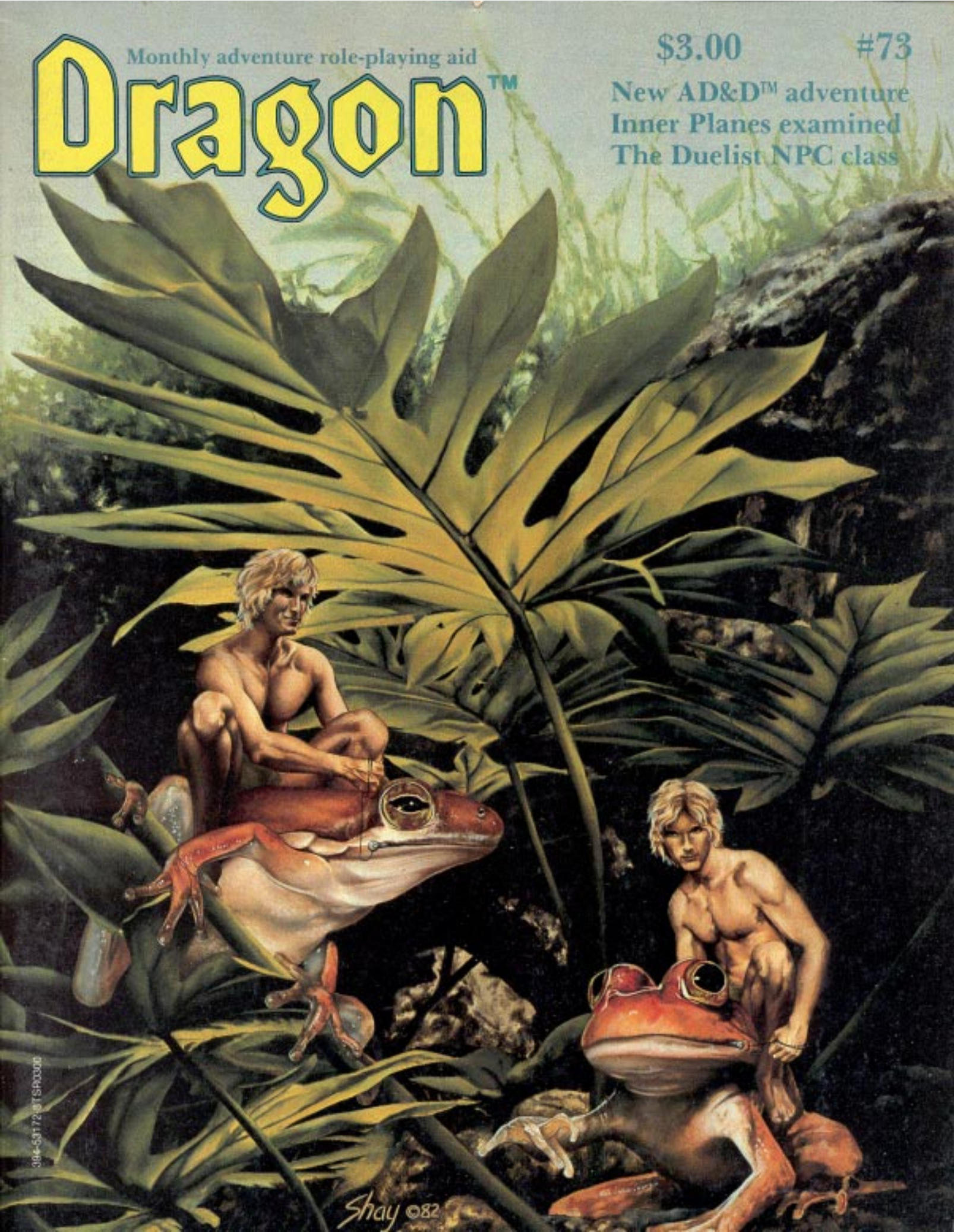
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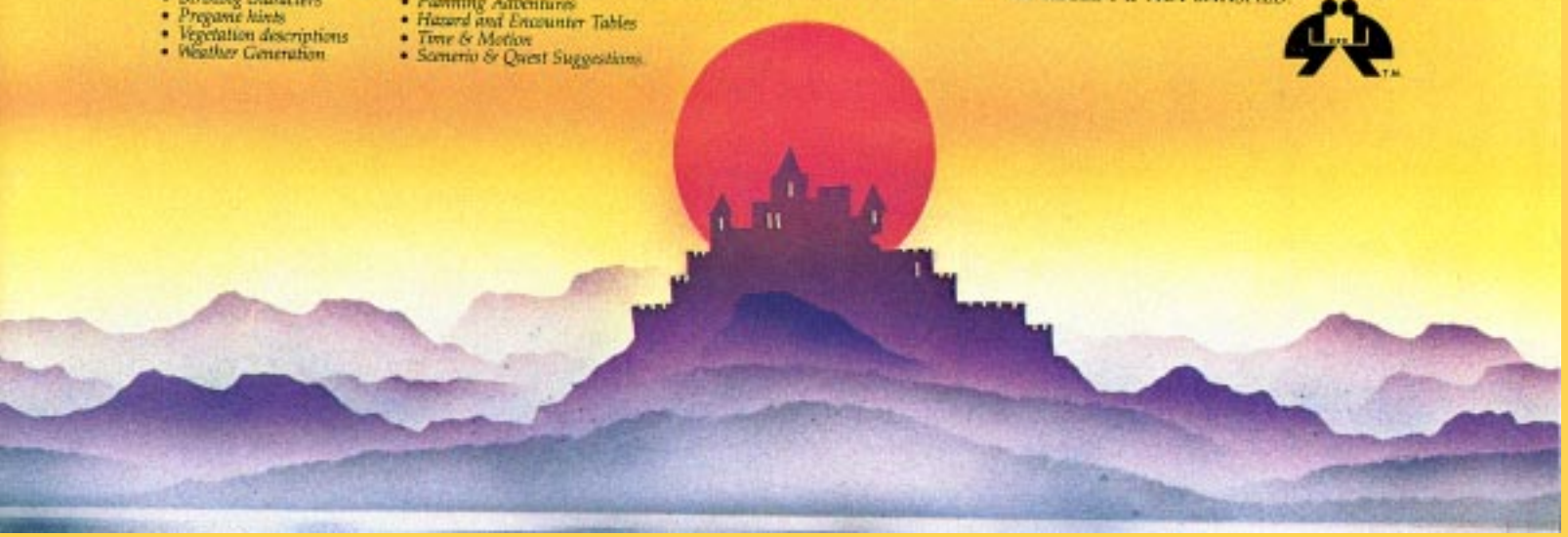

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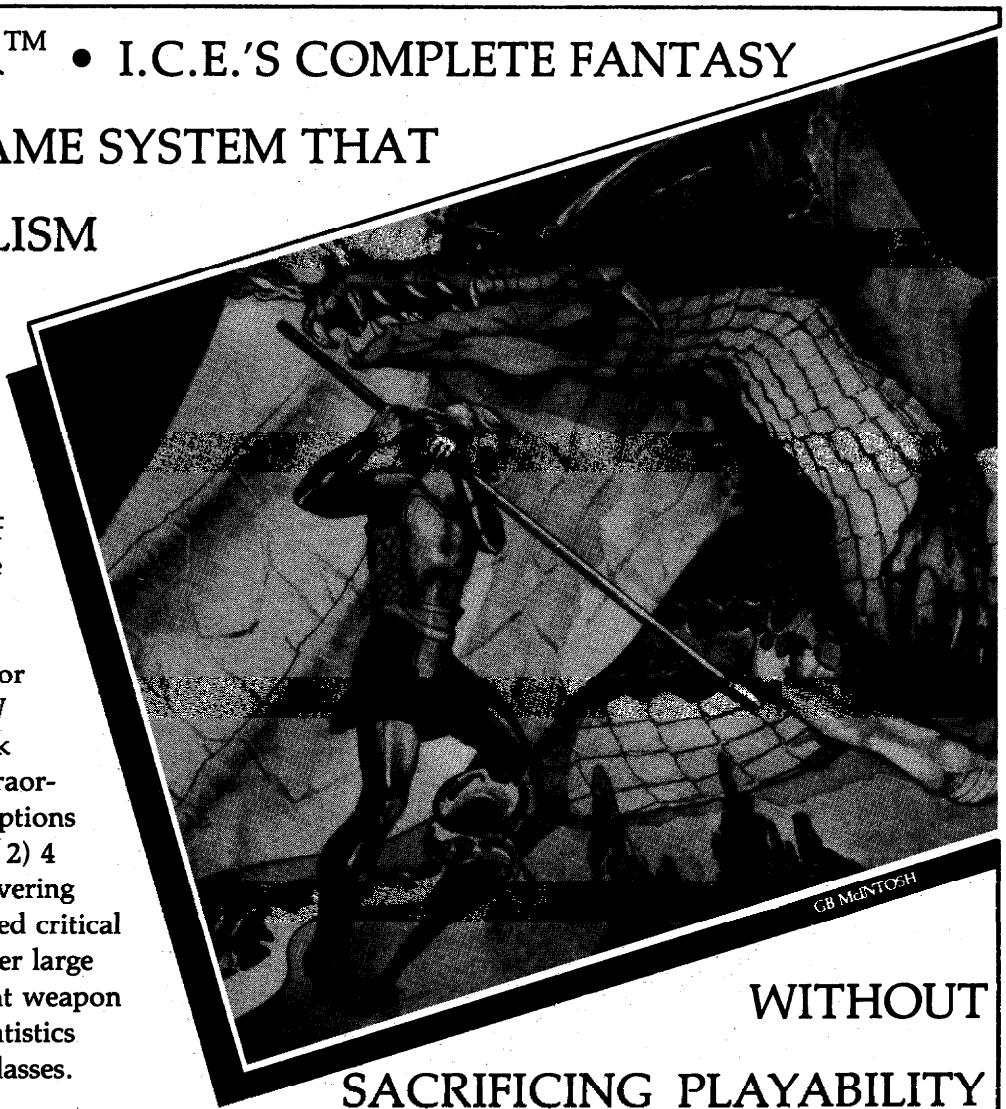

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DRAGON Magazine (ISSN 0279-6848) is published monthly for a subscription price of $24 per year by Dragon Publishing. a division of TSR Hobbies, Inc. The mailing address of Dragon Publishing for all material except subscription orders is P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 58147.

DRAGON Magazine is available at hobby stores and bookstores throughout the United States and Canada, and through a limited number of overseas outlets. Subscription rates are as follows: $24 for 12 issues to be sent to an address in the United States or Canada; $50 U.S. for 12 issues sent via surface mail or $95 for 12 issues sent via air mail to any other country. All subscription payments must be in advance, and should be sent to Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 72089, Chicago IL 60690.

A limited quantity of certain back issues of DRAGON Magazine can be purchased directly from the publisher by sending the cover price plus $1.50 postage and handling for each issue ordered. Payment in advance by check or money order must accompany all orders. Payments cannot be made through a credit card, and orders cannot be taken nor merchandise reserved by telephone. No customer can be billed for a subscription order or a back-issue purchase unless prior arrangements are made.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147. USPS 318-790. ISSN 0279-6848.

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Same difference

You probably noticed right away that this issue of DRAGON™ Magazine looks different from all the others in your collection. The fancy phrase for what we've done is "design changes." The translation, in layman's terms, is that the magazine *looks* different. But rest assured that, despite what you read in last month's facetious policy statement, the only changes we've made are for the sake of appearance.

The new type face we're using for text is called Baskerville (as in Sherlock Holmes). The new way of putting it in columns is called "ragged right" (as in right-hand margin). The end result, in our opinion, is text that is more pleasing to the eye and more easily readable than the way we used to print articles. We hope all of you agree with that opinion — and we're sure that if you don't, you won't hesitate to let us know.

It's time once again to hand out congratulations to another Module Design Contest winner. The top-judged entry in category A-2 is "Forest of Doom," designed and submitted by Scott Butler of Powassan, Ontario, Canada. We know we have thousands of readers from our neighbor to the north; this is the first adventure we've ever published that didn't come from somewhere in the United States, but we don't expect it to be the last.

The second-place winner in category A-2, entitled "The Gamehalls of Gyrond," came from Curtis McQuirt of Nashville, Tenn. Third place went to "The Icon of Palforin" by Mark Cutler of Anaheim, Calif. Somewhere down the line, you might see either or both of these adventures in printed form — but first, we have a lot of other first-place winners to take care of; you'll be seeing those in the center of the magazine every so often for the next year or more.

Lastly, in the "in case it needs to be said" department, we didn't *mean* what we wrote in last month's column. (Believe it or not, we've received some letters from outraged readers who took it all seriously.) This is, quite obviously, *not* a 32-page magazine, and to the best of my knowledge, the word "dragster" isn't used even once.

Why is a reader of DRAGON™ Magazine like a 10th level fighter about to enter the first level of a dungeon? Because the biggest problem either one of them has is figuring out where to start.

What you're holding is the largest, the most colorful, and the most diversified issue we've produced since Bahamut was a pup. Inside are 11 articles and features devoted to the D&D® and AD&D™ games, plus more than a dozen other presentations designed to appeal to those of you who are also interested in other facets of the hobby of gaming.

At the head of the parade is "Forest of Doom," an AD&D adventure that was judged the best entry in category A-2 of our Module Design Contest. I wish I could tell you why it won, but that would be giving too much away.

Hot on the heels of the cavalier class, presented by E. Gary Gygax in our last issue, is the duelist — Arthur Collins' concept of a non-player character who has an entirely different code of honor.

Speaking of EGG, Gary has a couple of contributions in these pages — one direct and one indirect. "The Inner Planes," in his *From the Sorcerer's Scroll* column, puts forth a consistent and colorful theory on the structure of the AD&D universe. "The whole half-ogre," composed by contributing editor Roger Moore, draws on an earlier piece of Gary's work and fleshes out what Roger calls "the best darn door-opener" you ever saw.

Most of the time, an AD&D playing session is — and should be — a group endeavor. But there are times, as pointed out by Katharine Kerr, when "The solo scenario" is the way to go.

As the second installment of what we hope will be a long-running series, offered herein is "The ecology of the catoblepas." Just about the only thing the article doesn't address is how to pronounce the critter's name — probably because nobody's ever been able to get close enough to one to ask it.

Lewis Pulsipher and Roland Gettliffe have collaborated to produce "Non-violent Magic Items," an extensive collection of objects that might be found around the house —if you have a *very* unusual residence.

Miniature-figure buffs will appreciate a couple of double-page spreads: "Photo finish," showcasing the handiwork of Mike Sitkiewicz, and a group of "weird monsters" assembled by Kim Eastland for this month's *Figure Feature* column.

I'm running out of space long before I've run out of things to talk about. But perhaps that's just as well: Half the fun of being a tough fighter in a tame dungeon is not knowing what's behind every door — but still being sure that whatever it is, it'll go down easy. —*KM*

Priority problems

Dear Editor:

The Attack Priority system in issue #71 is great! It is easy to understand, but I might get stuck on a few situations. First of all, what if, when closing, the opponents are still not in attack range (due to movement base)? What if a character is not closing but his opponent is? Let's say the character has set a spear to receive the opponent's charge.

And most importantly, what if the character is a spellcaster and is simply not using a weapon? The way this system is written, it seems to me that there is no way of determining things like, would a charging fighter get in his attack before a magic-user could cast a spell? The point I'm trying to make is that not everyone is going to attack after winning (or losing) initiative.

Mike Dujovne
Indialantic, Fla.

Dear Editor:

I was very pleased with "Who gets the first swing?" in DRAGON #71. I plan to use the Attack Priority system in my AD&D campaigns. But there are two things that puzzled me about the article.

First, there was nothing about missile weapons and their attack priority. I found this quite disturbing.

Second, the monsters from the FIEND FOLIO were not included. I don't know why — maybe because of space or time.

I would appreciate it greatly if Mr. Hall or another writer could arrange an article concerning these topics.

Jeffrey Bonevich
Kalamazoo, Mich.

The text of the article itself made it clear (but apparently not clear enough) that the Attack Priority system is designed for use in melee situations — that is, occasions when combatants are using or intending to use hand-held or "natural" weapons. The rules of the system don't cover the use of missile weapons or the casting of spells. It would seem that any "priority" system that took those attack modes into account would be unbearably complex, and in any event that wasn't the point of the article.

Mike's question about "what if the opponents are still not in attack range" is hard to understand: If "when closing" an opponent is "not in attack range," then that opponent is, by definition, still closing and not in range, and the closing modifiers for that opponent are used until the opponent is in range. That answer is almost as confusing as the question, but it seems like the only way to address the issue.

Lack of space is the primary reason why creatures from the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome weren't detailed — it took seven pages just to cover the critters in the Monster Manual, in addition to the five pages we "spent" describing the system, and that's about as many pages as we could afford for one article. Maybe Mr. Hall or another writer will figure out modifiers for FIEND FOLIO monsters, and perhaps we'll use that list as a supplement to the original article within another few issues. — KM

Class criticisms

Dear Editor:

I feel that Mr. Gygax's article on social status was long overdue. It is highly useful in creating a more logical and true-to-life campaign. However, I disagree on one point. Saying that a character born to the Lower lower class can only be a thief or assassin isn't very realistic. Of course, they couldn't be a paladin, and they would have a lower starting money chance. But they could be pretty much anything they wanted. However, this is a small oversight in such a useful article.

Esa Clubb
Austin, Tex.

Dear Editor:

After reading the article on social status by Gary Gygax (issue #70), I've come to the conclusion that it is overall a good idea, but it needs a little work. The main change I think it needs is the rule that says "any character must have, at the least, a social status of but one rank below that of his or her profession."

This is totally absurd. Tell me that a lawful good fighter, son of a freed slave or peasant (LLC), cannot ever become a paladin. Throughout history, whatever prevented the sons and daughters of proud generals and nobles from becoming some of the most infamous of thieves and assassins?

I feel the Social Class Table die roll should be used to determine the class that the character was born into. This will have a great deal of bearing on that character's history (which each player, according to the DMG, should create). A high-level fighter lord, Master of the Keep, will probably be more inclined to treat the peasants who work his land better if he was, in years long past, a peasant himself. Or, it might make him treat them all the worse!

If the social class rolled up during character creation is the one the character occupies at present, then why, for example, would a lawful evil cleric, son of a great noble (UUC) and advisor to the king himself, be hanging around with a low-life half-orc thief and a couple of battle-scarred dwarven fighters? Never happen. Assume, however, that the same evil cleric's father was forced to flee the kingdom with his newborn son, or die, for plotting to overthrow the king. He finally puts down roots in some obscure part of the world, hoping to elude his

pursuers, and now makes a living as a money-changer in a small town. His son grows up and eventually joins the priestly order of his choice. If he knows about his father's past (in which case he also knows that "noble blood" flows through his veins), he might not want to advertise the fact!

Frank Mentzer says, in his article, that "if the limitations on professions . . . start messing up your campaign, you should make exceptions. . . ." Agreed. So why bother making such limitations in the first place?

J. M. Dombierer
U. S. Navy

Chilly comments

Dear Editor:

I recently had the opportunity to read issue #68, containing "Thrills and Chills" by Arthur Collins and "Weather in the World of Greyhawk" by David Axler. While I found these articles interesting and useful, I was rather startled to read that "drinking hot beverages at temperatures below -20° F. offers the possibility that the drinker's teeth may crack from the sudden temperature change" and "No one in his right mind goes out in a Pleistocene winter if he can avoid it." These comments raised suspicions in my mind that these gentlemen have lived their lives in mild climates.

Allow me to draw it to the attention of your readers that -20° F. is no big deal. Lots of people live in areas where a daytime high of -20 is not unusual. Our teeth don't crack when we drink our thermoses of coffee outside. (I don't doubt that it's a possibility if one is foolish enough to expose one's teeth to the elements, but in practice, people keep them covered with their lips in cold weather.)

Mr. Collins uses the weather of the Hudson Bay area to simulate the Pleistocene winter. In this location, children play outside, people take skidoo rides for fun, and life generally carries on normally — and has for centuries — for those who live in this area.

Dungeon Masters whose knowledge of cold weather is entirely theoretical might be interested to learn a few "atmosphere" details about -20° F. To a person properly clad and out of the wind, -20° F. is quite pleasant in a dry climate and horrible in a humid climate. Packed snow creaks when you walk on it. Loose snow rustles. Frost forms on beards, scarves, collars, or wherever your breath reaches.

Frostbite sneaks up on its victims: After the initial pain when the affected area gets cold, there is numbness for quite a while before frostbite sets in. The first sign is that the area turns dead white. In severe cases the affected extremity turns black and may have to be amputated.

Hypothermia is another serious danger. The initial symptom is shivering, Later the sufferer becomes drowsy and will eventually lie down, go to sleep, and freeze to death.

At -40° F. it hurts to breathe, it hurts anywhere the cold air touches exposed skin, and even a slight breeze feels like it's burning you right through your clothing. Characters had better be dressed in furs or wearing a ring of warmth to even step outside at this point.

I am pleased to report that anything below -52° F. is beyond my experience. I have been advised by others less fortunate in this regard that -60° F. feels the same as -40° F. except that frostbite, hypothermia, and death all occur sooner. A lot of liquids will freeze at this temperature, and solids become more brittle. A metal weapon, for example, is more likely to break if it strikes another hard object.

Since I will be designing both an arctic setting and an Elemental Plane of Fire in the next year, I would like to see an article on the effects of temperature extremes. What are the chances, exactly, of an iron sword breaking in melee at -60° F.? When will a glass vial melt? When will a scroll burst into flames?

Lois Sparling
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Judging by the first eight paragraphs of your letter, Lois, you're probably as much of an authority on temperature extremes (well, one of the extremes, anyway) as anyone. The next time it gets down to 60 below in your neck of the woods, take your sword outside, bang on a rock, and see what happens. . . .

Seriously, the effects of temperature extremes sounds like a good article topic. Perhaps guidelines could be drawn up as part of a larger discussion of what it's like to live on the Elemental Plane of Fire, or the Para-Elemental Plane of Ice,. or some other extreme environment. Anybody want to take a shot at it?

And, for the record, Arthur Collins lives in the Indianapolis area and David Axler is from Philadelphia — mild climates, perhaps, to someone from Calgary, but certainly not places where palm trees and coconuts grow. — KM

Math mistake

Dear Editor:

I am writing about a seeming error I noticed in issue #68 in the Sorcerer's Scroll about the ***Fabricate*** spell. It says "If mineral material is worked with, the area of effect is reduced by a factor of nine; i.e., 1 cubic yard becomes 1 cubic foot."

I always thought there were 27 cubic feet in a cubic yard, so if the area of effect is reduced by a factor of nine, then it should be three cubic feet instead of one cubic foot.

David Paxson
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Right you are, David. There are 27 cubic feet in a cubic yard. But it seems this "seeming error" should be corrected by changing the "factor number," not by altering the area

(Turn to page 88)

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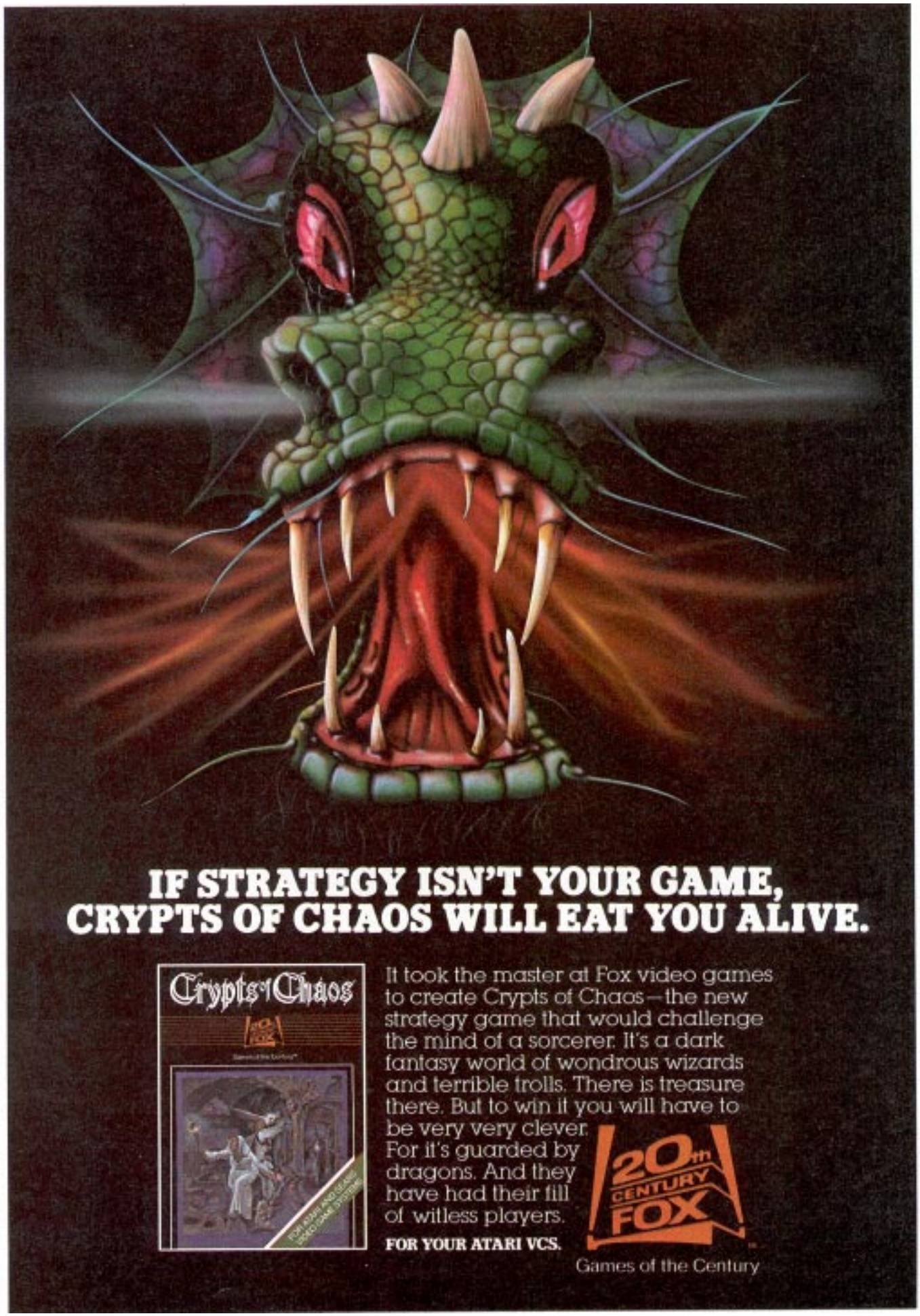
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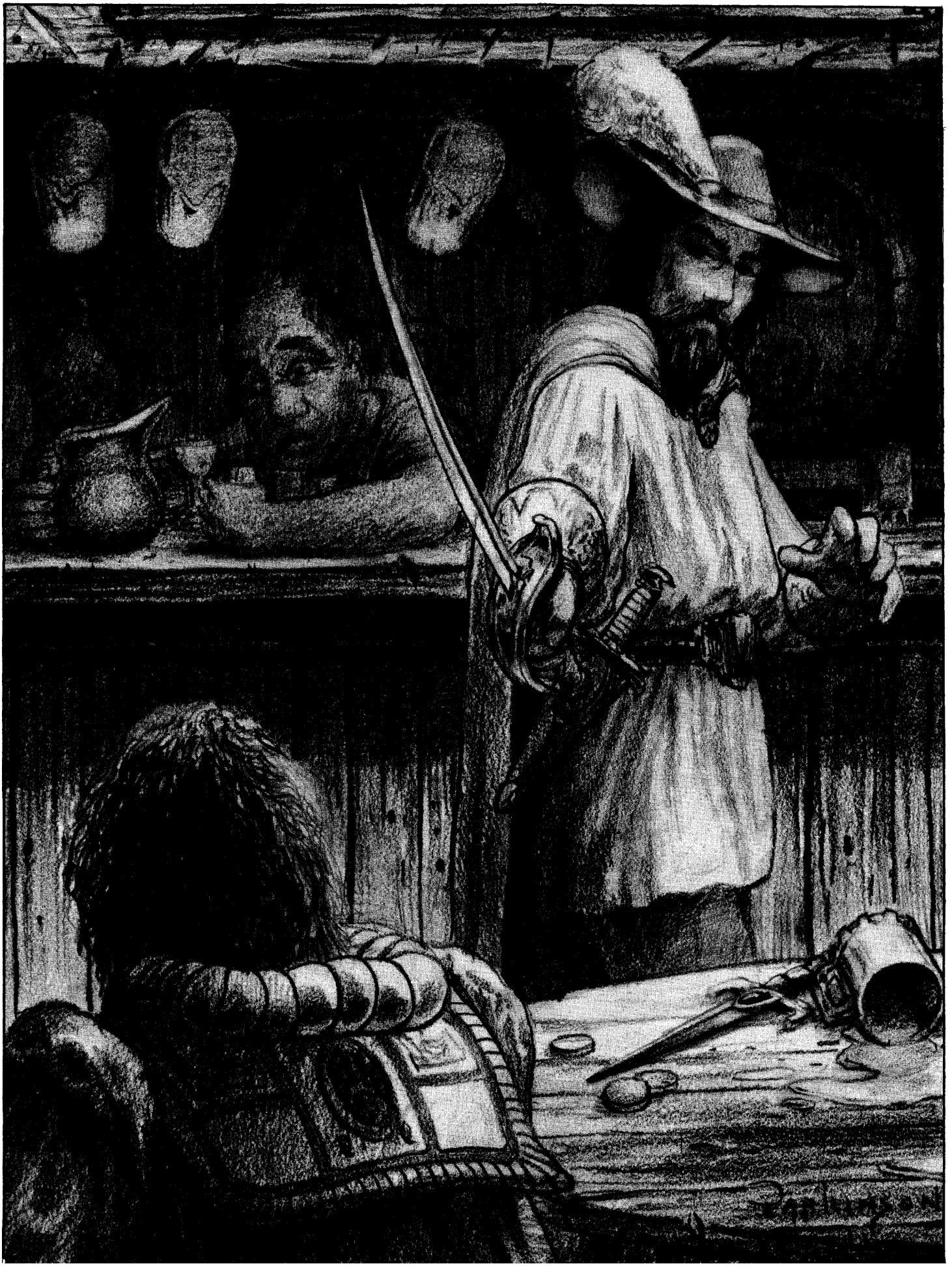

THE DUELIST

A chaotic non-player character who likes to make people pay

by Arthur Collins

Rain fell steadily outside on the balcony, running off to fill the ruts in the road. The chancellor sat at his desk, his expression as sullen as the sky, but lit by no flashes such as occasionally brightened his office. The council meeting had not gone well. The king had scorned his advice again, and turned to the ever-more-popular young Lord Alfstan of Golvring, who kept up his prattle about cleansing the government of corruption. Honest men are dangerous, thought the chancellor. But what to do? Thunder growled in answer to his mood.

After a time, a change came over the chancellor's face. Honest men are dangerous to others, he thought, but *honorable* men — young, valiant, *noble,* honorable men — they can be made a danger to themselves. Quickly, he fetched writing materials and wrote a brief note, without signature or seal. He called for a trusted lackey, gave him the missive, and said only, "Leave this with the innkeeper at the Laughing Trout." The lackey glanced at the address, which said only *Holgim.* The chancellor grinned as the messenger headed for the rain-soaked street below. . . .

"It's going on right under my nose, Gunnar!" The fat man almost choked on his outcry. His fellow merchant only sipped his beer and said, "Calm down, Wulfram. People will notice." But that hardly seemed likely in the roaring inn. Bawdy songs competed with three-score drunken men discussing everything but the cursed weather. Smoke from the fireplace and steam rising off drenched cloaks hung around the common room, shrouding it in a thick haze.

Wulfram continued talking to Gunnar, in an angrier but quieter voice. "I've told her, I don't want that young leech around. But every time I look, there he is lounging in *my* chairs, eating *my* food, and making verses to *my* wife. And that's not all he's making — I found one of his lute strings in my wife's chambers. She said she only took it there to compare it with her spare strings; she said he needed a new one. But I'm not so old and slow that I'm blind." Wulfram ended on a note of self-pity, such as often heard from rich, middle-aged men who marry young wives. His friend Gunnar made sympathetic noises, and then began to give him low-voiced counsel, pausing often to look around as if he feared being overheard, finally pointing out a figure in a corner booth.

In the corner of the Laughing Trout's common room sat a very wet man. He looked neither old nor young, rich nor poor. His dress did not particularly advertise his profession. Only the scabbard lying across his knees and his good gloves might give one to guess that he made his living at arms. At the moment, he was reading a hastily scrawled note given him a few moments ago by an equally drenched man.

Sipping his wine reflectively, the man named Holgrim mused on the ways of fortune. *Not a job in sixteen days,* he thought, *and now this. . . . Not a bad fee, but how do I find the man named in this document?*

At that moment a group of young nobles came cascading through the door, led by the king's new reeve, Lord Alfstan. *Well, well,* thought the man. *Here comes the rent.*

Then Holgrim glanced to the side and saw a rather fat, greasy man approaching him. *Wulfram the wool merchant — coming to me?* Holgrim thought. *It never rains but it pours, they say. He* chuckled to himself, just as old Wulfram cleared his voice and said nervously, "Master Holgrim?"

Holgrim invited the merchant to sit, and heard his tale. They agreed on a price, and then Holgrim rose, saying, "It may take me a few days to attend to your business, Master Wulfram, but I'll see to it as soon as may be. Shortly, I may have to leave town for a while." Leaving the merchant to pay his bill, Holgrim stood up, loosened his sword in its scabbard, walked up to the dashing young royal favorite, and announced to the crowd at large certain speculations about family life at Golvring Castle. The crowd gasped, the innkeeper began to put his breakables below the bar, and Holgrim the Duelist set himself to practice his trade.

* * *

For as long as personal combat has been going on, there have been specialists who would sell their prowess at it. Some have sold their services as mercenaries; this article has nothing to do with them. Mercenaries tend to be group-minded and barely proficient at arms; their place is to fill out a troop of soldiers. The emphasis in soldiering is on maneuver and cooperative effort. It is very fitting that most mercenaries in the AD&D™ game are permanently 0-level fighters. Repeated and frequent success in one-on-one combat requires something that a mere soldier is not up to providing. The specialists in personal combat became not mercenaries, but duelists.

And so evolved a distinct kind of profession. In Roman times, there were the gladiators, who made their way up from ignominy to international honor through their individual skill alone; in Renaissance times, there were the fencing instructors, who taught young rakes how to duel (and live to brag about it) the way that other specialists taught them how to dance or take snuff; and in all times, there have been the hired swords ("hired guns" in the Ole West), who have wandered about, fighting for glory, or money, or for lack of a better calling in life. The duelist non-player character class for the AD&D system represents this type of expert — one who makes his living by selling his skill in individual combat.

Typically, the duelist is of common birth. Serfs are given no opportunity to learn to bear arms, and nobles who take up arms as a profession tend to become fighters or paladins. Sometimes, as with the Roman gladiators, duelists are of the lower class, though they might have wound up that way not by accident of birth but by running afoul of the law. Sometimes they are of the lesser nobility — younger sons of younger sons, with no inheritance to give them status and no mind to be soldiers. Sometimes

they are merely disaffected types, loners or even outcasts, whose only claim to fame is their reputation with their blade.

This way of describing a duelist goes far to explain the alignment preferences of the class. The duelist has little use for law as an ethical principle, whether the law involved is good, bad, or neutral. Besides the fact that their profession is often illegal (though they are sometimes used by the protectors of the law), duelists also shy away from lawfulness because of their general outlook on life: They see things in individual terms (me against you), not in group terms (us against them). To be sure, most duelists are scrupulous about fulfilling contracts, but this is not a lawful-minded tendency so much as a matter of professional (by definition, individual) honor. Besides, an unreliable duelist gets no contracts.

Duelists, you see, have something of a code to live by, a parody of the knightly code of arms. The knightly code is born of law: Arms are to be used to execute justice; fair play (not taking undue advantage of an opponent) should influence behavior; the warrior is part of an arms-bearing brotherhood pledged to defend the community.

By contrast, the duelist lives by a highly individualistic (i.e., chaotic) code. Professional skill is exalted rather than the obligation to do justice: if the duelist's conscience sometimes accuses him of being a mere assassin, he tells himself he is just doing his job (and *doing it well,* by thunder!). Professional pride is a more important consideration than "fair play" — a duelist, like a knight, does not take undue advantage of an opponent, but a knight does this to be fair, while a duelist does it lest his reputation be besmirched. (This explains why a duelist will not use poison or flaming oil in personal combat — these are tools good

THE DUELIST

Minimum ability scores:
Strength: 9
Intelligence: 10
Dexterity: 15 (17+ = 10% bonus to earned experience)
Constitution: 9 (hit-point bonuses as for fighters)

Racial stock: Human or half elf

Hit die type: d12

Spell ability: None

Class level limit: 15 (Grand Fencingmaster)

Armor & weapons permitted:
Armor: Leather
Shield: None
Weapons: Dagger, scimitar (cutlass, sabre), quarterstaff, bastard sword, broad sword, long sword, short sword

Oil: No

Poison: No

No. of attacks per round:
Duelist level 1-4: 1/1
Duelist level 5-9: 3/2
Duelist level 10-14: 2/1
Duelist level 15: 5/2

Weapon proficiency:
Initial no. of weapons: 3
Non-proficiency penalty: -2
Added proficiency/level: 1/3 levels

Alignment: Neutral good, neutral evil, chaotic good, chaotic evil, chaotic neutral, or true neutral

enough for a cheap assassin or a stupid tavern brawler, but it would be seen as a failure in the area of his professional skill and bravery for a duelist to do the same.) The duelist is a loner, which means his worth is not measured by his attainments as a member of a warrior class, but by his individual achievements.

And so the world fears, admires, shuns, and brags of acquaintance with the duelist, all at the same time. He is both hero and villain. And he does have his place, not only as a hired sword (or, in some cultures, as a professional athlete). Running a fencing school, as many duelists do, is a very respectable occupation. It should be noted that what a Fencingmaster turns out of a fencing school are not necessarily more duelists — it takes more than just fighting ability to fit that mold, it takes a certain kind of person. The Fencingmaster's customers are young men who desire to be accomplished at the skills of dueling — but who may be incapable of actually becoming duelists.

In a society or culture in which a gentleman is expected to be skillful at arms (even if the gentleman is obviously unfit for it), the Fencingmaster's school becomes a combination hangout, gymnasium, betting parlor, and male gossip-shop all rolled into one, and the Master himself is a man of reputation who is not only dangerous to cross but who can expel you from much of society by simply barring you from his hall. A paradox: The Fencingmaster has no place in society (being base-born and having to work for his living), but he is in many ways one of the keepers of the keys to society's door, like the innkeeper of the most fashionable watering hole. And, like inns, there is no better place to hear certain kinds of news than a fencing academy.

Athlete, hired killer, or patron of youthful nobility, the duelist plays many roles, but he is always what he is. Grim or merry, devious or straightforward, famous or infamous, he stands on his own merits.

Experience Level Table

Experience points	Experience level	12-sided dice for accumulated hit points	Level title
0 — 2,500	1	1	Beginner
2,501 — 5,000	2	2	Brawler
5,001 — 10,000	3	3	Fencer
10,001 — 20,000	4	4	Challenger
20,001 — 40,000	5	5	Gladiator
40,001 — 80,000	6	6	Bladesman
80,001 — 160,000	7	7	Master Bladesman
160,001 — 320,000	8	8	Superior Duelist
320,001 — 640,000	9	9	Expert Duelist [1]
640,001 — 960,000	10	10	Fencingmaster [2]
960,001 — 1,290,000	11	10+2	Fencingmaster, 11th
1,290,001 — 1,600,000	12	10+4	Fencingmaster, 12th
1,600,001 — 1,920,000	13	10+6	Fencingmaster, 13th
1,920,001 — 2,220,000	14	10+8	Fencingmaster, 14th
2,220,001 +	15	10+10	Grand Fencingmaster

1 — Only duelists with 17+ dexterity can attain this level or higher.

2 — Only duelists with 18 dexterity can attain this level or higher.

Grand Fencingmasters are not limited in number, as are holders of top levels in the assassin, druid, and monk classes.

A duelist may have no henchmen until he or she attains at least 7th level.

Of all *fighter* encounters in a city or town, 5% (roll of 1 on d20) will be with a duelist.

Duelists are regularly engaged to slay people for hire (often by "calling out" their opponents), and the fees for assassins' work are typical of duelist fees, for which the duelist gains experience.

Likewise, the duelist gains experience points from the Assassination Experience Points Table for every foe he overcomes in single, open combat. Opponents so sought must be armed with a weapon, as opposed to being armed solely with natural weaponry (such as many monsters have).

Giving the duelist 12-sided hit dice is not intended to convey the impression that duelists are monstrous hulks, like sumo wrestlers. As the DMG points out (p. 82), hit points "reflect both the actual physical ability . . . to withstand damage . . . and a commensurate increase in such areas as skill in combat and similar life-or-death situations, the 'sixth sense' which warns the individual." And again, "the balance of accrued hit points are those which fall into the non-physical areas . . . ." In other words, a character taking damage in a long fight is not necessarily getting cut up so much as he is getting worn out; his concentration lags, his arms get tired, his feet begin to drag, until he is down to his last few hit points. That's when one simple thrust

might kill him, as it would any man — when he is open to the blow. By definition, a duelist is an expert at hand-to-hand combat; his inventory of tricks, his professional skill, and his stamina are superior to those of other fighter-types. By giving the duelist 12-sided hit dice, these superior abilities are expressed in game terms. A 10th-level duelist will average more hit points than a 10th-level fighter, thus giving the former an appropriate edge in one-on-one combat; the duelist can outlast and wear out an opponent who is less skillful than he.

A duelist is surprised only on a roll of 1 on d6, and his code of "honor" makes him dislike attacking by surprise in a one-on-one fight. (But he is no fool; survival is ultimately more important than "honor," and surprising an opponent is certainly not prohibited.) However, he only gains experience points on the Assassination Table if the fight is entirely conducted in the open — unless his intended victim surprised *him.* Note that "open" merely means man-to-man, without surprise being used by the duelist. It does not imply a *public* fight, nor does it entail a challenge conveyed through seconds. The DM will have to adjudicate all situations that require a ruling on whether or not the duelist will get experience points for a one-on-one fight.

When fighting opponents armed with weapons (other than missiles), the duelist gains bonuses to his armor class, simulating his superior skill in parrying blows. He also gains bonuses "to hit" and damage (referred to in the table below as the "combat bonus") when fighting an opponent who is using a hand-held weapon. This bonus increases when the duelist is fighting an opponent using the *same* weapon the duelist is using:

Level of duelist	*AC bonus*	*Combat bonus*	*Combat bonus vs. same weapon*
1-3	+1	+1	+1
4-6	+2	+1	+2
7-9	+3	+2	+3
10-12	+4	+2	+4
13-15	+5	+3	+5

Duelists use the combat tables and saving-throw tables for the fighter class, and conform to the specifications of that class with regard to psionics and the use of magic items. In addition, they are considered as fighters for any other determinations not specifically mentioned herein.

When fighting humanoids of size S or M in hand-to-hand situations, the duelist (and his associates) gain a +10% bonus to morale. The associates get this morale bonus only if they know the duelist for what he is — that is, a member of the duelist class.

Duelists' special abilities

Parrying the death blow: If the duelist receives a hit from a weapon which would finally take him to 0 hit points or lower in that blow, he gets a saving throw (vs. death). A successful save indicates no damage. On a second such death-blow attempt made during the same melee (but not during the same round; see below), before the duelist has regained some hit points through healing or other means, a successful save indicates half damage from the blow (or the duelist is reduced to 1 hit point, if that is necessary to keep him alive). A third such saving throw in the same ongoing melee is not allowed unless the duelist has first had some hit points restored. This special parrying ability applies only to attacks with hand-held weapons made by weapons-users. Thus, the duelist gets a save vs. a minotaur's axe or a hill giant's club, but not vs. a dragon's bite, a pseudo-dragon's sting, or a scythe-blade trap.

This special ability comes into play when the duelist is down to few enough hit points so that his opponent's potential maximum damage *could* kill the duelist with a single blow. The opponent's potential maximum damage, for purposes of this determination, is the maximum damage of the opponent's weapon, plus any bonuses that apply to the opponent's damage figure. If the opponent scores a hit, the duelist may attempt to parry the blow before dice are rolled to determine the actual damage.

Example: An opponent with a strength of 18/03 using a +1 long sword could potentially do 12 points of damage — 8 with the sword, +1 for the magic, and +3 for his damage adjustment due to strength. The duelist then has the option to attempt his parry when he is reduced to 12 hit points or less vs. this opponent, *after* the opponent has rolled a "to hit" die successfully, and *before* damage is actually assessed. Should the duelist be down to 5 hit points or less, he must attempt to parry automatically, since the minimum potential damage his opponent can inflict with a successful hit is 5 points — 1 with the sword, +l for the magic, +3 for his damage adjustment.

As long as an opponent's minimum potential damage is less than the duelist's remaining hit points, the duelist does have a choice in whether or not to attempt to parry the death blow. After all, this is a last-gasp trick, and he might want to keep it as an "ace in the hole" for one more round. Should the duelist be fighting more than one opponent, he may be forced to choose which of two or more equally deadly blows he will attempt to parry; he cannot try this trick twice in a round. Life is full of hard choices, isn't it?

Two-weaponed combat: Duelists take 1 less point off in penalties for off-hand weapon swings in two-weaponed combat, but they will only fight in such a fashion against other two-weaponed humanoids or plain old monsters. The duelists' code forbids them to seek a two-weapon advantage over a one-weaponed opponent, except in life-or-death situations.

Resistance to fear: Duelists make all saving throws vs. *fear* attacks at +2.

Identify magical properties: At 10th level and above, a duelist has a 5% chance per level of identifying the magical properties of weapons usable by his class. (One attempt per weapon per level.)

The Fencingmaster and his school

At 10th level (Fencingmaster) and above, the duelist has the option of establishing a fencing school. Such an establishment must be located in a large town or city, and must have adequate supplies and sufficient space for the exercises and activities that will go on there. Employment of a swordsmith is mandatory for such an establishment. The Fencingmaster will then attract students to his school.

Hiring a Fencingmaster as a teacher will cost 200 g.p. a month, and one can only be hired for a month at a time. Each month of work with a Fencingmaster gains a student a 10% cumulative chance of gaining a +1 "to hit" with a particular weapon the Fencingmaster employs. Dice are rolled *once,* at the end of the training, to see if the student gets the +1. This training must be uninterrupted by adventuring, and there is a maximum 60% chance of gaining the bonus. If the roll fails, the training must begin all over again. A student earning a +1 with a particular weapon (e.g., a long sword) cannot earn a further bonus with that weapon by continuing to study with a Fencingmaster, no matter how long he or she trains — but the +1 "to hit" could be gained in this way for more than one weapon, if the student engages in additional instruction.

The Fencingmaster can handle up to 30 students at a time, but if he goes out adventuring for more than 3 days in any month, his students will suffer from his absence, because their training will have been interrupted for too long — and the Fencingmaster will accordingly be deprived of the income those students would have provided.

The number of students a Fencingmaster has at a given time can be determined randomly by rolling 5d6 to see how many students a Fencingmaster has, and adding one student to the result for every 3 points of charisma the Fencingmaster has, up to a maximum enrollment of 30.

Fencingmasters, unlike fighters, acquire no *followers* upon reaching name level (10th), even if they establish a school.

Duelists' reputations have a tendency to get around, and they are known, or known about, to a greater extent as they become more accomplished. Most duelists will be aware of other duelists of equal or higher level operating in the vicinity. Sometimes a duelist will "call out" another duelist on his own initiative, just to prove himself. Grand Fencingmasters are more often revered than challenged, however, and this is also the case with many other duelists of great reputation and high charisma.

FROM THE SORCEROR'S SCROLL

The Inner Planes

A new way to look at the AD&D™ world

by Gary Gygax

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All Scholarly AD&D™ Game Aficionadoes are familiar with the torus used to illustrate the Elemental Planes. A depiction of it is printed in the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia, and that is reproduced here below (Figure A) for easy reference.

Note that, in the torus, the Para-Elemental Planes (Ice, Dust, Vapor, Heat) occupy too much area. Discerning Students will also remark that three of these intervening planes are denoted by some material manifestation, while the remaining one is designated by a condition. Thus, the logical question: Which one in the series does not belong? Do not blame the Learned Authors of the work in which the depiction occurs — I am the one responsible for it, and I offer my apologies.

Getting back to the point of this article: Another reference illustration (Figure B, at right below), also from the DEITIES & DEMIGODS" book, shows the Inner Planes (Material, Elemental, Positive, etc.). Isn't it interesting to note how the Positive Material Plane sits upon the material multiverse as if it were a plate? Observe also how the Negative one serves as a saucer for the same body?

If these odd relationships have troubled you, Gentle Readers, half as much as they have disturbed me, you have been sorely put upon. I, for one, could stand it no longer. After several hours of rooting around in the mess which I laughingly term my files, I discovered my notes on the Inner Planes. Atop the heap was an illustration of a tetrahedral structure for the Elemental Planes (Figure C, at the top left of the facing page) proposed by my Worthy Confederate, Steve Marsh.

It is easy to see that this form has the obvious advantage of allowing the four Elemental Planes to touch and interact with each other. The vertices where the elements meet provide us six (count 'em) Para-Elemental Planes, viz. *Lightning, Magma, Dust, Ice, Vapor,* and *Ooze* — all material substances, *not* conditions, by the by! The four faces are the Positive Material, Negative Material, and Shadow Planes, plus the infinity of the Prime Material Plane (which occupies the fourth face and is also assumed to fill the interior of the tetrahedron). Also existing in the same space as all of that is the Ethereal Plane, which passes around, over, under, and through the whole shebang. Got it? Excellent! It is a neat little package. Somehow, though, I am not too comfortable with the shape. It doesn't exactly fit in with the rest of the planar depiction, and the elements and para-elements don't seem to be quite right. After sitting and fiddling with the thing for some time, I decided to take Steve's thinking and apply it to a cube. Take a look at this representation (Figure D, at the top right of the facing page), where the four major faces represent the elements of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. (Let us leave the other sides for later.)

The direct intermingling of Air and Earth, or of Fire and Water, is impossible in this system. This isn't a bad idea, if I may be so bold as to so state, since they are opposed elements. Direct intermingling of the opposed elements should not take place, and with the addition of the Positive and Negative planes into this system of viewing things (about which more below), it isn't necessary to have these opposites do so in order to gain a desired material. The vertices between the pairs of Elemental Planes are the Para-Elemental Planes of: *Smoke* between Fire and Air, Ice between Air and Water, Ooze between Water and Earth, and *Magma* between Earth and Fire. These four Para-Elemental Planes are augmented by the intermingling of the Positive and Negative Material Planes with them, and in addition with the

Figure A

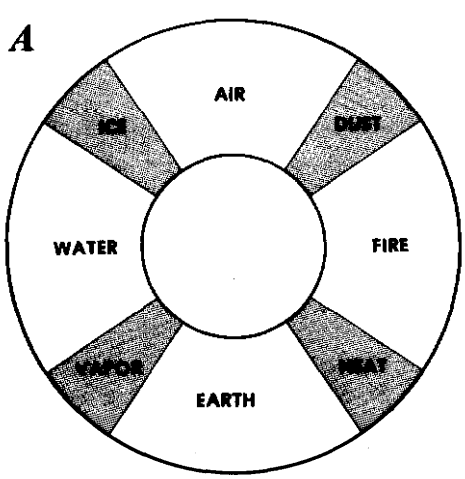


Figure B

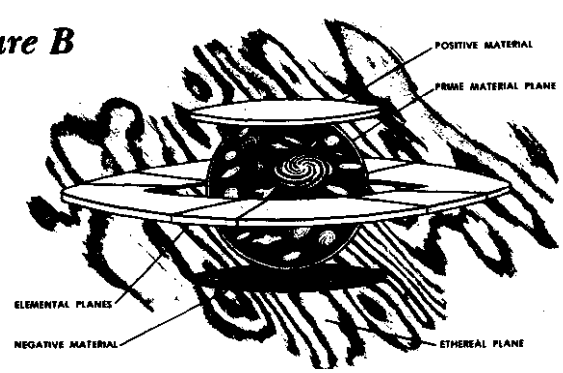
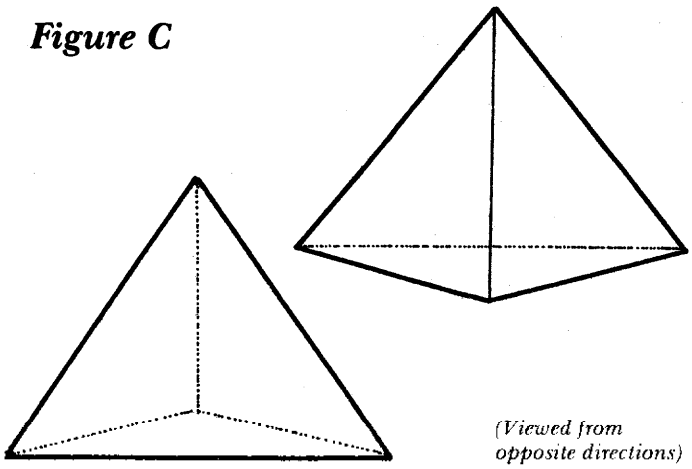


Figure C



four Elemental Planes. By the addition of the two new factors, the Positive and Negative Material Planes, we gain eight new "Quasi-Elemental" Planes.

Consider the Positive Material Plane and Negative Material Plane as occupying the two unaccounted-for faces of the cube, each abutting all four of the Elemental Planes. These planes extend into the Prime Material Plane (the interior of the cube), just as do all of the other sorts of Elemental Planes. The border between the Positive and Negative Planes exists in the Prime Material. It is the Plane of Shadow, which waxes and wanes from place to place but always permeates the whole.

At the intersections where the Positive Material Plane directly connects to the four Elemental Planes are found the following four Quasi-Elemental Planes:

The *Lightning* plane (at the junction with Air), ranging from static electricity near the Plane of Water to sheet lightning near the Plane of Fire.

The *Steam* plane (at the junction with Water), ranging from vapor near the Plane of Air, through mists, to superheated steam near the Plane of Earth.

The *Radiance* plane (at the junction with Fire), going from dull hues near the Plane of Earth, through rainbow colors, to a radiance of *force* near the Plane of Air.

The *Mineral* plane (at the junction with Earth), ranging from metals and gems near the Plane of Fire, through stone, to calcium near the Plane of Water.

Where the Negative Material plane touches the four Elemental Planes are found the other four Quasi-Elemental Planes:

The *Vacuum* plane, at the junction with Air.

The *Salts* plane, at the junction with Water.

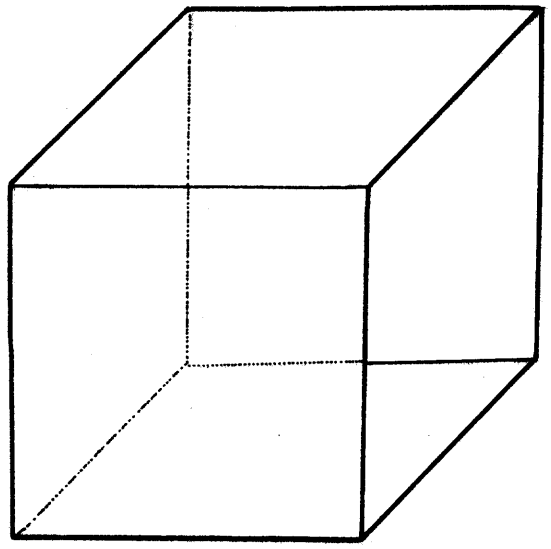
The *Ash* plane, at the junction with Fire.

The *Dust* plane, at the junction with Earth.

The six sides of the cube are shown "flattened out" in a full-color, two-dimensional representation of this system accompanying this text (on the second page following). Remember that the vertices and border areas representing the Para-Elemental and Quasi-Elemental Planes are shown as small areas here, but actually they — just like the Elemental Planes themselves — are multi-formed and fluid and might manifest themselves, in small part or large, virtually anywhere. Similarly, the various elemental areas are themselves virtually as infinite as the Prime Material Plane, which is itself composed of their substances, plus the ether, plus more *(time,* for example). Thus, while the diagram shows surfaces and areas bounded by lines, the Discerning Reader must always bear in mind that depictions such as these are merely tools for display of concepts, not exhaustive atlases of boundless spaces!

In order to sum up the "cubic" theory of the Inner Planes, and to assign each plane a designating color, the following list of planes and their colors is presented. For the sake of clarity, not all the planes given in the following list are shown on the two-dimensional rendering. This list is useful as a source of information, and can also be employed to randomly choose one particular Inner Plane when such a determination is needed.

Figure D



THE INNER PLANES

–	Concordant Opposition	Ochre
1	Prime Material	Turquoise
Elemental Planes:		
2	Air	Blue
3	Earth	Brown
4	Fire	Red
5	Water	Green
Para-Elemental Planes:		
6	Smoke	Pearl
7	Ice	Aquamarine
8	Ooze	Chocolate
9	Magma	Maroon
Quasi-Elemental Planes:		
10	Lightning	Violet
11	Steam	Ivory
12	Radiance	Rainbow spectrum
13	Mineral	Pink
14	Vacuum	Ebony
15	Salts	Tan
16	Ash	Grey (dark)
17	Dust	Dun
Others:		
18	Positive Material	White
19	Negative Material	Black
20 [1]	Shadow	Silver
20 [1]	(Time)	(Colorless)
--	Ethereal	Purple

[1]— Optional: Either assign 50% chance for each of the listed results, or ignore this result and roll again on d6, treating 6 as a 1, to yield a result of 1 through 5.

Having proposed a cubic form for the Inner Planes, and given them color identifiers in addition, it is high time to get at the next point. After all, when one is in the ethereal state and traveling about, how is it that one locates anything? By color, of course. Assuming that the whole of the Ethereal Plane need not be identified, since the adventurer is already upon it, then spots of color in the ether indicate that the substance impinges upon some other plane at that place. In this manner, the wanderer encounters wavering bands of colored mists when trekking through the Ethereal Plane.

Such curtains of vaporous color should occur at time intervals of every 12 hours, PMP (Prime Material Plane) time. The colors should occur at random, as the ether is everywhere and nowhere at once. By identifying the hue, the adventurer is able to determine the proximity of another plane and which one it is. By peering into the misty curtain, the viewer is allowed to see the other plane, while he or she remains ethereal and hence invisible. Movement in *both* planes at once is accomplished simply by being in the *ethereal* state and willing oneself to "enter" the, other plane at the same time. When the traveler so desires, he or

she can abandon one or the other of the planes, either deciding in favor of completely entering the particular non-ethereal plane, or turning elsewhere on the Ethereal Plane to see what else can be discovered. Note that this is somewhat different from travel of the *astral* sort.

To determine which plane is encountered, simply roll a twenty-sided die and read across the table. Both the Concordant Opposition and Ethereal Plane are reached from either the Astral Plane, or by magical means, from any of the other Inner Planes except Time. The latter plane abuts only the Ethereal Plane and Prime Material Plane directly, so the plane of Concordant Opposition cannot be reached from the Plane of Time.

With Roger Moore's excellent article on the Astral Plane handy (see issue #67 of DRAGON Magazine), the DM can also have fun with astral travel. The following list, giving color indicators for the planes that border on the Astral Plane, is useful in this regard.

TABLE OF THE OUTER PLANES
(and Concordant Opposition)

1	Concordant Opposition	Brown
2	Happy Hunting Ground	Emerald
3	Olympus	**Sapphire**
4	Gladsheim	Indigo
5	Limbo	**Jet**
6	Pandemonium	Magenta
7	Abyss	Amethyst
8	Tarterus	Olive
9	Hades	Rust
10	Gehenna	Russet
11	Nine Hells	Ruby
12	Acheron	Flame
13	Nirvana	Diamond
14	Arcadia	Saffron
15	Seven Heavens	Gold
16	Twin Paradises	Amber
17	Elysium	Opal
18	Extra-dimensional Space	Terra Cotta
19	Non-dimensional Space	soot
20	Ethereal	Purple

The cubic expression of the structure of the Inner Planes allows for more variety and a broader range of magic. Identification and travel to these places from the Ethereal Plane is now within easy grasp of the ambitious Dungeon Master. Likewise, the use of travel in the Astral Plane is facilitated by color identification. Pools of color encountered astrally indicate that there the Astral Plane interlocks with one of the Outer Planes.

Unlike the "peering" method of ethereal exploration, where a traveler can be in two planes at once, a color pool encountered on the Astral Plane can be examined (but not actually entered) through the use of concentration. The observer thinks of the place indicated by the color pool while gazing at the surface of the pool. This causes a view of the place to appear, with the viewer "positioned" as if observing it from a great altitude. The more the viewer concentrates, the closer becomes the prospect. A direction can be determined, and a point of view can be made to turn to that facing, as well as change perspective from distant to near and back again, all by continued concentration.

Of course, all sorts of factors — magical, monstrous, and otherwise — might impede such viewing; a sheathing of impenetrable metal, for instance, precludes viewing another plane from the Astral Plane.

The concentration of a viewer upon a pool of color allows rapid scanning from the broad perspective to nearly any close-range one, and when it is desired, the viewer can even materialize, going from astral to material form, upon the viewed plane.

With both more Inner Planes to visit and an easy-identification system offered for them and the Outer Planes as well, the range of AD&D™ adventuring is poised on the brink of new frontiers. More is needed, no doubt, regarding ethereal travel, creatures of other planes, and so on. Certainly the more venturesome DMs can begin here and now to include broad-scale adventures in the Inner and Outer Planes as part of their campaign repertoire.

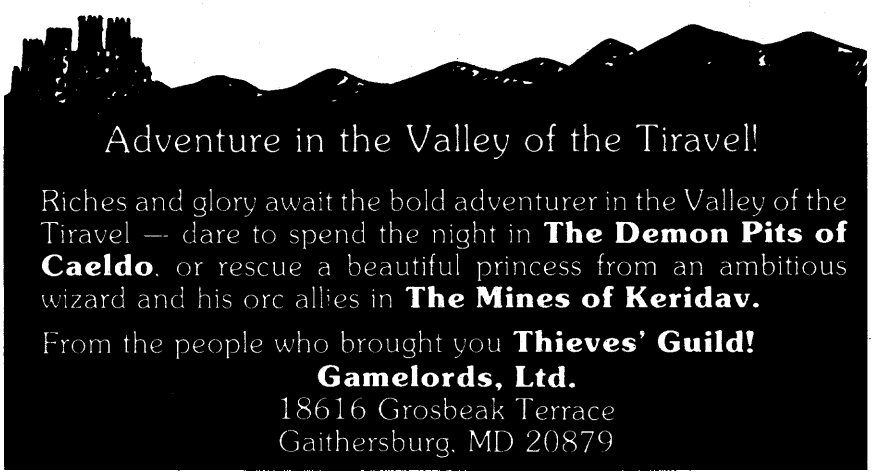
TSR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

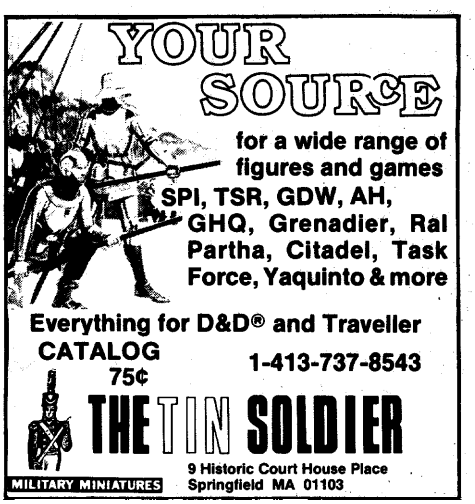
Some Gentle Readers have been reading this journal for a sufficient length of time to remember when an eyebrow or two, shall we say, was raised over my expressed opinion of amateur fantasy publications. (Those not familiar with this episode are easily brought up to date: The materials published are suitable for many purposes, including a replacement for toilet tissue, starting fires, and assuring that sanitation workers remain employed.) The amateur publications did not then, nor do they now, offer a reasonable training ground for aspiring designers and writers.

About two years ago, someone was kind enough to put their money where my mouth was. No, a superior amateur publishing effort was not begun; an anonymous benefactor of adventure gamers contributed a large sum of money to enable TSR to create a scholarship fund.

All of you should be aware that TSR granted five scholarships in 1982. The sums were not vast — $2,100 each. They were, however, the only such awards made strictly to game players, to the best of my knowledge. This is to remind RPGA™ network members that exceptional achievement in high school will place them in good standing for the potential receipt of such a scholarship. Be sure to check into the possibility if you need funding to continue your education. (Also, do remember that TSR is seeking personnel of high caliber, and will be in the years to come!)

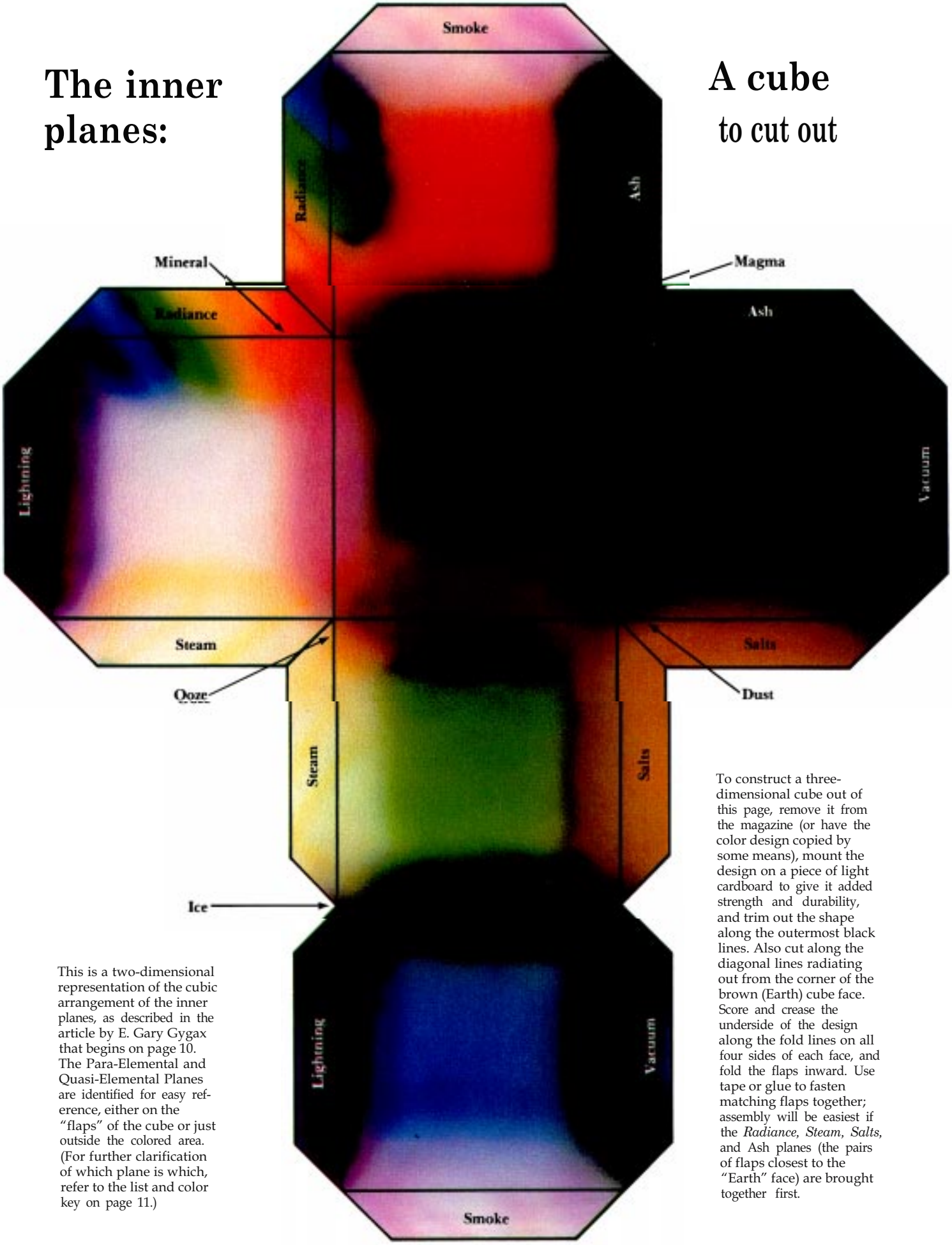
Good Readers in a position to make a tax-deductible contribution should consider the fund as a most worthy one. We can easily maintain the effort at its current level, but in order to enlarge the grants and expand the program, some additional help is needed. Donations should be made out to the TSR Foundation, c/o Bruce Blume, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147 8





The inner planes:

A cube to cut out



This is a two-dimensional representation of the cubic arrangement of the inner planes, as described in the article by E. Gary Gygax that begins on page 10. The Para-Elemental and Quasi-Elemental Planes are identified for easy reference, either on the "flaps" of the cube or just outside the colored area. (For further clarification of which plane is which, refer to the list and color key on page 11.)

To construct a three-dimensional cube out of this page, remove it from the magazine (or have the color design copied by some means), mount the design on a piece of light cardboard to give it added strength and durability, and trim out the shape along the outermost black lines. Also cut along the diagonal lines radiating out from the corner of the brown (Earth) cube face. Score and crease the underside of the design along the fold lines on all four sides of each face, and fold the flaps inward. Use tape or glue to fasten matching flaps together; assembly will be easiest if the *Radiance*, *Steam*, *Salts*, and Ash planes (the pairs of flaps closest to the "Earth" face) are brought together first.

(No, there's nothing missing from your copy of this magazine. We left this page blank on purpose, so that anyone who wants to remove it and assemble the cube design on the preceding page can do so without destroying any valuable information.)

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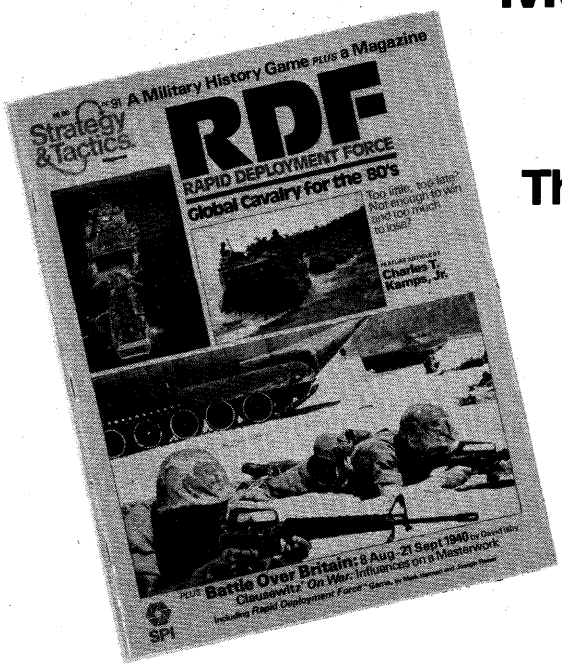

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needs to remember that such a scenario can — and should — be so simple that it would bore experienced players. Killing a giant rat is strictly ho-hum for a high-level paladin, but for a beginner it's a real thrill.

The very first game a beginner plays should never end in the death of the PC unless the DM has placed a convenient resurrecting cleric or some such thing close at hand. Rolling up a character for the first time requires too much work for the beginner to take the sudden death of that character with any kind of sportsmanlike attitude. Even the first adventure can have risks, such as being beaten up or robbed, but the DM should remember that the point of the game is to have fun, not to be bitterly disappointed in the first twenty minutes of a playing career. If the DM has the time, the ideal way to introduce the beginner to the campaign is in a series of single-player scenarios, starting with a simple walk-through situation and progressing to an adventure that does indeed carry potentially fatal risks. The DM is also perfectly justified in warning the player that ***soon*** things will get much, much tougher.

Back to basics for beginners

To design these simple scenarios, the DM must keep in mind what the player needs to learn: *everything*. The beginner has never entered a strange town, cast a spell or swung a weapon, or even walked down a corridor with a torch as the only light. The DM must start by explaining the simplest mechanics, move on to interactions between the PC and NPCs, and finally present combat and complex setups like crowded taverns. The first minutes of the beginner's first game in particular need to be stripped down to bare essentials to avoid confusion, frustration, and ultimately irritation between player and DM.

An example of such a beginner's game should make things clear. After the new PC has been rolled up and fleshed out with some kind of background and personal history, the DM should give the PC some reason for being in the part of the game world where the party that the PC will ultimately join is staying at the moment. Suppose we' have a young fighter, just discharged from the local militia with some pay in his pocket (the rolled-up coin). The DM tells the player that his character hears that adventure and profit can be found in a nearby town.

During the journey to town, the player can learn about movement rate, the need for rest, the passing of game time, and other such things in a very simple way. The road can present NPCs and random encounters in simplified outdoor conditions. Along the way, the DM can place a situation to explore: a simple abandoned hut, say, to be explored in daylight, where indoor movement and the indoor turn can be introduced. From there, the PC might find a dark place (a ruined house at night) in order to learn about torches and mapping in the dark. In these simple settings the PC can have low-level combat experiences — a giant rat, a large spider. The PC can also find his first treasure, say a hoard of ten copper pieces or a bit of cheap jewelry.

After this, the PC will understand the basic mechanics well enough to try a simple scenario. Perhaps a farmer offers food and shelter in return for our fighter's help in killing a bothersome wolf, or a hermit might ask a young neophyte cleric to dispose of a single animated skeleton in a shrine. Such scenarios will introduce clear goals and non-hostile interactions in order to train the new player to plan ahead, think through the consequences of his or her actions, and to see beyond looting to the possibilities of life in the game world.

Ultimately, these beginning scenarios should integrate the new PC into the ongoing group playing in the campaign. By using imagination, the DM can introduce new players in game-world terms rather than falling back on the mundane. In our example, the new player finally reaches town, has a few encounters on his own as he buys equipment, then hears a rumor that an adventuring party is drinking in a certain tavern. There the new PC meets his party for the first time, and it's up to him to think of ways to introduce and ingratiate himself. Perhaps the DM can arrange a brawl with the local yokels in which our fighter pitches in on the party's side, or some other such dramatic moment. The approach of "This is Joe, he's a fighter, and is it okay with you guys if he plays with us?" may work, but it's a lot more fun to have Joe show off his fighting skills in a situation where the admiring adventurers can watch.

Specific scenario ideas

With both the general principles of designing scenarios and the specific needs of the player in mind, let's consider some specific ideas that can provide the seeds of scenarios for the overworked DM. Each group of suggestions that follows starts with a generalized goal, then shows how the general can be turned to the specific for various character classes. From these starting points, the DM can work out particular plots for individual players.

1. Acquiring a desirable object: Somewhere, on a lonely hill or in a ruin, is just what the PC yearns for. This particular goal is perhaps the most useful scenario-starter, having vast numbers of variations.

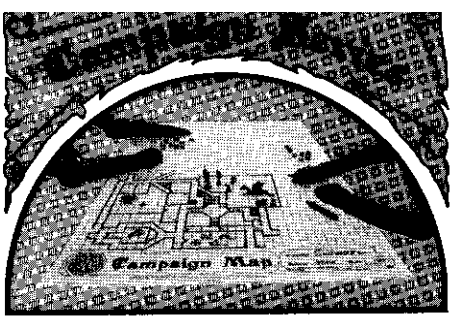
For instance, fighters will desire magic weapons and magic armor, which may be hidden in a ruin, lost in the wilderness, or in the possession of an NPC of opposite alignment. An interesting variation for a ranger is a valuable horse, running half-wild, that has to be tracked and tamed.

Thieves want riches, and the single-player scenario is a good way for them to steal without having to muck about in dirty dungeons. A big-mouthed NPC could brag about his riches, or gossip with the thief about the local miser in his lonely villa, or perhaps the thief merely sees a wealthy individual walk past in town and sets his or her heart on stealing said individual blind. Assassins may hear of a rare poison or a particularly fine knife to be had.

Magic-users yearn for magic items and spells, but remember that they also have to gather material components, some of which are rare and can be made hard to obtain by the clever DM. Consider the small canine statuettes needed for a *repulsion* spell, for instance: The DM might announce that the only pair to be had in the entire area were lost in a ruin some years ago.

Druids need mistletoe, which the DM can ensure must be harvested in dangerous conditions. For other clerics, the desired object might be a particular blessed mace or an important holy object that the cleric seeks not for him or herself, but for the sake of his or her temple.

The obstacle(s) standing between the PC and the desirable object can vary greatly, from mindless wild animals to NPCs actively seeking the same object and determined to keep anyone else from having it. The DM should remember to make the rewards as well as the dangers



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dependent on the PC's experience level. For example, allowing a second-level fighter to acquire a +5 sword would seriously unbalance a campaign; a +1 dagger would be more suitable and more likely to be guarded by the kind of enemies that this level of fighter could overcome. A low-level thief had best be restrained to robbing the weak and the helpless for a few gold pieces, but a high-level thief could be introduced to the local miser's villa, filled with traps, alarms, and armed guards, with a vault containing jewels and bags of gold.

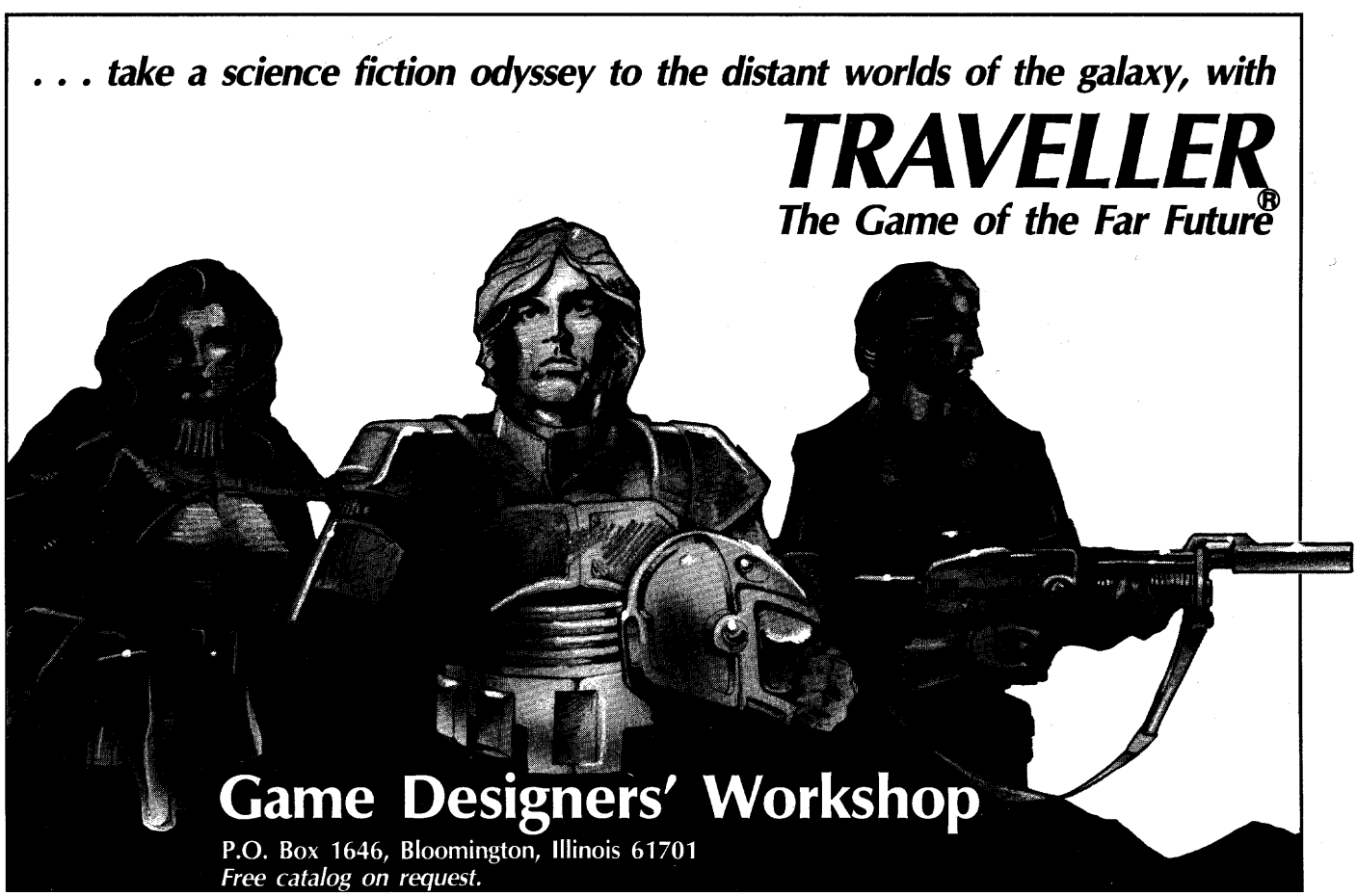
A good variation on the "desired object" theme is to have the PC *quested, geased,* or simply hired to obtain the object for someone else. In this way (if the DM is dealing with an honest PC, at any rate) the DM can have the desired object be most magical and wondrous without introducing it into active play later in the campaign. Another variation is to have the desired object be an item of stolen property which the PC is retrieving, either for him or herself or on hire. The opposition (the original thief or thieves) can be easily adjusted to the PC's capabilities. Still another variation is the rescue, where the desired object is another character. Fighters can be hired to free someone being held for ransom; magic-users, to break evil enchantments; clerics, to exorcise evil spirits; rangers, to track down a missing person in the wilderness.

2. ***Guard*** duty: This goal of keeping someone or something safe can also be widely varied. Fighters are the most obvious choice for guards, either as personal bodyguards or watchmen over threatened property. A rich merchant may worry about thieves, or a lord a sworn enemy who seeks blood vengeance. A traveler going through wilderness may pay a ranger a pretty penny to accompany him. A paladin might volunteer to guard a cleric from evil enemies. Other classes, however, can also do guard duty if the circumstances are right. A cleric or druid might be sent to guard a holy spot against desecration by undead or an evil cleric; likewise, some treasure of their temple might be threatened. A magic-user might be hired to turn back a magical attack against an NPC. The magic-user might also have a particular magical item that others want to steal from him or her. Thieves, by their nature, do not usually make reliable guards for someone else, but if they have booty, it might attract other felonious sorts who want an unearned share of it.

In all of these cases, the opposition wants the property or the person that the guard is looking after. If property is at stake, thieves are most likely the ones coming after it, either on their own or hired by an NPC of another class. If the item being guarded is a character, the opposition may be a hired assassin, or the danger may be a band of unskilled brigands. The assassin makes a good enemy for a rash hack-and-slash type player. Part of the player's job in this case is to use thought and guile in an attempt to figure out the assassin's disguise and to anticipate where the attack will come — a real learning experience for the unthinkingly violent.

3. Acquiring information: This goal is most suitable for a player in a long-running campaign. If the game world has a highly developed political situation or a war in progress, the PC can be hired by one side or another to spy. Although thieves and assassins make the best spies, a magic-user or cleric might well take on a temporary job of this sort if he or she feels the cause is worthy of it. Since heavily armed strangers look too suspicious to be successful spies, fighters are unsuited for this kind of job unless they can successfully convince the spied-upon that they are mercenaries with no attachments to either side.

The opposition to a player who is spying will consist of anyone who discovers the truth about the spy. The warlord or ruler in question will be highly aware of the danger from spies, as will his loyal subjects. Strong rulers will probably have their men check out any strangers in their territory. The spying PC may well meet a counterspy, too, who will entice him or her with bits of false information, then



ultimately turn the PC over to the authorities if he or she doesn't figure out what's going on.

Besides political spying, the player from an ongoing campaign can also undertake a scouting mission for the rest of the party. The party may have heard an interesting rumor of treasure to be gained or a wrong to be righted; on his or her own, the single PC can check out the rumor and scout out the possible dangers. The single player can also hear the rumor for the first time and do the scouting for an adventure that the DM has planned for the whole party.

For example, a cleric or magic-user of good alignment might hear reports of evil activities in some nefarious temple, or a paladin might hear of a lord who is oppressing the poor and generally engaged in wrongdoing. After tracking down rumors of treasure, a thief might decide that he or she needs the party's help in obtaining it.

In these cases, the opposition consists of those who have something to hide. An evil warlord, for instance, would be generally displeased to hear that a paladin is hanging around his fortress, and will no doubt take steps to have the do-gooder removed.

4. Vengeance: If a trusted friend or henchman of the PC has recently been murdered, or if the PC is foully insulted by an NPC, then vengeance is in order. The PC will have to track down the enemy, then challenge him or her to honorable combat (if the PC is one of the good alignments) or merely dispatch him or her (if the PC has a more flexible sense of honor). The enemy should be on guard against such an attempt, and would have guards and other obstacles around his or her person. Vengeance makes a particularly good single-player scenario for an assassin PC. The master of the assassin's guild can announce that someone has cheated the guild and send the PC off to avenge the insult. Of course, the assassin may simply be hired to do away with someone as a single-player adventure, but adding the vengeance theme dignifies the craft.

5. The random encounter ***series:*** Aside from the goal-plus-opposition pattern, discussed in detail above, the other typical category of scenario is a series of random encounters in a given area. If the DM has little time to plan a plotted scenario, such a series has much to recommend it, but even here the DM should use imagination to avoid the "just another dungeon" syndrome. Underground settings offer too many unfair difficulties for even a very high-level PC operating on his or her own. Besides having to fight enemies, the PC is responsible for all the mapping, lighting, and hauling of either supplies or booty, which adds up to more than a single person can handle while still enjoying the game. The DM who wants a dungeon-like setting for a single-player game should choose above-ground ruins to be explored by daylight. There can still be a dark corner, or a tunnel or two, in the environment, but the mechanics of such a setting won't interfere with play.

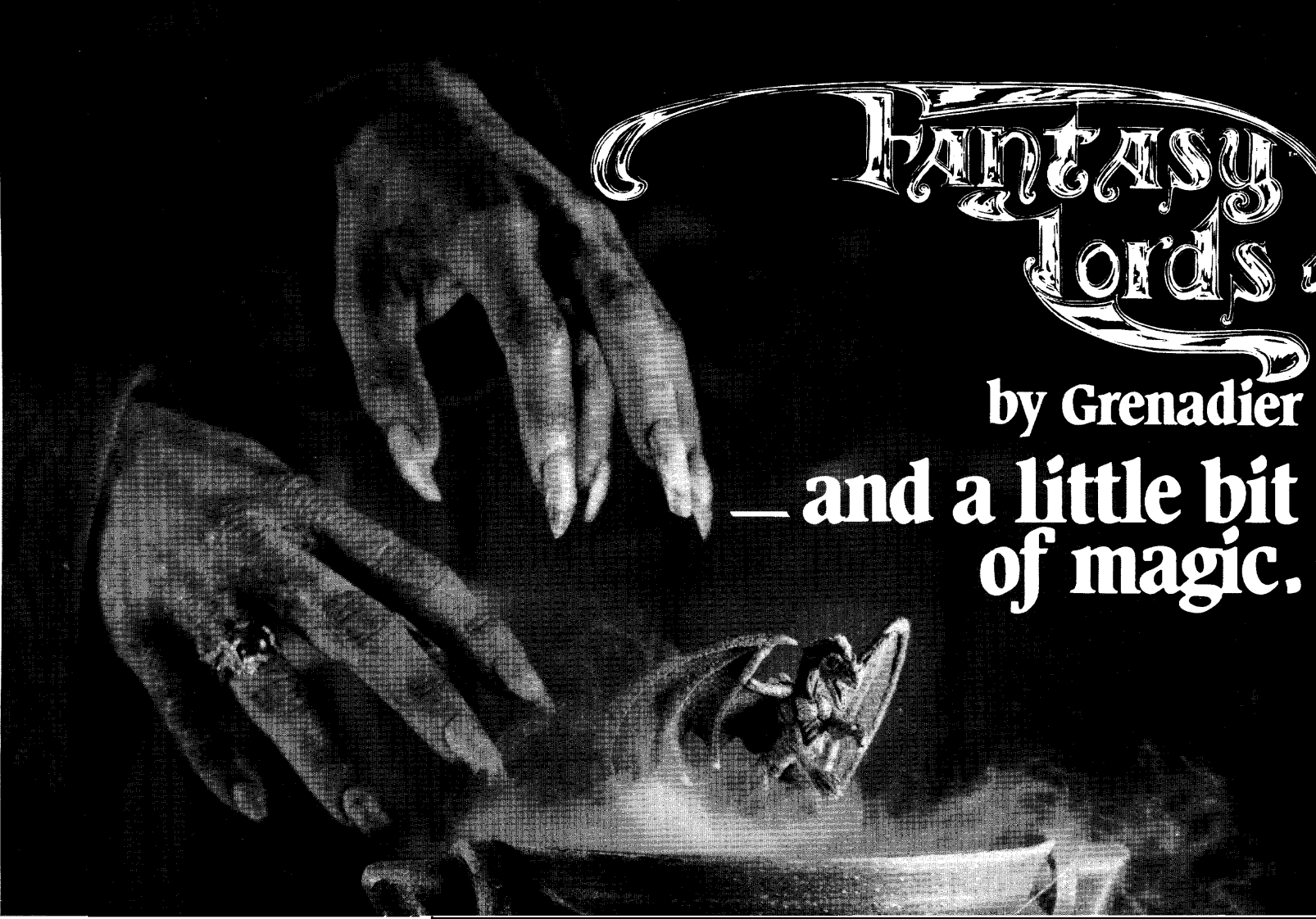
Perhaps the best setting for a series of random encounters for a single PC is the town or village, simply because towns are full of people of varying races who may or may not give the PC trouble. The PC may find him or herself cheated by a dishonest merchant, involved in a tavern brawl, challenged to a duel by an insulted noble, falsely imprisoned by a scurrilous sheriff, seduced and then robbed by a handsome thief of the opposite sex, and so on. On a brighter note, the PC may also meet assorted variant-class NPCs, like alchemists or astrologers, who may offer good advice and friendship. Another interesting idea for the DM is to set up the town gaol and have the unfortunate PC thrown into it for a night. The medieval-style gaol was generally one large room where criminals and vagrants of all descriptions were shoved in together. Any number of interesting encounters can arise from such a situation.

The wilderness is another good setting for a random series of encounters for a single player, as long as the DM keeps the opposition and dangers fair and compatible with the PC's experience level and character class.

The DM can also give the adventure a bit more meaning by suggesting a reason that the PC is in the wilderness, such as traveling or a hunting expedition. A druid gathering mistletoe or a magic-user searching for material components might meet all sorts of interesting things in the woods besides wild animals and monsters: brigands, madmen, hermits, evil spirits, and so on. A cleric might go to visit a holy (or unholy) spot and find it inhabited by hostile beings. In short, even when the DM has no time to plan an elaborate scenario, the adventure should have some purpose and some game-world "reality."

Set your standards high

Although imagination and consistency should be vital parts of every scenario, they are especially important in the single-player version. The interaction of a group of player characters creates plot and conflict within even the most routine scenario, but with only one player and the DM involved, the scenario has to be strong to avoid a kill-and-loot tedium. If the DM starts by considering the character of the PC, then keeps in mind what the game world has to offer for an adventure, the task of designing a single-player scenario will be easy — much easier than it might seem! — and the result much more fun to play.



Fantasy Lords

by Grenadier

—and a little bit of magic.

The ecology of the

by Chris Elliott and Richard Edwards

The debate about the nature of the catoblepas did not keep the proverbial man in the street awake at night, but it had for generations added fuel (as if fuel were needed) to the intense rivalry between the Wizards' and Naturalists' Guilds of To-Zen. The problem was one of demarcation. The naturalists could not deny that there were creatures of magic, and magicians could not help but admit that nature could at times achieve feats worthy of any wizard — but each side naturally wanted to claim the most bizarre beast for its own. And when it came to bizarre, the catoblepas certainly qualified.

To the wizards, a beast with the body of a buffalo, a huge tail and neck, the head of a warthog, and a gaze that slew was clearly a magical beast, and they bitterly rejected the jibe of the naturalists that such a beast, magical or not, would strangle on its own contradictions. The beasts had been seen, said the wizards, which proved that they existed, but any observer rash enough to meet the gaze of a catoblepas died instantly — and what more proof did one need of the beast's magical origin?

Fair enough, said the naturalists, but they pointed out that the catoblepas had been sighted in groups. So, how did they avoid killing each other — or themselves, for that matter — with their death-ray gaze? And how, in the name of the Mnoren, did they breed?

A magical creature, the wizards patiently explained, wouldn't need to breed, would it?

All right, retorted the naturalists, then how come there are so many of them? Is some deranged thaumaturgist turning them out as an occupation?

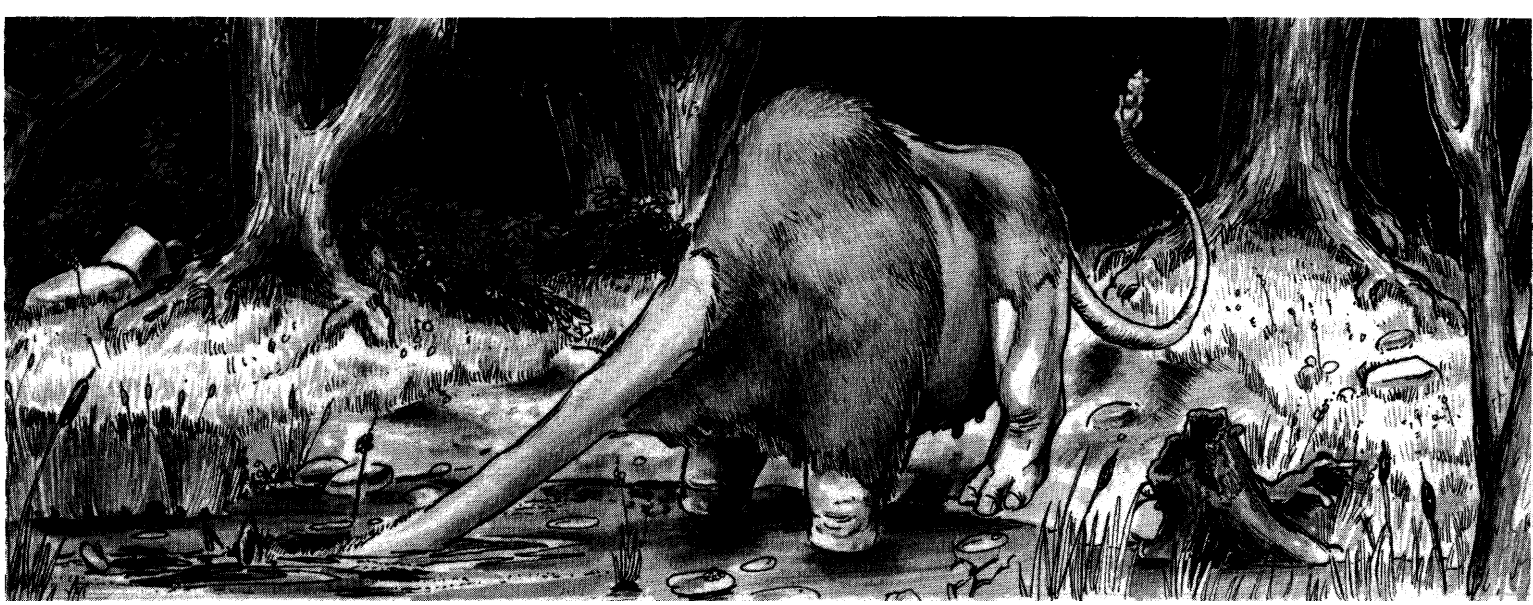
And so the debate continued, with each side having enough evidence to support its unshakable conviction that ***it*** was right, but neither having proof conclusive enough to convince the other side.

On one particular night, earth-shattering revelations were promised when the naturalist Bel-Ami, newly returned from an expedition to study the creature, was to address a capacity crowd in the Alchemists' Guild Hall, chosen as neutral territory. Inside the ancient vaulted hall, with its roof blackened by the fumes of countless demonstrations and its air pervaded by the sour reek of brimstone, the audience fell into three very different groups:

On one side of the hall were tight knots of black-robed apprentices surrounding splendidly gowned master sorcerers; hard-faced wizards, many in elaborately chased leather and silver armor; and a scattering of commercial-minded wizards and wizardly priests preserving a dignified silence. On the other side were the naturalists, dressed in all shades of brown and green, accompanied by almost as many tame hawks, hounds, birds and dragonets. And all around the upper gallery was crowded a mob of curious citizens, eagerly speculating on the outcome of the evening.

Suddenly, as if on a signal, silence fell over the hall. Bel-Ami, a stocky, bearded man in a curiously patterned green robe, came in from the side entrance leading an extraordinary creature. The height of a man, it shuffled nervously on its huge back legs and muscular tail, whilst its small forepaws twitched agitatedly and its delicate head swung this way and that, eyes, ears and nose straining in all directions.

"I expect you're all wondering what this little fellow is doing here," said the famous naturalist. "Well, after much patient and often dangerous observation in some of the wildest country in To-Zen, I can reveal that, far from being just another grazing animal, as we had formerly thought, this is a ***male catoblepas!"*** This remark immediately prompted a general uproar in the hall.



Catoblepas

(or, looks can be very deceiving)

"No, please — please relax! — no, he's perfectly safe, but he does hold the key to the mystery. You must all have read the classic description of, as we call it, the 'cat' in the Bestiary of Xygag, although how he worked out that its eyes are 'bloodshot' escapes me, and for a beast 'horrible beyonde alle description' he goes into a fair amount of detail!

"Well, as far as he goes, he's right, but he didn't realize that they were only the female of the species. From my studies, I have established that the female is a large omnivore, feeding mostly on ooze and water plants dredged from the swamps it lives in, but gaining an important part of its diet from animals it has killed. And no, she doesn't kill them with her deadly gaze, but with her *breath!*

"The female catoblepas secretes a gas, deadly to anything except the female catoblepas, that is belched out in an invisible cloud. The effective range is only about sixty feet before it disperses, but within that range, the only chance of escape is to run faster than the cloud expands. The gas is equally deadly if breathed in or absorbed through the skin.

"It was obvious from the time that I started to form this hypothesis that the 'cat' was immune to its own poison, but it was not for a long time afterward that I connected the female catoblepas with the small herds of grazers that were always found in the same area, following at a discreet distance, and realized that they were two forms of the same species!

"The male, poor fellow, is not immune to the poison cloud, and normally keeps well clear of the female. But in the mating season, the female exudes a scent which drives the male wild with a lust that frequently overpowers his instinct for self-preservation. He must try to wait until a solitary female is feeding with her head buried in the ooze of the swamp. Then, sprinting up to her, he dodges the heavy tail normally used as a defense, mates very quickly, and sprints off again.

"Six months later, the small, deer-like young are born. Since they are exposed to mild doses of the toxin before birth, they are immune to it. They are all weaned together, but at the end of the first year something very strange happens. The young scatter, and differentiate into sexes — a minority of females which remain immune to the toxin that they have begun to secrete, becoming fatter and thicker and eating flesh as well as plants; and the males, which undergo a radical change in their body chemistry, losing their immunity to the toxin and becoming fast-moving herbivores.

"As yet I can only speculate on the reasons for this division of the species; it may ensure a fitter breeding stock, or allow better use of existing food resources than the more conventional way, or both, or neither. Anyhow, enough talk. I'm open to questions from the floor."

During the course of his speech, all the magicians in the audience had been growing more and more restless. Now, one of their number burst from the audience with a horrified cry.

"You can't be serious! This must be your warped naturalist's idea of a joke!"

"Never more serious, I assure you," responded Bel-Ami.

"But, this is awful! When we heard that you had an astounding revelation in store for tonight, we were going to upstage you. My apprentices have gone out on an expedition to kill a catoblepas and bring it back as proof of its magical nature."

"That's quite possible. They can be killed."

"I know that, and you know that — but how far are they going to get with a polished shield?!"

(An earlier version of this article appeared in ***Dragonlords — Yet Another Fantasy & Sci-Fi Roleplaying Magazine.)***

The whole half-ogre

Ideas for finishing what EGG started

by Roger Moore

In *From the Sorcerer's Scroll* in issue #29 of DRAGON™ Magazine, E. Gary Gygax discussed the addition of new — and reasonable — character races to the AD&D™ game. *(Editor's note: This column was reprinted in the BEST OF DRAGON™ Vol. II anthology, under the title "Humans and hybrids.")* In particular, he outlined the game parameters of the half-ogre, the offspring of human and ogre parentage.

From what little I've heard about the campaigns other people in the world have, I've noted, as he has, that half-ogre characters do enjoy some measure of popularity. Despite the limitations the half-ogre has in intelligence, dexterity, wisdom, and charisma, and regardless of the other obstacles a half-ogre may encounter in an AD&D™ environment, the race does constitute an enjoyable alternative to humans, dwarves, and the like. Those who prefer "pure" AD&D rules can exclude half-ogres from being player characters, but can use them as NPCs, henchmen, and hirelings.

Some work is needed to flesh out the race, whether for use as player characters or non-player characters. Half-ogres may become fighters or fighter/clerics only if used as player characters; NPCs are allowed to be clerics only, in keeping with the guidelines in the Players Handbook. Dungeon Masters might amuse themselves with a rare bird who has some very low level (2nd at highest) thief or assassin abilities, to throw a wrench into players' plans. Half-ogres can advance to an unlimited level as fighters, but cleric advancement stops at fourth level.

In addition to learning common, ogrish, orcish, and troll tongues from their ogre parent, half-ogres may learn one additional language as well but no more. The base movement rate of half-ogres is 12".

Half-ogres range from 7' to 8' in height (80 + 4d4 inches) and weigh between 315 and 425 pounds (305 + 10d12). Skin color and hair color is variable but tends to be brown, greyish, black, dull yellow (skin only) or one of the above with a slight grey-green hue. Most half-ogres have human-like eyes, though about 20% have the white pupils common to ogrekind.

The initial age of a half-ogre when his or her adventuring career begins is 15 + 1d4 years for fighters, 20 + 1d4 years for clerics, and 24 years for fighter/clerics. An aging table for half-ogres, developed along the lines of the one on p. 13 of the Dungeon Masters Guide, appears below; for the effects of aging, also see the DMG.

Young Adult:	12-18 years
Maturity:	19-40 years
Middle Age:	41-80 years
Old Age:	81-110 years
Venerable:	111-140 years

Alignment for player characters is a touchy subject, since most adventuring groups are full of paladins, rangers, patriarchs, and evil-hating neutrals. Player characters can become true neutral or chaotic neutral to circumvent this problem, making a few steps in the direction of chaotic evil when no one is looking but generally maintaining a workable balance of alignments. I would not personally prefer to allow a good-aligned half-ogre player character in a game, and if I had to I'd remove all the influence of the ogre parent — including all knowledge of any language but common and other human tongues.

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to being a half-ogre that Mr. Gygax's article did not address. On the positive side, their greater size and mass allows half-ogres to use bastard swords one-handed and still get the full damage figure of 2-8/2-16 from such a weapon. Greater size and strength would also allow the use of a *rod of lordly might* or *hammer of thunderbolts* to better advantage. Like all beings but humans, half-ogres are immune to lycanthropy. Large shields would prove to be easier to manipulate for a half-ogre than a human, and offer the best protection for such a large body. Protective rings, bracers, and amulets may be used by the race.

On the negative side, half-ogres are never psionic. The alignment tendency toward chaotic evil makes the acquisition of henchmen and hirelings difficult, and can lower loyalty scores (as noted in the DMG). The cost of armor and clothing is high, perhaps two or three times the norm for any other humanoid. Half-ogres, once slain, will stay dead unless raised by a *wish* or the use of a *rod of resurrection,* requiring the same number of charges as a half-orc of the same class. (However, poisoning may be reversed using the appropriate cleric spells, as with any other character.) When struck by any weapon, half-ogres will always take damage as size L beings (Beware those two-handed swords!). They are also too big to ride anything but a huge horse or an elephant, neither of which is readily available or of low cost.

Going deeper into the rules, there are even more factors working against the half-ogre. Numerous magical items that vary in effect with the user's weight become less effective when used by a being that weighs an average of 370 pounds. Magical boots, brooms, armor, robes, cloaks, and magical walking or flying steeds either won't fit, won't work very well, or won't work at all for a half-ogre. Enterprising DMs may insert a *potion of half-ogre control* into the appropriate place in the chart on *potions of human control* in the DMG, and leave such lying about for discovery by enemies of the half-ogre. The *+3 hammer (dwarven thrower)* and *hammer of thunderbolts* will affect a half-ogre as they will a full-blooded ogre. Even as big as they

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are, half-ogres aren't big enough to fully employ either the *mattock* or the *maul of the titans.* And half-ogres, whether PC's or NPC's, are -2 "to hit" against dwarves and -4 "to hit" when fighting gnomes, because of the skills of those smaller races at battling bigger folk.

After all that, one wonders why half-ogres as player characters would be any good — as Mr. Gygax pointed out. Well, in a few words, half-ogres are the best darn door-openers in the whole universe. Those wimpy little kobolds clutch their ridiculous little spears and whine in unison when 7'6" of solid muscle smashes their door to splinters and walks in, and even other larger monsters tend to have serious reservations about attacking unless they belong to the kamikaze school of combat philosophy. Half-ogres might be able to cause orcs or half-orcs to call off attacks, or relate to ogres and trolls on a friendly basis (they all go back a long way together), and can absolutely terrify local human populations into leaving the half-ogre's party alone, simply by smiling and revealing those fangs that Daddy or Mommy Ogre left them.

These influences and potentials are subtle things, certainly, and DM's may not always take them into account. If the player enforces this sort of attitude by emphasizing, in delicate ways, that his or her character is bigger and tougher than anyone else in the party, other people will tend to go along with the idea. Wishes or the appropriate magical manuals and tomes may bring a half-ogre's weak characteristics up to more acceptable levels, and help even out some of the imbalance the player might perceive. It should be noted that there is no difference in maximum ability scores for male and female half-ogres. Both can have up to 18(00) strength, though only as fighters or fighter/clerics.

As pointed out earlier, having half-ogres as player-characters is up to the DM and the kind of campaign he or she wants to run. I believe they have some merit, at least as NPC's, and can add interesting new perspectives to the game. It is to them (in particular to Gi-Joe and John Grond, the two best half-ogres in our campaign) that this article is dedicated. Now, go forth and beat those kobolds into little pieces!

I. Half-Ogre ability scores

Strength: 14-18 [1]
Intelligence: 3- 12 [2]
Wisdom: 2-12 [3]
Dexterity: 3-12 [4]
Constitution: 14-18 [5]
Charisma: 2-8 [6]

[1] — Roll d6: 1 = 14; 2 = 15; 3 = 16; 4 = 17; 5 or 6 = 18. Fighters with 18 strength add +25% on roll for exceptional strength, up to 18(00) maximum.

[2] — Use 3-10 if human parent is below norm in intelligence.

[3] — Use 3-10 if human parent is below norm in wisdom.

[4] — Use 3-10 if human parent is below norm in dexterity.

[5] — Roll d6, applying the result the same as for strength.

[6] — Double the charisma score for effective score vs. ogres and other half-ogres.

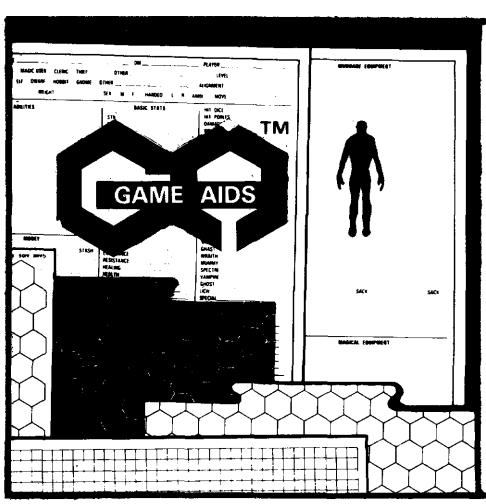
II. Racial preferences

Half-ogres are preferred (P).
Half-orcs are tolerated (T).
Humans are regarded neutrally (N).
All others are hated (H).
Note: These work both ways.

III. Special characteristics

Infravision range is 60'.
The languages of ogres, orcs, and trolls are learned only if the ogre parent is present.
Two hit dice of the appropriate type are gained at 1st level; progression is as normal at 2nd level and above.
Half-ogres have swarthy, dull complexions with dark, lank hair.

The preceding guidelines are paraphrased from information contained in the original article, "The Half-Ogre, Smiting Him Hip and Thigh" in *From the Sorcerer's Scroll,* DRAGON issue #29, by E. Gary Gygax.



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Relief for *Traveller* nobility

by Paul Montgomery Crabaugh

The nobility of the *Traveller*® universe has gotten kind of short-changed. There are a fair number of nobles, but their exalted social standing is just a hexadecimal digit in their UPP. It serves no function. Even those who enter the Noble "service" in the Supplement 4 rules basically become crackerjack handymen, who may or may not possess some money and who might, if lucky, get a ship which can scarcely generate enough revenue to operate.

What happened to the landed estates, the retainers, the political importance? Even the influence-shorn aristocracy of England are better off — and it can hardly be argued that the Third Imperium is more democratic than Great Britain.

So to provide relief for the nobility, or, more accurately, get the nobility off relief, here are offered some rules additions for people with a social standing of 11 or better:

There are two types of noble: new and old. The old nobility are those persons coming from families that have long been noble and have not necessarily done anything to earn their positions. The new nobility are those persons who have been granted noble standing by a grateful Imperium.

The latter are far more common than the former, because the nobility is expected to take an active role in Imperial interests, and, the Universe being what it is, that implies a fairly high casualty rate, high enough that whole noble lines are wiped out with depressing frequency.

Old nobility is considered to be represented by a character who rolled a social standing of 11 or 12 initially. If a 12 was rolled, there is a chance that the actual standing is even higher. In such a case, roll 1 die: On a result of 1-3, the social standing is indeed 12; a roll of 4 is social standing 13; a 5 is social standing 14; and a 6 is social standing 15.

It should be noted that a Duke does not run a subsector or sector automatically; that is done by Grand Dukes, who have a social standing of 16, the equivalent of the Princes who rule small client states.

A new noble is any character who began with a social standing of 10 or less (a 10 probably indicates that the character was an unrecognized but known illegitimate relation to nobility), who attains noble standing through mustering-out benefits and the like.

It is also, of course, possible for a person to start as a lower-level noble and be advanced through such benefits. Such people are still considered to be old nobility, although the family is probably noted for undergoing a resurgence.

All nobles have an estate, generally a minor world. This world generally shares a system with at least one other inhabited world, the one initially mapped. The referee should choose a location for the world and then create it more or less in accordance with the Book 3 rules: Starport (usually closed to general traffic), size, atmosphere, and hydrographics are rolled normally. Population is equal to the social standing of the noble minus 10 (new nobility have a 50% chance of having a population one level lower; old nobility recently promoted have a 50% chance of population equal to their original social standing minus 10). Government type is determined by a roll of 1 die: 1-2 is type 3; 3-4 is type A; 5 is type B; 6 is type C. Law level might be initially set to 2d-2; however, it may be varied at whim by the noble, who is not subject to it in any event. Technology is determined normally; however, a wide variety of imported goods will be present, lifting the effective tech level substantially.

A noble with a social standing of 11 who has a population for his estate of 0 is considered to be landless, without retainers, estate, or income.

There is, inevitably, a chance that the loyal retainers at the estate will not prove to be all that loyal. Each year, the referee will (secretly) throw 10+ to determine if a revolt will take place that year. If it does, the timing will be chosen by the referee. DMs are based on the noble's behavior during the *previous* year: Subtract the number of months spent in residence from the number of months not in residence and apply this figure as a DM to the roll. If the noble did not collect taxes at the beginning of *this* year (see below), a DM of -1 is imposed. If the noble's heir or spouse spent time in residence while the noble did not, a DM of -½ per each month so spent, rounding fractions up, is imposed.

This is assuming that the heir or spouse does not stage a revolt, which occurs at the referee's option.

A revolt must be put down by the fastest means possible. Failure to do so will result in the loss of noble rank. (An estateless knight does not need to worry about this.) If it is a popular rebellion, it may be crushed or subverted by any means. If it is the above-mentioned referee's-option revolt by an heir or a spouse, the rebel must be executed in single combat, since the rebel has a fairly strong claim to the title himself (herself) already. (There are no restrictions regarding the sex of the person holding the noble rank; that person's spouse is the immediate heir, their first-born child next, second-born third, and so forth. Unmarried nobles with no children leave no title when they die; the line disappears.)

Operating expenses for the estate are invisible to players; the estate's economy operates the same way the economy of a non-estate world of the same size does, including providing official living quarters for the ruler; therefore the character may assume that a palace suitable to his/her rank is always on tap. This includes sufficient funding to maintain any ships the noble possesses, and to provide charter transportation, at least within the system, in the absence of such ships.

In addition to this, the noble may acquire operating capital for his/her own ventures by taxing the population over and above their normal rate. This tax is levied once at the beginning of the year, and amounts to CR 1000 per inhabitant. This is the average figure for all taxes collected, including taxed businesses. The exact population will have to be determined by the referee; the nominal tax revenues for the various population levels are: Population 1, CR 10,000; population 2, CR 100,000; population 3, MCR 1; population 4, MCR 10; population 5, MCR 100.

It is up to the refereee and the players to find ways to disperse these funds, in such things as investments, supporting Imperial interests (e.g., toppling non-loyal governments) and so forth. The revenue of a Knight requires very little dispersal; it is scarcely more than pin money. The tax revenues of a Duke, on the other hand, will probably require the character's nearly full-time attention to properly manage.

Of course, a character may wish to forego taxation in order to reduce the chance of revolt during the year; just as having MCR 100 to play with is a lot of power, so can having that money cut off be quite a fall.

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A noble who enters the Noble "service" may acquire a yacht, the family excursion craft, as outlined in Supplement 4. However, in addition, there is a good chance that any noble will have one or more other ships available to him or her. To determine this, roll on the following table. New nobles receive a DM of - 1.

Die roll	Social Standing 11	12	13	14	15
0	--	--	--	--	--
1	— — — —	S	Sf	2S, Y	
2	- -	S	A2	Y	Sf, Y
3	S	Al	Sf	R	SDB+J
4	S	A2	Y	L	4B, T
5	Al	Sf	R	Sf, Y	2CE
6	A2	Y	L	CE	*

Abbreviations:
— — = none
S = Scout ship
Sf = Safari
Y = Yacht
Al = Free trader
A2 = Far trader
R = Type "R" subsidized merchant
SDB+J = System defense boat with jump shuttle
L = Lab
B = Express boat
T = Express boat tender
CE = "Gazelle" class close escort
* = Free design: 1000 tons of ship at tech level 15, any cost.

In the preceding chart, a number in front of a ship type indicates multiples of that type.

System defense boats, express boats, express boat tenders, and close escorts, although belonging to the noble, are ships considered by the Imperium to be semi-official; their use should be consistent with Imperial policy, and they may be called upon by the Imperium during crises to perform official tasks.

To find descriptions of these ships, you may have to hunt around; although all are described in GDW's various publications, they were culled from a variety of sources. notably Book 2 of the *Traveller* rules, Supplement 4, and Supplement 7.

Using these rules may force a change in the options available to certain characters — notably the higher-ranking nobles. These characters, possessing private fleets and enormous financial resources, will find some of the more common types of adventures (raids on private facilities, running marginal trading ventures, and so forth) either uninteresting or out of character. ("Milord, wouldst thou please lend me your frag grenades?") Such characters should instead become involved in high-level politics, planet-wide economic struggles, and other similarly large-scale projects.

At least it will be a change from standing in welfare lines.

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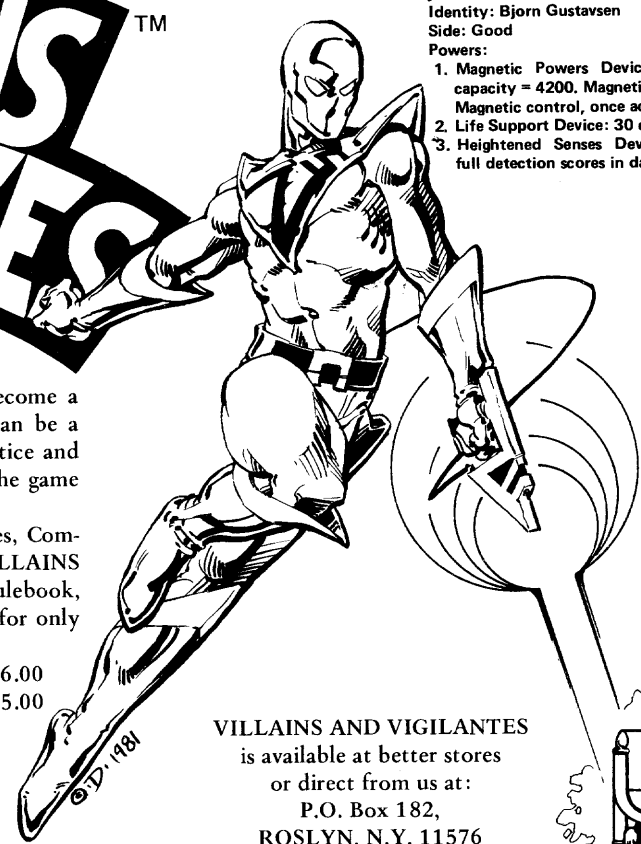

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Int.: 14
Char.: 11
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Acc.: +1
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Heal: 1.2
Car. Cap.: 320
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Homecoming *is a photographic interpretation of one of my favorite short stories by Ray Bradbury. The haunted house is a wooden HO model that I've had around for many years. Two spots cross-light the scene, the one coming from the right using a blue gel over the lens to enhance the night effect. A third spot was used in another variation on this scene, this one covered with a yellow gel and projected up through a hole in the base to light the interior of the house.*

Photo finish: Lights, camera, life!

Photographs and text by Mike Sitkiewicz

Many of us who are serious photographers are actually frustrated artists. Not having the talent to draw, we use our cameras to create "works of art." But in most photographic situations, we must shoot the world as we find it, our artistry being limited to selection, composition, and lighting.

Only by creating our own "worlds" in miniature can we have complete control over all of the elements in our photographs. My interest in this special phase of photography lay dormant until it was revitalized by the many new miniature "characters" that became available when fantasy role-playing games became popular.

As a writer-producer of audio-visual programs, I have spent a lot of time on motion picture sound stages. My basic approach and many specific techniques have been adapted from the soundstage to the tabletop. Each background setup is created for a specific picture. No attempt is made to make any of the elements permanent, as is the case in constructing a diorama. After the photograph is made, the setup is broken down, and often elements in one setup are recombined for another picture.

Once you get started in creating miniature worlds for photographs, you'll come up with more ideas for photo situations than you can possible develop. A climactic episode in a D&D® game may suggest a photo idea. A movie, story, fictional character, or musical composition may yield an idea, as was the case in three of the photos shown here: *Danse Macabre,*

Between Two Evils *depicts a pair of heroic figures reminiscent of Fritz Leiber's superheroes, Fafhrd and The Gray Mouser. As so happens so often in those stories, we find our heroes in a tight spot, defending themselves back to back.*

Danse Macabre *was inspired by the "spooky" art composition of Saint-Saens. The tombstones were taken from an HO kit by Bachmann. Two spotlights were used, a white backlighted key light and a fill light with a blue filter.*

Homecoming, and *Between Two Evils.* A photo idea may "spin off" an unusual miniature figure, like the eagle and rider in *Air Attack.* Or, a picture may be dominated by a photographic technique, as in *Dragon Fire.*

Technical information

The essential equipment you need to get started in shooting miniature fantasy photos includes a single-lens reflex camera, a "macro" lens, a tripod, and two or more small spotlights, preferably with barn-door closures.

The photos on these pages were taken with an Olympus OM-2 camera, using a Soligor 35-70 Auto Zoom lens and Kodak Ektachrome 160 Tungsten film. The shutter was set on automatic, the lens stopped down to f22, and the basic exposure was bracketed 2/3 stop, plus and minus.

Besides your "cast" of miniature figures, you'll want to have on hand a selection of real rocks, twigs, sand, and earth. Some artificial landscaping products sold in hobby stores for railroad layouts can also be useful. HO models are smaller in scale than 25mm figures, but can be useful as background elements.

Your "grip" kit should include, at the least, a variety of small "C" clamps, some kind of clay, and masking tape. The clay used by florists is the best I've found at temporarily holding things together and upright.

Probably the most dramatic single feature you can bring to your tabletop photos is a projected background. All of the photos shown here, except for *Between Two Evils,* use a projected background. A suitable rear projection screen can be easily made by taping a sheet of good-quality tracing paper to a wood or cardboard frame. For a light source, any standard 35mm slide projector can be used. If you're an active and organized photographer already, chances are that many of the slides you have in your files will make good backgrounds for photos of your fantasy worlds.

Air Attack *is dominated by a "flying" eagle figure, suspended above the terrain by means of a lug on its wingtip that fits into a notch in the base of the figure. Wedging this base between two rocks and swinging the eagle 180 degrees creates the illusion that the bird is in flight. In lighting this scene, and all scenes with rear projected backgrounds, care must be taken to keep light from bleeding onto the rear projection screen and washing out the projected image.*

Dragon Fire *is the result of a double exposure. A piece of acetate was taped over the original photograph, and the "smoke" was drawn on this acetate with a black marker pen. The "fire" coming from the dragon's mouth war scratched on a high-contrast piece of black film, covered by a red gel, and double-exposed into the "smoke" area.*

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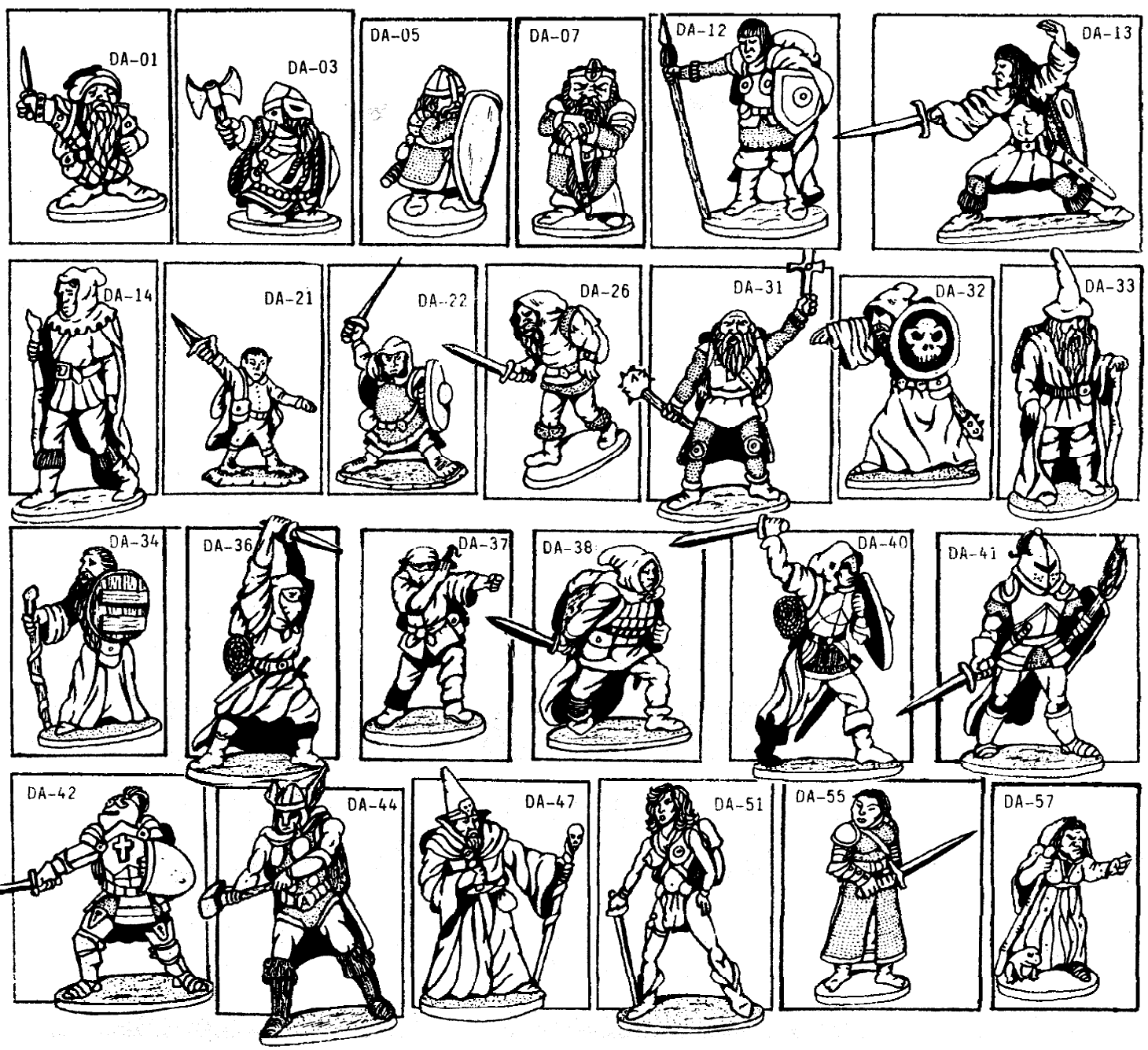

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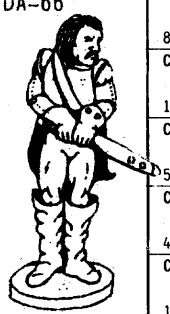

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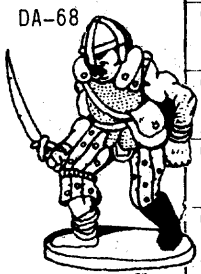

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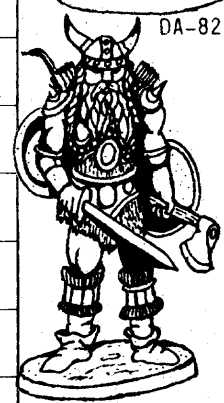

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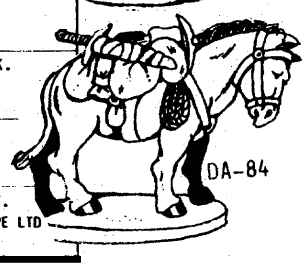

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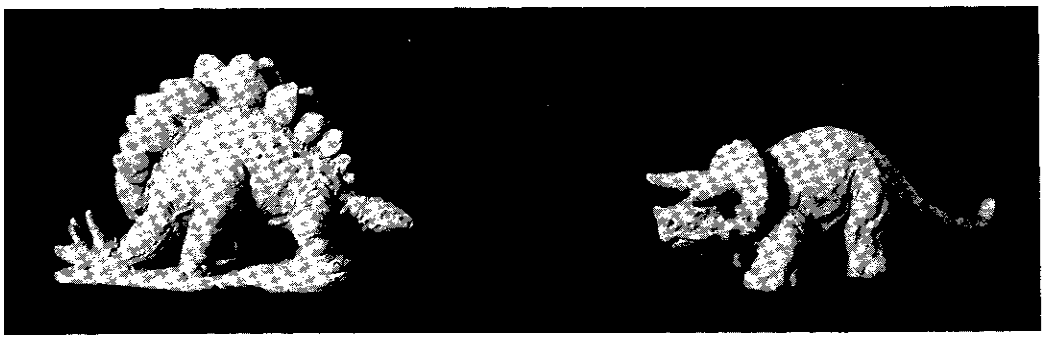

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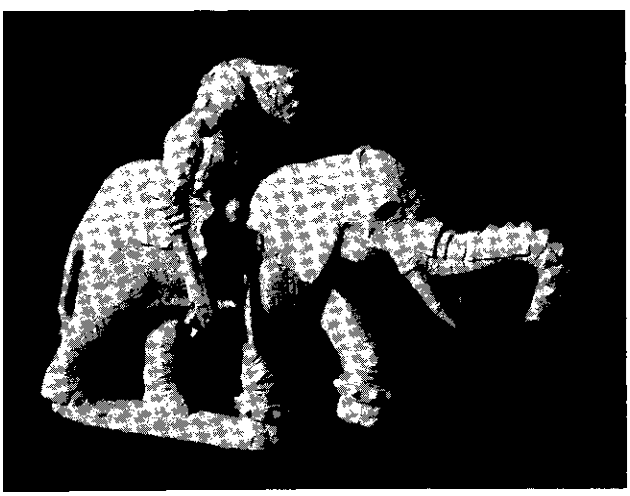
Stegosaurus and Triceratops
(Sculptor: Andy Chernak)

Pinnacle has four new products on the miniatures scene, among them a dinosaur set with eight exquisite creatures suitable for 15mm or 25mm play. The prehistoric creatures are anatomically accurate, making them equally desirable as gaming monsters or collectors' pieces. Suggested retail price is $12 for a set, which includes figures, paints, a brush, palette, and painting guide.



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Personalities Line

Pictured: Armored Giant Mounted on War Elephant
(Sculptor: Tom Meier)

Talk about weird monsters — who would have thought of an ugly giant riding a partially armored elephant? Tom Meier and Ral Partha did, and the result is a remarkable casting that comes in only two pieces. The detailing is nice; interesting touches include tusk, trunk, skull, and leg armor for the pachyderm and Roman-type armor, massive bracers, and a studded club for the "big boy." Of particular note is the determined and belligerent look on the giant's face. Suggested retail price: $6.00.

SAXON MINIATURES
P.O. Box 121
Rockville MD 20850

Cerberus Cat &Attack Cat w/Rider
(Sculptor: Conan Scanland)

Once again, Saxon has produced some really fine, large, one-piece monsters. The Cerberus Cat has all of the strength and suppleness of an actual "big cat," yet at the same time seems perfectly natural with its three snarling heads. The rider of the Attack Cat is a bit slight for 25mm scale, but it could be passed off as a jockey-sized rider or a member of a smaller race. In any case, it lends a realistic air to the bulk of the powerful-looking mount. Suggested retail price: $2.98 for the Cerberus Cat, $3.50 for the Attack Cat.

WEIRD MONSTERS

ASGARD MINIATURES
c/o The Armory
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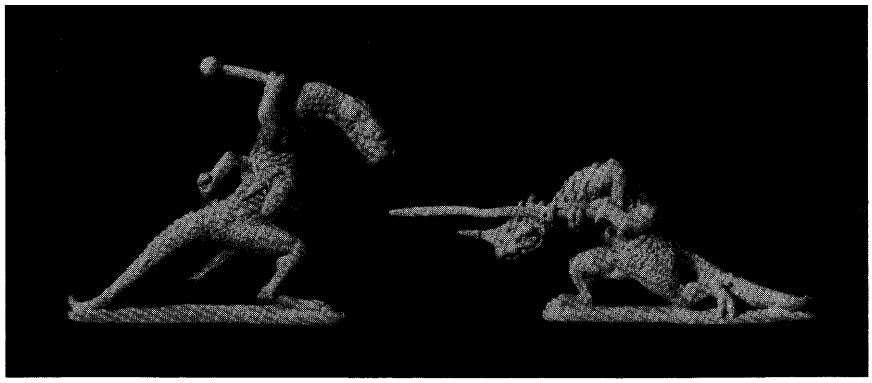
Baltimore MD 21215

Large Sadistic Demon Line
Pictured: Dragon Lizard w/Sword & Mace and Dragon Lizard w/Lance

Possibly the most creative line of monsters to come along in quite a while is Asgard's strange "LSD" line. The bipedal, four-armed lizards all carry weapons (usually multiple weapons) and have well sculpted scaly hides. Figures from this line are ideal for the gamer who wants to spring a "little surprise" on his fellow players. Suggested retail price: $1.20 each for the figures shown.



CITADEL MINIATURES U.S.
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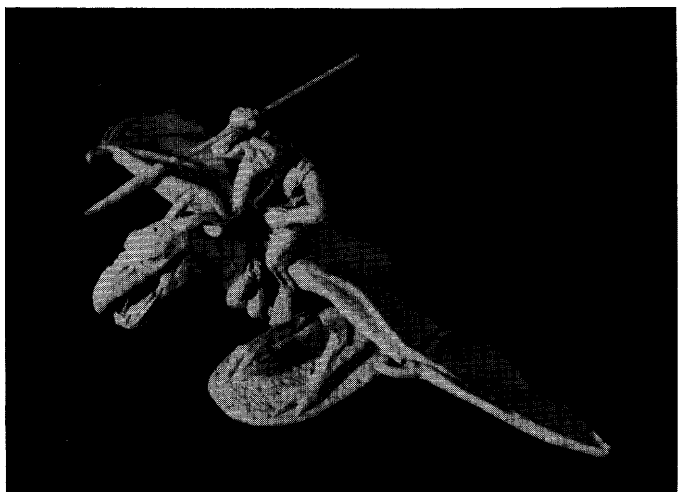
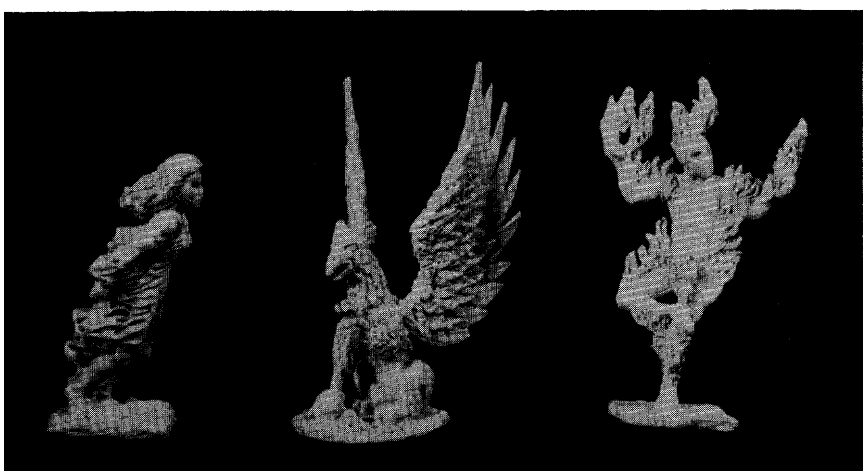
Fantasy Tribe Orcs
Pictured: Orc Riding Giant Wyverm
(Sculptor: Tom Meier)

This highly unusual, five-piece figure is the vanguard of Citadel's orc line. With his barbed lance and deformed fangs (a delightful feature of all of Citadel's new orcs), this fearless rider sits upon his pterodactyl-like mount. You can even see his provisions slung over the wyvern's neck. This should be a favorite with fantasy gamers, dioramists, and miniature army gamers alike. Suggested retail price: $7.98.





MASTERPIECE MINIATURES
P.O. Box 8986
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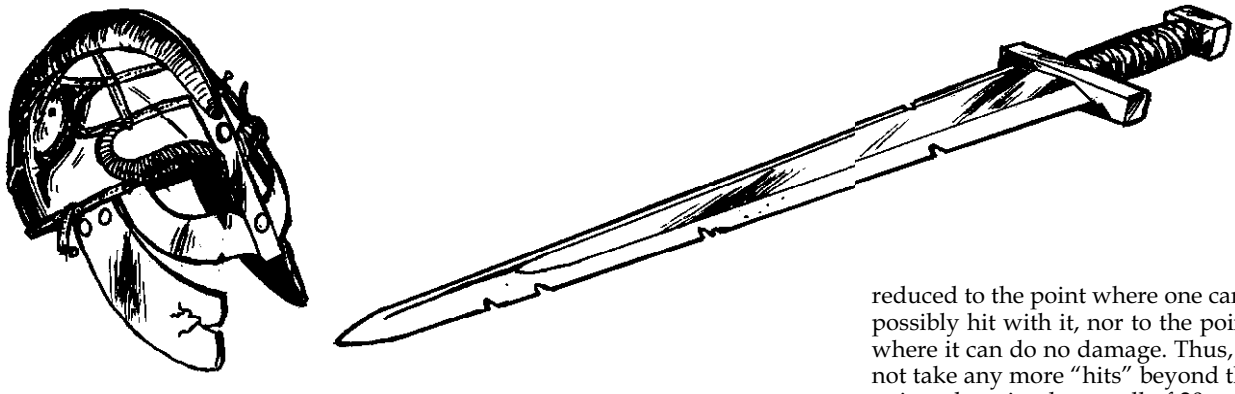
Air Elemental, Griffon, and Fire Elemental

Masterpiece Miniatures has been around for a while, but has recently expanded its efforts. Almost all of the company's offerings are packaged separately, which is a big help to collectors on a limited budget. The elementals are cast in innovative poses and are quite easy to paint. The griffon comes in three easy-to-assemble pieces, and is a good-sized miniature with nice detail. Suggested retail price: Elementals $1.99 each, Griffon $2.50.

For the record . . .

Diligent dragon-lovers should have noticed that the descriptions for the Superior Models and Saxon Miniatures dragon photos in last month's Figure Feature were accidentally reversed. Unfortunately, we didn't spot the error in time. Our apologies to all parties involved.



When it gets hit, it gets hurt

A system for equipment damage

by Arthur Collins

Why don't heroes ever seem to spend time sharpening their swords? Everybody else has to. How come Theobald the Magnificent never gets his shield banged up, or his sword notched, or his helm cloven? Wear and damage to equipment are concerns of every fighter making his way in a mutable world, but not, it seems, of characters in the AD&D™ world.

The simple fact is, though, that nothing lasts for ever. And without special care, nothing lasts as long as it should. Arms and armor are not exceptions. Sharp edges, to stay that way, must be honed occasionally. Nicks and dents have to be fixed. Rust will get you sooner or later, even if you sent all your equipment to Z-Bart. Following are some suggestions for easily implemented rules to add this dimension to your game.

Damage to armor

When a combatant rolls a *natural* ***20*** in melee, his or her opponent (if armored) must roll a saving throw for his armor vs. crushing blow. The armor gets magical plusses (if any) as bonuses to this save, plus any other bonuses that might apply. A shield, if one is being used by the character or creature that is hit, will take damage until it is rendered useless; after that, the armor itself will absorb the blows. Failure to make this saving throw means one's shield is broken (or at least severely damaged), or one's armor is rent.

Armor and shields can absorb as many dents and rents as the number of AC factors the item provides. Thus, a shield will take one good blow before it is broken (same for a helm); leather or padded armor will absorb two such blows before it is useless for protective purposes; ring mail can take three blows, studded leather three, scale mail four, chain mail five, splint mail or banded mail six, and plate mail seven. Magic armor adds absorption ability according to its magical bonuses; for instance, *chain mail +2* will absorb seven blows before it becomes useless.

Each time a piece of armor absorbs a blow, by failing to make the save, its AC protection drops by one factor. Chain mail (AC 5) becomes chain mail -1 (AC 6), then -2, and so on. A *shield +1* does not cease to be magical, but it drops to a *shield +0* after taking such a wallop, and then is a ruined, unmagical shield after one more damaging blow. Damaged armor will stay so until repaired by someone skilled in the craft. The cost, in gold pieces and time, of such repair is a minimum of 3 days and 25 g.p. for each damaging blow the armor has absorbed. Magic armor cannot be repaired by an ordinary armorer or smith without its losing its dweomer.

Damage to weapons

When a combatant rolls a *natural* 1 in combat, his weapon is adversely affected. An edged weapon becomes notched each time a 1 is rolled, and it takes a -1 penalty "to hit" and to damage. A normal sword becomes a sword -1. A magical *sword +1* becomes a magical *sword +0.* Magical edged weapons get a saving throw vs. crushing blow (non-magical edged weapons do not). No edged weapon can be reduced to the point where one cannot possibly hit with it, nor to the point where it can do no damage. Thus, it cannot take any more "hits" beyond the point where it takes a roll of 20 to hit with it, or below the point where it does at least 1 point of damage.

A character who rolls a natural 1 while attacking with a blunt weapon will find that the weapon has slipped from his hand.

A strung weapon will snap a string, and thus misfire, on a roll of 1. A weapon with a wet string need only roll a natural 2 for the string to snap.

A pole arm or staff will crack on a roll of 1. A saving throw must be rolled each round thereafter vs. crushing blow. Failure to save at any time means the haft snaps.

A hurled weapon is not damaged the way other types might be, but rolling a natural 1 means that the wielder (thrower) of the weapon may be temporarily off balance. Unless the wielder (thrower) rolls his dexterity or less on d20, he is off balance, loses all dexterity and shield AC for bonuses that round, and is -(1-4) in rolling for initiative. (That is to say, he loses 1-4 segments from whatever his party rolls for initiative.)

A fighter engaged in combat without weapons occasionally might not use the weaponless combat table. In this case (when, essentially, the fighter's bare fist is treated as a weapon), a roll of natural 1 is considered the same as a result for a hurled missile, described above. That is, the fighter is off balance, and must roll d20 vs. his dexterity or suffer the same penalties as for a hurled weapon that goes awry.

The ravages of rust and time

If a character neglects to have his swords and such attended to, or his armor gone over by an armorer at least four times a year, then the DM can assess the user of that equipment a penalty of -1 on every saving throw rolled for the equipment, due to neglected rust and wear and tear. This deficiency can be remedied by simply having the equipment seen to (cleaned, polished, etc.). At the DM's option, the same penalty may be applied for every week spent in a tropical or marsh environment (or the like) without the character cleaning his equipment. It takes a full day to go over an entire suit of armor and all of one's weapons — but it's a day well spent.

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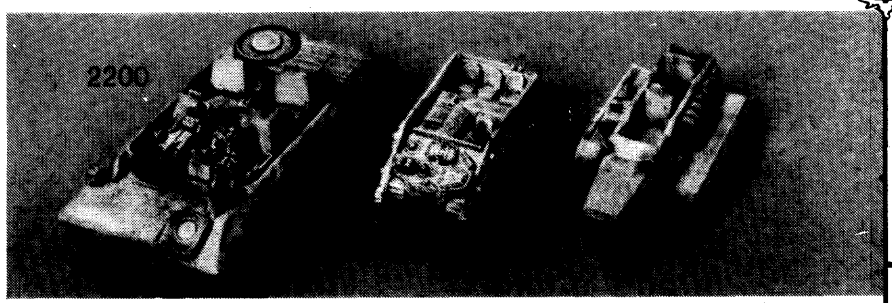

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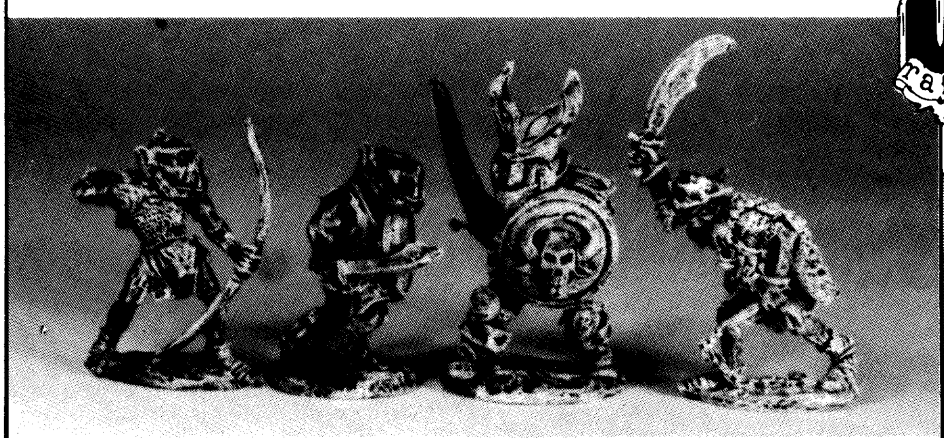

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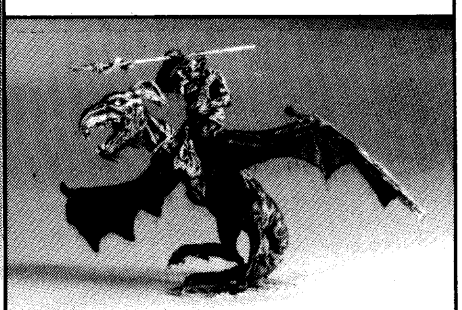

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Non-violent Magic Items

One hundred ways to keep players guessing

by Lewis Pulsipher and Roland Gettliffe

In most FRP campaigns, virtually every magic item found is more or less directly related to domination or combat. Yet in a non-technological society, it follows that some magical items would be constructed to serve the rich and powerful in other ways, for practical or luxurious reasons, rather than as a means to gain power or wreak havoc. In a way, magical items might take the place of modern technological conveniences — but only for those who can afford them.

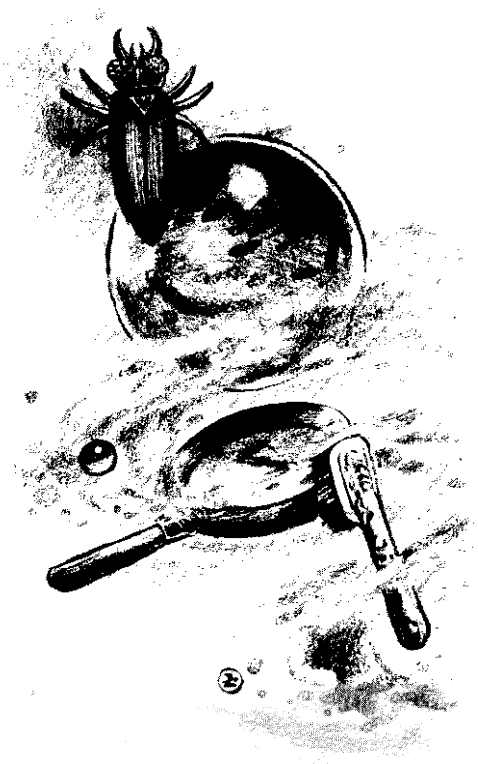
If one forgets "realism" and looks at this from a referee's point of view, such non-violent or luxury items are a most desirable addition to the campaign. First, these are magic items that player characters can acquire and enjoy without increasing their power, unless they're most ingenious. Second, adventures can be built around characters' attempts to sell or otherwise dispose of luxury items which the characters don't want to keep. A rich and interested buyer must be found; for some specialized items, this task might not be at all easy. Then the item must be taken to the buyer, with all the potential dangers that entails. . . . And the buyer may be less than honorable when buying time arrives.

Non-violent items are not hard to devise, especially if you don't mind duplicating modern convenience items such as toasters or hair dryers. For those without the time to do this, below is given a list of items (roll d% for random selection), some of obvious derivation and some unique. Game referees can have fun describing items literally, with elaboration added as requested by players. For example, don't blurt out, "It's an abacus" (item #70) — let the players figure this out. Command words can also be fun — a few examples are given in the text.

01: A small black scarab. Anyone carrying it will not be bitten or stung by common insects.

02: An intricately carved mahogany miniature bed in a bag of woven string (netting). When placed underneath a bed, it drives away all bedbugs and mosquitos.

03: A round, iron 9-inch pan with a runic "F" on the handle. It will automatically heat anything placed therein to frying temperature (and it's non-stick).



04: A normal-looking straw broom. Upon the utterance of the proper command word (written in common on the end of the handle), it will sweep out the room it occupies. It does not operate outdoors. It will attempt to sweep out all unprocessed organic material such as dirt, leaves, and living and dead animals and insects, even humans. The reverse of the command word, or completion of the task, stops the broom.

05: A glass ball (several colors possible) about two inches in diameter. When someone breaks the ball, places his or her face and upper body in the resulting colored smoke, and thinks about the kind of cosmetic treatment he or she desires, it will' be instantly accomplished. One person per ball, cosmetic effect only (not an actual disguise). Generally found in lots of 3-18. Different colors may signify different capabilities.

06: A rune-covered brush of dragonbone and animal bristles. Upon the utterance of a command word (written in elvish runes), the brush will begin to groom the hair of the speaker, responding to the speaker's telepathically expressed desires.

07: A white stone of a material resembling marble. It is about the size and appearance of a stone in the game of "Go." When it is thrown against or onto a hard object inside a room, it "explodes," and all dirt and dust in the room — non-living matter only — disappears. The command word "clean" must be spoken as the stone is thrown. Found in lots of 10-100, packed 12 to a box in wooden boxes similar to large matchboxes.

08: A dark green glass bottle, about the size of a half-gallon milk carton, with a screw top. Any liquid placed in the bottle will maintain its current temperature indefinitely while inside. The bottle is light and fairly fragile.

09: A large wood-and-glass hourglass filled with yellow particles. It records the passing of eight hours when turned over, after which a deep chime rings out ten times.

10: A mechanism of gears, a projecting lever, and three broad wooden "leaves" emanating from a hub, a little like a clover but with each "leaf" tilted out of line with the next (like a modern electric fan, in other words). When someone turns or pedals the lever-handle, the fan pushes forth air which is magically cooled to a temperature 20 degrees lower than the surrounding environment.

11: A 9-inch round iron pan with the runic S embossed on the handle. Any food fried in this pan is magically spiced to the cook's taste — quite a boon in areas where spice is scarce.

12: A carved miniature wooden chair. At a command word (carved in an ancient language on the underside of the seat), it expands to a full-size chair. Useful for travelers and some officials.

13: As above, but a padded couch rather than a simple chair.

14: A one-inch cube of a hard, whitish, translucent material, with slightly rounded edges and corners. When placed in no more than 16 ounces of liquid at an initial temperature of no more than 130 degrees, it will slowly cool the liquid to 35 degrees and maintain it at that temperature indefinitely. It will not affect more than 16 ounces, and if placed in a

liquid hotter than 130 degrees it will disintegrate.

15: An ordinary-looking oil lamp which, by use of the proper command words, may be programmed to light and extinguish itself at a specific time each day (with a variable of up to half an hour per day). Used to convince outside observers that someone is present in a room. The command words become visible when a little wine is placed inside the otherwise empty lamp.

16: An ordinary-looking needle. To use the needle magically, a person says "sew," and it will continue to sew a stitch on a straight line until ordered to "stop."

17: A quill pen. Anyone using it can write twice as fast as normal, with no loss of legibility. These pens are usually found in lots of 2-12, since the quills do wear out. The pens are appropriate for normal writing tasks, but not for the magical scribing of (for instance) scrolls or spell books.

18: A clay plant pot (size varies). Any insect entering the pot, or alighting on a plant growing in the pot, will die if it is a species harmful to that plant. Usually found in groups, not singly.

19: A one-inch obsidian cube and a metal tuning fork four inches long. When the fork is struck, the sound is reproduced from the cube as well as from the fork, provided the cube is no more than three miles away.

20: An eight-sided lantern. Each side shines with a different color, and the colors periodically rotate from face to face at intervals of 10 seconds to 5 minutes, depending on how far a button on the bottom is pushed in.

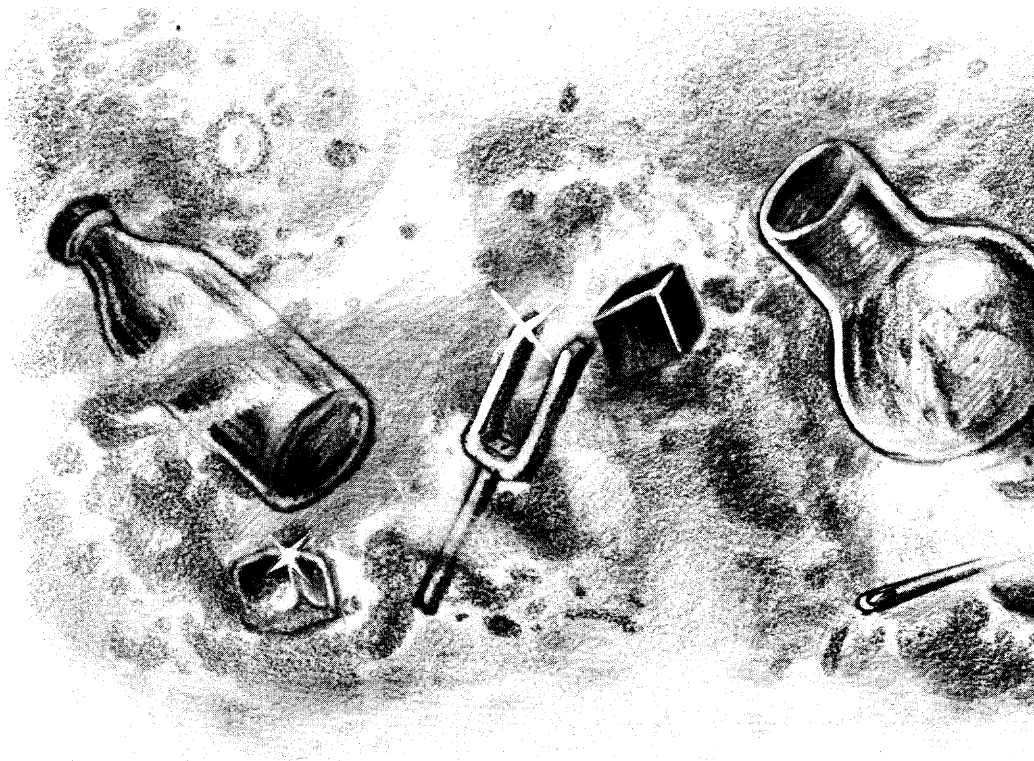
21: A hollow wooden tube, closed at one end, with a slot in the side. This is a herding whistle. Each type attracts a different herd animal and has a distinctive note. When an animal of the appropriate species hears the whistle (which is quite loud), it must move to within 25 feet of the whistler and maintain that position, following him or her if necessary.

22: Two miniature metal blacksmith's anvils, one red, the other black, each about one inch in all dimensions. If the black one is placed in a fire, the red one will heat to the temperature reached by the black one. The anvils are useful for boiling stews or for keeping food warm at some distance (maximum range 30 feet) from a fire.

23: A wooden drawer, about 12 by 18 by 9 inches high, which may be inserted into a suitable desk, wall, etc. When anyone who opens the drawer speaks the name of an object inside it, the object pops up at the front of the drawer, within easy reach. If several similar objects, such as sheets of paper, are placed in the drawer, the person placing them may speak a word which becomes the code word for one particular object in the group. The drawer's magic works only when it is in a proper receptacle of the correct size. Smaller versions are often found. This kind of item has obvious uses in a kitchen or closet, but could also be useful to a thief. It will not work in extremes of heat or cold, however.

24: A miniature tree, about three inches high, made of an unidentified material. When carried, it adds 20% to a person's chance of successfully climbing a tree. (It was made for a lame sylvan elf.)

25: A hemisphere (circumference about 10 inches) of hard but flexible material similar to tire rubber. A steel hook is embedded in the round side. When the flat side is placed against a fairly flat, smooth surface, and the command "adhere" is spoken, the object sticks to the surface with a strength equal to a wizard's lock. The command "dishere" *(diss-here)* causes it to cease sticking.



26: A blue pill about the size of an aspirin tablet, usually found in a group of 2-20. When covered with spittle, the pill expands and changes within 10 seconds, becoming a gallon of water. Customarily, one would dab the pill in one's mouth and then quickly pop it into a waterskin or bucket to expand. If the pill is left in the mouth, the water may (5% chance) drown the victim as it expands and is forced into the lungs. (This chance rises to 50% if no one is present to help the victim. Back-slapping or some similar action will help the victim to expel most or all of the water out through his mouth.) If the pill is swallowed, the victim's stomach may burst (10% chance), killing him, but in any case it will cause incapacitating discomfort.

27: A canvas stretched on an ordinary artist's frame. When a magic word is spoken, the canvas magically takes on the semblance of whatever it faces. Normally this is used for extremely accurate portraits. The result looks like a very realistic painting – *not* like a photograph shot with a wide-angle lens.

28: A bedroll sewn along the edges so as to make it a large bag (in other words, a zipperless sleeping bag). Anyone sleeping in this bedroll will remain dry, regardless of rain, snow, or other moisture, unless the bedroll comes to lie in more than one inch of water. It remains dry inside even if covered with snow.

29: Appearing to be an ordinary leather backpack, this one contains an other-dimensional space which allows up to 30 cubic feet of material to be placed in it, provided that no single object is more than five feet long. The backpack offers no reduction in the weight of the materials carried, however.

30: An ordinary-looking canteen. Any water which has been in the canteen for at least 24 hours will be purified; however, deliberately concocted poisons will be unaffected.

31: A leather drawstring purse about the size of a small fist. Whether it is full of coins or holds only a few, no noise emanates from the purse. (Other objects in it make a normal amount of noise.)

32: A pair of wooden knitting needles that enable the user to knit at double his normal speed.

33: This is a box of gears and cogs, with a crank handle protruding from one side. When the crank is turned, heat emanates from the top of the box, more heat as the crank is turned faster. Through magical means, the energy of motion of the crank is magnified and turned into heat sufficient (with steady

cranking) to heat a medium-sized room in winter.

34: This is a box about 12 by 12 by 2 inches. When a person steps onto it, numerals indicating his weight appear in his mind's eye. Only the user can see the numbers; they do not appear on the box itself.

35: This blanket automatically maintains a comfortable temperature for anyone sleeping under it. It cannot maintain a temperature difference of more than 30 degrees, however, from the ambient atmosphere.

36: This is a 6-inch-long stick in the shape of a miniature candle snuffer — a stick with a hook at the end, ending in a bell without a clapper. When it is pointed at a candle while the word of command is spoken, the candle will be snuffed out, regardless of the range as long as the candle is visible. It will not work on lanterns, torches, lamps, etc. — only candles.

37: This object, made of an unknown substance, is formed in the shape of an ebony candle with a flame atop it, the whole being about 4 inches high. Whenever an excessive amount of smoke is present (even just from cooking), it emits a wailing, ululating beep. (Naturally, this cannot be used in rooms heated by poorly made fires!)

38: This is a bronze miniature bucket, complete with a bronze inner surface which looks much like water. If the bucket is brandished at a fire, as though water were being thrown from it, the fire acts as though a normal bucket of water had been thrown on it, except that no chemical reaction (such as the reaction of sulfur with water) takes place. The bucket can be used repeatedly on the fire. It has no effect on anything except ordinary fire.

39: An ordinary-appearing set of cutlery which enables the user to eat in accordance with the standards or manners of the group he is eating with.

40: A thick, creamy-oily concoction, which may be in virtually any type of container. If a quantity is used to cover a scar, within a few days the scar will slough off and the skin will appear to be exactly like the skin around it. This is much sought after by the vain "upper crust," and is fairly common, because it is difficult to avoid acquiring scars from childhood diseases, if nothing else, in a non-modern world.

41: A robe of chamois-lined natural wool or fur which keeps the wearer 10 degrees warmer than would be expected of a non-magical robe of similar materials.

42: Black arm wrappings. An insomniac (or anyone else) wearing these sleeps soundly and comfortably.

43: A piece of jade carved in the shape of an insect one inch long, suspended from a light chain. This amulet keeps fleas and other insects of similar size from approaching within three feet of the wearer. It does not force them out of an area or location, however, so it could not be used, for example, to clear a bed of fleas.

44: Two black flexible oval objects, each about an inch long, connected by an inch-long flexible white strap and, from opposite sides of the ovals, by another strap about ten inches long. (In other words, like a pair of swimming goggles without the transparent plastic.) When the ovals are placed over the eyes, held on by the straps, the wearer can see under water twice as well as expected, and no water touches his eyes.

45: This carved stone miniature door, about 4 by 1½ by ½ inch, can be tuned to a particular door, set of doors, or gate by use of the proper magic words. Thereafter, when its knob is pressed, any such door or gate within 20 feet will swing open by itself.

46: This is a large leather glove. When a person puts his or her hand into it, the fingernails of that hand are painted and polished to a color that will most suit his or her present attire. (A matched pair is needed to do both hands.)

47: This is a wooden ladder 10 feet long. The user may at will cause it to expand to a maximum of 50 feet in length; it will retain the same strength it had at the 10-foot length, but remember that it is a wooden ladder, not metal.

48: This 9 by 5 by 3 inch box contains several miniature metal figures playing instruments. When the command word is spoken, the figures emerge from the box and play simple popular tunes for five minutes, then return unless the magic word is spoken again. The music is about as loud as a person speaking normally.

49: An ordinary horse's nose feedbag. Many horses can feed from this nosebag, yet it will continue to be full of grain. However, if more than 10 different horses feed from the bag in one day, the magic is lost forever. No grain can be poured from the bag.

50: A wine cup. Once per day this cup turns ordinary water within it into high-quality wine. No magic word is required.

51: A strongly constructed metal box (size can vary) with a key. When the user utters the word of command ("heel"), the box stays exactly where it is presently located, even if the user lets go. It is anchored to the ether, and any force strong enough to move it will inevitably destroy it in the process.

52: This is a black, covered pitcher or cylinder with one button on it. Objects are placed in the cylinder, the button is pushed one or more times, and the lid is closed; the item then blends, smashes, and breaks up whatever is inside. However, if anything harder than food or similarly soft materials is blended, the item will probably permanently cease to function. Chunks of ice are about the hardest usable material, and only if they are in a supporting liquid. The number of times the button is pushed determines how long the smashing goes on.

53: A large oil lamp. Although it appears to be nothing more than an ordinary flame, the light of this lamp is equivalent to ordinary-strength sunlight for purposes of growing plants indoors. Without the special oil or without the lamp itself, there is no magic. Generally, the lamp will be placed in the center of an array of plants. The wick and oil extend far up a slender cylinder in order

to be above the plants, yet shed light down on them.

54: These leather, calf-high dress boots can be brought to a brilliant shine by a single swipe of a cloth. Events violent enough to break through the leather will destroy the shine permanently.

55: A pair of onyx dice. The dice will give whatever result the roller desires.

56: A wooden log about eight inches in diameter and two feet long. Regardless of how often this log is burned, it remains whole and ready to burn again the next day. (It burns out as a normal log would, but leaving a large husk rather than a pile of ashes, and then "regenerates" over the course of the following 18 hours.) As a bonus, it is very easy to ignite.

57: A bone-and-bristle brush of untidy and uninviting appearance, this implement nevertheless immediately untangles the hair of anyone who uses it, without pain.

58: A blank parchment scroll. Anything written upon it can be read only by the writer and by those whose names are written on the scroll. It can be reused several times, until the scraping required to remove the old ink has worn through the parchment.

59: Any woman wearing this necklace of polished non-precious stones appears to be attired in elegant, expensive clothes appropriate to the place and time of day.

60: An ordinary rug. When a command word is spoken, the rug rises up and shakes itself free of dust and dirt. (It does *not* take itself outside.) The rug may be of any form, from a small throw rug to a large carpet.

61: This is a very small flexible strip of metal. When placed around the leg of a bird, its magic prevents the bird from getting out of the building it occupies, except when carried out by someone. The band is too small to fit any bird larger than a hawk or a macaw.

62: A gold-colored metal pen with a replaceable quill tip. Only statements believed to be true by the writer can be written with this pen.

63: Any item of clothing (but not armor). This magically fits any person who tries it on. It wears out through normal use.

64: This appears to be an ordinary stone oven. There is no place for feeding the fire, however; the oven is heated via a connection with the elemental plane of fire. A small number (10%) of these ovens are defective, however, such that a creature from the fire plane may come "through" the connection (5% chance per month, non-cumulative, for any defective oven).

65: This looks like a curved metal pipe closed at one end. When the command word inscribed on the side is spoken, hot air streams from the open end. It is ordinarily used to dry things, especially hair.

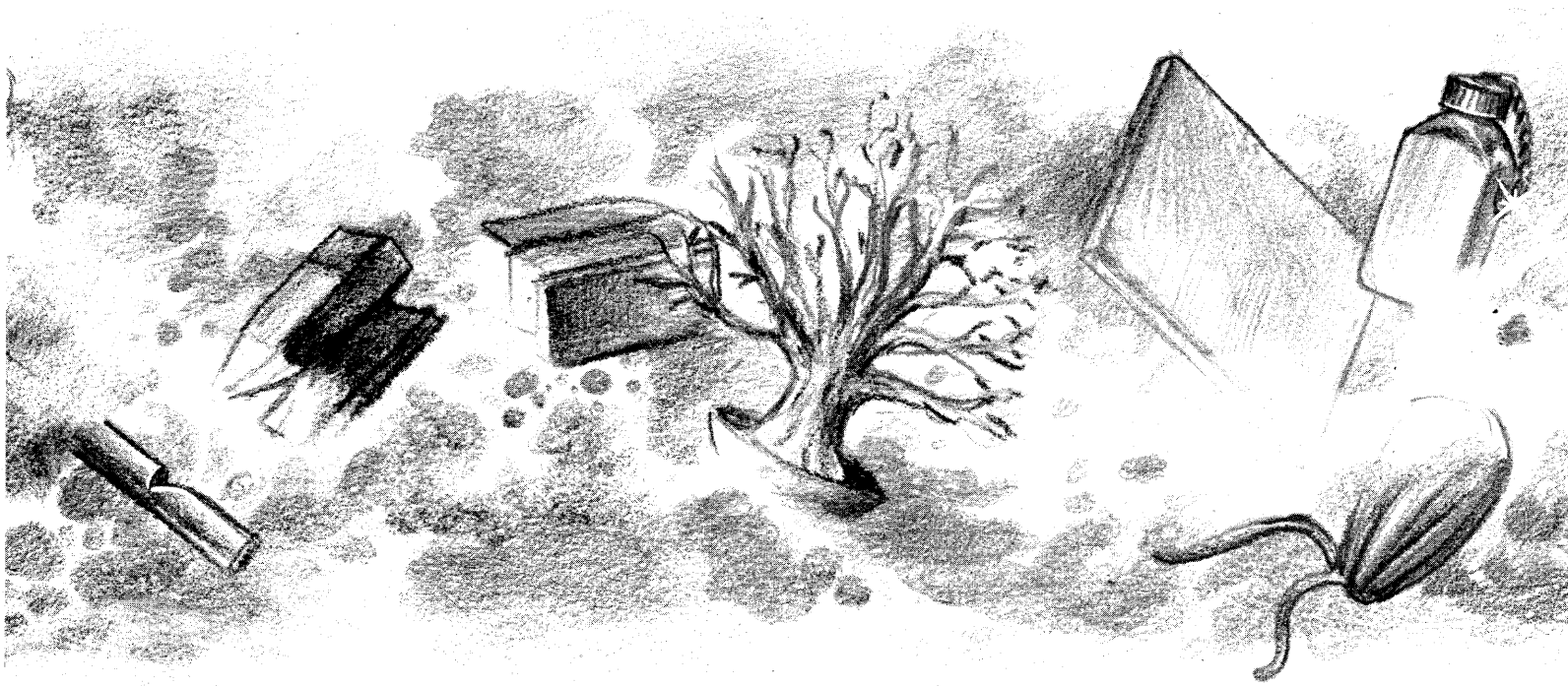
66: A soft chamois cloth one foot square. This cloth magically polishes anything it is rubbed against, immediately, provided that it is possible to polish the object. Human faces, for example, cannot be polished.

67: An animal harness/bridle. When placed on a recalcitrant beast, it forces the creature to obey the ordinary commands of its master. It will not, however, force an animal to do something it is afraid of (for example, run into a fire), nor will it have any effect when unusual orders are given — the beast being given the orders simply won't understand. The harness is particularly useful for mules and camels.

68: A horse's saddle. This saddle will never fall off a horse, even if the straps are undone and the rider is inexperienced. It can be lifted off in the ordinary way.

69: Another saddle. This one enables even a novice rider to remain on a speeding horse, provided the rider is in control of his own faculties.

70: This is a wooden frame, about 8 by 10 inches, across which several heavy wires are "strung" parallel to one another. On each wire are ten wooden balls. (In other words, an abacus.) When mathematical formulae involving numbers and simple operations (add, subtract, multiply, divide) are spoken near the object, the balls shift about and the answer to the equation is spoken aloud by a disembodied voice.



71: A stuffed chair. Although this chair looks and is extremely comfortable, anyone sitting in it cannot go to sleep. (It was made for a doddering family patriarch who didn't want to embarrass himself.)

72: Any article of clothing. This need never be washed because it sheds dirt when left in a dark place overnight.

73: Any kitchen knife. This utensil always retains a sharp edge.

74: This is any prosthesis (artificial arm, leg, etc.). The item magically enables the "wearer" to hide the fact that he has lost a limb, eye, etc. It won't necessarily allow full use of the body part *as* though it were "real," but the magic will prevent any observer from noticing the wearer's inability to use it fully.

75: A flat oval stone, about half an inch thick and four inches long. When placed

between two hands, the stone becomes very warm.

76: A chess set or other game set. This item plays against a person, moving the pieces magically. It gives a creditable but not truly expert game.

77: A miniature brass boot. When rubbed against the worn heel or sole of a shoe or boot, restores it to its original strength and thickness (but without a "new" appearance). Usable once per day.

78: A small, dark-crystal, covered bowl, rather like a sugar bowl. When the user places both hands on the covered item, and speaks the name of a delicacy (e.g., "caviar"), the bowl fills with one ounce of same. The magic may be used 10 times a week, whether all 10 times for the same item or for a mixture of items. Only delicacies "implanted" in the bowl may be produced. Such bowls usually are implanted with 1-6 delicacies; a particular one might produce caviar, frog's legs, fried ants, gooseberry jam, and port salut cheese.

79: A dull gray stone ball the size of a child's marble. When placed in open air (as opposed to a bag, pocket, or other closed container), the stone attracts all unintelligent avians which pass within 50 feet. Each avian will approach the ball and stay within five feet for five minutes, unless frightened away, as (for instance) by the obvious presence of unfamiliar humans. (This is used by the rich to enhance bird feeders, rock gardens, etc.)

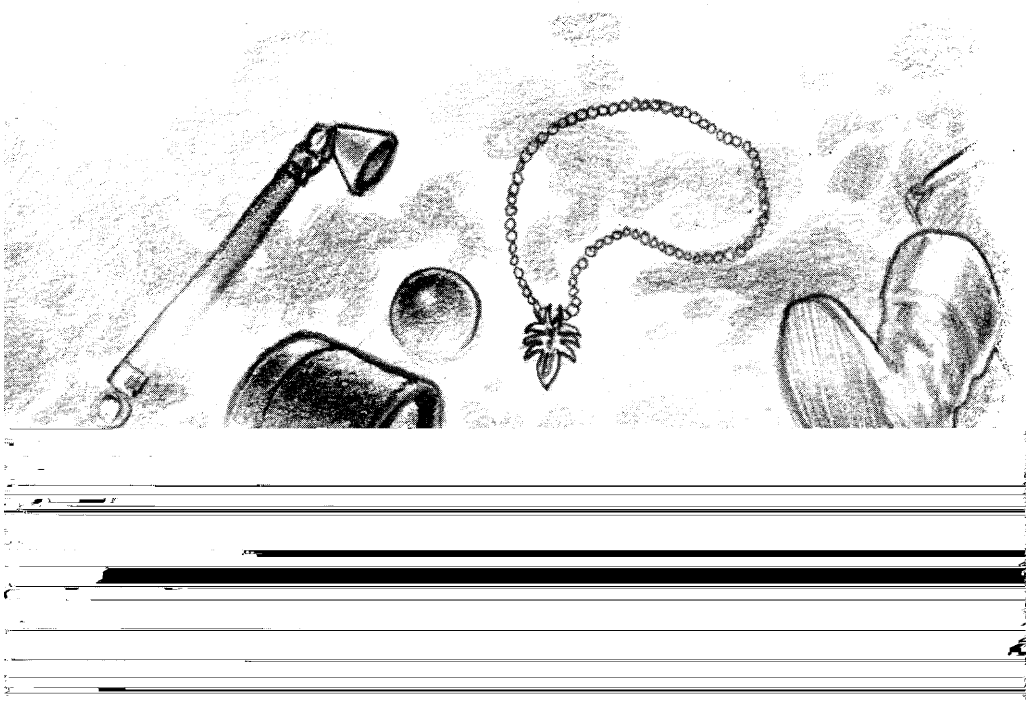
80: An ebony flute. When a magic word is spoken, the flute plays a haunting tune (something like *Greensleeves)* for five minutes, without human participation.

81: A broom. Like the classic broom of *Sorcerer's Apprentice,* this one will begin to sweep any room it is in when the magic word is spoken; it stops when another word is spoken.

82: A lady's fan. At a command word, the fan will continue to move in the same pattern (if any) it was moving in just before the word was spoken; typically, to continue to fan the lady while she attends to other things.

83: An ordinary lamp which ignites when the proper command ("let-there-be") is spoken within 15 feet of it.

84: A leather rectangular case about 12 by 9 by 5 inches, capable of holding many separate scrolls or papers. Any scroll or sheaf of papers put into the case is magically inserted among the contents in alphabetical order, *if* the person putting the item in the case enunciates a word to represent the item.



85: This looks like a wooden sundial without numerals, about four inches in diameter. Close examination will reveal that there are 16 marks rather than 12. When the command word is spoken, the "fin" or "hand" of the dial points due north. It does not work underground.

86: A wooden wand. When used with the proper words, the wand points toward any animal lost by the person holding the wand, or by his employer. The wand cannot detect any animal over the horizon.

87: An elegant wooden pipe. A person smoking this pipe can blow beautiful, perfect smoke rings at will.

88: A glass half-gallon open pitcher. Each day up to five gallons of water can be poured from this pitcher, provided it has not been tightly covered at any time in the preceding 24 hours.

89: A ceramic object shaped like a scroll two inches long. When it is placed on an open scroll, it holds the scroll open and flat, regardless of any tendency in the scroll to roll itself up.

90: A metal box the size of a breadbox. Anything put into this box is magically preserved from the effects of time. For example, food therein will be as fresh, when removed, as the day it went in.

91: An ordinary oil lamp. This lamp, however, needs no oil in order to burn indefinitely.

92: A short hollow wooden tube with a slot cut out of it. This whistle attracts all animals of a given type, usually some herd animal, within hearing.

93: An oil lamp. This lamp automatically ignites whenever any person approaches within 10 feet of it, going off when no person is within 10 feet.

94: A soft suede leather pouch (size varies). Any glass or ceramic item in the pouch will not break as long as the pouch itself is not penetrated or destroyed. For example, a hammer blow on the pouch would not affect the glass, unless the hammer blow was so powerful that it broke through the leather.

95: A small pouch containing 2-12 pills, each shaped like a huge teardrop. If a pill is dissolved in water, and the water is immediately consumed, any effects of alcoholic hangover being experienced by the drinker will disappear.

96: A nondescript small box. For approximately eight hours after a button on the side is pushed, this item is set to make a cacophony of noises similar to the approach of a large group of people when, and only when, a person comes within five feet of it. (The idea is to scare off burglars.)

97: Two circles of glass, in the same plane, connected by an odd-shaped piece of metal with projections; from opposite sides of each glass circle, perpendicular to the plane of the glass but parallel to each other, extend thick metal wires which hook at the end. This contraption (which will obviously be understood to be spectacles, to characters in a world where spectacles are known to exist) enables the wearer to see at night twice as well as would be expected. (This is enhanced vision, not infravision.)

98: Any utensil or plate. When left in a bucket overnight, the object sheds all dirt, which gathers on the bottom of the bucket to be discarded. While in the bucket, the object cannot be reached by insects, and no odor is emitted.

99: A cloak (for outdoor wear) or ring (for indoors). Anyone wearing this item appears to be 5- 10% lighter in weight than actual. Generally, the effect is to make overweight people look normal or normal ones look quite slim.

100: A simple silver band ring. The wearer of this ring is able to speak and act in a courtly manner, regardless of his upbringing or familiarity with social conventions.

FOREST of DOOM

An adventure for AD&D™ players

Designed by Scott Butler

For as far back in time as the tales of history stretch, the area bordering what is now the Lands of Launewt has been a foreboding, practically impenetrable forest. When the lords who ruled the various borderlands united to form the Council of Launewt a century ago, the forest was in the same physical condition as it is now: thick, dark, and expansive, said to be so dense at the center that sunlight pervaded the foliage only on the brightest days.

The forest is also, as it has always been, home to all manner of vicious animals and evil-minded denizen. The animals are generally only dangerous when one intrudes on their territory. The more intelligent evil creatures of the forest, however, often come out to the borderlands to make trouble. In even the oldest historical accounts, mention is made of sporadic raids by the evil creatures on villages and outposts in the borderlands. These tribulations have long been a fact of life for the citizens of the Lands of Launewt — bothersome, sometimes to the extreme, but usually not mounted by a large enough force to do any lasting damage.

On rarer occasions, the forest dwellers have collaborated in organized mass assaults. The provinces and communities of the Lands of Launewt have defenses that are not easily breached — but large villages have been known to be overrun and plundered by hordes of attackers. The cumulative effect of a series of these organized assaults can be devastating — stripping from an area the size of an entire province virtually all the area's material wealth and a good portion of its able-bodied citizenry.

Two generations of men have come and gone since the last time a group of such assaults took place — but now there is evidence, at least in some people's minds, of a conflict that threatens to escalate into another costly war. A minority faction in the Council of Launewt believes that the so-called sporadic raids have, of late, become systematic and purposeful; several villages have been plundered in a short time.

But most of the council members have turned a deaf ear to the assertions of their more cautious fellows, insisting that the raids do not fall into a pattern and maintaining that occasional conflicts of this nature are not worthy of the Council's attention, and should be left for the local militias to deal with. A splinter group within this majority has a neutral outlook; its members realize the dangerous potential of a united enemy, but hesitate to believe that there is a single force capable of consolidating and unifying all the evil humanoids of the forest.

Such differing opinions don't mix well. As a result, the Council of Launewt is in turmoil, its normally well-ordered decision-making process now paralyzed. *Nothing* is being done, even to the extent of preparing a contingency plan just in case the minority turns out to be right.

The council members predicting a mass invasion have gathered physical evidence and information to support their position: items like small, strange darts smeared and smudged with a harmless, fungus-like substance; stories like those told by men who claim to have ventured close to the forest's edge in pursuit of an evil band, and then turned back after glimpsing dark, shadowy shapes in the underbrush.

None of the evidence gathered so far has swayed any of the other council members, though. They assert that the darts are simply ordinary objects, and since the fungus coating is harmless, it must be symbolic, and not dangerous, in nature. As support for their position, they cite examples of strange short swords and other weapons recovered from the sites of battles — their blades so pitted and poorly worked that they bear mute witness to the inferiority of the creatures who forged them. The tales of dark shapes in the trees they dismiss as nothing more than fable, stories invented by terrified peasants and soldiers as a way to gain a certain measure of notoriety — or to hide their cowardice.

In hopes of obtaining conclusive evidence to support their position, several members of the minority faction have sought the aid of small groups of adventurers who would be willing — for a price, of course — to brave the evils of the forest and get at the truth of the matter. During the last few weeks, several bands of explorers have set out on missions into the forest. So far, none of them have been heard from — meaning, perhaps, that they have met and fallen to stronger adversaries, or perhaps that they have thought better of the whole idea and decided to not enter the forest after all.

Now, another such opportunity is being offered to a band of adventurers who seem more stalwart than any who have gone before them. A young lord of the Council of Launewt, after seeing his father die in a recent raid on his family's home village, has collected a few scraps of information that he hopes will demonstrate that the threat of an evil invasion is indeed real, and will encourage this new group of adventurers to seek even more information — and avenge his father's death at the same time.

"Goblins are not the most reliable source of information one could want," says the young lord, "but there seems good reason to heed something I heard about just three days ago. Several of these vile creatures were killed during one of their raids into our countryside. One of them, just before it died, became delirious and babbled almost incoherently about someone or something called 'Arron' — perhaps the name of a leader, or the name of a ruling order the goblins pay homage to. One of the goblin's babblings translates roughly as 'victory will belong to the noble.'

"We know that goblins are certainly not 'noble' — and, from what we have learned about them, they do not see themselves as noble. These words, if they are more than just the ravings of a mad goblin, seem to point to the existence of an evil force stronger and more devious than the goblins themselves. But the exact nature of this force is still unknown to us.

"I strongly suspect," continued the young lord, "that the creature or organization called 'Arron' is responsible for pulling together the evil creatures of the forest into a fighting force that threatens the life and property of every resident of the Lands of Launewt. As revenge for my father's death, I want proof that the evil designs of Arron have been ruined and the threat to our homeland destroyed. I offer you 5,000 gold pieces as a reward, plus the gratitude of everyone in the Lands of Launewt. Even those who have foolishly refused to recognize the threat will see the wrongness of their views when your proof is put before them."

After the adventurers accept the young lord's offer, he concludes his instructions to them with a brief description of how to get to the edge of the forest. It is at this point, on the fringe of the unknown territory, where the adventure begins.

For a party of 4-8 characters, each of 4th-7th level

First place, Module Design Contest category A-2

GENERAL INFORMATION

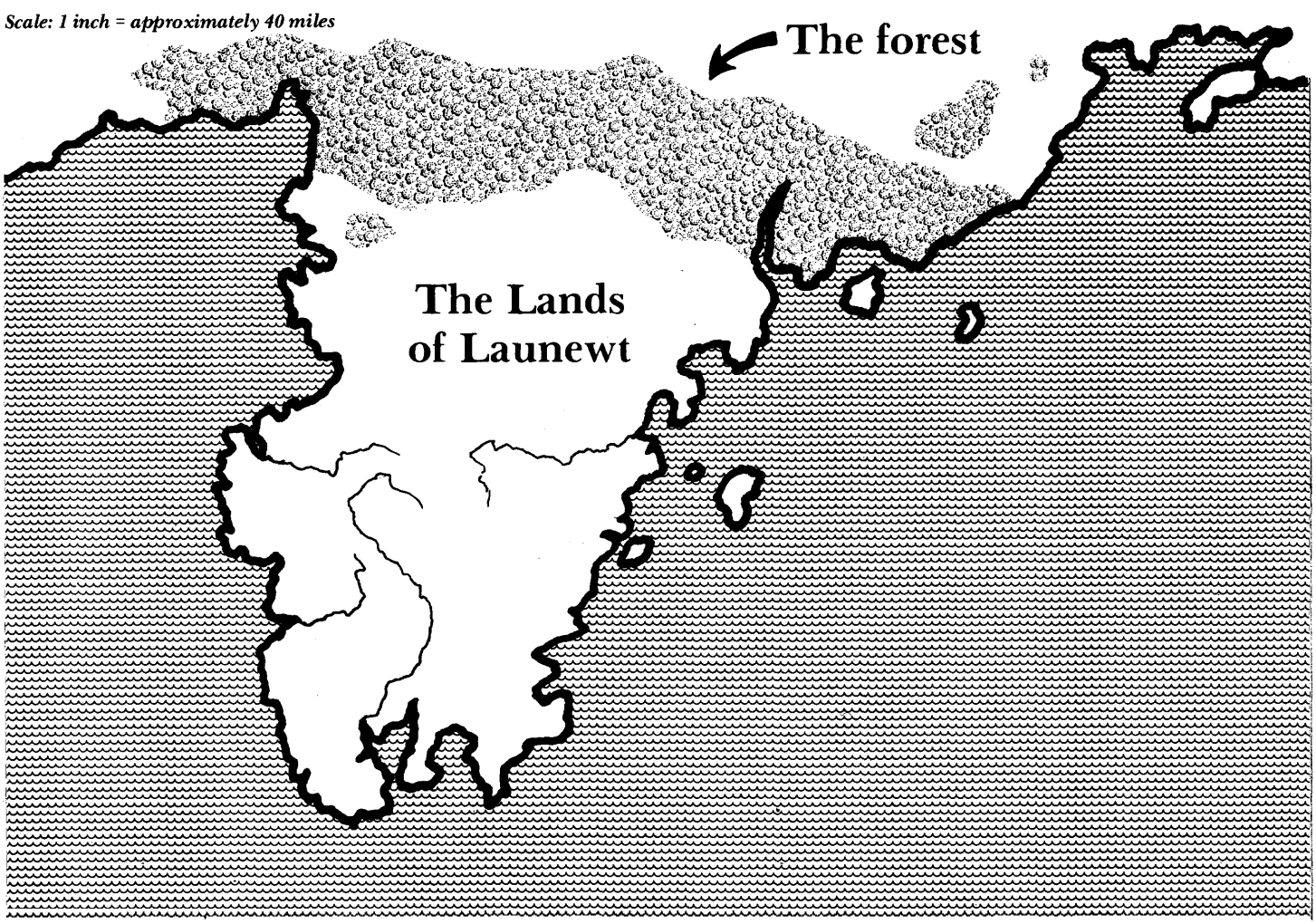
The preceding background information will give players sufficient facts to understand the history of the area, in addition to providing a purpose for the journey into the forest. The background includes some hints that dark elves (drow) are behind the organization of the evil forces within the forest.

A general description of the motives of the drow will be helpful to the DM in giving the adventure a logical foundation and, if desired, incorporating this adventure into an ongoing campaign. The ruling forces in the drow underworld are noble houses, whose actions are sometimes influenced by the merchant clans they are allied with. Inter-house rivalries pervade drow society; one faction or another is always trying to demonstrate its superiority over the others by wreaking more havoc and plundering more treasure than its competitors.

One noble house has gone to great lengths to formulate a scheme designed to assure its rise to the top of the noble hierarchy. This house, led by a noble named Erihn ("Arron"), has achieved the construction and occupation of a huge above-ground fortress, deep inside the evil forest. It serves as a base from which the drow, and various evil creatures in their service, can raid the prosperous Lands of Launewt, stripping the country of its valuables and riches and funneling prisoners and possessions by caravans back to the dark elves' underworld home.

The fortress took years to build, but the passage of time has little significance to elves; the end result is something that might be called a masterpiece, were its origin and purpose not so shrouded in evil. While the construction was proceeding, dark elves from the house of Erihn began to methodically make subjects and allies out of the evil humanoids who live in the forest, working toward the day when they could consolidate enough evil power to overrun every community in the Lands of Launewt.

The raids that have taken place in recent weeks were disguised to appear as isolated incidents, but their increasing frequency and ferocity suggest to some members of the council that they are really the first skirmishes in a massive assault which could descend upon the Lands of Launewt at any time. As the members of the adventuring party will discover when they reach the site of the



fortress, the threat of an all-out assault is a very real one indeed.

Except where otherwise specified, the drow encountered in the forest and within the fortress conform in all respects to the description of the dark elves in the FIEND FOLIO™ Tome.

THE FOREST

The Forest of Doom is a thick, dark curtain bisecting a peninsula, cutting off the Lands of Launewt (located at the tip of the peninsula) from the rest of the continent. It is a band 30 miles wide and more than six times that long. There is no way to go anywhere on foot from the Lands of Launewt without passing through the forest. (Player characters and other adventurers new to the Lands of Launewt are assumed to have approached the country by sea.)

The forest, in addition to providing the surrounding environment for the drow fortress, can also be built into an extended wilderness adventure. This expansion is particularly appropriate if this adventure is being integrated into an ongoing campaign — several parties of adventurers may go *into* the forest, but perhaps not all of them will come *out.*

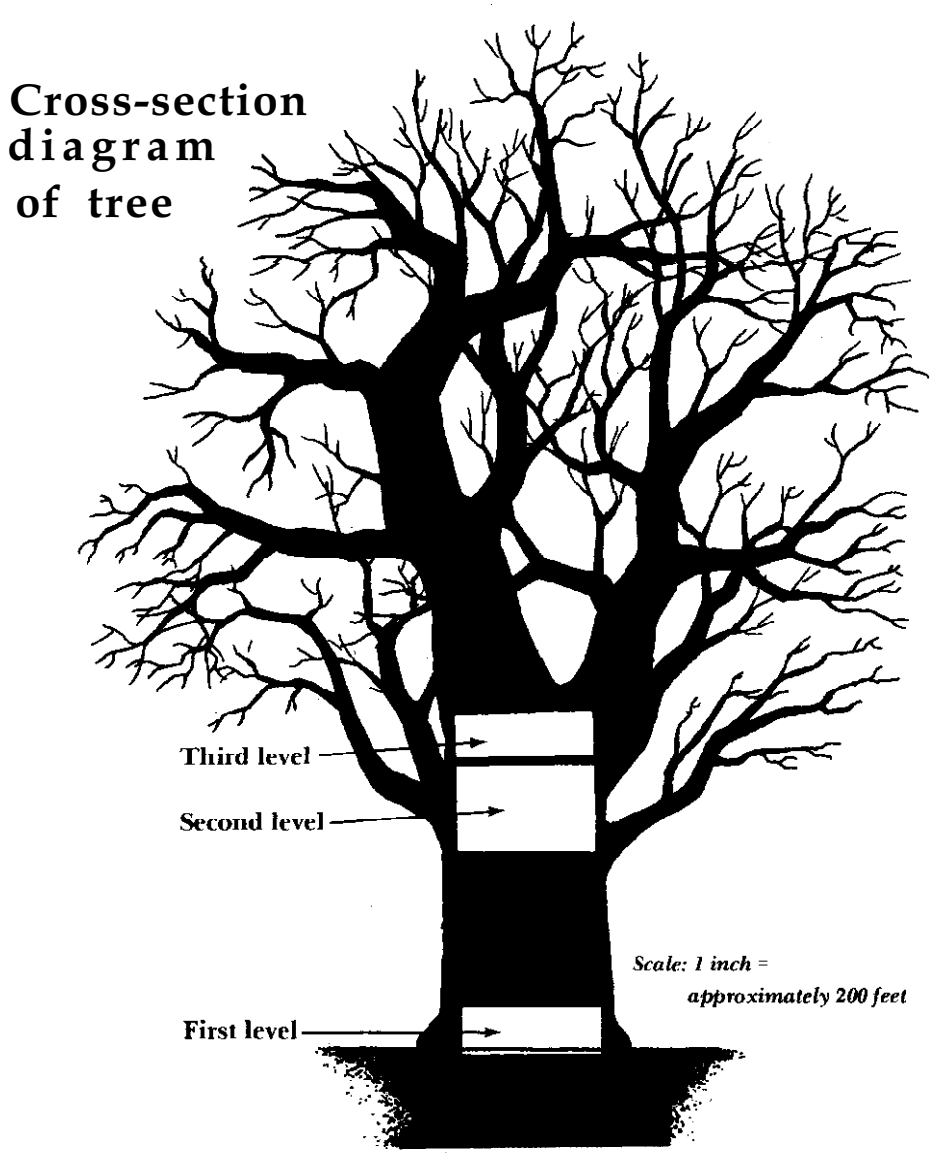
It is a thoroughly evil place. No good-aligned creatures will be encountered inside the forest; otherwise, treat it as a faerie/sylvan forest setting in a temperate climate. A suggested random encounter table is given below. The chance of a random encounter is a roll of 1 on d6, and should be checked every hour.

Encounter table

d% roll	Creature type	Number
01-02	Al-mi'raj	1-10
03	Ape, carnivorous	1-6
04	Basilisk	1-2
05-11	Bear, brown	1-2
12	Beetle, bombardier	1-8
13	Beetle, boring	1-8
14	Beetle, stag	1-8
15-20	Boar, giant	1-3
21-27	Bugbear	5-12
28	*Cockatrice* [1]	1
29	Dragon, green (young)	1
30-35	Drow Patrol [2]	— — [2]
36-41	Goblin	5-30
42-43	Gorgon	1-2
44	Groaning Spirit	
45-48	Hobgoblin	2-12
49	Lycanthrope, werebear	1-2
50	Lycanthrope, wereboar	1-2
51-52	Minotaur	1
53-55	Ogre	2-8
56-59	Orc	3-24
60-63	Quaggoth	2-12
64-65	Skunk, giant	1
66-67	Snake, giant, poisonous	1-3
68-78	Spider, huge	1-12
79-86	Stag, giant	1-2
87-89	Stirge	2-20
90	Su-monster	1-4
91	Tick, giant	3-7
92	Toad, giant	1-6
93-95	Troll	1-4
96	Weasel, giant	1-4
97	Whipweed	1-2
98-00	Wolf, dire (Worg)	3-8

[1] — 75% likely to be encountered while airborne.

[2] — A drow patrol encountered in the forest will be composed of 2- 12 male drow fighters, all of 2nd level, sometimes (20%) accompanied by 1-8 bugbears. Commanding the patrol will be either a fighter of 4th-7th level (70%) or a magic-user of 5th-8th level (30%). Note: All drow encountered outside the fortress will be using ordinary armor (chain) and weapons, *not* special items of drow manufacture.



The forest springs up abruptly at the edge of the Lands of Launewt. It is thick and dark, with no patch of land within it that could be called a clearing. There are no paths, and the forest floor is covered with a thorny underbrush that inhibits movement (two-thirds normal movement rate for overland travel). Negotiating the underbrush entails a great deal of noise, so that any creature's or party's chance of being surprised is halved — unless those attempting to surprise remain motionless and quiet.

The thick overhead growth starts to blot out daylight almost as soon as one sets foot inside the forest. At a point only a few hundred feet inside the forest perimeter, the light conditions are similar to twilight on a cloudy day. The darkness gradually deepens as one moves closer to the center of the forest until, for a radius of five miles around the drow fortress, the forest is as dark as night. Even on the brightest day, the sun produces no more light than a full moon.

The center of the forest's evil activity is located, logically enough, in the exact center of the forest. If the adventurers are actively seeking the drow fortress but have wandered far from its location, the DM can point them in the right direction

by the use of subtle clues: a deepening of the darkness as they move toward the center, and vice versa; the fact that encountered creatures (intelligent ones, at least) will tend to retreat in the general direction of the fortress; and other indicators of this sort.

Any time the adventurers are within one mile of the fortress, there is a 20% chance per turn of movement that they will discover one of the many trails that radiate into the forest from the drow fortress. There are 18 such radiating trails, spaced at roughly 20-degree intervals. They have been cleared to make it easier for slaves to forage raw materials (for the purpose described below) from the immediate area around the fortress.

THE FORTRESS

The headquarters for the house of Erihn's evil campaign is a phenomenally huge tree, with a trunk measuring 180 feet in diameter at the base. The tree, most likely related to the sycamore family, is made of relatively soft wood. Large sections of the inside of the trunk have been hollowed out to form rooms and passages, but the tree is so massive that these cavities have not weakened it structurally. The tree is alive; it is nourished by a wide, shallow river that passes within a few hundred feet to the south of the trunk, and in addition it is being continually fertilized by a procedure devised by the drow which is carried out through the efforts of several dozen slaves.

On the north side of the tree, opposite the river, are two semicircular trenches, each 15 feet wide and 10 feet deep and separated by a 50-foot-wide walkway. These trenches are always kept at least half full of fertilizer, which consists of decaying organic matter gathered from the surrounding forest as well as a compost-like mixture that is manufactured inside the tree. For most of every day, all except for the darkest hours of the night, slaves are kept busy gathering raw materials from the forest, hauling water in buckets from the river to inside the tree, and bringing out buckets of sludge to deposit in the fertilizer trenches.

If a party approaches the fortress by way of any of the foraging trails, there is a 10% chance every 3 turns, cumulative, of encountering a group of 3-6 slaves. The slaves will be supervised by 1 bugbear, if there are 3 or 4 slaves in the group, or by 2 bugbears if 5 or 6 slaves are working together. (For detailed descriptions of these creature types, see the notes following the Fortress Encounter Table below.) The bugbears are not especially bright, and not overly anxious to engage in combat. They will probably (60%) believe any *plausible* reason for the party being in the vicinity of the tree, and in that event they will be willing to let a party advance toward the fortress unopposed.

The chance of a random encounter within the tree is a roll of 1 on d6, with checks made every turn after the party gets inside. If an encounter is indicated, refer to the table and notes below to determine the creature type involved:

Fortress Encounter Table

d10 roll	Creature type	Number
1-2	Quaggoth	2-8
3-5	Drow	2-4 + leader
6-8	Slaves	2-8 + guard
9-10	Bugbears	

Quaggoth groups encountered inside the tree will be unarmed. These creatures are servants of the drow whose main purpose is to shepherd and supervise slaves working inside the fortress.

Drow random encounters inside the tree will be with groups of 2-4 plus a leader, with a 30% chance that each character in a group is a female. The non-leader types are all 2nd level fighters (AC 2, MV 12" or 15", HP 11 each, #AT 2, D sword 1-6, dagger 1-4). The leader of a party who is male will be a 3rd level fighter/magic-user (AC 2, HP 13) who can cast *burning hands, shield,* and *mirror image* in addition to the innate magic ability possessed by all dark elves. The leader of a party who is female will be a 3rd level fighter/cleric (AC 2, HP 20, D mace 2-7) with the ability to cast cure *light wounds, remove fear,* and *chant* in addition to the innate spell abilities possessed by all female dark elves. Any drow encountered inside the tree, randomly or otherwise, will be using the special drow weaponry and armor.

Slaves are various human, demi-human, and humanoid creatures who have been captured and put to work maintaining the fertilizer system, serving food, and doing other sorts of maintenance. Slaves encountered randomly inside the fortress will not be working on the fertilizer pit (see the descriptions of area 6 and area 7 in the first level), but will be engaged in other sorts of activities. Slaves are all AC 10, MV 9", HD l-l, HP 3, and unarmed (usually carrying buckets or sacks, if anything) and connected at the waist by 5-foot-long chains. A group of 4 or fewer will be guarded by an unarmed quaggoth; a group of 5 or more will be guarded by a single bugbear with a wooden club.

Bugbears will only be encountered on the first level (ground level) of the fortress; for random encounters on the other levels or in the passageways between levels, roll d8 instead of d10 to determine the creature type. Each bugbear in a random encounter will be armed with a long sword or a mace (50% chance for each).

There are no stationary light sources inside the fortress. Servants and slaves will carry lanterns or torches for illumination when such equipment is necessary. The fortress has no stairs as such; chambers located at different elevations are connected by rough-hewn, sloping passageways.

FIRST LEVEL

Elevation ranges from -5 feet (below ground) to +65 feet (above ground)

1. Sentinel Posts: If adventurers approach the fortress from the north, they will be spotted by drow sentinels located behind concealed doors that are 10 feet above ground level. There is a secret door at ground level between the two sentinel posts.

Characters approaching the tree will be fired upon as soon as they are within medium range if they do not give the proper signal, which consists of dropping one's weapons and continuing to advance empty-handed. If a party attempts to bluff its way into the fortress, the female elf at sentinel post (b) will use her *detect lie* ability to try to determine the truth of the characters' statements. If a full-scale battle breaks out at the base of the tree, the fighters at each sentinel post will fire their missile weapons at the rate of one shot per round. Meanwhile, the fighter/magic-user will go inside the tree and attempt to sound an alarm inside the bugbear barracks (area 2). The bugbears will arrive on the scene via the secret door in 10 rounds after the sentinels start their missile fire. When the bugbears engage the party, the two sentinels will drop down from their elevated posts and join the melee.

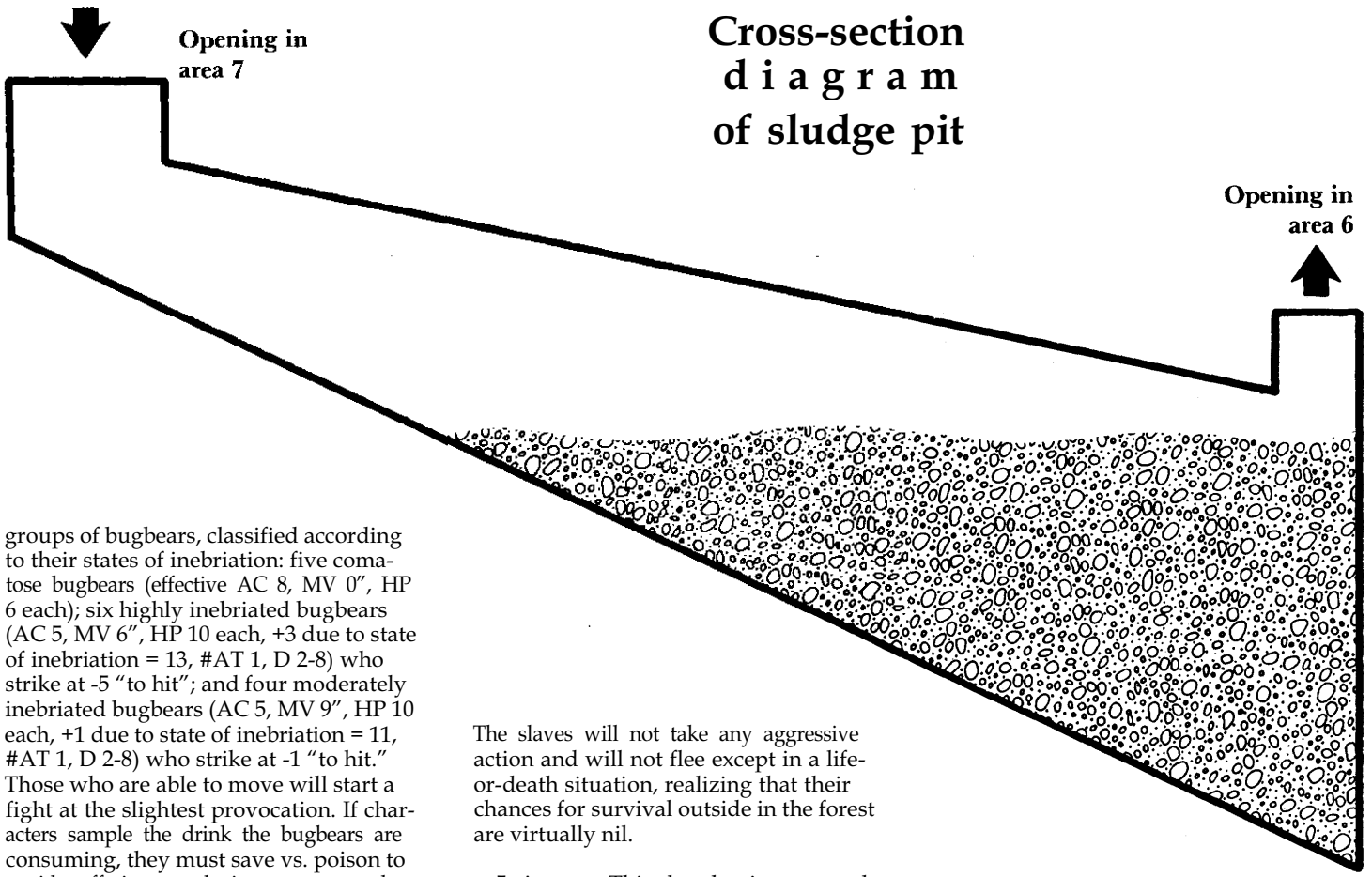
A. This post is occupied by a 3rd level male drow fighter (AC 3, HP 20) who benefits from 75% cover as long as he is at the post and protected by the half-open concealed door. He has a + 1 buckler, +1 sword and dagger, and a light crossbow plus 10 darts coated with sleep poison.

B. This post is occupied by two elves: a male fighter/magic-user of 2nd/3rd level (AC 4, HP 14, #AT 1, D sword 1-6) and a 3rd level female fighter (AC 2, HP 19) armed identically to the sentry at post A. The magic-user can cast *magic missile, hold portal,* and *detect invisibility* in addition to his innate magical abilities.

2. Bugbear Barracks: All of the bugbears in these three chambers who are able to do so will respond to a general alarm within 10 rounds, donning scraps of armor and taking up weapons as they go. All of the doors leading between these chambers and into the corridor are closed but not locked.

A. These sleeping quarters contain eight sets of sturdy double bunks around the walls. Seven of the beds are occupied by sleeping bugbears (AC 5, MV 9", HD 3+ 1, HP 14 each, #AT 1, D 2-8 or weapon). They will awaken instantly if intruders enter the room without being absolutely quiet, and will fight fiercely, using their natural attacks. Each bugbear has the equivalent of 1-8 g.p. somewhere on its person or nearby in its personal belongings.

B. This is a common kitchen and dining hall, currently occupied by three



groups of bugbears, classified according to their states of inebriation: five comatose bugbears (effective AC 8, MV 0", HP 6 each); six highly inebriated bugbears (AC 5, MV 6", HP 10 each, +3 due to state of inebriation = 13, #AT 1, D 2-8) who strike at -5 "to hit"; and four moderately inebriated bugbears (AC 5, MV 9", HP 10 each, +1 due to state of inebriation = 11, #AT 1, D 2-8) who strike at -1 "to hit." Those who are able to move will start a fight at the slightest provocation. If characters sample the drink the bugbears are consuming, they must save vs. poison to avoid suffering paralyzing cramps and sickness for 1-3 rounds thereafter.

C. This is another sleeping area identical in configuration to chamber 2A. Nine of the bunks are occupied by comatose bugbears (effective AC 8, MV 0", HP 6 each) who will not awaken even under extreme provocation.

3. Spider Lair: This chamber, earmarked for possible future use as slave quarters, is presently the home of a giant spider (AC 4, HP 22) which hangs suspended from webbing attached to the 20-foot-high ceiling. It will scuttle silently along the webbing and drop down on any character who advances more than 10 feet inside the door to the chamber. The floor of the chamber, except for a 10-foot radius right inside the door, is covered with tough, sticky webbing that will entrap a character who comes into contact with it.

4. Slave Quarters: This "barracks," nothing more than a hollowed-out area devoid of furnishings, is where slaves are quartered when they are eating or sleeping. At any given time, from 11-30 slaves (d20 + 10) will be present, overseen by a pair of quaggoth guards stationed at the opening in the southeast corner. If the guards are attacked or threatened, they will run outside, abandoning the slaves, and attempt to re-enter the fortress by way of the secret door at area 1 or the double doors leading to the storeroom (area 6). The slaves will not take any aggressive action and will not flee except in a life-or-death situation, realizing that their chances for survival outside in the forest are virtually nil.

5. **Armory:** This chamber is separated from the corridor by a thick wooden door bound with iron and closed with a large, intricate metal lock (-10% to any thief's chance to pick it). A *glyph* of warding has been cast on the door; anyone who picks the lock and attempts to open the door without neutralizing the glyph will take 1-10 points of damage unless a save vs. paralyzation is made.

Inside the chamber is a storehouse of weapons and armor. The following are all of drow origin: five javelins, two light crossbows, 30 crossbow darts, four +1 short swords, two +1 daggers, two suits of +1 chainmail, three +1 bucklers, and two packets of drow sleep poison, each sufficient to coat 10 crossbow darts. One of the packets is trapped with a needle mechanism that will be activated by anyone who handles the packet without first disarming the trap. The handler must save vs. poison at -4 to avoid being affected by the sleep poison.

Also in the room are several sets of ordinary armor and weapons (chainmail, bucklers, short swords, daggers, light crossbows) used by the drow when they go outside the fortress.

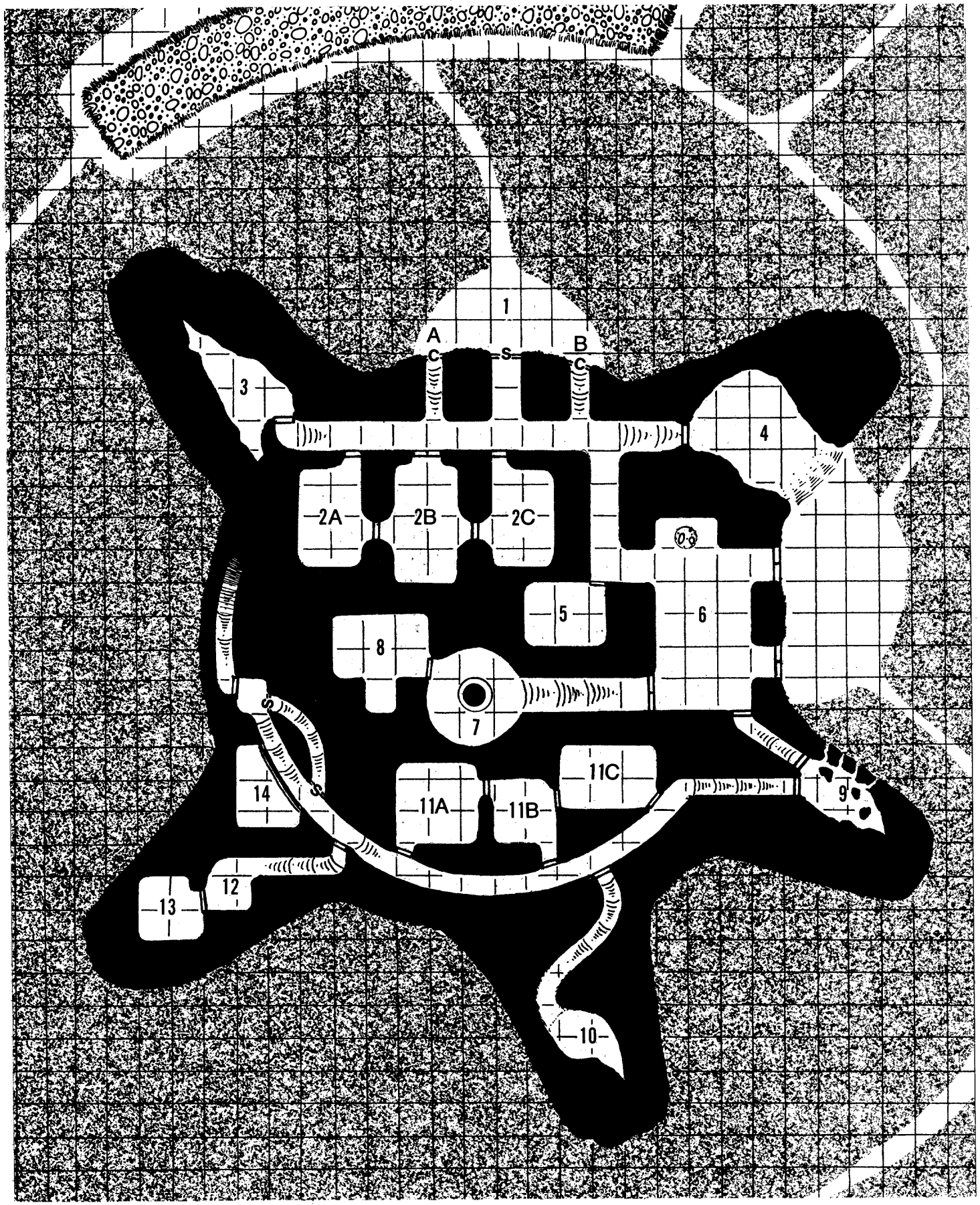
6. Storeroom and Sludge Well: Stacked along the walls of this large chamber are various sacks and crates of foodstuffs and trade goods, but not gems or jewelry or other valuables. This material is booty from various raids that has not yet been transported back to the drow underworld.

In an alcove in the northern part of the room is a 5-foot-diameter hole that leads to the lowest depth of the fertilizer pit located beneath this level. Slaves draw fertilizer up from the pit by lowering buckets into the hole on ropes and winches, then pulling them back up with full loads of the sludge. The buckets are then carted outside, and their contents dumped into the trenches that ring the northern edge of the fortress complex.

The two sets of double doors between this area and the outside of the fortress are wide open any time slaves are on duty. The slaves work in pairs, filling their buckets with sludge and then going out through the northern doorway, heading for the fertilizer trenches. Once every 1½ turns, two different slaves return from the trenches, entering through the northern doorway, with buckets to be re-filled. It only takes one turn for a pair of slaves to load their buckets and leave again, which means that for five minutes out of every fifteen the northern end of this room is vacant.

The southern doorway opens onto a short corridor leading into the storeroom; directly across the room at this point is another corridor which leads to area 7. Once every 1½ turns, two slaves enters the southern doorway, laden with sacks of raw materials or buckets of water from the river, and disappear into the long corridor.

The slaves who work in this area are



First level (ground level)

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

not strictly supervised or even necessarily watched over. However, bugbears and quaggoth are constantly roaming the rooms and corridors of this level, and can be expected to rush to the scene if they hear sounds of excessive activity, or some sort of disturbance.

7. Fertilizer Chamber: This featureless room, in the exact center of the tree trunk, is located at the end of a steeply ascending corridor that rises to 65 feet above ground level. The corridor is separated from area 6 by a set of wooden double doors that (like the doors in area 6) are only closed and locked during the few hours each night when the slaves are not working.

The floor of the chamber itself is level. In the center of the room is a 10-foot-diameter hole that serves as a receptacle for the water and raw materials (dumped into it by slaves) that combine and decompose into sludge. It is this sludge, which settles to the bottom of the pit beneath this area, that is hauled up through the hole in area 6 and taken out to the fertilizer trenches. (See the cross-section diagram on the preceding page.)

Pairs of slaves come up the corridor and into this chamber every 1½ turns. It takes only a moment for each two workers to dump their burdens into the hole, and the return trip down the corridor and into area 6 takes only a round or two. Consequently, the corridor and the chamber are unoccupied more often than not. As with area 6, the slaves working to keep the sludge pit full of raw materials are generally unsupervised, but there are guards continually roaming around the area who might be (randomly) encountered, and there is almost always at least one quaggoth in area 8, which is adjacent to the fertilizer chamber.

8. Quaggoth Quarters: This chamber is "decorated" with large, strange-looking furs that cover most of the floor. The only other objects of note are two wooden chests on the westernmost wall. The larger of the two is unlocked and holds several more of the strange furs. The smaller chest is locked; it contains an abundance of wood shavings with 80 copper pieces and 50 silver pieces scattered throughout the pile. The chest can be unlocked with a key which is found beneath one of the furs on the floor. There are 10 such furs, and there is a 10% cumulative chance that the key will be found under any one of them.

There will be from 0-7 (d8-1) quaggoth, unarmed and asleep, in this room at any given time. The door to the chamber is always closed, but never locked. However, it is a very noisy door — if precautions are not taken by anyone opening it, the movement of the door will disturb any quaggoth inside the room. If the creatures inside the room are outnumbered, they will try to flee into area **7** and down the corridor. If the quaggoth outnumber the intruders, they will fight ferociously until and unless the battle seems to be going against them, and the survivors will then try to escape the area.

9. Stirge Nests: This chamber is reached after passing through a locked door on the south wall of area 6, going up a narrow, curving corridor, and opening an unlocked door in the northwest corner of the chamber. The door in the southwest corner of the room is locked.

The northern wall of this room is littered with holes about six inches in diameter each. (The holes also open onto the outside surface of the tree, as indicated on the map; however, the passages are so twisted and convoluted that no light gets through them from the outside world to the inside of the chamber.) These are the nests of a swarm of angry stirges (AC 8, MV 3"/18", HD 1+1, HP 5 each, #AT 1, D 1-3 plus blood drain). Every round that at least one character or creature is in this room, 1-3 stirges will come forth from their nests and attack the nearest target. Any character bold (or stupid) enough to thrust an arm into one of the holes will have equal chances of finding a stirge, 1-3 gems of 20 gp value each, or both. If a nest is occupied in such a case, the stirge therein gets an immediate attack and automatically hits the intruder.

10. Water Trap: This irregularly shaped chamber is located behind an unlocked door and at the end of a curving, gently descending corridor which is very smooth and has a thin film of water over most of it, making it even more slippery. The walls of the corridor are covered with a mass of thorny material. Characters who attempt to negotiate the sloping passageway without taking some precautions against the slipperiness must roll their dexterity or less on d20 every round to stay on their feet. Failure to make this roll means the character has lost his balance and hit the thorns for 1-4 points of damage. The corridor levels out over the last half of the distance between the door and the chamber, so that movement becomes considerably easier: In this section of the corridor, a character must fail two consecutive saves vs. dexterity (as described above) in a single round to take any damage from the thorns.

If characters travel to the end of the corridor, they will see a chamber of no special note, except that the floor is covered with a semi-transparent membrane. Hung on a single large thorn, just above the floor right at the end of the corridor, is a pouch which will be spotted by anyone who examines the wall. The pouch contains a *ring of swimming.*

This chamber is relatively close to the river, at a spot where the water table is exceptionally high. The membrane is holding back a large pool of water. If any character weighing more than 120 pounds (including his or her possessions) steps onto the membrane, or if it is hit or punctured with a weapon, the membrane will rupture. Water will cascade out, filling the chamber and quickly rising to inundate the level part of the corridor nearest the chamber. Characters must save vs. strength on d20 to avoid being swept off their feet and back down the corridor. Failure to save means that the victim takes damage equal to his or her armor class rating, plus 1-4 points (but never less than 3 points altogether), from contact with the thorns. A character wearing the *ring of swimming* when the membrane is ruptured will be able to swim to higher ground (further back in the corridor) without taking any damage.

11. Drow Barracks: All of the doors leading off the corridor to this three-section area are closed and secured with simple latches — not locks. Opening any one of them, or making any measurable noise anywhere near a door in the level part of the long corridor, will alert all of the occupants of the section in question.

A. This is a barracks for drow females. Six living areas, each containing a cot and a wooden chest, are along the walls, partitioned off from each other with silk curtains. One curtain, in the northwest corner of the room, is open. Sitting on her cot (if the party achieves surprise) will be a female dark elf preparing to go on guard duty. She is a 4th level fighter (AC **2,** MV 15", HP 25, #AT 2, D sword 1-6 or dagger 1-4) with +1 chainmail, a +1 buckler, and +l weapons.

If she is not aware of the party's presence before they open the door to this chamber, she will immediately scream an alarm which will be heard by the occupants of section B. If she has been alerted to a possible disturbance, she will be poised for battle when the party opens the door (and perhaps will have been readying a spell in the meantime). The elves from section B will arrive to assist her on the round after the party enters the barracks.

Each wooden chest that is investigated will be found to contain ordinary (non-magical) clothing, personal items, and the equivalent of 2-12 platinum pieces.

B. This is a cooking and eating area containing two large tables and a total of 12 chairs. The doors leading to sections A and C are closed but unlocked. Seated around one of the tables are three male dark elves, two of them wearing black chainmail and the third one more casually dressed. The two elves in chainmail are 2nd level fighters (AC 4, MV 12", HP 17 and 12, #AT 2, D sword 1-6 or dagger 1-4). If they are intruded upon, they will immediately draw their +1 weapons and attack.

The third elf is a fighter/magic-user of 4th level (AC 8, MV 12", HP 15, #AT 1, D dagger 1-4). At the first sign of any sort of

disturbance, he will shout an alarm that will be heard by the occupants of sections A and C, and those elves will join the fight on the second round thereafter. Instead of getting into the melee, the third elf will attempt to stay away from the action and cast spells. In addition to the innate magical abilities possessed by all male drow, this magic-user can cast *forget, shatter, burning hands, shield,* and *push.*

This room contains little of value — some miscellaneous foodstuffs and ordinary utensils; plus a set of dinnerware spread out on the table the elves are occupying. The plates and cups are made of hammered silver and are worth a total of 75 gp.

C. This is a barracks for drow males, identical in configuration to the female barracks (section A), except that there are no partitions separating the sets of cots and chests. Sitting on a bed in the southeast corner of the room is a 3rd level fighter who is unarmored (AC 7, MV 12", HP 18, #AT 2, D sword 1-6 or dagger 1-4), but with his weapons close at hand. He will shout for help if the room is broken into, and then will attempt to hold off the invaders until the elves from the kitchen area arrive to join the fight one round later.

Each of the chests in this room contains ordinary clothing and personal items, plus the equivalent of 1-10 platinum pieces.

12. Anteroom: The corridor leading to this chamber is sealed off from the main corridor by a locked door. The passage slopes gradually downward until opening onto a room that is little more than an extension of the corridor. The chamber is empty and featureless.

13. Sludge Chamber: The door leading to this room is securely bolted. It also happens to be watertight — a fact that will become obvious when anyone lifts the single bolt. As soon as the door is freed, it will burst open, releasing a stream of thick, black liquid that will cover the floor of room 12 to a depth of five feet before the flood subsides. This room was the original outlet for the sludge pit, where slaves went to fill their buckets with fertilizer for the trenches. The outlet was poorly engineered, however, and the sludge backed up into the room, making it necessary to block the chamber off from the rest of the complex and build another outlet (in area 6).

The sludge is not harmful in itself, but the stench of such a large quantity of the stuff can be overpowering. A character of five feet or less in height will be submerged in the sludge within five segments after the door bursts open, and will suffocate within a number of segments thereafter equal to his or her constitution score, unless the victim can get back to the sloping corridor in time, or unless his or her head is lifted above the surface of the liquid by a taller companion. A character who is not immediately submerged must save vs. constitution on d20 or be overcome by the stench. Failure to save will cause the victim to become dizzy and keel over into the liquid, with the same chance for suffocation thereafter as for shorter characters who become submerged.

14. Tentamort Lair: If characters stay on the main branch of the long corridor and do not notice and pass through the secret door, they will attract the attention of a tentamort (AC 3/1, MV 1", HD 8, HP 10 per tentacle, 20 for body, #AT 2, D 1-6/1-6 plus special; see FIEND FOLIO Tome) that resides in the chamber to the south. This chamber is separated from the adjacent corridor by a curved wall running the length of the corridor at this point — except for a two-foot-high opening between the wall and the floor. It is through this opening that the tentamort will attempt to attack with its tentacles. To attack the body of the monster, characters must slide themselves through the slot and carry the battle into the room. The tentamort will not try to move through the slot to escape an attack, and can draw its tentacles back into the room if it desires to attack an intruder.

If characters detect the secret door, move through the passage that leads off it, and exit through the other secret door, they can avoid the tentamort and gain

access to a small, empty chamber with a locked door on its west wall. This doorway leads to an ascending passageway that spirals up inside the trunk and eventually leads to the second level of the fortress.

SECOND LEVEL

Elevation ranges from 200 feet to 300 feet above ground level

15. Snare Trap: The ascending, spiraling passageway ends at an archway that opens into the outside air. A small wooden door (actually a false door) is in plain sight along the inner wall of the corridor right at the end of the ascent, and seems to lead back into the tree. There is light here in the outside area — just enough illumination to make out general features, such as the door.

Pulling open the false door will trigger a trap. A *rope of entanglement* will lash out from inside the false doorway, wrapping itself around the legs of the character in front of the door and continuing to push outward until it "shoves" the victim off the branch. This activity all takes place virtually instantaneously — the victim being held cannot react quickly enough to grab a handhold, and no one else in the vicinity is able to keep the entwined character from falling off the branch.

The rope is 50 feet long, with its other end anchored to a post inside the false doorway. A victim who, is pulled off the branch by the rope will dangle in the air against the side of the tree, roughly 40 feet below the branch and more than 150 feet above the ground.

The *rope of entanglement* will remain stretched out to its full length and will not attempt to entwine other characters unless they try to grab it or sever it. This rope can entangle up to four man-sized creatures before its length is "used up," at which point the first character grabbed by it will have been pulled back up to a point just below the branch. If the rope is severed or untied from its mooring within the false doorway, any characters being held by it who aren't also anchored to the branch will plummet to the ground.

16. Rat Cage: The door to this room is different from all the others in the fortress. It is made of metal mesh reinforced by wood strips, with a sliding panel in the bottom of the door. (The entire door is also hinged and can be unlatched and opened wide if anyone cares to enter the room.) By looking through the mesh, characters can see a large number of giant rats inside the chamber.

There are 15 of these rats (AC 7, MV 12"//6", HD ½, HP 2 each, #AT 1, D 1-3 plus disease). They are used as food for the giant owl nesting in area 17. The sliding panel at the bottom of the door opens to reveal a chamber large enough to hold one rat at a time. This panel works in conjunction with another panel at the rear of the chamber — when the door panel is closed, the rear panel is open, and vice versa.

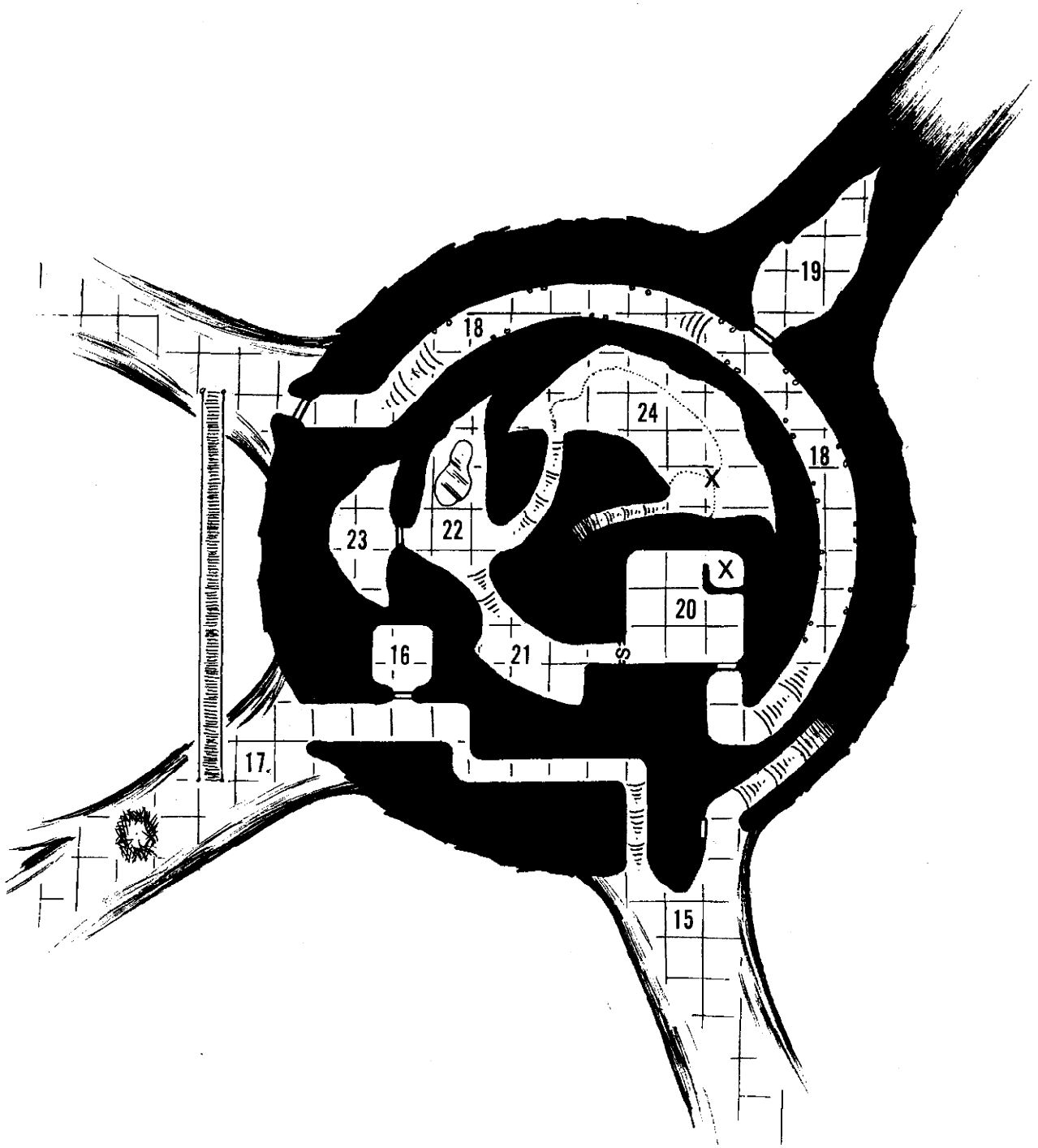
The way to get a rat out of the room without actually entering the chamber is to open the panel on the door, place a small amount of suitable food in the chamber, and slide the panel shut again. This action opens the rear door to the small chamber, allowing one rat to move into the feeding area. Characters will be able to see through the mesh covering the panel and know that this has occurred (always within one round of the time food is placed in the chamber). Then someone must slide the panel open again, kill the rat before it can escape, and throw the carcass to the owl to allow the party unimpeded access to the rope bridge. (Once they figure out what the rats are for, characters may also figure out that it's a good idea to kill two rats and save one to give to the owl on their return trip.)

17. **Owl Nest:** The passage leading past the rat cage opens onto a large branch. Thirty feet from the opening is an assortment of twigs and small branches — the nest of a giant owl (AC 6, MV 3"/18", HD 4, HP 25, #AT 3, D 2-8/2-8/2-5).

Twenty feet from the opening and ten feet away from the owl's nest, an 80-foot-long rope bridge is anchored into the branch, extending across to another branch that allows access to area 18. If characters approach the rope bridge without first tossing a dead rat in the direction of the owl, the bird will screech a warning and move toward the party, attempting to cut off their access to the bridge. It is possible for one character, or two at most, to run to the bridge and begin to move along its length before the owl gets within attacking range — but in such a case, the character(s) on the bridge will be the owl's preferred target, and they will be hard pressed to keep their footing on the bridge while the owl is hovering over them and swiping at them with its claws and beak.

The bird will try, first and foremost, to force characters to retreat back along the bridge to the branch containing the nest. If the characters do not retreat, the owl will make a direct attack, attempting to either disable the invaders or knock them off the bridge (a fall from this height would almost certainly be fatal). If no one tries to move immediately onto the bridge, the owl will take up a defensive position at the entrance to the bridge and try to keep the party from moving any further into the fortress.

Characters who are still on the branch will not be able to offer any direct assistance to those on the bridge, except possibly through magical means or by attacking the bird with missile weapons. If characters on the bridge demonstrate an



Second level (upper level)

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

intention to retreat back to the branch containing the nest, the owl will break off any direct attack it may have made and allow the retreat to take place.

The owl's nest contains two eggs which the bird will defend to the death. If characters move toward the nest, the owl will abandon any characters on the bridge and move to protect its eggs instead.

All of these possible problems can be avoided if the bird is fed one of the rats. It will snatch up the carcass and retire to its nest, taking five rounds to devour its meal. During this time, the party can move onto and across the bridge without resistance.

The rope bridge is somewhat rickety, but strong enough to support a fully armored human (or any smaller creature). Characters who attempt to negotiate it at their full normal movement rate have a 5% chance per point of dexterity to make it all the way across without losing their balance and possibly falling. If a character loses his balance while on the bridge, he or she must save vs. dexterity on d20 to avoid falling off. The danger of slipping and falling can be negated if characters move across the bridge cautiously, going at half their normal movement rate — which should still give them plenty of time to get across the bridge and through the passage into area 18 before the owl gets hungry again.

18. Corridor of Captives: This long, curved corridor has no features except for many pairs of wrist and ankle shackles set into the walls — and the unfortunate

creatures connected to those shackles. It is a "holding hall" for prisoners of the drow, humanoids who have been captured out in the forest as well as inside the fortress and who, for one reason or another, are unsuitable for slave work.

The door leading to this area is locked on the inside but can be opened easily from the outside. It will swing shut and lock behind any character or group who enters the corridor if it is not propped open. The corridor has no light sources of its own; as soon as the door is opened, much wailing and whimpering can be heard coming from the darkness ahead.

After ascending the ramp up to the main part of the corridor, characters will be able to see (if they have a light source) the first of the prisoners. He has been here longer than any other prisoner, and he looks it: emaciated, near death, and delirious — of no use to the party, either for assistance or information. His wrists and ankles are shackled and bound to the wall by foot-long chains imbedded into the wood, holding him in something of a spread-eagle position.

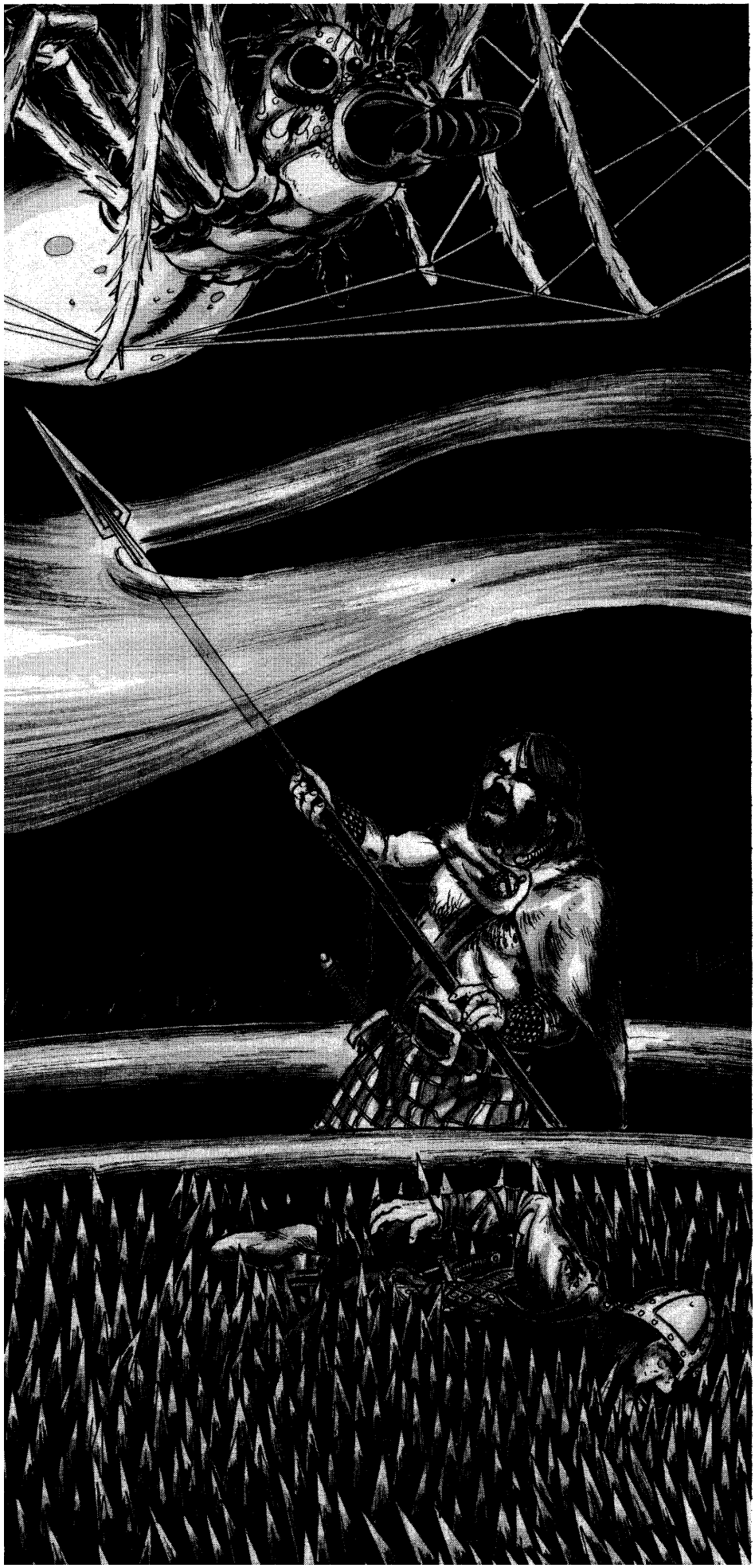
The chains and shackles are ordinary iron. The shackles cannot be broken open without causing fatal injury to the prisoner being held by them. (They can be opened by using the key possessed by the guard in area 19.) The chains can be snapped by repeated blows with an edged weapon at least as long and as heavy as a long sword. Each chain takes 24 points of damage before breaking.

Additionally, a chain cannot be damaged at all unless it is struck while draped across a surface harder than the surrounding wood — the stone or metal head of a hammer, for instance, would suffice. If a chain is struck while it is simply lying against the wood wall or floor, the force of the blow will dent or splinter the wood beneath the chain, and the iron will not take any damage. The ends of the chains are imbedded so deeply into the wood that any attempt to loosen them by chopping away at the wall or floor will be futile.

Sets of chains and shackles are spaced about 20 feet apart along both the outer and inner walls (at the places marked on the map), staggered so that no two prisoners are closer than about 10 feet from each other. There are a total of 17 sets of shackles, and 10 of them are currently in use.

Seven of the other nine prisoners that characters will encounter on their way through this corridor are almost as bad off as the first victim — able to do nothing but scream and wail, begging for their release. They are unarmored, in very poor health, and would not be of any measurable benefit to the party if they were released. Some of them may actually beg the adventurers to end their suffering, instead of screaming to be freed.

The two healthy prisoners — captured most recently of all — are shackled in the



last two spots in the corridor, at the foot of the ramp that leads to area 19. The first is a female dwarven fighter (AC 5, MV 6" if freed, HD 1, HP 7) who is armored but weaponless. She will follow the adventurers if freed, and will be willing to assist them in any way she can that does not involve a direct threat to her life. The second is a 3rd level female human magic-user (AC 10, MV 12" if freed, HP 9) whose only remaining spell at this time is magic missile. If freed, she will react the same way as the dwarf.

19. Guard Room: This sparsely furnished, irregular chamber, located behind an unlocked door, is occupied by a 2nd level male drow fighter (AC 2, MV 12", HP 15, #AT 2, D sword 1-6 or dagger 1-4) who is "guarding" the prisoners. The captives in the corridor don't need to be looked after closely; basically, the guard in this area is only responsible for making sporadic checks of the corridor to see if any prisoners have died. When he finds a body, he unlocks the shackles holding it and arranges for the remains to be transported to the fertilizer pit. A key, which fits any of the shackles in the corridor, is on a cord around his neck.

The guard is accustomed to hearing the delirious moans and groans of the prisoners, and will not be alerted to the presence of intruders by any sounds or statements the captives might make. He will be automatically surprised if the party approaches the door with caution and pulls it open quickly.

The guard will be able to hear if any attempt is made to release a prisoner from any of the five sets of chains closest to the door of this room. If this occurs, he will burst from the room, attacking only if a lone character is the adversary. If outnumbered, he will try to flee in a counterclockwise direction, heading back out of the corridor and toward the first level to sound an alarm. He will only engage in combat if an opponent stands in his way, and under no circumstances will he lead the party clockwise through the corridor and deeper into the fortress.

20. Shadow in the Shadows: This roughly square chamber lies behind a heavy wooden door that can be locked from the outside but is not locked at the present time. The room is pitch dark, and even if the chamber is illuminated by light sources carried by characters, the northeast corner will remain shrouded in shadow. This is because a four-foot-high partition of wood (indicated on the map by dotted lines) has been built up, closing off access to the corner except through a narrow passageway along the north wall.

Characters who advance close enough to the partition to see over the top of it will spot a gem in the corner of the chamber, glowing with a faint red color and seemingly suspended in the shadows a few inches off the ground.

The shadows cast by the partitions are designed to conceal the presence of a shadow demon (see the FIEND FOLIO Tome), whose inert body lies in the corner (at the spot marked "x"). The demon has cast a magic jar, causing its life force to be contained within the gem that is hung around its neck.

The demon will try to take over the mind of the first character who approaches to the outer edge of the partition, or who comes through the narrow passageway and moves toward the gem. If no one heads for the northeast corner and characters decide instead to move to the opening to area 21, the demon will attempt to magic jar into the mind of the first character who moves through the narrow opening.

For purposes of determining the specifics of the victim's saving throw, consider the demon's combined intelligence and wisdom scores to be 28. If the victim (or intended victim) of the magic jar makes a saving throw after being possessed, the demon's life force will be cast out of the character's mind and back into the gem, and the demon will not be able to attempt the same feat again.

The character whose mind is taken over by the magic jar will act accordingly, doing its best (as the demon would do) to foil the party's attempts to proceed further inside the fortress. The demon will have access to its darkness and fear spell capabilities while in the body of the possessed character, and will also use the character's available physical attack ability to best advantage. The demon will not immediately reveal its presence inside the mind of the possessed character — unless another character tries to steal the gem which is being used as the magic jar receptacle. The possessed character will fight to the death to prevent this.

21. Farther from the Jar: If the demon's magic jar takes effect, no matter where this occurs, the possessed character will immediately begin to try to get the rest of the party to turn around and leave the fortress the way they came. The resistance will be somewhat passive at first, as the possessed character tries to talk the — others into abandoning the adventure, but the possessed character will put up no physical resistance right away if the party keeps moving through the entranceway into area 21. This chamber is empty and has no distinguishing features.

(If the player of the possessed character demonstrates a desire to do something else, the DM may have to indirectly reveal to all the players that something is amiss, by making it clear that the actions of the possessed character are now being controlled by the DM and not the player of that character. But in no case should it be necessary to reveal the exact nature of the situation; the fact that a character is possessed is something that the players should have to figure out for themselves.)

The possessed character will reluctantly move along with the rest of the characters into area 21, all the while trying to persuade the party to turn back. If these pleas fall on deaf ears and the rest of the characters persist in their desire to move deeper into the fortress, the conflict will come to a head when the first party member reaches the bottom of the narrow ramp that ascends into area 22.

The demon, acting through the character it has possessed, will employ its spell abilities and the physical attack abilities of the possessed character in order to halt the party's progress at this point. (The demon does not want to move any farther from the magic jar gem than it has already, for fear of getting out of range of the gem and making it impossible for the demon to transfer its life force back to the receptacle.) Unless the possessed character is knocked unconscious or otherwise restrained, he or she will fight fiercely in an attempt to disable or destroy the party if more gentle forms of persuasion have not produced the desired result.

If the party is somehow able to neutralize or immobilize the possessed character and force him or her to keep moving with the group, the demon will voluntarily abandon the possessed character when the character's body reaches the top of the ramp leading into area 22. The demon's life force will travel instantaneously back into the magic jar gem in area 20, and the once-possessed character will regain control of his or her mind. The demon's life force will be back in the monster's physical body if and when the party comes back along this route on its way out of the fortress, and will attack if encountered.

22. **Perilous Pool:** The only noteworthy feature of this oblong chamber is a shallow pool containing what appears to be a shimmering liquid. Any and all characters who move to within 5 feet of the edge of the pool while facing toward the pool will see their reflection in the surface, and will soon discover that the pool is actually a type of mirror of opposition. Duplicates of characters who look into the pool will come into being one round later, so that the mirror's true nature will not be immediately evident to the party, and more than one character might approach the pool before its delayed-action magic goes into effect.

Any duplicate created by the magic of the mirror will attack only the character who was duplicated, ignoring the presence of any other party members who may be in the room, unless or until another party member joins in the attack against someone else's magical adversary.

23. Cleric's Chamber: This room, located behind an unlocked door, is the study and living quarters of a female drow cleric of 4th level (AC 7, MV 15", HP 21, #AT 1, D mace 2-7). She will be

oblivious to the presence of characters in the area outside her chambers, because she is deep in meditation, praying for replenishment of her spells. Her meditation will end at precisely the moment a character pulls open the door to her quarters (but she is susceptible to being surprised).

In addition to the innate magic abilities possessed by all female drow, this cleric has the following spells: *cure light wounds, protection from good, sanctuary, silence 15' radius,* and *spiritual hammer.* If outnumbered, she will attempt to escape into area 22 and from there into and through area 24, using her superior movement rate to outdistance the intruders and warn the occupants of the uppermost level.

The room contains ordinary furnishings of no particular value, plus a wooden chest that is locked and protected with a poison-needle trap. Anyone who opens the chest without finding and removing the trap will take 2-8 points of damage from the needle and must save vs. poison or fall unconscious for 2-5 turns. The chest contains ordinary clothing and personal items, a suit of +1 chainmail sized to fit a female elf, 20 gold pieces in a leather pouch, and three gems worth 10, 25, and 125 gp.

24. Catwalk Challenge:. After going up the ramp leading from area 22, characters will find themselves on a narrow catwalk elevated slightly off the floor of the chamber and set off from the surrounding area by a wooden ledge three feet high and six inches thick. The catwalk is too narrow to allow anything other than single-file passage through this chamber. The terrain on either side of the catwalk appears to be overgrown with mushrooms and other sorts of fungus. The catwalk twists around, following the path indicated by the dotted line on the map, and eventually leads to the base of a ramp that ascends to the third and uppermost level of the fortress.

The area around and beneath the catwalk has been magically altered by a *hallucinatory terrain* spell. The surface of this chamber is actually covered by a series of jagged wooden spikes that have been chiseled out of the floor. The spikes are all between 2 and 3 feet tall and are very closely packed together. If a character vaults over the ledge framing the catwalk, the *hallucinatory terrain* will be dispelled as soon as that character drops down on the outside of the ledge and falls onto the spikes below. A character will always take damage from the spikes, but has a chance to make a saving throw for half damage. The chance for taking full damage (4-16 points) is a base 100%, modified downward by 10% for each armor class factor the character possesses — not counting bonuses for dexterity or other advantages. (For instance, a character with a "real" armor class of 7 has a 70% chance of taking full damage and a 30% chance for half damage.) Any character who lowers himself carefully into the area of the spikes, once they have been "discovered," will not take damage from the descent.

Twenty feet from the foot of the ramp leading up to the third level, the catwalk opens out into a clearing. Right at the edge of this clearing (at the location marked "x" on the catwalk), the party's progress will be impeded by a powerful (32 hit points) giant spider that has been trained to attack any non-drow character or creature who advances this far into the chamber. The spider will begin its attack by dropping a bundle of webbing on the first character in line, and on the same round will then drop itself down from the darkness above and attack either the character ensnared in the webbing or the next character in line (50% chance of each). A character holding a light source above his or her head and actively scanning the ceiling of the chamber has a 20% chance of detecting the presence of the spider just before the creature drops its webbing, thus negating the spider's chance to surprise the invaders.

Any character in the area of the spikes must move slowly (at a 3" rate). In addition, characters in the spikes must save vs. dexterity on d20 every round to avoid stumbling and taking 1-6 points of damage.

THIRD LEVEL

Elevation ranges from 300 feet to 350 feet above ground level.

25. Drow Barracks: This chamber is used by male drow for sleeping and storing their personal belongings, but is only occupied when the male barracks on the first level is filled beyond capacity. The door is unlocked.

The room contains six cots and the same number of wooden chests, plus a small table and two chairs. Only two of the six living areas are presently being used; each of the (locked) wooden chests in those two areas contains ordinary clothing and personal items, plus (in one) 7-12 platinum pieces and (in the other) two gems of 25 gp value apiece. The room will be unoccupied, unless any of the dark elves from area 29 have retreated into this chamber.

26. Drow Barracks: This room, for females, is identical in contents and configuration to area 25, except that curtains divide each living area from the others. As in area 25, only two of the six living areas are currently being used, and the only items of value in the chests in those areas are (in one chest) 11-20 gold pieces and (in the other) a pair of non-magical necklaces worth 30 and 50 gp apiece. As with area 25, this area will only be occupied if any of the elves from area 29 have retreated into this chamber.

27. Erihn's Chamber: This is the living quarters for the drow noble Erihn, the commander of the fortress, and his henchman Tarmar. The room contains two beds strewn with silk coverings, one of them set off from the rest of the chamber by silk curtains; two desks; and a single wooden chest.

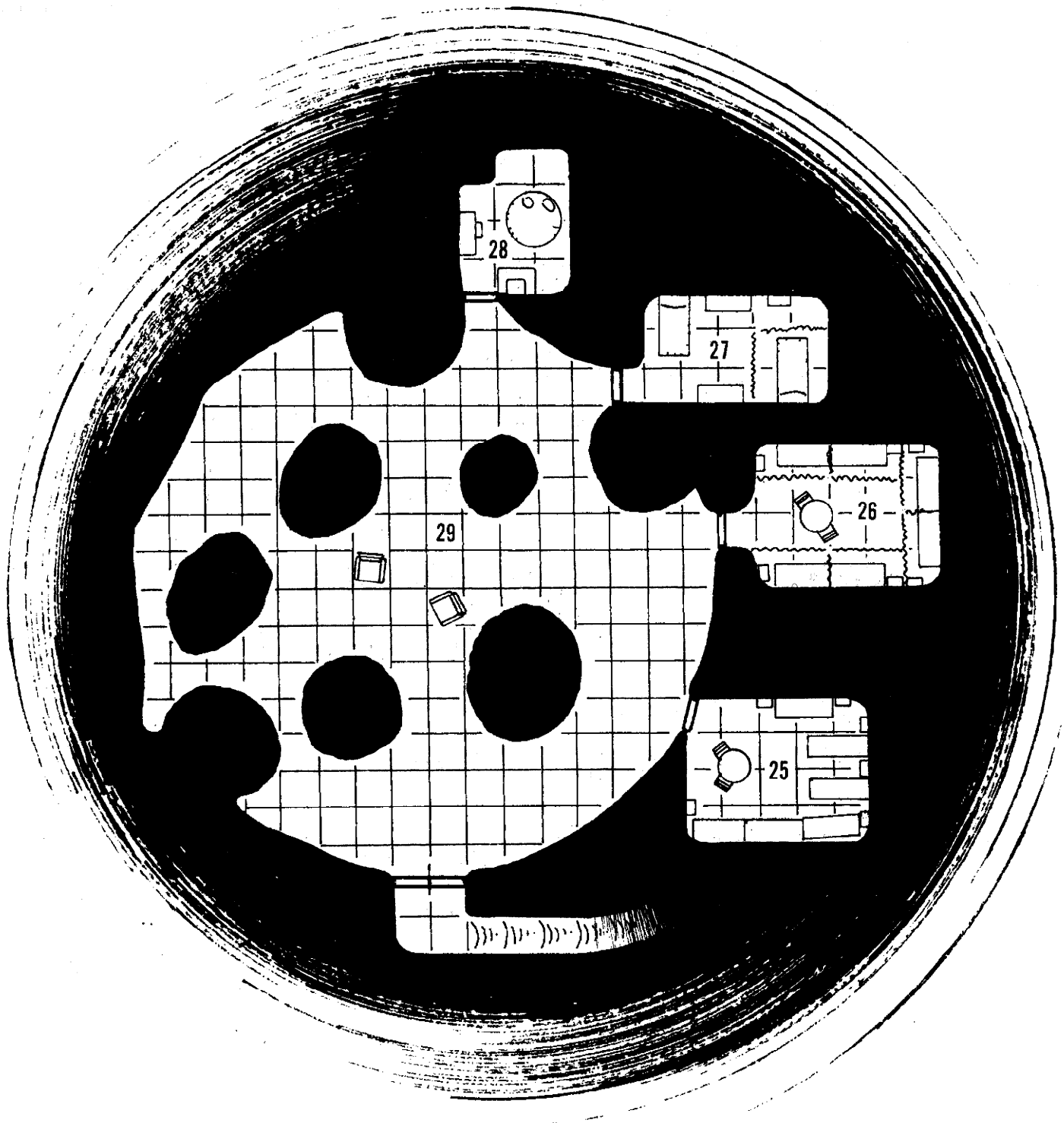
The desk on the north wall belongs to Erihn. In its compartments and drawers are material components for Erihn's spells, plus a set of ledger books in which the commander keeps track of plundered goods that have been transported back to the drow underworld. The books are written in drow language, which is unintelligible to anyone not familiar with the dark elves' secret writing. Inside a drawer that is *wizard locked* are Erihn's spell books, plus a letter signed by Erihn and bearing his personal seal. The spell books contain instructions for all the spells Erihn currently carries (see the description for area 29) plus *jump* and *fire trap.*

The other desk, against the west wall, belongs to Tarmar. In its drawers are a jeweled dagger (non-magical) worth 200 gp, some writing implements, and a partially completed report on the recent activities of the drow which includes a section relating how three promiment members of the Council of Launewt have been bribed into siding with the drow and trying to discourage concern on the part of other council members.

The wooden chest bears a *fire trap* which was cast upon it by Erihn. Inside are 200 silver pieces, 150 gold pieces, 300 platinum pieces, a scroll with *ESP* and *jump* inscribed on it, a small pouch containing 500 gp worth of gems, and a +1 dagger of drow manufacture. The door to the room is *wizard locked.*

28. Meronal's Chamber: This room, slightly smaller than the quarters occupied by Erihn and Tarmar, contains a large, round bed with silk coverings in the center of the floor; a desk and chair along the east wall; a small wooden altar in the southeast corner; a small, free-standing closet along the north wall; and tapestries of silk on all the walls. This is the living area of Meronal, a female who is Erihn's consort and (for the moment, at least) his second in command.

The door to this room is trapped with a *glyph of warding* that will explode for 16 points of fire damage if it is not bypassed. The closet contains ordinary clothing and clerical vestments owned by Meronal. The desk holds incense and other sorts of clerical items of no particular value. The tapestries are all of no great value, except for one behind the altar bearing a portrait of a huge spider with a female head that is worth 200 gp. The altar has a secret compartment in the front (same chance to locate as for a secret door) that contains a gold statue of Lolth, the drow spider-goddess, that is studded with gems and worth a total of 3,000 gp.



Third level (uppermost level)

Scale: 1 square = 5 feet

29. Hall of Homage: This spacious chamber is located at the top of a winding ramp that leads up from the second level. The double doors at the top of the ramp are not locked, but they have a *Leomund's Trap* cast on them, and they are so massive that a strength of at least 13 is needed to pull one of them open.

The room is principally used for worship ceremonies and celebrations. It is mostly open space, with massive pillars of wood arranged in a rough circle around a center clearing where the activities are conducted. These pillars are integral parts of the tree that were not chopped away when the cavern was hollowed out, primarily so that the tree would not be overly weakened by a full-scale excavation of the chamber. They are gently curved and tapered at the top and bottom so that they blend smoothly into the ceiling and floor of the chamber.

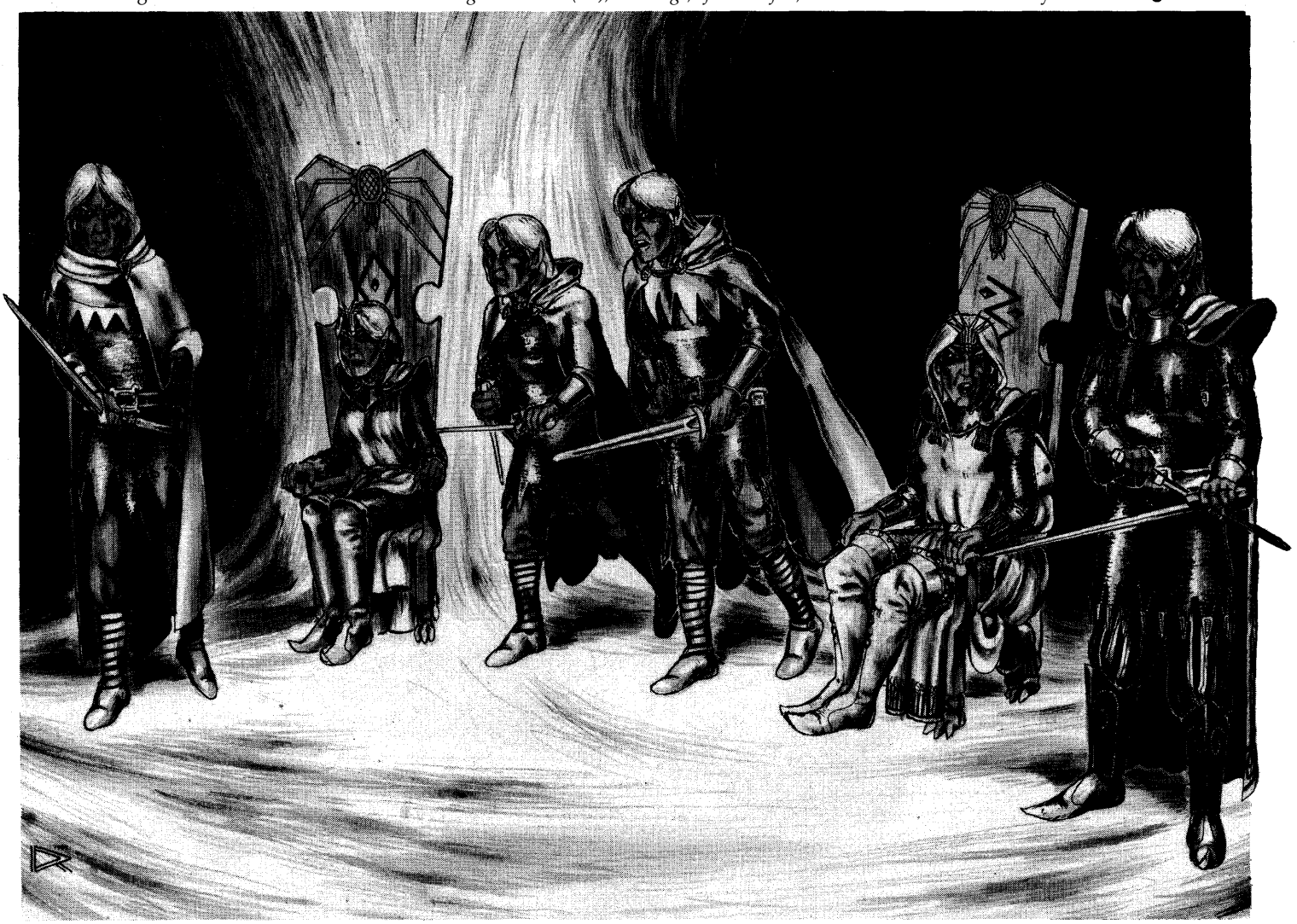
In the center of the chamber are two ornately carved and engraved wooden thrones. The one to the west is Meronal's, and the one to the east is Erihn's. Both thrones are currently occupied by their owners, and each seat is flanked by a pair of guards. Under no circumstances will the dark elves in this chamber be surprised by the arrival of invaders; as soon as even a single character advances to a point between any of the surrounding pillars, the drow guards will stand at the ready, prepared to beat off any assault directed toward them or the occupants of the thrones.

The guard on Erihn's left is his henchman Tarmar, a 5th level fighter (AC -4, MV 12", HP 33, #AT 2, D sword 1-6 or dagger 1-4). His chainmail, sword, and dagger are all +2 items of drow manufacture. The other three guards are all 3rd level male fighters (AC 2, MV 12", HP 24, 20, 16, #AT 1 or 2, D crossbow dart 1-3 plus poison, sword 1-6, or dagger 1-4) with +1 weapons and +1 chainmail of drow manufacture.

Meronal is an 8th level cleric (AC -1, MV 15", HP 55, #AT 1, D mace 2-7) who has the following spells in addition to her innate magical abilities: *bless, command, cure light wounds (×2), protection from good, chant, detect charm, hold person (×2), snake charm, resist fire, cause blindness, feign death, remove curse, cure serious wounds,* and *speak with plants.*

Erihn is a fighter/magic-user of 7th level in each class (AC 0, MV 12", HP 45, #AT 1 or 2, D crossbow dart 1-3 plus poison, sword 1-6, or dagger 1-4) who has the following spells in addition to his innate magical abilities: *friends, hold portal, magic missile (×4), message, feather fall, detect invisibility, ray of enfeeblement, shatter, lightning bolt, protection from normal missiles,* and *wall of ice.* He wears a *ring of wizardry* which doubles his first-level spell ability. Erihn wears +2 chainmail and uses +1 weapons, all of drow manufacture. Around his neck is a pouch, attached to a string, which contains 5 platinum pieces, a gem worth 100 gp, and a metal stamp that produces a seal identical to the one found on the letter inside his desk (see the description for area 27).

Starting on the tenth round after a conflict breaks out in this chamber, any and all dark elves from the lower levels who are still alive and able to fight will arrive on the scene, entering the room at the rate of one per round thereafter. The "rear guard" will attempt to block off the exit back to the ramp, while at the same time mounting enough of an offensive to direct the invaders' attention away from the occupants of the thrones. Erihn and Meronal will refrain from physical combat as long as possible, staying behind their guards and using their spell-casting powers to complement the fighters' attacks. If the battle goes against them, the dark elves will try to flee through the double doors and down the ramp — but in no case will they surrender.



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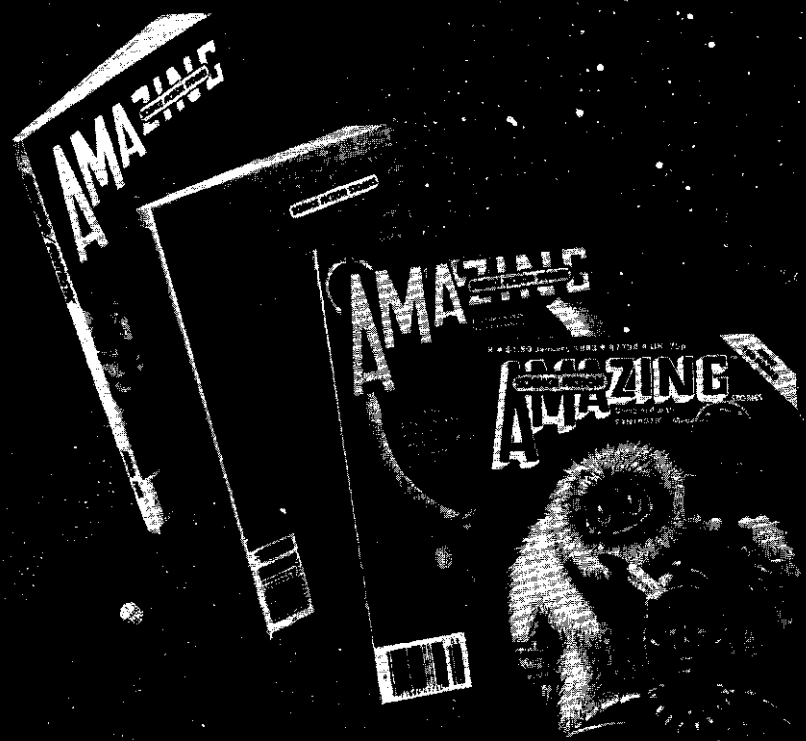

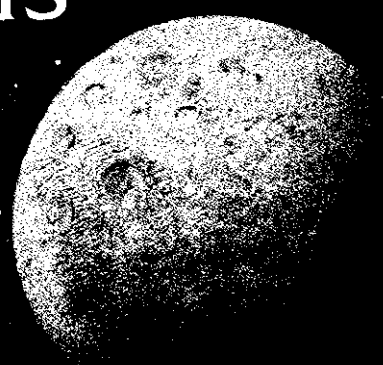

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New tools of the trade

TOP SECRET™

by Jeffrey L. Gillespie

As the saying goes, it's a poor workman who blames his tools — and, to tarry that reasoning one step further, it's a pool agent indeed who doesn't even have the tools to put the blame on. Weapons and basic equipment are, obviously, essential parts of any TOP SECRET® agent's possessions. But firepower and everyday items don't go nearly far enough to fill the needs of an agent, or group of agents, assigned to perform a mission. What fills the gap are the many and varied objects known as "tools of the trade."

The Character Construction section of the TOP SECRET rule book includes a short list of such tools. Suggestions for expanding the roster of available equipment are offered below. Agents should realize that the availability of any of these new "tools" is up to the discretion of the Administrator — and, conversely, the Administrator should appreciate an agent's need for certain special items that would enhance his or her chances for success on a particular mission. After all, an agent and the agency employing that person are supposed to be working toward the same goal — the successful completion of a mission. It is unfair, and may be downright foolhardy, for an agency to deny a piece of equipment to one of its operatives if the need for that equipment is obvious.

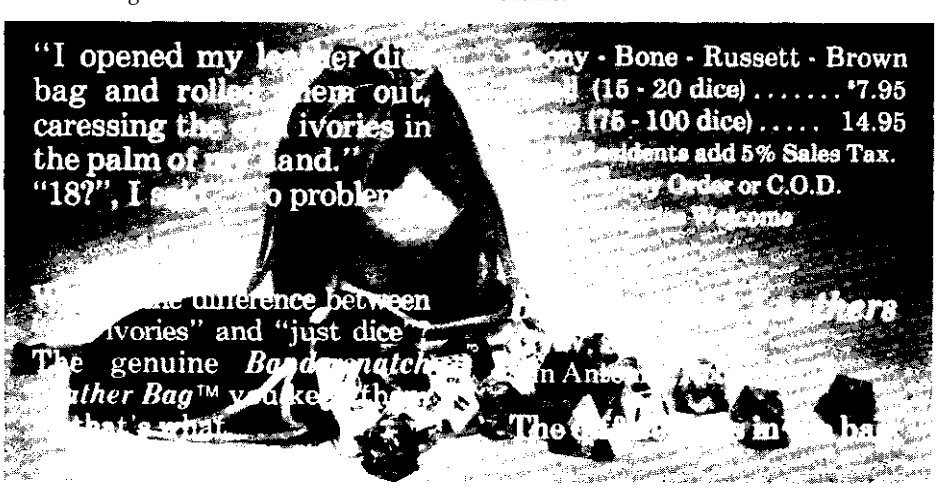
With all of the foregoing in mind, Administrators are invited to look over the following list of "tools" and include any or all of them in the agency's inventory. Of course, this list may be added to, or some of the specifics regarding a certain item may be modified to bring them in line with other particulars of the agency's activities and procedures.

The following list gives the name, weight in pounds (if significant) and cost in dollars of each item, all printed in **boldface** type, plus any other pertinent information about the item.

Some of the items (those with names printed in *italic* type) are special, for one reason or another, and thereby are difficult for the agency to obtain. The Administrator should inform agents desiring special equipment that a wait of 1-5 weeks (generate a number randomly or specify a certain length of time) will be necessary before such equipment can be delivered. In general, the agency will not attempt to obtain special items for low-level agents unless they are involved in a very important mission.

Acid — — **$75**
Price is for 1 gill (4 fl. oz.). If used as a weapon, unprotected skin suffers type X damage; clothing being worn on or over the affected area reduces this to type W damage.

Bolt cutter 8# **$25**
A heavy-duty tool primarily used for cutting the shafts of padlocks and heavy chains.



Bottle with secret compartment 2# **$30**
Looks like an ordinary bottle full of liquid with the lid still sealed. The bottle will twist apart to reveal a space about 1½" in diamater and 5" in height.

Calibration control 3# **$85**
This device is used to set and reset timers, either for time locks on vaults or timer detonators on bombs.

Camouflage fatigues — — **$40**
Includes cap but not boots.

Coat/jacket with secret pockets 6# **$40**
Pockets are hard to find unless you know where to look; impossible to pick this kind of pocket.

Code/cipher books 1# **$10**
Each book contains different codes and ciphers used by different countries. Ciphers are distinguished by type: uni-literal, multi-literal, keyword mixed, reversed alphabet, double keyword, etc.

Doctor's bag 5# **$120**
Includes stethoscope (useful for listening through walls), scalpels, syringes, needles, sutures, anesthetic, and other assorted paraphernalia.

Ether, bottle 2# **$35**
Price is for a 10 oz. bottle; normal dosage is 2 oz., which can be effectively administered with a handkerchief, When the handkerchief is held over a person's nose and mouth, the victim's Willpower is reduced by 5-50 points (d10 × 5) for each round the victim is disabled.

First aid kit 4# **$20**
Contains six roll bandages, gauze, tape, disinfectants, alcohol, plus ammonia inhalants or smelling salts.

Flare, hand-held ½# **$4**
Self-igniting cap; burn duration of 30 minutes.

Floor plans/blueprints -- **$20**
Available for most buildings, except

military installations or special private buildings.

Glass cutter — — **$3**

Grappling hook 20# **$40**
Comes with 150 feet of rope.

Jeweler's glass — — **$30**
Useful for examining documents to see if they're counterfeit, and (of course) for estimating the value of gems and jewelry.

Lie detector **25# $175**
Can be carried in a suitcase or the trunk of a car. Persons tested must roll d%; a result greater than the person's Deception score minus 50 indicates that a lie was detected — but there is always a minimum chance of 5% that a lie is ***not*** **detected.**

Lock 2# **$3**
Either a combination or keyed lock, useful for re-locking gates, etc. after an agent has cut off the original lock and passed through the barrier.

Map, city/country — — **$1**
Useful to facilitate travel in and around the strange places that agents are always being sent to.

Mechanical tool kit 20# **$15**
Contains a dozen assorted screwdrivers, a hammer, a set of 10 open-end or box wrenches, a hacksaw, pliers, and 100 assorted screws, nails, nuts, and bolts.

Movie camera with sound 8# **$160**
Much better for reconnaissance or blackmail than a standard 35mm camera.

Nitroglycerin 2# **$175**
Price is for 1 quart (32 fl. oz.), equivalent in explosive power to six ounces of plastique. If detonator is attached, there is a 15% base chance (-5% for an agent with Weaponry knowledge of 60 or higher) of accidental explosion if the item is dropped or handled roughly.

Pen flashlight — — **$3**
Battery life of 6 hours.

Pocket language dictionary — — **$4**
Provides translations for most common words from one specific language to another specific language.

Portable radio with police band channels 2# **$25**
Will only monitor police channels.

Shoes with hollow heels — — **$30**
Compartments useful for concealing very small items.

Skin graft, fake —— **$120**
Looks and feels like a 6" square (maximum size) patch of skin; can be used to conceal small-sized and small-bulk items (knives, wires, etc.) by placing graft over object. The material will adhere to real skin until pulled off.

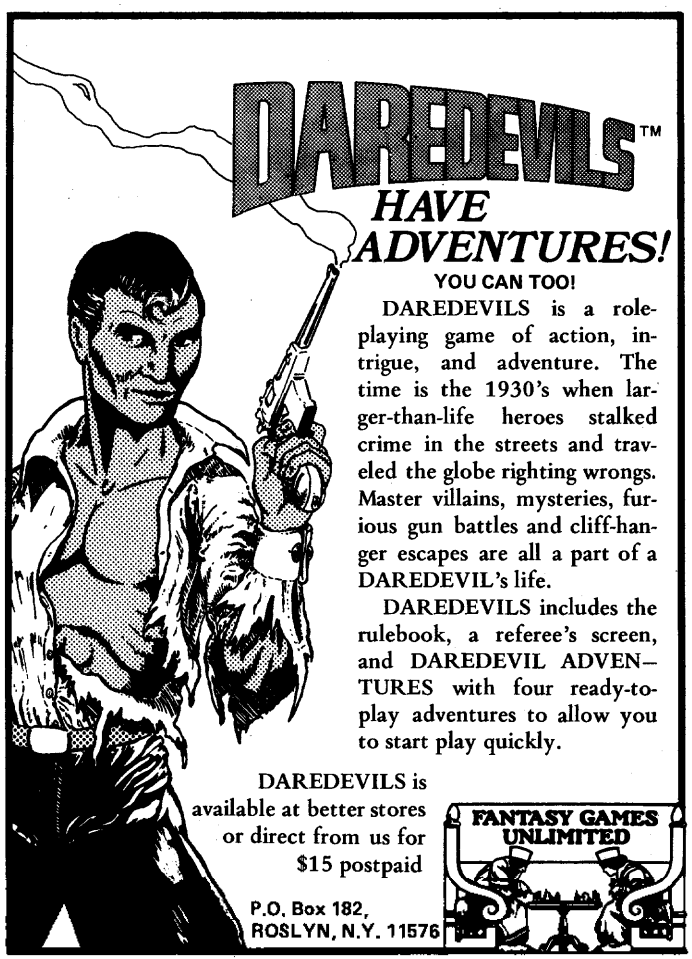
Spray paint -- **$4**
Useful for all sorts of mischief, such as leaving death threats on walls and painting windows so they can't be seen through.

Starlight scope —— **$730**
Adjustable from 3x to 9x magnification. Usable outdoors only; +90 to PWV during daylight hours, +70 to PWV at night.

Straitjacket 5# **$125**
A person being held in a straitjacket must roll his or her Evasion score minus 100, or lower, to escape.

Super glue — — **$3**
After this adhesive sets properly, the surfaces it joins are virtually impossible to separate without a solvent (such as acetone). It can be used to fill keyholes, glue papers to a desk, and so forth.

Wig or false beard — — **$40**
Adds +30 to Deception value while worn.



Thief's climb should be leveled out

by John T. Sapienza, Jr.

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Expert Rulebook adopted a more uniform set of experience scales for the various character classes than was contained in previous editions of the game rules, starting with a given figure for second level (L2) and doubling that figure at every level thereafter until L8 (with an unexpected rounding down for fighters at that point). The L8 experience-point total is then used as the figure to be added for every level thereafter. This system works well in keeping the different classes spaced evenly apart in their progression to higher and higher levels of ability.

The major exception to the regularity of the system is the scale for thieves. Because the thief's starting figure at L2 (1,200 points) does not directly correlate to the figures for that level for other classes, the XP scale for thieves produces "odd" numbers from L3 through L6, when it is rounded up to what it would have been had the starting number been in accord with the starting figures for the other classes.

(Editor's note: *Thieves need 1,200 points to reach second level; that figure doubles at every level from third through fifth, when it reaches 9,600 — and at sixth level, the point requirement is 20,000. The author's contention, brought out more specifically in the text that follows, is that the progression would have been regular, like all other classes, if the thief's requirement for second level was 1,250 instead of 1,200, so that doubling that figure at every subsequent step would still have brought the figure to 20,000 at sixth level, but without the uneven jump from fifth to sixth level that presently exists in the thief's experience-point table.)*

After L6, the thief's experience-point requirement then doubles evenly up to L8 like the other scales, and for the transition to L9 the L8 figure is used, as the system seems to call for. However, at L10 and above the increment between levels is not the 80,000 XP one would expect, but rather the 120,000 XP increment used also for fighters!

This produces unexpected results. A thief's progression in the combat table is in groups of four levels, so that at levels 1-4 the thief needs a 15 to hit an opponent in chainmail and shield, at levels 5-8 the thief needs a 13, and so forth. For convenience, a group of levels used as units of progression on the combat table is referred to hereafter as a "combat class." A cleric also progresses in groups of four levels to reach higher combat classes, but the cleric is on a more expensive XP scale than the thief, and so you would expect a thief to hit more accurately on average than a cleric. This is true for combat classes 2 and 3, which are reached by a thief at 9,600 and 160,000 XP respectively, and reached by a cleric at 12,000 and 200,000 XP. But because of the change in the XP cost for thieves at L10, the thief falls behind the cleric in reaching combat class 4 and above.

One might think that the reason for this arrangement is the decision of the game designers that the thief should not fight as well as the cleric, at least at high levels. This sounds reasonable enough, until the progression in hit points for the two classes is examined. The thief starts off his career getting four-sided dice for hit points up to L9, while the cleric gets six-sided dice up to that level. Clearly, this indicates that clerics are intended to have greater staying power in melee than thieves. But at L10, this analysis reverses, for thieves are given +2 hit points per level, while clerics receive only +1 hit point per level.

It seems that the treatment of thieves with respect to their rate of progression in the D&D® Expert Rulebook shows confusion of purpose. Accordingly, below is given a suggested new policy for the treatment of thieves in combat:

Thieves are basically not a fighting character class. The last thing a thief wants is to get into a fight, since the poor thief carries light weapons that are easily concealed but are no match for a fighter's heavier armament. And the thief wears practically no armor, so getting into a melee with an armored and heavily armed opponent is plain folly. The proper function of a thief is to steal things by stealth and quickness of wits, not to engage in frontal assaults. The thief, when operating in a party of fighters, properly functions as a scout. All of this leads to the conclusion that the thief should fight less well than the cleric, for the latter wears heavy armor and is trained for combat almost as well as a fighter. The cleric is a second-line fighter as a primary function of the class, and this is reflected in the cleric's protection, in the form of the armor the class is allowed to use and the hit points a cleric receives.

This can be provided for in the rules by making only a few changes. The most obvious changes are in the XP scale, which would now start at 1,250 XP at L2 and double evenly up to 80,000 XP at L8. Thereafter, thieves would add 80,000 XP per level. Thieves would receive one four-sided die for hit points at each level up to L9, and +1 hit point per level thereafter. Clerics would receive one six-sided die for hit points per level up to L9, and +2 hit points per level thereafter.

Progress for thieves on the combat table would be in units of five levels per combat class, instead of the present four levels. (For consistency, thieves would also drop their current saving throw table, and use the magic-user saving throw table, which is similar to the current thief table, but is in units of five levels per progression.)

This change in the thief's combat ability advancement will keep the thief's progress consistently behind that of the cleric, which is the design goal. 8

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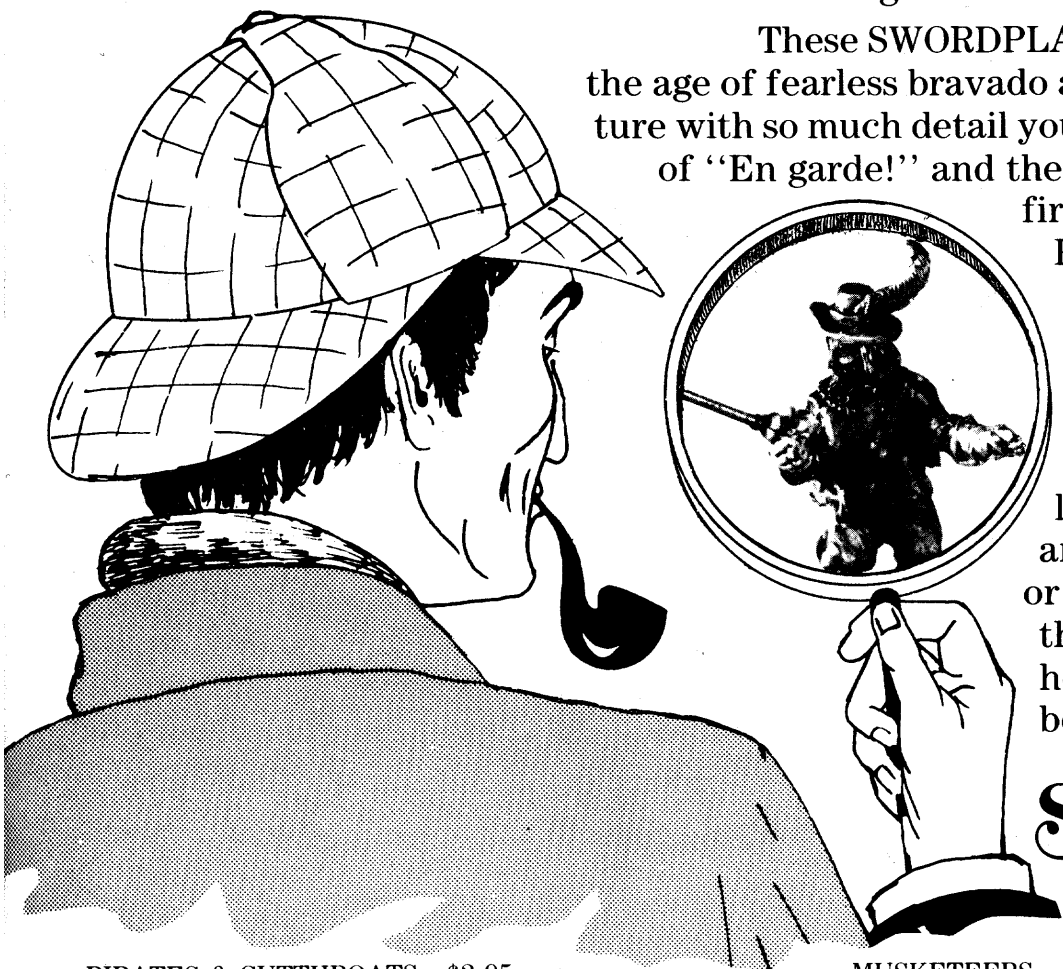

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A rare way of viewing the *wish*

High-level help comes once in a lifetime

by Lewis Pulsipher

In many campaigns, *wish* spells are extremely rare. In the known world in my campaign, for example, there is only one good magic-user able to cast a wish spell, and perhaps one evil M-U as well — no one is certain. And these are non-player characters, of course. No player character will ever reach such exalted heights, but even if one did, he would be so involved with other affairs that as DM I would not be concerned with the details of granting wishes to him.

A few wishes do exist in the world, occasionally on scrolls but usually on swords or rings. A player character would be very fortunate to have the use of one wish spell for himself by the time he reached tenth level. Or, to put it another way, one might expect all players in the campaign to acquire a total of one or two wishes per real year. In these circumstances of scarcity, I believe that the wish spell can be more powerful, and less subject to failure, than in worlds where their frequency is considerably higher.

First, I treat a *wish* not as something to be spoken into the void. Who grants a wish? Is it just another spell, arcanely pulling energy from the fabric of the universe? No — despite the existence of *wish* as a ninth-level spell, I believe that it is more reasonable (or at least more believable) to think of the wish as an extraordinary event caused by some non-mortal power in conjunction with the mortal making the wish. But if one follows AD&D™ rules, even the greater gods are rarely able to cause wishes, so there must be some higher, disinterested Power (or Powers) which grant the wish, and which certainly will not manipulate the wish to serve its own ends. After all, if a mere god — "mere" in AD&D terms at any rate — grants a wish, won't he manipulate the wish to serve his purposes? Or, approaching from another direction, why would the god somehow store in an item the ability to force him (the god) to grant a wish to whomever possessed the item? The wish as a form of divine intervention just doesn't make sense.

Consequently, borrowing from Michael Moorcock's Elric/Corum series (from which, presumably, the struggle between Law and Chaos was borrowed for the D&D® and AD&D systems), I prefer to think that a Cosmic Balance, a personification of the balance between alignments, grants wishes. The Balance being a distant and terrible entity, not merely a god, it is unlikely to grant more than a few wishes a year, but they will be powerful. Other explanations can be put forth; at any rate, the Powers who grant wishes are not akin to the anthropomorphic gods we know from such sources as the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ book.

The person contemplating a wish negotiates, in effect, with the Powers, to determine what is likely to be possible and what is not. In practice, this means that the player may discuss the possible uses of the wish with the DM, who will give more or less information in his reply as he likes. Oblique rather than direct answers are common. The DM's objective is to guide the player so that he won't waste the only wish he may ever use. A foolish player may still foul up his wish by ignoring the hints of the Powers, but a more cautious player can usually get a good idea of what the wish might do. In many cases it will not be necessary for the character to give exact wording to the wish; the Powers will know what he wants.

Because the wish is so rare, and derives from the most powerful beings in the universe, I permit the traditional use given as an example in the original D&D rules, but not in the newer versions: Someone may wish that a party of adventurers had never set out, or had taken a different route, thereby avoiding a trap or a fight which killed many or all of them. In such cases, the *players* are not allowed ever to return to the scene of the disaster with a party, because they know what happened — although, in their *characters'* minds, it never happened. (A clever player might wish that the event had not occurred, but that the characters would know what *would* have happened; but I usually rule that this is stretching the wish too far.) It is sufficient to say that the wish has the effect of subliminally warning the party never to go that way again, because the same disaster might occur.

Obviously, this is a most powerful tool, and players tend to hold on to wishes (or bury them where their friends can get at them) for dear life, because a wish is as good as life when used this way. I have never seen a wish used merely to resurrect one person, or for the minor purpose of changing one round of melee, or for transporting a party from one place to another — it is too valuable to be wasted this way. But if someone tried any of these, I would probably allow it.

Occasionally a player will, perhaps foolishly, wish to increase one of his ability numbers. The Dungeon Masters Guide states that a wish can raise a characteristic above 16 only by increments of one tenth, so that ten wishes would be required to raise one from 16 to 17. This is obviously a means of limiting power in those worlds in which *wish* spells are relatively common, and I do not think it should apply to rare wishes. Look at it this way: A player's character ability numbers are pure luck (and I require one 3d6 roll per ability, not any of the supermethods described in the Dungeon Masters Guide). A player presumably earns a wish, but he doesn't earn or necessarily deserve his ability numbers. Consequently, if a player is willing to use up his life-saving wish, I will allow him to raise almost any characteristic to 18. Generally, this characteristic will be his prime ability (intelligence for a magic-user, strength for a fighter, etc.) or his constitution, to increase his hit points and thereby his chances of survival. The actual limits of the increase depend on the character's other numbers and on how deserving he is (in my subjective judgment, as well as the judgment of the Cosmic Balance). Generally, the higher a character's numbers are, the smaller the increase.

The other use of a wish in my campaign has been to raise the level limits of a non-human character. For example, an elven magic-user with 18 intelligence cannot rise beyond 11th level. With a wish, he is able to rise to 13th level when he acquires sufficient experience. No actual experience is awarded.

I (as the Powers) discourage other uses of wishes, such as gaining experience points. If a player is unwise enough to set his wishes against the suggestions of the Powers, he'll deserve whatever punishment or failure you mete out to him.

These methods work well in my campaign, where the *wish* as a mere spell is virtually nonexistent; on the other hand, my methods would ruin a campaign in which *wish* spells and 18th-level wizards are plentiful. Each DM must adjust methods to suit his world.

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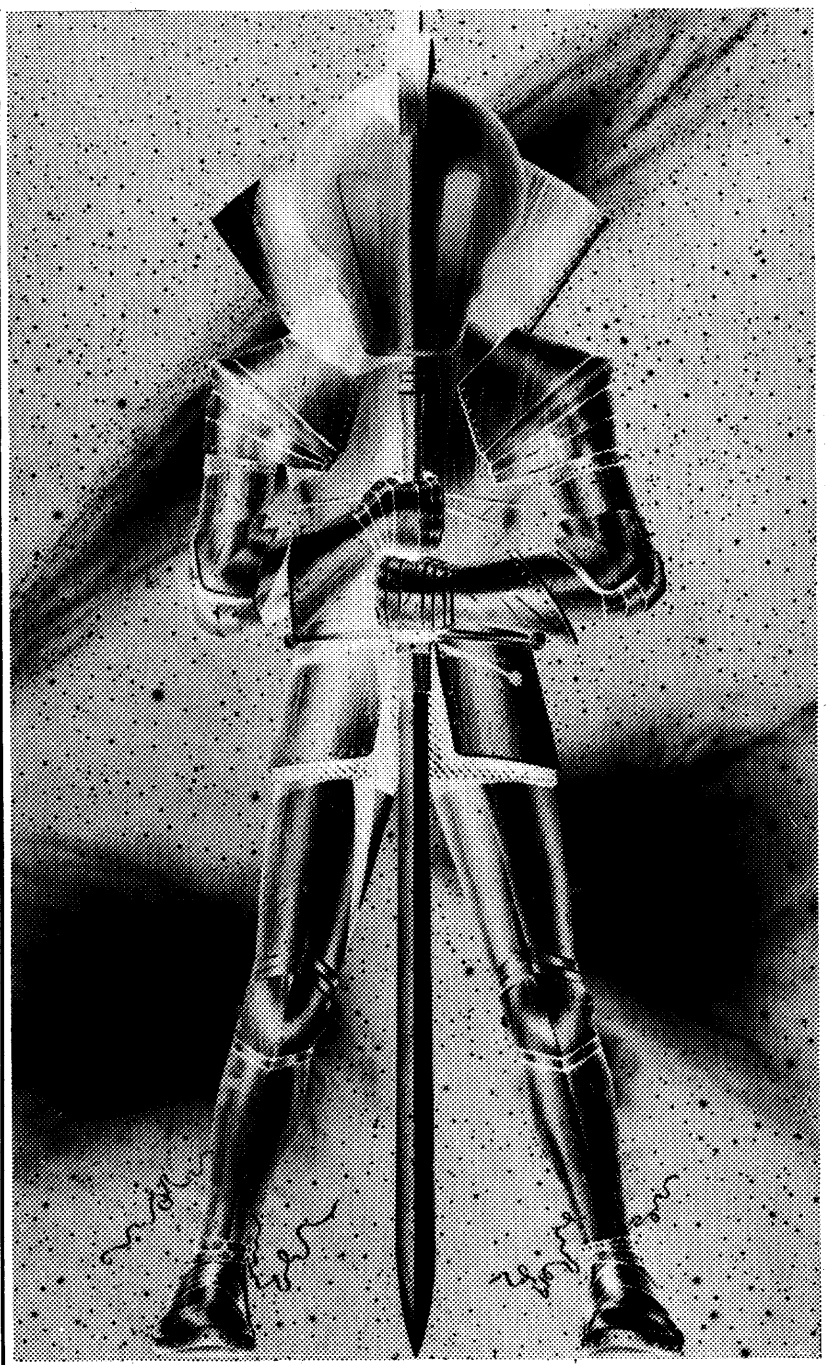

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September 1982. Marvin Kaye, Parke Godwin, Alan Ryan, David Bunch, George Alec Effinger; Michael Shaara interview.

November 1982. The first Scithers issue! Michael Whelan cover. Long fiction by Jack Williamson, Larry Niven, Robert Silverberg; short stories by Gene Wolfe, John M. Ford, Nancy Springer; Silverberg's "Opinion"; Ford's games column.

January 1983. Kelly Freas cover; "Aquila Meets Bigfoot" by Somtow Sucharitkul; novelet by Poul Anderson; stories by Tanith Lee, Jack C. Haldeman, Michael McCollum, etc.; Avram Davidson Adventures in Unhistory; Silverberg.

March 1983. Jack Gaughan cover; part 1 of *Against Infinity* by Gregory Benford; Bill Pronzini, Darrell Schweitzer, Sharon Webb, Damien Broderick; poetry by Thomas Disch; "The Amazing Years" by Cele Goldsmith Lalli; A. Bertram Chandler interview.

May 1983. Kelly Freas cover; *Against Infinity* by Gregory Benford concluded; "Aquila: The Final Conflict" by Somtow Sucharitkul; Gene Wolfe, Alan Dean Foster, William Wu; features by Silverberg, Ford, Catalano, Coulson.

Fantastic:

January 1980. "The Cliffhanger Sound" by Paul Dellinger; "Never Argue With Antique Dealers" by Darrell Schweitzer; a classic reprint by Murray Leinster; analysis of TV adaptions of Ray Bradbury.

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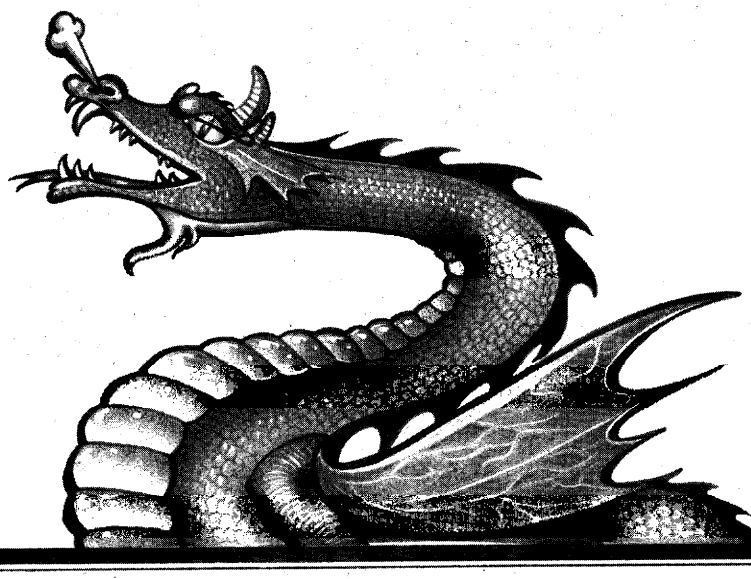

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Patching the cracks in *Champions*

From creating a character to keeping a job

by Paul Montgomery Crabaugh

CHAMPIONS, the flagship product of Hero Games, is marvelous news for all us comic-book fans: finally, a superhero game that actually sets out to simulate what occurs in comic books — the powers, the fights and so forth. For the most part, *Champions* does its job quite well. Only some minor problems, most of which are easily solved, have come up in the course of play.

One problem at the beginning of adventures is that people don't already have a character generated. They may not have the ability to come up with a complete conception of a superhero on the spur of the moment, especially if they have little interest in the comics to begin with. One fast solution I've found is to appropriate another game: *Villains & Vigilantes* from Fantasy Games Unlimited. That game has the saving grace that you can actually roll a superhero up quickly, with no imaginative input. Do precisely that; then, when you've got a *V&V* hero, convert him or her into the *Champions* system, buying powers and attributes to match.

Another problem is the various Hunteds and Dependent NPCs attached to the various characters. A strict reading of the rules generally results in each of perhaps half a dozen heroes having a couple of dependent NPCs apiece and one to three hunting groups, since nobody has the same dependent NPC and almost nobody overlaps the Hunteds. This can get confusing, not to say hazardous. Rather than everybody rolling for their various hunters and dependents showing up, the referee should select one or two heroes at random and roll only *their* hunteds and NPCs, holding down the number of extraneous elements that stir themselves into the scenario. (Don't worry, Aunt May will undoubtedly get hers next week.)

Speaking of dependent NPCs, a way of generating their attributes so as to provide a bit more variety is to roll the attributes rather than assume they're average across the board unles otherwise indicated. For incompetent NPCs, roll 1d12 per attribute; for average NPCs, roll 1d20; for very competent NPCs, roll 3d10 and add 1d4 × 5 points of power or abilities. An exception should be made for Comeliness, which should be 1d20 + 10.

Another problem is timing. It's sometimes difficult to figure out how the various characters can get together in one place at one time for a scenario. For bookkeeping purposes, try borrowing from another game, *Superhero 2044* by Gamescience. As is done in that game, require characters to plot out their activities for the week in four-hour blocks, showing what time is allotted to sleeping, to work, to patrol and so forth. There are certain requirements for upkeep in terms of time per week; the hero can't patrol the streets 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In terms of four-hour "blocks," the requirements go something like this:

First and foremost, the basics. A character must set aside 14 blocks per week for sleep, +1 block of sleep for each period of wakefulness exceeding 5 consecutive blocks (20 hours), +1 more block of sleep if there are more than 4 sleep periods of

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less than 8 hours (2 blocks) each. No more than 3 blocks (12 hours) of sleep can be taken consecutively. In addition, a character must devote 1d6 blocks per week to socializing and mundane responsibilities.

The question of allotting time leads in to the most noticed omission in the *Champions* rules: the lack of systems governing money, work, and so forth. How much equipment can a character afford? How much time is spent at work? Other questions turn up along the same lines.

It would probably be possible to come up with a list of jobs, income from those jobs, shopping lists of equipment and so forth, but the existing *Champions* rules provide a way to include day-to-day living more painlessly.

The way it works is that a certain standard of living is "purchased," just like a power or talent. The various lifestyles are non-specific, so that exactly where the hero lives and whom he or she works for are left to the players to define; however, the general social level, degree of wealth, and available methods of transportation are specified. The better off a character is, the higher the point cost of his or her lifestyle. The various lifestyles are these:

Poor — The character is constantly in danger of eviction. All money goes to food, clothing, and rent; none is available for equipment. Transportation is limited to bus or taxi. Time required per week to support this lifestyle is 1d10 blocks (roll each week for the amount of time needed). This standard of living is so poor it is actually treated as a Disadvantage, worth 5 extra build points that can be applied elsewhere.

Average — The character has a typical, middle-class lifestyle. The character can occasionally (once a year) make a major purchase of equipment or whatever, of about $5,000 in value. Transportation is by car or taxi. Time required to maintain this lifestyle is 10 blocks per week. This is the "default" lifestyle; it costs nothing and is worth nothing in build points.

Above average — This is the realm of the upper middle class. The character can make one major purchase per year of $15,000 (or, of course, several smaller purchases). Typically, the character owns a home. Transportation is by a car of reasonably good quality and recent vintage (the character may own two cars, or perhaps only one). This lifestyle requires 10 blocks of time per week to maintain. (A lifestyle which requires 10 blocks per week is normally an 8-to-5 job.) The cost of this lifestyle is 5 build points.

Wealthy - The character is very comfortably well off. Transportation is typically by any one of several cars, or one good car and one yacht or aircraft. The character owns a good-sized home. Up to $50,000 per year may be expended on large purchases. In addition, the character is assumed to have limited computer and/or lab facilities and specialized training facilities. The character can support several other characters indefinitely at a good standard of living, barring secret identity conflicts and such. This lifestyle requires 5 blocks of time per week and costs 10 build points.

Very Wealthy — The character is positively rich, and lives by clipping stock coupons. Owns several cars, as well as at least one aircraft (possibly a jet) and one boat. This lifestyle requires 2 blocks per week and costs 20 build points.

Extraordinarily Wealthy — Your basic billionaire. The character owns anything in the way of transportation short of space shuttles or aircraft carriers — and maybe them, too. This is a very high-profile lifestyle. It requires 1 block of time per week and costs 30 points.

Student — Similar to "Poor," but a student has *limited* access to lab and computer facilities. Requires 8 + 1d8 blocks per week; costs 5 build points.

Instead of merely being wealthy (or poor) as a result of some more or less ordinary endeavor, a character can own a business, industrial plant or other such facility. This provides a standard of living equivalent to one of the lifestyles described above, depending on the size of the business involved. In addition, the

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character has access to all the facilities the business (or whatever) owns, at least to the extent that use of those facilities does not devalue or damage the business. The hours are longer for a self-employed character, as a general rule, and those hours are variable from week to week, but on the other hand they are also more flexible; the character is less constrained by an 8-to-5 routine. Also, he or she can to some extent modify working hours by taking long lunches, refusing all calls for a while, closing the shop, and so forth — although excessive use of this privilege will damage the business. This flexibility also reduces friction with the character's secret identity.

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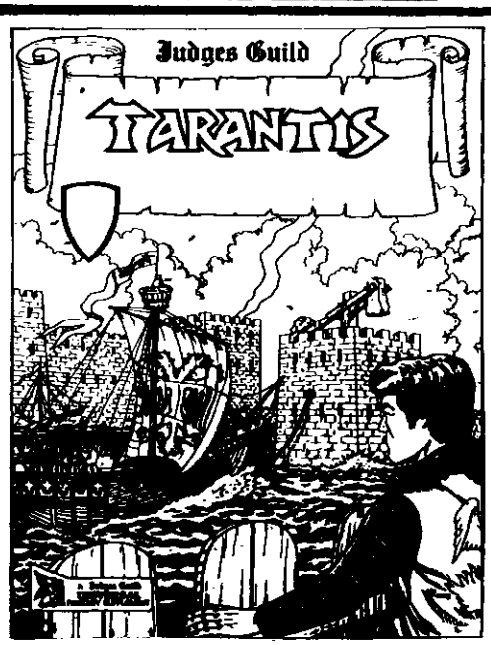

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The four types of business endeavors are these:

Small Business — Similar to "Above Average" lifestyle, with the character being the owner of a shop or personal business. This option requires 10 + 1d10 blocks per week and costs 10 points.

Medium Business or *Small Factory* — Similar to "Wealthy" lifestyle. This endeavor requires 3d6 blocks of time per week and costs 15 points.

Large Business or *Medium Industry* — Similar to "Very Wealthy," this option requires 3d8 blocks of time per week and costs 30 points.

Large Industry or *Ruler of Small Country* — Similar to the "Extraordinarily Wealthy" lifestyle, this option requires 3d10 blocks per week of time and costs 40 points.

One final note: Something missing from the original rules is the concept of official sanction. Some heroes are affiliated with the government (at some level) and garner extra brownie points that way. A license, badge, or ID card can be very helpful when dealing with recalcitrant authorities or annoyed citizens.

There are four levels of official sanction. Each successive step up the ladder of authority brings an increase in the amount of power that can be brought to bear in the above-mentioned situations.

Local Sanction is generally some degree of attachment to a city's police force. This sanction costs 5 build points and allows the superhero to do such things as poke around in areas the police have secured.

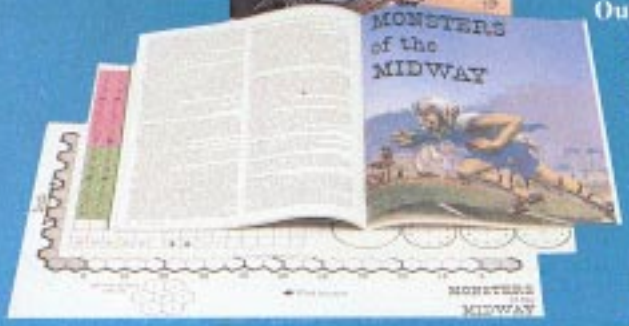
State Sanction can indicate something like membership in the state militia, or perhaps the possession of a private investigator's license. Benefits are similar to local sanction, but can be used in most places within the state giving the sanction. It costs 10 points.

Federal Sanction can be a wide variety of things: membership in an "official" superhero group, "Q" clearance, membership in the CIA (or some fictitious organization), and so forth. This is helpful in dealing with authorities at all levels of government, and can even be used to impress authorities in other countries — to a degree. It costs 15 points.

International Sanction is relatively rare, and typically indicates membership in some supranational organization, which can be helpful in dealing with authorities anywhere, any time. It can be a hindrance if the authorities view the member as a nuisance (actually, this can be a drawback to any of the sanctions). One such organization in the comics has its headquarters in a vehicle that appears to combine dirigible and helicopter technologies in one ungainly whole; there are others. This costs 20 points.

That should do it; your heroes can now feel completely fleshed out and free to join the colorful, if dangerous, world of the comics. 8

Dragon



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The Sagittarian

Fiction by Jessica Amanda Salmonson

For many days the greatest hunter among mortals stalked the most fabulous stag to dwell on Earth. It was fitting that these two should meet: Ain of the Arrow, who killed nine wolves on his first hunt when still a child, and the stag Elo, whose antlers were a nest of thorns upon which many a would-be slayer had been impaled, tossed into the air, and impaled again.

Ain followed the crafty spoor over grassy meadows, into reedy cypress-shadowed swamps, across scrub plains, through highland forests, onto Mount Pilak, and eventually into the stony canyons of the craggy mountain itself. Along the way, he had lost and found the tracks of Elo a hundred times. Over most of the trek, the signs of the stag had remained continuously two days old. Of late they had been fresher, meaning that Ain was finally closing the distance between them. The tracks he found on this day were made within the hour.

With his aurochs-horn at his lips, Ain arched his back and blew a fierce challenge like that of a warrior stag. Before the echo of Ain's long hoot had died away, he was answered by a call of equal ferocity.

Ain blew once more upon the curved horn, then tossed it over his back to hang alongside his quiver. He strung his bow and felt for the placement of the daggers on his hips; everything was secure. Ain stood with his bow in one hand, an arrow in the other. Clattering hoofbeats resounded from several directions, at first faint but soon becoming nearer. Elo had never fled from a challenge, and it seemed he would not flee this time.

The sound of hooves stopped before Ain could discern their origin from the echo. He looked about at the crags and fissures of the canyon's stone walls and wondered from which place the stag would bound. He stood fast, ready. His golden beard fell like a woman's locks upon his broad chest. His stone-grey eyes were bright like winter skies. His yellow hair was bound in a linen headband. He seemed calm, but the muscles high on his bare arms tensed and twitched, evidence of his impatience.

"Come out, Elo!" His voice was resonant, yet the pitch was fairly high. "Do not be a coward!"

Ain heard hooves directly behind him and reeled about. Within another instant, he had nocked his arrow and let it fly. The great stag veered with speed matching that of the mountain wind that suddenly blew through the canyon. Elo caught the arrow on a part of one antler, where it stuck as if shot into the limb of a tree. The animal bellowed, and Ain thought it sounded like a boast.

The unusually sudden wind was blowing directly in Ain's face. Flying dust stung his eyes. He furrowed his thick brow as he brought another arrow over his left shoulder. The stag was now too near to dodge the second arrow as easily as the first, and Ain let the shaft speed forward. Though it did not fly on a fatal trajectory, the arrow pierced Elo's neck; however, the stag rushed on, seemingly undaunted. Ain's bow went flying from his grip as he was caught on the stag's antlers. He was pierced multiply, but superficially, in the chest and belly.

Ain clung to the huge pair of antlers, refusing to be shaken off or thrown into the air, weighing down the head with his body's considerable bulk. He was in pain, but ignored it. He entwined his legs in the branches of the antlers, so Elo could not hope to easily unseat him.

Elo tried to scrape his antlers on the ground, but could not loosen the unwanted passenger. Ain was mad with ecstacy in his ride and, feeling the aurochs-horn flopping against his long beard, held tighter with his legs, so that he might snatch up the horn in both hands and blow it aloud. His boast was bigger than a bellowing stag's! He boasted to the wind and the gods, telling them to see how he rode. He laughed, even while knowing he was in peril because he had no way to dismount — except in death.

The stag ceased its wild antics and ran into a wind which howled up the canyon like a wave of an unexpected flood. The powerful legs of the beast beat upon the ground, against the wind. Then, to Ain's surprise, the purposeful charge turned abruptly toward a solid wall of stone.

On seeing his unwilling mount's intent, Ain stopped his laughter. His eyes grew round. He sought to untangle himself from the antlers, to leap upon the stag's back, but Elo's suicidal dash was too swift. With a terrific jolt, the stag ran head-on into the stone wall. Parts of the antlers shattered, Ain screamed what sounded like his name: *Aaaaiiinnn!*

After the blow, Ain could neither breathe nor see. The antlers had provided a cushion against his being crushed, yet he was too jarred to take any kind of action. He clung blindly to those antlers, fighting for his breath and his vision.

Stunned as well, Elo backed away from the wall, staggered, and charged again — this time with less of an impact, but enough of one to break off more of the antlers' points. One more blow like that and Ain would certainly be killed, for too few antler-branches remained between him and the wall. Ain's legs held fast around the stag's wet muzzle. As his vision and senses returned, he moved his hands near his thighs to grasp a dagger in each hand. Then the third impact came.

A piece of shattered antler burst through Ain's back and out his belly, severing his spine. Yet it hurt less than the other, less damaging blows. He knew the wound was fatal, yet he felt neither fear nor sorrow. It was a fine death for a hunter — and it would be a fine death for Elo as well. Ain brought both daggers down in clenched fists and thrust them to the hilts into Elo's eyes, wrenching the blades up into the stag's brain. Then Ain fell from his perch.

He was paralyzed in the legs from his broken spine. He was a mass of blood, the piece of antler still protruding from his middle. Even in this state, he remembered his training in the temple gymnasiums where perfect muscle tone and mastery of the body were religiously pursued. There was no reason to this remembering, for death was certain; but for however long he remained conscious, Ain was bound to strive for every added moment of life. He willed his wounds to cease bleeding and his pain to fade. Untrained folk might have called it sorcery; but it wasn't that. Yet, not even the vast will of Ain of the Arrow could hold death forever at bay.

The hunter lay quietly, breathing slowly, his mind calm, waiting for the end. His vision was clear now. He looked to where the stag was standing tall and regal. An arrow pierced its neck; its antlers were ruined; its eyes dripped with blood and gore. Yet it was a strong beast, its body still drawing heavy breaths while dripping rivulets of blood and sweat. Its mind had been destroyed by the knives; the stag was unable to think or move. Though unaware of the fact, Elo awaited death, too.

Ain noticed the terrific wind had gone, but was uncertain when it had passed. It had come only for the duration of the battle, perhaps sent by some elk-god to aid the stag in the initial charge. Now there was quiet, except for the snorting of the mindless stag and the heartbeat of the broken hunter.

"Elo," the man whispered. "You have killed me." He tried to move his legs, but they were stone. He tried to raise his head, but could only turn it slightly and then could not move it back. His arms could still move, but the only thing he could think to do with them was cross them over his chest. He added, "But I have killed you, too."

The world became a blur. The stag before him appeared to be covered with pleasant fuzz. Then, to Ain's surprise, the shape of a man, blurred like everything else, walked up and stood beside the stag. It seemed to be a ghost. *An angel,* thought Ain. *An angel come for my soul and that of Elo.* He tried to clear his eyes to see the apparition better, but his vision grew worse. Ain thought, *Can it be twilight so soon?*

The angel came nearer, moving like a doddering old man. He seemed to be carrying a barbed staff, but Ain could not be certain in the growing darkness. Angel or ghost, it was talking to him; however, Ain could not understand, for waves of ocean-sound roared in his ears.

Then, all was darkness and darkness was all. An eternity seemed to pass quickly, during which there was peaceful silence. Ain walked through a tunnel at his leisure, seeing a light far ahead.

"Shall I come to the light?" he asked the dark.

"To the light," the darkness answered. The darkness spoke like an old man. Yes, Ain thought, *darkness was old.*

Ain sauntered; there was no hurry. He wanted to whistle, but his mouth wouldn't pucker, so he hummed. The light in the distance grew brighter and nearer.

"It's not much further," the old voice of darkness said with odd compassion.

"Shall I go more swiftly?" Ain asked.

"No, no. There is time," said the dark.

The tunnel was long. He had first thought the light was at the other end. But he reached the light and saw that it was only a candle flame; the end of the tunnel was still lost in darkness. The flame hovered in limbo, no wax beneath it. So! It was not the darkness that spoke, but the flame.

"I am here," he told the flame.

"Almost, yes," the flame encouraged.

The aura of the flame grew, expanded. *Ah-ha,* thought Ain. There was wax beneath it after all! And a fist clutching the candle. *Who is that clutching the candle?* It was a stranger, Ain saw: an old man.

"Are you the angel?" asked Ain.

The old face smiled toothlessly, then the smile instantly vanished. "No," he said. The word was profound.

The light continued to grow. Ain felt his chest heaving, as though he had run to the flame rather than walked casually. He remembered for the first time that he had broken his back. He wondered how it could be that he was standing. No physician could mend a man with a broken back. Curious, he tried to raise his leg — and he succeeded. But when he put it down, it made an odd clack, as though his foot were made of wood.

The expanding light shone upon grey, wooden walls. The old man blew out the candle, but the light remained, and the blue smoke from the wick wound about like a stinking worm.

"For what you are about to see," the old man said, "you must have no fear."

Ain was suddenly weary. Although he had no desire to lie down, he had a desire to sleep — to sleep standing up. He bowed his head upon his golden beard — and before his eyes closed, he saw below his torso the legs of a stag! His head shot up. He looked over his shoulder — and saw the body of a stag!

His stone-grey eyes were suddenly wide and awake. Hatred blossomed in his breast. "Sorcerer!" he cried. His long arms reached forward and grabbed the evil magic-doer by the throat. "Turn me into a beast, shall you!" Ain's teeth were bared, the white standing out against his curly beard. His fingers clenched the wizard's throat tightly.

The old sorcerer did not fight. He made no attempt to speak a spell, nor to weave one with his fingers, nor even to struggle like an ordinary man. The villain's eyes bulged red. His face turned bluish-purple. Ain had never killed anything passive, and he felt repulsed that even such as a sorcerer should die without raising a finger. Ain threw the old man hard against the wall.

The sorcerer rubbed his throat, coughed, then clutched his way up the wall until he stood at the place where he'd been thrown. He limped to a nearby spot to fetch his staff, a pole which was barbed at one end. Ain tried to back away, thinking he was to be attacked by that spear-cane. But he could not work his four legs very well, and he stumbled. Before he caught his balance, he saw that the old man used his weapon only as a walking staff and did not mean to fight.

"I did what I thought best," the old man said. "You could have lived, but without the use of your legs. Would that have been better than this?

"Elo was my oldest friend — how could I let him wander mindless until he starved or stepped blindly from a cliff? I could not allow him such a fate; I owed him too many favors. He bore me to Mount Pilak after I was cast from my country for what others believed were evil practices. Since then, in my solitude, I have written books of magic for future, more understanding generations. I've had few visitors beyond the Great Stag, whose body is now yours.

"Hate me if you will; kill me if you must. I no longer care for life nor love, now that my books are written and hidden deep in a cave, and now that you have slain Elo."

A strange look came into the old man's eyes. It might have meant hatred, sadness, horror, or any number of emotions disguised by the leathery webbing time had etched upon his face. The sorcerer began to tremble. He continued: "Elo, dead. Elo, whom I raised from a yearling. Whom I rode into exile. Who was wild to everyone but me. . . ."

Tears sprang from the old man's sullen eyes. In a burst of fury, the aggrieved sorcerer raised his staff. Ain caught the descending weapon by the shaft with one strong hand and twisted it from the sorcerer's gnarled fist. He threw the spear-cane aside. The sorcerer turned to balance himself against a table and hide his tears.

Ain moved his legs — one, then the next, then the next, and the last, experimentally. He felt power in those limbs, but power not yet at his command. Step by careful step, he neared the table that held his quiver of arrows, his knives, his belt, bow, horn, and scarf. These, one by one, he retrieved: The belt he fitted around his waist; the knives he attached so that they hung against his stag's lower half; the horn he hung around his neck; the quiver filled with arrows and the bow he slung across his back; the bandana he tied around his long hair.

He knew this bitter wizard had performed his wicked sorcery as punishment for the slayer of his pet. He had doomed Ain to walk with the flesh of the creature he hunted and killed. All the same, there was truth to the old one's demented reasoning: Four legs were better than none at all. It was better to be a man-stag than to never walk. At least this way he was still a hunter!

With slightly better mastery of his legs, Ain backed into the doorway. His hooves clattered on wood. Before he turned to go out and away, he said, "I thank you for my life and these legs. I will walk with pride! From this day on, I will go by the name of Elo-Ain. Even in your retreat, you are bound to hear tales about me, if only from the birds and the wind. You may have intended revenge, but I think it is a favor."

Though he loathed his new form, Ain would not reveal his true feelings to the sorcerer. Having said his piece, the man-stag bolted from the door, following a path into the canyon.

The sorcerer retrieved his staff and hobbled to the doorway in time to see the familiar rump of an old friend vanish around a large tree, the short tail raised as a flag.

"We will see," whispered an old voice. "You will see. . . ." 8

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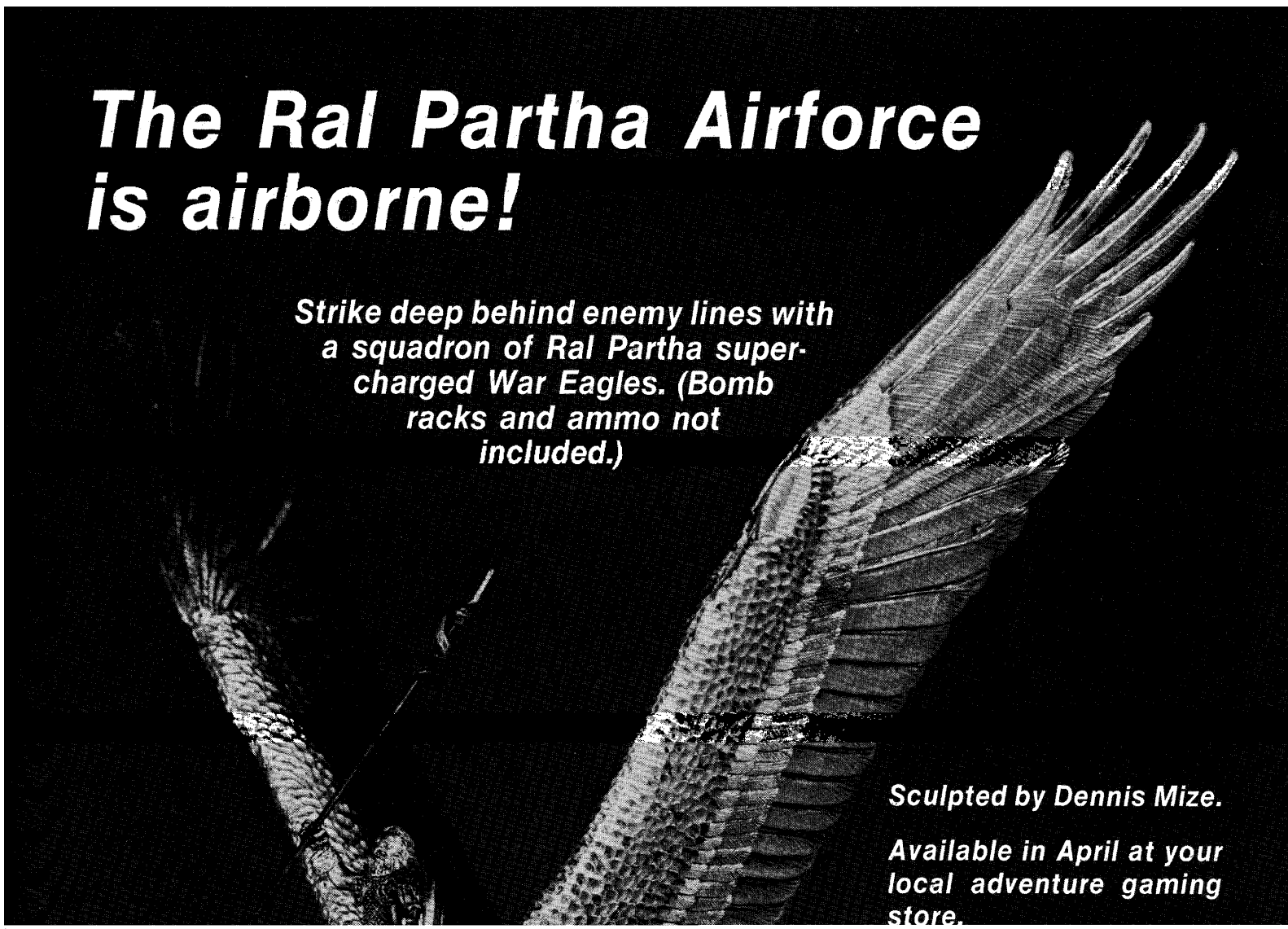

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Up on a Soapbox

All for all, not one for one

Selfish motives have no place in gaming

by Roger E. Moore

There is a peculiar practice (peculiar to me, anyway) going on in the role-playing world in which contests are held to give out an award to the best individual player, instead of to the best-performing team of players. Granted, it's nice to congratulate someone who has done a superb job of role-playing, problem solving, leading the group, or even just keeping the atmosphere light and enjoyable. On the other hand, this practice tends to misplace the more important emphasis of a role-playing game, and can lead to more problems than one might expect.

It could be argued that nothing is wrong with recognizing players for their personal ability; one could draw a parallel with the Olympics, if one wanted to stretch it that far, and point out that most awards there are for individual effort. Unfortunately, role-playing games are not structured by and large for individual competition. While any one player may have a character who is quite powerful, nearly all role-playing games are designed so that it's difficult for just one character to successfully resolve any one scenario. It takes the combined skills and efforts of all the group members to meet and defeat the obstacles that the game referee cares to put in the way of achieving the adventure's goal. Most role-playing games have character-generation systems which split up the various skills and abilities into "character classes" or "prior service tables" (like the AD&D™ and *Traveller* games, respectively) to promote interdependence among group members; no one character can have all the powers needed to accomplish a mission. If this were so, it would tend to make group adventures unnecessary; why split treasure with someone when you can get to it by yourself? Instead, in the AD&D™ game system there are fighters, magic-users, rangers, paladins, thieves, and so forth, each with their own skills and talents. In *Traveller* there are Marines, Doctors, Scouts, Pirates, Merchants, and other services. Even game systems like *Runequest* and *Call of Cthulhu*, which allow any one character to develop any number of skills, are set up so that it is impossible to be an expert at *everything;* someone may be good at thieving, another good at fighting, and someone else good at spell-casting, but no one can do everything. (If so, then someone is either cheating or has played continually over several years, working their skills up.) Combat in particular calls for coordinated effort; one person, even a Conan-type, cannot stand long against a horde of orcs, baboons, Zhodani, or Fungi from Yuggoth without some help from friends.

Of all the games in which I've participated, as a player or as a referee, group cooperation has been the one element that most affected whether or not a group was going to succeed on a mission. People tend to have an exaggerated idea of how important their individual characters are in a game, and often lose sight of this point. Some will do all they can to become the "shining star" in the group, making themselves obnoxious with their insistence on not cooperating.

If this sort of individuality is too strongly encouraged over group effort, there is an excellent chance the adventure will disintegrate into petty bickering and heavy-handed struggles for the position of King of the Heap. in the extreme, this will produce assassinations and fighting among group characters even in the middle of a critical adventure. One scenario I

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refereed, an expedition into a fire giant's lair, was aborted at the outset when one group member had his character kill off another character; this act could be defended by the player's claim that he played his character within his alignment, since he had an evil thief and the victim was a paladin. But now the group was in no shape to carry on the adventure, the guy playing the paladin quit, and the adventure was over for the day before it had begun. Another group, more tightly coordinated and more determined, played the same adventure on a later day and had the honor of smashing the lair.

Players generally want to cooperate with each other, and people who don't play by the rules (the unwritten ones about cooperating) can find themselves facing down the most dangerous of all opponents in any game: an enraged group of player characters. It is truly amazing just how effectively and completely one character, regardless of power or level can be greased by everyone else (unless the DM decides to pull strings and prevent this somehow). One of the most personally satisfying incidents of this sort I've heard of involved some players (friends of mine) who were having trouble dealing with one player's character who always seemed to try to dominate the gaming sessions, break group rulings, and so forth. Matters came to a head one evening, and an epic battle ensued in which many-dice fireballs flew and technological weapons, long hidden on group members from previous expeditions, were pulled out and used. The battle ended in the disintegration of the offending character and a spontaneous ten-minute celebration by the surviving members. It is one thing to be an outlaw from society; it is another, and more fatal, thing to be an outlaw from a group.

The other extreme is possible, too. I had a character introduced into one group and then discovered that the other players were in the habit of killing new characters, so *their* characters could take the newcomers' gold and magical items. My character got lucky and escaped, with the help of the character of a friend of mine (who was also almost slain by the other characters). But we never gamed with that group again. Months later, one of the cutthroat players saw me and asked why I never came back. Some people have a difficult time seeing the obvious.

How many times can you recall having your character play second fiddle to another character in a role-playing game? How many people can you recall who played as if this game was some kind of "survival of the fittest" competition, in which they intended to be Numero Uno? What about adventures in which no one wanted to do the same thing, and cooperation was hard to get without a lot of hurt feelings and comments like, "Okay, my wizard will go with you to the Caverns of Doom, but he isn't gonna help anybody out of trouble. . . ."? Do you remember those times as being particularly entertaining?

Try the other viewpoint. Think of those adventures in which everyone seemed to be having a good time, not just one person by himself. Was everyone involved in the adventure in some way? Did people have a chance to use their skills, to share in the combat, and get a share of the loot at the end? Did people work together, or was it dog-eat-dog? Sure, we all recall someone who showed an aptitude for figuring out traps, directing the group, giving needed advice, or telling jokes that had everyone rolling on the floor. But didn't other characters have their moments in the sun, too?

The true mark of a good role-player, in any game system, is the ability to work well with others. It is all well and good to have a +5 Holy Sword, and 18's in all of one's characteristics, but if one cannot get along with other players and interact effectively with them, one might have trouble finding groups who will accept him to game on a regular basis. At worst, one might find that his character is being eyed as another potential enemy to be eliminated. Groups are made up of individuals, but individuals must learn to act as a group if they plan to get anywhere on a role-playing adventure. 8

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Castles by Carroll

V: Leeds Castle

Majestically poised upon a pair of islands in the middle of a placid lake stands Leeds Castle, nestled among rolling hills of daffodils in Kent, England. It is a stone fortress straight out of medieval lore.

The castle of Leeds is mentioned in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and was in fact a stop along the pilgrimage route to Canterbury. The place has a long association with English queens, including the wives of Edward I and Edward II as well as Anne Boleyn. Like most castles, its role in history alternated between fortress and palace.

In the 14th century, Edward II gave the use of the castle to Sir Bartholomew de Badlesmere. Edward's infamous queen-consort, Isabella, tried to enter the castle disguised as a pilgrim — and was thrown out. This led to a siege of the castle by the king himself. When the garrison surrendered, the "rebels" were hanged in the gatehouse. Lady Badlesmere and her children were sent to the tower, and Isabella regained the castle until her death. Such were the ways of medieval diplomacy!

Leeds Castle was "born" as a wooden fortress in A.D. 857. A stone keep and gatehouse were built in 1130 by Hammond de Crevecoeur, a companion of William the Conqueror. The palace is in use even today; its security and impregnability make it an ideal place for meetings between world leaders.

Painting and text by Mike Carroll

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I know, because I'm Captain Chris Summers.

For a few hours every month, I shut off this Earthbound mortality and become a Starfleet officer. Meeting adventure and danger in far flung space. With my First Officer Jame Laurette and Science Officer Annikia 'Niki' Hendershott, I meet and successfully (most of the time) overcome incredible odds to right the 'mistakes' in UFP space.

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ECI stands for Entertainment Concepts, Inc., and until recently was virtually unknown.

In August of 1981, ECI was created by Jim Dutton and his wife Betty, and they began with a small home computer, an ad for their SILVERDAWN game in a gaming magazine, and launched into the play-by-mail gaming business. Their SILVERDAWN game, which was based on traditional medievil fantasy role playing games, was so successful that by their first anniversary they had hired two more gamemasters and obtained three more computers.

Beginning with 300 correspondents in 1981, SILVERDAWN now is played monthly by more than 1,200 people.

Meantime, with such a success in SILVERDAWN, Jim Betty, and new gamemasters Raymond Maddox and William Peschel decided to start a second game. They petitioned Paramont for the rights to Star Trek.

In July of last year they obtained those rights. Offering in the October issue of STARLOG the game to the general public for the first time, THAT WAS ALMOST A MISTAKE! New game players doubled, tripled. Why such success? Because every single penny spent playing the game is worth it.

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Each move thereafter consists of Starfleet orders, which outline a scenario and describes the current situation. The narrative details what happens to you and your crew to a point. There, faced with one or more problems, you are left to solve them with your "move."

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I usually savor every moment of it...I tend to linger over my moves, thinking through my solutions. I interject a sense of drama into my adventures and breathe life into my characters. Then, impatiently, I await a response to see how successful I am. I have never been disappointed, even though at times my "solutions" have only caused "new problems."

So, all you armchair Fleet officers out there, who have ever sat through 79 episodes of Star Trek and said, "Gee, I wish I could do that..."

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Oh, yes. where was I? Oh, I remember now. "Suddenly I was dumped on the floor of my little cabin. It took me only a moment to remember where I was. I felt along my shoulder for the halberth wound. 'Damn Klingon,' I thought. It had been several days, and although modern medicine had closed the skin, the wound was still tender. I could tell by the vibration under my feet that the Apogee was doing at least Warp Eight.

'Bridge,' I said, reaching for the com on the wall. 'This is your Captain, what the hell is going on up there? Why are we doing Warp Eight?'

'Captain,' the voice was that of my Communication officer Cmdr. Bromah Lomidak. 'We're pursuing the planet Aleshire that has suddenly jumped out of orbit and is headed into restricted Romulan space.'

'What?' I countered, then reached for the com a third time. 'Disregard that what. I'll be right there.' Whew! Such is the life of a Starfleet Captain."

— Gary Lee Stuber

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Time, Money, FILE 13 and the Goon Show

(not necessarily in that order)

by Tom Wham

I. TIME (more properly, the passing thereof)

Recently TSR employees got their copies of DRAGON™ issue #72 with the FILE 13 game therein. Fortunately, nobody took it too seriously, and I have not yet received any death threats. I figure this is mostly because the game is about what TSR used to be like three years ago. Nowadays life is more complicated — the path a game takes these days is so complex that no one person could hope to describe it in a lifetime. All my games usually end up in a new place they call "storage."

II. FILE 13 (the game, not the wastebasket)

Anyway, some friends who work in the darkest recesses of the Dungeon Hobby Shop asked me to teach them how to play the game. Obligingly, I cut out a game and mounted all the pieces. The night of the big game, we all chuckled at the improbable things that were happening to our inventions.

As the game wore on, I was alarmed to discover that everyone's games were dying dreadful deaths. For two hours it looked as though the evening would end with *all* our precious little inventions stacked in File 13. It was at this moment that I realized that the cosmetic changes Kim and I had made also changed the flow of the game. The game we were playing had only been playtested in the solitaire version!

Just as I was really afraid that all was lost, my players rallied, the game got close, and someone won. The four-player version had taken more than two hours to play. Out of this great experiment (and others) came the following clarifications, strategy hints, and — of course — the inevitable optional rules.

Clarifications: The *36 Hour Work Week* and *35 New Executives* cards can cause a bit of consternation, because not every move is simply forward or backward — there are shades of gray. Therefore, it is ruled that both cards move all games out of the Playtesters area (either "forward" or "backward" to the Product Review Board, depending on your point of view).

A move forward from the Product Review Board can only go to Cost Analysis. A move backward can never take a game into File 13. In similar fashion, a *Bad Review* card played against a Turkey game has no effect. When a choice of paths exists, the person who plays the card makes the decision on which direction to send the game affected by the card.

The message on a card speaks to the owner of the game on which it is played. The *Vice President Hates Your Syntax* card refers not to the holder of the card, but to the syntax of the game against which the card is played.

The *Building Fire* card will only send a game submission back to the "game box" if you have been energetic enough to make a box for your copy of the game.

Strategy hints: It never pays to be the front runner. Success lies in looking like you're losing, so that other people play their bad cards against each other, but not on you. If you have a choice between moving a game of yours forward (with a card) that is close to Sales or a game that is in Cost Analysis, move the one in Cost Analysis. Don't be in too much of a hurry to go into Sales until you can hit it with several titles at once.

A *Bad Review,* or any card that moves a game in Sales down one level, has a more deadly effect against Steady and Slow games than it does against Fast sellers and Hot Items.

If you are losing, sandbag (save) the following cards: *New Production Employee Hired, TV Advertising Push,* and any other cards that move a game up in Sales.

If you are winning, you would be well advised to sandbag the *Copyright Dispute, Complete Revision, Building Fire,* and *Lost in a Sea of Paper* cards. If these are in your hand, they can't be used against you!

Running out of ideas, by submitting all 13 of your games as soon as possible, will give you more "card power," since you can instantly replace all Game Submission cards you draw.

III. MONEY (the new rules)

Don't worry, the changes are minimal. Play a normal game as outlined in the rules. *(Editor's note: Is there such a thing as a normal game??)* Each time the deck is exhausted, play stops momentarily, and all players collect royalties on their games according to the following schedule:

For each game in:	Collect:		
	2 players	3 players	4 players
Hot Item	$60,000	$45,000	$30,000
Fast	$48,000	$36,000	$24,000
Steady	$32,000	$24,000	$16,000
Slow	$20,000	$15,000	$10,000
Break Even	$12,000	$ 8,000	$ 4,000
Turkey	$ 4,000	$ 3,000	$ 2,000

One player should keep a running score on a sheet of paper. The player who drew the last card from the deck gets to move his or her games before royalties are counted up. When the game ends, royalties are counted one last time. The player with the most money is the winner. (Lest you think you're getting rich, remember that once through the deck represents two years of real time — and don't forget to pay your taxes!)

IV. THE GOON SHOW (or, the True True Story)

It has rightly been pointed out to me, by a fellow fan of the All Leather Goon Show, that Eccles is spelled Eccles and not Echols. Thanx to my electrocution teacher and the BBC.

Kim Mohan's flattering article about the "true story" of FILE 13 was, like most good journalism, mostly true. Actually, I didn't think up all those silly names. An early version of the game contained blank counters, and players, as they submitted games, wrote their own names on the blanks. Credit must therefore go also to people like Brian Blume (whose *Foxcrap & Bantam* got the axe), Bob Waldbauer, and an old copy of *The Strategic Review.*

And, in conclusion: The way to my bedroom is not through the computer room. (I include this correction for the sake of any interested single women.) You go through the back porch, enter via the back door, cross the kitchen and the kitty poop room, go up the back stairs, through the back hall, open the door and go down to the end of the main hall. Knock at this point; if there is no answer, take the door on the left, pass through my office, and turn left. I should be in the next room sawing logs. 8

Moon Base Clavius is too basic

Reviewed by Tony Watson

The date is Oct. 28, 1996. The setting is the American mining and colonial facilities of Moon Base Clavius. Just at Earthrise, the forces of the Soviet Savyetskaya Lunaya Armia attack the installation. Armed with small arms (modified for the lunar environment) and dreaded nuclear mortars, the Soviet troops push back the U.S. Air Force defenders. The siege continues, the attackers ever tightening the ring, until Nov. 1 and the landing of the elite U.S. Marine Corps First Specialized Battalion. Within a few days, the Soviets' morale failed and all Soviet forces outside Earth surrendered, leaving America the dominant force in space.

While the above paragraph may sound like something of a neo-conservative dream, it is actually a brief summary of the introduction and rationale for Task Force Games' MOON BASE CLAVIUS. The situation described certainly has the potential to be a very interesting and exciting game situation. Unfortunately, *Clavius* fails to deliver on these counts.

The product is typical of Task Force's zip-lock games in its physical aspects. The components include 108 die-cut counters, an 18-page rules booklet, and a 21" × 16" map. The latter is appropriately dull, given the terrain in question, and is done in white and shades of gray, with red for the installations.

The game's mechanics are pretty simple. Since only one type of unit uses ground movement, and those pieces are not in play for most of the game, movement is extremely easy to play since terrain usually has no effect. In effect, the vast majority of the units in the game can move 10 hexes a turn. Combat procedures are more involved and actually somewhat innovative. Infantry- type units must attack from adjacent hexes, while mortars and self-propelled batteries can bombard opponents from two hexes away. The total strength of the attacking units, except for nuclear mortars, is divided by the number of defending units. Nuclear mortars, if available, are added to this total (and thus are very useful units in the game), and the resultant strength point total is indexed with the type of terrain the defender occupies to yield a number that must be rolled to kill the target. Each unit in a defending stack is rolled for separately.

Clavius has four scenarios. The first three correspond to the main phases of the large battle: the initial assault, the fighting around the colonies within the Clavius crater, and the landing of the Marines. The fourth scenario is a campaign game that links the others together. The shorter games play very quickly (30 minutes or so), and the campaign game can be knocked off in a couple of hours.

I was a bit disappointed in *Clavius.* The situation seems to be one that could be dealt with in a very exciting manner,

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but the game comes off rather flat. While the combat system is nicely crafted, it's not very decisive, and the game generally turns into a series of little slugfests.

Some of the more interesting aspects of the rules are rendered rather impotent in actual play. For example, the map has a number of mining installations, but they do not affect combat or serve as objectives. Their main purpose seems to be to anchor the ends of the US. monorail system — which itself is another problem. Ostensibly, its purpose is to speed the American troops around the map, since they can move an unlimited distance per turn on the system. However, the unassisted movement rate of a unit usually allows it to get where it needs to be without the monorail. Also hindering the monorail's usefulness is the fact that units using it cannot enter an enemy zone of control.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment in the game is the "big event," the landing of the Marines. In the third scenario and the campaign exercise, they arrive with too few turns left in the game to be of much use.

The idea behind *Clavius* is a good one, but the game begs for some chrome, something to spice it up meaningfully. As is, it quickly becomes a dull exercise.

MOON BASE CLAVIUS was designed by Kerry Anderson. It sells for $4.95 in most game stores. 8

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Grav Armor: A game to give tanks for

Reviewed by Tony Watson

Tanks just never seem to go away in wargaming; the armored fighting vehicle remains the object of a perennial love affair with game players. This romance has fostered such a strong sentimental attachment that a number of games have stretched the longevity of the tank far into the future. Titles such as *Helltank* and the very populare Ogre spring to mind.

The latest entry into this derby of futurisitic AFV games is Heritage's GRAV ARMOR. By many standards, from the size of units simulated by the counters to the geomorphic map pieces, GRAV ARMOR is "simply" *Panzerblitz* set in the 31st century.

This is one of Heritage's "Dwarfstar" line of pocket-size games. The components include six card-stock, full color, 4" × 7" geomorphic map pieces, 154 counters in three basic colors, two dice, an information sheet and a twenty-four-page rule and scenario book. All the components are attractive and of good quality, and in this respect the game is certainly worth its $5 price tag.

Most of the counters in the game each represent a company, consisting of either ten vehicles or a hundred infantrymen; other counters are included for fighter craft, cities and forts. The units have quite a variety of ratings on them: electronic warfare value, attack and defense factors, range and movement points. In addition, there is a silhouette and a notation indicating the type of weapon the unit is equipped with. These weapons include missiles, particle beams, gatling lasers and magnetic bolts, each of which has its advantages in certain circumstance. The countermix includes a sizable selection of models of anti-grav tanks and hovertanks with various combinations of weaponry, defense, range and EW (electronic warfare) capability.

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As mentioned before, the game's maps are geomorphic, and with six separate sections, that means an amazing amount of configurations are possible. Five kinds of terrain types are included, but their exact nature and effect upon play vary with the scenario. For example, hexes containing green markers could be forests, icefalls, or rough terrain, depending on the scenario being played. This rather clever system allows the map to simulate the surfaces of a host of different planets. Each hex is fifty kilometers in scale, so the entire map surface represents a very large area.

GRAV ARMOR uses a rather distinctive sequence of play that keeps both players involved throughout the turn. Basically, one player moves *while* the other fires. The player who is moving deals with one unit at a time; the firing player can halt that unit's movement and fire at the unit with any unit of his own that meets the conditions for combat. This system allows for a high degree of simultaneous activity and neat little tactical tricks, such as having one unit draw fire so that other units can rush or bypass a position. It also requires players to consider possible attacks beforehand, since units must move into position, braving enemy attacks, before getting the opportunity to fire themselves.

A unit can fire only at those units that are both within the firing unit's range and have been detected by that unit. Detection is a function of the firer's EW rating and the terrain that lies between and in the defender's hex. Each hex has a rating for the type of cover it provides; if the would-be attacker's EW rating is greater than the cover of the intervening terrain, he may attack. The detection concept is an odd variation on the more traditional line-of-sight rules used in most tactical games. However, in GRAV ARMOR, the path of fire does not necessarily have to be a straight line!

The rules for resolving attacks are simple enough, but manage to consider the important factors of terrain, weapons type, and electronic warfare equipment as well as attack and defense strengths. The attacker totals his EW value, his attack factor and any bonus for weapon type (such as firing particle beams at infantry or hovercraft). The defender subtracts the total of his defense value, EW rating, and the value of the terrain he is in. One can easily see the importance of a good EW rating; it not only helps in detection of enemy units, but aids in both attack and

defense. To resolve the attack, the column relating to the final differential (ranging from -10 to +10) on the results table is consulted and two dice are thrown to see if the target is hit. A hit destroys anything except infantry or forts; the former can be disrupted for one move, while the latter can take partial damage.

As befits a science-fiction game, GRAV ARMOR does include some space forces. The most potent of these are space fighters and "ortillery" — orbital artillery. The fighters are represented by counters just like tank units, and since they can move anywhere, they are pretty handy little devils. Ortillery consists of invulnerable weapons placed in orbit that can fire down on enemy targets in much the same way as ground units fire. Rounding out this section are rules for drop ships to carry units down from space, jump troops, and grav descent from orbit for some armored units.

GRAV ARMOR comes complete with five scenarios, set on as many worlds, that pit the forces of the Lerlim Empire against the rebels of the Panumatic League. One of the weak points of the game is its lack of context; exactly who the two sides are and why these battles are important is glossed over. Still, the scenarios are interesting tactical situations and are reasonably well balanced. The structure of the game would allow for additional scenarios to be constructed fairly easily. With a little work, enterprising players could even come up with some simple campaign versions of the game, linking scenarios together.

GRAV ARMOR is not a particularly innovative game, but it is certainly solid, well thought out, and quite playable. The catchy graphics, the variety of unit types, and the unusual move/fire phasing lend the game a real tactical feel. The wealth of different units and the versatility of the maps and terrain rules allow the simulation a number of different situations on any type of world. While not in the classic mode of Ogre, GRAV ARMOR is certainly a worthy addition to the genre, and is recommended for those interested in futuristic tank games.

Dragonmaster

A classy-looking card game

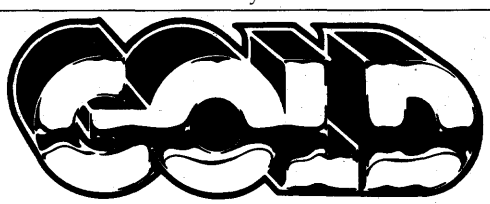
Reviewed by Glenn Rahman

DRAGONMASTER, published by Lowe, a division of Milton Bradley, is a fantasy card game for three or four players, ages twelve to adult. Its components are of the highest quality, consisting of a deck of thirty-three character cards, five special "hand" cards, one rank-order card, four score charts, a thirty-four-page rule book, sixty plastic "jewels" (representing diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires), and a cloth drawstring pouch to store the jewels in.

The cards are printed on thick paper stock and are exceptionally handsome. There is one dragon card and four suits, each of which has a king, queen, prince (or princess), wizard, duke, count, baron and fool. Each of these thirty-three cards has individual artwork. The colors are rich; the detail and poses are imaginative, powerful, and evocative. This artwork is the best selling feature of the game.

The object of the game is to accumulate the greatest value in jewels after a certain number of hands are played. A three-player game has fifteen hands; a four-player game has twenty. The dealer of a round is called the Dragonmaster; each round consists of five hands. The dealer has the first lead, and subsequently the lead passes to the player who takes the trick. The leading player presents a card of one of the four suits; the other players must follow suit if possible. The highest-ranked card of the suit led wins the trick.

The Dragonmaster/dealer examines the cards he has dealt himself, then chooses one of the "hand" cards. This hand card



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describes certain prohibitions (such as "Don't take any wizards"). After the first hand is played, the Dragonmaster selects a different "hand" card to affect the second hand of the round, and so on until five hands are played. At that time the Dragonmaster/dealership passes to the player on the dealer's left.

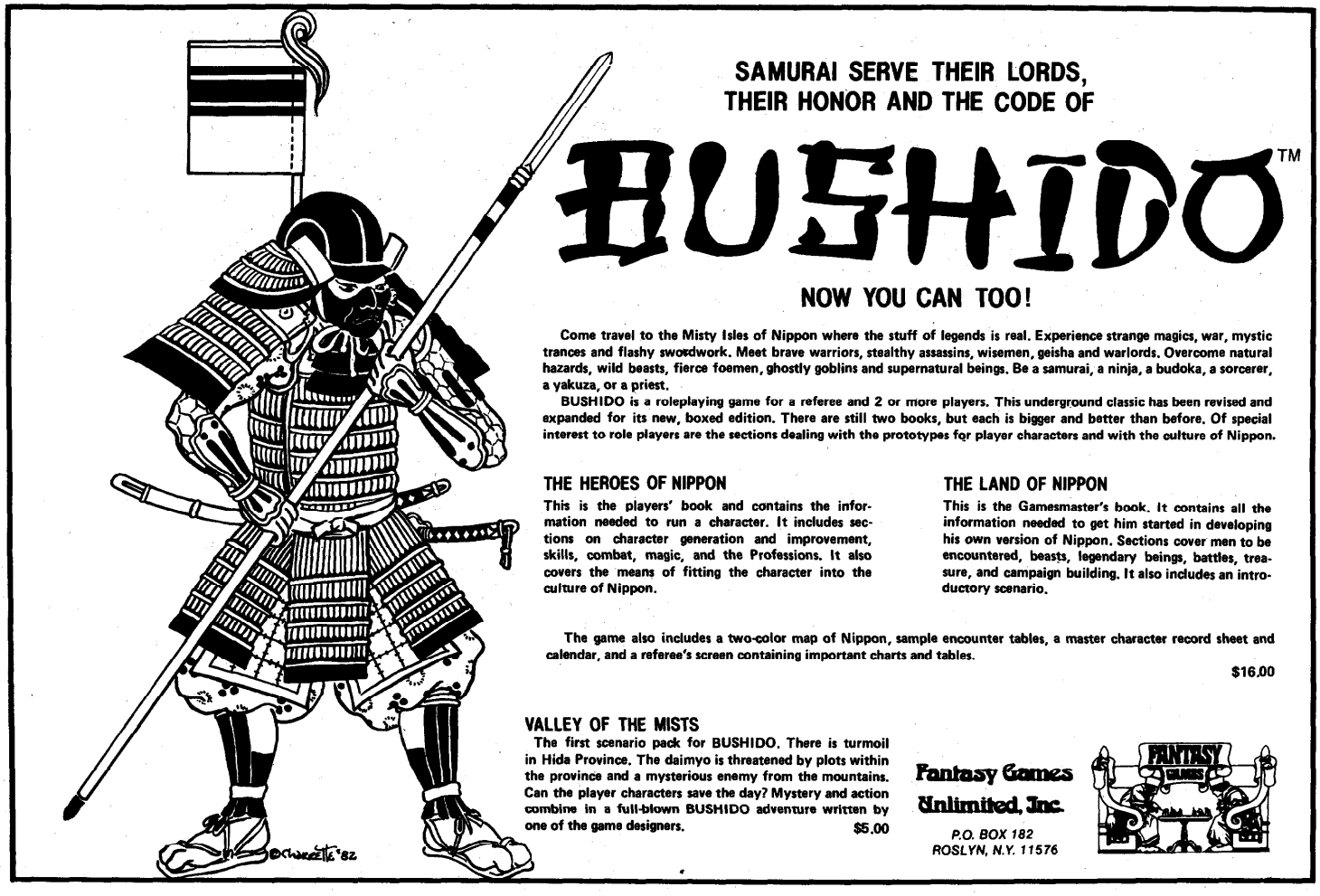
These "hand" cards are the key to the action. Each time any non-dealer takes a card that violates the prohibition in effect during a hand, he must pay a fine in jewels to the Dragonmaster. Naturally, the Dragonmaster attempts to manipulate the tricks to force as many prohibited cards as possible on to the other players.

The Advanced game features the addition of a "powerplay" rule. The dragon card is added to the deck; the player who receives the dragon must either discard it or declare that sometime in the round he will attempt a powerplay. If he chooses to discard it, the Basic game is played for that round; if he declares his intention to powerplay, he must during one hand of the round select a "hand" card, the reverse side of which describes the terms for a successful powerplay. (These powerplays are usually a simple inversion of the "hand" card's basic rule. He might, for instance, opt to try to capture all the wizards during the round). If successful, the player immediately receives a contribution of jewels from all the other players and becomes Dragonmaster for the rest of the round; if unsuccessful, he pays a fine to the Dragonmaster.

The Expert game is like the Advanced game, but allows a "secret powerplay". If no player wants to declare a formal powerplay, any player (except the Dragonmaster) may try to covertly attain the card requirements for one of the powerplays, with the same rewards and risks.

Unfortunately, powerplays of any type are so hard to bring off successfully that they are seldom attempted. This is not important, however, because even the powerplay rules cannot disguise the fact that DRAGONMASTER is a bland and simplistic cardgame. It would have been far better had the designers tried to work some real fantasy features into the course of play. As it is, there are no duels, no quests, no magic objects, no heroics — in short, nothing to justify the fantasy theme of this game.

Yet, this reviewer is reluctant to completely write off a game of such high production values. The game's first-class components can easily be cannibalized for use in any of a number of sword and sorcery role-playing games — the jewels can be used for currency, or for awards given by the game master, and the cards can be used to represent the player characters or the NPCs encountered in the course of play. Unfortunately, as a game in itself, DRAGONMASTER cannot be recommended. 8



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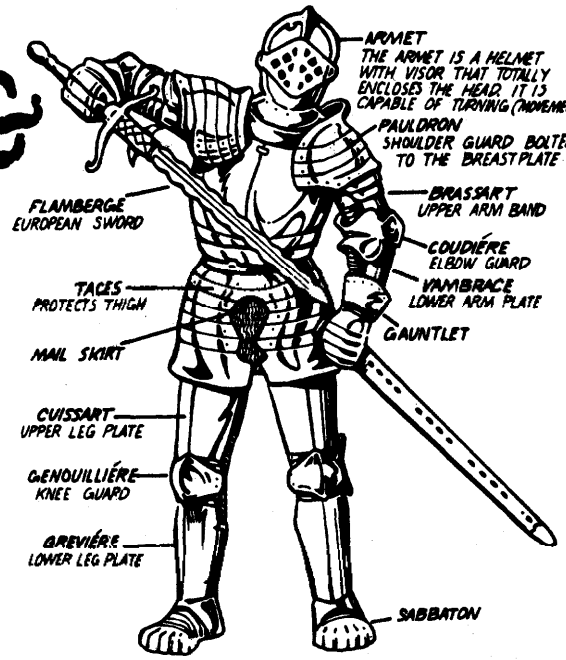

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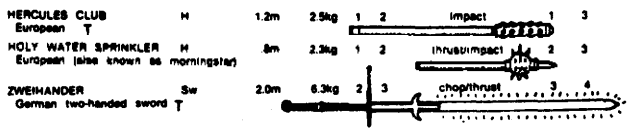

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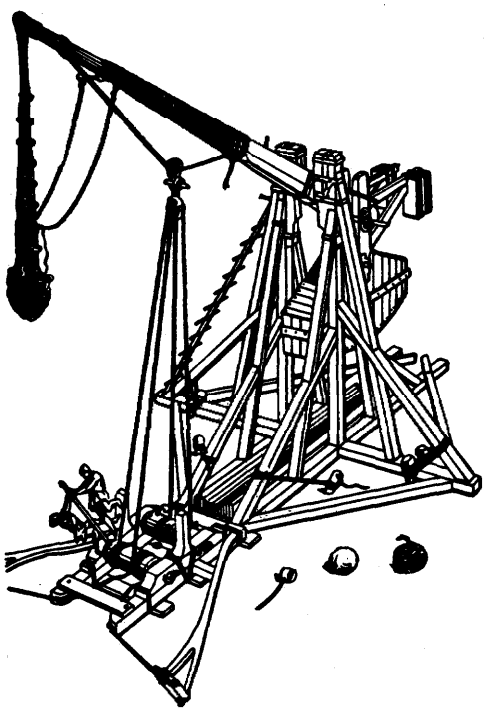

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Beginning with the June 1983 issue (#74) of DRAGON™ Magazine, our readers and our advertisers will benefit from a new feature — the Gamers' Guide.

The Guide will offer a wide selection of advertisements and notices directed specifically at the ever-growing audience of game hobbyists. It will be a place for growing businesses to tell readers about their wares, and a place for established businesses to publicize products of interest to gamers. All of the advertisements in the Gamers' Guide will be grouped on one or more pages, so that readers and potential customers will get a great deal of information without having to leaf through a lot of pages.

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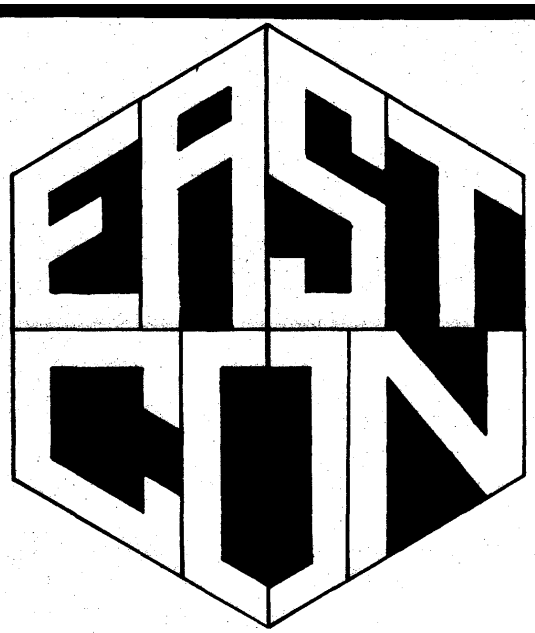

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Convention schedule

MARCON XVIII, May 13-15 — Author James P. Hogan will be guest of honor at this SF/gaming event at the Quality Inn Columbus, 4900 Sinclair Road, Columbus, Ohio. Memberships are $12.50 until April 15, $15 thereafter. Contact: Marcon XVIII, P.O. Box 2583, Columbus OH 43216, phone (614)497-9953.

TEXARKON 1983, May 13-15 — A SF/fantasy/gaming convention to be held in Texarkana, Ark. Scheduled guests include Andrew Offutt, Richard and Wendy Pini, and Robert Asprin. For more information, send SASE to Texarkon, 1021 East 29th, Texarkana AR 75502.

C. W. I. CON '83, May 20-22 — A gaming event, sponsored by Chicago War Gaming Inc., to be held at The Odeum in Villa Park, Ill. Role-playing games, board games, seminars, an auction, and a dealer area will be among the attractions. More information is available from Chicago War Gaming Inc., P.O. Box 217, Tinley Park IL 66477.

CONQUEST IV+10, May 27-29 — Author Kate Wilhelm will be Guest of Honor at this SF convention, to be staged at Howard Johnson's Central in Kansas City, MO. Membership fee is $12 until April 30, possibly higher thereafter. For details, contact ConQuest IV+10, P.O. Box 36212, Kansas City MO 64111.

M. I. G. S. IV, May 29 — The fourth annual gamefest sponsored by the Military Interests and Games Society, slated for the Kitchener-Waterloo Regional Police Association Recreational Centre, RR2, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and admission is free. For information, write to Les Scanlon, President M.I.G.S., 473 Upper Wentworth Street, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L9A 4T6.

WARGAMERS' WEEKEND, June 3-5 — The seventh annual event staged by the Newburyport (Mass.) Wargaming Association and Chris's Game and Hobby Shop. Pre-registration fee (deadline June 2) is $2 for Friday, $3 for Saturday or Sunday. For details, contact Chris's Game and Hobby Shop, 1 Hales Court, Newburyport MA 01950, phone (617)462-8241.

DALLCON '83, June 4-6 — A convention for gamers at the Dunfey Hotel in Dallas, Texas. For information, write to Dallcon '83, P.O. Box 345125, Dallas TX 75230.

R. F. MICROCON III, June 10-12 — Sponsored by the Forest Gamers Club, to be held at the River Forest Community Center, 414 Jackson, River Forest IL 60305. For more information, write to the above address.

UNICORN I, June 10-12 — The first fantasy gaming convention ever in Lexington, Ky., to be staged at Lexington Catholic High School. For registration information, contact convention coordinator Steven J. Isert, c/o Unicorn Adventurers, P.O. Box 12666, Lexington KY 40583.

X-CON 7, June 10-12 — Author Poul Anderson will be among the guests of honor at this SF convention, to be located at the Olympia Spa and Resort in Oconomowoc, Wis. Registration fee is $10 until May 10, $15 thereafter (half price for children under 12), payable to X-Con 7 at P.O. Box 7, Milwaukee WI 53201. A convention brochure and other information can be obtained by writing to the above address.

HUNTCON II, June 16-18 — This second convention effort of the Dragon Hunters' Guild is sponsored by the Fountain Hobby Center in Winfield, W. Va. Several AD&D tournaments are scheduled, plus other contests and special events. Admission is $1 per day or $2 for all three days. For more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Keith Payne, Rt. 1, Box 794, Winfield WV 25213, or call (304)757-9519.

GENGHIS CON V, June 17-19 — A gathering for gamers in Denver, Colo., featuring board games, role-playing games, miniatures, and computer gaming events. Reasonable on-campus housing is available. For details, contact the Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 2945, Littleton CO 80161, phone (303)798-1404.

KOMMAND CON '83, June 18-19 — At the Ohio National Guard Armory in Mansfield, Ohio, this event has something for every type of gamer. For more information, write to the Kommander's Wargaming Club, P.O. Box 2235, Mansfield OH 44905.

STARS, SPELLS & SHELLS, June 18-19 — A mini-con staged by the Game Masters' Guild of Waukegan, to be held at the Zion Ice Arena in Zion, Ill. Admission is $2 per day or $3.50 for the weekend. Contact the Friends Hobby Shop, 1413 Washington St., Waukegan IL 60085, or call (312)336-0790 after 2 p.m.

SEAGA '83, June 24-26 — A wide range of gaming activities is scheduled for this event to be held in Norcross, Ga. For information and registration details, write to SEAGA '83, P.O. Box 930031, Norcross GA 30093.

EASTCON, June 24-26 — More than 3,000 gamers are expected to attend this gathering at Glassboro State College in Glassboro, N. J. The organizing group is a combination of the people who have helped stage Origins, GEN CON® East, and PennCon conventions over the past several years. Seminars, demonstrations, and tournaments will be offered involving most major games and gaming activities. The convention also includes many events of particular interest to science-fiction enthusiasts. Plenty of space for open gaming will be provided, and food and housing are available on the site. For a pre-registration form and more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to EastCon, P.O. Box 139, Middletown NJ 07748.

POLYCON '83, June 24-26 — Sponsored by the Society of Wizards and Warriors of Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, this event promises a large variety of games and related activities. More information can be obtained by writing to the Society of Wizards and Warriors, P.O. Box 168, Julian A. McPhee U.U., Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo CA 93407.

TEXCON 1983, July 2-4 — An extensive schedule of games and related events will be offered at this convention in Austin, Tex. For details, send SASE to David Ladyman, 8028 Gessner #1805, Austin TX 78753.

ARCHON 7, July 8-10 — A SF and gaming convention slated for the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, MO. Gene Wolfe will be Guest of Honor, and the list of other guests includes names such as Joe R. Haldeman, Ed Bryant, and Wilson "Bob" Tucker. Memberships are $12 until June 1, $18 thereafter. To preregister or obtain more information, write to Archon 7, P.O. Box 15852, Overland MO 63114.

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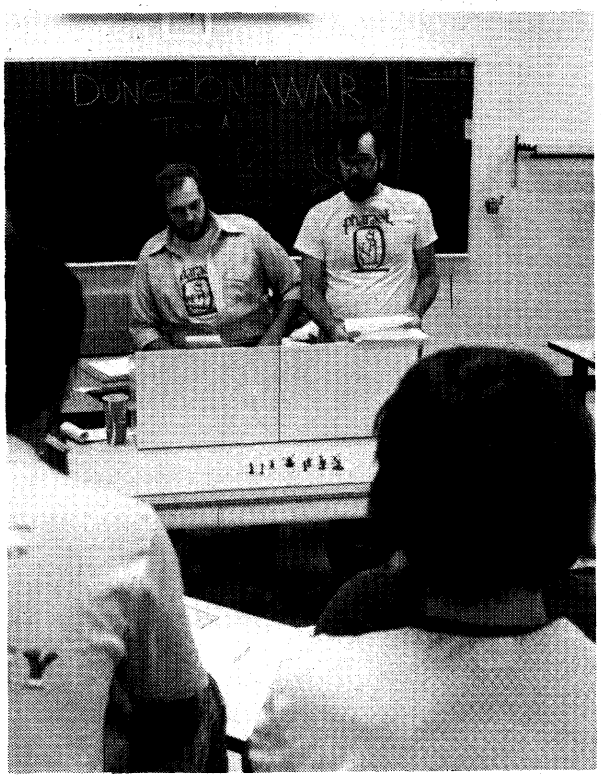

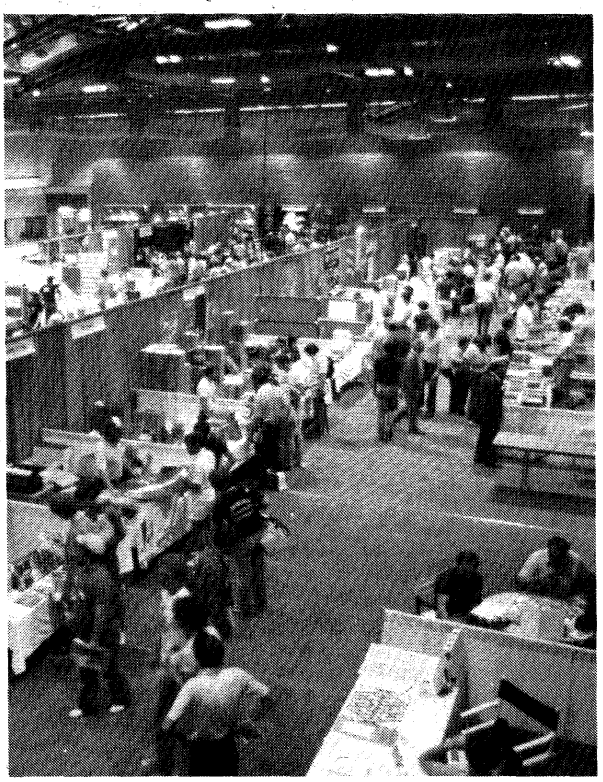

XVI

GEN CON® XVI GAME FAIR UPDATE

The GEN CON XVI Game Fair will make its sixth consecutive visit to the University of Wisconsin - Parkside campus on August 18th - 21st, 1983. The GEN CON Staff has announced plans for a general expansion this year. The expansion will include all the basic convention fare, more miniatures, role playing, and boardgaming; plus more non-gaming activities, more entertainment, a bigger Art Show and a daily Flea Market.

A great deal of work on the logistics of the convention has gone hand-in-hand with the general expansion. Most notably, a revised and expanded pre-registration system. Even at this time the staff is in the process of switching to this new system for information storage, accounting, and pre-registration. In the new system a permanent account number, called an *Express Number*, will be assigned to all customers. This number will instantly connect any GEN CON office record with that particular customer. The *Express Number* will enable the GEN CON Staff to quickly and accurately process correspondence of any type.

If you pre-registered for any of last year's GEN CON game conventions, or have corresponded with or requested information from the GEN CON Staff before March 1st, 1983 you have already been assigned an *Express Number* and you should receive a card bearing your number shortly after you read this.

The new system will help to expedite all correspondence and bookkeeping, including pre-registration, and should be fully operational soon.

The pre-registration brochure for the GEN CON XVI Game Convention will appear in next month's magazine.

Any questions or requests for information should be sent to:

GEN CON XVI INFORMATION
POB 756
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

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(From page 4)
(volume) of effect. It's our feeling that Mr. Gygax meant for the area of effect to be reduced from one cubic yard to one cubic foot, which should have been stated as a factor of 27 instead of a factor of nine. – KM

Just one more tide

Dear Editor:

I feel that some further clarification of tides as set forth in David Axler's article (issue #68) and commented on by Jonathan Roberts (issue #70) is called for. First of all, my experience as a seagoing officer in the U.S. Coast Guard caused me to cringe upon reading Mr. Roberts' comment that ". . . anyone who's spent time near or in the ocean knows that there are two high tides each day." I've spent considerable time "on or near the ocean," and I know that not all areas experience the semidiurnal tide pattern he is obviously familiar with. The lunar gravitational effects he describes are accurate as far as he has taken them.

However, there are two other recognized patterns known as diurnal and mixed tides. In his article on weather, Mr. Axler described a diurnal tide pattern. This pattern is observed along the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico, the Java Sea, and the Tonkin Gulf. These areas experience only a single high and a single low water each day. A mixed tide is a blend of semidiurnal and diurnal tides, characterized by large variations in heights of successive high and low waters. Its tide cycles are also longer than the semidiurnal cycle. Mixed cycles may be observed on the U.S. Pacific coast and many Pacific islands.

If lunar gravitational effects were the only forces affecting a planet surrounded by an envelope of water having a uniform depth, we might expect to see the textbook semidiurnal tide pattern described by Mr. Roberts. Tides, however, have not read the textbook. They are influenced by the gravitational effects of not only the moon, but also the sun, acting in conjunction with the centrifugal force arising from the earth's rotation. They are further distorted by the ocean basins and their continental boundaries. This gives rise to not one, but three recognized tide patterns. Mr. Axler's tide pattern description could easily be accurate, and would not necessarily have to conform to Mr. Roberts' experience. A good explanation of tides is given in Chapter 11 of *Marine Navigation I: Piloting,* by Richard R. Hobbs.

Dan Laliberte
Miami, Fla.

Art advocate

Dear Editor:

In issue #71 of DRAGON, I especially enjoyed the Deities & Demigods of the World of Greyhawk. I was also greatly impressed by the artwork that accompanied the article. Mr. Easley did an outstanding job. His drawings made me think to myself, "Not only does this magazine include an abundance of relevant game playing information, but it also features some of the more outstanding artwork and illustrations in magazines such as this one." I would like to commend Mr. Easley, Mr. Trampier, and the many others who have drawn for DRAGON, for their visual contributions. After all, some pictures are worth more than a thousand words.

Jim Parks
Lebanon, Tenn.

Our sentiments exactly, Jim. Illustrations can be and should be more than just stuff that fills the spaces between blocks of type. We're proud of the artwork we use – and of the people who create it – and it makes all of us feel a lot better when we know people are noticing and appreciating the pictures we print. – KM

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Readers of DRAGON™ Magazine are invited to cast their votes for the most deserving entry in each of seven categories. The award recipients will be announced at the Strategists Club Banquet, to be held on the evening of Thursday, Aug. 18, at the GEN CON® XVI Convention.

After all eligible ballots have been counted, six will be picked in a random drawing, and the voters who filled out those ballots will receive free one-year subscriptions to DRAGON Magazine. (Winners who are subscribers at the time of the drawing will receive extensions on their current subscriptions.)

Only new products released during 1982 are considered eligible for the 1983 Strategists Club Awards. This does not include second (or subsequent) printings, or re-releases of products which were first made available in 1981 or earlier.

The seven categories in which Strategists Club Awards will be given are listed and described below, along with short definitions (when necessary) of what sorts of products qualify for those categories. Write the name (and the manufacturer, if you know it) of the product(s) you wish to vote for in the space(s) provided — and note that it is not necessary to vote for a product in every category.

This printed form need not be used to vote if you'd rather not damage your copy of DRAGON Magazine; a photocopy or a reasonable facsimile (handwritten or typewritten) of the ballot is acceptable. Only one person can vote on a single ballot, and each voter is only allowed to turn in one ballot. Every ballot must include the voter's signature and mailing address. Illegible or improperly marked ballots will be discarded as soon as they are received.

Mail your ballot to **Strategists Club Awards, c/o Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147.** Do not include a ballot in the same envelope with any other correspondence. Ballots must be postmarked no later than **Aug. 1, 1983,** in order to be eligible for the tabulation and in order for the voter to be eligible for the drawing for free subscriptions to DRAGON Magazine.

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SPIRITS, STARS, AND SPELLS by L. Sprague de Camp and Catherine Crook de Camp: 348 pp., illus., $17.00, 0-913896-17-9. *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction:* "Spirits, Stars, and Spells is the usual meticulous de Camp work . . . It is a fascinating study of magic, in history and practice." Each chapter tells, in highly readable prose, the story of a particular magical concept and describes those men and women who developed it and those who then fell under its spell. And, the authors explain why civilized men still turn to modern Merlins for refuge, protection, and inspiration.

THE HAND OF ZEI by L. Sprague de Camp. Color cover, based on a color sketch by Edd Cartier. 22 b&w drawings by Cartier. $20.50, 0-913896-20-9. *Publishers Weekly*: "Rousing and lighthearted entertainment. Dirk is a typical de Camp protagonist—a mild-mannered homebody forced to be a hero." *SF Chronicle*: "Set in his Viagens Interplanetarias series, *Hand of Zei* is a swashbuckling adventure story, one of the very best novels that de Camp has ever written. You aren't likely to find many better books for your money."

SCIENCE FICTION WRITER'S WORKSHOP I: An Introduction to Fiction Mechanics, by Barry B. Longyear: vi + 161 pp., paper, $7.50, 0-913896-18-7. *Booklist:* "With clear prose and a resolutely commonsense attitude, he covers the basic concepts of fiction, the peculiarities of SF, and the preparation and marketing of manuscripts." *Analog Science Fiction-Science Fact:* "He explains well and illustrates better, and you could not ask for a more effective teacher. If you have any hope of becoming a science-fiction—or other—writer, buy *Workshop*. It will help you more than any other three texts." Mr. Longyear has won the Hugo and Nebula awards, and the John W. Campbell award for the best new science fiction writer. He says that he would be unable to write this book ten years from now, when he will be too far removed from the feeling of what it is like to be a *new* writer.

THE MIRROR'S IMAGE by Francis Grose & Dan Cragg: xi + 144 pp., illustrated, $9.50. 0-913896-10-1. *Military Review:* ". . . a fascinating reprint of an 18th century satire on the British army at the time of the American Revolution . . . the book surveys the faults, weaknesses, and ambitions of officers and soldiers . . . There is a chuckle on every page . . . both historical and amusing."

TALES OF THREE HEMISPHERES by Lord Dunsany with foreword by H. P. Lovecraft: xviii + 140 pp., color dj and frontis and 16 b&w drawings by Tim Kirk, $9.00. 0-913896-04-7. *Booklist:* "A charming new edition, comprising a sampler of Lord Dunsany's exotic tales, those exceptionally rich and imaginative stories which attracted and influenced modern writers of fantasy." *Science Fiction Review:* "Dunsany at the height of his powers . . . a gorgeous edition, with flawless reproduction of the black and white Tim Kirk illustrations, plus the painting used for both frontispiece and jacket."

ON WRITING SCIENCE FICTION: The Editors Strike Back, by George H. Scithers, Darrell Schweitzer, & John M. Ford. $17.50, 0-913896-19-5, vi*+ 227 pp., Publication date: Sept 1981. The experience of the editors of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* distilled into a complete guide to writing science fiction. Separate chapters cover Idea, Plot, Character, Background, Science, Tragedy, and Comedy. Twelve stories, each a first sale by its author, have been selected to illustrate the main points of the book. A foreword by Isaac Asimov gives an overall look at the task of becoming an SF writer, and an appendix by the editors explains exactly how to prepare a manuscript for publication.

Jack Williamson: "The advice to the new writer is clear, practical, and well-proven. The stories are aptly chosen, and interesting in themselves. The comments from their authors give the reader a real feeling of what the writer does and how he does it." Algis Budrys: "Highly recommended." *Locus* ". . . after reading this book . . . I'd be surprised if you didn't have a damn sight better chance of being published."

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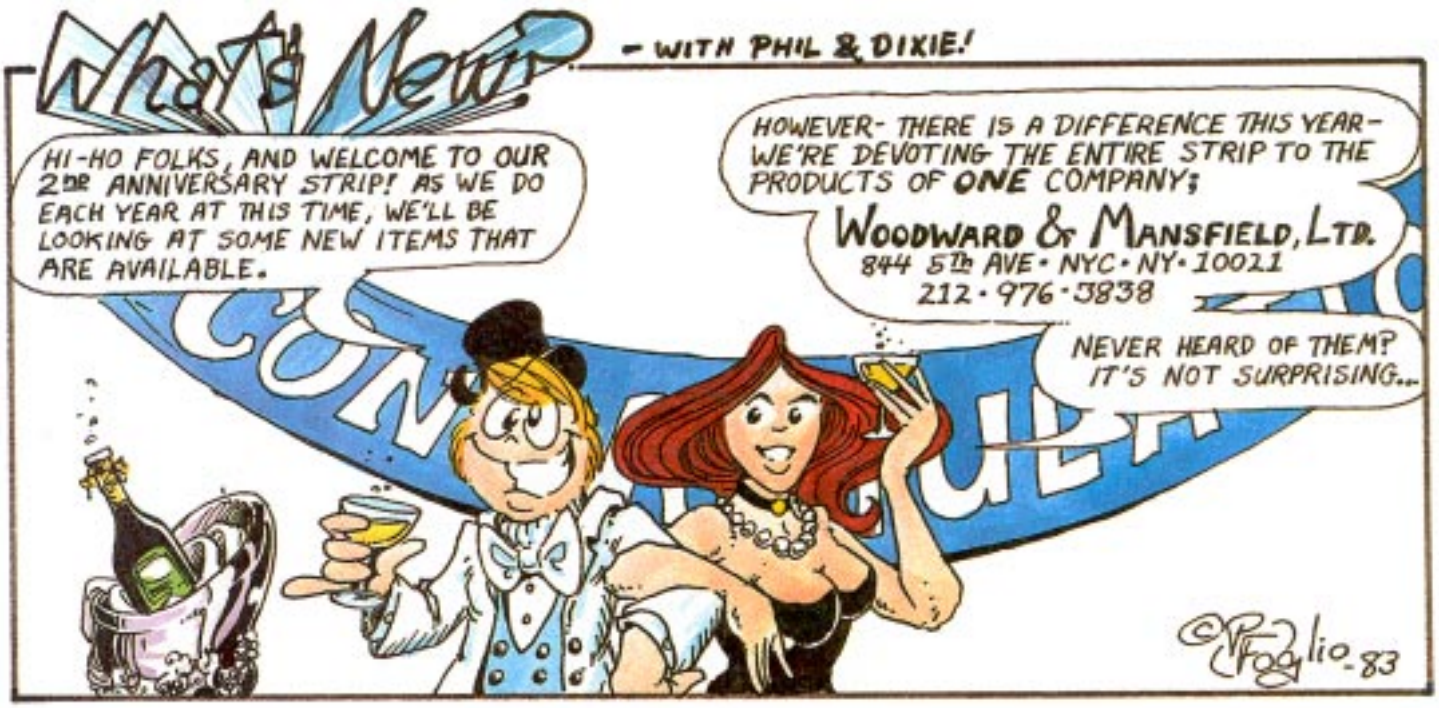
What's New
- WITH PHIL & DIXIE!
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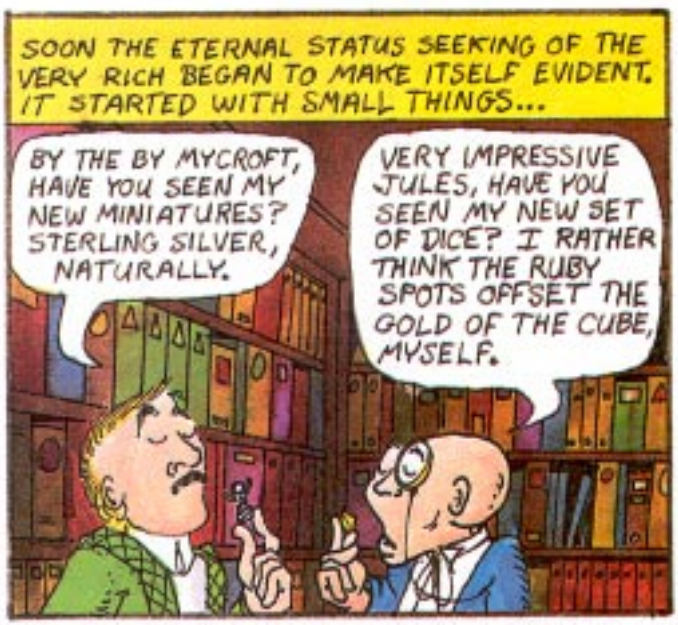
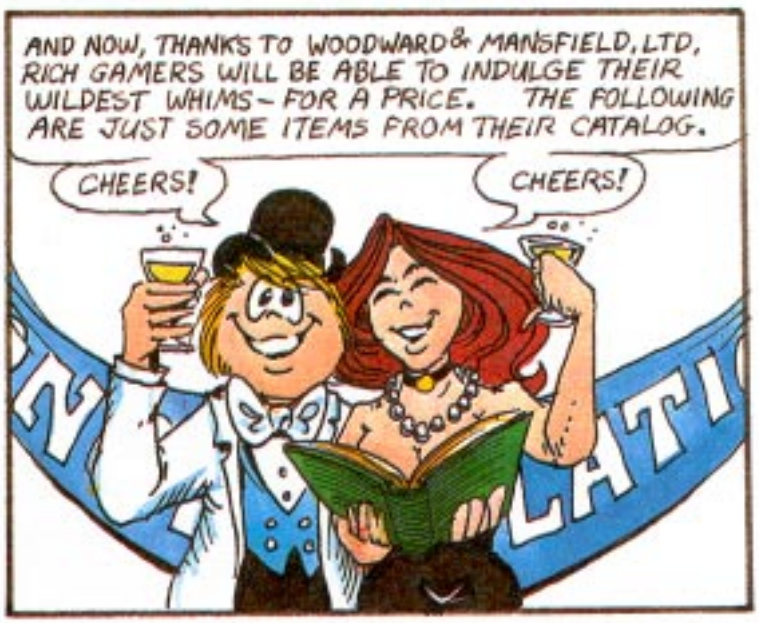
WITH THE POPULARIZATION OF FRP GAMES OF LATE, IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY WERE SEIZED UPON BY THE IDLE RICH.
I SAY, CECILEÉ, I HAVEN'T HAD SO MUCH FUN SINCE I SOLD PATER'S POLO PONIES TO THAT DOG-FOOD COMPANY!

IT QUICKLY BECAME THE THING TO DO, REPLACING YACHTING, RAQUET BALL AND PERRIER
OH I SAY, ROGER, A TROLL HAS APARENTLY JUST JUMPED UP AND STAVED YOUR SKULL IN.
WHAT? WITHOUT EVEN BEING INTRODUCED?
AFRAID SO
EGAD. AM I DEAD?
QUITE.
FUNNY, I HADN'T NOTICED.


SOON THE ETERNAL STATUS SEEKING OF THE VERY RICH BEGAN TO MAKE ITSELF EVIDENT. IT STARTED WITH SMALL THINGS...
BY THE BY MYCROFT, HAVE YOU SEEN MY NEW MINIATURES? STERLING SILVER, NATURALLY.
VERY IMPRESSIVE JULES, HAVE YOU SEEN MY NEW SET OF DICE? I RATHER THINK THE RUBY SPOTS OFFSET THE GOLD OF THE CUBE, MYSELF.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CHEERS!

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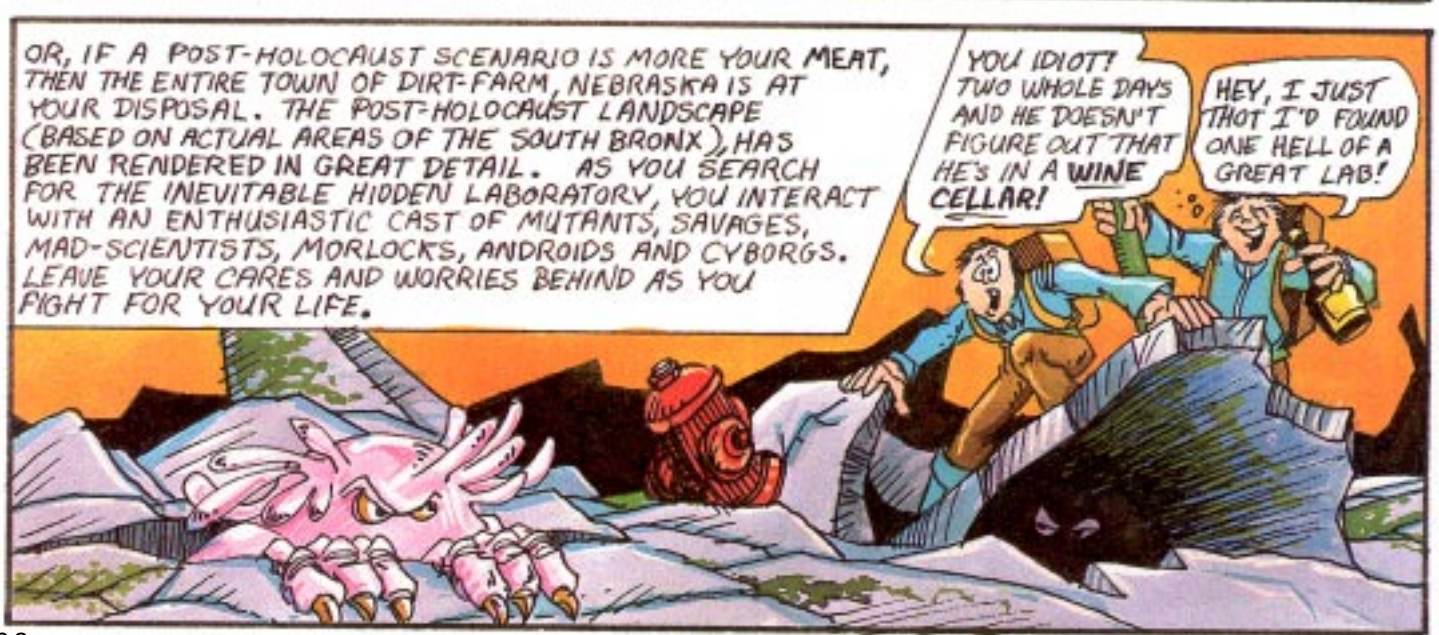
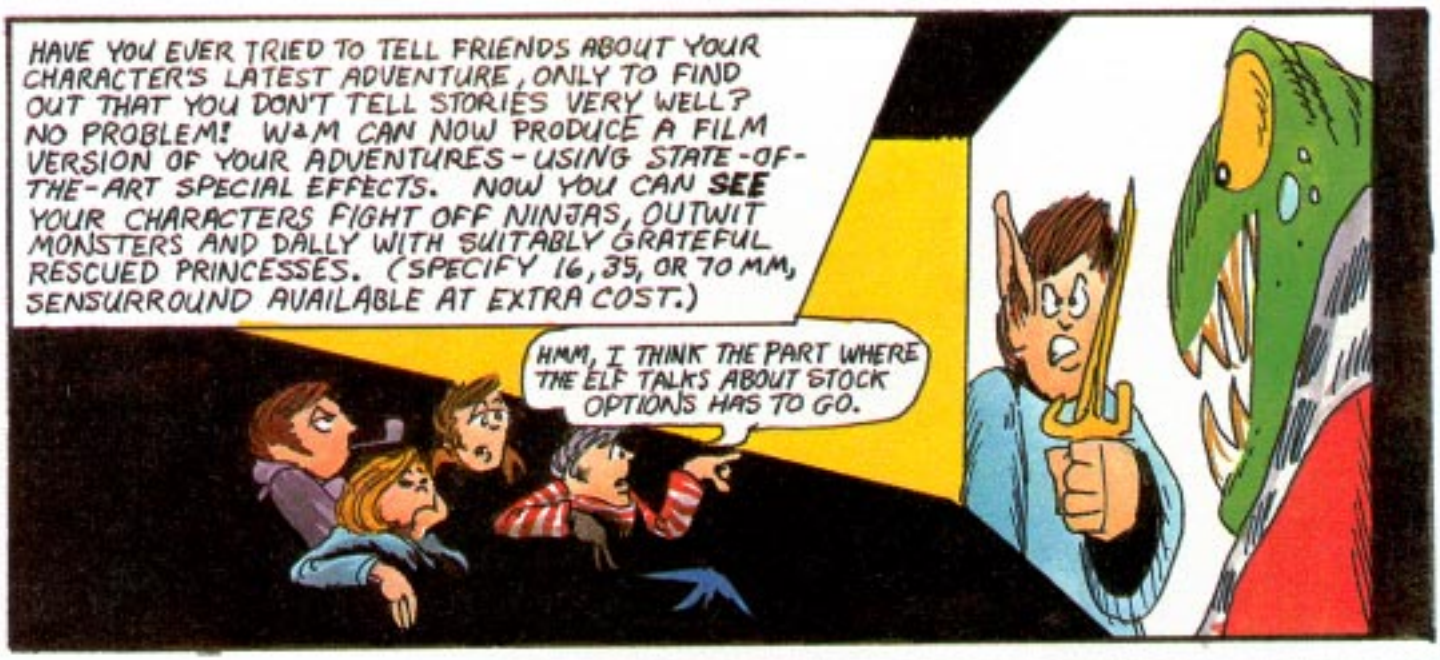
NO! NOT THE BLOWTORCH OF POWER!!
SSSSSSSSS


OR, IF A POST-HOLOCAUST SCENARIO IS MORE YOUR MEAT, THEN THE ENTIRE TOWN OF DIRT-FARM, NEBRASKA IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL. THE POST-HOLOCAUST LANDSCAPE (BASED ON ACTUAL AREAS OF THE SOUTH BRONX), HAS BEEN RENDERED IN GREAT DETAIL. AS YOU SEARCH FOR THE INEVITABLE HIDDEN LABORATORY, YOU INTERACT WITH AN ENTHUSIASTIC CAST OF MUTANTS, SAVAGES, MAD-SCIENTISTS, MORLOCKS, ANDROIDS AND CYBORGS. LEAVE YOUR CARES AND WORRIES BEHIND AS YOU FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE.
YOU IDIOT! TWO WHOLE DAYS AND HE DOESN'T FIGURE OUT THAT HE'S IN A WINE CELLAR!
HEY, I JUST THOT I'D FOUND ONE HELL OF A GREAT LAB!


HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO TELL FRIENDS ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER'S LATEST ADVENTURE, ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT YOU DON'T TELL STORIES VERY WELL? NO PROBLEM! W&M CAN NOW PRODUCE A FILM VERSION OF YOUR ADVENTURES - USING STATE-OF-THE-ART SPECIAL EFFECTS. NOW YOU CAN **SEE** YOUR CHARACTERS FIGHT OFF NINJAS, OUTWIT MONSTERS AND DALLY WITH SUITABLY GRATEFUL RESCUED PRINCESSES. (SPECIFY 16, 35, OR 70 MM, SENSURROUND AVAILABLE AT EXTRA COST.)
HMM, I THINK THE PART WHERE THE ELF TALKS ABOUT STOCK OPTIONS HAS TO GO.

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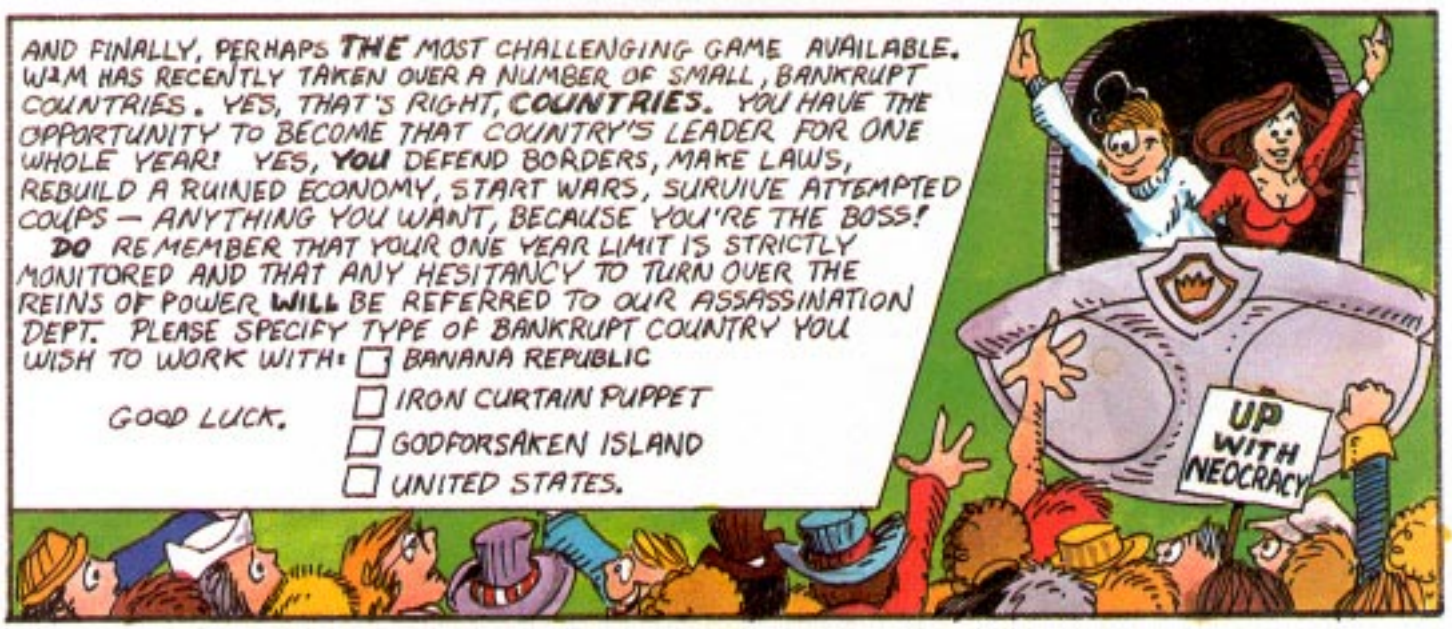
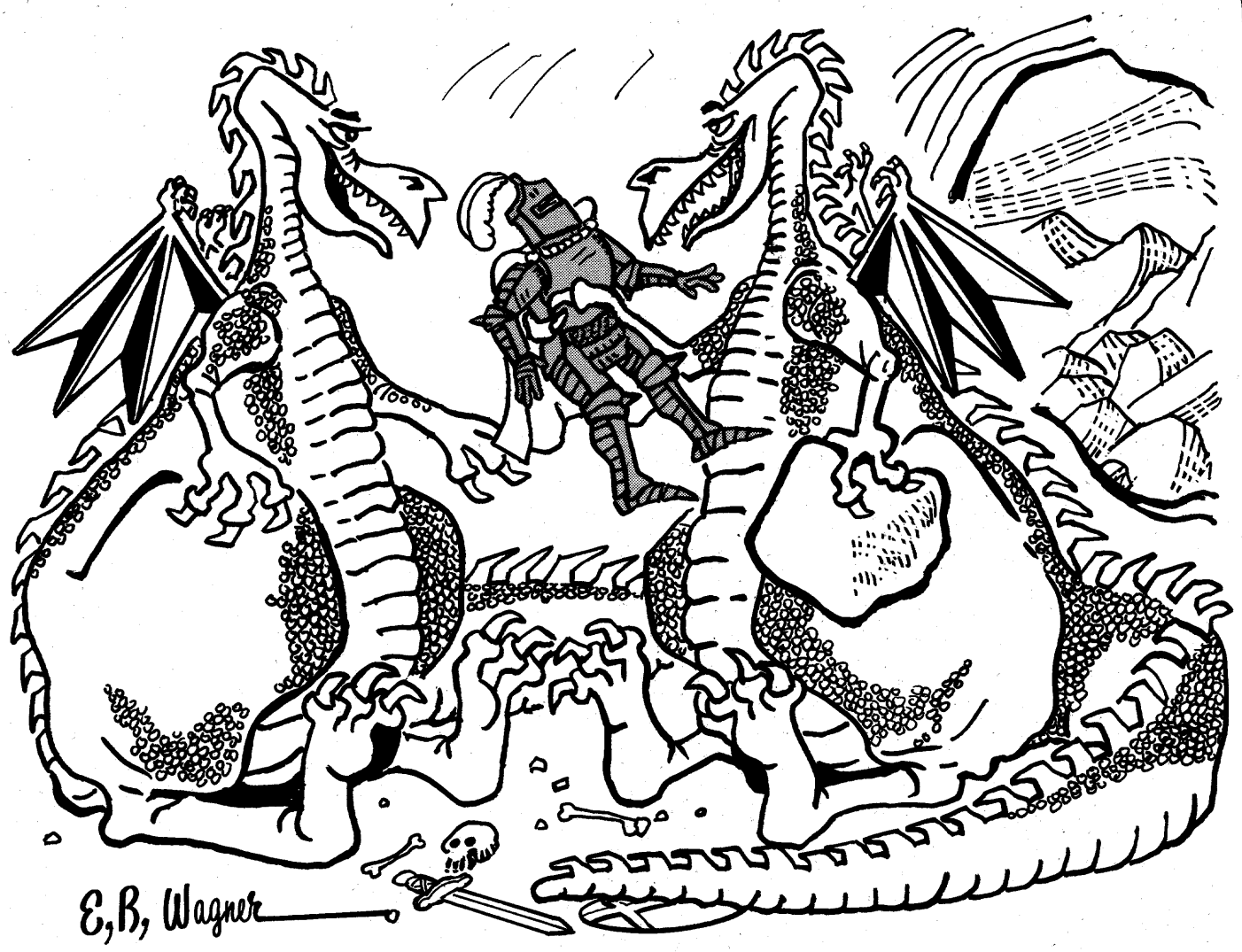
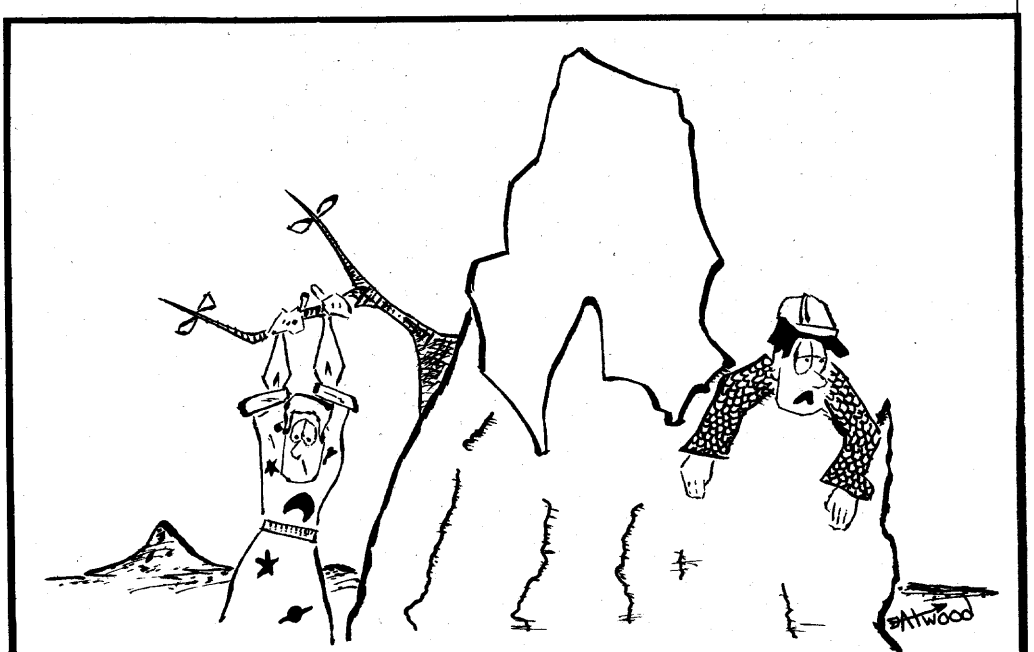
I'LL **GET** YOU FOR THIS, LIONEL.
I COULD'VE **SWORN** I FILLED 'ER UP BEFORE WE LEFT!
COAL
COAL


AND FINALLY, PERHAPS **THE** MOST CHALLENGING GAME AVAILABLE. W&M HAS RECENTLY TAKEN OVER A NUMBER OF SMALL, BANKRUPT COUNTRIES. YES, THAT'S RIGHT, **COUNTRIES.** YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME THAT COUNTRY'S LEADER FOR ONE WHOLE YEAR! YES, **YOU** DEFEND BORDERS, MAKE LAWS, REBUILD A RUINED ECONOMY, START WARS, SURVIVE ATTEMPTED COUPS — ANYTHING YOU WANT, BECAUSE YOU'RE THE BOSS!
DO REMEMBER THAT YOUR ONE YEAR LIMIT IS STRICTLY MONITORED AND THAT ANY HESITANCY TO TURN OVER THE REINS OF POWER **WILL** BE REFERRED TO OUR ASSASSINATION DEPT. PLEASE SPECIFY TYPE OF BANKRUPT COUNTRY YOU WISH TO WORK WITH:
☐ BANANA REPUBLIC
☐ IRON CURTAIN PUPPET
☐ GODFORSAKEN ISLAND
☐ UNITED STATES.
GOOD LUCK.
UP WITH NEOCRACY

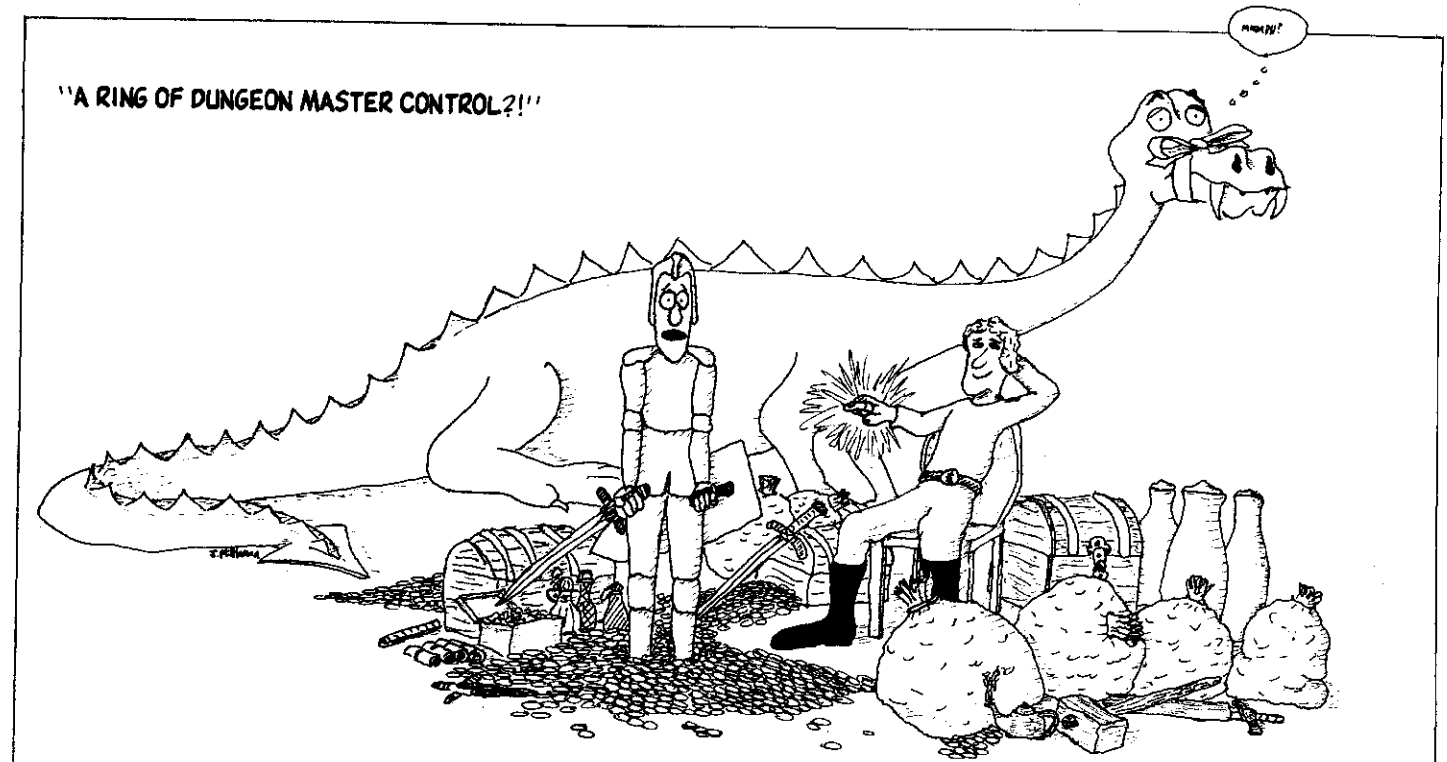
WORMY
WAH!
Ogre! HALT!
RAOG?
Now listen to me...
Do you follow me?
PUH... WUD 'E SAY?
GOT ME.
KRAK!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
GREAT HARMD!
CLOSE THE DOOR! QUICKLY!
CRRREEEEE!!!
SLAM!
TRAMP ©1983

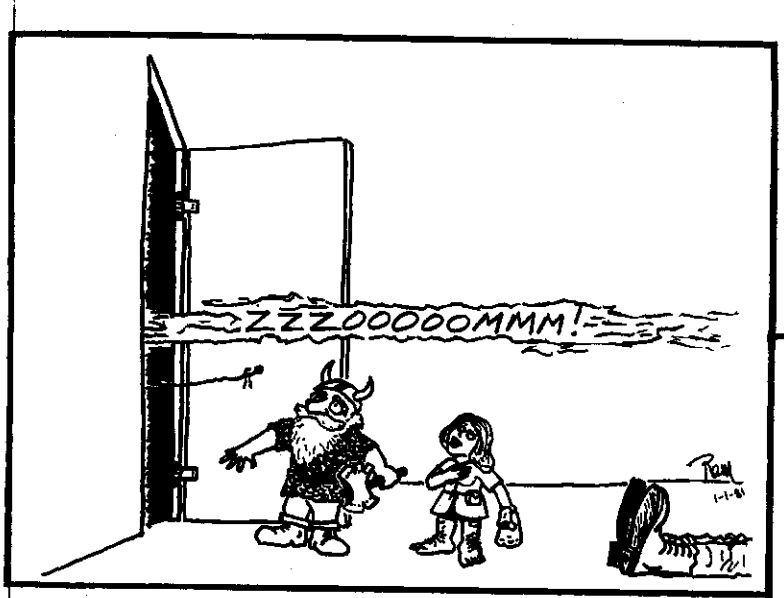


"TAKE A BOULDER AND BREAK THE HARD OUTER SHELL. THE INSIDE IS GOOD EATING."

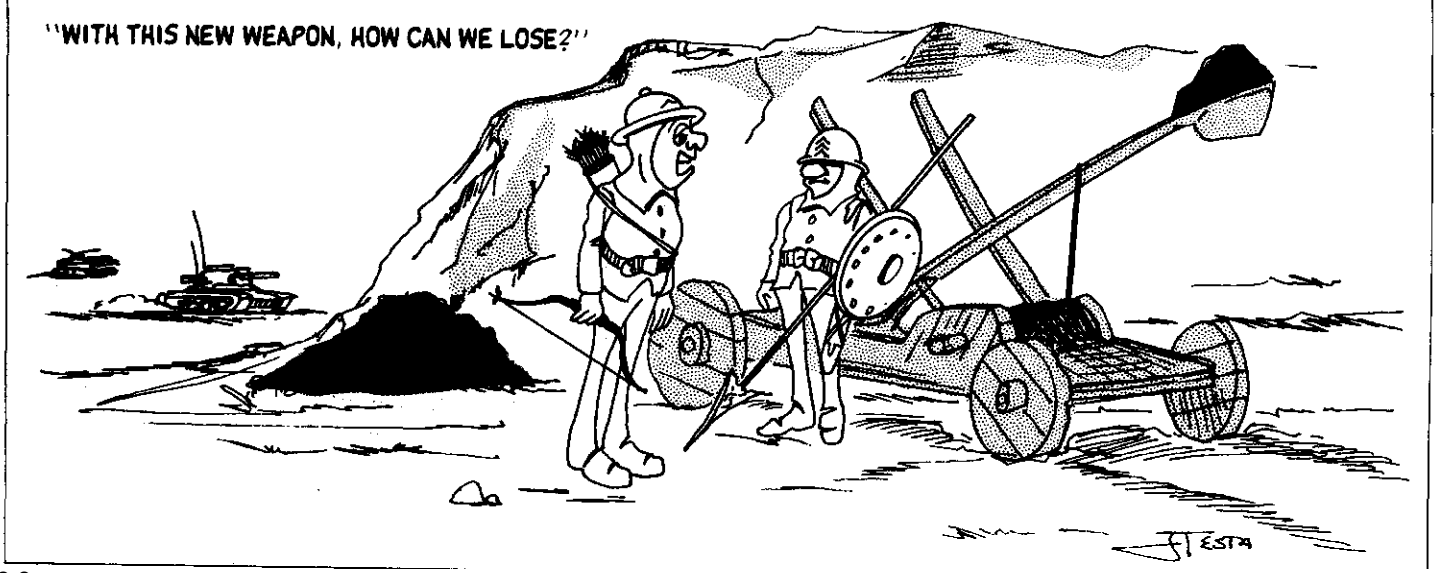


"YOUR TELEPORT SPELL MAY NEED A LITTLE WORK."





"WHEW! GOOD THING US HALFLINGS AND DWARVES ARE SO SHORT OR THAT BALLISTA TRAP WOULD'VE GOTTEN US! RIGHT, BIG JOHN?"



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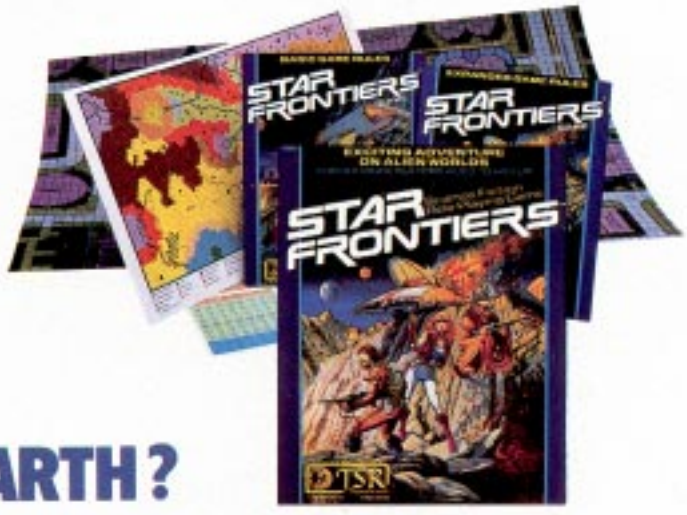

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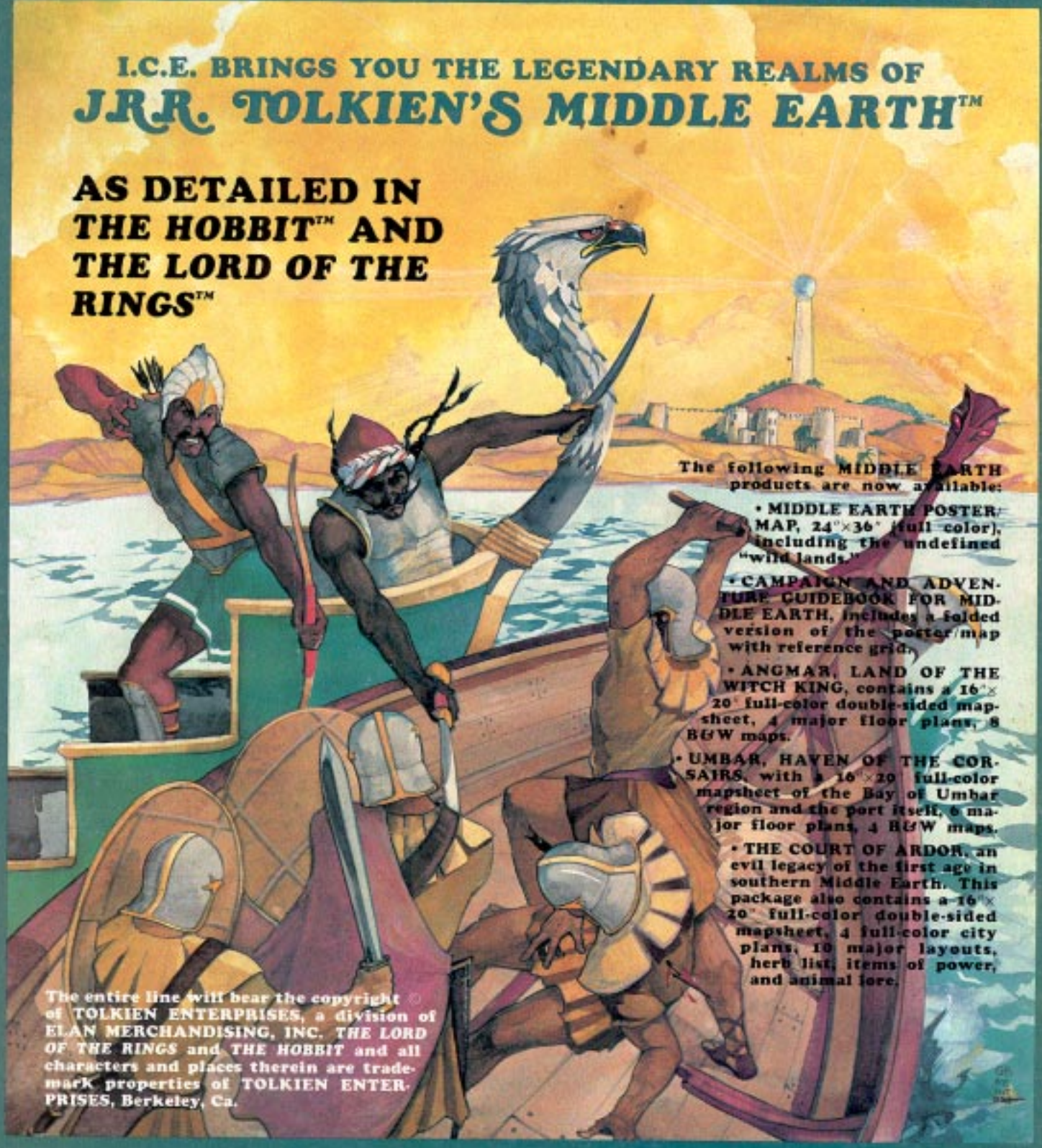

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