, it will take at least a full day (9-12 hours) to get through the pass and reach the Sea of Dust. While the party is in the mountains, encounter checks are made at dawn and at dusk.

Adventurers may choose to leave the pass and move through the mountains, but this strategy is extremely difficult and dangerous, offering a 10% chance per hour of a

climbing accident occurring to each character. Accidents will do 1-4 six-sided dice of damage, from falling or being struck by rockslides. Travel time to the Sea of Dust will be increased dramatically, to 3-6 days, and there is a 50% chance of the group becoming lost each day they travel off the pass.

A roll of 1 on a d12 indicates an encounter in the mountains when a check is called for. If an encounter occurs, the DM should roll d4 and refer to the following table:

Die roll	Encounter
1	1 tiger
2	3-8 hunters
3	1 giant poisonous snake
4	2-12 wild dogs

If encountered, tigers will only attack if there are three or fewer characters in the group; they will simply sit and watch otherwise unless attacked themselves. Hunters will be 1st-level fighters, wearing leather armor and using longbows, spears, and throwing axes; they will be led by a 2nd level fighter (15% chance of 1st-level ranger) using the same equipment and armor. Giant snakes will lie in wait to attack parties that pass by them; those snakes living in the mountains can surprise prey on a roll of 1-4 on d6, because of their silence and coloration. Wild dogs are treated as war dogs, as per the Monster Manual, because of their size and ferocity.

As travelers reach the end of the pass, they will look down upon the Sea of Dust. As far as they can see, there is no sign of life other than scraggly weeds among the low, sculpted dunes. The Sea of Dust is composed of fine sand and dried earth, pale yellow in color. Crossing it presents several problems.

A party traveling on foot and unencumbered can move through the Sea of Dust at the rate of one mile every hour and a half. Under any other conditions, movement rate is slowed substantially, to one mile every two hours or perhaps even more. As stated in the earlier text, the Sea of Dust extends for a radius of live miles around the ruins.

The loose sand and dust make it difficult to get traction, and movement through the dust stirs up a choking cloud as well. When the party is in this area, there is a 10% chance per hour per character that dust causes blindness for 1-4 turns (30%), sneezing and coughing for 1-2 turns (40%), or the dust gets into armor (30%), causing itching and loss of all dexterity bonuses until the armor is completely removed and shaken out. Characters affected by temporary blindness or sneezing and coughing will only be able to move at one-fourth of their normal movement rate, or perhaps even more slowly; assuming that the adventurers intend to stay in a group as they cross the Sea of Dust, this will mean that the group's movement is drastically slowed. Characters affected by sand in their armor will not be slowed unless the same thing happens twice to a single character, in



which case that character will move at one-half normal speed until his armor is taken off and cleaned out.

The daytime temperature in the Sea of Dust is abnormally hot (about 130 degrees F.). Characters who are heavily encumbered (i.e., forced to move at a pace slower than normal due to amount of equipment carried) must make a system shock roll every hour. Failure to make the required percentage means the character will collapse from heat exhaustion and must make a saving throw vs. death magic or die within 2-20 minutes thereafter. If the saving throw vs. death magic succeeds, the character will recover if he is allowed to rest for 1-4 hours and is bathed in cold water at least once during that time. Failure to administer the treatment described above will result in a new saving throw vs. death magic after 1-4 hours.

Furthermore, characters will lose 1 hit point per hour from dehydration as they cross the Sea of Dust. This can be prevented by drinking a minimum of one quart of fluid every two hours. (A typical waterskin holds one quart.) Large animals like horses will require enormous amounts of water, and should not be taken into the Sea of Dust. Small beings like gnomes and halflings will require only half as much liquid.

To add to these difficulties, there are problems with the desert wildlife as well. The daytime environment is safe, in the sense that it is too hot for most creatures to be out hunting for food. This is not so at night, when temperatures fall to about 70 degrees F. The DM should roll for encounters at dusk, in the pre-dawn hours, and just after dawn; a 1 on a roll of d6 indicates an encounter has taken place; if this occurs,



roll d4 to determine the specific creature encountered:

Die roll	Encounter
1	6-24 giant centipedes
2	2-5 giant scorpions
3	3-6 giant poisonous snakes
4	2-20 death dogs

In addition to the monsters that may be discovered, there is a 5% chance per hour during the day of a dust tornado forming from the freakish winds crossing the desert. A dust tornado will appear 100-1000 yards from the characters, and essentially is identical in appearance to an air elemental's whirlwind form (20' base diameter, 60' top diameter, 120' height, takes ten minutes to form completely, travels at 36" speed). There is a 10% chance that the dust tornado will approach the party and pass through the group. Though not a living being, the tornado will absorb a character if it makes a successful roll "to hit" as a 12 HD monster against the character's armor class (no dexterity bonuses allowed). Characters caught in a dust tornado will be flung violently around in it for 1-8 rounds, taking 1-4 points of damage per round. There is a 50% chance the character will then be dropped from a height of 10-100 feet. The damage taken from the fall, because the ground is dusty, is reduced by 1 point per die of damage done.

### The ruined city

In the center of the Sea of Dust lies the ruins of once-proud Andril. Fallen columns, broken walls, collapsed roofs, and rubble-choked streets are all that remain of it. The ruins are thickly coated with sand and dust. No monsters other than those found in the Sea of Dust inhabit the ruins, with the exception of the two creatures that might be found at the monument (described below). The ruins appear to be utterly silent and deserted, and there is no useful treasure to be found here.

### Spell alterations

Because of the curse of the priests of Andril cast on this area long ago, certain spells have altered effects when used within the ruins or in the monument. The spells most severely affected are those listed as "divinatory" in nature, such as *find traps*, *divination*, *commune with nature*, *ESP*, *legend lore*, and any of the various *detect* spells. The bardic ability to *legend lore* is not considered divinatory magic, since it consists only of remembered history, songs, and tales.

Any being who employs any divinatory spell within the area of the ruins will suffer sudden pain, taking as many points of damage as the level of the divinatory spell attempted. Thus, *contact other plane* will cause 5 points of damage to a magic-user casting the spell, whether from memory, from a device, or from a scroll. The damage caused can be healed in any normal fashion.

In addition, the being casting the divina-

tory magic will be subjected to a sudden vision, lasting 2-5 segments, depicting the last hours of Andril. Terrifying images will be seen of elementals and demons loose in the streets, while spell casters hurl destructive magic, commoners riot, and soldiers mutiny. Each time the vision recurs it will depict more or less the same aspects as previously seen (i.e., total chaos).

Note that the use of spell scrolls (requiring a *read magic* spell) is prohibited. Nothing else will be gained by a divinatory spell, including the information for which the spell was first cast. *Detect magic* won't detect anything except the vision, and will cause 1 point of damage besides.

The use of *wishes*, *limited wishes*, and *alter reality* spells is permitted within the ruins, so long as such spells do not attempt to duplicate the effects of an existing divinatory spell. If this is attempted anyway, no information will be gained, though no damage will be taken. One could use a *wish* spell to heal, teleport, or attack, however. Psionic powers similar to divinatory spells (such as *ESP*, *clairvoyance*, and *object reading*) will fail to produce any useful information, but won't cause any damage either.

If someone tries to cast a divinatory spell concerning Andril while the party is away from the ruins, including the use of *wish*, *alter reality*, *limited wish*, or similar magic, no information will be received, but no damage will be taken from casting the spell.

### THE MONUMENT

When the adventurers approach the ruins, the monument will already have risen from the sands and will be clearly visible from a distance of several hundred yards. From the moment the adventurers sight the monument, they will have a limited amount of time in which to explore it as thoroughly as they can before it disappears once more from view. The referee should roll 12d6 for the number of hours (12-72) remaining before the monument sinks into the sand, keeping careful track of time in the adventure from this point onward.

Rising from the center of the ruins are two towers, each 40' in diameter. A crystal sphere 3' wide rests solidly atop each tower; neither of the spheres can be removed without destroying it. Each more than 200' tall, the towers are covered in old hieroglyphs and pictograms, as well as having long sections written in an ancient version of the common tongue. Clerics and magic-users who worship deities from the Egyptian pantheon (as outlined in the DDG book) will be able to partially translate the writings, which merely describe the history of Andril.

The towers rest upon the monument base, which is nearly 400' long and over 200' wide. A stairway rises to the top of the monument base, beneath an enormous bronze statue of Thoth which appears to be in excellent condition.

If characters approach the monument in the daytime, they will encounter nothing in

its vicinity. At dusk, however, two strange visitors will arrive. Characters arriving before then should roll for surprise to detect the approach of the visitors, noting their arrival at a distance of 10-100 yards. If the party arrives after dusk, the visitors will have already taken up their positions at the monument.

The lore of the disappearing city has reached other than human ears. A gynosphinx and a lamia have decided to come and investigate the monument. While the gynosphinx has come to further her knowledge of ruins in general, the lamia has come for a more practical reason: She has heard that the ruins attract adventurers, and she wants to eat a few if possible.

The gynosphinx will come to rest atop the central building on the monument base, at the feet of Thoth's statue. The lamia (invisible; see below) will be sitting to the side of the top of the stairs immediately below her. If encountered after they have arrived, the two will be discussing past adventures they've had (and adventurers they've eaten), as well as speculating on the nature of the ruined city. Both will break off conversation when they see the party coming. If they are surprised, the conversation in the common tongue between the two may be overheard by characters.

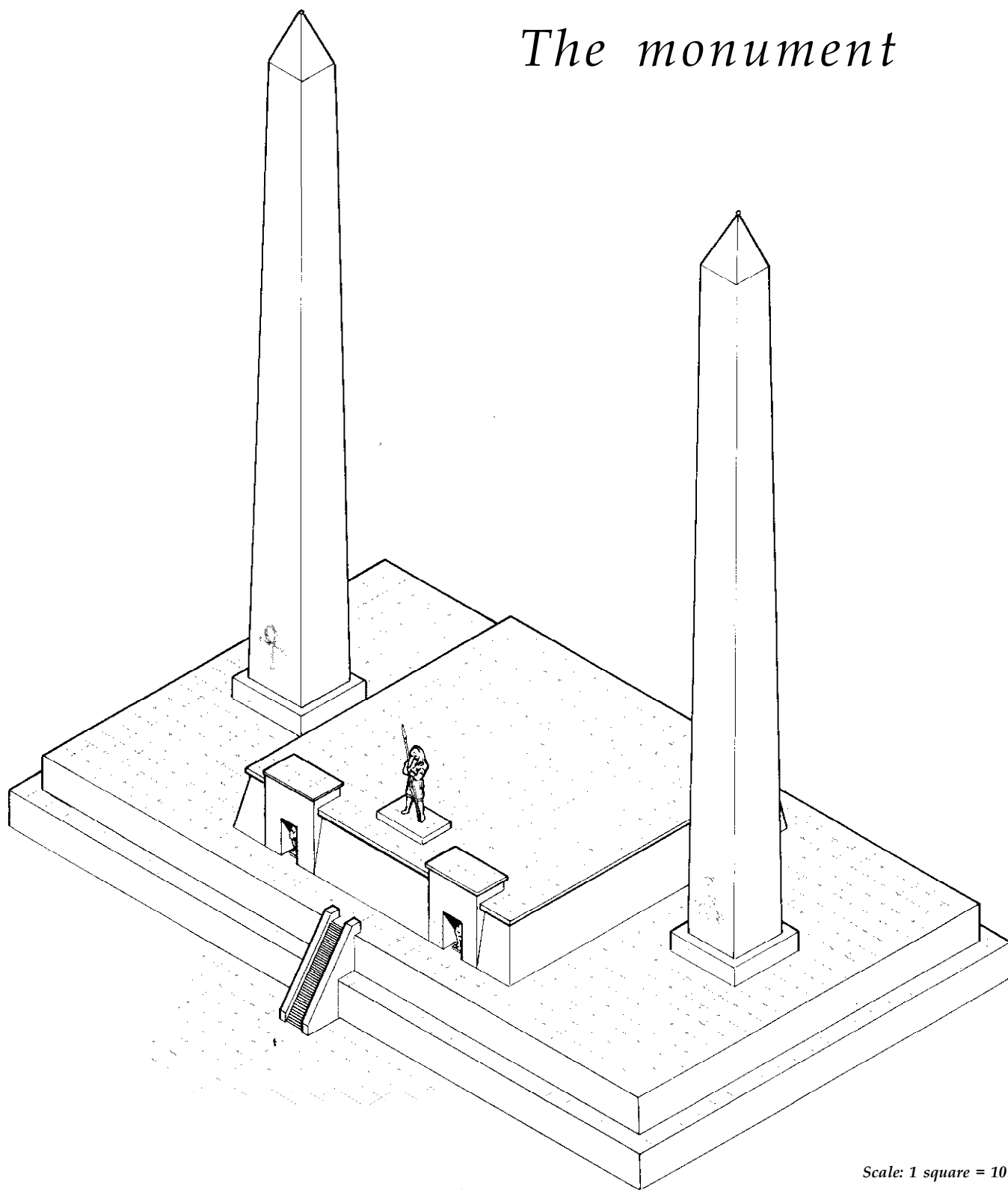
Gynosphinx: AC -1, MV 15"/24", HD 8, HP 43, 2 attacks for 2-8/2-8 damage.

Telketnatun is a rather bored sphinx who looks back on the "good old days" several centuries ago when there were more androsphinxes around. She is fascinated by bards and clerics, and will question them unceasingly for information about ancient history, religion, and where an androsphinx might be found. She will speak to adventurers only after the lamia has gone through her "spirit" routine, described below; if asked, she will say that the "spirit" was real (she wants to play along with the prank). Having heard from another source about the effects of casting divinatory spells, Telketnatun will only pretend to use such powers if asked to do so by adventurers.

Being somewhat vain about her looks, Telketnatun wears three silver necklaces (worth 250 gp each), a pair of gem-studded platinum anklets (worth 1000 gp each) about her forepaws, and has a small *ioun stone* flying silently about her head. The *stone* is a lavender and green ellipsoid that will absorb up to 28 levels of spells of up to the 8th level in power before burning out. The stone cannot be seen in the night unless one is very close to the sphinx, and she won't let anyone get that close. If attacked, she will cast a *symbol of pain* on the air at the top of the stairway and will fly off.

Lamia: AC 3, MV 24", HD 9, HP 49, special attacks. Feyodena considers herself an adventurous lamia, and wanders constantly from place to place. An accomplished and artful liar, Feyodena enjoys using magical devices and her own powers to appear as something other than she is, to lure humans, demi-humans, and human-oids to their doom.

# The monument



Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

From her previous adventures, Feyodena has picked up four rings of various makes (worth 75, 120, 400, and 650 gp each), a tiara made from gold wire (worth 250 gp), and an ivory armband with silver inlays (worth 400 gp), all of which she wears. She recovered some magical items as well, including a *potion of growth*, a *ring of invisibility*, and a *rope of entanglement*. She will enter the ruins with the *ring* activated.

When adventurers appear, Feyodena will

use her powers to generate the *illusion* of a ghostly male figure in front of the party. The figure will greet the party in a soft voice, saying that he is a guardian of the monument. The "spirit" will take no offensive action against the party, instead questioning them as to their reason for coming to the ruins. When all have spoken, the "spirit" will ask that each person leave an offering to the god of the monument before they enter inside; offerings should be of

sufficient value, the "spirit" warns, so as not to offend the deity. If anyone refuses to do so, the "spirit" sadly notes that he cannot guarantee that character's safety inside the monument.

If the party complies, the "spirit" will bid them to climb the stairway and explore the monument. Then the spirit will fade away. Any attack upon the figure will cause it to be dispelled. Whether the ruse works or not, Feyodena will move out of the way of

the party as they ascend the stairs; a successful listen-at-doors roll, determined individually for each party member, will indicate that the character heard something moving at the top of the stairs. Feyodena will not attack at this time, preferring to catch the party as they leave the monument later. Once the party has entered the monument and is out of sight, she will descend the stairs, snatch up what treasure the party left her, and will prepare the greeting that she plans to offer the party when they leave the ruins (see "Leaving the monument" below). Remember that anyone using a *detect invisibility* spell will suffer the aftereffects noted in the section on spell alterations above.

## KEY TO THE MONUMENT

1) Western Statue — This alcove contains a statue of a priest of Thoth, bearing a staff and an ankh (a cross with a loop on the top). The statue appears normal, though clerics and magic-users who worship a deity from the Egyptian pantheon will recognize a special hieroglyph on the statue's chest that means "evil." A sympathy spell has been cast upon the statue, so that any human of chaotic evil alignment who approaches within 10' of the figure will be attracted to it. All other alignments and beings will be unaffected by the statue. The person will be made by the spell to remain near the statue for 1-6 turns before being released by the spell. The person may then

leave, but approaching the statue again will trigger the spell effect once more. This effect cannot be dispelled.

2) Eastern Statue — Like area 1, this alcove also has a statue of a priest of Thoth. This figure, however, also has a permanent *magic mouth* on it. If anyone steps within 5' of it, the statue will say (in an ancient dialect of the common tongue): "All hail the wisdom and knowledge of Thoth, divine guardian of Andril, foremost of deities!" Characters have a 5% chance per point of intelligence of translating this speech correctly. If anyone inspects the statue, they have a chance of discovering a secret door behind it (roll to detect traps applicable).

## FIRST LEVEL

General Note: The ceiling height throughout the monument's interior is generally 8'-9'. Rooms which are larger than 20'x20' have a 10' ceiling. The air in the monument is very stale, but breathable. In areas where corpses are found, the air will be worse than usual, but is still acceptable unless otherwise stated. The air is very dry, and the temperature is a constant 60 degrees F.

3) Stairway and Entry Hall — A 5' wide stairway descends 20' down into an open chamber, where the party will see the bones

and possessions of past adventurers lying about on the floor. There is a 10% chance per character that some old writing on the left stairway wall will be noticed; blurred by the passage of time, the writing says (in elvish): "Call out the name." Anyone who calls out "Thoth" before entering the chamber will temporarily deactivate the caryatid columns (see the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome) at the foot of the stairs.

The caryatid columns (located at A and B) will step down behind the first character who enters the chamber without saying the word "Thoth" in the melee round beforehand. They will not initially attack, instead reaching out to catch hold of the character's arms (roll "to hit" at -2 for each as a 5 HD monster) and prevent further movement. The figures will speak to their prisoner (by *magic mouths*), saying, "Go no further, or risk your death as a defiler of holy places." They will be speaking in an ancient form of the common tongue, with the same chances for successful comprehension on the characters' parts as given in area 2. If attacked, the caryatid columns will strike back with their swords, releasing their hold on the victim. They will fight until destroyed. If the victim agrees to leave, they will release their hold on him, wait until he (and anyone behind him) leaves, then will resume their old positions and their stoney forms. They won't leave area 3.

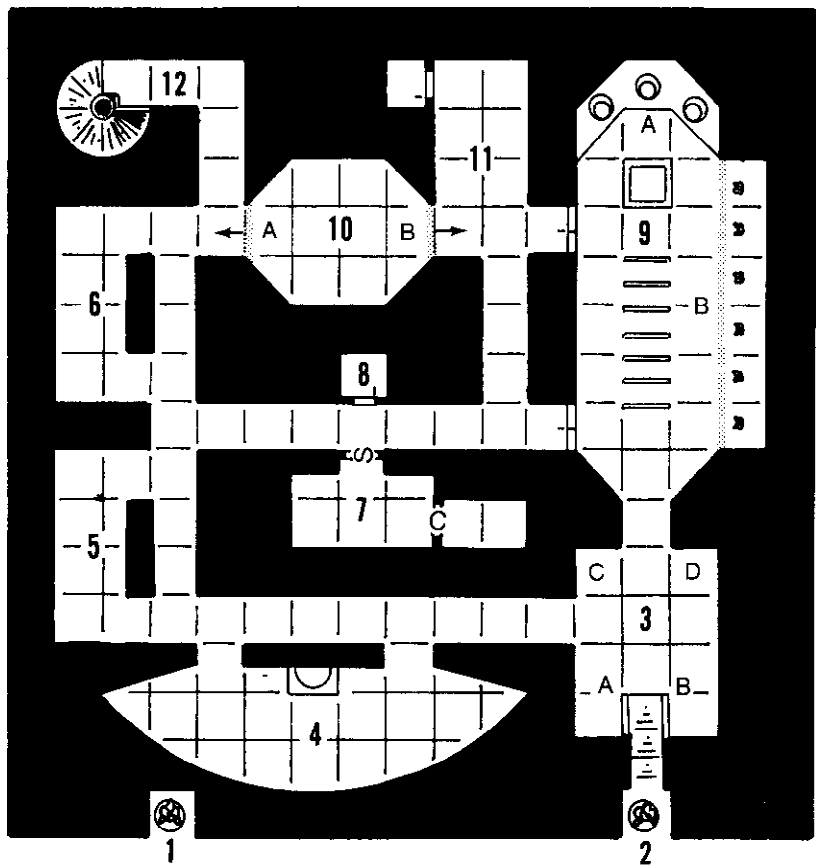
Across the room are two stone golems, each appearing to be an enormous statue of a priest of Thoth (similar to the statues at areas 1 and 2). If the caryatid columns are attacked, one of the golems will step forward and cast a *slow* spell at the nearest opponent, an effect which will last 20 rounds. The other golem will shout out in a loud voice (by *magic mouth*), "You tempt the wrath of Thoth the All-Knowing! Flee, fools, before judgement is wrought!" If the party flees up the stairs at this point, the caryatid columns will strike at them once before retiring to their old positions. The stone golems will move back into place, and all will be as before.

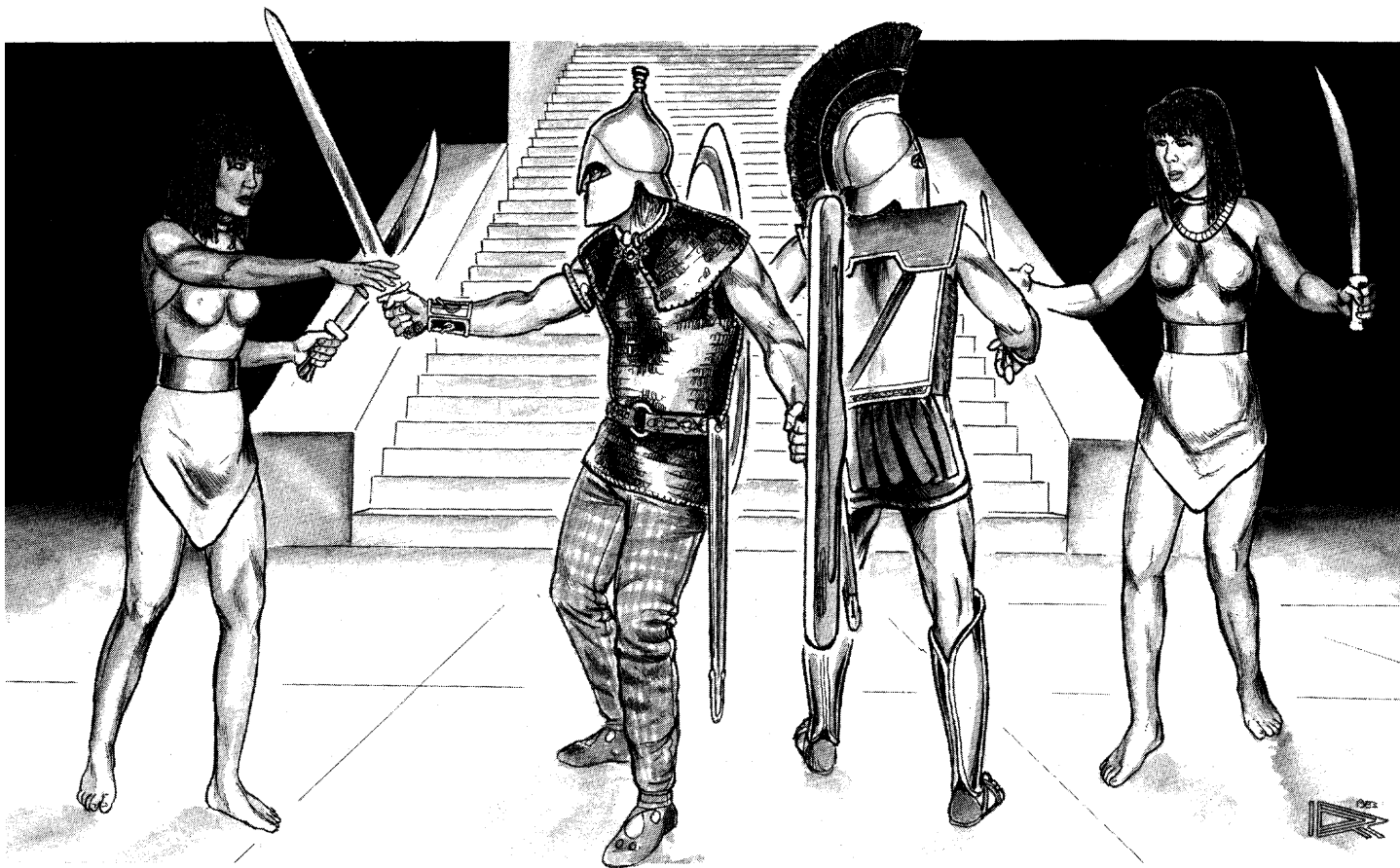
If the party continues to attack, both golems will activate and attack, not stopping until the party flees, is destroyed, or both golems are destroyed. They will use slow spells as frequently as possible, trying to slow everyone they can before using the spell again on already slowed characters. Both golems will pursue intruders throughout the first level, attempting to trap them in area 10 (which they themselves will not enter). The golems will also not go downstairs to any other level, and won't leave the monument.

Area 3, aside from being littered with the debris of previous battles, bears evidence that not everyone who came through here fared badly. Someone once built a campfire in the center of the room, and several old sleeping cots rest in the alcove behind point A. Most of the debris (broken weapons, bones, bits of armor) has been swept aside against the east wall. All debris is at least ten years old, if not more.

# First level

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet





4) Room of Vision — Just down the hall from the entry chamber is an oddly shaped room. The southern wall is curved and has a beautiful mural painted upon it, depicting a view of Andril as it once was: a rich, peaceful city surrounded by jungle. The mural has been defaced somewhat by passing adventurers who have signed their names on it, marked off dates, and so forth. The city is shown as if viewed from a point high over the monument, looking to the south. A raised stone platform 1' high lies against the northern wall; upon it is a semicircle paved with obsidian. Anyone who stands upon the semicircle and faces the southern wall will feel very strange for 1-4 rounds. The character will then experience a vision of the ruins in front of the monument, seen from an angle above. The perspective is peculiar, as if the ruins and landscape were much smaller than they actually are.

The platform is actually a viewing device connected to the two crystal spheres atop each of the 200' towers outside. Each sphere acts as a magical camera, sending a picture of the front of the monument directly to the viewer on the platform. The wide separation of the spheres produces the unusual perspective of seeing everything as if much reduced. The viewing device gifts the viewer with *ultravision*, allowing clear sight at night to a range of one mile. While human-sized beings can be clearly seen, identifying persons is difficult unless the person dresses distinctively. Invisible, hidden, out-of-phase, ethereal, and astral objects cannot be detected using this device. This device will not show the area to the sides or behind the temple.

One unpleasant side effect of this device

is that the unusual perspective will cause the viewer to be disoriented for 1-4 rounds after leaving the platform. Disorientation means the affected character cannot attack or defend himself, and cannot use magical or psionic powers during that time. If the character fails a saving throw vs. paralysis, he will fall down (taking no damage, but being unable to stand up until the disorientation ends).

5) Storage Room — This room contains numerous crates and kegs filled with dried, spoiled food. Consumption of any of it will require a saving throw vs. poison, or the character will develop nausea and cramps (-4 "to hit" in combat, one-half normal movement rate) for 2-5 hours, starting 2-8 minutes after eating.

One large stone urn in the southwestern corner of the room is marked "Holy Water," and is loosely sealed with a copper lid. The skeleton of a humanoid figure in leather armor lies against the base of the urn. A careful examination reveals the character died of a crushing blow to the skull.

If anyone opens the lid, a colony of algae will be revealed inside (appearing not unlike green slime in dim light). Any exposure to noise or light will cause the algoid inside (AC 5, MV 6", HD 5, HP 28, #ATT 2 or 1, D/ATT 1-10 per fist or psionic blast with 110 psionic ability points) to rear up abruptly and deliver its psionic attack. It will then strike out at anyone within 5' of it, dropping back into the urn when everyone has gotten out of reach.

Scattered on the floor around the urn are bits of treasure the algoid inadvertently collected when it bashed the half-arc assassin lying in front of the urn: 122 cp, 30 sp,

203 ep, 55 gp, 8 gems worth 50-300 gp each, and a *necklace of adaptation*. A flask of *oil of slipperiness* has rolled behind the urn, out of immediate view, and a *dagger of venom* lies at the bottom of the barrel, where it fell when the half-arc tried to attack the algoid (and lost).

6) Storage Room — This storage room is much like the one at area 5, though there are fewer items about. One of the kegs of drink has become poisoned with toxic bacteria; if someone goes through the trouble of opening all six kegs present, the poisoned keg will explode from the extreme pressure of gases produced by the bacteria. Anyone within 10' of the explosion will take 5-20 points damage from flying splinters and bolts, and must make a saving throw vs. poison or develop a severe, acute gastrointestinal disease (as per the DMG) within 3-12 hours. The disease will reduce the character's hit points by half within a 30-minute period, causing violent nausea, cramps, and other problems.

Unless cured by magic, the disease will last for 7-12 days, with a reduction of strength and constitution by 1 point each permanently. This loss can be recovered by a heal spell or a *wish*. After the 7-12 day period of severe sickness, another 4-16 days will be required to become fully recovered. Once the disease develops, a character will be completely incapacitated and cannot perform any actions except to crawl or stagger at half-normal speed.

7) Mage's Quarters — The secret door to this room may be detected in the usual manner. It consists of a carefully balanced block of stone attached to a pulley-and-



counterweight system. All one has to do is reach down, grab a secret handhold at the base of the door, and pull up. The entire section of stone wall will risk up into the ceiling in one segment (like a modern garage door) and one may enter the room. It takes a roll to open doors normally to lift the block of stone.

There is, of course, a problem. If one fails to detect the special catch that must be released when the door is opened (roll to detect stonework traps required), then a mechanism will sever the pulley rope when the stone door is completely raised, dropping it immediately back to the ground. The stone block weighs several tons easily; anyone standing next to or directly underneath the door must save vs. paralyzation in order to dodge aside as the door comes down. Those who fail to save will take 10-100 points of damage; anyone killed by the drop is assumed to have been crushed under the stone. The great mass of the stone prevents anyone from lifting it, even with a giant's strength, though other methods may remove it (*disintegrate*, *rock to mud*, etc.)

The room itself appears to have been the living quarters for a magic-user of some sort. Tapestries of an man wearing a kilt and a conical hat hang on the walls; the man is shown casting rivers of fire from his fingers, directing lightning upon an enemy army, slaying demons with a glance, and so forth. A well-kept bed (now rather dusty) and a number of tables and shelves fill the room as well.

A careful examination of the room will reveal that the aged books and scrolls are in good condition, and could bring a total of some 500-800 gp if sold in a large city. They are on a variety of topics (astronomy, botany, myths and legends), and date from the time of the destruction of Andril. In a secret compartment in one of the bedside tables is a scroll of seven spells, each of 5th to 8th level power (determine spells randomly or assign them as desired). Adventurers might also wish to pry out some of the various gemstones mounted in the headboard of the bed. This will garner some 20-80 gems, each of 20 gp value and of many types.

A large cabinet filled with colorful rocks and minerals sits against the eastern wall of the room. Behind it is a concealed door to a storage room, filled with worthless old furs, antique furniture (worth 2,000 gp total), a collection of non-magical staves; and a small chest in the easternmost end of the room. Sitting on the chest is a dark-colored cat that appears quite alive.

The cat is a guardian familiar (as per the FIEND FOLIO Tome) and was the property of a 17th-level magic-user who lived here many years ago. It has an 85% magic resistance. The familiar will prevent the chest from being opened, chasing characters out of the storage room if they start to approach the chest. Characters can see that something has been written in tiny print over the lock on the chest; anyone who manages to deal with the guardian familiar

and reads the words will trigger the *explosive runes*, which will not affect the chest. Anyone attempting to pick the lock will activate a magical trap that will do 16 points of damage (saving throw vs. spells for 8 points damage) from electrical shock; to make it worse, the chest has been *wizard locked* and the "shock lock" is actually false, having nothing to do with opening the chest.

If the chest is finally opened, it will be found to contain a number of old, rather racy love letters from a girlfriend of the magic-user, a huge (9,000 gp) diamond in a small box (labelled "Break In Case of Emergency"), a *portable hole* completely filled with mud, and a spindle-shaped clear *ioun stone* that sustains a character without food or water. A secret compartment in the bottom of the chest contains a strange metallic item, shaped like a small steel box. If the lid on the box is opened, some peculiar projections can be seen, along with a tiny stone wheel that can be manipulated with one's thumb. There is a chance equal to one's intelligence score expressed as a percentage that a character will discover that the device will produce flame when the wheel is rotated quickly (on the bottom of the device is the inscription "Zippo"). The lighter is good for 60 uses.

The giant diamond is enchanted, as per the spell *trap the soul*, and contains the life force of an unfortunate thief who once ran afoul of the magic-user and paid for it. The thief, a gnome (level 9, S13, 114, W7, D17, C15, CH13, HP 37, chaotic neutral) named Grumbamm, will be released from the gem if it is broken, appearing with no possessions whatsoever. He will be extremely thankful to whoever released him, and will try to help them out for a few days before leaving on his own. Of course, "helping out" may take on many meanings to a chaotic gnome thief, and may include stealing from other party members in an attempt to make his benefactor richer. Communicating with Grumbamm will be a problem, as he speaks only archaic tongues. He will be able to make himself understood if the character he speaks with rolls his intelligence x5 as a percentage; likewise, Grumbamm will understand characters 70% of the time.

8) Hall Storage Room — This small room appears empty at first glance. It actually has some tools inside it that have been rendered *invisible* by spells. None of the tools are particularly valuable, though they are well preserved and rust-free. One of them strongly resembles a *saw of mighty cutting*, though it is not.

9) Hall of the Tribunal — This large hall has a series of seven benches in the middle of the room, a raised platform in the northern end for speakers, and three ivory-inlaid wooden seats at the area marked A, where the high priest, high priestess, and temple mage formerly sat in judgement on various matters. Previous adventurers have taken

almost all of the ivory from the three northern chairs, leaving only some 50 gp worth left. The floor in this room is of dark gray stone, polished smooth.

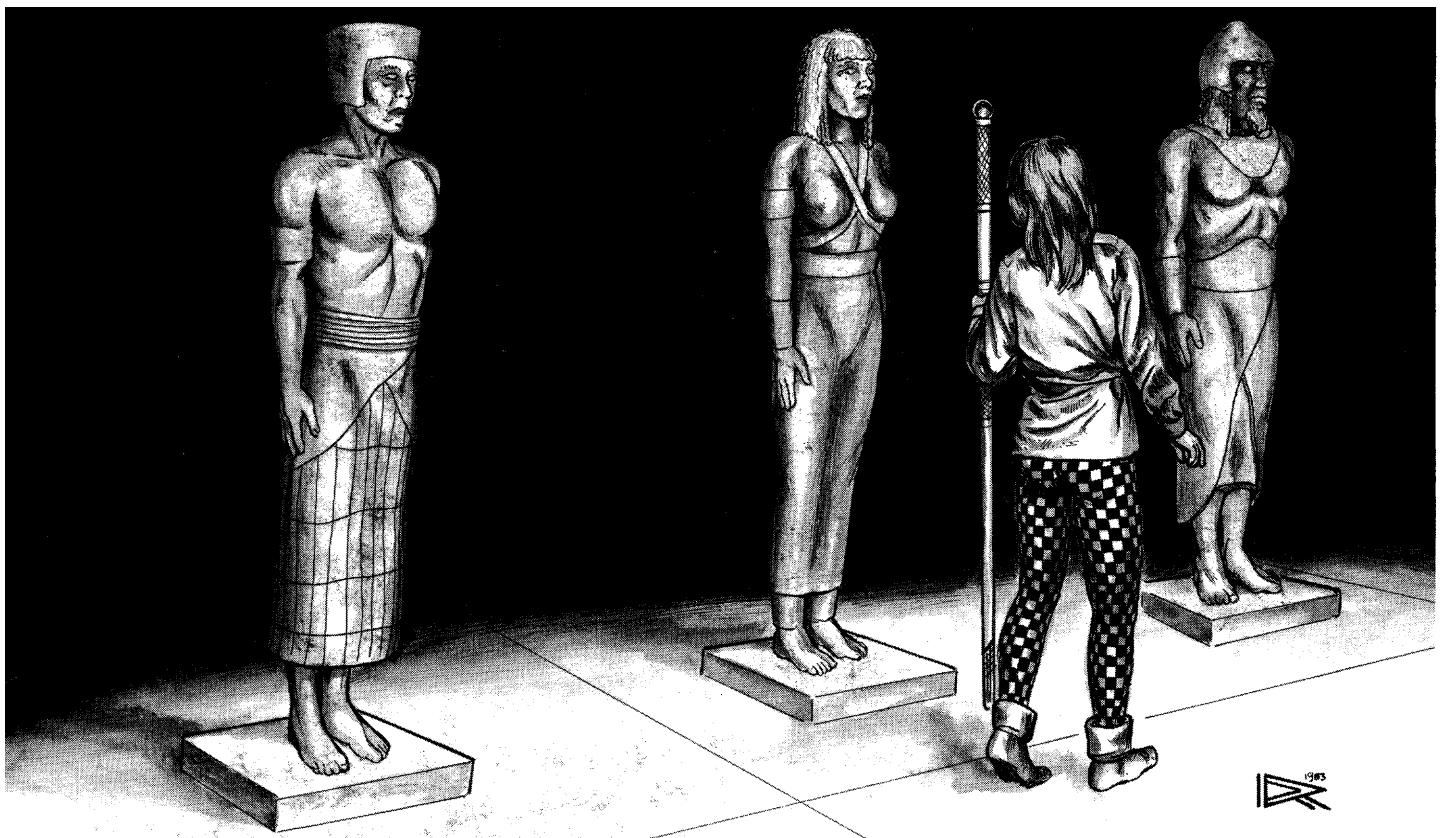
Along the far eastern end of the room at area B is an alcove lined with tapestries depicting the history of Andril, up to (but not including) its destruction. In front of the tapestries are six statues of various past priests and priestesses of Thoth, who were regarded as particularly powerful rulers. Each statue is decorated with gems, jewelry, and precious metals. However, a *wall of force* separates the statues from the viewers. Apparently, no one has ever managed to bring the *wall* down; unlike the *walls of force* at area 10, this *wall* will disappear permanently once it has been *disintegrated*. Each statue has 5,000-8,000 gp worth of gems, jewels, and metals on it. Removal of such items will take 2-8 hours per statue.

10) Trap — This room is not normally visible to anyone who stands beyond the eastern or western ends of the room and peers "into it." A special magical effect exists at points A and B, such that someone looking eastward from the hall by area 6 will look directly into area 11; someone in area 11 will see the entrance to area 6 (as shown in the diagram). Appearances are deceiving, however; anyone who tries to pass from the hall by area 6 to area 11 (or vice versa) without the special protections described below will become trapped in room 10. The room is covered with the bones of long-dead adventurers who found no way to escape. Various items of old equipment (well preserved in the dry air of the monument's interior) lay scattered about, as well as some minor treasures.

Once inside, both the eastern and western walls at points A and B will be transparent and people can see out of the room clearly. However, *walls of force* at A and at B prevent all escape. *Disintegrate* spells will cause a *wall* to be-dropped for 10 rounds, but a *dispel magic* must be cast in the round immediately afterward to negate a *dimension door* effect for 2-8 rounds, or anyone leaving the room from one side will reappear on the other side, still trapped within the room. Both spell effects will return after the noted periods of time.

The bones of 17 adventurers fill this unlit room, most of them being human in nature. Scavengers will find assorted usable weapons, pieces of adventuring gear, and some 370 gp worth of assorted coins and small (10 gp) gems. Three silver daggers, a +2 *battle axe*, and a *wand of illumination* with 31 charges left may be discovered among the remains after 3 turns of careful searching. Unless rescued or able to rescue themselves, persons trapped here will die of thirst and hunger within 10-40 days after their food runs out.

To prevent being trapped in room 10, one must have an abjuration spell of any sort cast upon him in the same round that he crosses points A and B. The person will then be *dimension doored* from either A to



B or B to A, as if room 10 never existed. Abjuration spells include *protection from evil* and *dispel evil*, as well as spells like *cure blindness* or *protection from normal missiles*. Casting an abjuration spell will not enable one to escape from the room if one has already become trapped within it. An exception to the above concerns those characters of true neutral alignment; these persons get a saving throw vs. spells each time they cross the *dimension door* points. Failure to save means the person is trapped within the room. Escape for such persons is conducted as for all others.

Anyone who examines the room's contents for longer than one turn will note that some of the remains have been carefully arranged, apparently after their deaths. Whether this was done by their companions or by someone else cannot be told.

11) Robing Area — This chamber contains cabinets and pegs for assorted clerical garments (purple cotton tunics) covered with hieroglyphs and symbols that pertain to the worship of Thoth. None of the garments, though well-preserved by the dry air, are in very good shape. One tunic has a dormant goldbug (see FIEND FOLIO Tome) in a side pocket, along with three gold and live silver coins.

There is a side closet in the northeastern part of the room in which the clerical vestments of a high priest and a high priestess of Thoth (recognizable to anyone worshipping a deity from the Egyptian pantheon) may be found. Less damaged than the other garments, these are worth about 250 gp apiece. Hanging in the back of the closet is a black robe with a golden serpent woven into the back. This is a souvenir of a suc-

cessful raid against a temple of Set long ago; if worn by someone of lawful evil alignment, the robe will add +2 to saving throws vs. all magical effects. Anyone else wearing it will suffer as if the robe were a *cloak of poisonousness*.

12) Stairwell — This circular stairway descends 30' to the second level. It is lit in three places by *continual light* spells along the ceiling.

## SECOND LEVEL

13) Minor Library — This was a combination library and discussion room for the lower level clerics who inhabited the monument. There are very few books left on the shelves, most of them having been taken long ago or destroyed by passing adventurers. What books remain are in good condition, though useless to adventurers. There is one scrap of parchment, much handled, that appears to have been a note left by an adventurer who speculates that the clerics fled the monument after the disaster, as he can find no sign of their bodies within the building.

14) Study Carrels — Six small niches lie in a row here, each with its own desk and chair. All paper here has been destroyed by past adventurers, and a few random scribbles may be found on the wall to the east behind the study carrels.

15) Minor Clerics' Dormitory — Screened by faded curtains, this area once housed from ten to twelve lesser clerics of Thoth's religion. There are no food prepa-

ration facilities here, since the clerics simply used their spells to create it. The bedding and furniture in this room has been much damaged by passing adventurers, but is still usable as a resting spot. Indeed, judging from the amount of random equipment left here, many adventurers have used area 15 for just that.

The Dungeon Master should prepare a list of a large number of random items that may be found after a careful search of this room. Most items should be useless (boots with holes in them, burned-out wands, broken amulets, spoiled food, skeletal remains of an adventurer or two). There can be some valuables like coins, small gems, and the like. One or two minor magic items may be included here as well.

16) Restroom — This surprisingly clean facility is arranged so that garbage and wastes are dropped into a 10' by 10' chamber below the floor that contains a gelatinous cube. The monster cannot escape its confinement (not that it cares). However, anyone who tries to climb down the 3' diameter garbage chute in the north wall will find that the walls of the chute are perfectly slick, and the character will be dropped directly onto the gelatinous cube. The character will be automatically struck by the gelatinous cube, and must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation in that round and every round thereafter in order to "stay afloat." Failure to make the roll means the character sinks into the gelatinous cube and is dissolved shortly thereafter. Contained inside the gelatinous cube, no worse the wear for their long stay, are 12 gems (worth 20-120 gp each) and a set of *bracers of defense* (AC 2).

17) Gymnasium — This large room has a number of old pieces of exercising equipment sitting about (weights, tumbling mats, bars, etc.). The skeletal bodies of three adventurers lay about the room, having obviously been beaten by something with incredible strength. Standing with arms folded in the center of the west wall is a huge, heavily scarred human male. The man wears a ragged set of robes belted at the waist, extending down to his knees.

The "man" is actually a flesh golem that has become altered somewhat from its long stay underground. It has become tougher as its skin dried out, making it AC 3 now, and it will take only half damage from blunt weapons used against it. The golem has also developed a low intelligence, and can regenerate its wounds at a rate of 1 point per turn. It is a normal golem in other respects (MV 8", HD 9, HP 40, #ATT 2, D/ATT 2-16/2-16).

When anyone enters the room, the golem will walk over to the nearest character and nod at him. It will attempt to speak, but nothing it says makes any sense. If anyone

tries to communicate with the golem, it will smile and follow that character around wherever he goes. It will do nothing more than follow, however, and will obey no commands. If attacked, the golem will immediately go berserk and attack everyone close to it. It may be noticed that the golem is wearing a ring on one hand; the ring is one of contrariness.

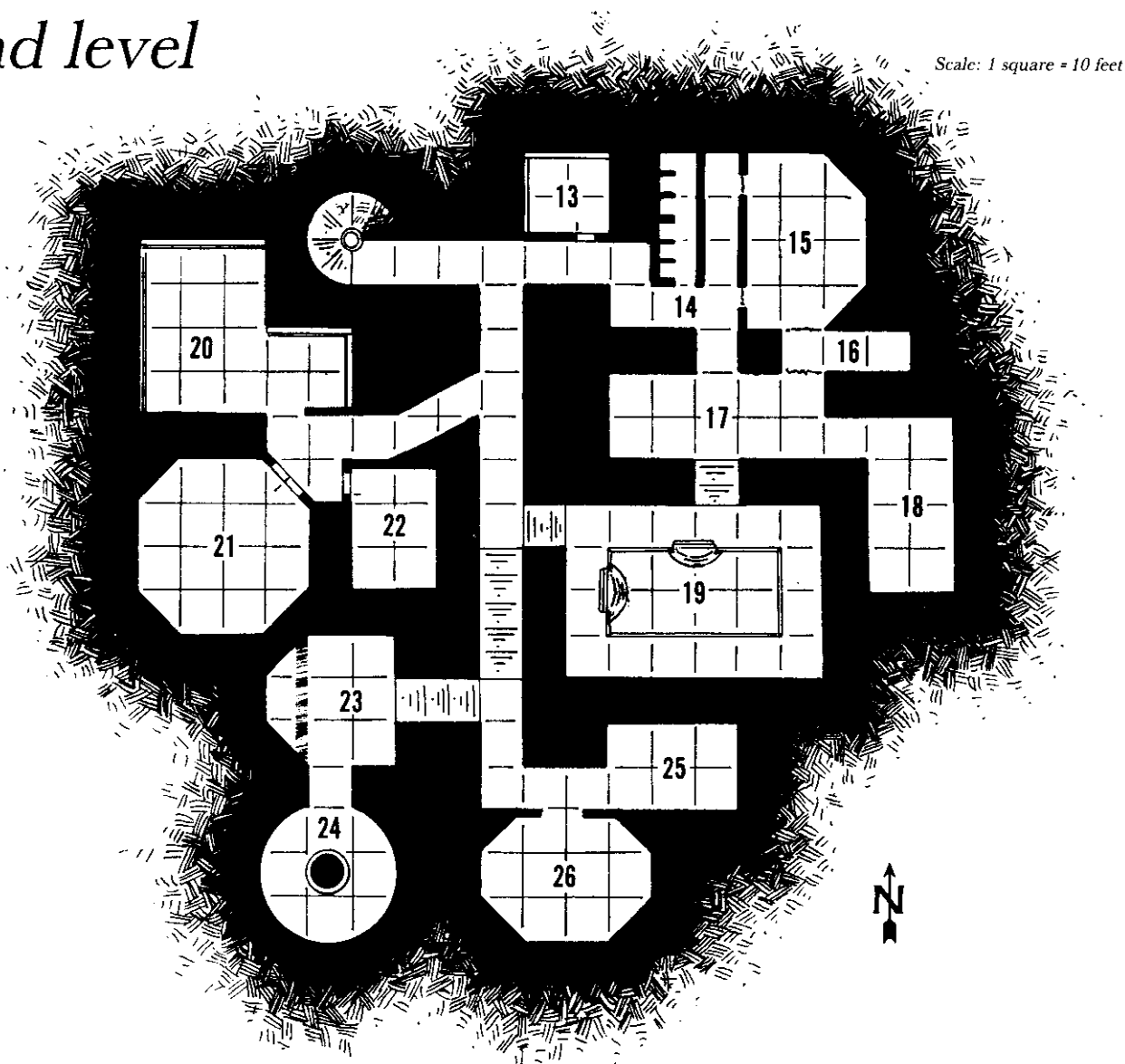
18) Major Clerics' Living Quarters — This chamber was once the personal quarters for the high priest and high priestess of Thoth. However, the southern 20' square section of this room is now covered by a large patch of witherweed (see the FIEND FOLIO Tome). The weed has grown over a bed, some bookshelves, and a wooden chest.

Unfortunately for intruders, an evil illusionist once cast a *permanent illusion* over the witherweed, so that the room appears to be in perfectly normal and undamaged condition. Anyone who walks over to investigate will walk directly into the witherweed and be attacked by it. If someone manages

to destroy the weed without burning it off, then the chest may be opened. Inside is a large stack of papers, including three random magical scrolls (if they contain spells, the spells will be clerical in nature) and a diary kept by the high priestess of Thoth. The priestess describes the day-long destruction of the city in careful detail, and finally notes that the clerics planned to escape through the "gates below" with the help of the deity Geb (see the DDG book for information on this god). There is very little in the way of information on the monument; most of the diary is concerned with financial matters and with the priestess's relationship with her spouse, the high priest.

19) Pool — Adventurers will note that this pool has no drainage pipes to fill it or empty it with (clerics used create water, *destroy water*, and *purify water* spells on it). The pool is now dry, though there is a layer of dried material around the edges and along the bottom, similar to salt in taste. Anyone who actually tastes this material

## Second level



will be healed of 1-4 points of damage. This material will only do this the first time a character tastes it, and will have no further effect on the character afterward.

20) Major Library — The shelves and tables in this room are littered with the remains of books, papers, and scrolls that have all been defaced and burned. Graffiti on the walls indicates that previous adventurers have looted this place thoroughly, and destroyed whatever was left. Lying under a table in the center of the room is the body of a dead adventurer, who was apparently killed in his sleep, possibly by another adventurer. Though there is a lot to investigate in this room, there is nothing further of interest.

21) Laboratory/Workroom — The huge bronze doors to this workroom area are locked with three locks. Because of the powerful enchantments placed upon them, no magic can undo the locks; only thieves can open them. However, each lock will place a different curse upon any thief who is bold enough to try opening it. The uppermost lock will cause any thief who tries to pick it to save vs. polymorph or be turned into a non-poisonous snake of small size. The second lock causes everyone within 20' to save vs. spells at -4 (with wisdom bonuses applicable) or be struck with *fear*. Those who fail to save will flee back to the first level of the dungeon, and will not descend willingly any further. The third lock causes the thief to save vs. spells; while no immediate effects will be noticed, the thief will have a permanent invisible brand upon his or her forehead that will only be clearly visible to clerics. The mark identifies the thief as such, but does not force any clerics to react unfavorably toward the character. Near the base of the door are two snake skeletons, killed by sword blows.

Inside the room is a laboratory and workshop designed for building enchanted creatures, particularly golems. A partially completed clay golem stands in one corner, and tables around the room are filled with various sculpting tools, metalworking implements, surgical materials, and so forth. The total resale value of these materials would be considerable if sold to temples or wizards who wanted them (1,200-1,800 gp value).

The room is guarded by a special enchantment. If anything is taken from the room, an aerial servant will be summoned from the Elemental Plane of Air to recover all stolen items as soon as anyone leaves the room with something. The aerial servant (AC 3, MV 24", HD 16, HP 98, #ATT 1, D/ATT 8-32) will not fight, but will not leave unless it is destroyed or unless it recovers all items taken from the laboratory.

22) Storage Room — This room contains a large amount of material that clerics of 9th level and above will recognize as useful for building clay golems. Wizards of 11th level and above will note materials good for

building other sorts of golems as well. Most of this material is difficult to transport, but could bring fairly good prices if sold in a major city (totalling 1,000-4,000 gp).

23) Guardian's Chamber — The western end of this room is covered by a permanent illusion of a stone wall. Standing behind the illusionary wall, and able to see through the illusion clearly, is a clay golem (AC 7, MV 7", HD 11, HP 50, #ATT 1, D/ATT 3-30). Two skeletons of adventurers lie at the foot of the stairs, clutching swords. One wears +2 plate mail, and the other has two 500-gp gems in a belt pouch, as well as a scroll tube with a *protection from devils* scroll inside. Both adventurers seem to have been killed by great blows, and have been dead many years.

The clay golem is under the control of a chaotic evil spirit. Formerly it guarded the entrance into area 24, but during the fight with the two adventurers, it was possessed and will now attack anyone who reaches the foot of the stairs. The clay golem will pursue adventurers through the monument, and will even leave the monument to attack anyone else it can find. The golem will surprise opponents when it steps from the illusionary wall on a roll of 1-4 on d6.

24) Shaft to Third Level — This circular chamber is devoid of all ornamentation, except for a suit of plate mail hung on the south wall of the room. The armor was obviously seared in the past by great heat. Close examination will reveal nothing else.

In the center of the room is a 10' diameter shaft that drops down for 120' to the third level. Anyone stepping out into the shaft will slowly float downward to the next level, as if having received a *feather fall* spell for the duration. The descent will take exactly one minute. However, during that time anyone in the shaft will find all of their metallic belongings abruptly heating up to searing temperatures. The character will take 1 point of damage for every 10 gp weight of metallic equipment carried. (The encumbrance tables in the back of the newer editions of the DMG will provide weights for most metallic items; weapon weights are given in the Players Handbook, and armor weights in the DMG.) Thus, a man wearing plate mail armor would take 45 points of damage from that alone, since platemail weighs 450 gp. A saving throw vs. spells permits one to take half damage (rounding fractions down) from the heat. Any of the precautions listed as negating the effects of the druid spell *heat metal* will be effective in negating the effects here.

The only way to avoid taking damage is to send metallic items down the shaft separately from living beings. The items will float to the bottom like everything else will. Though metallic items become extremely hot, they need not save vs. magical fire, and will remain effective and useful.

25) Conjuring Room — This chamber seems to be devoid of all furnishings and

tapestries. The remains of a pentagram and a protective circle lie on the floor. A magic-user can tell that they were designed to conjure elementals, and can judge the age of the scribbles to be about equal to that of the rest of the monument. The scribbles are useless now; if anyone tries to summon an elemental or other creature using these protective drawings, the summoning may well succeed, but the drawings will be found to be ineffective, and the elemental or other summoned being will attack the summoner at once.

26) Unused Room — This room seems to have been used as a storage area, and later as a garbage dump by adventurers. The referee should feel free to fill the room with items from the "Dungeon Dressing" tables (Appendix I) in the back of the DMG, keeping the number of useful items to a minimum. A few coins or minor treasures might be included as well. Over the years, a small colony of yellow mold has sprung up in the southern end of the room, and there is a 5% cumulative chance per turn of searching through the junk-laden room that the mold will burst. Adventurers have a separate 5% cumulative chance per turn of searching of finding the mold before it blows up. A complete search of the room will take 12 turns.

### THIRD LEVEL

27) False Elemental Hall — Adventurers who arrive in this area from the second level will see an octagonal room with four 14'-by-14' alcoves in the northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest corners. The alcoves are sealed from the octagonal room by *walls of force*. The four alcoves (labeled A through D) are described below. Careful observers may notice that the arrangement of the alcoves and their contents is not consistent with the arrangement of the Elemental Planes. Four secret doors may be discovered in the north, south, east, and west ends of the room, two leading to other major areas of the monument complex and two (located between "planes" that do not normally touch one another, at the Fire/Water junction and Earth/Air junction) lead to traps.

A: This area is filled with roaring flames. Though the heat from them cannot be felt, this area illuminates most of area 27. If someone casts a *disintegrate* spell at the *wall of force* here, flames will burst out into area 27 for one round, doing 10-100 points damage to each person there (save vs. dragon breath for half damage). The flames will go out immediately afterward.

B: This alcove appears to be full of solidly packed sand. If the *wall* is brought down, sand will pour into area 27, forcing all within to make saving throws vs. wands or be buried in the sand, helpless to save themselves. The victims will be crushed for 3-30 points of damage, and will suffocate unless dug out within 2 rounds. Those who are not



so trapped can search for buried victims, with a 5% chance per segment (6 seconds) of uncovering them (cumulative over time).

C: This area is completely filled with pure green water. Dropping the *wall* will cause everyone in the room to save vs. paralyzation or take 4-16 points of damage from the resulting wall of water. The water will fill area 27 to a depth of 3', and will pour into other areas of the complex as doors are opened.

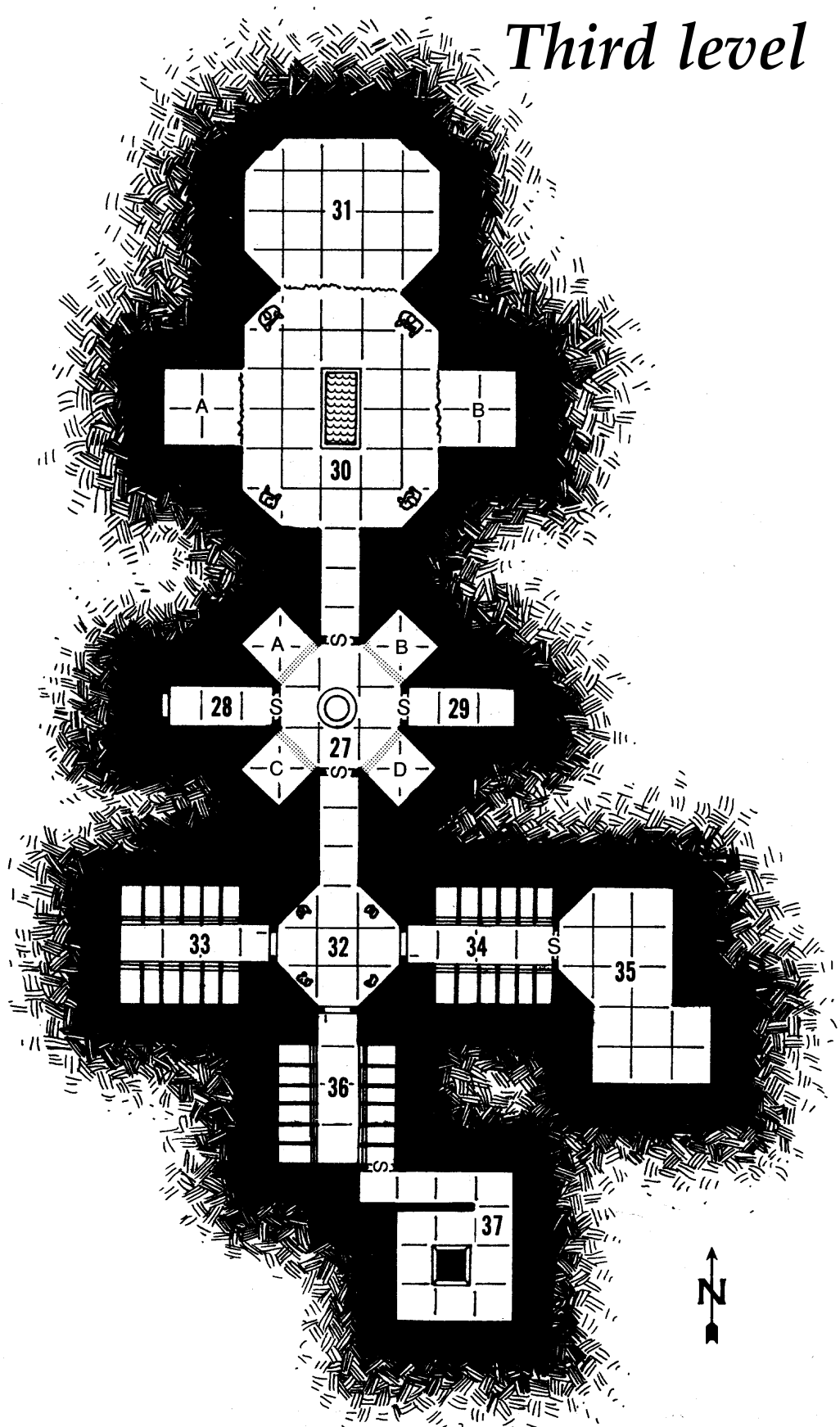
D: This room appears completely empty. It is, almost. Contained inside is a vortex (AC 0, MV 15", HD 2+2, HP 17) that, if released, will immediately turn into a whirlwind centered under the shaft to the second level. It will also try to capture one character at a time and spin him around in it, lifting the victim some 30' up the shaft. If the vortex is killed, the character will drop 30' and take damage from the fall.

Finally, if anyone walks away from the center of area 27 after dropping down through the shaft from the second level, and then walks back underneath the shaft and stands still for longer than one round, that character will be *levitated* directly up the shaft to area 24 within one minute. The character will *not* be subject to the *heat metal* effect on the trip up.

28) Steam Trap — Anyone who opens the secret door to this room will see a door at the far end. The moment that someone opens the far door, the secret door into the room will lock shut (as per *wizard lock*, 17th level). The far door is false, opening to a rock wall behind it. In the round after the one in which the secret door shuts, the room will magically begin to fill with steam. Those trapped inside will begin suffering from the scalding mist, taking 1-4 points of damage every round they are exposed to it. The steam bath will last for 2-20 rounds, after which time the secret door will again open, and survivors may flee.

Fire resistance potions or rings, protection from fire spells, and similar powers, or spells will protect the trapped characters from harm. Any sort of cold-producing spell, such as an *ice storm* or *cone of cold*, will also negate the steam's effect, as well as causing none of the damage that would normally be taken from the cold spell. However, cold-producing spells will only negate the steam's effect for as many rounds as the level at which the spell was cast (i.e., a *cone of cold* cast by a 9th-level magic-user will negate the steam for 9 rounds).

29) Dust Trap — Anyone opening the secret door to this room will find a thin layer of sand and dust on the floor inside. Nothing else is visible at first. Anyone who steps inside the room, however, will be trapped as the secret door slams shut behind him, locked as if by a *wizard lock* of 17th level power. In the round afterward, a trap in the ceiling will release *dust of sneezing and choking* into the room. The secret door will open again in 21-30 rounds, after the *dust* has dissipated and is harmless.



Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

30) Foyer — This large octagonal chamber has three curtained exits leading off from it. In the four diagonal corners of the room are giant statues of Thoth, in four different colors of stone (red, brown, blue, green).

They are arranged in "correct" order, if the colors are taken to be related to the four elemental planes of fire, earth, air, and water. In the center of the room is a long pool of water, level with the floor. If anyone

stands at the side of the pool and concentrates on the water, there is a percentage chance equal to that character's intelligence score that a vision will be seen in the pool. Such a vision will come only after a round of concentration. It will last for 2-9 rounds, and can only be generated once per day per character.

Visions that will be seen will vary from character to character. Most visions (70%) will be of a past event in the character's life, drawn at random (the Dungeon Master may also invent brief episodes that occurred in the character's life prior to taking up adventuring). Other visions will be of the character and his party as they are now inside the monument's tunnel system (25%). This type of vision will reveal one member of the party at random, showing his location, his actions, and so forth.

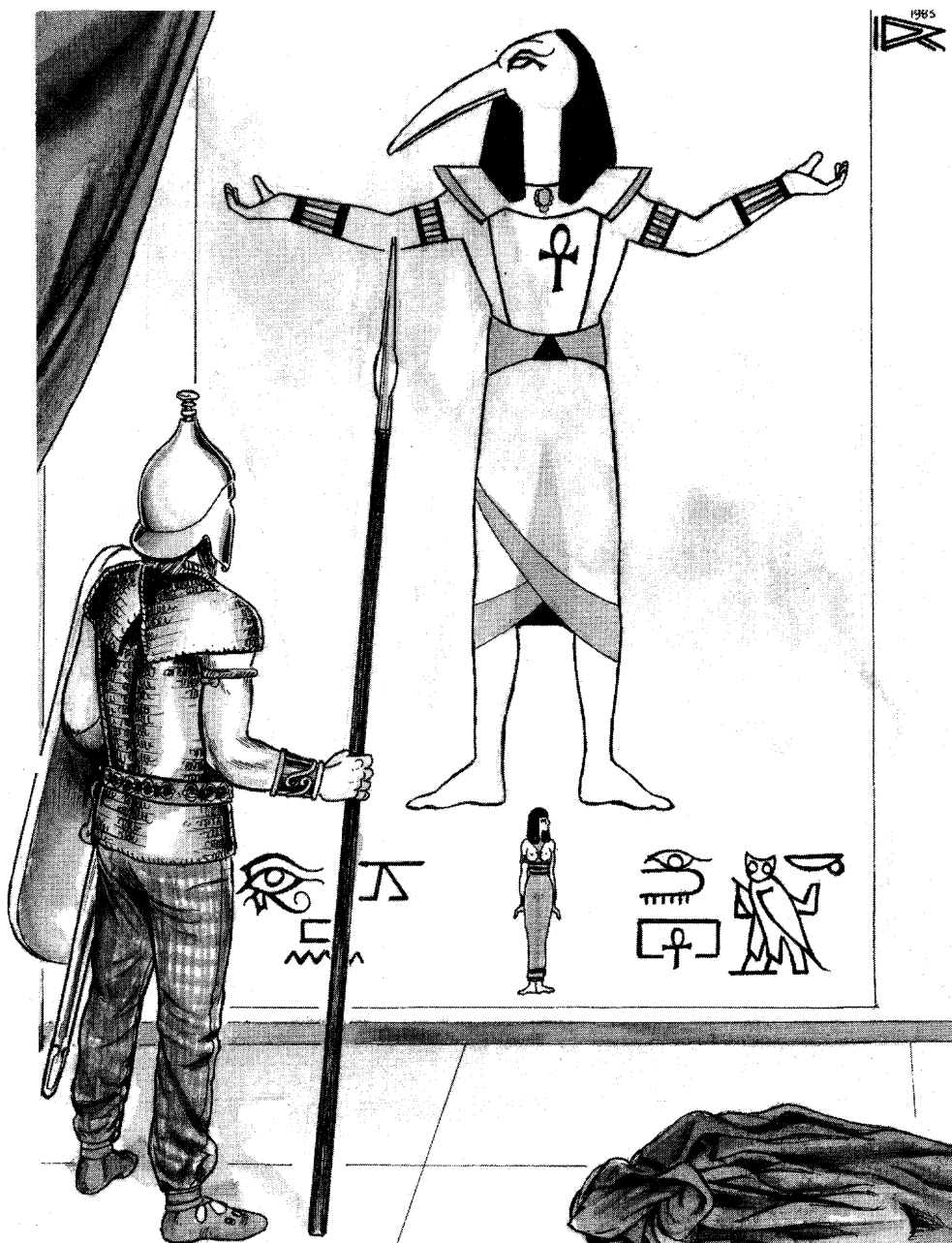
Finally, 5% of all visions seen here will depict some future episode in the character's life. Such future events only serve as possible futures, and are not fated to occur. For example, the character might see an assassin creeping up and backstabbing him in a local inn. The character can prepare for the event by having bodyguards with him, and the assassin may be captured or slain before the prediction comes true. DMs may become very creative when using this "prediction" power, and should not feel constrained to make things come true in a certain way.

The two chambers to the east and west have hieroglyphic writings upon the floor and walls around them, warning everyone to stay out of them. The hieroglyphs may be read and understood by a cleric or magic-user who worships an Egyptian-panthoeon deity. The rooms, A and B, are described below.

A: This area, screened by a thin purple curtain, is bare of all furniture and ornamentation except for a huge painting on the western wall. The picture shows the god Thoth, arms outstretched, standing over and behind a tiny human male figure. Some hieroglyphs on the wall, next to the human figure, may be read by any cleric or magic-user who worships an Egyptian-panthoeon deity. The message indicates that this was the return point for the high priest of Thoth when he used a *word of recall* spell.

B: Much like area A, this chamber is also bare of all but a picture showing Thoth standing over a female human figure. The hieroglyphs indicate that the high priestess of Thoth teleported here with her *word of recall* spell.

31) Chamber of Meditation — This room is a soft gray color, and has a thick carpet on the floor. The only thing that adorns the plain walls is a single word in the center of the northern wall: *Meditate* (written in ancient common, but clearly understandable to all). Any cleric who rests here in meditation for as many hours as he or she has levels will be magically affected by this room. Clerics who are of the neutral alignments (true neutral, lawful neutral, etc.),



including all druids, will be affected as if they had inhaled *incense of meditation*. Clerics of lawful good, chaotic good, lawful evil, and chaotic evil alignment will be affected as if they had been exposed to *incense of obsession*. All clerics and druids will be able to tell from the magical "feel" of the room that it may have some effect upon them, though they won't know what effect.

32) Chamber of the Dead — This small octagonal room has a *silence*, 15' radius spell cast upon it. It was cast at the 16th level of ability, for purposes of deciding if *dispel magic* will work upon it. If anyone does manage to dispel the *silence*, that character will be automatically stricken with a curse (no saving throw) to have to make a saving throw vs. spells whenever confronted with an undead being. If the saving throw is failed (wisdom bonuses apply), the character will flee from the undead creature in fear for 5-8 rounds, dropping everything that he holds. This curse can only be removed by a

cleric of 9th level or higher using a *remove curse*, or by the use of a *wish*, *limited wish*, or *alter reality* spell.

Three doors lead to the south, east, and west. In the diagonal corners of the room are four statues of the gods Thoth, Anubis, Ra, and Osiris. Each is made from colored marble, and appears virtually lifelike.

33) Western Vaults — This area is one of three burial vaults in this end of the underground complex. The walls have sealed chambers for the burial of dead priests and priestesses of Thoth, as well as other important religious officials of Andril. This area, as well as areas 34 and 36, has 24 burial chambers; roughly two thirds of the chambers in each area contain mummified bodies, dressed in funeral clothing with ceremonial items with them. Few items buried with the dead are worth anything. Allow a 5% chance per chamber that some minor item, such as a non-magical ring, gem, or the like will be found (maximum value of such items will be 100 gp).

34) Eastern Vaults — This area is just like area 33 in all respects, except for the secret door in the far eastern end of the room. The secret door is sealed with a *wizard lock* of 17th-level power. The door may be detected as either a stonework trap (by dwarves) or as a secret door (by elves). Other characters have 1 chance in 12 to detect it, per turn of searching. If the *wizard lock* is dispelled, it will reappear the next time the door is shut (and the door will shut automatically within 1-4 rounds if it is left alone).

35) Embalming Room — Embalming and necromantic materials of all sorts fill this room, covering tables, cabinets, and

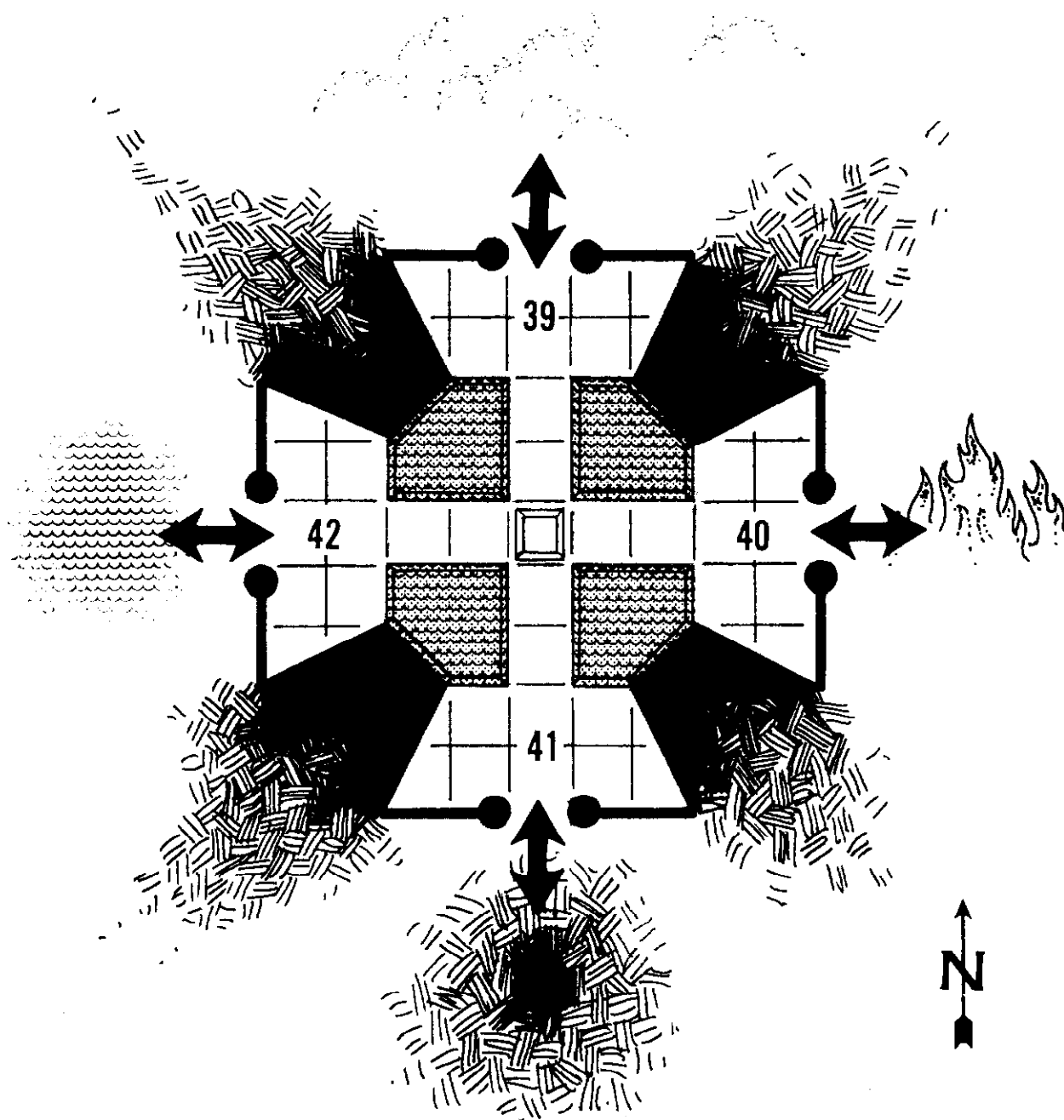
walls. The smell of some of the chemicals is quite strong, and will make characters nauseous for 1-4 rounds if they fail to save vs. poison upon entering the room. However, anyone who stays here for longer than one turn will be overcome by the fumes, and will fall into a deep trance-like sleep. This sleep will last for as many weeks as the character has hit points, and at the end of this time period the character must make a system shock roll or die. If the roll is made, the character will awaken with 1 hit point, barely able to move (half normal speed) and unable to attack or defend himself. The character must eat and drink within 24 hours of awakening or will quickly perish.

In this room are three adventurers who

came into the ruins two years ago; two of them are dead, but one is still alive. Lying between a dwarven male in leather armor and a human male in plate mail is a human female, wearing bracers and carrying a dagger. She is dressed in flowing green robes, belted at the waist with two side pouches (containing items like copper coins, candles, tinderboxes, etc.). The woman is Karamel Andrigson, a paladin who prefers the use of daggers to other weapons and enjoys bracers for armor over more encumbering sorts. Karamel was trapped in this room with her companions while searching for a legendary "gateway to other planes" rumored to exist in this monument. She is near death, though it is obvious at a glance

## Fourth level

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet



(comparing her to the state of her companions) that she still lives. She is a 10th-level paladin: HP 108 (currently 3 left); S15, I17, W17, D7, C18, CH17; no spells currently, Her *bracers of defense* are of AC 2, and she uses a +3 *dagger*. The religion she belongs to is that of Ukko, chief of the Finnish deities (see the DDG book). If taken out of the dungeon and given proper treatment, Karamel will reward the adventurers with 5,000 gp each from her temple. She will only truly befriend good characters, particularly lawful good ones.

36) Southern Vaults — Much like areas 33 and 34, there is one anomaly that may be noticed in this room. The lowest burial crypt in the southeastern corner of the room is slightly open. Investigation will reveal that the crypt here is empty, and that there is a secret door in one side of it. The secret door can be opened easily with a catch on the floor. On the northern wall of the crypt is the inscription (in ancient common, but clearly understandable) “Through the halls of the dead, to the halls of the elements.”

37) Shaft to Fourth Level — This is an unadorned little chamber with a 10' square pit in the center of it. The pit drops 110' down to area 38. On the southern wall of the room is written the word “Trust.”

Anyone who jumps into the pit will fall immediately at full speed toward the bottom. However, the character will not strike the sides of the pit and will receive a *feather fall* spell just 10' above the bottom of the shaft, enabling the trusting character to land safely, even if somewhat shaken up.

#### FOURTH LEVEL

38) Crossroads — The drop shaft from area 37 will land characters onto a crossroads-like structure, surrounded by four pools of violet-colored liquid. The crossroads path is 10' wide, and has no railings to prevent one from falling into the liquid. The liquid acts as a *potion of delusion* if consumed (it tastes like fine wine). A deluded person will believe that he or she knows everything there is to know about the area he or she is in, and will rush off madly toward either area 39, 40, 41, or 42, crossing through the doorways there without stopping.

The four areas that can be seen from area 38 are all transdimensional gateways to the four major elemental planes. The doorways that can be seen are black in color, but are not solid; anyone may walk through them and will emerge somewhere on the elemental planes. A small pedestal sits 10' in front of each door, each bearing an item upon it. The clerics of Thoth used these gateways to further their knowledge of the Elemental Planes. It was through such contact that certain clerics came to know one of the Elemental Princes of Evil (most likely Olhydra, as listed in the FIEND FOLIO Tome), and became corrupted.

The DM should sketch out a small portion of each plane, in case some adventurers decide to try their luck thereon; remember, though, that the monument won't stay above ground forever, and characters might not be able to escape if they dally too long on other planes. Also, entry into any elemental plane without proper protection means the abrupt death of the character from drowning, burning, suffocation, or wind blasts (depending upon the plane traveled to).

Anyone who stands directly beneath the opening in the ceiling at area 38 and says, “up!” in any language will be lifted into the air by rapid *levitation*, and will rise up to area 37. The *levitation* will be dispelled once the character enters room 37 and moves away from the shaft, landing the character on the floor again.

39) Gateway to the Plane of Air — This chamber is sky blue in color. The pedestal is of a clear blue crystal (*glassteed* glass worth 500 gp) and has a *ring of air elemental command* upon it. The ring will initially function as a *ring of invisibility* when first worn by anyone. The hieroglyphs and other writings on the ring make it clear the ring is to be worn only by a cleric of Thoth.

In order to activate its powers, the ring must be blessed by a cleric of Thoth. However, if anyone takes this ring from the monument without having it so blessed, the ring will be cursed and will function as a *ring of -3 protection*, worsening all saving throws that character makes. The ring will not then be removable unless a cleric of Thoth casts a *remove curse* on the ring. The cleric will recognize the ring as belonging to the priests of Thoth, and will also take the ring back in addition to any other payment for the spell casting. Note that no cleric of Thoth will bless the ring unless it will be worn by another priest of Thoth. Also note that every time the ring is removed, it must be *blessed* again in order to function at full power.

40) Gateway to the Plane of Fire — This chamber is fiery red in color, and the small pedestal before it appears to be of *glassteel* but is actually of regular glass (worth 350 gp) and is rather fragile. Upon it is a *ring of fire resistance*. If anyone touches the ring without speaking the name of the glyph of fire (*fah*, as per the DMG) will trigger the *glyph of warding* placed on the tabletop. The burst of flame will do 30 points of damage to the character grasping the ring (half of that if a save vs. spells is made). The glass table must save vs. magical fire or it will shatter. The ring, of course, will not be affected.

41) Gateway to the Plane of Earth — This chamber is a deep brown in color. The dark wooden pedestal before it is quite broad and massive, much moreso than the other pedestals. A smooth black stone rests upon the tabletop. Anyone who picks up the stone will immediately discover that the

pedestal is actually a killer mimic (AC 7, MV 3", HD 10, HP 66, #ATT 1, D/ATT 3-12). There is a 90% chance that whoever sticks up the stone will also get his fingers stuck to the mimic, rendering that hand useless. The stone is a *loadstone*, and will cut the movement rate and number of attacks per round of the victim by half even if the mimic is slain. The mimic will not attack anyone who tosses some food on the tabletop first. The priests of Thoth were able through costly rituals to invoke the favor of the deity Geb (see the DDG book), who lives on the Elemental Plane of Earth, in order to cross into that plane without other magical assistance. The table and stone, of course, were only traps for the unwary.

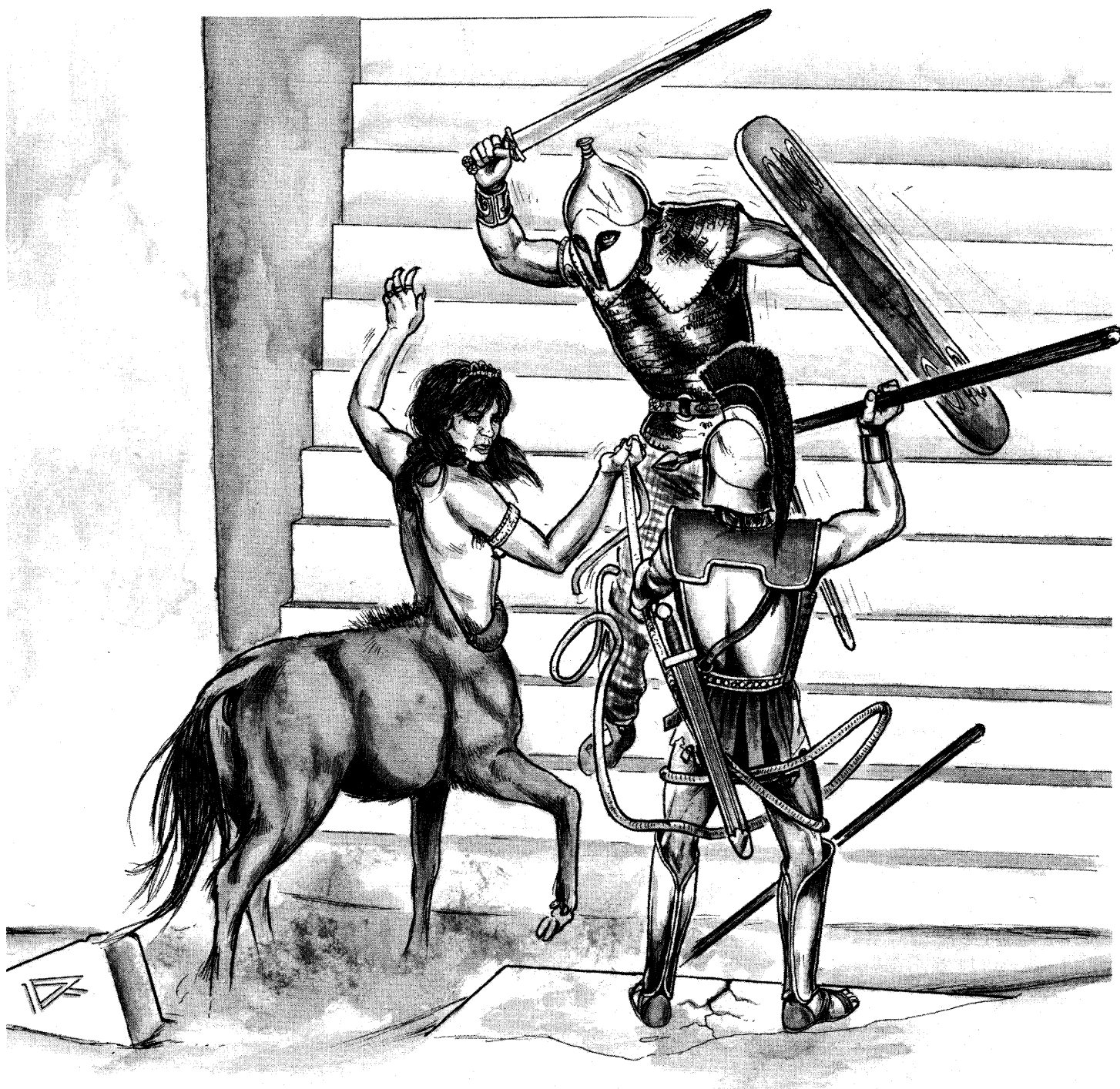
42) Gateway to the Plane of Water — This chamber is a deep sea green in color. The pedestal before the door is made of brilliant jade, and is worth 10,000 gp if removed intact. In pieces, the table is worth about 1,000-4,000 gp altogether. On top of the table is a *ring of water breathing*, with a 5' effective radius. The ring is unremarkable in appearance, being a plain silver band. However, if anyone wears this ring within 60' of a fire elemental (or an efreet, salamander, or other denizen of the Plane of Fire), the fiery creature will immediately sense the presence of the ring and will attack the wearer instantly, regardless of any other orders (this will occur even with fire elementals under a magic-user's personal command). This peculiar curse cannot be removed from the ring without destroying the ring.

#### Leaving the monument

While the adventurers are exploring the monument, Feyodena the lamia (and Telketnatun the gynosphinx, if the party has attacked or been rude to her) will be preparing an ambush for them outside. Feyodena will station herself at the foot of the stairway leading up to the statue of Thoth, magical potion in hand. The magical rope will be left coiled in a heap at the top of the stairway, out of immediate view. As soon as the party emerges and starts down the stairs, the lamia (still invisible) will drink her *potion of growth*. As soon as the party starts down the stairs, she will call out the command word to activate the *rope of entanglement*. This will also render Feyodena visible, and the party (now most likely entangled in the rope) will be confronted by a 30' tall lamia!

Feyodena will immediately start using her *charm* power on any character who attacks her. If reduced to below half her hit points, Feyodena will turn *invisible* using her ring, and will flee into the desert. If she can *charm* attackers into submission, she will move within reach of the party (easy enough for her to do, in her enlarged form) and will begin touching them and draining their wisdom points away. Once the party has been completely brought under her





control, she will command the *rope of entanglement* to release them, and will bid the party to follow her away, where she will dine on them at her leisure . . .

If Telketnatun is involved in the ambush, she will assist Feyodena by inscribing a *symbol of stunning* on the first step of the stairway down from the monument (beside the rope). She will then use her *dispel magic* power on anyone who appears to be a spell caster (having a genius intelligence, Telketnatun has a 90% chance of accurately picking out spell casters, even in disguise). Knowing that Feyodena will be trying to *charm* those caught in the *rope of entanglement*, she will concentrate on uncaptured spell casters, maintaining this power from round to round until everyone is captured, escapes, or is slain. If she takes more than

half damage in hit points or is in danger of losing her life, Telketnatun will fly away for good. If the gynosphinx and her ally win, they will divide the party up between them (Telketnatun getting all the clerics and bards) and have an informal luncheon.

#### Ending the scenario

If time runs out and the monument starts to descend into the sands again, the characters will know about it only if they are outside the monument or have a guard stationed somewhere who can warn the group; the descent of the monument will be completely silent. The monument will sink into the sands at a rate of 30' per round, and no magical force or power can stop it. Characters standing on top of the monu-

ment will be able to leap off onto the sand and escape. Those inside the monument will be trapped (the secret entranceway shuts and locks one round after the descent starts, with a 17th-level *wizard lock* in effect upon it) and will have to wait for two years to escape — unless they leave through the gates into the Elemental Planes.

Any characters who manage to survive the dangers of the monument and return to Ruatha will be treated as heroes by the villagers. They will get free food, free lodging, and other courtesies. The townspeople will ask only that the characters describe, in great detail, all of their adventures within the monument. Refusal to do so will be taken as an insult, and the characters will be escorted forcefully out of town.

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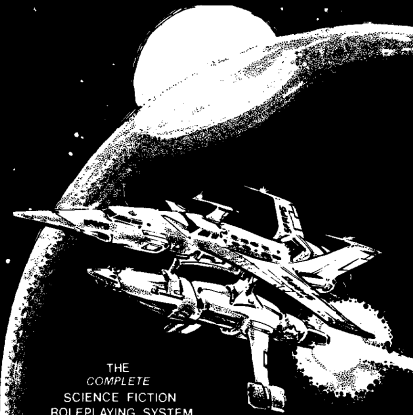
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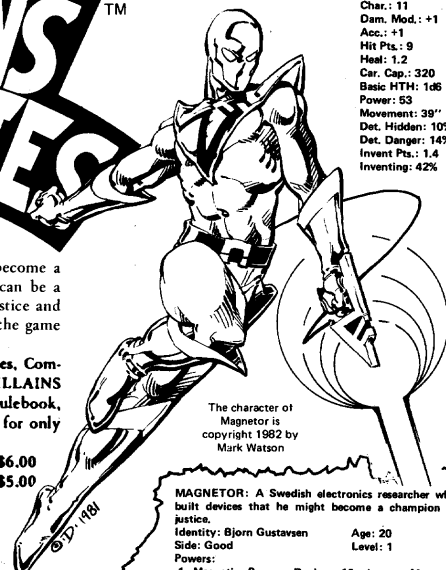
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# Living in a material world

## Where and how to scrounge up spell components

by Michael Dobson

*"Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boil and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,  
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,  
For a charm offpowerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble."*

— Macbeth, Act IV, Scene I

Although the AD&D™ magic system does not require quite the same range of material spell components as did Macbeth's witches, what components it does require are often difficult to find and use in play. As a result, many Dungeon Masters may choose to ignore, omit, or just assume the presence of material spell components used by player and non-player characters.

The Players Handbook is of little help. It says only, "Material components for spells are assumed to be kept in the folds and small pockets of the spell caster's garb. Of course, some materials are too bulky, and in these cases the materials must be accounted for carefully. Also, some materials are rare, and these must be found and acquired by the spell user."

How are material spell components found and acquired? This is a problem not addressed in the rule books; as a result of that, this article is designed to supply the missing information. As with all other unofficial game additions, the DM should feel free to add to, subtract from, or otherwise modify this material.

In a world in which wizardry is relatively common, there must be places where spell materials can be bought. In some areas, the local Wizards' Guild might operate a private shop for its members; in smaller areas a witch or herbalist might sell selected items to the traveling sorcerer/adventurer. A well-

equipped expedition outfitter might contract with a local witch or wizard to sell spell components. Alchemists, druids, cloistered clerics, and others might sell material spell components appropriate to their professions. The careful shopper could find many of the required items in local stores. And, some spell items are so common (a piece of rock, a bit of mud) that they can be had for the taking.

### The magic shop

Magic shops are found in virtually all cities, in some towns, and occasionally in some dark wood or cave. (The latter are frequently run by witches, who also sell love potions and cures to the local peasants.) Some shops are private, selling only to members of a specific Wizards' Guild, or only to spell casters of selected alignments. Witches may have been persecuted, and therefore would not be inclined to trust or to deal easily with strangers.

Magic shops will normally carry the full range of material spell components for magic-user and illusionist spells. They will also carry cleric or druid spell components only when those spells are the same as magic-user or illusionist spells. They do not, as a rule, sell gemstones which are necessary for spell action (see the section on gems below), nor do they commonly sell items which must be fabricated (see the section on fabricated items).

The markup on material spell components for sale in magic shops is very high — often more than 1,000%. The sale price is either 10 times the sum of the costs of the components (see Table V for this information) or 10 gp per level of the spell, whichever is higher.

Items purchased in a magic store are pre-packaged and ready for immediate use.

They are provided in a leather pouch, iron or glass flask, or small box as appropriate.

The following tables should be used to determine availability of material spell components:

Table I

### The magic shop

Base chance to have component(s): 100%

Modifiers:

Subtract 10% for each spell level over 2nd (e.g., 5th level = -30%)

Add 10% for each level of the shop proprietor above 3rd (e.g., 5th level = +20%)

Subtract 30% if the spell is of a different class than the proprietor (e.g., buying cleric spell components in a shop run by a magic-user)

Adjust by level of rarity (Table II) and size of city/town (Table III)

Table II

### Levels of rarity

Everyday. . . . .	+30%
Common . . . . .	.0%
Uncommon. . . . .	-10%
Scarce . . . . .	-20%
Rare. . . . .	-40%
Very Rare . . . . .	-60%

Table III

### Size of city/town

Major city (20,000+). . . . .	+30%
Large city (10,000-19,999) . . . . .	+20%
Medium city (5,000-9,999). . . . .	+10%
Large town (3,000-4,999). . . . .	.0%
Medium town (2,000-2,999). . . . .	-10%
Small town (1,000-1,999) . . . . .	-20%
Village (500-999) . . . . .	-30%
Hamlet (100-499). . . . .	-40%
Crossroads (Less than 100). . . . .	-50%

All results of 100% or more mean that the desired items are available in unlimited supply. Totals between 01% and 99% require the appropriate percentile roll; successive rolls are required if more than one of any particular item is desired. The first failed roll indicates that the supply of the item is exhausted. If the adjusted total is 0% or lower, then spell components are not available in any quantity.

### Expedition outfitters

Most towns and cities have at least one store devoted to filling the needs of adventurers. Depending on the community, they might be known as expedition outfitters, general stores, or ships' chandlers. They stock a wide range of everyday items, including most of the basic equipment and



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supplies listed in the Players Handbook on pages 35-36. (Note that at such stores "the average costs will be higher because these traders are middle-men.")

From time to time, one of these stores may arrange a contract with a local magic-user or witch to provide material spell components for the needs of traveling adventurers. The base chance for such an arrangement is 50% adjusted by the size of the city/town (Table III), or as desired by the DM.

The chance of a store having particular material spell components is determined as for a magic shop, but at -30%. The level of the shop proprietor is replaced with the level of the witch/wizard supplying the store.

The price of material spell components purchased through one of these stores is 15 times the sum of the costs of the components (Table V) or 15 gp per level of the spell, whichever is higher. As with the magic shop, gems and fabricated items are normally not available; see the appropriate sections of this article.

### Alchemist

The AD&D alchemist is a combination of chemist, bio-chemist, pharmacist, and magical researcher. Because of the nature of this work, the alchemist is frequently in the possession of material spell components. An alchemist may manufacture potions for a magic-user using the rules for costs and time as given in the Dungeon Masters

Guide, pages 116-117. (Editor's note: See the BEST OF DRAGON® Vol. III anthology for an example of the alchemist described as a character class.) Although only magic-users of 7th level or higher may employ alchemists on a permanent basis, others may consult them for answers to specific questions related to their field of expertise.

Nearly all alchemists will be found in cities or large towns. They are part of a formal or semi-formal brotherhood. Their consulting rate is 100-150 gp per day. Some alchemists only consult, being primarily involved in their magical research. Others operate shops where a variety of alchemical and pharmaceutical substances, both magical and unmagical, can be obtained.

Alchemists who operate stores may also sell other material spell components. The base chance for such an arrangement is 50% adjusted by the size of the city/town (Table III), or as desired by the DM. The level of the "shop proprietor" is used as the level of the alchemist running the shop. As provided in Table I, subtract 30% if the components for the desired spell do not involve substances used in alchemy, or are not of spells usable by alchemists.

Prices are identical to those charged by expedition outfitters; see the preceding section of text.

### Druids and temples

Druid spells and cleric spells normally

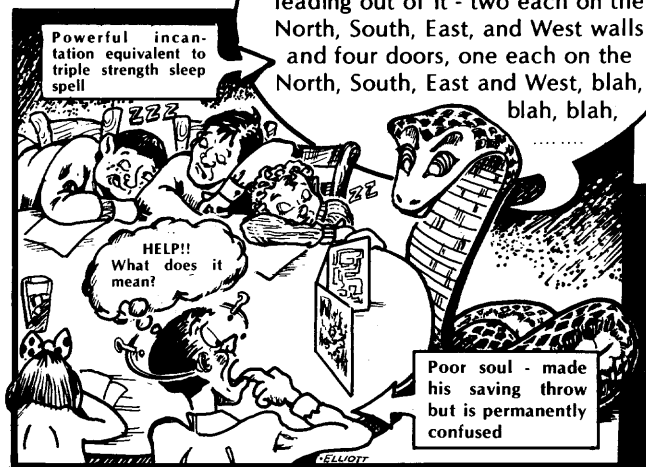
require a smaller range of material spell components than magic-user spells and illusionist spells do.

A druidic order will normally be based in a grove or other natural setting. The members tend to have the full range of druid spell components (but of course only "borrowed" mistletoe), and make them available to druids, rangers, and bards who are part of their order or who tithe generously. Table V notes those items which can only or best be obtained from a druid. Druids may also deal with persons outside the faith; the chance of such an occurrence is 50% plus (or minus) the non-druid's charisma reaction adjustment, minus 10% for every alignment step the non-druid differs from true neutral.

Clerics would always prefer to deal with a temple to their deity when attempting to procure material components, but can also deal with a temple to an equivalent deity, in stature and alignment, or at a minimum with a temple of identical alignment.

Cleric spells normally require the use of a holy symbol, prayer beads, or similar devices. I recommend that it be assumed that 1st-level clerics receive one appropriately prepared and consecrated holy symbol as part of their ordination. Any other holy symbols or other such items will have to be either prepared by the cleric when he is able to cast the *holy symbol* spell (see issue #58 of DRAGON® Magazine), or be obtained from a temple of identical faith.

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Another frequently required material spell component is holy (or unholy) water. This should be available at the listed Players Handbook cost from any temple of the appropriate alignment: a good church will produce holy water, an evil church unholy water, and a neutral church none at all.

Many temples will have clerical only spell components for sale, but will sell them only to clerics of appropriate alignment. The base chance of a temple selling such components is 80% adjusted by the size of the city/town; all other factors are calculated as for a magic shop, with the level of the highest cleric used as the level of the "shop proprietor." Prices are 10 times the sum of the costs of the components or 10 gp/level of the spell, whichever is higher. A tithe, sacrifice, or large donation is advisable.

### Gathering

A number of material spell components can most easily be obtained just by going out and gathering them. Anything not fabricated and not refined can be gathered.

To determine the chance of gathering a particular material spell component, use the following equation: a base chance of 100%, adjusted by the item's level of rarity times two, plus 1% for each day spent searching, plus 2% per day for each additional searcher beyond the first. Roll the adjusted chance once per day until the desired item is found, or the search is given up. If the chance to find the item is exactly 100%, it can be found after one full day's search (approximately 12 hours). For every 10% over 100%, the searching time drops by two hours. If the chance to find the item is 160%, then the item is found instantly.

The Dungeon Master should use discretion in determining whether a certain item can be gathered or not, based on his knowledge of the campaign area. If the spell caster insists on looking, roll the dice every day, but if the item is simply not to be found, the outcome is always negative regardless of what the dice read.

### Gems

A large number of spells require gems, jewelry, or precious metals as part of the material component. There are two basic ways of obtaining such items: the spell caster may retain gems found during adventures, or he may purchase them from a jeweler, gem dealer, or (occasionally) a moneylender who assays and deals in precious stones.

In the case of many of the spells, the cost in gold pieces of the gems required is defined; otherwise the tables in the Dungeon Masters Guide, pp. 25-27, should be consulted for representative prices.

The chance of a particular dealer having the required gems is determined by the following formula: a base chance of 100%, adjusted by the rarity of the gem (see Table IV) and the size of the city/town, plus 20% if the shop is large, no adjustment if the shop is medium-sized, and minus 10% if the shop is small.

Powdered gems may be prepared by any gem dealer. If the spell caster wishes to have his own gems powdered by a jeweler, the cost is 10% of the value of the gem(s).

Gold and silver items can be made by goldsmiths and silversmiths; this is described in more detail in the section on fabricated items. Jewelers and moneylenders can provide certain gold items, including gold dust, gold coins, and some fabricated items. Silversmiths can make the full range of silver items; so can many jewelers.

**Table IV**  
**Gems**

Level of rarity of gems:

Ornamental stones	Common
Semi-precious stones	Uncommon
Fancy stones	Scarce/Rare *
Gem stones	Rare/Very Rare *

\* - Within the categories of gems, some are noted as having a base price five times higher than average. These should be treated as being one rarity level higher than others in the same category.

Gems used in spells:

Agate	Ornamental/ Common
Amber	Fancy/Scarce
Amethyst (crushed)	Fancy/Scarce
Citrine	Semi-Precious/ Uncommon
Corundum	Gem/Rare
Diamond	Gem/Very Rare
Moonstone	Semi-Precious/ Uncommon
Opal, Black	Gem/Rare
Pearl	Fancy/Scarce
Pearl, Black (crushed)	Fancy/Rare
Ruby (powdered)	Gem/Very Rare
Sapphire, White	Gem/Rare
Topaz	Fancy/Scarce

Several spells call for a "large gem" or "a gem worth at least 5,000 gp." These should always be treated as Gem Stones (Rare), except those of 5,000 gp or greater value, which should be treated as Gem Stones (Very Rare).

### Going shopping

Of course, not all communities have a magic store, or an alchemist, or even an expedition outfitter. Not all stores which do carry material spell components as such will have all the items in stock that a spell caster may desire. In addition, as noted, the prices that magic dealers charge is well in excess of the going prices on the open market.

The following table is a master list of material spell components, their level of rarity, their "normal" cost (perhaps subject to change based on demand or availability), and a list of shops or other sources where they might be obtained. Not all communities will have all the various types of stores listed; some will have stores not listed. If a player wishes to attempt to buy material spell components in a shop not described in the following table, the DM should allow it

if, in his opinion, there is a reasonable chance that the shop might carry the desired item. Omitted from this list are gem stones, holy symbols, and fabricated items, all of which are discussed in other sections of this text.

The rarity of each item was determined assuming a temperate (European) climate and the proper season, especially for botanical products. If this does not describe your campaign situation, the DM should adjust the rarity level and cost accordingly.

It will be necessary for the spell caster to purchase or obtain appropriate containers for the components, and to spend time preparing the mixtures for rapid casting. This should be a part of preparing and memorizing spells prior to an adventure. Failure to do this will substantially extend the spell casting times listed in the Players Handbook, which assume that the material spell components are ready and available.

Sources already described — magic shops, expedition outfitters, alchemist shops, druid orders, cleric temples, and jewelers — are not listed except when those stores are the optimum (or only) place to get a certain item.

The base chance for one of the listed stores to have the given component is 100%, adjusted by the item's level of rarity and the size of the city/town.

**Table V**  
**Material spell components**

*Acid, strong* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, brickmaker, engraver, stonecutter  
*Acorns* (Common; 5 cp/lb.): druid, gathering

*Adder stomach* (Scarce; 5 gp/ea.): magic shop

*Alcohol, grain* (Common; 1 gp/qt.): alchemist, barber, dyer, jeweler, painter, paper/ink maker, perfumer, physician, tanner

*Alkaline salts*<sup>1</sup> (Scarce; 5 gp/oz.): alchemist, gathering, physician

*Alum* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, barber, dyer, paper/ink maker, perfumer, physician

*Amaryllis (Hypoxis) stalk*<sup>2</sup> (Rare; 24 gp/doz.): botanist, druid, flower shop

*Animal hoof, powdered* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, physician, stable, veterinarian

*Bag, tiny* (Common; 15 sp/ea.): leatherworker, moneylender, tailor, tanner

*Bark, tree / Bark chips* (Common; 1 cp/lb.): carpenter, druid, gathering, lumber mill

*Bat fur/Bat guano /Bat hairs* (Scarce; 10 gp/oz.): gathering, magic shop

*Bead, crystal or glass* (Common; 5 sp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler

*Beeswax* (Everyday; 1 cp/oz.): beekeeper, bowyer/fletcher, food store

*Bell, small* (Uncommon; 20 gp/ea.): bellmaker, clockmaker, jeweler, musical instrument maker, smith

*Berries, edible fresh* (Common in season, 1 sp/lb.; Rare out of season, 15 gp/lb.): druid, food store, gathering

*Bitumen*<sup>3</sup> (Uncommon; 5 gp/oz.): alchemist, barrelmaker, carpenter, shipmaker  
*Blood, black dragon* (Very Rare; 500 gp/oz.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Blood, human*<sup>4</sup> (Rare; 100 gp/oz.): alchemist, druid, magic shop, physician  
*Blood, mammal* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, butcher  
*Bone, powder or shard* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): alchemist, butcher, magic shop, physician  
*Bone from undead* (Rare; 50 gp/ea.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Brandy, drop* (Common; 1 gp/pt.): tavern, winemaker  
*Brass dust* (Common; 5 sp/oz.): armorer, smith, weapon maker  
*Brazier* (Uncommon; 25 gp/ea.): candlemaker, smith, temple  
*Bromine salts*<sup>5</sup> (Scarce; 5 gp/oz.): alchemist, saltmaker  
*Bronze disc* (Common; 15 sp/ea.): armorer, engraver, smith  
*Bull's horn, carved* (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): carver, stable  
*Burrs* (Everyday; 1 cp/oz.): gathering, stable  
*Butter* (Everyday; 5 cp/lb.): dairy, farm, food store, tavern  
*Candles, various types* (Everyday, 1 cp/ea., for tallow; Common, 1 sp/ea., for wax; Uncommon, 1-6 gp/ea., for special candles): candlemaker  
*Carbon* (Common; 1 cp/oz.): candlemaker, paper/ink maker, smith

*Carp, live miniature* (Scarce; 1 sp/ea.): bait shop, fishmonger  
*Carrot, dried or powdered* (Scarce; 1 sp/oz.): alchemist, food store, herbalist  
*Castor beans*<sup>6</sup> (Rare; 10 gp/oz.): alchemist, dyer, perfumer, physician  
*Caterpillar cocoon* (Uncommon; 5 sp/ea.): druid, gathering, silkmaker  
*Chalk* (Common; 1 sp/stick): quarry  
*Charcoal: see Carbon*  
*Citric acid (lemon or lime juice)* (Uncommon; 1 gp/pt.): food store  
*Clay* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): artist/sculptor, brickmaker, potter  
*Cloth* (Everyday; 1-10 gp/yd.): clothmaker, sailmaker, spinner, tailor, weaver  
*Club, oaken* (Common; 1 gp/ea.): weapon shop, woodcarver  
*Coal* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): brickmaker, quarry, smith  
*Cone, crystal or glass* (Scarce; 10 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler  
*Copper piece* (Everyday; 1 cp/ea.): moneylender  
*Copper wire, fine* (Common; 1 gp/ft.): smith  
*Corn extract* (Common; 2 sp/lb.): alchemist, food dealer, herbalist  
*Crickets, live* (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): bait shop, gathering  
*Crystal* (Uncommon; 1-10 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler  
*Dart* (Common; 5 sp/ea.): weapon shop  
*Demon ichor* (Type I, Very Rare, 500 gp/oz.; Type II, Very Rare, 750 gp/oz.;

Type III, Very Rare, 1000 gp/oz.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Dirt* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Dirt, graveyard* (Common; 1 gp/oz.): graveyard, temple  
*Down* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): bowyer/fletcher, farm  
*Dragon bones* (Rare; 500 gp/set): magic shop  
*Drum, small* (Uncommon; 10 gp/ea.): musical instrument shop  
*Dung* (Everyday; 1 gp/lb., packaged): stable  
*Dust* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Eagle eye* (Rare; 20 gp/ea.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Egg, rotten* (Uncommon; 1 cp/ea.): farm, food dealer  
*Eggshell* (Common; 1 cp/ea.): farm, food dealer  
*Elixir made from the juice of dried plums and the oil of 5-8 beans of a castor plant* (Rare; 50 gp/oz.): alchemist  
*Evergreen* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): druid, lumber mill  
*Eyeshell, normal* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Eyeshell of basilisk, ki-rin, ogre mage, or other spell-using creature* (Very Rare; 100 gp/ea.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Fan* (Common; 1-6 gp/ea.): clothing store, tailor  
*Fat* (Everyday; 1 cp/lb.): farm, food store, tavern  
*Feather, wing / White / owl* (Common/

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Uncommon; 1-6 gp/ea.): farm, gathering, tailor

*Feather, exotic* (Scarce; 10-20 gp/ea.): clothing store, tailor

*Firefly, live* (Uncommon; 1 sp/ea.): gathering

*Firefly, tail* (Uncommon; 5 sp/ea.): magic shop

*Fleece* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): farm, fuller, tailor, weaver

*Flesh, human*<sup>7</sup> (Rare; 50 gp/bit): alchemist, magic shop, physician

*Flint* (Common; 10 sp/ea.): armorer, candle maker, smith, tobacconist, weapon maker

*Flower petal* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Flour, white* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): food store, miller

*Fool's gold*: see Iron Pyrite

*Fur* (Common; 1-20 gp/skin): farm, fuller, furrier, tailor

*Garlic* (Common; 5 cp/bud): food store, herbalist, tavern

*Gauze* (Common; 1 sp/yd.): physician, weaver

*Glass* (Uncommon; 10 gp/sq. ft.): glassblower

*Glove* (Common; 1-6 gp/pr.): leatherworker, tailor

*Glove, snakeskin* (Scarce; 25 gp/pr.): tailor

*Gold* (Uncommon; price varies by weight and workmanship, base value 1 gp/1 gp wt.): goldsmith, jeweler, moneylender

*Grain* (Everyday; 1 sp/lb.): bakery, brew-

ery, farm, food store, miller, stable, tavern  
*Granite, dust or block* (Common;

1 sp/oz.): mason, quarry

*Grasshopper hind legs* (Uncommon;

5 sp/ea.): gathering, magic shop

*Gum arabic*<sup>8</sup> (Uncommon; 2 gp/oz.):

alchemist, bakery, candy maker, physician

*Gut* (Uncommon; 1 gp/yd.): butcher, musical instrument shop

*Hairs from a strong animal* (Common; 1 cp/bunch): gathering, stable

*Hammer, war* (Common; 1 gp/ea.): weapon maker

*Hawk eye* (Scarce; 15 gp/ea.): alchemist, hawker, magic shop

*Heart of a hen* (Uncommon; 1 sp/ea.): butcher, farm

*Herbs, various* (Uncommon/Rare; 2-40 gp/oz.): alchemist, herbalist

*Herring scales, powdered* (Uncommon; 2 gp/oz.): alchemist, fishmonger, herbalist

*Holly* (Common; 5 sp/oz.): druid, gathering

*Honey /honeycomb* (Everyday; 1 sp/pt.): alchemist, beekeeper, farm, food store

*Horn, carved* (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): carver, stable

*Humus*<sup>9</sup> (Common; 1 cp/lb.): farm

*Ice or snow*<sup>10</sup> (Varies)

*Incense* (Common; 1 gp/stick): candle-maker, perfumer, temple

*Inks, special* (Scarce, 100-500 gp/oz.;

Rare, 600-1000 gp/oz.): alchemist

*Ink, normal or lead-based* (Uncommon;

10 gp/oz.): alchemist, paper/ink maker

*Iron, various shapes and sizes* (Common; 1-6 gp/ea.): smith, weapon maker

*Iron pyrite* (Uncommon; 5 gp/lb.): alchemist, magic shop

*Jade circlet* (Rare; 5000 gp): jeweler

*Lampblack* (Common; 3 cp/oz.): candle-maker, illuminator/scribe, painter, paper/ink maker

*Lard* (Common; 2 cp/lb.): farm, food store, tavern

*Leaf* (Everyday; free): gathering

*Leaf from poison ivy, oak, or sumac*

(Common; 1 sp/ea.): druid, gathering

*Leather loop* (Common; 1-6 sp/ea.): leatherworker, tailor

*Leather blessed by cleric* (Uncommon; 100 gp/ea.): leatherworker or tailor + cleric/temple

*Leek, crushed* (Common; 5 cp/ea.): food store, tavern

*Licorice root, shaving* (Scarce; 15 sp/oz.): alchemist, food store, herbalist, physician, tavern

*Lime, powdered or crushed* (Uncommon; 1 gp/lb.): alchemist, quarry, stonemason

*Loam* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): brickmaker, farm, foundry, quarry, smith

*Lodestone* (Rare; 25 gp/ea.): astronomer/navigator, Chandler, magic shop

*Magnets*: see Lodestone

*Mandrake root* (Scarce; 15 sp/ea.): alchemist, herbalist, physician

*Marble, polished* (Uncommon; 1 gp/cu. in.): mason, quarry

*Marigold* (Common; 1 cp/ea.): druid, flower shop, gathering

*Mercuric-nitric crystals* (Rare;

50 gp/oz.): alchemist, physician

*Mercury*<sup>11</sup> (Scarce; 25 gp/oz.): alchemist, physician

*Metal bar: rod, nail* (Common;

1-6 cp/ea.): barrelmaker, carpenter, smith, weapon maker

*Mica* (Uncommon; 1 gp/cu. in.): mason, quarry

*Milkfat, solidified* (Common; 5 sp/pt.): dairy, food store

*Mirror, silver* (Uncommon; 20 gp/ea.): jeweler, silversmith

*Mistletoe, borrowed* (Uncommon;

10 sp/sprig): gathering

*Mistletoe, greater* (Scarce; as per Players Handbook)

*Mithral plate* (Rare; 50 gp/1gp wt.): armorer, jeweler, smith, weapon maker

*Moonseed plant*<sup>12</sup> (Scarce; 5 gp/ea.): druid, flower shop, herbalist

*Mud* (Everyday; free): gathering

*Mushroom spores* (Rare; 50 gp/oz.): alchemist, herbalist, physician

*Nettle leaves, crushed* (Uncommon; 10 gp/oz.): alchemist, druid, herbalist, physician

*Nitre*: see Saltpeter

*Nut shells* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): food store, gathering

*Oak bark / leaf* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): druid, gathering

*Octopus (giant) tentacle* (Rare; 50 gp/ea.): fishmonger

*Oil* (Common; 1 gp/flask): alchemist,

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Oil, sweet / oil refined from hickory and walnuts (Uncommon; 5 gp/flask): alchemist, bakery

Ointment of very rare mushroom powder, saffron and fat (Very Rare; 500 gp/oz.): alchemist, herbalist

Ointment of oil, poppy dust, and pink orchid essence (Rare; 150 gp/oz.): alchemist, herbalist

Paddle, wooden (Common; 1 sp/ea.): carpenter, woodcarver

Parchment (Common; 10 sp/sheet): illuminator, paper/ink maker, scribe

Peas, split dry (Common; 3 cp/lb.): food store

Phosphorus (Uncommon; 5 gp/oz.): alchemist, glassblower, physician

Pigments (Uncommon; 1-6 gp/oz.): alchemist, painter

Pine /pine cone (Common; 1 cp/ea.): druid, gathering

Pine tar (Common; 5 sp/pt.): alchemist, carpenter, painter, physician

Pins, silver (Uncommon; 1 sp/ea.): jeweler, silversmith

Pitch (Common; 5 sp/pt.): carpenter, painter, physician

Plant, green (Everyday; free): gathering

Plums, dried (Common; 2 cp/doz.): food store

Pork rind (Common; 5 cp/lb.): butcher, food store, tavern

Potion of heroism or superheroism (Rare; 500/700 gp/ea.): alchemist

Prayer beads / Prayer wheel / Prayer book (Common; 1-100 gp/ea.): temple

Prism, mineral (Uncommon; 5 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler

Quicksilver: see Mercury

Quartz, rock crystal, smoky quartz (Uncommon; 1-6 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler

Raisin (Common; 3 cp/lb.): food store

Ram's horn (Uncommon; 15 sp/ea.): farm

Reed (Common; 1 cp/lb.): gathering, mill, weaver

Resin (Common, 1 gp/oz. for ordinary sort; Uncommon, 5 gp/oz. for resin from camphor tree): alchemist, musical instrument shop, painter, paper/ink maker, physician

Rhubarb leaf, powdered (Uncommon; 5 sp/oz.): alchemist, herbalist

Roc eye (Very Rare; 500 gp/ea.): alchemist, magic shop

Rope (Common; 50' for 4 sp): expedition outfitter, ropemaker

Rose petals (Common; 1 sp/ea. rose): flower shop

Salt /Rock salt (Common; 1 gp/lb.): food store, herbalist

Saltpeper (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): stable, quarry

Sand, fine / colored (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): clockmaker, gathering

Scroll (Uncommon-Scarce; 10-60 gp/ea.): illuminator, paper/ink maker, scribe

Seashell (Common; 1 sp/ea.): fishmonger, gathering, jeweler

Sesame seeds (Uncommon; 2 gp/lb.): herbalist

Shamrock leaf (Uncommon; 5 sp/ea.): druid, gathering

Silk, various (Scarce; 50-300 gp/yard): clothier, tailor, trader/importer, weaver

Silver (Common; price varies by weight and workmanship): jeweler, silversmith

Sinew from strong animal (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): alchemist, butcher

Skunk cabbage leaves (Uncommon; 1 gp/cabbage): druid, gathering

Slug (giant) digestive juice (Rare; 50 gp/flask): alchemist

Smoke (Everyday; free): any fire source

Snake scales / skin / tongue (Scarce; 6-12 gp/ea.): alchemist, magic shop

Snow: see Ice and snow

Soot: see Lampblack

Spectre, essence of (Very Rare; 750 gp/oz.): alchemist, magic shop


Spell books<sup>14</sup> (Rare; 1000 gp + 100 gp/spell level): magic shop

Spell books, travelling<sup>14</sup> (Rare; 500 gp + 100 gp/spell level): magic shop

Spheres of crystal, glass, or mineral (Uncommon; 5 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler

Spider, live (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): gathering, magic shop

Spider web (Everyday; 1 gp/web): alchemist, gathering, magic shop



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*Squid (giant) tentacle* (Rare; 50 gp/tentacle): fishmonger  
*Squid secretion* (Rare; 50 gp/flask): alchemist  
*Stalactites* (Scarce; 5 gp/ea.): gathering  
*Steel* (Uncommon; 10-60 gp/sq. yd.): smith  
*Stone, small* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Stone, square chip* (Common; 1 cp/ea.): mason, quarry  
*Straw* (Common; 5 sp/bale): farm, stable  
*String, piece* (Everyday; 1 cp/yard): clothing store, any craft shop, tailor, weaver  
*Stylus* (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.): engraver, paper/ink maker, scribe/illuminator  
*Sugar* (Common; 1 gp/lb.): food store, herbalist, tavern  
*Sulphur* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, physician  
*Sumac* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): druid, gathering  
*Talc* (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.): alchemist, beauty shop  
*Tallow* (Common; 1 cp/lb.): candlemaker  
*Tea, herb* (Uncommon; 1-6 gp/lb.): herbalist  
*Thread* (Common; 1 sp/spool): clothing store, tailor  
*Thorns* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): druid, gathering  
*Tort, minute* (Common; 3sp/ea.): bakery  
*Tortoise / Turtle shell* (Common; 3 sp/ea.): fishmonger, jeweler  
*Treacle* (Common; 5 sp/qt.): alchemist, food store, physician, tavern

*Twigs* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Umber hulk blood* (Very Rare; 750 gp/flask): alchemist  
*Vampire dust* (Very Rare; 1000 gp/oz.): alchemist, magic shop  
*Vellum* (Rare; 50 gp/sheet): paper/ink maker, scribe/illuminator  
*Viz-million* (Uncommon; 10 gp/oz.): alchemist, dyer, paper/ink maker  
*Vestments, clerical* (Uncommon; 100-600 gp/set): tailor, temple  
*Vial* (Common; 1 gp/ea.): alchemist, glassblower  
*Vinegar* (Common; 5 cp/qt.): food store, tavern, wine shop  
*Water* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Wax* (Common; 1 sp/lb.): candlemaker  
*Whitewash* (Common; 1 gp/gal.): painter  
*Willow or other flexible wood* (Common; 1 cp/yard): carpenter, druid, gathering, lumber yard  
*Wood, small piece* (Everyday; free): gathering  
*Wool* (Common; 1 cp/oz. unwoven, 1-20 sp/yard woven): farm, fuller, tailor, weaver  
*Wytchwood*<sup>15</sup> (Uncommon; 5 gp/piece): druid  
*Yellow-tinted glass, crystal, or mica* (Uncommon; 1-6 gp/ea.): glassblower, jeweler

moderate, temperate, European climates.

13 — For a pineal gland from human or humanoid creature, see Notes 4 and 7, above.

14 — Spell books and travelling spell books are treated in detail in issue #62 of DRAGON Magazine and the BEST OF DRAGON Vol. III anthology. If the spell caster desires to make his own, the cost will be the same.

15 — Wytchwood is also known as Wytch Elm or Witch Elm, and is found in temperate climates.

### Fabricated items

Certain material spell components must be specially made, either by skilled craftsmen or by the spell caster personally. The following table provides information on those components which must be fabricated, who can do the work, how much the work costs, and how long it will take. (*Editor's note: Tables VI, VII, and VIII hereafter include mentions of some spells that are not part of the AD&D rules, but which were described as official new spells in past issues of DRAGON Magazine. The issue in which each of those spell descriptions appears is indicated by the reference following the spell name.*)

**Table VI**

Fabricated material spell components

*Augury* (cleric): A set of gem-inlaid sticks. These sticks can be manufactured by a jeweler in 1-4 weeks at a cost of 500 gp per set.

*Plane shift* (cleric): A small, forked metal rod. Tuning forks can be made by a smith or musical instrument maker in 1-6 days for 25 gp, tuned.

*Changestaff*, #71 (druid): A staff of ash, oak, or yew wood made from the limb of a tree which had been struck by lightning within the past 24 hours. Obtaining the tree limb requires one full day of searching following a lightning storm. If your campaign has no system to determine the occurrence of such a storm, assume a 10% chance plus 1% per day, cumulative. There is a base 50% chance of finding such a tree. Searchers may be hired to help in this search. Normal searchers add 10% to the chance for each additional person; their cost is determined as per the DMG, pg. 29. Druids or rangers add 25% per person, and cost 150 gp per day to hire. Having the limb carved into a staff will take a trained woodcarver 1 week + 1-6 days, and will cost 250 gp.

*Levitate* (magic-user): A piece of golden wire bent into a cup shape with a long shank on one end. A goldsmith can manufacture this in one day for a cost of 100 gp.

*Deeppockets*, #67 (magic-user): A tiny golden needle and a strip of fine cloth given a half-twist and fastened at the ends. A tailor can manufacture this in one day at a cost of 100 gp.

*Whip*, #67 (magic-user): A small bit of silk braided into a miniature whip. A tailor

1 — Alkaline salts are found in natural water and arid soils.

2 — Amaryliss (Hypoxis) stalks are native to southern Africa, and would be Uncommon in that climate. They are also known as "Belladonna lilies."

3 — Bitumen is obtained by distillation from coal or petroleum, and is occasionally found naturally.

4 — Human blood is actually not rare, but because its indiscriminate gathering is likely to cause trouble with the local authorities, it is a troublesome substance to obtain.

5 — Bromine salts are obtained from seawater, and are only Uncommon in the vicinity of the ocean.

6 — Castor beans are native to tropical Africa and Asia, and are Common in similar climates.

7 — Human flesh poses the same problem as human blood; see Note 4 above. Both can be "gathered" by the spell caster, of course, but watch out for alignment problems.

8 — Gum arabic is a gum resin exuded by various African trees of the genus *Acacia*. Because it travels well, and has many uses, it is only Uncommon.

9 — Humus is found in compost heaps. It is not made from chick peas.

10 — Ice or snow is Common or Everyday in appropriate climates, and unavailable without magic in other climates.

11 — Mercury has been known since ancient times, but was thought to have uses only in alchemy and medicine. It is also known as quicksilver (q.v.).

12 — Moonseed plants are found in

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can manufacture this in 1-3 days for a cost of 15 gp.

*Clairaudience* (magic-user): A small silver horn of 100 gp value. This can be manufactured by a silversmith in 7-12 days for 100 gp.

*Tongues* (magic-user): A small clay model of a ziggurat. This can be manufactured by a potter, sculptor, or mason for 100 gp in 7-12 days.

*Melf's Minute Meteors*, #67 (magic-user): A small golden tube, 1000 gp cost. This can be manufactured by a goldsmith or jeweler in 14-21 days for 1000 gp.

*Dig* (magic-user): Miniature shovel and tiny bucket. A smith, jeweler, or other craftsman can make these items in 1-3 days for 50 gp.

*Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer* (magic-user): An ivory plaque of at least 100 gp value. This can be carved by a jeweler, sculptor, or carver for 100 gp in 7-12 days.

*Magic mirror*, #67 (magic-user): A silver mirror of 1000 gp cost. This can be manufactured by a silversmith for 1000 gp in 14-21 days.

*Leomund's Secret Chest* (magic-user): An exceptionally well-crafted and expensive chest costing at least 5000 gp, and a tiny replica, perfect in every detail. The chance of finding a master craftsman capable of this work is 50% adjusted by the size of the city. The cost of doing the work is 5000 gp + (50-5000) gp. The replica costs 2500 gp + (25-2500) gp. The work will take 7-12 months.

*Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound* (magic-user): A tiny silver whistle. A silversmith can manufacture such a whistle in 7-12 days for 50 gp.

*Sending*, #68 (magic-user): Two tiny cylinders, each with one open end, connected by a short piece of copper wire. A smith can manufacture this device in 1-8 days for 50 gp.

*Legend lore* (magic-user): Strips of ivory formed in a rectangle. This can be made by a jeweler or sculptor in 1-3 days for 100 gp.

*Project image* (magic-user): A small replica (doll) of the magic-user. For 100% spell effectiveness, this doll should be prepared by a witch or magic-user, at a cost of 300 gp in 1-4 weeks. A sculptor or tailor could produce such a doll for 100 gp, but the spell would only have 50% effectiveness in terms of range and duration.

*Repulsion* (magic-user): A pair of small magnetized iron bars attached to two small canine statuettes, one ivory and one ebony. A skilled carver or craftsman could make this device in 7-14 days for 200 gp.

*Spiritwrack* (magic-user): An illuminated sheet of vellum. Although the final product of this spell must be personally produced by the magic-user, the vellum can be illuminated by a trained scribe in 7-14 days for 200 gp.

*Contingency*, #68 (magic-user): An elephant ivory statuette of the magic-user. This can be carved by a good sculptor in 1-4 weeks for 1500 gp.

*Duo-dimension* (magic-user): A thin, flat ivory likeness of the spell caster, gold

filigreed, enameled, and gem-studded at a cost of 5000-10000 gp. This can be manufactured by a trained sculptor in 2-8 weeks at a cost of 5000 gp + (d6 x 1000) gp.

*Mordenkainen's Sword* (magic-user): A miniature platinum sword with grip and pommel of copper and zinc at a cost of 500 gp. A good smith could manufacture this in 1-4 weeks at the listed cost.

*Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion*, #68 (magic-user): A miniature portal carved from ivory. This can be carved by a jeweler, sculptor, or trained carver in 7-14 days for 250 gp.

*Volley*, #68 (magic-user): A bit of bent willow or other flexible wood, crisscrossed with specially prepared strands of gut. A carpenter or musical instrument maker can build this in 1-6 days for 100 gp.

*Bigby's Clenched Fist* (magic-user): A small device consisting of four rings joined so as to form a slightly curved line, with an "I" upon which the bottoms of the rings rest, the whole fashioned of an alloyed metal of copper and zinc. A smith can manufacture a set of brass knuckles in 1-6 days for 100 gp.

*Hypnotic pattern* (illusionist): A crystal rod filled with phosphorescent material. This can be made by a glassblower in 7-14 days for 300 gp.

#### Variable spells

Some spells have material components which vary with each casting. The spell

caster should write down the material components to be used, and where he intends to get them, prior to casting. The DM, using the guidelines in the Players Handbook and this article, can then determine availability and costs, as well as the effectiveness of the proposed spell components. Expensive, rare, or particularly well-chosen materials should result in full (or even slightly improved) spell effectiveness; a half-hearted attempt to satisfy the material requirements should be penalized.

#### Table VII

Variable spells

#### Druid spells:

*Animal friendship*  
*Slow poison*  
*Trip*

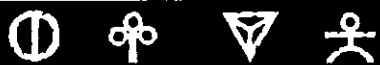
#### Magic-user spells:

*Mount*, #67  
*Dismissal/Beckon*, #68  
*Fabricate*, #68  
*Enchant an item*  
*Legend lore*  
*Banishment*, #68  
*Clone*  
*Binding*, #68

#### Illusionist spells:

*Minor creation*  
*Vision*  
*Mirage arcane*, #66





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## Reusable items

Most material spell components vanish upon use. A few, however, survive. Such reusable items are particularly desirable for spell casters.

The following table lists all such material spell components. In some cases, it is not clear from the spell description whether the item is meant to be reusable or not; in those cases, a "(?)" follows the item. In the absence of official rulings on these items, the DM should use discretion in making the items either reusable or expended.

### Table VIII

Reusable material spell components

Cleric spells, various: holy symbol

*Sanctuary*: a small silver mirror

*Augury*: a set of gem-inlaid sticks or dragon bones

*Locate object*: a piece of lodestone (?)

*Atonement*: prayer beads, prayer wheel, or prayer book

*Find the path*: divination counters favored by the cleric (as for augury)

*Control weather*: prayer beads

Druid spells, various: mistletoe or holly

*Shillelagh*: an oaken club

*Changestaff*, #71: a staff of ash, oak, or yew wood made from the limb of a tree which had been struck by lightning within the past 24 hours.

Magic-user spells:

*Read magic*: a clear crystal or mineral prism (?)

*Bind*, #67: rope or ropelike object (?)

*Clairaudience*: a small silver horn of 100 gp value (?)

*Lightning bolt*: a bit of fur and an amber, crystal, or glass rod (?)

*Detect illusion*, #67: a piece of yellow-tinted glass, crystal, or mica (?)

*Melf's Minute Meteors*, #67: a small golden tube of 1000 gp cost

*Magic mirror*, #67: a silver mirror of 1000 gp cost

*Leomund's Secret Chest*: two custom-fabricated chests

*Magic jar*: a large gem or crystal (?)

*Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound*: a tiny silver whistle (?)

*Project image*: a small replica (doll) of the magic-user (?)

*Contingency* #68: an elephant ivory statuette of the magic-user (?)

*Cacodemon*: a brazier

*Trap the soul*: a very large and expensive gem (?)

Illusionist spell:

*Hypnotic pattern*: a crystal rod filled with phosphorescent material

## Spell substitutions

Sometimes, material spell components can't be found. The Players Handbook, pg. 64, notes that "Substitute materials might be allowed. This is up to your Dungeon Master. It should be noted that such substitutions could affect spell range, duration,

area of effect, effect, etc." If you decide to allow substitutions, their effectiveness should be judged on (a) effectiveness and (b) expense.

In the AD&D magic system, material spell components tend to either follow the Laws of Magic or are puns or modern-day references. Good material spell component substitutions should have the same characteristics.

The Laws of Magic require that the method of the spell be an analog to reality in some way. The Law of Similarity, for example, states that events resemble causes, which is the principle behind pouring water on the ground as part of a rain dance. The Law of Contagion, which states that things once in contact continue to interact from a distance after separation, is the principle behind a voodoo doll.

Examples of modern-day references and puns in the AD&D magic system include the brass knuckles in *Bigby's Clenched Fist* (the glove itself is an example of the Law of Similarity), or the tin-can telephone in *sending* (issue #68), which implies the Law of Contagion.

Higher-level spells generally have more expensive material spell components than lower-level spells. The addition of high-cost components may increase spell effectiveness, at the discretion of the DM. This should not exceed the addition of one level to the spell caster's level for casting effectiveness for each doubling of the cost of material spell components.

Of course, poorly chosen or cheap material spell components will substantially lower spell effectiveness, or possibly not work at all . . . but the spell caster may not know this in advance.

## Selling material components

A party of adventurers that kills a black dragon, an umber hulk, a spectre, etc., might elect to take the blood, ichor, or essence back to civilization to sell to the local alchemist or magic shop. This is a good way for a resourceful party to make some extra money.

The price an alchemist or magic shop will offer will only be half the sale price as listed in Table V — if very large quantities are offered for sale, the offering price will plummet to as low as one-tenth. Of course, if the party has sold several gallons of black dragon blood to an alchemist, the level of rarity in that area of the campaign world should drop considerably.

Magic shops and some expedition outfitters might want to buy magic items, potions, and scrolls found by the party which are surplus to their needs. The price offered will run about one-half the sale price in the Dungeon Masters Guide. If a party member wants to buy an item back, he will, of course, be charged full price.

At the Dungeon Master's discretion, magic shops may have a few select enchanted items, scrolls, etc., for sale. These can either be generated randomly, using the tables on pp. 121-125 of the



DMG, or selected by the DM. As always, the DM should not allow a randomly generated result to allow an item of too great power into the party's hands.

#### Using the system

Greycloak, a 5th level magic-user, is preparing for a several-week expedition to defeat the evil wizard Ashlock, who inhabits an old, evil dungeon in the mountains. Because he must travel light, he has obtained and prepared a travelling spell book (500 gp) with the spells *charm person*, *magic missile*, *sleep*, *stinking cloud*, *forget*, and *phantasmal force* (1000 gp to inscribe). Fortunately, *charm person*, *magic missile*, and *forget* have no material components.

Using the spell descriptions in the Players Handbook and the tables in this article, Greycloak makes the following list:

*Sleep*: a pinch of fine sand (Uncommon; 1 gp/oz.), rose petals (Common; 2 sp/ea.), or a live cricket (Uncommon; 1 gp/ea.)

*Stinking cloud*: a rotten egg (Uncommon; 1 cp/ea.) or several skunk cabbage leaves (Uncommon; 1 gp/cabbage).

*Phantasmal force*: a bit of fleece (Common; 1 gp/lb.)

Greycloak has paid 500 gp to the local magician's guild in dues to use the guild's private magic shop. In order to make sure he has ample supplies for the upcoming adventure, he wants to buy ten sets of ingredients for each spell.

The magic shop is located in a medium-sized town (-10%), and is run by a 3rd level magic-user (no adjustment). *Sleep* is a first-level spell, so the base chance to have the most rare item (Uncommon, -10%) is 80%. Greycloak rolls less than 80% ten times, and receives ten packets of fine sand and/or rose petals in a waterproof box, for which he pays 100 gp.

The next item on Greycloak's shopping list is the ingredients for *stinking cloud*, a second-level spell with Uncommon components. Again, there is an 80% chance that the components will be in stock, but this time Greycloak rolls an 85% on his fifth roll, meaning that he can only buy four sets of components here, for a price of 20 gp each, or 80 gp. "Make sure they're packaged tightly," Greycloak growls. "Last time the party made me stay twenty feet downwind!"

Because he still needs six rotten eggs (or skunk cabbage leaves), he decides to visit the local alchemist. He could, of course, visit a farm or a food dealer, but he wants to make sure that the ingredients are pre-packaged. There is a base 40% chance that the local alchemist will sell material spell components; the roll is successful. The chance of the items being in stock is 100% (base) -20% (alchemist) -10% (medium town) -10% (Uncommon component) = 60%. This time, Greycloak succeeds in making six rolls, and finishes his purchase for a price of 15 gp/level x 2 levels x 6 sets =

180 gp. He grumbles at paying the higher price, but likes the odor-proof containers.

The third item on his list, fleece for the *phantasmal force* spell, would cost 30 gp for each casting. "Outrageous, what these magic dealers get away with," Greycloak mutters. He visits the local fuller, which is 90% likely to sell fleece, a Common item. He buys a pound of fleece for 1 gp, and spends another gold piece to have his purchase wrapped.

Finally, all the preparation is complete. His horse has been groomed and fed by stableboys, his dagger sharpened, all his magic items carefully checked and ready for use. "Now for a good night's sleep," Greycloak says to himself, and yawns. "And on the morrow, the adventure begins!"

#### Conclusion

I hope this information will allow the more active use of material spell component rules in your campaign. Properly used, material spell components add to the romance and realism of magic use, and somewhat restrict the power of spell casters. They also provide an interesting method of siphoning off excess cash, and ways for a clever party to obtain extra gold pieces. And, by giving people a reason to visit more stores and shops in your favorite city or town, they will meet more non-player characters, hear more rumors, and become more involved in the day-to-day life of your world.



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# The Forum

(From page 26)

(a few hours), during which time they are AC 10 and their eyestalks are not strong enough to aim the eyes, so they can be killed fairly easily. Once the shells harden, one will drive off the other (usually harmlessly, but double deaths have resulted) and will take over its parent's territory. The loser will try to find some vacant territory or drive out another beholder, sometimes with success.

David Carl Argall  
La Puente, Calif.

\* \* \* \*

Although my AD&D group has used psionics for quite a while, there have been a few questions along the way. The articles in issue #78 helped to clear much of these away. One question still: Why relate psionic progression to class progression at all? No doubt it lessens the DM's "not another item to keep track of" blues, but I can't find the logic behind it. A character's mental abilities (i.e., psionics) have little relation to the character's class. When you realize that the acquisition of psionic disciplines depends upon the progression within the character's class and moreso upon *which* class is chosen, it makes even less sense.

Comparisons of the separate class progression tables shows that a druid would gain disciplines quicker than any other class. Why? Logic along one line would say that a magic-user or illusionist (who uses naught but his/her mind normally) would acquire them faster. Along another line of logic, a fighter (who uses mostly his brawn with less mind) would acquire them fastest as the "spell users" already have their minds busy holding spells. Yet the druid gains them faster than any other class because he/she is a druid. Either way you lose.

One suggestion would be to have a separate progression for the gaining of disciplines and attack/defense modes. This could possibly be modified by the pertinent ability scores (intelligence, wisdom, and charisma) and/or the character's total psionic ability score. A bonus/penalty might be added per the class that is chosen.

Another suggestion might be to create a new class along the lines of Mr. Collins' Psionicist. A character who showed *potential* (per the previous roll of the dice) could opt for this class *only* to develop the talent. Choosing a class other than this one would mean that the talent was never developed and would not be available to the character.

Rodney L. Barnes  
Albany, Ore.

The issue on psionics was very well received. There could have been more on the political side of the psionic endowed. For

those who wish to find out more of the political side, I suggest reading *To Ride Pegasus* by Anne McCaffrey. The book is very good in dealing with the psionic community and their dealings with the "ungifted." The problems they encounter are similar to the Deryni. And with a little imagination, a scenario could be built around a town in need of saving from suspicious neighbors. . . .

Mark Kadas  
Allentown, Pa.

\* \* \* \*

Of the articles on psionics in issue #78 (which I think were excellent, considering they seemed obligated to stay within the original rules), the one that caught my attention the most was the one on "Overhauling the system." I don't think this article did enough overhauling.

The author was quite right when he pointed out the role psionics come to play in a typical AD&D game, although there wasn't enough stress put on the problem as I see it. The real problem seems to spring from the players' refusing to realize that psionics would have more of an effect on their characters than a new magic item that spent most of its time in a leather case. The best ideas for this come from Stephen King ("Carrie" being the most relevant in a typical fantasy world). If psionics are so rare and different, wouldn't they invoke some kind of awe in people, especially uneducated commoners in a medieval or pre-medieval setting? It seems more logical that the power would be taken as most things the majority of people can't understand, that is, as evil. Wouldn't a character with these powers have severe problems with family and local populace? Not to mention the character's own troubled thoughts on the subject; would even the character understand so fully his/her talent?

The trouble I see with the AD&D psionic system is in generalization. The setting down of all psionic possibilities in one set of charts and tables may make it easier to handle in gaming purposes, but makes psionics too similar to each other. This takes out the novelty that could be stirred into psionic combat if it came down to a comparison of power and skillful use of unique mental powers, rather than an overbearing of a psionic by another with more options (with which the psionic is familiar, though he/she doesn't have them) and power points. Letting characters know their points and full powers I see as a mistake; wouldn't a real psionic spend a great deal of his/her life discovering and developing these strange abilities? Wouldn't it be quite likely that such a person would go through life with some powers never fully developed or even discovered? Individualizing psionics can be hard work, but can add a new dimension to the psionic character and put a bit more of the details into the DM's hands.

Joseph D. Wilkinson II  
Mountain Brook, Ala.

\* \* \* \*

Although I enjoyed the Psionicist article in issue #78, I encountered a problem. If a psionicist gains a discipline such as Preservation upon becoming a 20th level Grand Master, he can then attain only a first level mastery of that discipline. In some disciplines, of course, level of mastery makes no difference; in cases like this, however, there is a very great difference. There should be some provision made for advancement in certain disciplines after the psionicist becomes a Grand Master (20th).

Andrew R. Briggs  
College Park, Ga.

\* \* \* \*

In reference to Theresa Reed's letter about male orientation published in issue #74 of your magazine, I would like to say that I find your articles are in general very good, but there are occasions when they are downright terrible. In the much maligned issue #72, for instance, there is an article called "A new name? It's elementary!" Quite handy to have for naming characters, but what if those characters are female? I see in this article a word for "prince," but I see no sign of a word for "princess." Similarly, there are words for "man," "god," and "warrior, man" but the female equivalents are not even mentioned.

This oversight was bad enough, but the article about the new Duelist NPC class in the next issue of DRAGON Magazine (#73) was even worse. In this article the Fencingmaster's school is described as a "male gossip shop" and there is no hint whatsoever of the female pronoun throughout the entire article. It is true that the profession on which the Duelist NPC class is based was entirely made up of males, but that is no reason for it to be limited in the AD&D world. After all, fighters, cavaliers, and most thieves were male, but Gary Gyga has had the good sense not to restrict the game in that area, and in so doing has attracted many women to the game. (No doubt many men find the "him/her," "he/she" approach of Mr. Gyga's writing cumbersome, but women resent being referred to as "he," just as most men would resent being referred to as "she.")

There are a few other examples I could give of this male orientation, but as they are relatively minor I won't cloud over the major issue by getting picky. I would like to emphasize, however, that I do not want articles written from the female perspective. They are just as bad as articles written from the male perspective, as they too alienate a large proportion of the readership. What I do want is for all articles to be written from, an unbiased perspective.

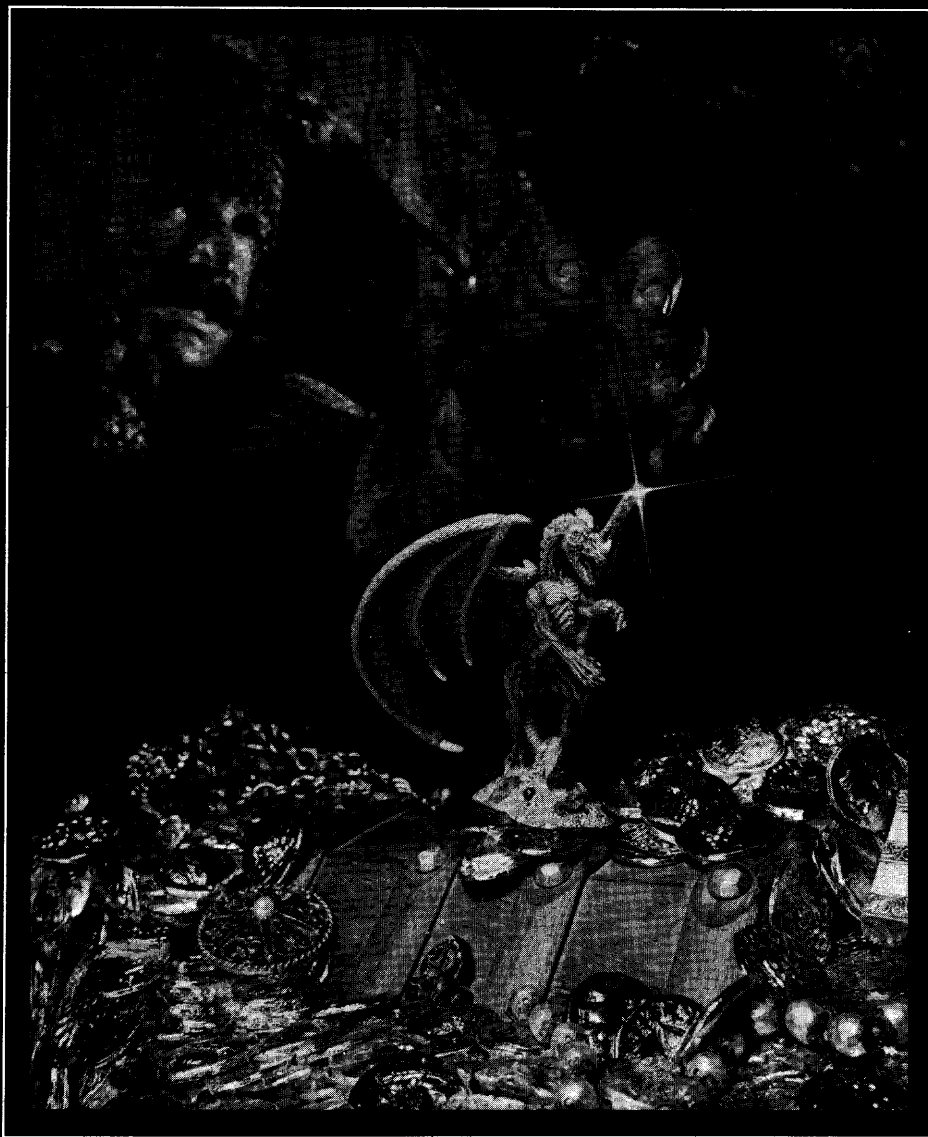
Elizabeth Perry  
Wellington, New Zealand

P.S. Sorry this letter came so late after the subject of male orientation was raised, but issue #74 only arrived in this remote part of the prime material plane three weeks ago. ♪



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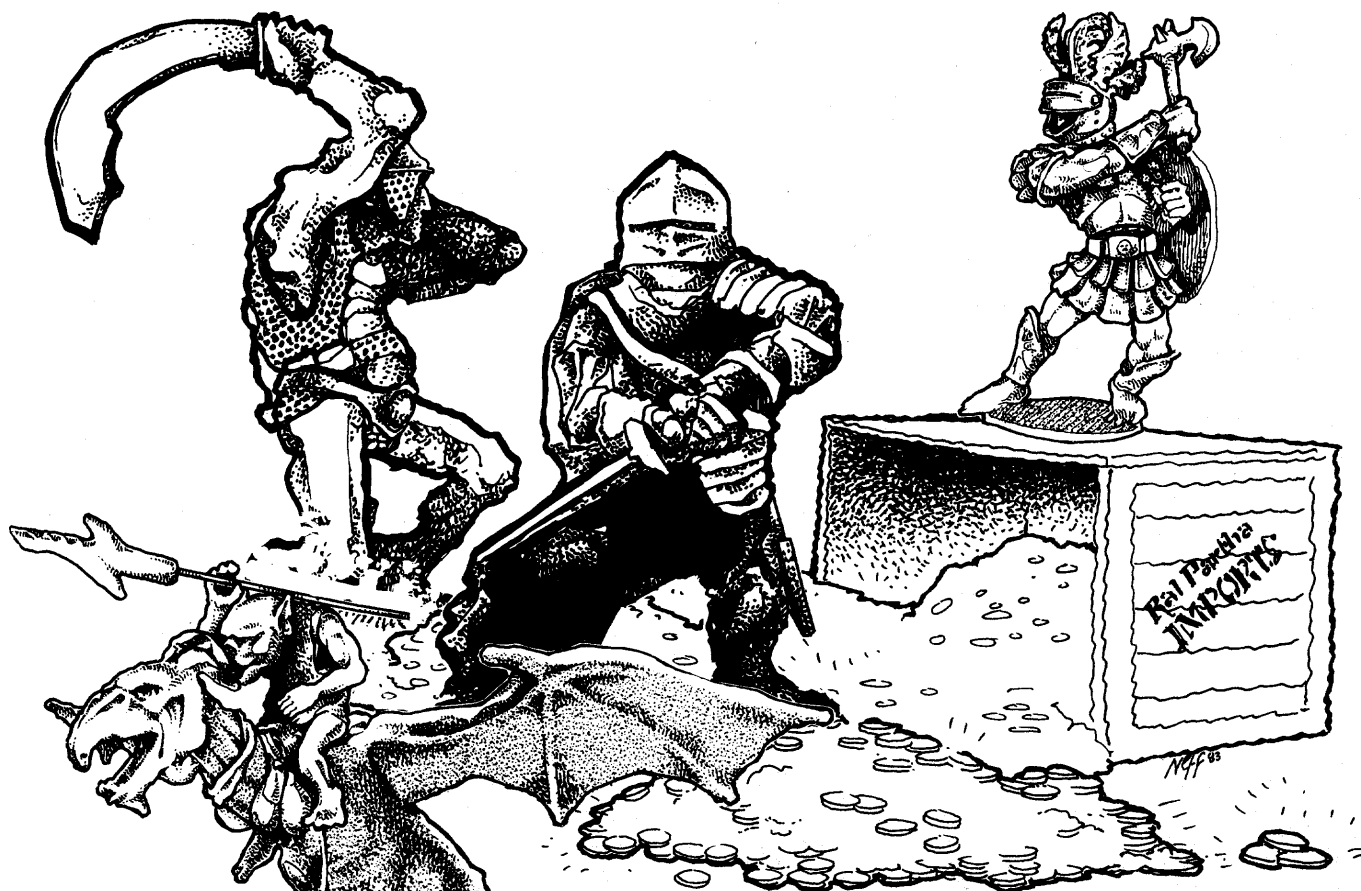
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# Off the Shelf

## MASTER OF THE FIVE MAGICS

Lyndon Hardy

Del Rey/Ballantine Books \$2.25  
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As the title suggests, *Master of the Five Magics* is, above all else, a novel about magic. In his self-assigned quest to win the favor and, eventually, the hand of Queen Vendora, the hero Alodar must save his land from destruction. As a journeyman in the art known as Thaumaturgy, Alodar is led by the exigencies of his career to proceed to a study of the art of Alchemy, of Magic proper, of Sorcery, and eventually of Wizardry as well. During various scenes, Alodar — and thus, the reader — is lectured by numerous master magic-users about the principles, bases, and details of their particular arts. This is not as boring as it sounds, because these expository “lumps” are small and widely scattered; and the reader, identifying with Alodar, is eager to understand these various magical arts.

Hardy has clearly gone to a great deal of trouble in the creation of his magic system — one far more complex than, and quite compatible with, the one used in the AD&D™ game system. Hardy is obviously drawing on some of the sources which have been used since Harold Shea tried his *Incomplete Enchantments* — Frazier's *Golden Bough* would be a good example. Therefore, the reader encounters such concepts of magic as the Principles of Sympathy (like produces like); Contagion (once together, always together); and the Doctrine of Signatures (the attributes without mirror the powers within). But Hardy adds some twists of his own which seem more original. He creates the Maxim of Persistence (perfection is eternal) and the Law of Ubiquity (flame permeates all).

But what of the work of fantasy in which this system is displayed? Here there is less to surprise or to challenge the reader.

The tale of Alodar becoming a student, though never a master, of each mystic science is quite colorfully and competently told. The characters are well-drawn and believable, including the few women characters. Although the characters are not two-dimensional cutouts, they aren't as developed as they could have been; this tends to create a series of caricatures, albeit well-executed caricatures. Thus, the reader is treated to a detailed physical description of Alodar's rival-to-be, Basil the apothecary, when they first meet. Basil's greed, viciousness, and cowardice are sketched out by the dialogue and other interactions; however, Basil never really comes across to the reader as a real human being, but rather as a “type.” Even the Lady Aerial, who comes to rival the queen in Alodar's affections, is

never fully realized as a living, breathing person.

Alodar's quest, his education, the most unexpected entanglement in the councils, and the battles of the mighty and powerful — these elements of plot are enjoyable and plausible. The style is undistinguished but also unobjectionable, save that Hardy absolutely lacks the Gift of Names. I cannot proclaim another “new Tolkien” of the sort that copywriters used to announce every couple of days, but I can and do welcome another very competent worker to a field which is always in need of them.

— Reviewed by Michael J. Lowrey



## SOUL-SINGER OF TYRNOS

Ardath Mayhar

Ace Books \$2.25 0-441-77590-X

As a writer of fantasy, Ardath Mayhar is capable of creating some very refreshing concepts. However, the problem that plagues her tales is that the impact of her innovations is weakened by the presence of such elements as unchallenging situations, unconvincing revelations, and divine intervention. Alas, once again, this is the fate of *Soul-Singer of Tyrnos*.

In this novel, Mayhar introduces a new type of character class: the singer. When still a child, a singer is carefully selected to be educated as a special type of cleric in the local School for Singers. Upon completion

of said education, a singer is assigned to a certain part of the country of Tyrnos in order to keep the country a place of justice. This is accomplished by singing the souls of the citizens — a routine wherein a singer uses the Voice to depict the true nature of a specific soul. Through this process, those with good souls are made purer, while those with evil souls either repent of their misguided behavior or die from viewing their internal wickedness. I found the singing of souls to be an interesting means of dealing with the concepts of spiritual growth and reconciliation.

Armed with this talent, the protagonist — appropriately named Singer — leaves the school on her first assignment. At this point, the story promises some interesting encounters and, in fact, delivers many. Early on, Singer sings the souls of many people: a sick man whose pain must be eased before a doctor arrives; the evil Razul, who commits suicide upon realizing just how wicked he has become; and an unborn child whose mother is taunted by the superstitions of her neighbors. These examples of Singer's ability are remarkable scenes, giving depth to the protagonist's character and credibility to this type of exorcism.

However, by the fourth chapter, Mayhar tries to make the story more grandiose in its scope, as if the purging of evil within the human soul weren't noble enough. Here, Mayhar introduces a quest: the protagonist must find and eliminate the overwhelming evil which threatens to destroy Tyrnos. This quest theme has been seen before in other Mayhar novels, usually with unsuccessful results.

Joining Singer on her quest are the Winter Beast, an intelligent and mysterious cat-like creature, and Lisaux of the Black Shield, a warrior seeking his abducted wife. Well, this unlikely trio discovers that the Ethran, an alien race from another dimension, has, with the aid of the corrupted High Singer of Tyrnos, infested the royal palace and debilitated the powers of the High King. Why the Ethran wish to take over the land of Tyrnos is never quite clear. (Perhaps that point is moot; alien races are always trying to wreak havoc in Mayhar novels.) And why the High Singer has become corrupt is also never explained; then again, perhaps this is also a moot point, since without this corruption, there would be no quest.

I could forgive these oversights if the rest of the novel proved challenging, both to the characters and to the reader. But it does not. When faced with difficulty, the trio is assisted by the gods: lots of snow to cover the trio's progress to the royal city, dreams



that predict future events, an ethereal sojourn with a god to case out the royal palace before the characters invade it, and revelations as to where keys for secret panels to gain access in the palace are kept. At one point, the reader even discovers that one of the trio is the original High Singer from eons past. Now, with all this divine intervention, how could the characters fail in their quest?

I could even forgive all these devices of *deus ex machina* if the characters somehow managed to mature from their experiences. But they don't. Lisaux remains the ever-dutiful knight, champion of good, and a plastic character. The Winter Beast turns out to be kin to the gods, so she's not bound to change much as a character. Singer herself even maintains somewhat adolescent attitudes: things are either good or bad, black or white; there are few moral dilemmas, few gray areas. No growth, no depth, no insight into the human condition.

With such fascinating concepts as singers and soul-singing, this novel had potential, but that potential never blossomed. Instead, the reader is treated to the pretentiousness of a quest, the prescribed feat of which is nothing more than a set of circumstances governed by the gods. Had it been possible, I would have sung the soul of this book, forcing it to repent for its one unpardonable sin: soiling clean sheets of paper with the ink that comes from poorly developed notions.

— Reviewed by Patrick Lucien Price

#### THE SWORDSWOMAN

Jessica Amanda Salmonson

Tor Books \$2.75 0-523-48526-3

Aside from her anthology series *Ama-zons*, Jessica Amanda Salmonson is best known for her novels about the female *ronin* Tomoe Gozen in a land which is the "real" counterpart to the medieval Japan of legendry — a setting which begs to be flushed out for FRP by someone far more knowledgeable than myself. *The Swordswoman* is also a novel of a woman warrior in a hierarchic, non-technological culture which makes use of magic; nevertheless, it is a very different work indeed.

### Label your letter

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Erin Tyler, who shall become Erin of Thar, is a third-degree black belt in karate, a fourth dan in kendo and isido sword styles, with at least a working knowledge of jujitsu. In the midst of a kendo tournament, Erin goes berserk, slaying a harmless young opponent with an edgeless bamboo practice weapon. In reality, this fight is a reflection of a battle in the place called Endsworld — of which Earth is but a distorted image, being Endsworld's nineteenth Hell — where the combat ended differently. The institutionalized Erin is led from Earth into Endsworld by an obsessed medic, who is also drawn into this strange world, much against the intentions of those unseen others who seek to manipulate both worlds.

The culture of Endsworld, the byproduct of a revolt by human slaves against a technological insect civilization, is meticulously realized. The lives of the peasant fishermen and city beggars with whom Erin lives, and whose champion against tyranny she becomes, are especially well done. A virtual gallery of vivid portraits is clearly and movingly presented: the centaur Kiron, immortal Teacher of Black Mountain; Dee the Rope, the mercenary turned paid agitator; and the half-mad healer-messiah Valk the Ear, who was once the naturalized American Valkyova Idaska. Above them all rises the truest hero of the book, the crippled pirate who became an itinerant fishpeddler only to then become a pacifist warrior-saint, Teebi Dan Wellsmith.

This is an enjoyable work, the complex plot of which I will not presume to summarize. My principal criticisms are two-fold.

In her wholly praiseworthy effort to create a truly original fantasy culture, as opposed to the poorly disguised Europe of most heroic fantasies, Salmonson sometimes becomes a reflector of traditional Japanese culture instead: the Zen-like philosophy of Kiron the Teacher, white as a funeral color, the names of the political units, the thonged sandals, the orders of wandering warrior-monks, and the arrogant aristocratic warrior class. All of these elements, however, have been beautifully depicted in the interior illustrations in the quasi-Japanese style of Wendy Adrian Shultz.

The other problem with the novel is the book's cover. Carl Lundgren's more-or-less competent painting of a busty brunette about to pop out of her mini-gi is in glaring contrast to Shultz's works. The meticulous drawings by Shultz of a vaguely oriental, appropriately garbed young woman add so much to the texture of the book. Shultz's works are far more faithful to the details and feelings of the text than the cover is.

The ending leaves open the possibility — perhaps even the necessity — of a sequel. If one appears, I hope to read it with the same intrigue and pleasure which *The Swordswoman* offers to the fantasy, or martial arts, fan willing to try something a bit out of the ordinary.

— Reviewed by Michael J. Lowrey

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## The Role of Books

# Get out of the medieval rut

by Lewis Pulsipher

Fantasy role-playing derives from medieval traditions and history, and from novels with medieval backgrounds, so referees tend to create medieval worlds. For those who want to get out of the medieval groove, here are some books that describe life in the ancient world.

### *Daily Life In Ancient Rome:*

#### *The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*

by Jerome Carcopino,

edited by Henry T. Rowell

Yale University Press, 1940

(1960 paperback evidently still in print) 342 pp.

In many ways this is the most interesting of the "Life in . . ." books I've read because it describes the everyday existence of a great, perhaps unique, city as well as the daily life of the individual. The book has been called the historical novelist's standby; it certainly provides a wealth of detail about Rome under the emperors Trajan and Hadrian.

In every FRP campaign there is a city either acting as a base for adventurers or as an occasionally visited source of rare supplies and information. In a few campaigns, there is little but The City. Reading about Rome enabled me to understand how a single city could be the source of so many adventures and such great interest, and how a single city could be so great that it could dominate — and ultimately leech to destruction — the known world.

In this book we learn how Rome differed from a great modern city, and perhaps from our conception of a great ancient city. Despite a population of more than a million (one quarter of them slaves), traditional infanticide was gradually dying out in imperial Rome. The 89 kilometers of streets were ordinarily little more than narrow warrens, just wide enough that balconies above did not meet. Vehicular traffic was allowed only between sunset and sunrise; this was necessary to avoid completely choking the streets, but made Rome a city of insomniacs. Even without carts, the streets were so choked with shops overflowing from streetside stalls that traffic could scarcely move.

Perhaps 75% of the inhabitants were on the dole, and virtually all of them lived in huge apartment complexes, up to six stories high, without water or refuse service except (in some cases) on the ground floor. Despite laws decreeing height limits, the sounds of the collapse of these fragile buildings reverberated through the city almost every day. Nor were the worst conditions confined to well-defined ghettos, as in a modern city; the rich and the poor rubbed elbows indiscriminately in the unplanned, helter-skelter network of streets — a mansion might be on one block, a squalid apartment house on the next. The streets at night were as dangerous as big-city streets are today, perhaps even more dangerous, with no street lights, not even street names or numbers, and no maps; moonlight rarely got through to the narrow pavements.

In fact, conditions in Rome contrast quite sharply with conditions in smaller towns and colonies, such as the one described in David Macaulay's *City*. Rome was the great exception to the rule, but despite the discomfort, Rome drew the masses from Italy and beyond to its innumerable games, festivals, and free grain. Carcopino somehow manages to make it all come alive and seem understandable.

The first half of the book concentrates on the city; the second half discusses every aspect of individual life, down to hairstyles and toilets. For example, the absolute con-

formity of Romans in the matter of facial hair is surprising. When Julius Caesar instituted a clean-shaven style, *everyone* followed suit, despite the pain and frustration of shaving with only water and a straight iron razor, until the emperor Hadrian went back to the beard and everyone followed.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of an individual's life in Rome was the client-dominus relationship. *Everyone*, except the emperor himself, was a client of someone higher on the social ladder. The client paid his respects to his dominus before going to work (or play) every morning, and received a small gift of some kind in return. Unfortunately, the author doesn't explain how this extraordinary system came to be; at any rate, many clients were not legally obligated to their lords in any way.

I have written at some length about this book, both because imperial Rome is so fascinating, and to give a few examples which may stimulate a gaming referee's thinking and interest. Sometimes the book is too detailed, and it seems not completely accurate — e.g., chess was unknown in the ancient world, though the author says it was common — but if you have an interest in great cities or in the Roman empire, as well as in fantasy role-playing, the effort to read this book will be repaid tenfold.

### *Everyday Life in Roman*

#### *and Anglo-Saxon Times*

including *Viking and Norman Times*

By Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell

G. P. Putnam, 1959 236 pp.

Aimed at juvenile British readers, this book says as much about British history as about everyday life in Roman and later Britain. There is, of course, quite a range of difference between the Romans who occupied Britain in the first century, and the Vikings and Normans of the eleventh, so that the book covers a great variety. There are many drawings of buildings (the Roman villa is notable) and objects to supplement the text.

Topics such as locks, tools, and literacy are discussed, one topic more or less following another without much connection. One of the sections most directly applicable to fantasy role-playing is the description and drawings of Roman legionnaires' equipment, and of the Roman equivalent of medals for bravery: crowns-of-bay, oak, a ship's prow, a city wall, or a crown of gold for such actions as saving a comrade's life, being first to board an enemy ship or scale a wall, and so on.

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style and the bit-by-bit presentation of the book disappointed me, but there's a lot of information about ways of life quite different from the romanticized high chivalry most of us equate with the Middle Ages.

### *Life in Classical Athens*

by T. B. L. Webster

Batsford (London), 1969 192pp.

The first three chapters of this book, "Background," "Life at Home," and "The City," offer many adaptable details, and these three plus "Religion and Festivals" could provide the foundation for a Greek-like democratic city-state as a home base for adventurers. The average Athenian citizen was extraordinarily active in governing his city, however, and either the adventurers would have to be citizens with many obligations, or they would very much be outsiders unable to take part in much of the life of their temporary home. Many of the 2,000 Athenian officials were chosen at random each year, and in most cases could never hold the same office more than once. Attendance at the Assembly was more or less mandatory (if you were nearby during the meeting), but on the other hand assemblymen were paid for each appearance. Juries might include as many as 501 or 1,001 persons, each paid about one-third the wages of a skilled workman.

The second half of the book, "Athenian Attitudes to Myth" and "Art and Literature," is too detailed, too much concerned

with psychology, styles, and interpretations, to hold the interest of most readers, and in any case is of little use to the person interested in fantasy role-playing.

### *Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt*

by Jon Manchip White

Capricorn Books, 1963


Typical fantasy campaign worlds tend to resemble France, southern England, or a medieval version of midwestern America: a vast land blessed with good agriculture, decent weather much of the year, and no dominating feature or oddity of climate. I've not heard of a fantasy world in which a monsoon, bringing rains vital to farming, dominated the climate, or in which a single feature like the river Nile, its waters replenished by annual floods, dominates life.

I've often had a hard time believing in the worlds of many fantasy novels, which hardly seem to change in any vital way despite the passing of hundreds if not thousands of years. Tolkien's Middle-earth in *Lord of the Rings* had some of this feeling of hoary tradition about everything and everyone. In ancient Egypt we have the closest historical analogue to this unchanging world and venerated tradition. In Egypt's case, this resulted from the eternal fertility of a relatively narrow band of land along the Nile, from the buffer zone of hostile environments around the land, and from the contented life the people led. The author asserts that the Egyptians, far from

being gloomy, were "frank and open" people who enjoyed life, unlike the contemporary Mesopotamians, who lived in a "chronic state of mental dread" of gods, spirits, and of more mundane invaders from within their culture and without.

Following the description of the land, White devotes much of his book to the buildings and monuments of Egypt, though there are few diagrams or photos. The discussion of major occupations such as scribe (a highly respected profession in a "lawful" but largely illiterate society) and priest give the reader a view of a non-medieval lifestyle.

In Egypt, unlike ancient Rome or Greece, economic life was not based on slavery, which was rare. There are bits of colorful information to give referees food for thought, from the description of bureaucracy to little differences in everyday things — there were no domestic chickens, for example, and very little furniture because wood and stone were so scarce — to a discussion of the temples. (Two great temples in the capital controlled, at one time, 90,000 paid workmen, 500,000 cattle, 400 orchards, 80 ships, and 50 workshops, and drew tithes and taxes from 65 townships in Egypt and Palestine.)

If you're casting about for an unusual setting for a campaign, or part of one, Egypt with magic mixed in is worth considering. This book, short and written in a popular style, is enough to get started. 

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# Gaming without heroes

## Horror role-playing gets its vigor from victims

Reviews by Ken Rolston

### SHADOWS OF YOG-SOTHOTH

(supplement for *Call of Cthulhu* game)

Designers: Sandy Petersen, et al.

Publisher: Chaosium, Inc.

Price: \$10.00

### RAVENLOFT

(adventure for the AD&D™ game)

Designers: Tracy and Laura Hickman

Publisher: TSR, Inc.

Price: \$6.00

### BROTHERHOOD OF THE BOLT

(Generic FRP supplement)

Designers: Wm. John Wheeler and Peter

L. Price

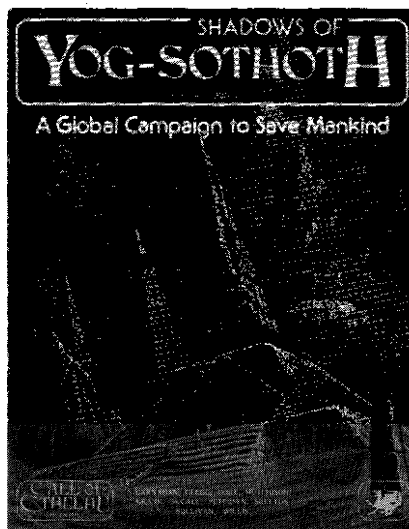
Publisher: The Companions, Inc.

Price: \$8.50

In the beginning, role-playing games took their inspiration from the sword-and-sorcery fantasy genre, complete with its vile orcs, mighty thews, and Arthurian knights. Now, in search of novel ideas and effects, role-playing games and supplements are exploring other genres in search of narratives. Several recent releases exploit the popular horror genre, which superficially resembles the fantasy genre in many of its elements — monsters, supernatural malevolent powers, magic and mystery, restless dead, and so on. However, horror has many features which run against the grain of typical fantasy role-playing adventures.

Horror is a genre of victims, not heroes. Doom confronts the terrified protagonists. They hope to survive, but never doubt the threat of death. The enemy is often subtle or unseen, ambushing when the victim is least prepared, isolated from friends or defenders. The enemy is unspeakably powerful — supernatural, unkillable, deadly, and mercilessly malignant — while the helpless victim, typically not a skilled adventurer, is unarmed and unarmored.

The action in horror role-playing centers around avoiding confrontations with the enemy; to stand and fight is less a heroic action than a gesture of despair. Horror role-playing makes greater demands on player toleration of frustration and helplessness. The victim cannot release tension in periodic combats, since the shroud of mystery veils the enemy; even if it is identified, the evil is dismayingly invulnerable. Fantasy gaming heroes are confident of the eventual triumph of justice; horror victims anguish in terror and despair. The core of horror lies in the sense of menace in the setting and atmosphere, and action may even be destructive, releasing the tension and dread that horror seeks to build.



SHADOWS OF YOG-SOTHOTH is a 72-page collection of adventures for Chaosium's horror role-playing game *Call of Cthulhu*, based on the works of H. P. Lovecraft, the master of American horror literature. The book contains a sequence of seven linked scenarios — "A Global Campaign to Save Mankind," as they are described on the cover and title page — and two unrelated "bonus" scenarios.

*Yog-Sothoth* exemplifies the classic features of role-playing horror. The player characters are confronted with a worldwide conspiracy to awaken Cthulhu, an ancient and powerful god of inconceivable evil, as his legendary isle R'lyeh rises from the depths of the Pacific. The enemy has the support of vast magical powers and ghostly allies from beyond time and space, while the PCs often are not even permitted firearms by local authorities, who regard them with distrust and disbelief. The introduction warns that players should be prepared to lose characters; the campaign is very deadly, since the enemy uses ambush and surprise to full advantage. Gamemaster fiendishness? Yes, and such is necessary for the horror genre.

In design, each of the seven linked scenarios is a mystery, complete with clues, NPCs, and settings. However, for smooth presentation, considerable study and preparation by the GM will be necessary. The scenarios lack strict linear narratives. Though this avoids arbitrary limits on player freedom, it forces the GM to structure the adventures in response to the actions of the players — a difficult job even for experienced gamemasters. The tactics of the antagonists are not adequately detailed, and will need to be improvised or planned ahead.

Unfortunately, the first scenario, "The Hermetic Order of the Silver Twilight," is the weakest of the adventures. The elements of an interesting adventure are provided, but PC motivations and objectives are vague, and the scenario's episodes are inadequately anticipated or described by the designer. "Look to the Future," the second scenario, is well-motivated and structured, though it threatens the destruction of entire parties through the agencies of an incurable disease, an indestructible blast door, and a shoggoth. Such death-traps could easily bring an untimely end to the campaign.

Scenario three, "The Coven of Cannich," is excellent, with a difficult mystery, well-conceived allies, informants, and enemies, and a rich atmosphere of legend, folklore, and history. The necessary clues are hidden among loose ends and misdirections; the background information is well-organized for player use and GM reference. The GM will have to establish a time line and flesh out the tactics and motivations of the NPCs, but this is otherwise a model of scenario design.

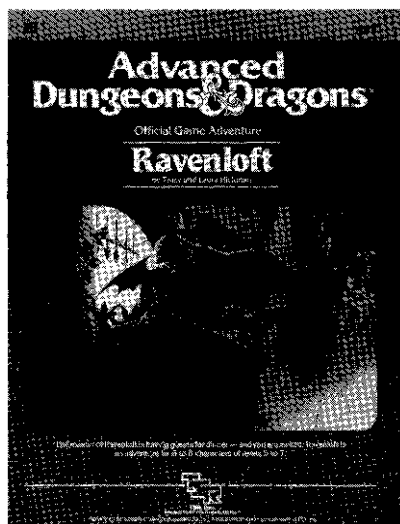
"Devil's Canyon," the fourth scenario, is an effectively simple, easily run scenario with narrow focus, compelling settings, and plausible horrors. Scenario five, "The Worm That Walks," is a series of death-traps organized by the opposition. This scenario features action (and PC death) rather than mystery-solving, and is an effective change of pace from earlier adventures in the series.

"The Watchers of Easter Island," scenario six, is another superior scenario, with well-developed NPCs, an exotic South Seas atmosphere, and suitably loathsome enemies with appalling ambitions. The final scenario in the series, "The Rise of R'lyeh," is an epic confrontation between a handful of investigators and an army of insane wizards dedicated to calling Cthulhu forth from his tomb. If the PCs are fortunate, they may get an opportunity for a footrace with Cthulhu. If they are not fortunate, the world is doomed. It's hard to find an analogy to the scale of this one-sided challenge; perhaps a group of ants threatening a locomotive . . .

The first bonus scenario, "People of the Monolith," is all atmosphere and no danger, appropriate as a brief introduction to the game or as a quickie for a small party. "The Warren," the other stand-alone scenario, is a very effective, dungeon-style adventure with an imaginative central concept and a suitably macabre setting — an ideal adventure for introducing FRP gamers to the *Call of Cthulhu* system.



*Yog-Sothoth* requires much labor and study on the part of the GM; it is not usable after a single reading. The GM will have to provide most of the narrative structure for the campaign, since the players have much freedom to choose their own approach to solving problems. The writing and editing are generally superior. Player materials are provided in ample quantity and the text is adequately organized for GM reference. The adventures are unusual and the atmosphere exotic and terrifying. *Yog-Sothoth* is a classic example of role-playing horror, with awesome monsters, desperate victims, and an atmosphere of mystery and menace. Since it provides enough material for a campaign of several months' duration, it is an excellent value for the \$10 purchase price.



RAVENLOFT is a 32-page module from TSR for the AD&D game system. It represents a remarkable experiment in design and style, diverging markedly from the rest of TSR's role-playing supplements. The brief but ominous passage at the top of page 2 sets the mood unmistakably:

*"I am the ancient. My beginnings are lost in the darkness of the past. I am not dead. Nor am I alive. I am undead, forever."*

— Count Strahd von Zarovich

These are the words of the antagonist — one Count Strahd, a vampire. His castle, Ravenloft, is perched atop a thousand-foot cliff overlooking Barovia, the village that suffers under his ancient curse. The burgo-master's pretty daughter is the object of Strahd's mysterious obsession. The gypsies keep their own council in the shadow of Castle Ravenloft. Late at night the somber strains of a pipe organ are driven by the wind out across the valley, and the howls of wolves disturb the sleep of the villagers.

Embodied in those few sentences are all the major elements of gothic horror. The vampire has always been one of the most fearsome opponents in an AD&D adventure, but seldom has he been presented in the gothic horror setting where he belongs. Though there may be more powerful opponents, none are more fearsome than one who can rob you of levels of experience,

charm person at will, regenerate damage, assume gaseous or bat form, and command the armies of the dead.

An ingenious mechanic of the design, disguised as gypsy card-reading, determines the location of certain items and NPCs in Castle Ravenloft, the nature of the luck (good or bad) to be encountered in those locations, and Strahd's basic objectives and motivations. Whenever the players seek their fortune from the gypsies during the adventure, the reading they receive reassigns the basic elements of the plot.

The map illustrations are a special treat. Each level of Castle Ravenloft is rendered in isometric perspective (as viewed from above and at an angle). The effect is three-dimensional and particularly useful because of the plethora of staircases and passages accessing the catacombs and towers of Ravenloft. The illustration and graphic design are also notably improved over earlier modules.

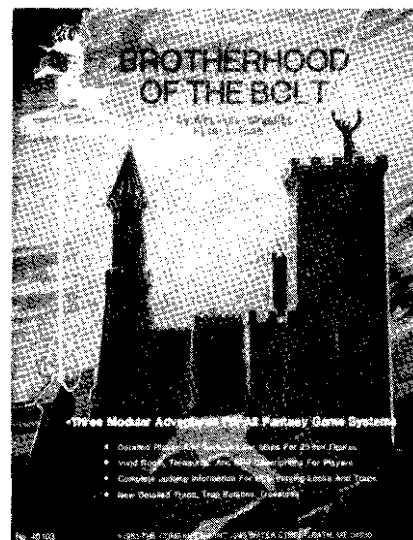
The player text throughout the module, written in the style of gothic horror, consistently develops an atmosphere of darkness and decay. In previous TSR™ modules the style of these sections has been dry and journalistic; here the moodily detailed setting helps establish the atmosphere.

However, for all its virtues, *Ravenloft* does not work as effectively as *Shadows of Yog-Sothoth* in developing and conveying an atmosphere of horror and terror. The conventional trappings of AD&D fantasy adventures are often at odds with the horror effects. For example, the monsters used are all straight from the official monster manuals, precluding surprise or uncertainty about the nature of the menacing opposition. Castle Ravenloft harbors some inappropriate monsters — dragons, golems, and gargoyles — as well as more fitting creatures like wolves, rats, and wraiths. The numerous encounters, puzzles, and traps of dungeon adventuring disrupt rather than develop the central focus on Strahd the vampire and his traditional minions, the bats, wolves, hunchback servitors, and subordinate vampires. The periodic combat episodes dissipate the atmosphere of tension and uncertainty necessary for proper development of "victim terror." There are also flippant elements inconsistent with the tone of a horror adventure, though perfectly acceptable in dungeon adventures. (For example, one crypt bears the inscription, "Sir Sedrik Spinwitovich (Admiral Spinwitovich). Confused though he was, he built the greatest naval force ever assembled in a land locked country.") This is not to say that the module is a poor adventure; in fact, in AD&D terms it is a masterpiece. What it is *not* is gothic horror, though it borrows elements from that genre to add texture and novelty to the dungeon-style adventure.

This looks like a tough module. Though I haven't playtested it, I suspect that clerics and paladins will be in great demand. Strahd is supposed to be an evil genius, giving fiendish Dungeon Masters a marvelous opportunity to indulge themselves.

Strahd by himself will challenge a tough, experienced party, even without the numerous traps and denizens of the castle. Will the party destroy him? Not without luck or brilliance, I suspect.

TSR's module designs are well-organized and require a minimum of DM preparation. (Many other supplements actually require as much work as if the gamemaster had done the design himself.) *Ravenloft's* layout and adventure structure can be run after a single read-through, and requires little labor or improvisation along the way. Though the horror may be somewhat compromised by the fantasy conventions, the setting and atmosphere, the layout and component quality, and the peril and challenge all contribute to the module's superior effect. This is the acme of the FRP genre, and an excellent value for anyone looking for a well-designed AD&D adventure.



BROTHERHOOD OF THE BOLT is a more traditional FRP adventure with trace horror elements, distinguished by unusually detailed settings and perceptive layout design which teaches and supports a sophisticated GM presentation style. The major scenarios include a tomb expedition and a covert castle assault — familiar staples of FRP narratives. However, the novelty and virtue of the supplement lies not in the dramatic situations, but in their organization and presentation.

The encounter, NPC, and setting descriptions are more detailed than those usually found in FRP adventures. The surroundings are vividly visualized. Because the package is not system-specific, the magical effects are daunting and unpredictable (a fantasy element often lacking in scenarios constrained by conventional spell lists and standard magical items). NPC encounters varied in tone and significance, include allies, neutrals, and enemies — some helpful, some treacherous, some comic, some malicious — entertainingly individualized in motives, abilities, and personality. The magical treasures are imaginative and distinctive — not simple adjustments to power-gaming mechanics, but subtle wonders

employed as devices to be supportive of the fantasy atmosphere.

The layout and organization displays a command of advanced technique and enlightened awareness of GM needs. Player maps of the castle interiors, scaled for 25mm figures, are provided, along with player and GM maps of various other scales, and a full-color, topographic, hex-grid map of the region. The layout is modular and page-oriented, with each page a separate and complete unit for reference, intended to be cut apart, punched, and loose-leafed, making the package flexible in use and easy in reference. Encounter locations are described in a six-section format: Entrance/Approach (a survey from a distance); Rapid Glance (a two-second initial impression); Detailed Look (visual survey for one or two minutes); Brief Search (a physical investigation of varying duration); Thorough Examination (full-scale, CIA-style search); the Hints for Play (GM tips for handling tricky mechanics and situations). This encourages intensive, methodical player-character reactions to the detailed settings, which perhaps slows the play but also increases player involvement with the setting.

A suggested sequence of encounters is offered to provide a narrative structure for the package, and valuable advice is given for organizing the plot with time lines and specified NPC activity rosters. This is what is missing in *Yog-Sothoth*, and it makes

manageable the GM's task of preparing the supplement for use in his campaign. Unfortunately, there is the major problem of adapting the package to an established rules system. Despite good intentions and efforts, the designers can offer little help in translating game mechanics for NPCs, particularly as it affects spell use and magical items. The GM must spend substantial time and effort in preparing *Brotherhood of the Bolt* for play. Nonetheless, given the quality of the presentation and fantasy atmosphere, and the relatively small cast of NPCs who must be adapted, the GM's investment will be well repaid.

The production values of *Brotherhood of the Bolt* are nowhere as professional as those of major FRP game publishers. The illustrations and cover art are unremarkable, and a more concise style would improve the readability. The package will require considerable adaptation, and the plot elements are solid but unexceptional. Within these limitations, *Brotherhood* is a worthwhile foundation for a series of interesting FRP adventures. The distinguishing virtues of the package are in the detail and atmosphere of the setting and the GM-supportive game design of the materials.

#### CAPSULE REVIEWS

*Lost Worlds* booklets

Nova Game Designs, \$8 each

These booklets enable players to conduct fantasy melee combat, using the *Ace of*

Aces game system, while playing as a human, a skeleton, a dwarf, or a giant goblin. (Other booklets in the series are forthcoming and may be released by the time you read this.) Over-priced, but the mechanics provide exciting combat gaming that lets you block, parry, dodge, slash, and thrust, all the time viewing drawings of your opponent that reflect the results of your maneuvering and bashing. The closest thing to suiting up in armor and entering the grand melee. A classic example of hack 'n' slash gaming without the distractions of role-playing. Gauche, but thoroughly entertaining.

*Superworld* comic-book hero RPG

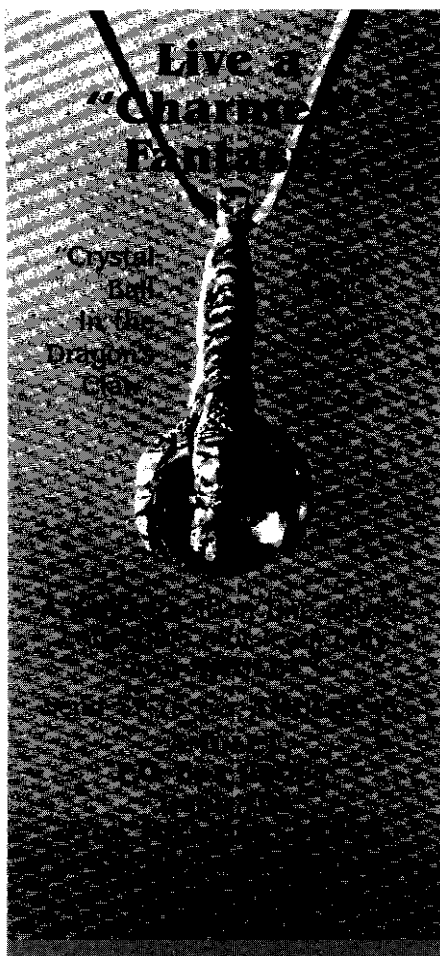
Chaosium, \$20

Another entry in the superhero market, competing with Hero Games' *Champions* and FGU's *Villains and Vigilantes*. High quality production. Contains campaign background to provide dramatic foundation for adventures and establish superheroes in the context of normal society. Mechanics are very different from the other established systems; character design is just as laborious and combat is just as detailed and complex. Superhero games contain the mechanics to handle the magical effects from fantasy games, the ordnance of modern weaponry, and the high-tech marvels of science fiction. Currently a very popular and flexible role-playing genre.

*The Asylum and Other Tales* supplement

Chaosium, \$10

Designed for the *Call of Cthulhu* game, noteworthy features of this product include excellent production, layout and design; a marvelous cover; and adventures of uneven quality. The good outweighs the bad, and this is worth the money. The *Call of Cthulhu* system is uniquely dependent on supplements, since it is derived from Lovecraft's writings; there are dozens of sources for science fiction, fantasy, comic, and spy adventures, but only one fairly coherent source for Cthulhu. The settings of the historic '20s also require research to avoid anachronisms and false chords. Finally, most Cthulhu adventures center around mysteries, the most difficult type of role-playing narrative to design.



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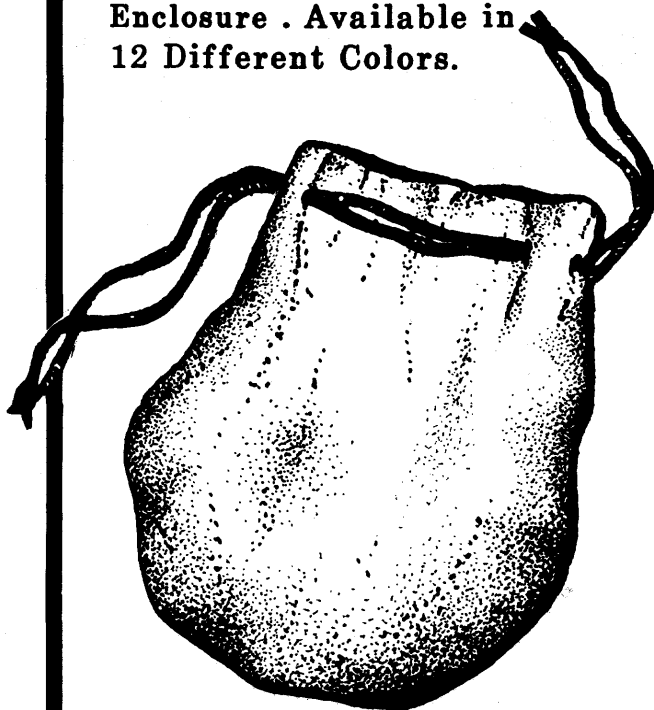
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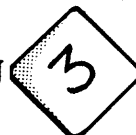
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# SF/gaming convention calendar

## **DRAGONCON, Jan. 6-8**

A gaming event to be staged in Portland, Maine. For details on registration and other information, contact The Dragon's Keep, 93 Ocean St., South Portland ME 04106, phone (207)767-5086.

## **CRUSADER CON III, Jan. 13-15**

To be held at the Metropolitan State College Campus in Denver, Colo. Registration fee is \$8 until Jan. 1, \$10 thereafter. For more information, write to The Auraria Gamers Club, Metropolitan State College, 1006 11th Street, Box #39 Denver CO 80204.

## **PIRATE CON, Jan. 28-30**

At the Ramada Inn in Amarillo, Tex. For details, write to Pirate Con, c/o Starbase Amarillo, P.O. Box 30961, Amarillo TX 79120.

## **EMCON '84, Feb. 4**

To be held at the University of Oregon Ballroom in Eugene, Orgeon, this convention will feature fantasy role playing, board-games, and miniature competition. In addition, Emcon will offer seminars on gaming and a science-fiction/fantasy art show and sale. For more information, please send a S.A.S.E. to: Emcon '84, 2180 Ohio, Eugene OR 97402.

## **EXPLORERCON MAINE, Feb. 11**

Sponsored by Explorer Post 315 and the University of Maine's D&D® Club, this event will take place at Orono High School in Orono, Maine. A variety of games for different skill levels and age groups will be available. Contact: Dan Belyea, Chairman, Explorercon Maine, 474 Stillwater Ave., Old Town ME 04468, or telephone (207)827-2215.

## **WISCON 8, Feb. 24-26**

Noted writers Jessica Amanda Salmonson and Elizabeth A. Lynn are guests of honor for this SF/gaming event at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wis. Memberships are \$11 until Feb. 1, or \$16 at the door. Children under 12 are admitted free if accompanied by an adult member. Contact: WisCon 8, P.O. Box 1624, Madison WI 53701, phone (608)251-6226 (days) or (608)233-0326 (evenings).

## **WINTER FANTASY, March 3-4**

This convention will be held at the Americana Resort in Lake Geneva. It will include seminars, demonstrations and an auction. Contact: GEN CON® Office, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

## **GOLD-CON II, March 3-4**

At the Omni Auditorium, Broward Community College-North, Pompano Beach, Fla. Gaming events, films, and Civil

War re-enactments are among the scheduled attractions. Advance registration is \$4; admission at the door is \$5. For additional information, write to John Dunn, Library, B.C.C.-North, 1000 Coconut Creek Blvd., Pompano Beach FL 33066, or telephone (305)428-8832.

## **COASTCON '84, March 9-11**

This seventh annual SF/fantasy gaming convention will again be held at the Royal d'Iberville Hotel in Biloxi, Miss. The organizers anticipate attendance of more than 1,000 persons. Authors Robert Adams (guest of honor) and Andrew Offutt (toastmaster) will be among the celebrity guests. Continuous film and video shows, a 24-hour game room, an art show, and a "meet the guests" party are some of the scheduled offerings. Memberships are \$10 through Dec. 31, \$12.50 after that until March 8, and \$15 at the door. For information, write to CoastCon, Inc., P.O. Box 1423, Biloxi MS 39533.

## **GEN CON® SOUTH VIII GAME CONVENTION, March 16-18**

All aspects of contemporary hobby gaming will be featured at this event, co-sponsored by the Crawford Dragoons and TSR, Inc., to be held at the Thunderbird Resort Hotel in Jacksonville, Fla. For details: GEN CON South Information, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

## **MIDSOUTHCON 3, March 16-18**

Guests of honor at this SF/fantasy convention will include author C. J. Cherryh, Margaret Middleton, artist Steven R. Dodd, and toastmaster Daluan Coger. Memberships are \$10 through Feb. 1, \$15 after that date, and \$8 at the door. This convention will be held in Memphis, Tennessee, and will feature a masquerade, video room, art show, auction, and a 24-hour convention suite. Send all inquiries to: Midsouth Con 3, c/o Richard Moore, Jr., 1229 Pallwood, Memphis TN 38122.

## **ORCCON 1984, March 16-18**

Touted as one of Southern California's largest strategy gaming conventions and expositions, this event will take place at the Sheraton-Anaheim Hotel, located next to Disneyland in Anaheim, California. Wargame, science-fiction, fantasy, sporting, and family-oriented game tournaments will be featured. Also, industry exhibitors will be there, and many special events will be offered. Prepaid admission to the convention is \$15.50 for all three days; prices at the door are \$17 for the entire weekend and \$13 per day. Advance pre-registration must be postmarked no later than Feb. 24, 1984, permitting tournament pre-registration at this time. For further details write to: STRATEGICON PR Dept., P.O. Box

2577, Anaheim CA 93804.

## **TRI-CON II, March 16-18**

A SF/gaming convention to be staged at the North Carolina State University campus in Raleigh, N.C. For more information, send a SAS envelope to: N.C. State Gaming Society, P.O. Box 37122, Raleigh NC 27627.

## **ALASCON V, March 17-18**

The organizers of this convention call it the biggest and best gaming convention in Alaska. A tournament dungeon, miniature painting contests, and more will be featured at the event. The convention will take place at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks campus. For more information, or for pre-registration materials, write to ALASCON V, c/o Ken Mayer, P.O. Box 82374, College AK 99708.

## **MUGG-CON I, March 23-25**

A benefit SF/gaming convention to be staged at the Interlaken Lodge in Lake Geneva, Wis., sponsored by the Multi-Universal Gamers' Guild (MUGG). An AD&D™ tournament, nearly 100 other gaming events, and other special attractions are on the schedule. All proceeds from the convention will be turned over to the American Red Cross. For more information, send a business-size self-addressed, stamped envelope to MUGG-Con Convention Committee, c/o Jan Carlson, P.O. Box 265, Lake Geneva WI 53147.

## **STELLARCON 9, March 23-25**

A science-fiction and gaming event to be held at the University of North Carolina's Greensboro campus. For more information, contact the Science Fiction and Fantasy Federation, Box 4, Elliott University Center, UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro NC 27412.

## **NOVA 9, March 24-25**

Free movies, gaming, an art show and auction, a costume party and contest highlight this convention, to be staged on the campus of Oakland University in Rochester, Mich. For registration information and other details, send SASE to: The Order of Leibowitz, P.O. Box 61, Madison Heights MI 48071.

## **AGGIECON XV, March 29 - April 1**

This science-fiction convention, featuring L. Sprague de Camp and Catherine de Camp as guests of honor, will be held on the campus of Texas A&M University. Among the other personalities scheduled to be present are Don Maitz, James P. Hogan, and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. For further information about this convention, write to AggieCon XV, P.O. Box J-1, College Station TX 77844, or call (409)845-1515.

### CAPCON '84, April 6-8

This seventh annual gaming convention will be staged at the South Terrace of the Ohio Union on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. Cost is \$2, for Saturday and Sunday only. Events include miniatures battles, and fantasy and historical gaming. Contact: Paul T. Rigel, c/o War Game Designs, 6119 E. Main Street #202, Columbus OH 43213, or call (614)863-6635 between 2 p.m. and midnight.

### CAROLINA CON, April 6-8

This event will be held at Russell House University Union, USC Campus, Columbia, South Carolina. These three days of tournament and fun will include fantasy, science-fiction, historical, and adventure gaming. For information, contact: USC Wargamers, Box 80138, USC, Columbia SC 29208.

### NORTHEASTER 2, April 6-8

Sponsored by Rutgers University Garners, this second annual event will be held at the Rutgers University campus in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The convention will feature fantasy role-playing, wargames, boardgames, miniatures, and other gaming events. To run a gaming event or attend as a participant, send all inquiries to: NORTHEASTER 2, Box 101, R.U. Student Center, 126 College Av., New Brunswick NJ 08903. Inquiries from hobby dealers are invited.

### GAME FAIRE '84, April 28-29

This year's Game Faire will take place at Spokane Falls Community College. Inexpensive housing and breakfasts will be provided by local gamers. The school's cafeteria will be serving food, and snacks will be available at concession booths. Admission is \$5 a day or \$7 for a prepaid weekend pass; the weekend pass will cost \$9 at the door. All proceeds will go to the Spokane Guild School for handicapped children. Events include AD&D™ and *Runequest* Tournaments, miniatures painting contents, game instructions and classes, computer gaming competition, and fighting demonstrations by the Society for Creative Anachronisms. For more information, contact: Shannon Ahern, Book and Game Company, West 621 Mallon, Spokane WA 99201, or phone (509)325-3358.

### NIAGARA GAMEFEST & COMPUTER SHOW '84, May 4-6

For more information about this third annual gaming event in Ontario, Canada, contact: Niagara Gamers Association, 223 St. Paul Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2R 6V9.

### ONOCON '84, May 4-6

Described by the organizers as the largest SF/gaming convention in the central New York area, this event will be held at the Sheraton Inn Convention Center in Syracuse, N.Y. Guests of honor will include

Frederik Pohl, L. Sprague de Camp, Randy Elliott, Carl Lundgren, and Jay Jay Klein. More information is available by sending a SASE to: OnoCon '84, P.O. Box 305, Syracuse NY 13208

### TRI-STATE CON 1984, May 4-6

This gaming convention will be staged at the Cincinnati Technical College in Cincinnati Ohio. For further details, contact: Tri-State Cin '84, c/o Boardwalk, 1032 Delta Ave., Cincinnati OH 45208, or call (513)871-2110 or (513)351-9920.

### TEXARKON 3, May 11-13

This SF/fantasy convention will be held at the Tall Timbers Resort and Inn in Texarkana, Arkansas. Guests of honor will include Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Sturgeon, Phil Foglio, and Robert Asprin. An art show and auction, video room, D&D® and costume contests, and a dealers' room will be featured at this event. For more information, send a S.A.S. envelope to: Texarkon, 1021 East 29th, Texarkana AR 75502.

### WILCON, June 23-25

Fifty free events will be featured throughout this convention, which will be held at the Civic Center in Wilmington, Illinois. Memberships are \$4 per day, or \$10 for the entire weekend. For more information about this gaming convention, contact: Donald Heck, 1790 Vista Drive, Wilmington IL 60481, or phone (815)476-7385.

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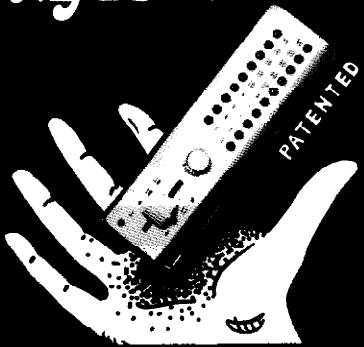
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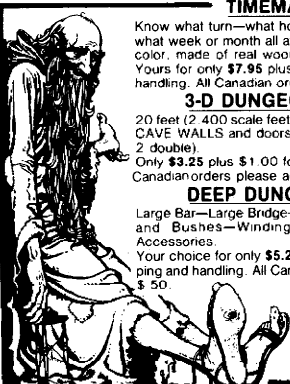
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**Letters**

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(From page 4)  
duced or marketed any more. (By the way, I don't understand Fred's remark about the original rules being "more restrictive in many ways than the advanced rules." I always thought the original rules were less restrictive; maybe this was a slip of the typewriter?) Even so, the ideas and suggestions in most of the articles in DRAGON Magazine can still be applied to "Collector's" games, if the players and the DM are looking for ways to add new ingredients to their adventures.

This is a good time to point out, for those who are still misled by the similarity in names, that the D&D game and the AD&D game are not structurally related to one another. Many of the rules concerning specific topics are vastly different in each game. It is not possible to translate a D&D

campaign into an AD&D campaign, or vice versa, without losing an awful lot in the translation. Anyone who's ever given advice on this subject recommends simply scrapping the old campaign and starting fresh if you want to change games. If you're playing cards and you want to switch from a game of hearts to a game of contract bridge, you don't try to merge one game with the other — you pick up the cards, shuffle them, and deal them out all over again. Despite some basic similarities between the two games (they both use all the cards, they both involve taking tricks), they don't use the same rules. It isn't possible to move smoothly from one game to the other while retaining elements of the first one. And so it is with the D&D game and the AD&D game: You can play one or the other, but if you try to play both you'll be playing neither. — KM

## Tabletop allies

Dear Editor:

There is a small question about "King of the Tabletop" (issue #77) that is not answered in the rules. Suppose there are three players, A, B, and C. During his war phase, player B attacks and neutralizes player A's castle, but does no damage to the army behind it. Now it is player C's war phase. He and player B were allied against player A, so he is going to attack him too.

Is the castle still neutralized, making it so that any hits scored will go directly into player A's standing army, or is the castle brought back up to full strength before player C's attack? In general terms, is the damage done to a fortification repaired after the same phase it is caused in, or is it repaired the next turn?

Chuck Troje  
Lakewood, Colo.

We went right to the source on this one. Tom Wham, the co-designer and co-author of KOTT, says that player A's castle has to be re-neutralized by player C; a fortification does not remain damaged or neutralized from one player's war phase to the next player's war phase. "Doing it the other way," says Tom, "would be letting player C use the results of player B's turn, and

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### FANTASTIC:

**January 1980.** "The Cliffhanger Sound" by Paul Dellinger; "Never Argue with Antique Dealers" by Darrell Schweitzer; classic reprint by Murray Leinster; analysis of TV adaptations of Ray Bradbury.

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you can't do that. The only thing allies can do (directly for each other) is give each other magic."

If you want a logical explanation, you could assume that some time elapses between player B's war phase and player C's war phase, and during that time, player A is able to re-fortify his castle so that it is again at full strength before player C makes his attack. — KM

## 'Let me keep him'

Dear Dragon,

I enjoyed your articles on psionics and their uses. Once I read the article on the psionist I set out on making my first one. They are interesting to play, but it took a while to convince my DM to let me keep him.

I am reading Piers Anthony's *Xanth* series, all along wondering how most citizens have magic. Could I incorporate it into fantasy gaming classifying their magic as psionics?

And, is there any chance you will publish in your "Best of the Dragon" the M.U. spells Mr. Gygax did in issues #67 and #68? I only got the back copy of #68 and don't subscribe.

Henry Wilkinson  
Charlotte, N. C.

I'm glad for your sake, Henry, that you were allowed to "keep" your psionist character. We don't like to be the cause, even indirectly, of a conflict between player and DM. However, you should be aware that the psionist is not an official addition to the ranks of player-character classes for the AD&D game — and it isn't even necessarily designed as a player-character class at all. As with all of the suggested new classes we present in these pages, the psionist is offered for your examination and enjoyment, and possibly for use as a non-player character class if the DM is so inclined. We don't try to examine new classes to determine whether their inclusion as player-character classes would unbalance the game system; such questions are best left to Gary Gygax and other people who have a more in-

depth and intuitive appreciation for what works and what doesn't as "official" new rules. What we do is present the ideas of independent contributors without recommending or implying that their ideas ought to be made into actual rule additions or alterations. From the standpoint of strict adherence to the rules of the AD&D game, no DM is obligated to allow a player character based on any of the unofficial classes from the magazine. But, at the same time, there's really no harm in doing so, as long as the balance of the campaign is not upset and everyone involved is having a good time.

Following from that point, there's no harm in adapting some ideas and concepts from fantasy literature into a gaming campaign. You can use the ideas of Piers Anthony, or any other author, to add some variety to your AD&D universe — we print articles on this theme once in a while, the most recent example being the adaptation of Katherine Kurtz's *Deryni* race that ran as part of the psionics section in #78.

Certainly, no one has to ask for permission to be creative in this way; you can do practically whatever you want within the limited sphere of your own campaign and your own playing group. There's just one thing to be aware of: Whenever you incorporate any changes into your game — from books, from this magazine, or any other source — you are no longer playing the AD&D game "by the book," and your characters and your campaign won't mesh very easily, if at all, with a universe being run by someone who plays strictly by the rules. If you plan to enter an official AD&D tournament, don't expect to be able to use a psionist player character or any ideas derived from the *Xanth* series, because those things aren't in the rules and can't be allowed in a standardized tournament.

Yes, we are planning to include Mr. Gygax's new magic-user spells in the next BEST OF DRAGON® anthology we put together (which will probably be released in the summer of 1984). Those articles weren't considered for Vol. III — now on sale — because issues #67 and #68 weren't very old at the time that volume was assembled. — KM

## Okay, you asked

Dear Editor:

Your answer to Robbie Dean about the Combat Computer (Out on a Limb, issue #79) contained a sentence dealing with DM's that don't let players read DRAGON Magazine. Well, I don't let my players read mine or anyone else's magazine, and they think I'm a selfish su-monster. Do you think I should let these pixie players read DRAGON Magazine or not? Please don't say "It is not my place to say," because I am asking your opinion.

(name withheld by editor)  
Camarillo, Calif.

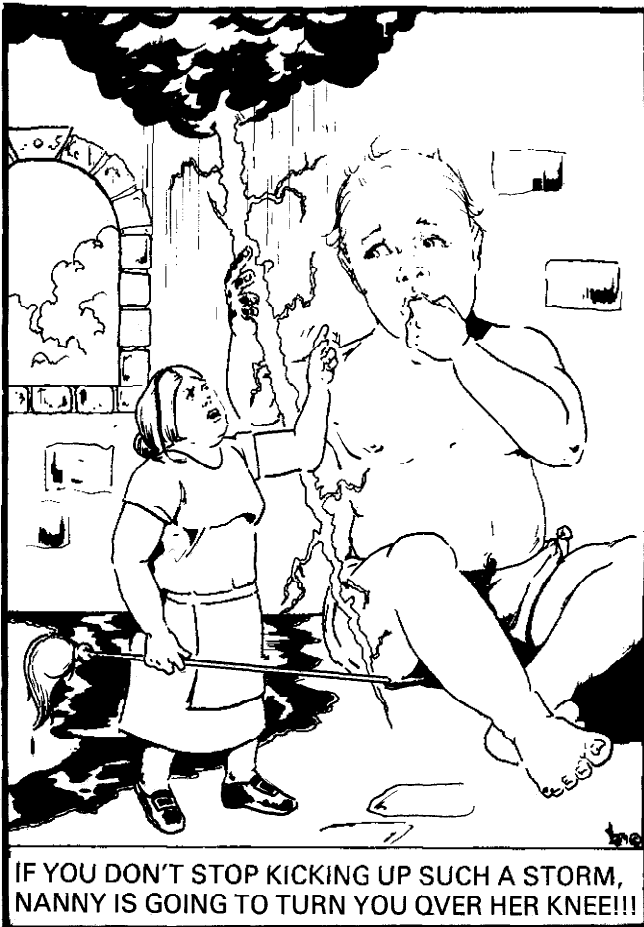
I don't know if you're putting us on or not, (name withheld), but I'm going to take you very seriously. Very seriously. I think that not allowing players to read this magazine is the second most unimaginative thing a DM could do. The most unimaginative thing a DM could do is take all of his "new" ideas straight out of the magazine in the first place. DRAGON Magazine does not exist for the purpose of doing a DM's work for him. Any DM who relies entirely on ideas from other sources probably runs a campaign that has all the excitement of a bowl of cold oatmeal. And any DM who thinks he's justified in preventing "his" players from looking at DRAGON Magazine is a selfish su-monster, to put it mildly.

Sure, there are people in the world who like cold oatmeal (or who can be convinced that it's hot when it's not), and there are people who will put up with almost anything, even su-monsters, if refusing to do so means they have to stop playing their favorite game. But how can you, as a DM, feel fulfilled by the realization that desperation, not enjoyment, is what's keeping your group of players together? Maybe your players are better off than if they had no DM at all — but on the other hand, there are a lot more DMs than su-monsters in this world. Sooner or later, they're going to decide they'd rather play with a human being, and then where will you and all your magazines be? — KM

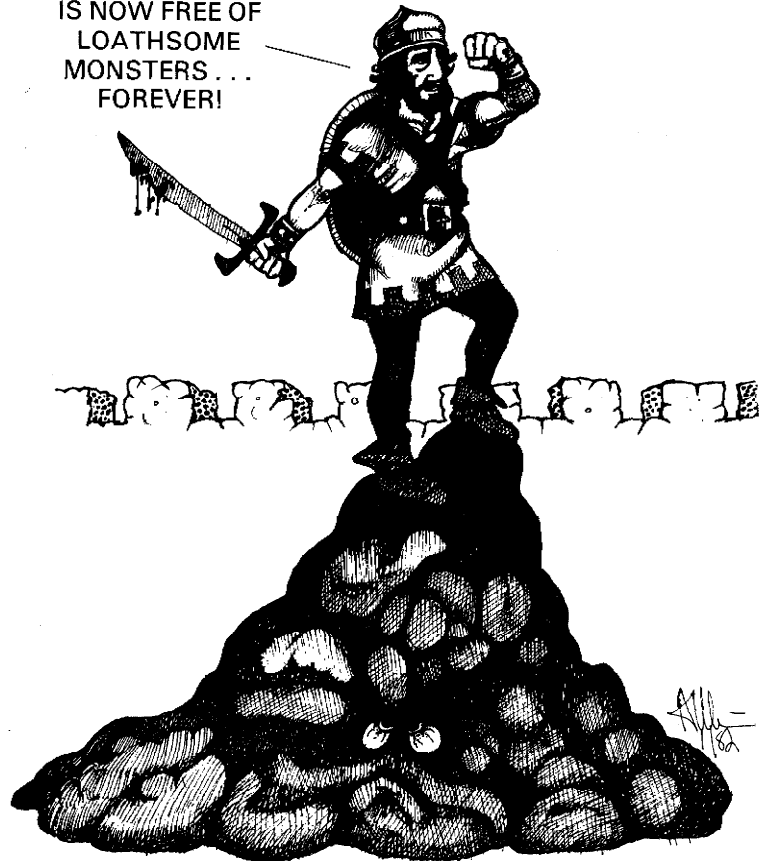
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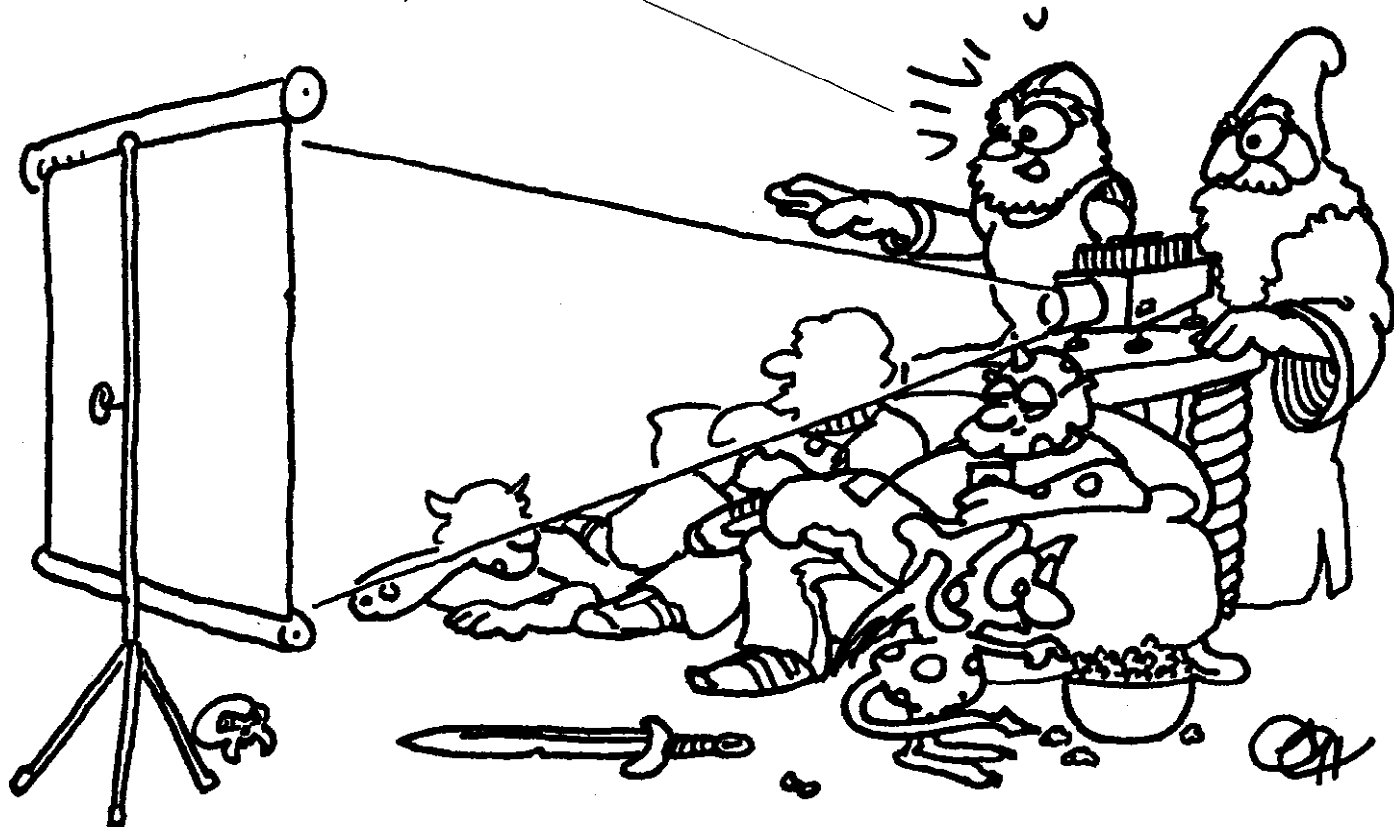


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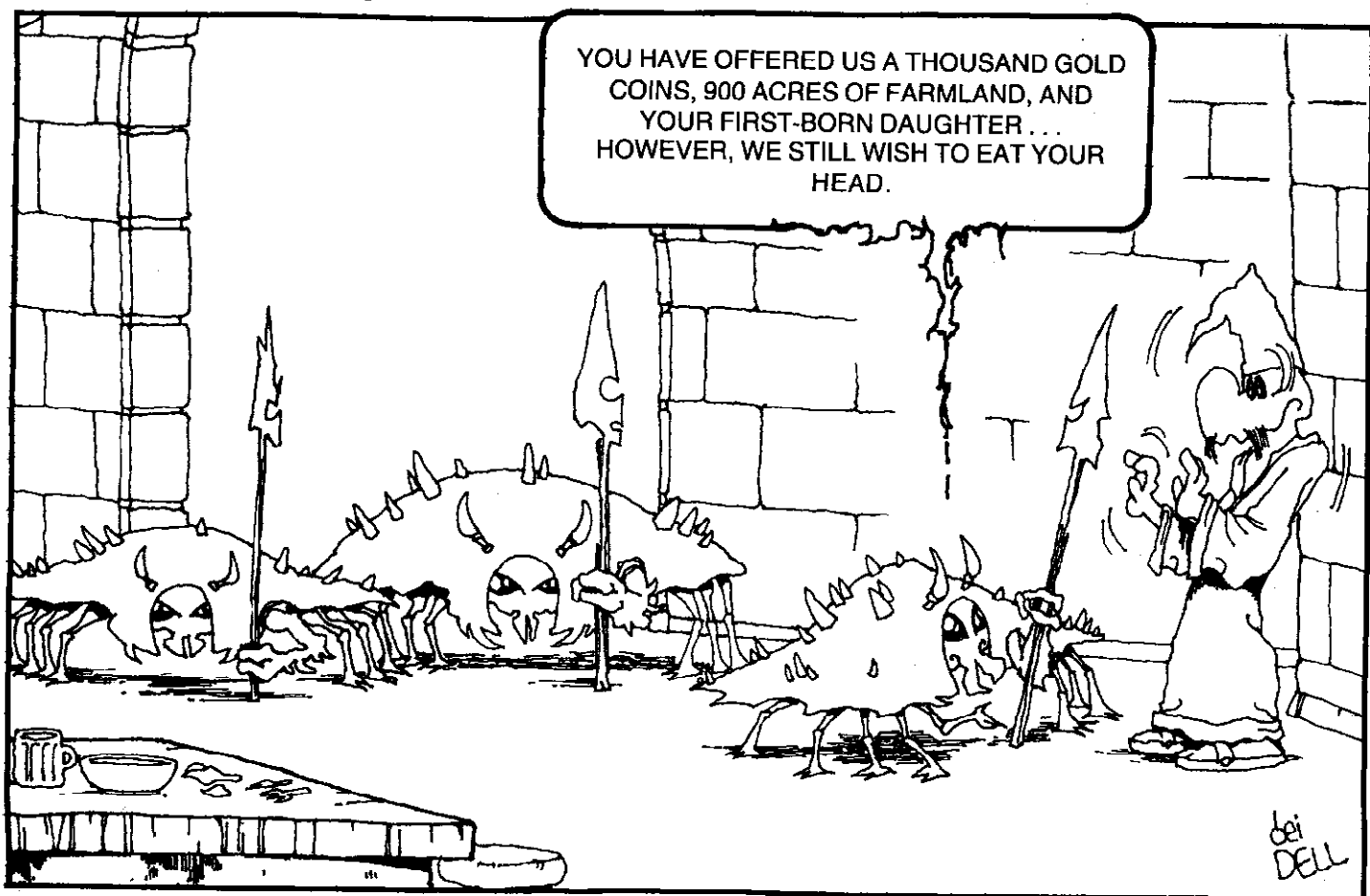




"... AND HERE'S THE ROOM WHERE WE WERE  
SURPRISED BY THAT INTELLECT DEVOURER... THERE'S  
MAX ON THE LEFT; AND HERE ..."



YOU HAVE OFFERED US A THOUSAND GOLD  
COINS, 900 ACRES OF FARMLAND, AND  
YOUR FIRST-BORN DAUGHTER...  
HOWEVER, WE STILL WISH TO EAT YOUR  
HEAD.



# WHAT'S NEW?

- WITH PHIL AND DIXIE!

DIXIE HAS YET TO SHIFT OUT OF HER DRAGON BODY - SO SHE'S USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE DRAGON SOCIETY - FROM THE INSIDE. 'WHAT'S NEW' IS NOW PROUD TO PRESENT;



## Dixie's DRAGON NOTEBOOK—

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1983

DRAGONS BECAME VERY INTERESTED WHEN HUMANS THAT THEY **KNEW** HAD BEEN FRIED SHOWED UP THE NEXT DAY, READY TO FIGHT ALL OVER AGAIN. ALWAYS WILLING TO USE A GOOD IDEA - DRAGONS NOW HAVE THEIR OWN CLERICS.

DRAGONS CLEAN EACH OTHER IN FIRE. THIS FEELS VERY GOOD...



- BUT IS VERY HARD ON THE SOAP.



YOU REALIZE THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE A CHALLENGE...



CLERIC? AGAIN?!



YOUR FATHER WENT TO A LOT OF TROUBLE TO GET THIS - IT'S GOOD FOR YOU - BESIDES, THERE'S PRINCESS FOR DESSERT.

IT'S YOUR TURN TO CHANGE THE BABY, DEAR.

JUST AS YOUNG BIRDS HAVE TO BE TAUGHT TO FLY - YOUNG DRAGONS HAVE TO BE TAUGHT HOW TO CONTROL THEIR FLAME...





DRAGONS ARE ONLY SOLITARY WHEN "ON THE JOB" — AND SOCIALLY ARE VERY GREGARIOUS.



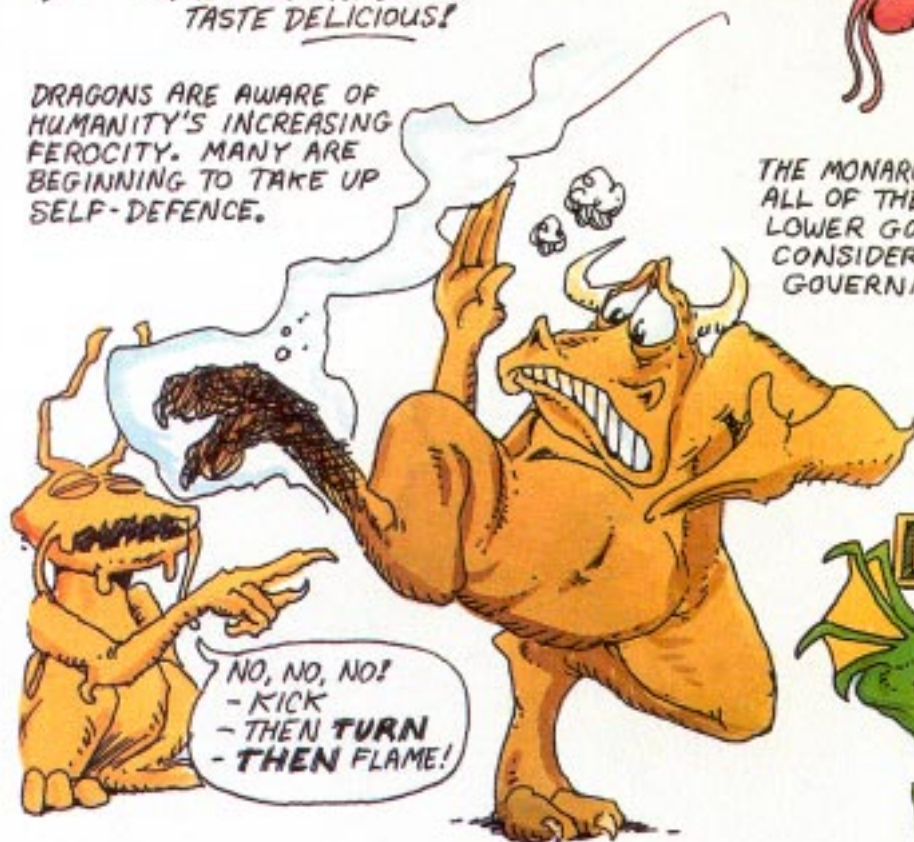
AS FAR AS DRAGONS ARE CONCERNED — HUMANITY'S GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE FIREWORKS...



DRAGONS ARE LOOSELY RULED BY A HEREDITARY MONARCHY.



DRAGONS ARE AWARE OF HUMANITY'S INCREASING FEROCITY. MANY ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE UP SELF-DEFENCE.



THE MONARCHS' MAIN FUNCTION IS TO DESTROY ALL OF THE PAPERWORK PRODUCED BY THE LOWER GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRATS. IT IS CONSIDERED THE MOST EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT IN HISTORY.

- MOST ENLIGHTENING WAS FINDING OUT WHERE DRAGONS GET THEIR HOARDS — CASHING IN EMPTIES.

OKAY - 4 SETS OF CHAIN MAIL - 3 HELMS - 2 SHIELDS - 4 SWORDS AND A SPEAR. THAT'LL GET YOU 500 GOLD PIECES.









KEEP YER EYEBROWS ON.  
...IT AIN'T THE KINDA  
HEADS YER THINKIN' OF.



HERE.

TAKE A  
LOOK AT  
THESE.



WHAT IS THIS, A JOKE?

HEH  
HEH  
HEH

THESE  
ARE ALL  
GIANTS!



HEY.  
THOSE  
ARE NEAT!

WHERE'D YA  
GET THESE?



YA RECKONIZE ANY  
OF THEM MUGS?

...  
SEEN 'EM  
ANYWHERE  
AROUND?

SURE.

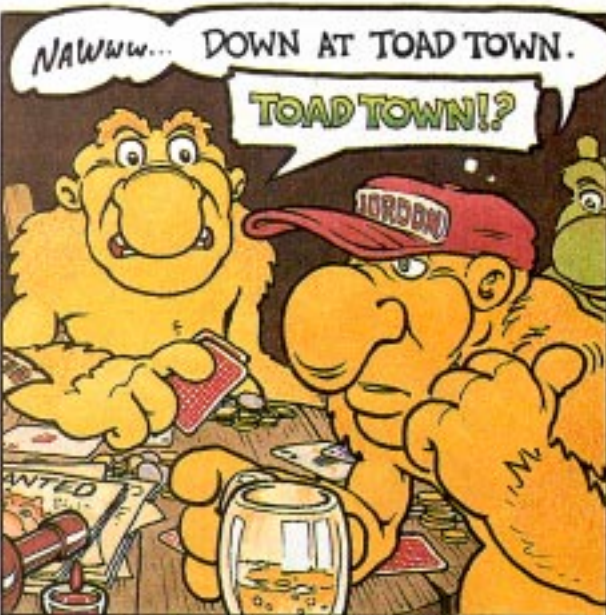
I'VE SEEN  
THIS ONE  
BEFORE.



AROUND  
HERE?

NAWWW... DOWN AT TOAD TOWN.

TOAD TOWN!?



YEAH!  
HANGIN' UP IN THE POST OFFICE.  
HELL! THEY PROBLY DON'T EVEN  
KNOW IT'S WORTH ANYTHING!  
WATCH YER DRINK, THERE,  
MISTER... YA WOULDN'T WANNA  
RUIN THAT COLLECTION A-YERS.

YA KNOW WHAT?

WUT? I ALWAYS  
THOUGHT BOUNTIES  
WERE SOME SORTA  
FAT, LITTLE RODENTS.

IT'S A  
SIMOLEON  
TO YOU.



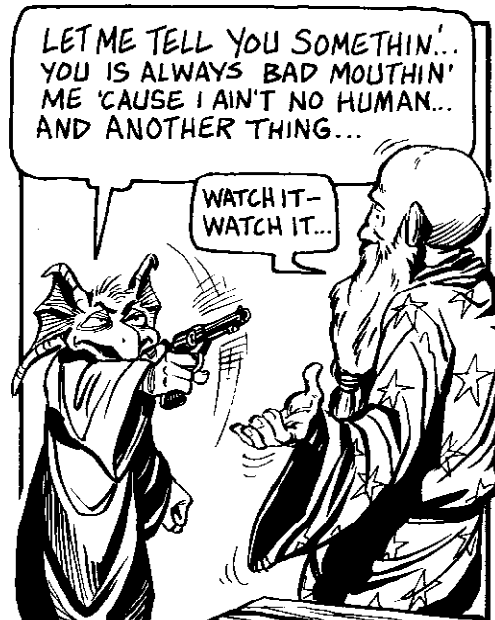
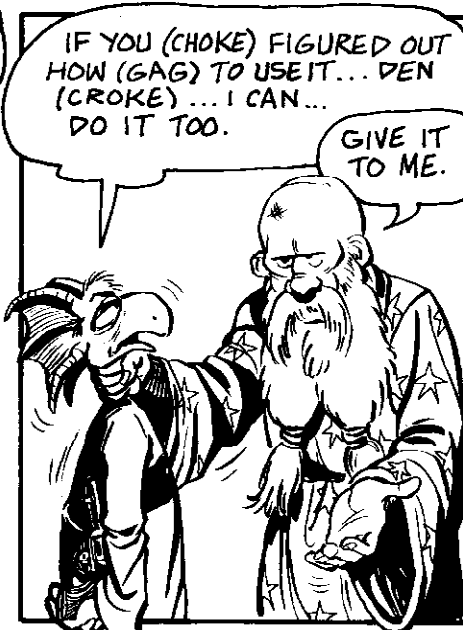
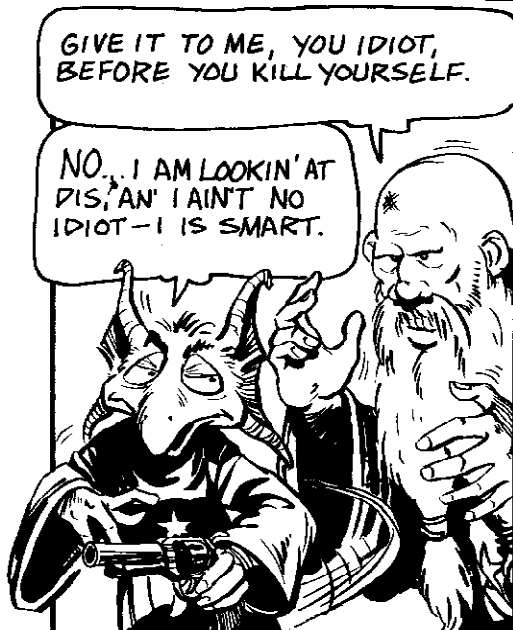
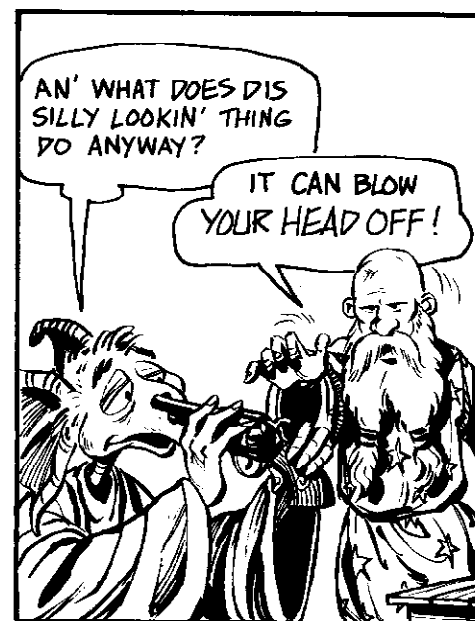
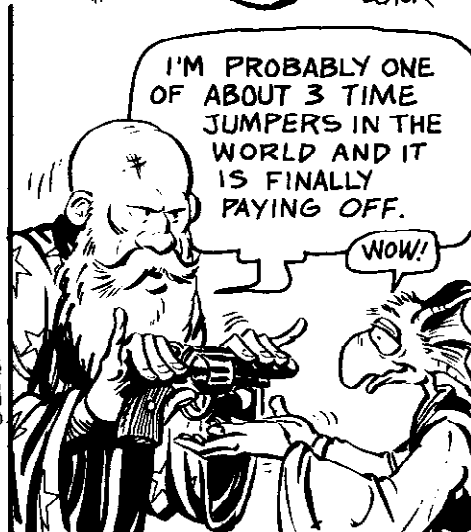


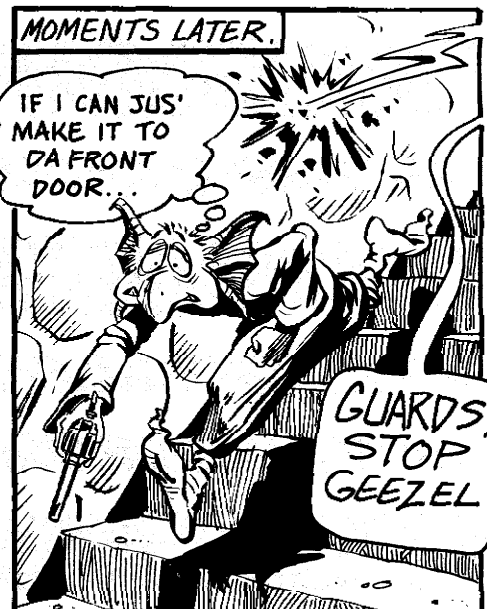
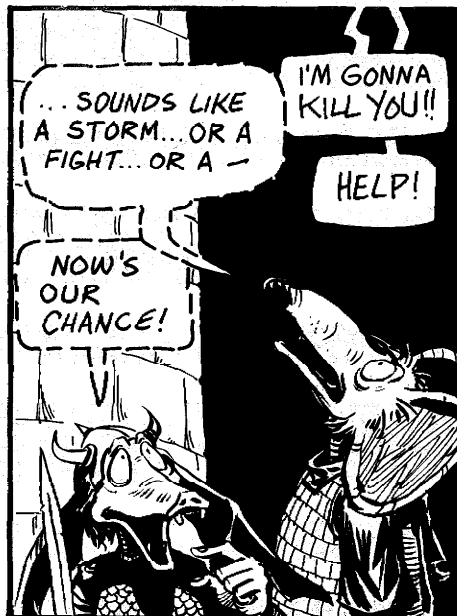
# SNARFQUEST

#6

BY ELMORE

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SOMEONE IS COMING,  
LET'S CAPTURE HIM...  
MAYBE HE COULD GIVE  
US SOME DIRECTIONS.

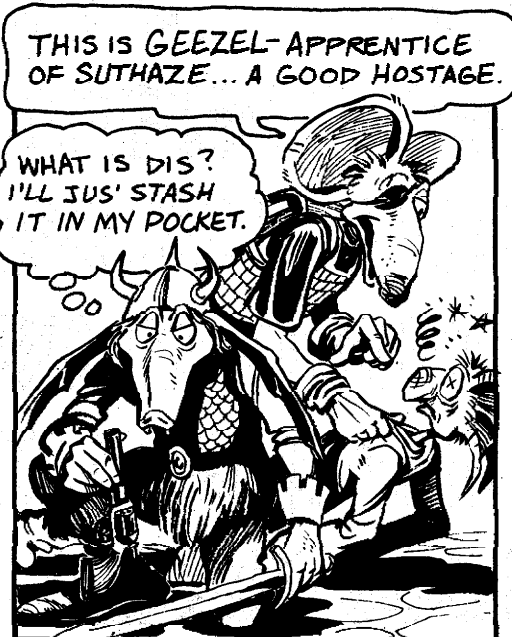
I'LL GO LOW,  
YOU GO HIGH.



SPLAT

UFF...

BLAT



THIS IS GEEZEL- APPRENTICE  
OF SUTHAZE... A GOOD HOSTAGE.

WHAT IS DIS?  
I'LL JUS' STASH  
IT IN MY POCKET.



AAAAHH...  
WHAT  
HAPPENED?

SHUT-UP!

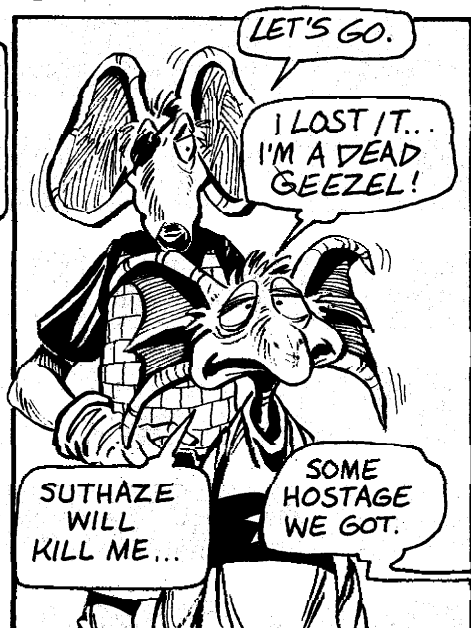
LET'S GO BEFORE  
DA GUARDS  
FIND US.



MY MAGIC WEAPON!  
WHA?... WHERE?  
GONE

I DIDN'T SEE  
ANY MAGIC  
WEAPON...  
DID YOU  
SNARF?

NOPE... NOT  
A THING.



LET'S GO.

I LOST IT...  
I'M A DEAD  
GEEZEL!

SUTHAZE  
WILL  
KILL ME...

SOME  
HOSTAGE  
WE GOT.



LET'S JUS' DO HIM IN NOW!

NOOO... NO, I IS  
SMART, GEEZEL  
CAN HELP YOU  
ESCAPE...



ESCAPE? NOT YET!  
WE WANT TO FIND  
DA TREASURY AND  
PICK UP A FEW  
LOOSE ITEMS...  
WE ARE ON A  
QUEST!

NOW, WHERE IS  
DA TREASURY?



GEEZEL KNOWS  
WHERE IT IS!  
YOU FOLLOW  
GEEZEL... ME  
IS SMART... YES  
ME IS... (GULP)



HUMM, I SEE I HAVE TWO  
OTHER VISITORS, THEY  
HAVE GEEZEL, AND HE  
HAS MY MAGIC WEAPON.

NEXT: CAN GEEZEL BE  
TRUSTED OR IS THIS A SETUP?

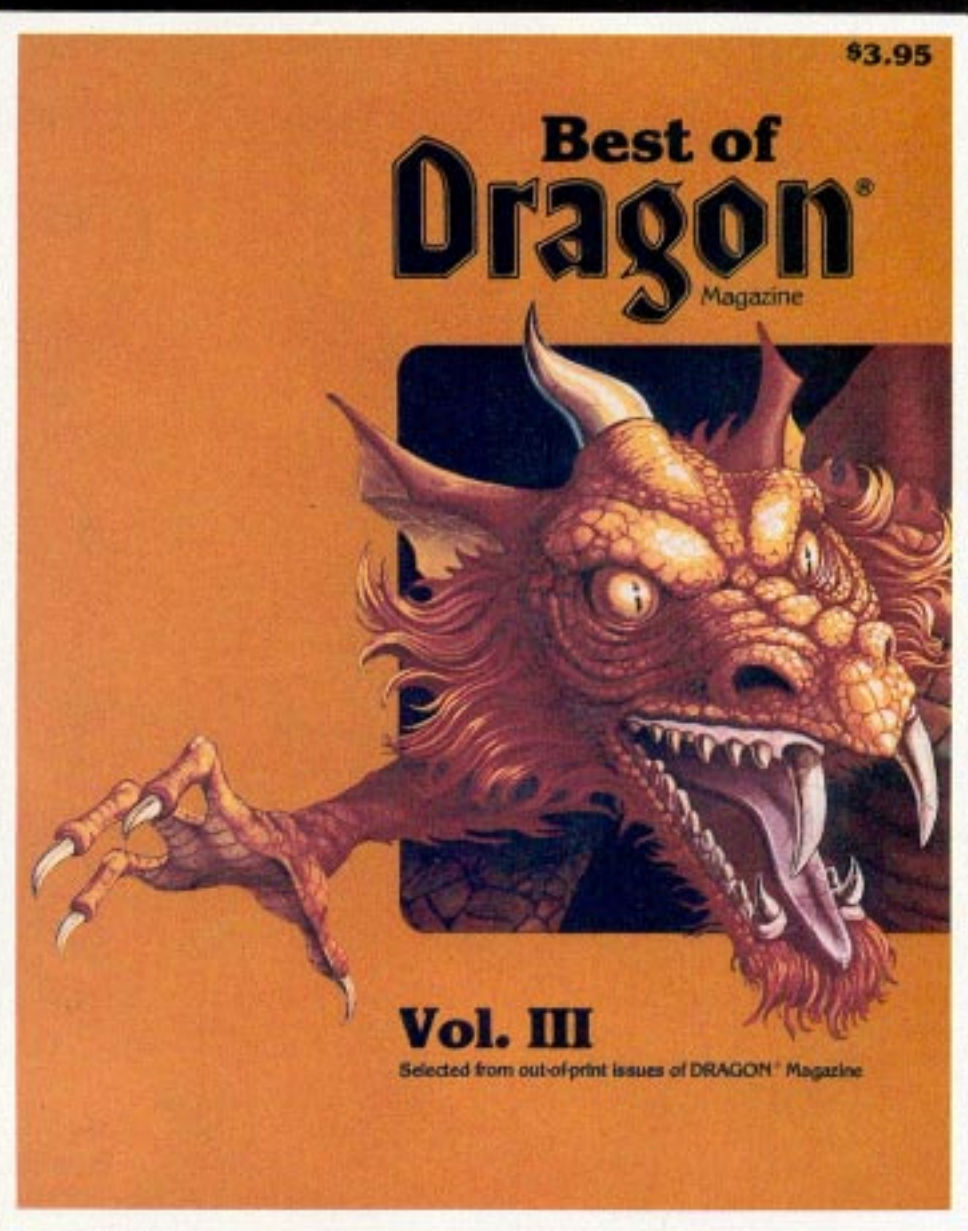


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