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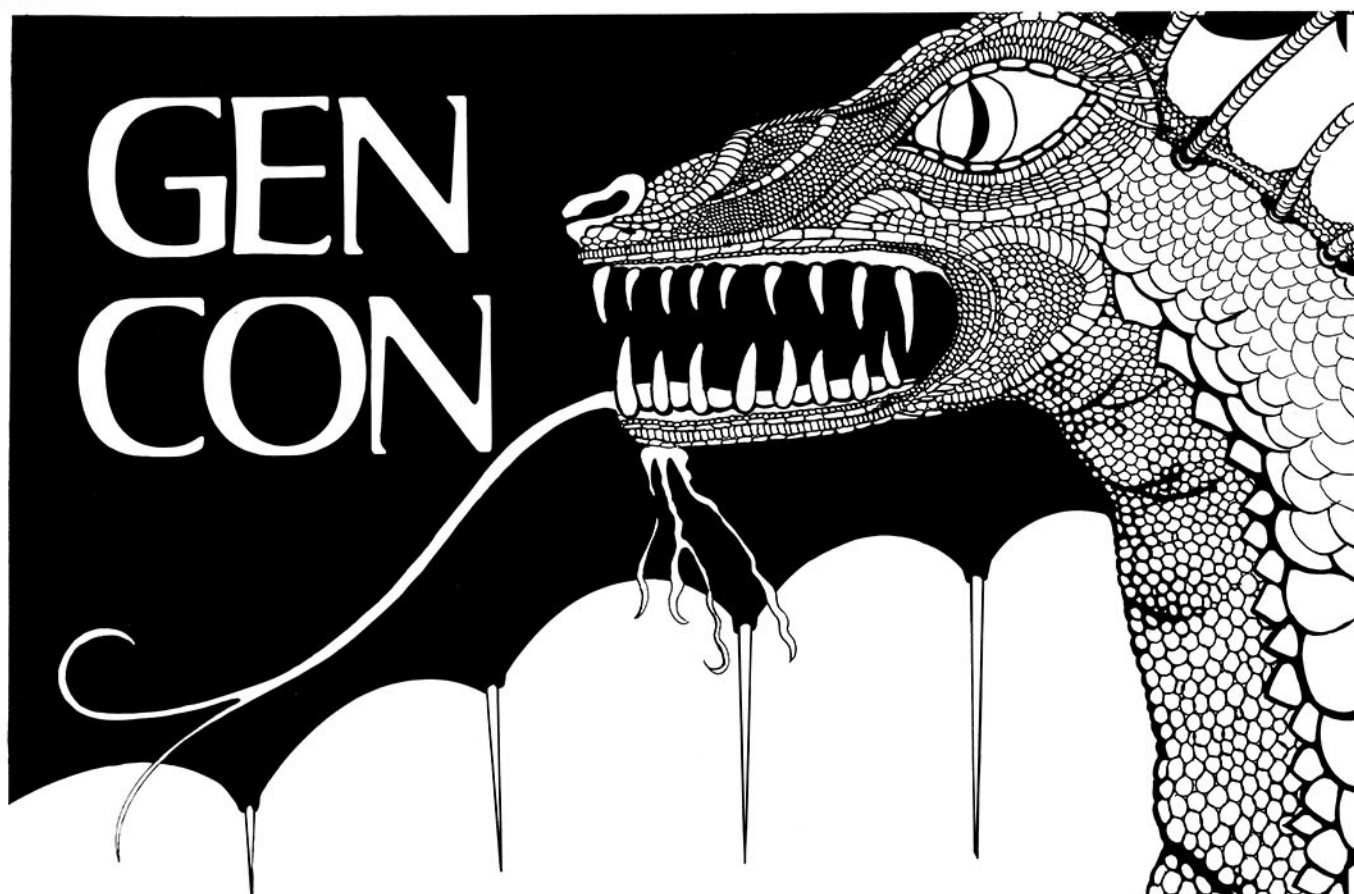
A DAY IN THE CITY-STATE
by Ronald Pehr



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SIEMBIEDA - 80



JOCULAR JUDGMENTS

On March 29-30, 1980 in a small hamlet to the northeast of Decatur called Detroit one of the most important events in recent history of the City-states occurred when Bob Bledsaw, founder of Judges Guild, Incorporated and Chuck Anshell, famed editor-in-chief for said Guildhall, met and actually shook hands with one Harlan Ellison, noted science-fiction author, playwright and lecturer. The fans, utterly appalled at this lack of proper decorum decided that the annual, involuntary pie-eating contest must begin immediately and because of their exhibited lack of good taste during the hand-shaking incident, the local townfolk neglected to invite the three guests to participate.

Later that same convention, the local constabulary received many complaints from irate citizens about an alleged "mad chase" which had the town's coach traffic tied up for hours. It is rumored that the three guests were so happy over the treatment they received that they decided to get autographs from all the convention promoters (the Order of Liebowitz) and the fan attendees!

This highly unusual occurrence was made to seem even more unlikely by the reports that the fans, being chased by Bledsaw, Ellison and Anshell, were being pursued by an even more unlikely group - headed by a Fuzzy (no less), whose species is known to be friendly! Multitudes of other aliens were reported seen, as well, including a well-known galactic trader and his - er - secretary and a mercenary (who refus-

ed to identify himself) who was accompanied by a bevy of no less than 6 (count 'em 6) of this planet's most beautiful women.

Frankly, this reporter tends to find this whole story a bit unbelievable and over-stated. In fact the only part of it that I heard which would seem to logically be possible is that at the traditional feast at Kubla Khan's restaurant, the ancient wizard, Zoc the Great, who was unable to attend in person, took temporary control of my body and amazed all with a real balloon which was skewered on a long, metal needle of unknown composition. I have no recollection of the happenings of that evening, however, which lends credence to this story.

. Samurai Editor

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ADVENTURERS WANTED FOR EXPEDITION

A group of hearty adventurers are setting sail after the festival Imbolg in the month of the Crocadile for Tarantis to the far east. The good captain of the Bold Morn is to deposit the group on Shillelah Isle at Dark Odyssey. Thence we will take a fish sloop to Bastinadi where we will be met by the ambassador of the Wizard of Wisperag. The high magician is rumored to have lost a kinsman to the petty chief of the Skulks, a nomadic party of clansmen commanded by Beastly Brisbarf. The wizard is particular about the composition of this group and is mostly concerned that no south-handed men be included. He has promised riches and power for the head of Brisbarf. Further details can be had by the expedition head, Sellsword Forlinglarn the Savage staying at the Mermaid Tavern. Weapons are not to be furnished...gruel and hardtack is.



A Day in the City State

by ronald Pehr

Drfaf, of the Clan of the Changing Rat, had traveled far from his native land to seek adventure. He had come to the City State in hopes of meeting others who also would risk all for Gold and Glory, perhaps even encounter the most famous explorer whose exploits had become known even in his far land - Maramis the Elf. Drfaf had taken an inn room in the Merchant's Quarter, belting on his good sword and still wearing the stiff gray leather armor favored by fighters of his tribe he walked out into the streets to take the measure of this greatest of cities.

The streets and taverns are the marketplaces of the City State. So Drfaf was not surprised, when as he sought entrance to a tavern to quench his thirst, that he was stopped by a man, a dealer in livestock, who had a fine bullock to sell. He was not surprised, he was insulted! The asking price was far too high - because he wore the clothes of an outlander did the merchant take him for a gullible fool? - rudely did Drfaf answer, turning scornfully away.

As Drfaf began to enter the tavern, he was tripped from behind. He kept his balance, whirled, but saw no one save a shabbily dressed man leaning against the building front. The man smiled.

This was no ordinary loafer. The man was an elite officer of the Overlord, who was wont to dress in ill fashion as a disguise, and wander the common sections of the City State. He would insult or jostle those who were obvious strangers, hoping to provoke a duel. The officer carried only a dagger, with which he was most skillful. By challenging better armed opponents, he kept his skills sharp, and if a stranger

died...who would avenge a stranger?

When confronted by Drfaf, the officer answered forthrightly and mockingly, then drew his dagger. Drfaf rightly suspected that the shabbily attired man was not what he seemed. What common yokel with only a dagger would challenge an armed and armored foe?

Swift was the dagger! The officer was slashing even as Drfaf drew his sword, cutting him, but he had challenged one stranger too many. Drfaf's wound was slight, his anger increased his speed, and he slew the foe with a backhand cut. Not one day was he within city walls, Drfaf of the Clan of the Changing Rat had killed his first man.

The cattle merchant - who had known the identity of the dead officer - had been watching, hoping to see Drfaf's blood flow, and he now revealed who the youth's opponent had been. It was not likely that the constabulary - when they arrived as they inevitably would - might credit the word of a stranger that the officer had been slain in self-defense. Truth, justice, honor, righteousness would all mean little compared to who had been the "honest" officer and who the stranger. Drfaf gave a practical sigh then took a practical remedy.

He tendered to the merchant ten full pieces of gold that the man should cry alarm and then direct approaching constables in pursuit of an imaginary person that the merchant would call out had fled. This was done, and as a half-dozen constables charged from the very tavern that Drfaf entered, he did so unmolested as they ran down the street in pursuit of a phantom.

Drfaf emerged after a drink or

two to find that other eyes had witnessed the fray. A man approached; slim, quick of movement, wearing a belted sword. He revealed that he had seen the killing, knew the identity of the victim, and his silence was assured if Drfaf would come meet some of his friends. In truth, the newcomer had been much awed by Drfaf's skill at swordplay and wanted to enlist his aid in an adventure.

The slim man led Drfaf to a dimly lit inn on a narrow street. Three rogues sat around a table, ceasing to swill cheap wine only long enough to acknowledge the newcomer's return. One of them wore a sword, as Drfaf and his guide, the others had maces tucked into their belts, the maces showing signs of prior use. This in itself was not alarming. While dueling is forbidden within the City State, many men carry weapons as all parts are not safe and the land beyond the walls is of Chaos; neither farmer, merchant, nor gentleman dares travel unarmed.

Though Drfaf knew it not, his new "friends" were of Chaos. They were bandits. Now, however, they desired to go adventuring and had been seeking brave allies. They would descent into the Dungeon of Kroom!

This catacomb was ancient before the City State was founded, having been a stronghold of a Wizard from out of the Cold Lands. An entrance was to be found in the unused cellar of the Sword Rat Rest, an infamous den in Thieves' Quarter. The nefarious inhabitants of Thieve's Quarter all knew of it, scoffed at legends of buried treasure, yet though they claimed it to be naught but rooms full of dust and cobwebs none of them ever dared venture into it. Some few

had gone at various times - they had not returned. The bandits proposed to enter, with Drfaf, in search of the legendary Ogre's Treasure. Drfaf had come to the City State seeking such adventure, but not with such obvious ruffians as these. While he did not yet know their true profession, he already knew he would not trust them at his back in the Dungeon of Kroom.

Thus, it came to pass that when a trio of constables confronted the party, denouncing the bandits and attempting to capture, Drfaf aided them. Drfaf lashed out at the leader; parry, cut - Drfaf was hurt! - then Drfaf slew him. Quickly then, Drfaf cut down another, calling out in common-cause to the constables. The remainder of the bandits fled, pursued by the constables, Drfaf ran in the other direction - still bleeding from a sword cut.

His steps took him to Lawful Haven, sole diocese of the Bishop Pontifico. The Bishop was a Lawful Cleric who oversaw the Haven which Maramis herself had founded for those in need. By great good chance Drfaf had stumbled to the very doorstep of the one whose reputation had brought him to the City State.

Inside the Haven at this time was a Priest who saw to the caring for the needy. A bleeding young man was needy indeed! Seeing Drfaf wandering the streets outside, the Priest brought him in and by the Miracle of Holy Curing granted to Lawful Clergy did cause the blood to cease flowing and the wounds to close of themselves. Then, hearing Drfaf's story, the Priest did summon Maramis herself from her abode at the nearby Scholars' Inn.

Maramis welcomed the adventurer. With others the Elf knew and could trust, they went to Sword Rat Rest. There, Maramis bought, of her own coin, all for all within. The landlord waxed merry, and gave leave for the party to delve into the tavern's basement. If it became known that adventurers dared enter the legendary Dungeon of Kroom through his establishment, the landlord might expect increased patronage by curiosity seekers and he was glad at the Elf's coming.

Soon within the halls of the dungeon they met peril. Ancient structures are often the lairs of strange and terrible beasts of prey. Able to survive in hibernation for long times without food, these monsters emerge infrequently to hunt - one reason the walls of the City State are high! - and are a peril to any who explore their haunts. This that they met was a Giant Scorpion!

Maramis cast forth a Magic Missile, but the bolt of Sorcery glanced harmlessly from the monster's armored hide. The Giant Scorpion scuttled forward, snatching at Welkin the Bard with a jagged claw. Torn to his vitals, the Bard died instantly. Though too late to save their friend, Drfaf, Sorthon the Archer, and Hawk the Ranger did avenge by sharp steel. Such rapid victory was good fortune for now a new menace came upon them.

Whether of the savage tribes of Chaos, civilized inhabitants of the City State, or inhabitants of the dungeon, the Orcs were within it now. There were as many Orcs as adventurers and they too were well-armed. However these Orcs had come here, they soon made it known that they had been hunting the Giant Scorpion to slay it for food. Orcs have undiscerning palates, they are as much predators as the Scorpion had been. But, the adventurers had slain the monster, had certainly no wish to eat it, and the Orcs were pleased that they might dine well without risk of facing ripping pincers or venomous tail. So, the Orcs were glad enough to let them pass without incident.

Maramis and her men did not find the sought-after treasure. It seemed as if those they did encounter within the dungeon were poorer than they. Once, Kodolds camped in a bare room with naught but cheap weaponry and tattered armor - were they explorers or inhabitants of the dungeon? - would have taken up their small bows to shoot at them. Before the loathsome little creatures could do so, Maramis gestured, recited a word and the Spell of Sleep was cast. The Kobolds succumbed. So ragged in aspect and poverty-stricken were the Kobolds that the party left them

where they had fallen and pressed on.

They came at last to a huge chamber, so vast that even keen-eyed Maramis could not see the opposite side or the ceiling. However, the torch she carried must have been seen for a voice called out. The party stopped and waited.

At last, Maramis perceived an armored figure mounted on a horse. At his side walked young man in leather armor. They halted at the range of the torch's light and the horseman issued a challenge. He would joust against any man of the party and would not be denied. That none of them were mounted - and could not have brought a horse into the dungeon through the narrow staircases, halls, and doorways they had traveled - did not seem to disturb their challenger. Such are the ways of Chaos!

Hoping to forestall useless melee, Maramis cast a Spell of Charm. She was greatly surprised to see, that as she recited the incantation, the young man in leather raised his hands and her gathering magic dissipated. Even the mightiest Wizard could not have invoked a Dispel so quickly!

The rider charged! Sorthon fired an arrow, missed! Hawk slashed at the galloping beast with his sword, hoping to topple horse and rider; the horseman thundered past them, his lance failing to skewer anyone. He galloped beyond, wheel his steed about, and put his lance to rest again. How, at the sight of the charging horse, Drfaf and commenced to foully curse, gnaw at his shield strap, and bring upon himself that blood-chilling rage of the Berserker - the fearful battlerage for which those of his tribe were known. As the lancer came about, Drfaf hurled himself bodily at man and horse alike, bringing the animal down then swiftly slaying the man.

At this, the young man who had countered Maramis' Spell drew a sword of his own and ran at the party, screaming his rage at the death of the lancer. Still in his own Berserker battlerage, Drfaf met the charge and slew him. The threat was ended, though now they might never know the mystery of how the young man

had been able to turn magic aside.

Within the saddlebags of the horse they found 2 small sacks of silver coin. This they kept as spoils of battle. Wandering on, they found a descending staircase. Following, they found a room wherein the floor was of naked earth and trees grew up from it. Yet, there was no light, nor way that the trees might be watered by rain.

An old man greeted them. He was, he claimed, the caretaker of these trees. He was the servant of a nameless deity who devoured the

fruits of the trees. He offered each of the party a taste of the pod-like fruit, in honor of the deity.

Ever curious, all Rangers, Hawk ate. To his amazement, the pod had the taste of well-cooked mutton. Drfaf also ate. He too tasted mutton! Intrigued by such a strange fruit, each of the rest ate. The old man gave them another pod then they departed in wonderment. They had found no treasure, they were tired, the dungeon would be here from them another day.

Returning as they had come,

they found the Bard's body still where they had left him. The Orcs, having devoured the Giant Scorpion, had also stripped the Bard's corpse of clothes, boots, sword, and lute. Maramis directed that the men bear Welkin's body up with them, and Drfaf also carried a claw from the Giant Scorpion which he gave to the landlord of the Sword Rat Rest. Maramis paid her gold to one who was a gravedigger and Welkin was borne away to be laid to final rest. They did all quaff a round in his memory.

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THE WELL-WASTERS & WATER-WHIPS

This peculiar creature was created (or so legends say) by the great wizard Tsarth-pwal as a vengeance upon the city dwellers in the Guarding Range. The knowledge of it's composition and the great enchantment necessary for it's creation has spread throughout the land by the Wizards Guild and is considered one of the stock-in-trade for sale to the vengeance seeking customer. The creature begins it's existence in a small vat of chemicals mixed with sea-weed from Deeprock Lake and diced tadpoles. Standard costs vary but a Well-Waster can be generally had for 178 Gold Pieces within 21 to 40 days. The creature grows quickly, gaining one hit die each year until it reaches maturity on the ninth year and thereafter declines at the same rate although still growing in size. The armor class of the creature declines one class per year beginning at AC1 and declining to AC9 on the 9th year. It's bite does 1-6 points of damage and is reputed to cause the hapless victim to develop an awful thirst (drinking until they burst unless Neutralize Poison is cast upon them or they quickly ingest sea-weed from Quill Lake). If in the water, the creature can also attack with it's two claws (1-4 each) and it's heavy tail (2-12 points of damage). The creature never leaves the well or body of water in which it is first located.

How to Cross a River

Without Losing Half the Party

By Bill Paley

All you folks out there with rings of water-walking, or horseshoes of flight are welcome to stop chuckling in delight, and let those of the audience who've been swept for the third time over the mile-high waterfalls a chance to learn something. Most of us on wilderness expeditions have found that rivers (not brooks, streams or creeks, but rivers) are at least as dangerous as dragons. Nearly as bad are high velocity, boulder-strewn mountain streams, which can snap a horse's leg like a twig in the hands of an ogre.

Using the maps available from Judges Guild as an example, the map is strewn with major rivers, several of which are over a mile across. Such great rivers (say, the Estuary of Roglaroon) usually have a great deal of boat traffic, and a party containing a member or two with a powerful set of lungs (or better yet, a horn or drum) will be able to attract a means of transport. Such boatmen will be wary of river pirates, however, so have your weapons put away while bargaining with them.

When the party reaches a river of 300 to 700 yards width, they will usually seek a fordable point. Once one is found crossing is simpler, but what to do if there is none?

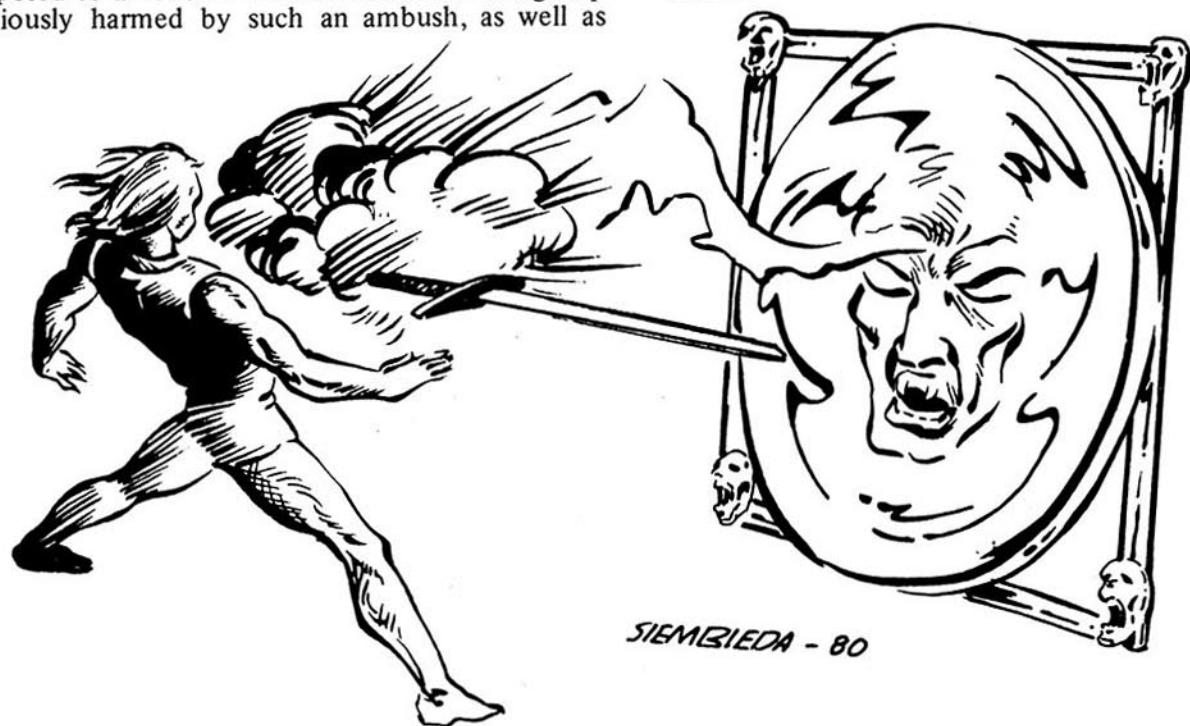
Horses can swim, although I wouldn't suggest it for heavily loaded or barded animals. However, thrashing across such a river leaves a group very exposed to ambush. I've been a member of a group seriously harmed by such an ambush, as well as

having judged a battle started by a band of hobgoblins with missile weapons catching a party of adventurers in such a position.

What to do? Remember, a group is only in danger of ambush if the whole group struggles across at once. Instead, let us hypothesize an expedition of ten persons (Druid, Ranger, two Magic Users, two Clerics, Thief, and three Fighters). The situation has the group finding a river with heavy deciduous forest on both banks, giving a great deal of cover to anyone who might wish to attack the group.

Recognizing the situation, the Fighters and Ranger unlimber the bows (or crossbows) and two Fighters dismount and take cover. The Druid and Ranger start across while covered by the bows and spells of those behind them. Reaching the far shore, they dismount, and scout the far bank. Only when both signal "All's clear" do the remainder of the party cross, by ones and twos. At all times they are covered from both sides of the river from bowmen under cover. Lastly, the two Fighters mount up again and cross. This could take up a great deal of time, in terms of game turns, but it could save the group casualties.

By the same token, if a group is being pursued, a river is a perfect place to ambush the pursuers. Here's your chance to teach the judge a lesson!



This is the Way Heros Die

By Thomas McCloud



Chapter One

Asteroids are really very much larger than mountains. The Water Synthesis Experiment asteroid, Clara, was sixty-eight kilometers along its shortest diameter. That's no more than average for an asteroid. For comparison, the peak of Mount Everest is less than nine kilometers above sea level.

There were craters on Clara with diameters over five kilometers, and in one of them was the Water Synthesis Experiment. The Experiment Station was a collection of inflated white domes and connecting tubes, surrounded by enigmatic engineering structures. Lit, as it was, only by a dim and distant sun, the light of the stars, and light that leaked from the white domes, it was a cold and lonely place. But among the bubbles of sterile white was one that was transparent to open to the glories of the heavens. In that darkened room, silhouetted against the Milky Way, the Reverend Cecil Brown was preaching in a voice as deep and resonant as the drums of his ancestors.

"...and so, brethren, the miraculous sacrifice of God's only begotten son reaches across the years, and across the void of space, to offer us salvation on this asteroid today."

Reverend Brown was middle-aged, medium tall, and pronouncedly black. He looked at his audience. The starlight was dim, but his eyes had adjusted. Besides, he knew quite well who they were: one Christian, two atheists, and eight agnostics. Still, there was always hope.

"That is the end of today's message. Now if Brother Benson will

turn on the lights, we will turn to hymn number one-thirty-seven: 'Christ the Lord is Ris'n Today'."

With the lights back on, their view of the speldors of the stars was replaced by reflections of the inside of the chapel dome. As he waited for everyone's pupils to finish contracting, Reverend Brown gave the invitation.

"As we sing, if there are any among you who have been moved to accept Jesus Christ as your personal savior, you are invited to step forward and declare your faith. If you are too shy, we understand that, come and see me after the services. And now: 'Christ the Lord is Ris'n Today'."

But in the end, no one came forward. In all of Brown's career, no one ever had.

Alone in the chapel bubble when all the others had left, Brown knelt down before the altar, and prayed.

"Oh Lord, I'm still failing you. I don't know what I'm doing wrong. Seems I can't save a soul, not one. All right, so be it. But please, at least let me plant a tiny idea, just one, in someone's mind. Then you can nurture that seed until it blossoms into a full blown faith, even if I never have the joy of knowing it. . . If that is your will, so be it."

Brown sighed, and stood up. "Amen," he concluded, and turning out the lights once more, left the chapel for his spaceship.

Back at his ship, he found John Benson putting cans and boxes into the Horseback-15's supply lockers.

"Howdy, Rev. Very good sermon and you'll find a message on your recorder."

"Oh?"

"Be about the hijacking I expect."

"Hijacking?"

"Yep. About four hours ago somebody grabbed control of the Fontainebleau--that's an Earth-Mars liner. I expect the tape will tell you all about it."

A minute later, Reverend Brown had the playback on and was listening to his Mission bishop.

"Hellow, this is Bishop Ben Levi. I don't know whether or not you've heard about the latest hijacking, so I'll assume you haven't."

"The spaceship Fontainebleau has been taken over by a person or persons unknown. The ship is headed for Mars orbit from Earth. Flight plan data follows."

The bishop's voice was replaced by a squealing squawk of computer coded data, then resumed.

"Of course, we have no assurance that they will continue with the orbits originally filed. But, assuming that they will, the Mission wants someone in a matching Mars orbit just in case there is something we can do. Reverend Thelmer is in Mars orbit now, but he has to return several people to Earth for some badly needed full gravity."

"There are others closer to Mars than you are right now, but either they don't have enough fuel left to maintain a powered orbit, or they have other commitments, so you are the most logical choice. Please proceed to Mars as quickly as possible and do anything you can to help. A Treaty Agency ship will meet you in orbit."

"Let us know as soon as your new flight plan is approved by the Treaty Agency--and may God be

with you."

Reverend Brown had just finished putting the new flight plan into the ship's computer when a woman entered through the airlock.

"Howdy, Karen. Have you met the preacher?" asked Benson, still putting away supplies.

"No."

"Karen Ashley, Reverend Cecil Brown. Karen's an atheist."

"What an introduction!" exclaimed Ms. Ashley.

The Reverend Brown grinned. "Brother Benson is only putting first the fact about you that interests me the most. What can I do for you?"

"I'm just bringing you the invoice." She handed it to him.

Brown examined it carefully. "...one hundred dollars for air... credit for recyclable CO2... Well, it looks all in order."

"I'm glad you at least read the invoice. Father Shieldman never did," remarked Ms. Ashley.

"Father Shieldman? Isn't he down on Venus?" asked Benson.

"I think so," said Brown. "Well let us see if the computer will say we can pay it." He suited his actions to his words.

"Ha! Don't you poor-mouth me!" said Ms. Ashley. "I saw the Meissenbaerns in the airlock."

Brown shook his head. "God has indeed blessed the Mission richly with financial support, but you can't go by those spacesuits, they're donated. Meissenbaern's a devout Christian, and Toshihi, his partner, is a devout Moslem."

"Moslem?!"

Brown spread his hands. "I can't help it." At that point the computer printed out a check to pay the invoice. Brown handed it to Ms. Ashley.

"Thank you," said she. "I hear you're getting involved with the Fontainebleu hijacking-I was in the communication/command center when the message came in from your bishop."

"Then you know as much as I do. I will be going to Mars, what I'll do after that God knows, I don't."

"It'll take a miracle to keep it from becoming a tragedy," said Benson. "There hasn't been a hi-

jacking yet that hasn't killed somebody. We'd better pray for that miracle."

"You Jesus-freaks and your prayers and miracles! Can't you see, they're nothing but self-delusion and coincidence?" asked Ms. Ashley.

John Benson smiled. "Permit me to substitute a more polite 'inspiration' for your 'self-delusion' and ask you this: given coincidence and inspiration, what other tools does God need?"

It was certainly coincidence that Reverend Brown of all people should be chosen to represent the Ecumenical Space Mission in the first stage of the Fontainebleu hijacking affair, and he thought it was an inspiration that came to him on the second day of his flight from Clara to Mars.

"...thus the electric fields of the push-pull plates lining the inside of the meson tubing appear to move toward the magnetic north of the magnetic field created in the tubing by the tubing coils. This apparent motion produces a real motion of the meson-groups to the magnetic north."

Reverend Brown typed "fast forward" and the computer skimmed through "Documentation Manual - Class 34 Space Craft (Utilizing Total Mass Conversion)." The audio became a high pitched blur, the video a quick step succession of pictures, diagrams, and tables. Brown stopped the fast forward to listen to a section of the manual.

"...after start-up.

"For normal operation, the meson subsystem produces only replacement particles for those mesons which are inevitably lost in the circulation of the meson current through the propulsion block and the energy block of the electric power subsystem.

"The half lives of the mesons are greatly lengthened by the macroscopic nuclear weak force field generated by the helical current of mesons in each meson-group. (Refer to Table 283.2 - b Stability of Extra-Nuclear Mesons in Macroscopic Nuclear Weak Force Fields.) In consequence, the losses to be made up are primarily due to collisions of the mesons with stray molecules in the imperfect vacuum within the tubes.

"A normal space ship can operate three to four days with the meson generating subsystem completely shut down. This is an important consideration in emergency procedures for partial power failure since all other subsystems. . ."

It was just then that Brown got the idea. It seemed brilliant. He turned off the documentation and thought about it. The more he thought about it, the better he liked it. Best of all, he'd no longer have to think of himself as a failure. Why, he might even become a hero.

The two spaceships were in parallel powered orbits, rotating around Mars at more than orbital speed, keeping position by balancing on their thrust beams against the centrifugal effects of their motion. It was a profligate waste of fuel, but it provided the ships with internal gravity, a very useful thing.

So, to the Reverend Brown in his Meissenbaern spacesuit standing on the edge of the airlock, there was the very real "up" and a very real "down". Hanging over his head was the huge red world of Mars. Below his feet was the bottomless void of interstellar space, spangled with stars.

Reverend Brown checked the time on the suit clock. Zero three hundred hours, Universal Time. The men on the Fontainebleu would, mostly, be asleep. Brown took a breath, stepped out of the airlock, and jumped into space. Suddenly the hull of his ship was rushing up at his side and the vivid feeling of falling was terrifying.

He closed his eyes and told himself: "I'm floating, I'm floating, I'm floating. . ." Gradually he relaxed. He reopened his eyes. The ship was far above him now, merely a glaring white spot against the cough-syrup red of Mars. There were two white glares. The other was the hijacked Fontainebleu. That was his goal, but he didn't have to do anything about it now-he had preprogrammed the whole trip into the Meissenbaern's computer.

After another minute, long enough to make Brown wonder if it was ever going to happen, the suit's thrusters turned on, and slowly the feeling of weight returned.

Something sparkling caught his eye, and with a shock Reverend Brown realized he was observing the Madison effect as his suit maneuvered around his ship's drive beam. The Madison effect was a blink of light from each atom in space literally shattered by the impact of the photons from the propulsion block. The vacuum of space in Brown's vicinity graded about ten atoms per cubic centimeter, more than enough to turn the edges of the beam into a lightly glittering dance of light.

To go through the beam was impossible. The Meissenbaern was rated for continuous duty well within the orbit of Mercury, but it would not have survived long in a drive beam.

But now his suit moved away, and toward the Fontainebleu. Long minutes passed and nothing happened but a slow increase in the apparent size of the hijacked ship. Then smoothly and without incident Reverend Brown's suit lifted him up and gently put him down inside the skeletal structure of the Fontainebleu's engine "room".

It wasn't really a room, just a place. Even the floor on which Brown stood was a lattice of access panels to the propulsion block. There were no walls. The equipment in the engine room all worked better in vacuum.

Surrounding Brown were the tubes, cables, cooling fins, and machinery of the five major subsystems of the drive.

Brown looked and recalled the diagrams he'd studied. The huge multi-studded column in the center, leading up to the fuel tanks in the "ceiling" was the laser batter chamber for vaporizing the rock dust. The monstrous machine to his left, twice his height at least, was the main power generator. The big gadget connected by dozens of tubes to the largest cooling fins was the helium condenser. The meson generator/collector/pump was on the other side of the pillar of lasers, next to the ship's ladder.

He walked around, and beheld his goal: the hydrogen ionizer that that feed the cyclotron that pumped the high energy particles into the meson generator. It was a relatively small device, one point five meters long and six centimeters in diameter.

There were eight control and monitor circuits to be bypassed, then he could unbolt the ionizer, take it back to his ship, and the hijackers of the Fontainebleu would be at his mercy.

The Reverend Cecil Brown was just getting his splicing wires out of his spacesuit's pocket when it hap-

pened.

A spacesuited figure jumped down from the ship's ladder and landed on the "floor" less than a dozen meters away, partially obscured by the meson generator and its tubing. Brown froze. The man had a gun. The gun pointed through the tangle of tubing at Brown.

In the very few seconds that remained to his life, Brown had time to think. He realized then that he'd been a fool. Even if he had succeeded in disabling the Fontainebleu he would only have put the passengers of the liner into much greater danger. It would have made the hijackers angry, it would not have controlled them.

Pride was his sin, he could see that now, and "pride cometh before a fall."

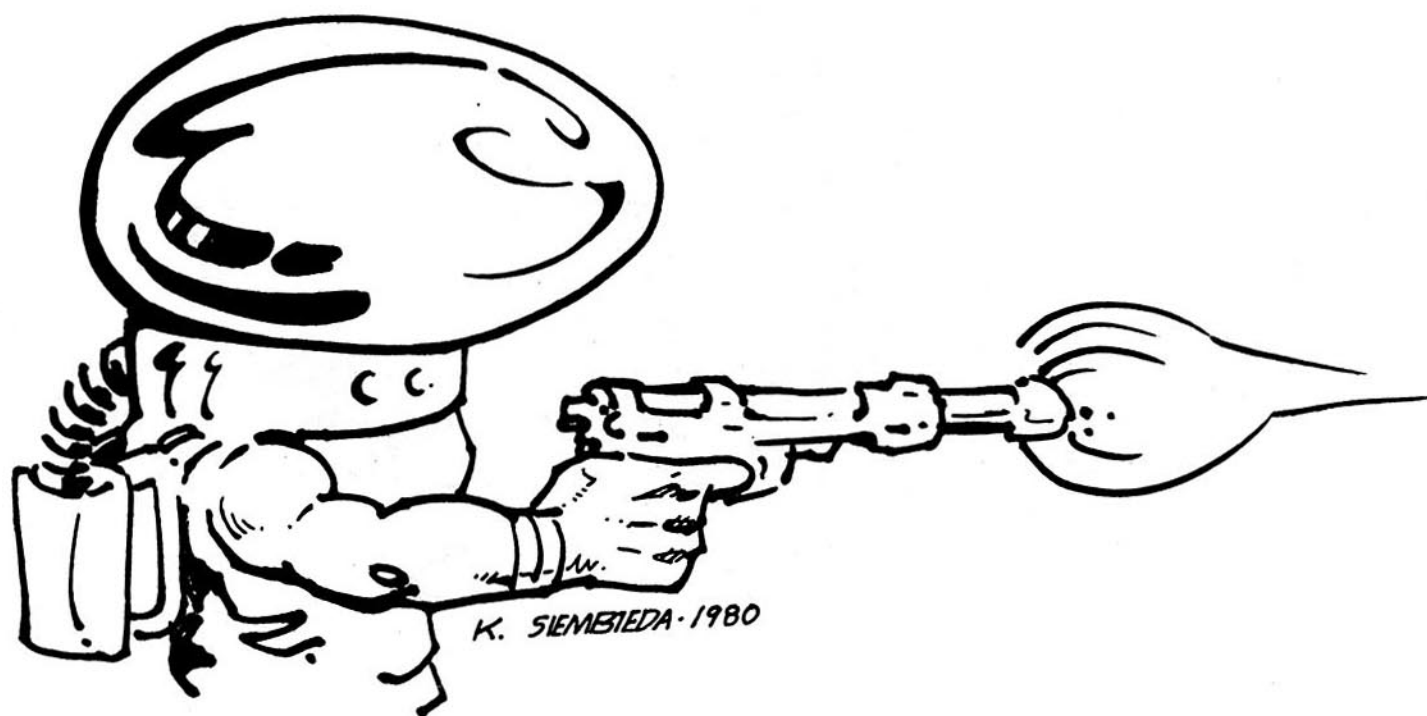
Oh God, what a long way there was to fall!

The gun fired: a flash at the muzzle, a flicker of static on the radio, and a sudden, horrible, agonizing pain in his chest.

Dumbly, he looked down at the red wet blood spraying out through the hole in his Meissenbaern. But... why were there holes in his hands and feet?

Then he reached out and took Jesus' hand...and the Lord said PEACE and there was peace.

continued on page 46





The Alternative Combat System By Michael A. Dodge

If you use either the Alternative Combat Systems, Men Attacking Chart, with *Greyhawk's* variable damage by weapon type, or *Chainmail's* Man-to-Man Melee Table and find them to be a quick and realistic means of resolving combat between two armed and armored fighting types, but feel a lacking when resolving combat with monster types, then you are not alone.

Dungeons & Dragons™ Monster Attacking Chart, even with the addition of *Greyhawk's* Attack and Damage by Monster Type, leaves something to be desired. Saying that a 9 HD Chimera and a 10 HD Black Pudding have the same chance of hitting a Man, Armor Class 9 or any Armor Class

does not seem right. A man with no armor will find it easier to keep from being enveloped by Black Pudding than from being bit, butted, or clawed by a Chimera.

As a solution, I have drawn up this chart. I have used it for over a year and found it to be a most welcomed accompaniment to *Chainmail's* Man-to-Man Melee Table. I use it along with *Greyhawk's* Attacks and Damage by Monster Type, but have included the number of attacks per turn and Hit Die per attack on the chart for convenience. I hope you get as much use and enjoyment from the chart as I have.

Armor Class

		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2		
Weapon	Size	No	Leather		Chain		Plate		No. of		Hit Dice
		Armor	Shield	& Shield	& Shield	& Shield	& Shield	& Shield	Attacks	(6-sided)	
Teeth	Small	7	8	8	9	8	9	10	11	2	1
Teeth	Medium	7	8	7	8	8	9	9	10	2	1+1
Teeth	Large	6	7	6	7	6	7	8	9	1	3
Claws	Small	5	7	7	8	9	10	11	12	2	1
Claws	Medium	6	7	7	8	9	10	11	12	2	2
Claws	Large	5	6	7	7	8	9	11	12	1	3
Pincers	Small	8	8	8	8	7	7	8	9	2	1
Pincers	Medium	8	8	8	8	7	7	8	9	2	2
Pincers	Large	8	8	8	7	6	6	7	8	2	3
Horns	Small	8	9	8	9	8	9	10	10	1	1
Horns	Medium	8	8	8	9	8	9	9	10	1	1+1
Horns	Large	8	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	1	2
Hooves	Small	7	7	7	9	10	10	11	12	1	1
Hooves	Medium	7	7	7	9	10	10	10	12	1	1+1
Stinger	Small	6	7	7	8	9	10	12	12	2	1+1*
Stinger	Medium	6	7	7	8	9	10	12	12	1	1+1*
Stinger	Large	6	7	6	8	9	10	11	12	1	2*
Crushing	Small	8	9	9	10	9	11	12	12	1	3+2**
Crushing	Medium	8	8	8	9	9	10	11	12	1	4**
Crushing	Large	7	7	8	9	8	9	10	10	1	6**
Envelopment	N/A	10	9	9	8	9	8	8	8	1	***

* Regardless of success vs. poison saving throw

** Subtract victim's strength, minimum 4 hit points

*** 4 hits per turn

This system is useable by itself, but is recommended for use with *Greyhawk's* Attacks and Damage by Monster Type. If used with that system, the number of attacks and hits per attack should be substituted on the chart from that system.



Shrewd Slants from the Sagacious Sage

The date was June 6-8, 1980 and gamers were pouring into Oakland University for MICHICON. A record number (although tallies weren't completed as of our leaving the con it was known that over 2500 attended) came, despite the intermittent rains. All the major manufacturers were either in attendance or had representatives and, as usual for an MDG con, it seemed to go almost flawlessly to the gamers and dealers.

Judges Guild was in attendance with a crew consisting of Dave Sering, Chuck Anshell, Mike Reagan and Dan Hauffe who somehow managed to find time to win a Panzer Tournament.

Dave and Chuck were busy the whole time, too, and they ran events and sat on panels. (Mike, also, was in a tourney but didn't win.)

One of the scheduled events was the Judges Guild tournament. Players played a scenario taken from a product currently in the works: Book of Treasure Maps II. There were 36 players playing in 5 groups and the overall

winners were as follows:

- 1st place - Glen Asp
- 2nd place - Mike Dimango
- 3rd place - Ken Wyzywany
- 4th place - Scott Hutchings
- 5th place - Jim Icks

Each winner received a certificate and a prize from Judges Guild.

A highlight of the convention was our trek to Kubla Khan Restaurant where, after a great meal, Lou Zocchi entertained with jokes and an unbelievably fantastic rendition (with taped orchestral background) of the Theme from Exodus (a good 8-10 minutes long) on the Singing Saw!

There was, also, a FRP panel which Ree Moorehead-Pruehs moderated and both Dave Sering and Chuck Anshell were panelists along with Rick Loomis, Paul Jaquays and Randy Cox. The main interest of the audience seemed to be how to go about submitting material for publication in the magazines or for use as products and what new things were coming from Judges Guild. CA

One end of our Michicon booth. Left to Right: The Unknown Customer, William Pixley (one of fearless volunteers), The Unknown Younger Customer and Mike Reagan.



The other end of our Michicon booth. Left to Right: The miniatures display case, our sign, The I Wish He Were Unknown Comic, and the Headless Customer.



Call ME Friend

By Bob Pryor



Once, a love was formed. It started as many loves do... a sharing, a longing to be with the person loved. A few words were exchanged, and then... a gift. The love grew between the two, grew from a private feeling, to a touching, a physical attraction. Soon it became too public. Disaster.

The adventuring band noticed the group of warriors early in the evening. At one point a messenger arrived at the table, and gave the leader a small slip of parchment. The joviality that had been evident at their table drained rapidly as the lead warrior raged. Finally they began quietly and dangerously plotting between drinks.

Late in the evening one of the adventurers (a thief by trade) approached the plotting band with an offer of employment as mercenaries. The offer was accepted, as long as the group would wait two days.

"We have work to attend to," stated the leader carefully.

"Well, friend, what shall we call you?," asked the halfling thief jauntily.

"Call me Friend," chuckled the leader humorlessly.

Soon the mercenaries and adventurers introduced themselves around, and the newly hired troops once again began to enjoy the evening. Only their leader remained silent. The halfling thief, with his eye for jewelry, noted only one odd thing about Friend, a necklace with a strange symbol wrought in gold.

The next night, two thieves from amongst the adventurers were out practicing their skills at burglary. Sneaking into an inn on the far side of the town, they stole quietly into the finest room in the house, certain of acquiring a tidy sum in loot or gold. One of the two halflings stopped long enough to plan routes of escape, the other began blundering about the room in the dark.

The room was well-appointed, with desk, bed, chest-of-drawers, and a large chest at the bed's foot. As the bumbling halfling began to investigate

the drawers, the careful furfoot picked the lock on the chest. Raising the lid carefully, he was sickened to find the dismembered body of a beautiful woman. Many papers were stuffed in the chest as well, which the halfling automatically stuffed in his haversack.

At the chest-of-drawers, the other halfling had opened the bottom drawer so as to reach the top drawer by standing tip-toe. Pawing blindly at the contents, he let out a shriek as a mouse trap snapped down on his left hand. Immediately the other halfling was out the door, utilizing an escape route already plotted, while the injured halfling dimly began to plan his escape.

The sounds of feet pounding on the stairs brought the halfling out of his pain-fogged shock. He dove to the window, and clamored up to the roof, just ahead of the innkeeper.

Late the next day there was a public hanging of a confessed wife-murderer. Friend and his men attended, smiling without humor.

"Let us leave this town now," said Friend.

On the road, the halfling examined the papers he had taken. Most were of little interest, no maps, or scrolls of magic. One sheet did catch his eye, and at first he thought it seemed familiar. Why, he didn't realize, until after some reflection he saw it clearly. It was a mirror-image of the symbol that hung about Friend's neck. He resolved to investigate further, and hid the sheet in his backpack.

The group traveled south and eastward toward the once famous resort town of Wormingford. While on the way, they exchanged stories of the past of this town, how once the nobility of the City State had vacationed here, how the fabled Jeweled Worm of Wormingford had arrived, smashing the opulent villas, and devouring debutantes by the dozen. His hoard was rumored to be in the hundreds of thousands, with more gems than gold.

Arriving at the economically destroyed town,

they could see the devastation the Worm had wrought. The high dirt embankment about the town was breached in several places, and many great houses lay in ruins. Even the people of the town looked as though they lay in psychic ruin, seeming uncaring about their appearance.

The group lodged in the Crowned Dragon Inn. The inn was poor, but comfortable, and the fact that strangers were visiting brought half-a-dozen people in to the normally empty common room. Soon, tale-telling began in earnest, with each person relating an interesting story, except for Friend.

Suddenly, during a story one of the villagers was relating about a townsman of strange powers, Friend interrupted with an evil glint in his eyes. Plaguing the fellow for details of the man's appearance, history, and family, Friend growled with pleasure at the man's answers. After his rough treatment of the peasant, Friend bought a round for all present, and the jolly atmosphere returned. As the songs and tales began again, noone noticed as Friend slipped away into the night.

"So, the uncle of that bastard lives in this town," Friend thought excitedly. "My vengeance on this evil family will begin here with this vile Wizard." Friend slid from shadow to shadow, finding a vantage point from which to watch the cottage belonging to his intended victim. He sat there the night through, to be relieved by his second-in-command shortly before dawn. They exchanged news, and Friend returned to the inn.

At breakfast soon afterwards, the adventurers were interrupted by a thoroughly disheveled Friend. He joined them, and listened to their plans for the near future. As they began to argue about the use of his mercenary band, Friend asked leave to speak.

"We will not be continuing on with your group, I'm afraid," he said politely. "We have business to conduct in this town which may take us some time."

Unheeding of their protests, Friend thanked them for the employment, and offered to return part of the mercenaries' wages if they so desired. After a group conference, the decision was made to allow them to keep whatever money they might have. The two halfling thieves offered the band their wishes for good luck.

Soon, the adventurers had packed their belongings and gone, passing the house of the man whose presence had caught Friend's interest. The halfling smiled when he noted a strange symbol carved on the door, matching the one on paper in

his backpack. He made a hex sign at the house, and turned on his way down the road to riches or ruins.

For the next few weeks, the man's house was never left unwatched. Each messenger was followed and "questioned", each shipment was perused. The facts began to clear. This was a Mage of no small power. He was aware by celestial means that some mortal had sworn vengeance on the blood of the Wizard's family, but he knew not who. To be certain of this safety, the man had resolved to lay in stores, and to hide in Wormingford for a year or two, letting others of his relatives slay the new-found enemy.

The Wizard's habits were easily chronologged, for he was a punctual, exact man. Each night, at moon rise, he went out to weed his garden. Each morning at dawn, he opened one window on the upper story of his house, working with a strange apparatus pointed at the sun. He slept the afternoon through, allowing four wolves he kept as pets the run of the house while he snored.

The cottage itself was built of stone, with heavy oak support beams, doors, and shutters. The chimney was much too slender for a human to enter, although one of the mercenary band swore that he saw a bat fly in and out through the flue. But for the early morning sun-gazing, the windows remained tightly shuttered with hardly a crack to peer through.

Once each week a messenger would arrive from major cities in far-off lands. Men from Tarsh, Tarantis and Modron were not uncommon, although the majority were from the two City States. Friend learned the origin and destination of each messenger of the past few months, and listed mentally the next several targets which he intended to eradicate. The messengers, unaware that they had betrayed their employers went on their way.

A local family supplied the Wizard with food each week; fruits, meats, grain and vegetables. Although the man had a well-tended garden, it appeared to be filled with weeds and tangles, and no vegetables could be seen growing in this "garden".

Finally, Friend gathered his band. They each knew what his next words would be, and they looked at him with grim determination showing in the glint of their eyes as their leader said, "Tonight."

As the moon rose over the treetops, the cottage door popped open. An elderly man, wearing a silk robe and a leather cap stared into the darkness of his garden. From rooftops and alleyways surrounding the overgrown garden, Friend and his band, armed with crossbows, watched, waiting for

the moment to open fire.

Apparently satisfied that no prowlers waited amidst the vines, the Wizard stepped out into the garden, closing the cottage's door behind him. Stepping farther out into the tangled vegetation, he stooped down to pick some herbs.

"Feel my vengeance," howled Friend as he cut loose with his crossbow. The force of the blow smashed the Mage to the ground, as the rest of the mercenary force loosed their quarrels. In a moment, the man's form lay bleeding on the path of his garden. One of the younger mercenaries ran up, and with his short sword he slit open the man's throat, an unnecessary act. Quickly, the group lit firebrands and soon the beams supporting the stone building were engulfed in flames.

Friend approached the body, and pinned a small scroll to the corpse chest. Then, bellowing a command, he and his men gathered their horses and remounts, and rode off towards Modron.

"Sire, this was found on your great-uncle's body," quavered the servant as he bowed low before his master. The corpulent man grabbed the scroll, eyes wide with hope and desire. As he read its contents, however, a transformation occurred, from lust to terror. The scroll fell from his nerveless fingers as he squawked for his carriage.

Lying on the flagstones, runes upturned, the servant could read the words written in a brownish ink, "You who read this missive will be next. . . . I will have my fill of your family's blood. . . ."



K. SIEMBIEDA-80

Survey Replies: The Guildmembers Speak

We have already received many replies to our former Reader Survey and are looking forward to receiving many more. Below are just a few of the comments written in.

You might want to have an article that would give quests for characters in the City State. This would save Judges some time when a character is Geased or sent on a quest by a powerful Magic User or Cleric.

I would like to see more Wilderness and City State type aids (basically because the one I've already seen are excellent).

Proof reading could be better, but that's only a minor annoyance.

Keep up the good work! I would like to give my opinion on Question U: What size game-aids do you like? Though I like the shorter game aids, I will (usually) not buy them unless they display an incredible amount of imagination. This is primarily because I like to create my own scenarios, all of which are about that length, and would generally prefer to play it as opposed to someone else's. 32 page game-aids are usually very good (especially Tower of Ulission and Sword of Hope), but generally they don't influence me as much as the LONG game-aids. This is because 64 pages usually demands superior quality, effort, and imagination. They are usually real accomplishments and something I don't have the time to create myself. Twice, now, I have picked a long scenario up at a nearby store, not necessarily with an adventure in mind, but simply to enjoy the result of great amounts of effort by reading the adventure.

I have been very satisfied with all the goods you have sent me so far! Buying from the "Booty List" is very convenient for me. I would enjoy having a mini-dungeon made for high-level characters in the back of some Journals.



All of the Judges Guild products I have bought have been very good on the average; ranging from poor (Survival of the Fittest) to excellent (Dark Tower and The Mines of Custalcon).

I like your products very much. Am glad you are planning to expand information about the smaller towns of the Wilderness (Wilderness Project). I would like for you to do more in this area before producing more Wilderness maps. Please print the Lairs and Ruins hexes on the Wilderness maps (i.e. denote these hexes by some symbol).

Judges Guild has a problem with improperly edited material; this survey being a prime example. Some articles are useless, or express common ideas. You seem to have a fondness of charts, (such as Bill Paley's Heraldry and Doors) where explanations of heraldry and a list of ideas would be better. I would prefer to be stimulated with ideas, rather than revert to random die-rolling. Watch the cost of printing the magazine! Color covers and high quality paper is nice, but not at the expense of other aspects of your operation. It is tempting to continue improving when the money rolls in; but what happens when it runs out? Thanks for the survey.

I love your Wildernesses. I own all of your maps and Mines of Custalcon, Modron and the City State of the Invincible Overlord (of course). I like Modron especially well, since it has a town layout that I can understand and use.

I also like the trend to detail the large maps like the Mines did. I only wish that the villages were printed on the maps more conspicuously. I took a high-lighter pen and put dots on each of the Wilderness maps to represent all the Ruins, Relics, and Lairs listed in the guidebooks. That way, I don't have to leaf through the books. Just thought I would pass that on. Quality really pleases me. Keep them comin'.

Fraternity For The Eradication Of Armored Riffraff

By Bill Paley

This group is almost entirely made up of Knights of the Inner Circle (who guard the Cryptic Citadel of the Invincible Overlord) along with a few nobles who also belong. The organization put down any person of under the fourth level who dares to wear plate armor. These Knights will normally embarrass the transgressor, but if the character breaks the "ban" again, they will attack (most likely at night) wearing red robes and masks over plate armor, carrying maces. They will then beat the character into unconsciousness.

The leader of this fraternity is also the Commander of the Knights: Sir Robert Aug: Class: Fighter, Alignment: LE, Level: 5, HP: 31, AC: 2, Social Level: 12, STR: 15, INT: 14, WIS: 10, CON: 14, DEX: 13, CHAR:

16, Weapon: Mace +1. He has taken his post as leader of FEAR as less important than his charge as Commander of the Knights of the Inner Circle. However, once each month, he assigns twenty available Knights to their "pranks" in groups of five. The groups are led by the following sub-commanders: Sir Terrance Bloodgut: Class: Fighter, Alignment: LN, Level: 4, HP: 26, AC: 2, Social Level: 10, STR: 17, INT: 10, WIS: 7, CON: 12, DEX: 7, CHAR: 12, Weapon: Broadsword; Sir Haroll: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CN, Level: 4, HP: 22, AC: 2, Social Level: 10, STR: 14, INT: 3, WIS: 10, CON: 11, DEX: 10, CHAR: 12, Weapon: Flail; Sir Wily Willard: Class: Fighter, Alignment: LE, Level: 4, HP: 27, AC: 2, Social Level: 10, STR: 12, INT: 10, WIS: 16,

CON: 12, DEX: 16, CHAR: 10, Weapon: Morning Star; Sir Steff the Crass: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NG, Level: 4, HP: 18, AC: 2, Social Level: 10, STR: 16, INT: 12, WIS: 8, CON: 14, DEX: 11, CHAR: 5, Weapon: Scimitar.

They will lead groups of Knights of the third level (HP: 18, 10, 12, 7, 5, 15, 24, 22, 10, 11, 15, 27, 15, 17, 18, 12).

The chance of their attacking a character who has worn plate in town that month is calculated by rolling 1D12. Then take the number of player characters who wore plate and divide it by the number rolled. This is the chance that at least one group will "attack". It is possible for all four groups to take on one fellow...for "blatant flaunting of Knightly armor."



The Black Prince

by Wilbur Ochiltree, Jr.

The riders were not far behind as he forced his tiring stallion to veer sharply to his left into a narrow way with the cliffs looming above on both sides. Pulling up sharply, he covered his stallion's mouth and his other hand silently freed his large sword. Two-handed, it was meant to be welded in battle, but he welded it in one hand with no sign of strain.

The eight riders went thundering by, their horses hooves ringing off the passing rocks. They were to intent upon their prey they believed to be ahead of them to notice the dim shadow between the cliffs.

Silently he sheathed his sword and turned his stallion round, crossing the rocky way and off into the forbidden Forest of Darkness.

The sun was bright and few clouds rode the light breeze that ruffled his black cloak. "Damn this sun and damn my temper," cursed the lone black rider. The forest was deep and dark on both sides of the narrow trail he was following. He thought back to yesterday morning, cursing inwardly, yet knowing he would've done nothing different.

He'd gotten up early at his father's insistence and threats. Crusing and loathing this man who 'thought' he was his father. He thought of the pleasure he would have in slowly killing him, but knew it wasn't time yet. He got up and quickly ate the small meal his mother had prepared. Then he followed this man to his small work shop.

His 'father' was a maker and merchant of tools in this small outlying village of Argos that Veron Kereg hated so much. It was here that he had taken so much abuse and early

beatings in his childhood. His eyes, he smiled inwardly, his eyes were the main cause of this terrible mistreatment from the children and their families.

All he had were two large pupils and could see nothing. But, he could 'sense' things around him, even the slightest movement, yes and even make out details of people and objects. In the darkest of nights or in the most foul of weather when no living man could see more than five feet in front of him, Veron Kereg could. Yes, he could 'sense' anything about twenty paces away. He reveled in the darkness of night and hated the bright sun, for then he is vulnerable than most, even more vulnerable than an unarmed woman lost in the wilderness. When the sun comes, so does man's vision, and then Veron Kereg could easily be killed by arrows of flighting death, and he could be killed without so much as drawing his foes blood, but to be killed like a mad dog. Yes, he hated the sun.

In his youth he had learned early the lessons of pain and humility. The other children treated him cruelly and he had to learn to defend himself early in life. Aye, and after many fights, even up to a few years ago, the others learned to fear him, for this not muscular boy, but wirey and tough, had amazing strength and speed. He tossed them about and delivered stunning punches before they knew what he was doing. His movements but a blur to them. They learned that even without his sight, none could surprise him. He was awed and feared by them. From that fear a hartred was born between his would be antagonist and himself, and between himself and any that welcomed

the rising of the sun!

He was about six foot, four inches and weighed only one hundred and twenty pounds. He had yellow hair that fell to his shoulders and milky white skin. There was a crescent birthmark on the back of his right hand. He had a thin nose and a low voice and always appeared serious. He welds his great sword in his right hand. The other villagers whispered that his uncanny eyes, strength and speed were Demonic. Laughing to himself, he thought if they only knew how close they really were to guessing the truth. He always wore a shirt of light mail, black riding boots and a black cloak. Secretly he had a black horned helmet made in a small village a days ride to the East. Tonight he was riding to pick it up.

He put in a long day, baring the curses and insults from his 'father' and was happy when the sun went down. He went in and prepared for tonight's journey. He had a small meal and quickly left, hearing the threats from the man and the sobbing of his mother as she pleaded with that damned bastard not to treat him so. Before he knew it, he had drawn his sword and turned his nag around, heading back to the hut and the voice of that bastard cursing his mother for baring him such a son as Veron Kereg. He fought against this incredible wrath inside him. All he wanted was to feel his sword cut through flesh and bone, to see the bastard's head slashed from his body. His right arm fought him for control of the sword, but slowly he forced the sword back in its scabbard, his whole body shaking from the efforts to control the soul consuming wrath. He, sweating, swirled his nag round and viciously urged it into a

full gallop, leaving the village of Argos well behind.

He arrived at the armorer's shop as the sun rose over the horizon. After beating on the door for what seemed like hours, the armorer, cursing, came and he conducted his business and prepared to leave, hating to have to ride under the sunlight, when a passing Nobleman of the City State of the Overlord, in company of ten men at arms, made him the center of his unwelcome attention.

"You there, yes you in black. Come here. Lets have a closer look at you," called out the young Nobleman, sitting proudly on his beautiful black Sarvon Stallion.

Veron Kereg slowly turned toward the voice, hand resting on his sword hilt and strode forward to get them within his sensing range.

"What need have you of me, lord?" he ask the proud Nobleman. As he came closer to them, one of the guards in mail resting on his large shield, suddenly laughed and pointed at him, yelling, "Look at his eyes, M'lord."

"Aye, and his skin as well," laughed the Nobleman. "Your a strange sight stranger. Where did you come from? No doubt crawled beneath a rock," then he urged his stallion closer. His men at arms formed a circle around Veron Kereg. Five had their horses at hand.

Veron Kereg was but a blur as he leaped at the Nobleman, swinging his sword, all in one smooth motion. Before the men at arms knew what had happened, their Lord's head laid at their feet and this terrible stranger clad in black had grabbed the great stallion's mane and swung himself upon its back. He was swinging his terrible sword about him, and two had heard it's song of death before they sunk to the dirty street, soaking in a fast forming crimson pool. Before the remaining eight could free their weapons, Veron Kereg had urged the black stallion into a frenzied gallop under the sun, hoping to reach the forest before an arrow found its destined mark. Arrows flew over his head and he heard the enraged cries behind him and the thundering of hooves of pursuit. He judged he had enough of a lead to reach the forest

and once there the threat of an unseen death would disappear beneath those close towering walls of trees.

He had ridden all day when he again heard sounds of pursuits. The forest was thinning out now and he knew he was nearing its edge.

There would be a price on his head and he would have to be an Outlaw now, but he had unfinished business to attend to in Argos before he left.

As the eight riders went thundering by, eager for his blood, he disappeared again into the forest beyond the mountains, he was heading for Argos.

His thoughts turned back to the time his mother had called him to her when they were alone and told him of a dark moonless night before he was born. She told him that when she was still young and carried her beauty with more grace than now, that she was visited in the middle of the night by a lover. Not human, No, not human. But more than any man could hope to be. Demon he was. Magnificent and of the Greater Demons. This was his real father. That, no doubt, is where he received the gift of his eyes, for none other could've bred that into him. The Demonic Lover was not seen any more, but had left the Demon Seed in his mother.

His eyes and Demonic senses were his main cause of trouble since his early childhood, but now he was proud of them, for they truly united him with his true father. Someday he would meet his true father and claim his Birthright, but till that time, there were plans to make, people to slay. Yes, he would be busy for quite awhile. He promised his god, Set, many sacrifices and many an evil and daring deed before his time came.

The sun had been down now for hours when he came riding silently into his village. All was quiet except for the distant howling of wolves. A large bat flew across the moon as he stopped his stallion in front of his 'father's' hut. He felt a rage forming in the pit of his gut as he sat there on the stallion looking at this dispicable group of huts. The rage was working its way up to his head as he slowly dismounted, feeling the loose rock under his riding boots. The hut was

dark and silent. He slowly strode to the door in deliberate measured strides as he drew his sword silently. He stopped, hand resting on the door latch as he lowered his head listening. Not a sound issued forth. He tried the latch as he lowered his head listening. Not a sound issued forth. He tried the latch and the door silently swung open. He stepped over the threshold, sweat breaking on his brow. He found himself overly excited at the prospect and immense satisfaction at what he was going to do. He slowly made his way to the farthest door. This was where the bastard would be sleeping. He tried the door and it opened with a squeak. He stood like a rock, silent and unmoving, 'sensing' two shapes on the bed, but they didn't even stir. He grinned in grim anticipation. His black riding boots didn't make a sound as he went to the right edge of the bed. There he sensed that damned bastard that had tormented him for years. He raised his great sword, hesitated for a second, then slashed down, feeling it slice through flesh and blood, feeling the hot sticky blood and brains splatter on his hands and arm. His mother sat up terrified with a scream. A back hand slash took her head neatly off. Cursing her dying scream, he rushed for his stallion. He leapt upon its back as the first torch came into sight. He heard talking and cursing as some men were questioning one another and running toward his hut. Laughing loudly, he turned his stallion and made for the forest. He was in his element now. Men could only grope and stumble in the darkness, while he lashed out in deadly skill. Before he had circled the village, fifteen men lay, choking in their own blood. He then disappeared into the forest, leaving many widows and orphans to mourn their dead.

The moon was full and not a cloud was to be seen. There was a brisk wind and his cloak was streaming behind him as he made his way westward. He had been travelling for four nights now, hiding when the sun rose. But silent and terrible at night. He waylaid any he came across, robbing and sacrificing them in the name of Set.

He pulled up suddenly. He sensed a large manor house before him. He

dismounted and drew his sword. He went toward the adorned double doors. As he strode forward, he sensed someone large passing by on the other side. He kicked open the doors and surprised the large blond-haired giant of a man. The man welded a double edged battle axe and barely got it up in time to parry Veron Kereg's deadly blow, that smashed him down to his knees. Still, this man was skilled in the art of war and quickly struck out at Veron Kereg's legs. Kereg leapt up as the deadly axe knifed through the empty air. He landed like a panther, all senses alert for any weakness in his wary opponent. The blond giant, obviously a Northman, quickly gained his feet and circled him, watching, waiting for a single split second of an opening. Veron Kereg and the Northman met, sparks flew from sword and axe as they each sought the others life blood. The Northman stepped back with a wide grin on his face. Veron Kereg smiled only inward as he knew he was the others master. He swung in a low arc at the others legs, and as the Northman stepped back, Veron Kereg checked his swing and slashed upward at an angle and stepping into the blow, but to late the Northman tried to parry with his axe, but he didn't have his strength in it and was caught off balance. Kereg's sword knocked it aside as it cut through the Northman and left him in two separate pieces, still smiling. He gathered up the pieces, cut off the head, left a ransom note, then went outside and hid the body, putting the head in his saddle bags. He then took up a hiding place to wait till he had some sign of their willingness to negotiate.

He had sensed or heard nothing by the second night. He entered again. He noted another double door directly opposite him about fifty feet away. He cautiously went over to it, ignoring the crimson stain on the floor. He heard the sounds of merry making going on. He rapped loudly on the door. Someone opened both doors for him to enter. As he did so, he sensed ten Crossbowmen along each wall. There was four long tables here with armed men feasting and making sport of wenches. At the farend of the Great Hall sat a lone man, not in

armor, but in the robes of the merchants. All grew quiet as he was heavily escorted up to the lone merchant.

"Pray tell, stranger, what purpose do you have in this unexpected visit?" asked the merchant.

"I seek employment in your service I am not unaccustomed to sword play," I replied. I sensed him grin with satisfaction, like a cat who has caught a mouse.

"Why are you bloodied, my friend?" he asked as he looked at my garb.

"I was waylaid by a bandit whom I had to slay. I've got his head in my saddle bags."

"Go and bring it here." I turned to go and sensed him motion to the Crossbowmen, and four of them fell in behind me.

Once outside, Veron Kereg slowly led them toward his stallion. One of the Crossbowmen stumbled and almost fell, but before he could regain his balance, Veron Kereg swirled around swinging his sword as it sung of death. One guard's arm flew from his body, leaving only a bloody stump. One let fly a bolt, but so startled was he that it flew passed Kereg's head by inches. Kereg smashed his face in with a back hand blow with his sword hilt. The other two panicked and started running away from him. He freed his bow and brought them down before they escaped his range.

He heard a noise overhead, sixteen Great Eagles, each ridden by a warrior. They let loose a hail of arrows in his direction. He raced for his stallion, leaping up on it's back. It needed little urging from him as it broke into a frenzied gallop. He gave it free reign to pick its way through the rocky pass. The Great Eagles were closing with him. He had little hope in escaping.

A wild shot brought down his stallion, but he leapt aside, landing catlike on his feet. At once he saw in a rocky hollowing all but hidden, an ever shifting door, yes a door, he thought, trying to clear his vision. With no time to ponder over this strange sight, he sprinted for it as a dozen arrows struck around his feet. The fierce war cries of the Great Eagles echoing in his head, he leapt

through the ever shifting door.

All he remembers was the bursting of colors and a tremendous falling sensation and a vast feeling of emptiness.

He awoke with a hammer pounding inside his head. Sitting up, he saw he was in a small clump of trees. He immediately caught sight of an opening in the ground, partially hidden by the undergrowth. He drew his sword as he went forward to investigate. He discovered rough steps going down from the dark opening. Slowly he went down, testing his weight on the narrow steps that no human hand had made.

At the end of the stairs he found himself in a large chamber which had three large marble pillars at it's far end. There were three corridors going from the chamber and there was a lead-coated door.

He stood for a moment, then finally chose to investigate the door and cautiously approached it.

Suddenly he spun about, sword at the ready, facing toward the north eastern passageway. He sensed three shapes coming towards him rapidly. Something wasn't quite right, in fact, something was awfully wrong. The three human shapes were not solid and had an aura of fear and death! The closest one suddenly burst into an unnatural speed and lunged at him, trying to touch him with its outstretched pale blue hand.

He threw himself to his right, rolling under that deadly hand and slashing out with his sword, eager for the feel of cutting through flesh and bone, but the sword passed right through the thing's legs, doing no damage at all. He sprang up crouching, as the other two rushed at him, he leapt to his left, arms up over his head, stomach held in as one of them came but inches from him. This maneuver threw them off balance and gave him a split second to try the lead-coated door. He put all his strength in the attempt and hit the door with his shoulder, feeling it give and fly open as he crashed through. He spun around slamming the door shut behind him, putting all his strength in holding it closed since its latch was busted. Sweat dripped off him as he turned, holding the door shut with his shoul-

der, and pulled out two flasks and a torch from his backpack. Then, taking a deep breath, he lit the torch and leapt down the corridor, spun around and threw the flask at the floor beside the door as two of the black robed Undead rushed in. He hurled the torch at the thing's feet. The flames leapt up and the oil burned hot and bright. The two Undead leapt back, stumbling into the third one.

Veron Kereg turned and fled down the dark and unknown passageway, stopping for nothing, putting as distance between him and those three Soul Suckers as possible before the oil burnt out.

Finally he stopped, his breath coming in painful gasps. He sensed nothing behind him as he rested against the corridor's cold stone wall. He knew not how long he had fled. He sensed an outline in the wall about ten feet ahead of him. He, sword in hand, went forward, prodding the wall as he went. He traced the outline of a door with his sword. He found a hidden latch after a few moments of searching. Lowering his head, he listened as he slowly tried the latch. Hearing nothing, he entered. The door closed behind him. The loud sound of the latch catching sent a cold chill down his spine.

Tightening his grip on his sword, he cautiously went forward, striving to sense anything within his range.

He heard a very subtle noise above him, out of his range of sensing. He leapt back not a second too soon, as a large blob splattered where he was but a second ago! It sped toward him as he fumbled for another flask scrambling back all the while. He had heard rumors of hideous things and slimey that dwelt in dark damp places and knew if he struck it with his sword, the results would be the creation of many small slimey things like the one before him, trying to crawl its slimey bulk over him, to smother him and drain him of his blood with its hideous body. Thus, he flung the flask at it, then turned tail and ran to the door he had entered. Turning around, he lit his torch as it came on ever after him, he flung the torch at it, only a few yards from him and threw his arm up, shielding his face from the flames as it burst into a being of

living torment of bright flames.

It died slowly. While the flames consumed the thing and chased the shadows along the walls, he went on past it to see what it was guarding when it had almost successfully ambushed him. About two hundred feet down the passageway he found a small wooden casket about a foot long and six inches wide. Inside he found twenty-five Jade Gems. A fortune! he thought to himself. He carefully placed the small casket in his backpack, then sought to find his way out of this den of horrors, many yet unknown and hidden below in this catacombs of sorcery.

He found the ancient narrow stairway and started following it up, when it seemed to shimmer and shift in strange colors and sensations. Once again he felt that vast emptiness and falling sensation, then he knew no more as he fell to the stairway.

He, once again awoke, finding himself in a clump of trees. His head lacked the steady pain he had felt the first time, but he was still dizzy.

He gained his feet, shaking his head clear of the mist that at first shrouded his senses. He tensed and drew his sword as he heard voices not far away and to the right of the trees. He couldn't understand them, thus he had to consider them enemies. He crouched and silently moved toward the voices. Panther-like he was, a black shadow among shadows, not making a sound, ready to deal death out, no, eager to deal death, to feel his sword cutting through flesh and bone.

He peered out from the trees and sensed a road heading to the south. Mercenaries, he thought, judging by the sound of them. All in mail shirts and all had shields at their horses sides.

After they passed, he made his way to the road and journeyed southward. The moon was high and the skies hinted of rain, as he quickened his pace. The surrounding country side was clear, mostly grasslands.

After eight nights of travel, hiding and sleeping when the sun rose, he found himself engulfed in a Great Desert, and a city's towers and walls looming up at him ahead in the distance.

He was a foreigner and in strange

lands. He had entered the city with no trouble, but found none that he could understand.

He was sitting in a tavern nursing his ale, thinking over his situation, when a man in black robes came over to him, noticing Veron Kereg's skull buckle and necklace.

"Hail, stranger. How long have you been in Stygia?" he asked. Struck dumbfounded, Veron Kereg found he could understand this stranger.

"I have been here for twenty some days now, trying to find someone I could speak with. You sure are a most welcome surprise. I take it your a Priest by your garb."

"Yes, I am a Priest of Set."

Veron Kereg stood up and bid the Priest sit with him, then he ordered the finest wine in this tavern of thieves and outlaws.

"I am Veron Kereg of Melnibone. I am in need of a translator. Since the only ones that know my tongue here are Priest and Sorcerors, perchance you can arrange this for me. I am a worshipper of Set."

"I know this, Veron Kereg. You have been known to the Temple almost from the time you first arrived. I am called Seethar and have been instructed to help you as much as I can. Your, let us say, lineage is known to us, but not clearly. We know you yourself know less than we do on this matter."

Veron Kereg looked long and hard upon this Priest of Set. He had short white hair, narrow eyes and skin as white as his hair. His yellow eyes hinted of no mercy, but a chilling hardness. He judged the Priest to be about five feet, eight inches and weigh around two hundred pounds with a muscular body hidden under his robes of Priesthood, and, no doubt a sword hidden there also.

Veron Kereg relaxed and nodded to Priest Seethar, "No doubt you do. Being a Priest of Set and having access to the Forbidden Secrets. You then know also that I wait to claim my birthright in the name of Set."

"I will help you in this and any other matters I can," he said with a glimmer of respectful fear in those yellow eyes.

Veron Kereg and Priest Seethar, after a hushed talk in whispers, rose and went over to the barkeeper and

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Dungeon Contest Winners!

Hear, ye, hear, ye! Let it be known throughout the kingdom. The Judges Guild Journal Bride of the Son of the World's First and Greatest Dungeon Creation Contest-Contest-Contest is over. The entries have been compiled and judges and the moment you have been waiting for has arrived! But, first, a word from . . .

This contest had a longer running time than before and the entries continued to pour in throughout. One entrant even wrote that he'd better stop typing but he swore that his entry was ready and would be mailed by midnight even if the postmark didn't show it. (It did, however.)

Judges for this particular contest included Bob Bledsaw, Mark Holmer, Chuck Anshell, Dan Hauffe and Rudy Kraft. As with the last contest, this one was a toughie to judge as most of the entries were really good dungeons. The entries were divided into three size categories. Each section is listed below with the winners indicated.

LARGE: K. Criscione's "Khrest Test" (1st place); R. Baier's "The Azurain Pirates" (2nd place); J. Alford's "Bloodthirsty" (3rd place); N & M Plants' "House and Lands of Leamon the Greedy" (honorable mention). Other entries in this section included (in order of their final standing): R. Jones' "Threat in the North"; G. Paczolt's "Rat-on-a-Stick"; B. Chapin's "Haus of Phunn"; D. Houdeschel's "Revenge Dungeon"; K. Wyzywany's "Eight Swords of Chayn"; D. Dyche's "Halcyon

Cavern"; J. Hopkins II "Demon Lair"; R. Jones "Dungeon of the Mouth"; J. Fowler's "Striek Hollus"; R. Irwin's "Stronghold of Karthas"; and J. Mounie's "Thunderhold Caverns".

MEDIUM: B. Hinch's "Lair of the Ninja Lord" (1st place); D. MacKenzie "Lost Tomb of Ahmahnteph" (2nd place); D. Ellis's "Catacombs of the Undead" (3rd place); A. Eaglestone and G. Butler's "Alamastara's Realm (honorable mention). Others were: G. Menning's "The Depths of Darthvoor"; B. Fawcett "Beastmaker Mountain"; J. Graff's "Duinar"; P. Amory's "Conspiracy of the Demon Lord"; G. Tolle "Vovedyosey"; W. Carlsrud's "Storm Giant's Citadel in Harridan Gap"; K. Wyzywany's "Great Halls of the Snake Lord"; S. Jones' "Mountain Moor Dungeon"; and C. Weaver and G. Woodcock's "Pyramid of Suberus".

MINI: D. Carnley's "Fortress of the Great Wurm Master" (1st place); D. Houdeschel's "Indians & the Mountain Ram Clan" (2nd place); D. Coble's "Tunnel of Ikata-Sa" (3rd place); B. Prouty's "Ruined Tower of Mabeleck" (honorable mention). Others in this category were: D. Goodsell's "Forgotten Mine"; R. Marron's "Tomb of Nekt"; D. Goodsell's "Cave of the Goblin Lord"; B. Walters' "Shrine of Shaka Groggi"; C. Heiney "Kthenta's Dark Repose"; J. Scrimgeour's "The Jade Seagull"; L. Baker "Heart of the Temple Dungeon"; R. Verberer's "The Humor of Amadon"; N & A Jensen "Prison of the Gods"; V. Mather's "Simpleton's Tomb"; D. Jageman's unnamed dungeon; C. Campbell's "Terror of Forest Deep"; T. Daley's "Temple of Demogorgon"; D. Maxfield "Jackrabbits Lair"; W. Gustafson's "Red Mountain Mine"; and S. Kucera's "Zygomatia's Dungeon".

This contest included dungeons for T&T and TFT as well as D&D and AD&D types. Once again our readers have proven they are the best judges in the world!

CA

owner of the Serpent's Head Tavern. A Tavern known all over Stygia for the rugged outcast and dark deals that are there and made there in. Even one of those of the Black Dagger Brotherhood will be wary in that den infested with the most vile of men and women.

Priest Seethar arranged to have Therk Mvekon, the owner of the Serpent's Head and notorious thief, to hire twelve outlaws with a price on their heads, all having known skill with their swords. Also to hire twelve thieves that have the skill with lock picking and moving with stealth. All must have prices on their heads, and be skilled in the sword. But none must be wanted in Stygia, but in other countries. Therk agreed to this after Veron Kereg had a few Gems changed for Gold coins and giving Therk a good size bribe to insure he gets the most rugged and skilled of those specified.

Priest Seethar had Temple business to attend to, but appointed another Priest to translate for and tutor Veron Kereg, but assured him that he would return in a few weeks.

Priest Eeston immediately took up the tutoring and conducting Veron Kereg's business. Veron Kereg set up headquarters in the Serpent's Head. It wasn't long till Therk's efforts were getting results. Some of the most notorious thieves, renegades and outlaws of Hyborea were gathering at the Serpent's Head Tavern, taking Veron Kereg's Gold.

He felt it was time and had Priest Eeston secretly gather a force of one hundred Mercenary Light Cavalry. He put his feared outlaws in command as their captains.

Darkness enveloped all. It seemed like a living thing. It laid thick and heavy, trying to fight back the light of the torches of Veron Kereg's men. They rode, two abreast, winding along the road. Their torches fighting back the darkness. Ahead of them rode a shadow. It needed no light to see by and it was as quiet as death itself. This was Veron Kereg scouting ahead alone. He sensed the bridge ahead and heard the crackling of fire. The Border Guards, he thought. He slid from his stallion's back, feeling the soft dirt underfoot. A cool breeze stirred the heavy mist that hung low over the

River. He crept forward panther-like, not making a sound, drawing his sword. He stopped in the shadows that played about the camp's perimeter. He sensed seven shapes within the perimeter, huddling around the campfire for what little warmth it offered. Silently he withdrew and made his way back to his stallion. There he rode back to his band of cutthroats.

He led them in a charge for the bridge and into Shem. He did not interfere in the borderguards hasty retreat, knowing of the report they would give to their captain.

He led his men only at night, making camp during the day. They had been travelling along the road, making straight for the border City State of Semar, one of the large City States of Shem.

"Thar, send for Quon the Bow. Have him meet me here within the hour. You and four other captains will enter the city with me. Go and make preparations," ordered Veron Kereg in his low voice. The one called Thar turned and disappeared from the flickering light of the campfire.

They were camped sixty miles southwest of Semar. Veron Kereg did not wish to risk leading so many armed men any closer to the border city. A lone rider burst into the camp. "Kereg, there's a small party journeying south along the road. There is eight Mercenaries led by three Sorcerors."

"Treker," shouted Kereg at a tall skinny renegade, "You and Mog the Axe ride with me," and at those last words, Veron Kereg had leapt upon his great black stallion, cloak swirling in the wind and spurred his stallion into a gallop, leaping over the campfires as he went. The two renegades followed him.

Mog the Axe's black bare chest glistened under the moonlight as he cautiously crept towards the road. He had his axe in hand, waiting for Kereg's signal. He knew that desert dog, Treker, was about fifteen paces to his left, awaiting the same signal. Veron Kereg was on the other side of the road, deadlier than the poisons of the Dark Brotherhood of the Black Dagger, that one was, he thought with a shudder of fear. Aye, a damned devil, no mistake about it.

He heard a man's dying screams over the small bank in front of him. He charged over the hill and caught two unlucky mercenaries unawares. He swung his axe in a low arc, feeling the cutting of bone, the warm blood splashing on his naked chest. One mercenary was smashed to the ground with a gaping cut in his stomach, feeling his guts running down his sides. Before the other mercenary could finish his untimely sword thrust, Mog the Axe caught him on the side of his head, sending pieces of skull and brain splattering on the road side.

He caught a glimpse of Treker cutting down another mercenary, his broadsword a crimson blur. He saw a Sorcerer, hands raised in some sort of conjuration. A shudder ran through him, fearing what was to happen. At his moment of hesitation, a mercenary had stole upon him, lashing out with his sword. Mog the Axe's instincts took over as he spun about, leaping to his left, sucking his stomach in as the mercenary's sword cut into him, splitting his stomach open. Mog's axe struck out, splitting the air as it softly sighed in anticipation and cut into the mercenary's collar bone. The mercenary crashed to the roadway as Mog jerked his axe free of the dead man, blood running freely from Mog's light stomach wound.

He croached, tightening his grip on his axe as the Sorcerer turned toward him, but the next second the Sorcerer was not to be seen, he just vanished in thin air. Next thing Mog was aware of was the sight of the other Sorcerer's head leaping from his shoulders, rolling to his feet in a grisly smile of death. Then he felt something brush his hand, rushing off the road.

"Mog, you fool, help Treker," hissed a low voice familiar to him. It was Veron Kereg in pursuit of some unforeseen foe. Kereg was only a shadow as he sped by. Mog the Axe ran toward the ringing of steel. There, off the road he saw four mercenaries baring down on that skinny desert dog who fought with his broadsword in a dazzling display of his skill, as he parried three blows at once, then ramming his broadsword clean thru the fourth one, cleaving through the mail shirt, before the mercenaries wild thrust could find him.

Mog charged into them as his colorful feathers bristled in the wind and he roared out the Battle Cry of the Black Corsairs as his axe came slicing into the head of one, splitting his head and helmet neatly in two.

They made short work of the remaining two. They made their way back to the road in time to see Veron Kereg off on the other side swinging his great sword at an unseen foe. They stood there in astonishment as the sword bit into something that appeared like nothing but thin air, then a body appeared, sinking to the dirt with its midsection bleeding freely and spitting out its guts as it lurched in death once as it came to rest. It was the last of the three Sorcerors that had vanished earlier.

Veron Kereg was bending over the bloody corpse pulling a gold ring off the limp hand, quickly sliding it on his own hand.

"Trecker, bring the horses," he said as he stooped over another body and carefully searched it. At last he rose with an old leather map in his hands. Trecker returned leading their mounts. Kereg quickly glanced over the map, then mounted and led his two captains back to camp.

Once back in camp, Mog and Trecker realized that Veron Kereg had feared no sword of the mercenaries, but had quickly cut down the Sorcerors, and with good reason, if you put things in their proper perspective. Even the Sorcery of the last Sorcerer had not saved him. No human eye could see him, but Veron Kereg could and the Sorcerer forfeited his life for that deadly mistake.

Veron Kereg learned from Priest Eeston of the NEXUS Points, or better known as the Dimension Doors or Gates. Those few of the hidden knowledge know that many such gates exist. Many Dimensions exist on this plane interlapping one another. The only way to pass from one to another is by these gates which open at specific points at certain times, to those Gates which are opened with sorcery. This is what brought Veron Kereg here and saved him from the razor talons of the Great Eagles.

Veron Kereg entered the border city of Semar along with the dim stars. He slowly rode, unchallenged into the

dark alleys. He stopped and entered a small rundown tavern. Those that were in his path, after one look at him, slowly moved aside clearing a path for him. He strode slowly to the bar. There the barkeeper brought him his ale.

"Barkeep," said Kereg as he slid a pouch of gold coins to him, "Does the Royal Family of the House of the Unicorn have any children?"

The rough looking barkeep, with a glint in his eye as he opened the pouch answered, "Aye, that there is. There is the Princess Dalania. A more beautiful young woman you want find. Aye, and ripe for the picking. Many a man would like to plow that field and reap the harvest, if you get my meaning, kind sir," he finished with a crooked smile flashing his yellow teeth. "They have three fine sons, the lot of them. Aye, fit rulers they'll make when the time comes."

Veron Kereg threw another pouch to the barkeep. "Are they staying in the city now?"

"No, they are at their country manor sixty miles north of the city." At that Veron Kereg left, mounted his stallion and quietly left the city making for his camp.

Veron Kereg sat alone in his tent in deep thought. He had given the order that they'd break camp tonight and ride for the country manor of the Royal House of the Unicorn. Yes, the lovely Princess Dalania would bring a handsome ransom, among other things, and at that thought he smiled to himself. He would slip in alone and abduct her.

When the sun sunk over the horizon, his men were ready to ride. He rode alone and well ahead of their torch lights.

Before they had set out he had met with Quon the Bow, that bronze wirey tough outlaw. He judged him to be a leader with possibilities, but above all, he judged him to be loyal and that's a rare characteristic to find in any man. The other renegades respected and would follow him. He wasn't as experienced as Trecker or Mog the Axe, but he was best suited for the position Veron Kereg gave him. That to lead the men in Kereg's absence. To be second only to him. Quon the Bow was to lead the men

and await Kereg ten miles west of the country manor with orders to remain hidden and stay as long as possible, but if a Shem patrol discovered them, Quon the Bow was to lead them back into Stygia to meet later at the Serpent's Head Tavern.

Veron Kereg later picked fifteen rogues and led them out heading for the Royal Family's manor.

He left them just out of sight of the outer walls, then he silently stole up to the outer walls being nothing more than a shadow. He turned the Golden Ring on his finger and brought out a grappling hook from his backpack. Whirling it up and over the walls he felt it catch hold. Holding his breath he heard nor sensed any guards coming towards him.

He pulled himself up and crouched on the narrow walkway of the wall. Silently he crept down the stairway. he found a few paces to his right.

He sensed two guardsmen approaching. He stood still as an unfeeling rock. The guardsmen passed within a few feet of him and didn't know they were but a short breath away from death if they had seen Veron Kereg. He took a small step forward feeling the small branch snap under his boots. The two guardsmen whirled, drawing their swords. They called out as Veron Kereg leapt upon them, bringing his sword down in a powerful blow cutting into one's shoulder, and kept going till it was free. The guardsman's arm flew from his shoulder. Kereg smashed the remaining guardsman's face in with the back of his hand. Then he ran to the wall as he heard the alarm being given, and many feet running towards him. He quickly climbed down the rope and sprinted for the nearest shadows as three arrows flew over his head. He ran into a partol of fifteen men at arms outside the walls that were alerted by the shouts of those on the walls. Seven had Crossbows but couldn't see well enough to get a clean shot at him but fired wildly. He turned the Golden Ring and stood stark still, daring hardly to breath as the patrol came within a few yards of him. Suddenly from out of the night charged Kereg's men, their horses in full gallop. Their Scimitars circling

above them in deadly arcs, till they were among the patrol, then they bit down at the unwary patrol reaping a bloody harvest. He heard more men rushing forward. They had opened the main gate to reinforce the desamated patrol.

Without hesitation, Veron Kereg again climbed the rope and rushed down the narrow stairway. He ran for the main house. He made it to the corner. Peering around, he saw what had to be the Royal Family of the House of the Unicorn. There were four men, one obviously the King and the other three his sons. The two women were both beautiful, but the Princess was an utter vision of loveliness. They were all in their sleeping garb and surrounded by eleven of the King's Elite White Guard.

Veron Kereg twisted the Ring once again, then crept silently toward them. He was only paces from them and none could see him even though a guardsman looked right at him. He slipped between them and entered the manor house. Once there he hurled a burning lamp and sent in crashing against the front wall, watching it catch the tapestries on fire. The front room was a blazing inferno when he left through the front doorway. Silently he maneuvered into a position behind the beautiful Princess.

The Captain gave the alarm and ten of his guardsmen started a bucket line from the large fountain in front. This was what Kereg had waited for. During a moment of confusion, he hit the Princess a light blow and caught her as she fell. He slipped the Golden Ring on her finger and slung her slender form over his shoulder as he sprinted for the shadows of the

flickering flames. The five remaining guards and their Captain hesitated for a second at the unnatural sight of a tall warrior in black appearing before them for only a moment holding their Princess, then he slipped something onto her finger causing her to vanish, then this thing in black threw her over his shoulder and sprinted for the shadows and out of sight of their eyes!

He made it over the wall during the confusion and saw the last of his men being drug off their horse's back to be hacked up by the enraged guardsmen. Veron Kereg found his stallion still in the woods. He threw the Princess on and leaped up behind her and quickly disappeared into the woodlands.

The next morning a sentry found a large stone wrapped in a parchment. He quickly took this to the King. It was a ransom note demanding twenty-five thousand in Gems to be delivered in two days ten miles west of the manor house.

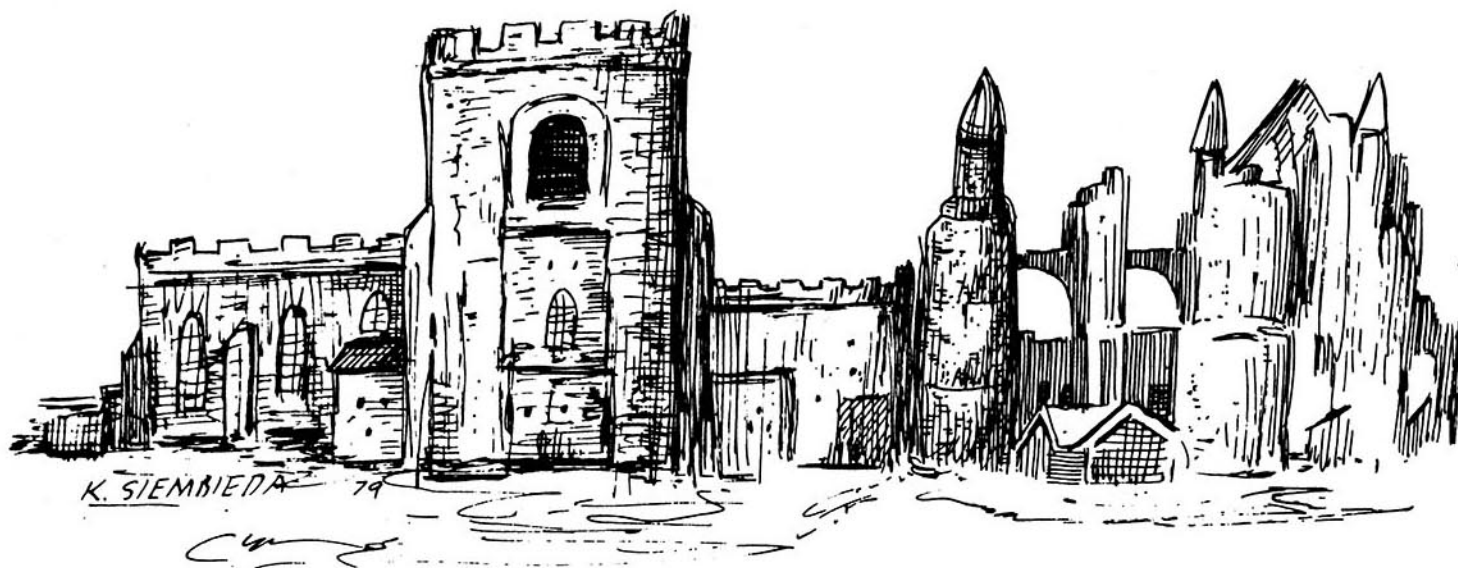
Veron Kereg found the camp of his men abandoned. He slowly searched the area and determined that they were pursued by a large Shem patrol but were able to escape. He deemed it was safe to stay here till he received the ransom. He made camp and secured the Princess. She awoke finding herself bound hand and foot and this man staring down at her. She tried to conceal herself from his appreciating eyes. Those eyes! She shivered but could not hide her feminine charms under the thin sleek robes of her royal bed. Kereg smiled and slowly went to her where she lay. She was too terrified to even scream. She feebly tried to fight against his

rough caresses, but soon she found no desire to. Her whole being was aflame. She longed for his touch and eagerly arched her body up at him as he took what he wanted.

It was approaching the hour of midnight. Veron Kereg had left the lusty Princess back at his hidden camp and was waiting for the agent that the messenger had arranged to bring the required jewels. It was then that he sensed the five riders approaching from his left. There was no full moon and they hadn't seen him as yet. He urged his stallion into a full gallop, speeding silently under the dark clouds above. The five riders had not known of his presence so no pursuit followed.

Veron Kereg sharply reigned in, stopping his horse dead. Before him was a mounted warrior. "Easy, rogue, I bare the jewels as agreed upon in the ransom," the warrior spat out, throwing a large pouch to Kereg. Catching it, Kereg tested it's weight before he was satisfied. "You Shemite dogs are known for your treachery and cowardice," he said hotly. The Shem warrior's hand dropped to his sword hilt, but he hesitated, "If I had the Princess safe, you would die slowly, you Stygian swine!" Kereg laughed wickedly, "The likes of you are destined to soak in your own crimson pool," and at that Kereg spun his stallion around and rode south, knowing that the Shemite patrols had probably found their wild Princess and were even now speeding to ambush him if he was still in the area.

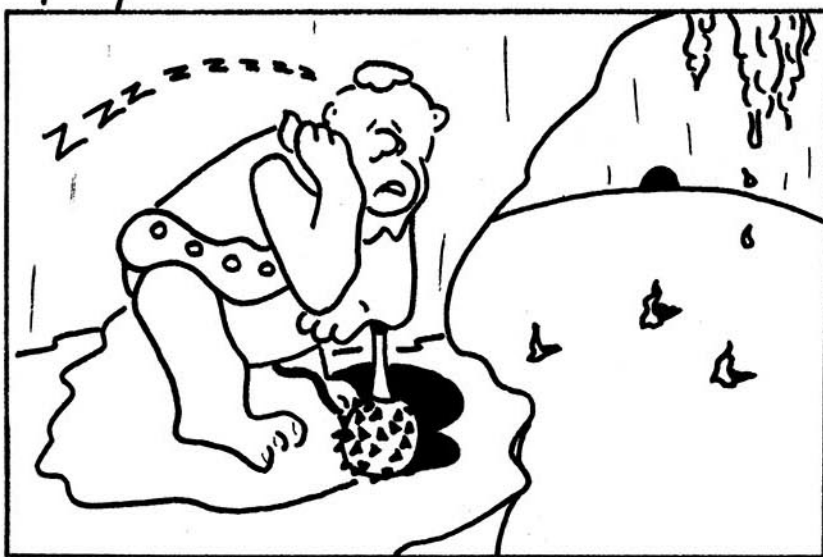
Veron Kereg was eager to be back in Stygia where his outlaws were awaiting his arrival with his Gold on their belts. He had plans even for his next raid into Shem.





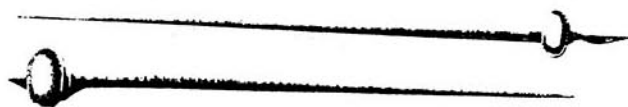
THE MEGADVENTURES OF THE EARTHLOUS GROC : STEALTHY STAN & BURT

BY GARY



Quests in AD&D

by David Fleissig



Tomar looked up, the glimmering of the sceptor twinkled in his eyes. Slowly he crept towards it, he reached his hand out to grasp it. And as he did he cried out: "My quest is over! I've found the Sacred Sceptor!" His companions dead, he was alone, but his quest was over. . . .

• A quest as defined by **Websters Unabridged Dictionary** is an heroic expedition in search of a particular object. In major works of fantasy it is the quest which provides the frame work for the novel. Definite quests were the basis of the books, **The Hobbit** and **The Sword of Shannara**. In **The Lord of the Rings** the quest was reversed with the item already in possession and the expedition to destroy it. In Burrough's **Martian Series**, **John Carter** is always in a quest to rescue his princess. In a quest a specific task is required to be accomplished by the adventurers. To accomplish this task many obstacles have to be surpassed. These obstacles could be the traversing of a number of dungeon levels, the climbing of an endless mountain, the crossing of a stifling desert or a number of other things. These adventures are different from regular ones because they have a purpose.

In fantasy role-playing games such as **AD&D** having a quest makes the game more interesting and appealing. If you look at it, any **AD&D** adventure is a quest in itself for the general objects of treasure and experience. But if the quest is for a specific item then the adventures had would be more meaningful because there would be a reason behind them.

Some quests could be for a very powerful magic item or artifact, a key to the Golden City, the pond of Infinite Life or a Staff of Power without which the world would be destroyed. All items should be guarded heavily and access to them should be almost impossible. Perhaps some quest could be a grand journey in the **Tolkien** tradition with various NPCs offering aid or evil. The NPC should play some part in the quest unknown to the players and he or she should have a reason for being there. Maybe the NPC is the rightful owner of the item or perhaps he is the henchman of the owner of

the item who will offer wrong advice to the players. In either case it is up to the players to make that deduction and in some cases it may be fatal.

There are two main types of quests. The first is one of necessity and the second one of want. The reasons for a quest of necessity are varied. They can be formed of repentance (usually from an *Atonement* spell) if a Cleric is not faithful to his or her diety. They can also be a type of payment for services. Suppose a group of adventurers want a *Ressurrection* spell cast on their long lost comrade and they have no money or items of worth. The powerful Cleric might ask them to get him a certain object as payment. Or let's say the characters insult a high level Magic User without knowing what he was. The Magic User instead of killing them offers them a chance to redeem themselves by fetching an item for him. These types of quest should be of short length as their purpose is to serve other ends rather than the actual getting of the object for the characters themselves. This doesn't mean that these quests should be easy. They should be just as difficult if not harder than quests of want depending on the degree of unfaithfulness of the Cleric or the disposition of the NPC.

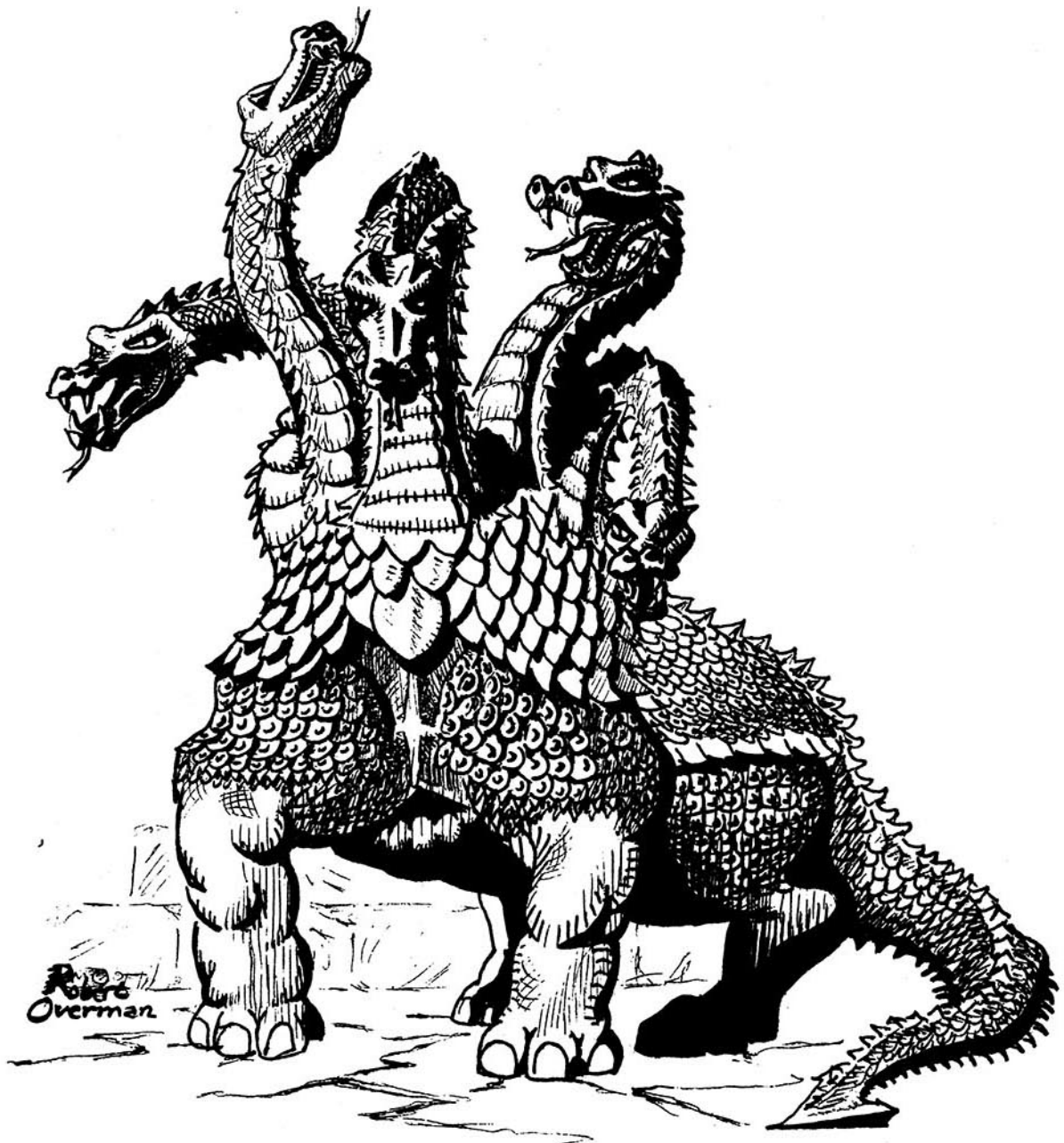
A quest of want is one that is decided to be undertaken by the players. Usually they hear about the item through sources planned by the Judge. These sources can be varied. Muffled whispers and vague rumors could be heard at a tavern or overheard arguments between two NPCs could bring about the details. In any case the players out of their own volition decide to go after the certain item. The information given to them should not be so vague so as to discourage the players from attempting the quest nor should it be so precise that the players know exactly where to go, what to defeat and so on. Basically the information should be just enough to whet the appetites of the players and provide them incentive to undertake the quest, nothing more.

Once the players have started the quest, the Judge must be careful not to let the players veer off course from the quest especially if it is one of

necessity. The reason is that if this happens the quest will lose its importance and will become drawn out. In quests of necessity where the item is gained for someone else, players become bored if this happens. This is because they know that all their time and effort is being spent on someone else. Therefore the players might try to stray away from their task. This should be stopped early on. When a quest is for a high level Cleric or Magic User, he will probably have ways of detecting this. In my campaign, a Patriarch made the adventurers wear unremoveable neck collars which would do unknown things to them if the quest was abandoned. Similar things can be utilized for the same effect.

Another alternative would be to let the adventurers stray away from the quest and in so doing, meet up with the very NPC for whom the quest was for. These make for interesting encounters!

As you can see, quests are very useful in spicing up a campaign. To newcomers to the game a quest can be the answer to their cries of "But how do you win?" Since a quest has a certain objective there is a way to "win". And it is hoped that these starting players after experiencing the game with a quest will no longer need to ask that question since they will see during the quest that the fun is in playing of the game rather than the winning.



Multiple Mage Magics

by Geoffrey O. Dale

As powerful as a good Wizard is, he still must have limitations on what he can do by magical means - limitations based on the fact that he is a single individual. Further problems arise for the Wizard of D&D/AD&D, for he is additionally encumbered by being oriented towards battle magic. This limits the range of spells the players of such Wizards would be interested in. In my view, the AD&D *tm* adventurer-mage is an aberration who, in the judgement of his fellow mages, has chosen to remain professionally stifled through his abandonment of his proper research. He is also mentally warped - lured by mere gold into spells intended for control over men in a profession marked by its aims of a much greater power: that of Nature itself.

This difference of philosophy is not meant as a tirade against the design of the AD&D *tm* Wizard, although I think that the writers are mistaken, but to give some of the reasoning behind the consideration of this article. Those magicians locked in their towers and their schools, who never see the dungeon or the dragon, would naturally turn over time to consider effects which go far beyond the capabilities of single spell-casters and belong more properly to the realm of Gods. One group in my campaign (the Clerics) take the theological view that "the Gods" are simply exceedingly powerful Magic Users who have concentrated their researches in single areas over centuries so to have complete control there. If any significant number of magicians also subscribe to this idea, then they would naturally become convinced that it must be possible to duplicate the feats of the Gods through magical means and attempt to do that!

In general, such divine works are not useful to war or suited to battle, even on a tactical scale - such as normal D&D/AD&D melee by individual player characters. Therefore any active adventurer would not attempt to duplicate the Gods. First, such magicks are not immediately useful to him (in the way that *Fireball* and *Teleport* and *Invisibility* are) and second, it takes so much time to research such magic that the character could no longer be thought of as an adventurer anyway.

The discussion above leads to the conclusion that there should exist a class of magical spells which not only **are not** accessible to player character Wizards, they **cannot be cast** by any single individual magician. If you conceive of magic as involving ANY mental and/or physical drain on its worker (and I do), then these spells involve such an amount of energy that, were an individual to cast these spells, he would die in the process (I recommend that no resurrection be allowed in these cases) and probably the spell would not have more than token effect if only one Wizard worked it. A beginning list of such spells are appended to this article. This leads to the question - if no Magic User can cast the spells, why do we want them? Why bother?

My answer to this is to introduce a concept which I don't think has ever been formally presented in the literature (at least I've never seen it!) and that is the Multiple-Mage spell. This is one which requires three or more magicians to perform, all of them working together and on the same spell. For example, three Wizards, all of them casting the same spell is not a MM-spell for the three are not participating in one spell but applying the same spell in three separate applications.

A more concrete example would be the same three casting a *Firestorm* spell to clear a one hex area of forest to build an army base there (they had some firefighters surrounding the hex to control the fire afterward, let's say). This is a MM-spell, whereas if the three of them had thrown three simultaneous *Fireball* spells, their spells might have eventually had the same effect, (given luck and several days, no rains, etc.) but do not total to the effect of a *Firestorm* over a large area.

MM-spells in general are concerned with geological effects and spells over large areas, and are more specifically meant to control or alter Nature in a permanent sort of way. They have typical casting times on the order of weeks, and may conceivably extend into years for the more powerful ones, much like preparing a powerful magic item or artifact. These spells can be made to serve

strategic military ends, though rarely they can effect combats ("either you cede us that pass or our MMs will make your capital into a desert next summer. . .").

The casting of MM-spells is accomplished in the following manner. First, the requisite number of magicians must be secured. More than is needed may be used but never less (the spell simply fails). No magician of less than the 5th level may participate. A Team Leader is agreed upon and a Focus is then designated: often they are the same individual. The Team Leader is either the highest level present or the magician who actually researched the spell. The Focus is typically either the most expendable member of the team or its senior member. The Team Leader coordinates the actions of the entire team and sees to the proper rest of members, preparation of materials, etc. The ultimate responsibility of the spell's success or failure rests on him.

The Focus is the individual who ultimately triggers the spell - when the spell is finished, and everything is ready he pronounces the Power Word to activate the spell (after being informed at the last minute what the word is by his Team Leader); The Focus also stands to take any backlash effect and protect the rest of the Team from harm. The Focus need not be physically present with the rest of the team to speak the word and need not be a Magician himself. Note that the Focus must still have access to the Power word and know when to say it; premature use by a non-present Focus (who is not in communication with the team) will either negate the spell or produce an instant backfire upon the unfortunate Focus. Player characters may take part in teams and perhaps assemble and lead them, or even act as Foci.

Judges may require special material components for these spells; I recommend a cost of no less than 20,000 GP per Team member in components. Also, often these spells can require the destruction of magical items (most of mine do) for power, and this is an easy way of eliminating irritating items from play.

Since all team spells take at least one week to complete, each member may cast for only eight hours per day and must rest quietly, meditating, the rest of the time. Members must be kept in isolation except under the supervision of the Team Leader. They may touch **no magical items** not prepared for the spell, nor may they read any spell books nor scribe any nor enchant any other item. To do so negates the spell (but this will not be known until the spell is completed!). Any magician who drops out of the spell, without completing his

part in it, will take from 4 - 40 points of damage in the form of Exhaustive Wasting (cannot heal or be cured) - therefore, no Team Spell may be abandoned after being started, else all members take such damage; this occurs even if the spell is known to be useless, misguided or negated! Wasting requires complete bedrest for one week per three hit points taken in damage to cure. Failure to do so will kill the Magic User the next time he throws a spell without having completed his rest.

The actual MM-spells themselves are frequently reflections of the normal spell lists, only much more powerful in content. It is reasonable to assume that there are graduations in degree in magic, and it is theoretically possible for any spell to be upgraded to have stronger areas of effect and changed saving possibilities. As no team spell is aimed at an individual, no MM-spell has a saving throw. Only a backlash or spell failure is possible.

Backlash is interpreted as incorrect application of spell procedure. That is, somebody in the team goofed and everybody pays the price! Backlash takes three primary forms (although individual Judges are welcome to improve on this): 1) An energy rebound which takes the form of extreme damage; 2) A loss of magical powers such that no member of the team is able to perform magic for a time equal to the casting time of the spell; and 3) Reduction to low-grade moron status for the rest of the magicians's life! The second and third forms are self-explanatory; for the first, multiply the average level of the team by the number of weeks spent in casting the spell, and multiply that by 50. Each member of the team receives that amount of damage divided by the number of team members, no saving throw. Some backlash!

Spell failure is just that; the spell doesn't work, and it incurs no penalties. The best explanation for this is that the researcher didn't quite have the spell that he thought he did, so even though correct procedures was followed, there was no magic powers to draw on, hence no danger to the casters.

Backlash, as mentioned before, can be modulated through the Focus; refer to the tables below for % of spell failure, for % Backlash and for whether the Focus takes up the backlash or shares it with the party. If the Focus absorbs all of the first backlash then he takes all of the damage himself (usually saving the team the expense of cremation). If he takes all of the second backlash then he is unable to function magically, for a time equal to the casting time of the spell multiplied by the number of magicians participating in the spell (including himself).

I Percentage of Spell Failure

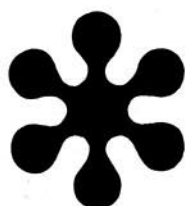
Team Leader Level	Team Average Level											
	5-7	8-10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20+
5-6	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	05
7-8	57	52	47	42	37	32	27	22	17	12	07	02
9-10	53	48	43	38	33	28	23	18	13	08	03	01
11-12	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	05	01	-
13-14	47	42	37	32	27	22	17	12	07	02	-	-
15	43	38	33	28	23	18	13	08	03	01	-	-
16	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	05	01	-	-	-
17	35	30	25	20	15	10	05	01	-	-	-	-
18+	30	25	20	15	10	05	01	-	-	-	-	-

Fails on Roll or Below

II Backlash Percent/Type Backlash

Team Leader Level	Team Average Level											
	5-7	8-10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20+
5-6	50	47	44	41	38	35	32	29	26	23	20	17
7-8	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	15
9-10	46	43	40	37	34	31	28	25	22	19	16	13
11-12	44	41	38	35	32	29	26	23	20	17	14	11
13-14	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	15	12	09
15	40	37	34	31	28	25	22	19	16	13	10	07
16	38	35	32	29	26	23	20	17	14	11	08	05
17	36	33	30	27	24	21	18	15	12	09	06	03
18+	34	32	28	25	22	19	16	13	10	07	04	01

Team Leader Level	Type of Backlash											
	5-7	8-10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20+
5-6	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
7-8	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
9-10	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
11-12	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
13-14	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
15	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
16	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
17	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
18+	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2



Focus Takes Backlash

	Focus' Constitution											
	3-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Non-Mage	*	*	*	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27
1-3	*	*	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4-5	*	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33
6-7	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36
8-9	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39
10-11	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42
12-13	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45
14-15	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48
16-17	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51
18-19	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54
20+	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48	51	54	57

Roll % Shown or Below

* Does not Shield Party and Dies



38 Judges Guild

Spell	Number of Wizards	Average Level	Time (Weeks)
Black Death	8	6	6
Raise Vocano	10	10	10
Stop Planet/Comet	25	12	50
Eclipse Unlimited	20	12	35
Tidal Wave	10	8	8
Form Mountain Chain	30	15	83
Raise/Sink Land	18	10	40
Blight Major	12	8	8
Float Mountain/City	8	10	4
Marching Forest	6	9	2
Form Desert	18	12	35
Lake to Mud	4	8	2
Pass Mountain	6	10	2
Canyon	10	13	5
Create River Major	11	9	3
Wall Immunity (to Spells)	6	13	8
Major City Strike	8	15	8
Minor City Strike	4	10	3
Deflect Hurricane	9	12	1.5
Sterilize Area	15	15	40
Create Heavenly Body	30	18	88
Flier Shield	8	13	6
Hide Fleet/Army	5	10	2
Mass Teleport	5	10	1
Floating Island	8	13	2
Move Mountain	10	12	3
Glacier Speed Control	13	13	2
Create Glacier	18	14	12
Melt Glacier	10	10	3
Form Iceberg	12	15	8
Gale Focus	12	14	2
Natural Earthquake	13	15	3
Alter Orbits	25	20	99
Reverse Planetary Spins	20	20	85
Babel-Tongues	12	15	6
Cloud Transformation	8	13	2
Bore/Mine	6	10	1
Construction (Building)	5	12	1
Drought	11	15	7
River to Sea Water	6	8	2
Natural Firestorm	5	9	2
Alter Gravity	20	17	63
Misborn	5	12	8
Create Typhoon	3	12	6
Create Current	3	10	2
Alter Sea Currents	3	11	1
Restore Area	20	17	60
Dust - Storms	5	12	15
Major Insect Plagues	4	9	3
Angels of Death	15	15	20
Create Species	3	12	41

Most spells are self-explanatory, and the rest are left open for interpretation by individual Judges. Have fun!

The Wreck of the Titan

by Stephen H. Dorneman

Introduction

For many years the "unsinkable" galley **Titan** and its captain, Black Tavis, plied the rich trade routes of the Northern Ocean. But some 15 years ago Tavis accepted a special commission from the infamous Halfling Thief, Yadnom, that brought him to the warmer waters of the South. It is said that a magic Sword was Tavis' partial payment for the journey, the transportation of the Halfling's take from a brief foray up the Demon Cliffs. Whether it was a cursed Sword or cargo, or simply a sudden storm and the crew's unfamiliarity with the shallow coral seas may never be known, but the voyage was never completed.

It is suggested that a map be found (drawn by a member of the crew who survived the wreck, albeit not for long) to lead the adventurers to the treasure ship.

The ship is submerged under 30 feet of water in a coral reef. The water is quite clear, so visibility is excellent.

This module is intended for medium-level characters (5th - 8th level), but will easily accommodate an intelligent and/or well-equipped group of lower levels. For higher level groups, merely add various sea creatures such as Sea Lions, a school of Barracuda or a Giant Squid to the waters outside of the ship. Doubling the number of monsters appearing within the vessel may also be needed. In any case, once blood has been shed, check every 10 minute turn - 5% chance (cumulative) that 3 - 12 Sharks will appear (or Giant Sharks, if you prefer).

Note that coral completely fills the lower hold where the ship snapped in two, making the lower decks accessible only from the upper, and furthermore separating the lower decks into two sections.

Upper Decks

- 1) The Deck of the ship appears relatively clear, although the ship is tilted so that sand has collected up against the door to rooms 2 - 4, and a mound of coral covers the stairs down to A so that they must be found as per a Secret Door, and it will take at least two turns to clear a way down. The ship's mast is missing, snapped off at the base. The door to Rooms 6 - 13 is wedged open.
- 2) Officer's Quarters. Sand covers the floor of this room, and also covers (90% undetectable) a Sting Ray: AC: 7, 1 HD, HP: 6. In this room is a bunk with rotted mattress, a corroded bronze brazier, and a sea chest containing a tin cup, a normal Dagger, a sewing kit, a clay pipe, a rusty razor, and in an inlaid onyx and amber Scabbard (worth 2500 GP) is a Cutlass (Scimitar) +1, unintelligent.
- 3) Officer's Quarters. Furnished as above, sea chest contains only rotting clothes.

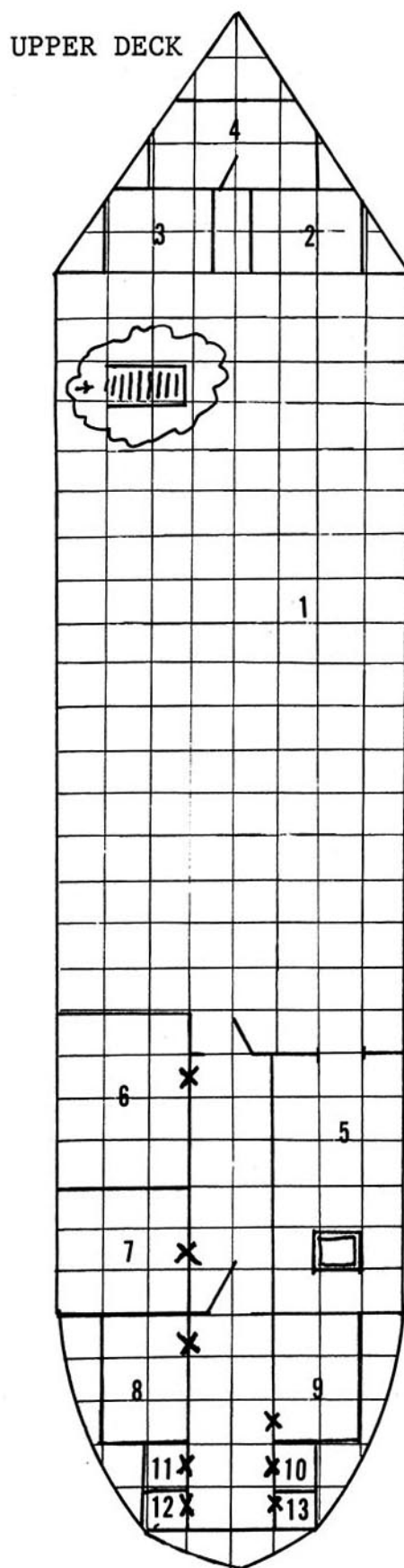
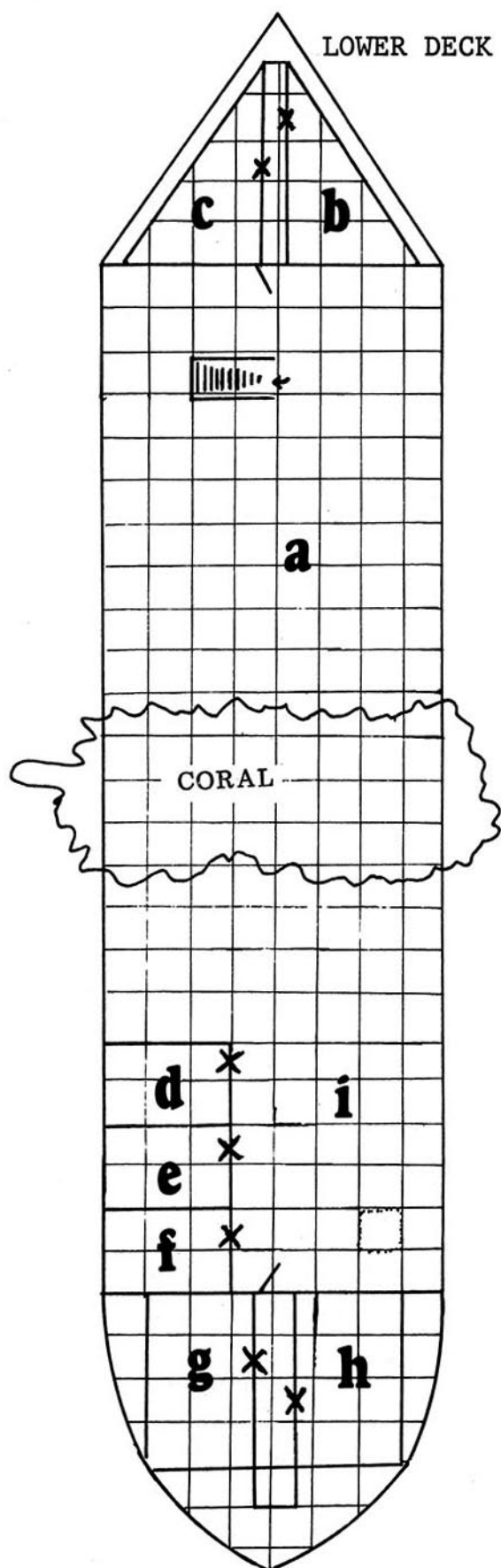


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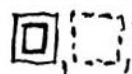
- 4) Captain's Quarters. Tied to the rotting bedframe here is a Female Skeleton, and standing in the doorway is the Captain, cursed for taking his evil pleasure while the ship sank. Appearing as a Skeletal form, wearing an eyepatch and wielding **Lichblade** (see below), he has been transformed into a Spectre: AC: 2 (+1 or better weapon to hit), drains **three** life levels per hit while attacking with the sword, HD: 7 + 3, HP: 45. He cannot leave the surface of the ship. **Lichblade** is a +2 Sword of Life Stealing that *Detects Magic* and *Good*, IQ: 13, Ego: 10, Alignment: Neutral/Evil. It is so attuned to the Negative Material Plane that if someone dies while wielding it, they are transformed into a Wight within 48 hours - even if separated from the Sword after death. *Raise Dead*, *Wishes*, etc. will not work on such a victim unless a *Remove Curse* has been performed on the body **and** the Lichblade has been destroyed (by a *Rod of Cancellation*, a *Wish*, broken by 18 (00) or better strength, or by similarly powerful means) before the change occurs. Lichblade appears as a dull black and grey-speckled blade with a silver-chased steel hilt and basket handguard. No other treasure.
- 5) The passageway is open to this cargo hold and entrance to the lower deck. Poking around in the few rotting crates here may stir up a few fishes, some rotten clothes and food, but nothing of value. There is the smell of sulfur dissolved in the water here, and occasionally bubbles of sulfur drift up from below decks.
- 6) Crew's Quarters. There are bunk beds for 14 men here, and a search of the various rotted sea bags and chests here will reveal a total of 400 Copper, 69 Silver, 77 Electrum, 41 Gold and 5 Platinum Pieces.
- 7) Crew's Quarters. Bunks here for ten men, otherwise as above with treasure of 500 Copper, 98 Silver, 67 Electrum and 37 Gold Pieces.
- 8) Mate's Quarters. A single bunk here, and a sea chest containing a purse with 34 Gold Pieces, a carved Ivory statuette of a naked woman worth 450 Gold, and a Scroll (Protection - Possession).
- 9) Mate's Quarters. Now occupied by a Giant Octopus that fills most of the room. Octopus is AC: 7, HD: 8, HP: 38. Under the Octopus is the crushed remnants of a sea chest, and in this is a rusted shut iron chest containing 52 Gold Pieces, a small leather sack containing three gems (worth 50, 100 and 500 GP) and a Ring of Contrariness (which acts as a Ring of Flying when first worn), and a set of keys to 10 - 13.
- 10) Empty Brig. A 1' x 1' barred window in the door looks into this bare cell.
- 11) Empty Brig, as above.
- 12) A prisoner in this cell during the Titan's last voyage is now a Ghost: AC: 0 or 8, HD: 10, HP: 34. The Ghost will attempt to *Magic Jar* the first person appearing at the door in order to get the keys from Nine and unlock this door. Having done so, it will leave this plane forever. Failing that, it will materialize and mutely implore the party to unlock or break down the door. The door opens as if *Wizard Locked* by a 12th level Magic User. No treasure.
- 13) Empty Brig, as above.

Lower Decks

- A) There are floating about here, eight chests of rotted clothing and foodstuffs, all worthless, and on the floor are three chests containing (protected from the water) 20 Longswords, 6 Heavy Crossbows (some assembly required), and 5 suits of Chainmail, all non-magic. Also floating about the hold are six Lampreys: AC: 7, HD: 1 + 2, HP: 4, 9, 5, 5, 10, 9, and one Giant Lamprey: AC: 6, HD: 5, HP: 20.



X=Door which opens into passageway, hinged on left (from passageway)

 Hatch (open) to lower deck

- B) This Storeroom is closed with a locked (-20% on lockpicking abilities) heavy iron-bound hardwood door. There are rotted chests that once contained precious silks and spices here, as well as 35 Copper ingots (of 100 weight each), 15 Silver ingots, and in a well protected chest (Lightening Trapped, as per the *Fire Trap* spell, only does 12 plus 1 - 4 points of electrical damage) is a bejeweled Silver statuette of an angel worth 5000 GP, a Golden sceptre set with six matched sapphires worth 7000 GP, and a wrought Gold medallion worth 1250 GP.
- C) A Storeroom as above, but the door to this one is unlocked and it now houses a Sea Hag: AC: 7, HD: 3, HP: 19, 50% Magic Resistant. She will use her death glance on the first member of the party who opens the door, and if he/she succumbs, the Hag will then attempt to drag the body into the room and bar the door. Treasure scattered about here of 20 Silver ingots, 40 Gold ingots, and the Hag will be using a Mace +2.
- D) A Giant Moray Eel: AC: 6, HD: 5, HP: 18, nests here among boxes of once fine rugs and he will resent any intrusion. There is nothing of value left.
- E) Empty Hold.
- F) Empty Hold.
- G) Locked in here as per B above are 40 ingots of Silver and a rusted strongbox containing 50 Platinum Pieces and a sack of six gems (10, 1000, 50, 500, 100, 500 GP).
- H) Bubbles of sulfurous fumes arise from around this door, locked as above, for within this room is trapped a Nightmare: AC: -4, HD: 6 + 6, HP: 48. This diabolic mount is held by the Silver and Mithril Chain of Cernusca, an unbreakable chain that extends into the Ethereal, Astral and Elemental Planes as well as the Material. Its lock is -100% on lockpicking abilities (the key to it is elsewhere in this room), and if thrown at an opponent within ten feet it acts as a Rope of Entanglement, although a saving throw versus magic is permitted. The chain extends far enough so that the Nightmare could reach up to the door to I if the door were open. A chest in the far corner of the room contains a Shield +3, a Ring of Protection +1, a Potion of Climbing, a Potion of Flying, a Rope of Climbing, a Protection - Demons Scroll, and the Key to the Chain of Cernusca (an intricately worked Silver key).
- I) Some livestock were penned here, and their remains float eerily about the room if disturbed. Picking the bones are six Giant Crabs: AC: 3, HD: 3, HP: 20, 9, 16, 15, 9, 12. If the party has some form of light, the Crabs will be hiding and surprise on a 1 - 4 (D6). No treasure.



Random Character Weapons

by Tom Jones



I have no way of knowing how many of my fellow Judges have been in the embarrassing position of having the party leader say to you: "O.K., What's the party ahead of us carrying by way of weapons?" and being stuck for an answer. Or worse yet, having to delay the expedition while fumbling around in your head for ideas. I unfortunately have been in both situations. Furthermore, as the Player Character became richer, enabling them to purchase platemail, I found myself unconsciously weighting the weapons distribution towards those arms which are most effective against that armor class.

In order to solve these problems, I collected the information on weapons and the restrictions placed on the various classes for their use contained in the **Player's Handbook** and drew up the following tables.

Instructions For Use

There are two ways to use these tables:

- 1) Based on the level of the party encountered, utilizing the weapon proficiency restrictions located in the **Player's Handbook** (The number of weapons carried by each individual will equal the number with which he or she could be proficient with at his or her level).
- 2) A completely random distribution, with due regard being taken of the above noted proficiency restrictions during combat.

Method One: Step A) Determine the number of weapons each character is proficient in and the type(s) randomly; Step B) Consult the appropriate chart for the class and roll a 20-sided die to determine the actual weapon(s) carried. If an inappropriate type results, reroll. Note: For Fighters it will be necessary to roll a 6-sided die first to determine which column of the chart to use: 1 - 2 = Column 1; 3 - 4 = Column 2; 5 - 6 = Column 3.

Method Two: Step A) Go to section "D" and roll a 20-sided die to find the number of weapons being carried by each character. **Do this for each one individually;** Step B) Consult the correct class weapons table and roll to determine the actual arms carried. For Fighters see the note under Method One.

For those who are inclined to completely individualize the members of a randomly encountered party I have included an armor chart and a shield chart. They are not mandatory, but they will tend to offset the impression that a party of NCPs were poured from the same mold.

By using these charts in conjunction with the "Possessions" section of the "Non-Player Personalities" in the **Dungeon Master Guide**, you can create a party containing both motley, moth-eaten Men-at-Arms and richly appointed Lords (this is recommended only for those Judges who are drafting preset encounters).

D) Number of Weapons Carried

- 1) One Melee Weapon
- 2) Two Melee Weapons
- 3) One Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 4) Two Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 5) Three Melee Weapons
- 6) Four Melee Weapons
- 7) Three Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 8) Four Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 9) Five Melee Weapons
- 10) Six Melee Weapons
- 11) Five Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 12) Six Melee, One Archery Weapon *
- 13) One Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 14) Two Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 15) Three Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 16) Four Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 17) Five Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 18) Six Melee, Two Archery Weapons *
- 19) One Archery Weapon *
- 20) Two Archery Weapons * (*see next page)

* Includes hand hurled missiles (1 - 4 for Spears/Javelins). Roll on the class lists to find the eligible weapons types. Then roll on Projectile Table for each Archery Weapon.

A) Weapon Allocation By Class**Fighter (1)****Number 1**

- 1) Axe, Battle
- 2) Axe, Hand
- 3) Axe, Throwing
- 4) Bardiche
- 5) Bec de Corbin
- 6) Bill-Guisarme
- 7) Bo Stick
- 8) Club
- 9) Dagger
- 10) Dart*
- 11) Fauchard
- 12) Fauchard-Fork
- 13) Flail, Footman's
- 14) Flail, Horseman's
- 15) Fork, Military
- 16) Glaive
- 17) Glaive-Guisarme
- 18) Guisarme
- 19) Guisarme-Voulge
- 20) Halbred

Number 2

- 1) Hammer, Lucerne
- 2) Hammer
- 3) Javelin
- 4) Jo Stick
- 5) Lance (Light Horse)
- 6) Lance (Medium Horse)
- 7) Lance (Heavy Horse)
- 8) Mace, Footman's
- 9) Mace, Horseman's
- 10) Morning Star
- 11) Partisan
- 12) Pick, Military (Foot)
- 13) Pick, Military (Horse)
- 14) Pike, Awl
- 15) Ranseur
- 16) Scimitar
- 17) Spear
- 18) Septum
- 19) Staff, Quarter
- 20) Sword, Bastard

Number 3

- 1) Sword, Broad
- 2) Sword, Long
- 3) Sword, Short
- 4) Sword, Two Handed***
- 5) Trident
- 6) Voulge
- 7) Bow, Composite, Long*
- 8) Bow, Composite, Short*
- 9) Bow, Long*
- 10) Bow, Short*
- 11) Crossbow, Light*
- 12) Crossbow, Heavy*
- 13) Sling*
- 14) Oil**
- 15) Oil**
- 16) Oil**
- 17) Oil**
- 18) Oil**
- 19) Oil**
- 20) Oil**

Cleric (1)

- 1) Club
- 2) Flail
- 3) Hammer
- 4) Hammer, Lucerne
- 5) Mace, Footman's
- 6) Mace, Horseman's
- 7) Staff, Quarter
- 8) Oil**

Magic User (3)

- 1-2) Dagger
- 3-4) Dart*
- 5-6) Staff, Quarter
- 7-8) Oil**

Illusionist (3)

See Magic User Chart

Thief (4)

- 1-2) Club
- 3-4) Dagger
- 5) Dart*
- 6) Sling*
- 7) Sword, Broad
- 8) Sword, Long
- 9-10) Sword, Short

Druid (2)

- 1) Club
- 2) Dagger
- 3) Dart*
- 4) Hammer
- 5) Hammer, Lucerne
- 6) Mace, Footman's
- 7) Mace, Horseman's
- 8) Scimitar
- 9) Sling*
- 10) Spear
- 11) Staff, Quarter
- 12) Oil**

Assassin (5)

See Fighter Chart

Monk (3)

- 1) Bo Stick
- 2) Club
- 3) Crossbow, Light*
- 4) Crossbow, Heavy*
- 5) Dagger
- 6) Hand Axe
- 7) Javelin
- 8) Jo Stick
- 9) Pole Arm (roll on
Fighter Chart)
- 10) Spear
- 11-12) Staff, Quarter



- * Roll on Projectile Table to find the number of Arrows/bolts/stones.
 - ** Roll on an eight-sided die.
 - *** Subject of weight restriction as specified in **Player's Handbook**.
- (Number) Refer to appropriate Footnote.

B) Footnotes

- 1) Any roll on the Armor Chart and Shield Chart (following).
- 2) Leather Armor and Wooden Shield only.
- 3) NO Armor or Shields permitted.
- 4) Restricted to Leather Armor only, NO Shield.
- 5) Leather Armor only, any Shield.

C) Auxillary Charts

Projectile Chart

(With Quiver, Case or belt pouch as required)

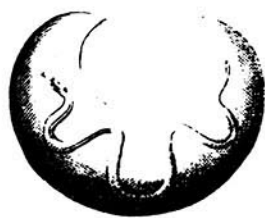
- 1) 1 - 6 Arrows
- 2) 1 - 10 Arrows
- 3) 2 - 12 Arrows
- 4-5) 2 - 20 Arrows
- 6) 1 - 6 Arrows (Silver)
- 7) 1 - 20 Quarrels (Light)
- 8) 1 - 20 Quarrels (Heavy)
- 9-10) 2 - 40 Quarrels (Light)
- 11) 2 - 40 Quarrels (Heavy)
- 12) 1 - 10 Quarrels, Light (Silver)
- 13) 1 - 10 Quarrels, Heavy (Silver)
- 14-15) 1 - 6 Darts
- 16) 1 - 12 Sling Stones
- 17) 1 - 20 Sling Stones
- 18) 1 - 12 Sling Bullets
- 19) 1 - 20 Sling Bullets
- 20) 1 - 12 Sling Bullets (Silver)

Armor Chart

- 1) None
- 2) Padded Armor
- 3) Hardened Leather Armor
- 4) Studded Leather Armor
- 5) Ring Mail Armor
- 6) Scale Mail Armor
- 7) Chain Mail
- 8) Splint Mail
- 9) Banded Mail
- 10) Plate Mail

Shield Chart

- 1) No Shield
- 2) Small Wooden Shield
- 3) Small Shield
- 4) Large Shield



This Is The Way Heroes Die

By Tom McCloud

continued from page 13

Chapter II

No, I don't have a coronascope, this is a rescue ship, not an observatory. . . . Yes, we do rescue souls as well as bodies. . . . No, I don't think the sun has a soul. . . . Yes, that's an intensive life support chamber. . . . No, I've never been inside it. . . . No, it won't revive a dead man—not a really dead man, only Christ and his disciples could do that. . . . Yes, I have heard about Reverend Brown, and yes, as far as I know, he is really dead. . . . Yes, non-Catholics can go to heaven, Pope Gregory XVII explained that quite clearly. . . . Stop that! Do not touch those controls again, young man. . . . That's right, they are locked, but you are not to touch! Is that quite clear? . . . All right, don't let it happen again. . . . Yes, Arnold, you may read that book."

Father Shieldman sank into the other acceleration chair with a sigh, brushing back what was left of his hair with a liver spotted hand. He had promised Arnold's parents that he would provide the boy twenty-four hours of one-g therapy, but coping with Arnold's ten-year-old enthusiasm was almost too much for Father Shieldman's eight-two-year-old body.

But the one-g therapy was necessary. Lack of sufficient gravity produced many undesirable effects, especially in young persons, from loss of calcium in the bones to sodium-potassium imbalance. Of course, everyone was different and for many old persons the absence of gravity was therapeutic. Those old persons included Father Shieldman.

Thankful that his current "sit" would be over in five hours, the old priest programmed the food subsystem

for some hot coffee, then closed his eyes. He opened them again as the message recorder chimed on.

"Father Shieldman, this is Bishop Ben Levi."

Shieldman noticed how tired the young Rabbi looked. Clearly Ben Levi was not enjoying his term as Bishop of the Ecumenical Space Mission.

"The hijackers of the Fontainebleu," continued the message, "have asked for you to come to them and take the body of Reverend Cecil Brown. They have specifically asked for you. One of them appears to know you, someone by the name of John Taylor."

"What Taylor actually said was: . . ." Ben Levi picked up a paper and read, " 'Please send Father Shieldman for the body. I always did rather like him, and I know he won't pull the kind of stunt Brown did'. . . ."

Ben Levi went on, but Father Shieldman had stopped listening.

John Taylor!

That was a real shock. He remembered "babysitting" for Johnny Taylor when Johnny had been. . . . why. . . . ten years old. He couldn't help glancing at young Arnold Silver, sitting in the other chair, with his nose in "Jerusalem--Past, Present, and Future".

Something was dreadfully wrong. Johnny Taylor was no hijacker. That was absurd. Johnny had always been a good boy, and he'd grown up to be a good man. The whole thing was nonsense, and he'd just have to put a stop to it before someone else got hurt.

Father Shieldman reached out and typed a command to the computer to replay the message.

"...Oddly enough, these particular hijackers seem bent on obeying all the space traffic regulations. They have kept entirely to their flight plans as filed, and have kept in constant contact with the Space Traffic Control Treaty Agency. Since the Treaty Agency cannot act until some traffic regulation is actually violated, and since by an idiotic oversight there exists no Treaty regulation against hijacking itself, the hijackers are, for the moment, untouchable."

"Anyway, when the Fontainebleu was nearing the end of its schedule for orbiting Mars, the hijackers filed a status of 'indefinitely uncommitted, but fully manned'. I think it likely that they simply could not decide what to do next, but as soon as they filed that status it made them available for weather control duty, and the Weather Control Agency ordered them to the sun to modify a sunspot. Frankly, I would have thought it much much too dangerous to let them participate in weather modification, but it was not my decision. I suspect the idea was that they would ignore the order, and then the Treaty Agency would act. But the Fontainebleu hijackers are obeying the order. The Fontainebleu is scheduled to orbit the sun for two weeks, after which they will return to Earth for fresh supplies. . . ."

At eight p.m., U. T., Arnold Silver's father, Eldridge Silver, Ph.D., came to take Arnold back to the Venus Orbit Sunwatch Complex.

"I hear you're going sunward."

"That's correct. I'm going to rendezvous with the Fontainebleu. They're following a sunspot in sub-

synchronous powered orbit."

Eldridge Silver shook his head. "If the Weather Control Agency, had a grain of sense, they wouldn't let those hijackers near the sun. Do you need any sub-Mercury equipment. . . an E.V.A. suit?"

"The Mission outfits all its ships with Meissenbaern spacesuits. They're rated for deep solar orbit."

"How about shielding for the engine compartment?"

"That I could use."

"Titanium foil enough, or do you really plan on a deep solar orbit?"

"Foil should be adequate."

"I'll ask Dr. Semajo to send over a crew to wrap up your engine section."

"Why thank you very much."

"Well, I'm not Catholic, in fact as far as I'm concerned, religion is a pack of obscene nonsense. But that doesn't mean I can't help my fellow man."

"I see."

"I'm ready to go, dad," said Arnold.

"All right, it's time to go. What's that book? Not some religious garbage I hope?"

Arnold held up "Jerusalem--Past, Present, and Future". "It's just history, dad. I'm up to the time the Arabs conquered Israel, and pushed the Israelis 'into the sea'. Poor Arabs, it didn't do them much good in the end, did it?"

"No. Well, that's all right."

Father Shieldman looked sadly at the scientist. "I take it you're not fond of inspirational books?"

"Inspirational! All they every inspire me with is. . . Oh never mind. No sense expecting sense from a priest. But if you can't see it, hear it, touch it, taste it, or smell it, it doesn't exist!"

"Dad," asked Arnold, "Haven't you been insisting for years that the missing solar neutrinos must be going tachyonic?"

"Well, yes. What's that got to do with anything?"

"Well, it seems to your poor ignorant son that tachyonic neutrinos would fit your definition of 'non-existent'."

By the time Arnold and his father left the Horseback-5, they were arguing about the existence of the

empty set. Father Shieldman never did understand what they were talking about.

Anyway, he had a man's remains to recover, and a strayed lamb to bring back to the fold.

The ships met in a zero-g orbit--with a period that matched that of the sunspot--twenty-five million kilometers above the sun.

"Now, you just stay put, and we'll bring the body to you," said Taylor over the communication link.

"No, Johnny, I'm coming aboard. This nonsense has got to stop."

Ignoring Johnny's intemperate reaction, Father Shieldman calmly dressed in his Meissebaern, cycled through the air lock, and used his suit's homing system to rocket across to the upper airlock balcony of the Fontainebleu.

The airlock was closed.

"Come on, Johnny, open up."

"The Hell I will, Father. You just turn around and go back to your own spaceship!"

"I will stay here until you open this airlock. Johnny, you are not a criminal, and sooner or later you are going to see that what you are doing is foolish and dangerous."

"I'm deadly serious, Father, doesn't Brown's death prove that!"

"No. The death of Reverend Brown was an accident, however it may have happened. Give up, Johnny, before there is another accident. Please."

"NOT UNTIL ALL HIJACKERS NOW IN CUSTODY ARE EXECUTED!"

"The League will never do that, no matter what you do. Besides, those people are being punished. All of them are in prison. Isn't that enough?"

"Prison, Hell! The hijackers of the Buckingham killed my daughter. Karen is not in prison, she's dead! I want those hijackers JUST AS DEAD!"

"Romans 12:19."

"Huh?"

"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

"Don't go spouting Bible at me!"

"Johnny, the League and the

Mission will not give in."

"Karen died!"

"Everyone dies."

"Father, you have forty seconds left to get back to your own ship!"

"Johnny, this nonsense has got to stop. Open up the airlock, and let me in. You're not a criminal, and what you're doing is foolish and dangerous. Give up before there is another accident."

"SHIELDMAN, I'M GETTING DAMNED ANGRY. NOW GET OFF!"

"Johnny, Johnny, Johnny, you just aren't a criminal."

A noise of inarticulate frustration and rage came over the communications link, then, suddenly, the drive came on and Shieldman slammed down on the balcony.

Swiftly the acceleration built, one-g, two, three. . . It pressed the old priest's flesh cruelly down into the suit.

Just as suddenly as it had started, the drive shut off. Shieldman should have been shot up and off the balcony by the elastic reaction of the suit, the balcony, and his own muscles. The Meissenbaern, however, had been programmed by the factory to compensate for sudden jerks when homed to a particular place. With an immediate impulse from the thrust units, the suit prevented itself from leaving the balcony.

Again the Fontainebleu accelerated wildly, again jerked to a stop, this time tilting sharply in the process. The Meissenbaern compensated flawlessly.

Again the acceleration, up, and up, until finally Father Shieldman lost consciousness. Twisting and jerking, the Fontainebleu tried to throw off the stubborn spacesuit and its occupant. The Meissenbaern continued to maintain its position just outside the airlock.

That was unfortunate.

Slowly Father Shieldman returned to consciousness. Pain was his first sensation, pain and a noise he didn't understand. Then he woke up.

The suit's alarm, a muted but unignorable klaxon, was honking, honking, honking. . . Dozens of pinpoint red lights to the lower left of

his faceplate blinked at him. Through the faceplate he could see nothing but far away stars.

Inside his body, the aches and soreness were a nuisance. But the alarm klaxon was more of a nuisance.

"Spacesuit, turn off the alarm."

Nothing happened, the annoying sound continued.

"Let me see. 'Spacesuit, enter command mode, disengage alarm, exit command mode'."

This time a string of characters flashed on to the lower right of his faceplate: "command improperly formatted--please rephrase."

Well, that was something. Father Shieldman had no illusions about his own abilities as a programmer, and was always glad when he got any response at all. Eventually, after three more frustrating mistakes, the old priest got the suit to turn off the audio alarm. He then managed to command the suit to explain the reasons for the alarm.

The data from the Meissenbaern was as bad as it could be. He was falling into the sun.

There was no reaction mass left in the thrust units. There was no possible rescue ship--the hijackers of the Fontainebleu had left with a message that the spaceship had used up almost all of what was left of its own fuel in shaking off the tenacious suit, and the violent maneuver had injured several passengers. The ship had to go back to Earth. John Taylor's message ended with apology, but not repentance. Father Shieldman prayed for his soul.

Shieldman's own situation was purely physical. His heliocentric angular momentum was zero, his fall into the sun was straight down--not an orbit, not a grazing trajectory, not a slanted "glide" path, just straight down.

He queried the suit as to how long it would take.

"4 days, 9 hours, 30 minutes, +/- 30 minutes."

Days? Shieldman had thought of hours left, not days. He turned to look at the sun. His faceplate went black. For a moment, Father Shieldman was annoyed, then he remembered the boy in his high school class who got a

telescope for Christmas, turned it "just for a second" to look directly at the sun...and never saw out of his right eye again. Grateful to his suit's designers, Father Shieldman turned his back to the sun.

The faceplate cleared, and Shieldman looked once more at the starry heaven in all its glory.

It reminded him, as it often did, of God. Thinking of God reminded him of an unfulfilled obligation. For a moment he wondered how, in his present solitude, he could fulfill that obligation. But the answer was simple enough for even Father Shieldman to see.

"Spacesuit, enter Command mode, orient transmission to Earth, enter Transmission mode, message begins."

"Hear me, Father, for I have sinned..."

After that the day passed with infinite slowness, for nothing happened.

Father Shieldman did have much to remember: old friends, places he'd been, good deeds he'd done, and some deeds not so good. But he'd lived a long life, and when he thought back on it, rather a good one. He gave thanks many times to God for the blessings he'd received. True, he'd seen much sorrow, and a full share of grief, but he never blamed God for that.

But memories alone are a pretty thin meal for the mind, and eventually Shieldman grew bored. The hours began to drag past in slowly moving minutes. Try as he might to avoid it, the sheer doing nothing of floating in space became the intolerable center of his thought.

If only he had something to read, anything. He'd have welcomed a cereal box, or a computer dump. And he hated computer dumps, he'd never been able to figure them out.

At length, Father Shieldman slept.

When he woke again, the old priest mentally kicked himself, for he had suddenly remembered the vast array of data stored in the Meissenbaern spacesuit's computer. So, logically, for he was capable of being logical if not very technical, he commanded his suit to explain to him the

programs and data available. Two kinds attracted him immediately: data about the sun, and data about the Meissenbaern itself.

As he drank a mixture of sugar and proteins for breakfast, he discovered that his suit had an optical system that could project a controlled image of the sun on the inside of his faceplate. He activated it, and at last saw his destination: the sun.

It was tiny. Well, not really, but he had expected a huge looming orb as big as a planet seen from orbit. Instead he saw a small yellow disk, about the same size as a small coin.

All that day, and the next, he studied the sun. It was a relief to have some distraction from the aches and pains of his body, the feel of slick plastic where his flesh touched the suit, and the flat insipid taste of recycled air.

Shieldman enlarged the image on his faceplate, and saw sunspots. In one of the five groups he saw must have been the very sunspot the Fontainebleu had come down to modify. The energy of a spaceship's drive beam was tiny compared to the enormous hot vortices whose eruptions spotted the sun, but, like tickling an elephant, when it was done right the effect was out of all proportion to the cause.

When he tired of gazing at spots, Shieldman watched the granulations of the sun, the "boiling oatmeal" effect of thousands of violent convection cells, any one of which could have swallowed Earth.

When that in its turn grew boring, he went back to the suit's data about itself, and learned how he could watch the sun in monochromatic and/or polarized light. He even found that the suit had its own coronascope. He thought for a moment of Dr. Silver and his son and prayed for them both.

The corona was a beautiful graceful outpouring of lines of light of irregular length that surrounded the sun like outblown hair. He'd seen pictures, but now he saw the reality, and was awed.

Eventually, he slept for the second time.

He woke for the third time, and thought: "one more dawn to go." He

was almost glad, he felt so old and so tired. Then to his mind came the words of John: "...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." and he was glad. Of course, there was the ugly business of dying to get through first. The thought of opening his suit's exhaust valve crossed his mind to be instantly rejected. His beliefs, his training, and his instincts all forbade suicide. He would die not by his own hand, but by the heat of the sun.

By then the sun was visibly bigger than it had been when the fall began. The unenlarged image was the size of a large coin. Still, the apparent diameter was less than five degrees.

The day passed without events of any interest. At the end of the day the sun's image had grown another degree. Shieldman checked his supplies and found that he had food enough for eight more days without any attempt at rationing. His recycled air and water would last for as long as the recyclers had energy. Since the Meissenbaern included solar cells as an auxillary source of energy, he had a superb abundance of that.

In fact he noticed, as he drank his "last supper", that the radiators

on the front of his suit (which was the side away from the sun) were glowing red hot. If they got hot enough to melt then the suit's cooling system would fail, and he would die.

More likely, some other part of the suit would fail first, then the system would collapse in an avalanche of failures. He was sure he'd never know which failure was fatal.

With that cheerful thought, he closed his tired eyes to go to sleep for what he knew would be the last time. If all the mass of the sun had been at a single point, he would by calculation reach it in twenty-one hours. He had no idea how far he would get. But, ignorant of physics as he was, he knew he could not live to reach the surface.

He woke to find the sun huge in his newly learned perspective, more than nine degrees across, larger than any coin. As he stared, something caught his eye just beyond the edge of the sun, and he ordered in the coronascope. There, above the upper limb of the sun, he saw the great arch of fire of a spectacular prominence, soaring fully a quarter of the sun's radius into space, and raining down in tatters of vivid orange and yellow light.

Enthralled, Father Shieldman

watched, and thanked God for the sheer poetry of reality the Maker had created. But then he noticed that the inside of his spacesuit was very very warm. He knew then that the end was near, and he made his peace with God as best he could with that sun-blown bow of glory distracting him at every prayer.

The suit grew hotter and hotter.

This was unexpected. Father Shieldman had imagined that everything would blow just about together, a sudden mercifully swift ending, not a slow roast in a spacesuit turned oven.

Still the heat grew, and still the solar prominence slowly spread starward in answer to its own destiny, unconcerned with a tiny mortal man who chanced to pass by on his way to death.

The inside of Shieldman's marvelous Meissenbaern was hot now, hot enough to burn everywhere it touched his body. It touched his body everywhere. The plastic was melting, and it stuck painfully to his skin. The pain was cruel, driving all thought from the old priest's brain as it tortured him. It hurt. Still the suit grew hotter and hotter, and the pain grew worse.

"God! God! How much longer!" gasped out the dying priest.

"It is finished," said God.

And it was.



to be continued next issue

The Swamp Rats

By Bill Paley

This band lives on a small island in the Troll Fens, about six kilometers from the Rorystone Road. On the island are three huts in which they live and keep their treasure. In Hut One lives: Cary Vaspig: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NE, Level: 3, HP: 26, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 16, INT: 9, WIS: 8, CON: 12, DEX: 12, CHAR: 14, Weapon: +2 Sword (Neutral, IQ: 3). Cary is the leader of the band, more by terrifying his men than by leading. However, he has been quite successful. Most of the group's treasure has been turned in for silks and food to pamper the three women now living with them as concubines and servants (Level 1, HP: 6, 3, 1, armed with Daggers and/or Rolling Pins (treat as Maces) -1 damage). In a small

box hidden under a loose stone he keeps one gem worth 500 GP and six worth 25 GP.

In Hut Two are the women and the food supplies. They will always be found within 300 meters of the huts as they are afraid of becoming lost in the trackless marshes. The men will be here 65% of the time.

In Hut Three are the four other Swamp Rats, when the band is not out raiding along the road. They are most likely to be gambling while here. The four are: Arkos: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NE, Level: 2, HP: 9, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 12, WIS: 10, CON: 9, DEX: 8, CHAR: 12, Weapon: Short Bow; Tylers: Class: Fighter, Alignment: N, Level: 2, HP: 12, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR:

12, INT: 14, WIS: 10, CON: 11, DEX: 12, CHAR: 7, Weapon: Battleaxe; Will Bols: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CE, Level 1, HP: 7, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 13, INT: 7, WIS: 9, CON: 14, DEX: 11, CHAR: 10, Weapon: Flail; Darkeyes: Class: Thief, Alignment: NE, Level: 1, HP: 3, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 12, INT: 13, WIS: 10, CON: 9, DEX: 15, CHAR: 8, Weapon: Short Sword.

Each will have 10 - 60 Copper Pieces, 1 - 8 Silver and 1 - 4 Gold Pieces in a small sack on their belts. (Darkeyes will have double whatever he rolls...he's been practicing on his comrades).

The group is wanted - Reward of 300 GP from the City State.

A New Spell

By Bill Paley

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All this and World War Two!



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We produce game aids for added depth of play for Dungeons & Dragons Reg. App. For, and useable for other fantasy game systems. Most of our retail game aids found in stores are made up of previous Guildmember subscription issues. Since many have asked for a description of what has been published, we have provided such-with the numbers of the issues that made them up.

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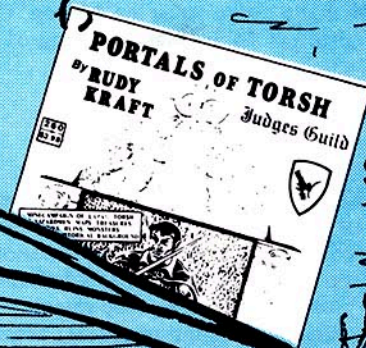
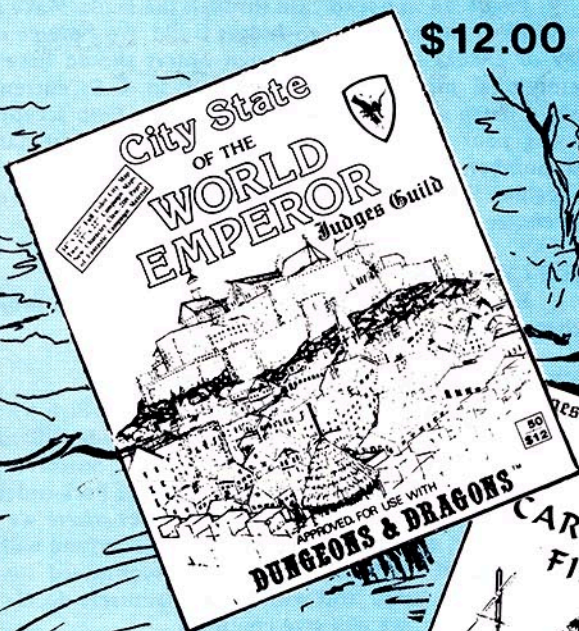
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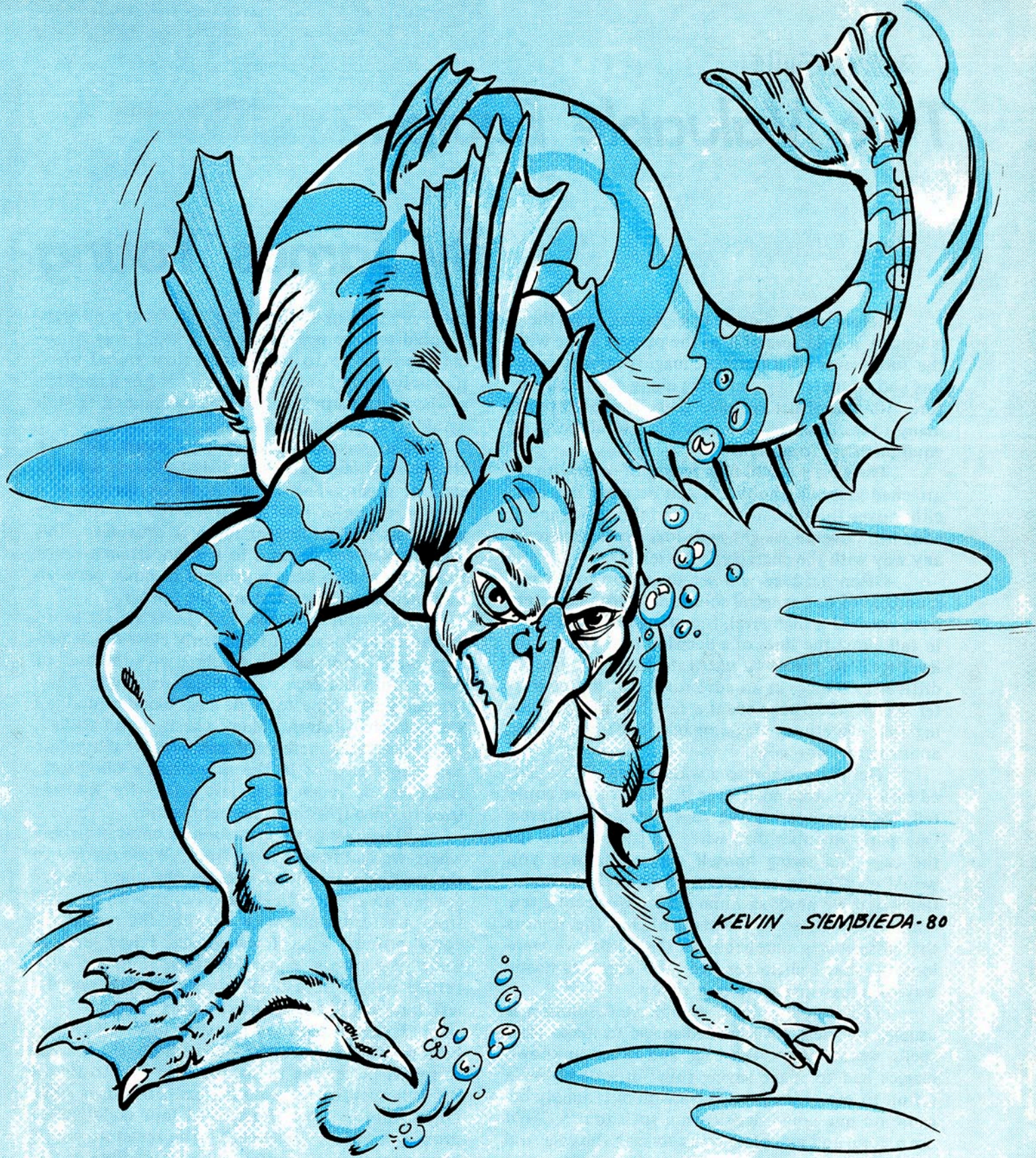
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KEVIN SIEMBIEDA-80

Two Valuable Equipment Items

By James Young

Before every fantasy role-playing game there is usually a wild scramble as the players argue with the Judge over what fantastic magic potions, weapons and amulets they can bring along on the adventure. In the effort to have these super-weapons, many times two very ordinary but useful pieces of equipment are forgotten.

The first is a 200-foot length of rope with an attached grappling hook. It can be worn in a coil, either over the shoulder or around the waist, and it adds little overall weight and does not interfere in any way with the character's dexterity.

Often a Judge will set up a trap to favor a mundane or non-magical solution. Once characters have reached a high level, too many decisions seem to fall along the lines of a decision over which 5th-level spell to throw to extricate the party from a difficulty. Once, in an adventure that my character was in, the Judge spent a few minutes explaining that sometimes magic, magic items, and magic armor would not work.

The party came to a wide chasm with a gilded bird cage suspended over it. As far as we could tell, the wire holding the cage extended forever. One party member died when he tried to leap for the cage and swing himself across the way you would on a swing or trapeze. He stretched into infinity and we never saw him again. We spent a few minutes debating, as we remembered the rumors that magic was unreliable in the tomb we were looting. Each character had a different, fantastic way to cross using spells or artifacts.

The simplest, least complicated solution is usually the best. We needed magic to make their spells work. Also, the cage and other unknown magics had to make saving rolls. It looked like a set-up to me. Finally my idea won out, mainly because no one could decide on a spell to use. We'd use a rope and grappling hook to snag the cage and swing it over to our side of the ravine. Then, one at a time, the party members would swing across to the other side.

As soon as I swung the hook in the direction of the cage, a force yanked the grapple to the cage. The cage then swung easily over to our side of the ravine by itself. We got across easily and went on our way.

Several times, a rope and grapple have extri-

cated my own or another character from a pit trap. I would tell the rest of the party that I was throwing the rope up to them, then they would brace themselves and I would climb up. If I or a member of the party hadn't carried this equipment, the job would have been quite a challenge.

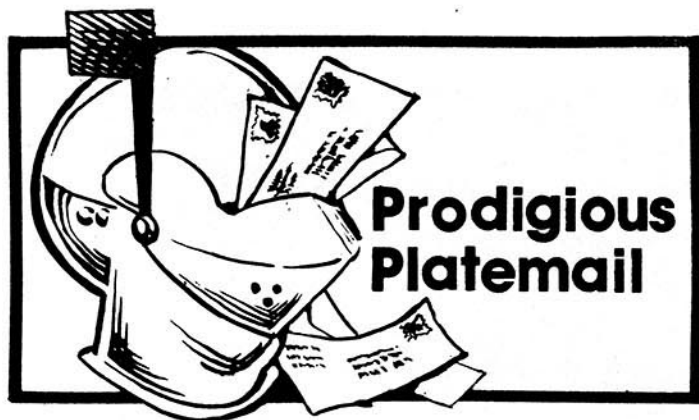
The second piece of equipment that my character always carries is a six-foot-long wooden staff or spear. This is not so much for use as a weapon (I prefer bow and arrow for any distance work), as for the longer reach it provides. This longer reach can be used to test uncertain areas of the floor, and to keep a prudent distance between a suspicious sack or chest and the opener.

Most trapped sacks and chests are set up to zap an incautious thief from fairly close range, perhaps while kneeling and fiddling with the lock or peering into the sack. The longer reach might give the characters time to evade a gas cloud or dodge a spring-loaded dagger. Many chests aren't locked, since they were merely storage areas for petty cash and a few potions in the magic-user's laboratory. However, he might have left a trap for whoever tried to open it without his permission.

Once our party came upon a chest in a room where we had fought some trolls. While the rest of the party discussed how to get the chest open, I got fed up and twitched the lid open with my staff from a safe distance. By the time the rest of the party noticed what I was doing, I had grabbed some gold pieces, a possible magic ring, and what turned out to be a healing potion. The sword I left, but only because I was a cleric.

I have often used my staff in this way, and have only twice regretted this caution. Once, using this staff placed me in just the right spot to almost get beheaded by a pendulum axe à la Edgar Allen Poe. Another time, I activated four skeletons by probing a sack with my staff. The skeletons would have appeared no matter what was done to the sack, which turned out to be a bag of holding.

These two items have saved my role-played life several times, and have proven more useful than many treasures I have seen used. I suggest, however, that you specify on your character sheet that you are bringing them along. A nasty, or just alert, Judge will require proof that you have them, without which he'll let you fall to your doom.



Prodigious Platemail

To All the Wierd People (??) at Judges Guild:

First off, I must thank you for your wonderful Christmas card. Admittedly, I am a little late, but I want you to know that I deeply appreciated it, especially as it had all your signatures on it (I'll appreciate it more in about twenty years when your autographs become valuable...). Really, I thank you and hope you had (have) a merry, busy white season. Now, if none of you mind (and probably you do...), I will mention some of the miscellaneous facts that have been clogging up this Magic User's cerebral material.

First off, I have been involved in D&D for approximately 1 - 2 years. This unfortunately addicting experience came about in the formation of "The Greater Miami Wargamer's Club" - not as large a club as one might think. Since then, I have become Judge (par excellence) and player non-comparable. In my 'years' as player (at third level), I took **Blackmoor** by storm, destroyed various killer dungeons, and killed most of the various demons. I say during my 'years' as a character because when you get to a point where you're almost impossible to harm, with magic items so profuse that one literally breaks them or gives them away, most of the fun is gone. And I know what you're thinking. NO! We do not play Monty Hall down here. I am now a lowly second level Ranger. Also noteworthy, is that despite all the dungeons thrown at me, I have lost only one character (when I didn't kill myself because of boredom, too much money, et. al.). All the dungeons have ranged from those of TSR to your Killer dungeons, and I have had fun. As a Thief, picking the pockets of one's own party (and sneaking off when battles threaten); as a Fighter living bravely, honestly, and with much derring-do. Strangely, I've never had any other type of character. No matter what though, when the chips are down, I go out fighting (which is not to say that I don't do a little bit of running prior to this).

One of the main points of this letter is that I am wondering if you can conceive of any use of

an avid TRS-80 MII 48K 4d computer 'ist' (I flatter myself), inquiring if Judges Guild has any use for a D&D program which I am developing. Or if they have developed one of their own.

Other questions I must ask. Got any hints for those planning/hopin' to get a convention going down here? Have you got any tricks up your sleeves planned for around here? And would you happen to need any judges... if you do, I'm generally willing to help (if possible), even if you only need manual labor-type junk... (yuk!). Let me know will ya?

A few other well phrased questions. My friends and I (16 by the way) are planning to start our own magazine. Any freebee advice for us local yokels? Trade secrets perhaps? We plan on having a monthly paper and a bi-weekly dungeon/adventure. At least wish us luck...

Would you be interested in a few tidbits of material that I have been diligently cogitating about... a Judges Trade Secrets, including Traps for fun (and profit!); The Professional Fighter (i.e. Mercenary); Ziggurats & Zombies; and many other marvels.

Keep the quality of your treasures high, and prices low. Frankly, you're one of the best buys on the gaming market. I have gotten nothing but good products at a very reasonable price. And personalized service (Thank you Pat). Keep on truckin'.

Elen sila lumenn' omentielvo.

Chris

P. S. Any discounts for large lot purchases?

Dear Chris,

Thanks very much for your letter. Several people have written thanking us for the Xmas cards. If, by the way, you were one who got a card with my name rubber stamped, I want you to know that it wasn't that I don't care but, rather, that I was out sick the first day of card signing and they didn't know if I would be back.

In regards to the computer question: I assume you mean a TRS-80 MI Lvl II (as I am unaware of MIIs with 48K). Regardless of which - yes we are interested in any programs - for any of the hobby or home computers. One difficulty is that we cannot produce any computer products for D&D as TSR has stated that they are going to do all computer versions themselves. We can, however, have fun with them ourselves, even if we can't make a product from them, and if they are variant types, etc. we can publish them in the

magazine. As far as I am aware, we can do computer products for the other manufacturer's games that we do play-aids for (Chaosium, GDW, FGU, and Zocchi). In any case we are interested in seeing all programs for possible publication or just for our fun, if that's what you wish.

By now you are aware that we were at GENCON SOUTH. I hope you got to meet Mark and Debbie Holmer, there. Unfortunately, we do not have any plans to put on a con ourselves in your area, at this time. It is hard enough to put on a con in your own area, let alone try to plan and operate one hundreds of miles away.

In regards to starting up a fanzine: take your time—if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well and just because your a fanzine running off a mimeo or (even better) a Xerox or (even much better) a quick printer doesn't mean that a low budget has to keep you hogtied. Try to locate a good commercial art supply store (there's got to be a lot of them in and near any major FL city). They are good places to go and browse and collect ideas from and if you shop around to find the one that is cheapest in prices, you might be surprised at what you can do with a really low cash outlay. Find places that do bulk copy work and price shop those sources and printers and talk to them—make friends—it can't hurt. Even if you can't use their services right away, if you know what they can do and you send other business their way it can help you later when you need something done right away, etc.

YES! YES! YES! It never ceases to amaze me that people keep asking if we are interested in this or that. IF IT HAS TO DO WITH GAMING AND RP-GAMING IN PARTICULAR, WE ARE INTERESTED! DON'T TAKE TIME TO ASK—JUST SEND IT IN!!!

P.S. Reply: Yes, we give 10% off to schools and other non-profit organizations, etc. and we give 10% off on purchases of \$100.00 or more. Helen's silly luminous omen-tiles 2U2. CA



The Mountain Lions

By Bill Paley

This group of Brigands hide out in the Cloudwall Mountains in several stone buildings (5). Building One is the Stables with eight Medium Warhorses and four Cows; Two is a Storehouse filled with food stuffs; Three is a Cell Block with six cells; Four is a Barracks and Five is the Leader's Home. They are led by: Jack the Club: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NG, Level: 5, HP: 32, AC: 5, Social Level: 4, STR: 15, INT: 10, WIS: 12, CON: 9, DEX: 11, CHAR: 15, Weapon: Cudgel. Jack is a friendly sort who has taken to kidnapping to keep food on the table. He always offers to any group he attacks the chance to surrender right off. Only then will he allow his Bowmen to begin picking off guards, etc. The prisoners for ransom are very well treated, being released for exercise for two hour each day, while prisoners who are unransomable are released (blindfolded) several miles away, with one week's food, arms and armor, and directions to the nearest town.

Jack has twelve followers - eight are primarily Bowmen: J.J.: Class: Fighter, Alignment: N, Level 2, HP: 9, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 9, WIS: 13, CON: 16, DEX: 15, CHAR: 10, Weapon: Longbow and Sword, a heavy drinker; Roback: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CG, Level: 2, HP: 11, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 12, INT: 15, WIS: 7, CON: 9, DEX: 13, CHAR: 12, Weapon: Longbow and Mace, jolly fellow who knows many tall tales; Ricker Devilsbane: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CG, Level: 2, HP: 14, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 16, INT: 11, WIS: 10, CON: 11, DEX: 17, CHAR: 13, Weapon: Long-

bow and Sword, the group will delightfully relate the tale of Ricker versus a Minor Devil (he loosed a landslide on the thing). Whelp the Elder: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NE, Level 2, HP: 11, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 12, WIS: 12, CON: 13, DEX: 14, CHAR: 9, Weapon: Longbow and Dagger, a stern but fair man; Whelp the Younger: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NE, Level 1, HP: 8, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 12, WIS: 10, CON: 13, DEX: 14, CHAR: 9, Weapon: Longbow and Dagger, a brass young fellow, a risk-taker; Tarabelld: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CN, Level 1, HP: 6, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 9, INT: 4, WIS: 7, CON: 17, DEX: 13, CHAR: 14, Weapon: Longbow and Flail, a dull-witted but likeable fellow, always interested in hearing stories and songs (even after twelve times); Elst Belda: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NG, Level: 1, HP: 9, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 9, WIS: 10, CON: 10, DEX: 13, CHAR: 7, Weapon: Longbow and Flail (she is dour, but brave); Swineface: Class: Fighter, Alignment: N, Level: 1, HP: 3, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 12, INT: 10, WIS: 13, CON: 9, DEX: 17, CHAR: 4, Weapon: Longbow and Spear, an ugly, disgusting fellow who stays by himself normally. He is the best bowman of the group, however, and they respect him for it.)

The other four members of the band are Quarterstuffers: Sheld Seeva: Class: Fighter, Alignment: NE, Level: 3, HP: 21, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 14, INT: 7, WIS: 8, CON: 11, DEX: 10, CHAR: 9, Weapon: Quarterstaff,

of all members of the group, Sheld is the most outcast and is most likely to betray them; Harok L'Don: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CG, Level 2, HP: 17, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 12, INT: 10, WIS: 6, CON: 14, DEX: 11, CHAR: 13, Weapon: Quarterstaff, loves to show off with his staff; Smithson John: Class: Fighter, Alignment: N, Level: 1, HP: 6, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 10, INT: 10, WIS: 12, CON: 11, DEX: 13, CHAR: 9, Weapon: Quarterstaff, whittles beautiful (non-weapon) staffs which he often gives as gifts to prisoners with whom he has become friendly; Regallit: Class: Fighter, Alignment: CG, Level: 1, HP: 3, AC: 7, Social Level: 3, STR: 12, INT: 11, WIS: 12, CON: 14, DEX: 15, CHAR: 10, Weapon: Quarterstaff, wants to find a Palomino for sell (or steal). He has some skill as a leatherworker and he is tooling an ornamental saddle.

Whenever the gang goes patrolling (four days each week), three men will be left on guard, prisoners are not (2 Bowmen, 1 Quarterstaff). The same goes for days on "leave" (once each two weeks). They rotate ransom demand duty as needed. When at base, three men will be on guard at all times.

Ransom demands will be reasonable, seldom exceeding 5000 Silver Pieces, even for powerful nobles. All possessions will be returned to those ransomed (not those "Unransomable"). Presently they have a chest buried under a large boulder 200 meters North - Northeast of Building Two containing 15000 Silvers, 1200 Gold Pieces, 750 Copper Pieces (on top), a Portable Hole, and a Potion of Diminuation. The chest is untrapped.

CONVENTION

WATCH

ALL THE CONS WE KNOW OF

As part of our function as a National Convention Clearing House in conjunction with MGA and MDG, and as a service to our readers, we provide a listing of planned conventions that we have information on. Due to space limitations we can only list the name, type and date of the convention, and an address to write to for more information. Convention planners are asked to contact Chuck Anshell and send all available information on their convention so that we may print it and inform dealers of it. They are also welcome to write or call him at (217) 422-1930 for help in finding an open date for their convention. Convention type abbreviations: G=Gaming, SF=Science Fiction & Fantasy, ST=Star Trek, CO=Comics, CU=Computers.

NANCON III (G), Jul. 4-6, 1980. Nan's Toys and Games, 1385 Galleria Mall, 5015 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77056. (713) 622-0760.

ORIGINS '80 (G), Jun. 27-29. Strategy & Fantasy World, Valley Forge Shopping Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406.

ARCHON 4 (SF), Jul. 11-13. Archon 4, POB 15852, Overland, MO 63114.

PHRINGECON (G, SF), Jul. 11-13. PhringeCon, POB 1072, Phoenix, AZ 85001.

OKON '80 (SF), Jul. 19-20. Okon, POB 4229, Tulsa, OK 74104.

AUTOCLAVE 4 (SF), Jul. 25-27. Diane Drutowski, 2412 Galpin, Royal Oak, MI 48073.

CWA CON (G), Aug. 1-3. CWA, 3605 Bobolink Ln., Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.

MICHICON (SF), Aug. 15-17. Diane Carey, 1916 Cadillac St., Flint, MI 48504.

GENCON XIII (G), Aug. 21-24. Joe Orlowski c/o TSR Hobbies, Inc., POB 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

NOREASTCON 2 (SF - 38th WorldCon), Aug. 29 - Sep. 1. NorEastCon 2, Box 46 MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

WINDYCON VII (SF), Oct. 10-12. Windycon, POB 2572, Chicago, IL 60690.

CONCLAVE 5 (SF), Oct. 31 - Nov. 2. Waldo and Magic, Inc., POB 444, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

WINTERCON IX (G), Nov. 21-23. MDG, POB 787, Troy, MI 48099.

AQUACON (SF), Feb. 12-15, 1981. Aquacon, POB 815, Brea, CA 92621.

DENVENTION II (SF - 39th WorldCon), Sep. 2-7, 1981. Denvention II, POB 11545, Denver, CO 80211.



Tips from the Tower

Well, now, there are so many new things happening at Judges Guild that I hardly know where to begin. As all you Guild-members are aware by now, the fabulous CITY-STATE OF THE WORLD EMPEROR is now out. Those of you who let your memberships lapse are sure to be sorry! It took three installments to provide all the necessary material for you. For those whose memberships started in the middle - check out the Booty List for the part(s) you are missing. This City-State is the 4300 year-old city of Viridistan. Three books, a total of 208 pages, cover the history and background of this huge city-state. The three map set includes two 17" x 22" campaign maps (judge and player) and the full-color 22" x 34" map of the 4.7 million square yard walled city. The three books include one on the city (80 pages) one on the shops (also 80 pages) and a 48 page Wilderness campaign book with descriptions of 59 villages and much, much more! As with all of our campaign selections on this world, City-State of the World Emperor is approved for use with D&D and sells for a mere \$12. This monumental work was accomplished by none other than Bob Bledsaw and Craighton Hippenhammer. A "must" for any D&D judge!

Also just out is Inferno, a module approved for use with AD&D, which is made for those judges who want to tell their players where to go. This is the destination for you! It is based on Dante's Inferno and it includes the outer four circles (the others will be covered in a later product). Included within its pages are abilities and treasures for the most powerful Devils as well as statistics for many new minor devils which can plague your

players for a long time to come. (\$5.98)

Another new product which is approved for use with AD&D is Portals of Torsh. It is an area reachable only through the use of teleportation devices known as "Portals". There is an economic description and history of the area, a town of lizardmen and another of humans and several small adventures. Also you will find it full of monster lairs, wilderness descriptions, wandering monster tables and major character descriptions. It is suitable for mid-level characters and can be fit into any campaign. It was written by Rudy Kraft. Portals is only \$3.98.

A third new product for AD&D is Treasure Vaults of Lindoran by Geoffrey O. Dale, the same writer of Inferno. In this scenario, the treasure vault of an elven king has been discovered. The party may be aware of some of the guardians and dangers, but more are to be discovered. Will they be able to retrieve the Scepter and Ring of Ancient Power? Treasure Vaults of Lindoran is available for only \$4.00

For those of you who are judges of RUNEQUEST, you should be made aware that our recent release: the Runequest Judges Shield is based upon the most recent version: "Runequest 2" with "Cults of Prax" information, included, as well. Our D&D shield has proven to be an invaluable aid to those judges and we are sure that the two large (11" x 17") sheets, printed in red and black on a no-glare buff, with all the tables for judges on one side and all the tables for players on the other side, will prove equally invaluable to you Runequest judges. As a further aid, appropriate page numbers have been included to speed reference to rules on those few occasions that the shield information seems insufficient. These sheets easily tape together to form a screen which conceals the judge's confidential information, secret die rolls, etc. This shield is designed and approved for use with the Runequest Game System and is only \$2.50.

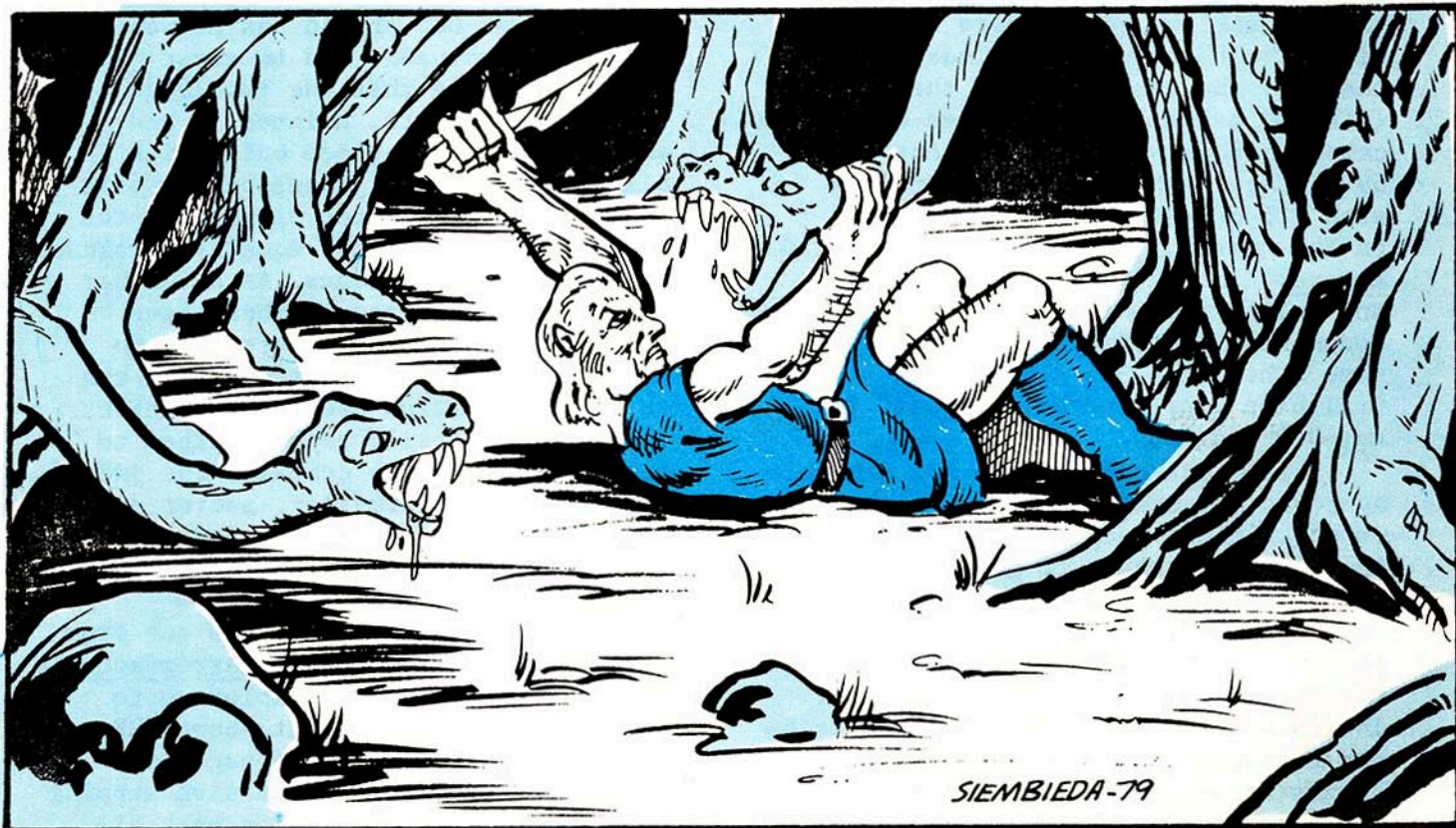
One other new product is out from Judges Guild: The Fantasy Cartographer's Field Book. This is our solution to the many inquiries we get about FRP mapping problems. This 96-page book provides a set of comprehensive mapping symbols that can be used to mark all

map features and encounters. Gamers are sure to find this book useful for record keeping and mapping their campaigns. The increasing numbers of gamers who are writing magazine articles, designing products and submitting contest adventure scenarios will find this book to be invaluable. The first pages give important information on how to use the book and then there are several pages of each of the four main types of grids we at Judges Guild have found to be of most use. Most pages are printed in a non-reproducing blue for general record-keeping and for those maps you wish to submit (as above), but there is, also, a page of each type which is printed in black so you may reproduce the map grids. (Please be aware that most reproduction machines DO change the size of the reproduction along at least one axis, however). This great aid is \$3.98 and is available from any Judges Guild dealer or distributor.

In addition to our own new products, there are many new products which are not yet in our catalog. From Ral Partha there are four new boxed sets: Caverns Deep, Witches Caldron, Galactic Grenadiers and Final Frontier each of which sells for \$15.95. Several new and recently released items from Avalon Hill include: Baseball Strategy and Football Strategy,

both only \$13 and Statis Pro: Basketball, Statis Pro: Major League Baseball, Regatta, Title Bout, Intern and War and Peace each of which sells for \$15. Judges Guild, also, now carries Different Worlds magazine and has a fairly complete selection (all except volume 1). Newer issues are \$2.50 older issues are mostly \$2.00. From GDW we now have in the brand new Research Station Gamma (\$4.98) and the new double-adventure Shadows/Annic Nova (\$4.98). From Metagaming: two new micro-boxed games: Rommel's Panzers and Artifact, each \$3.95 and from TSR their new hex maps (\$1.00 each). The latest issues of The General (\$2.50), Wargamer's Digest (\$2.50) and The Dragon (\$2.50) are in, too. Finally, two new companies have products out: Group 1 has Pen-Latol's World, a Traveller adventure for \$7.95 and DGA (Detroit Gamers Association - not to be confused with MDG) has Sector 57 a tournament rules set for sf adventure for \$5.

If all that doesn't hold you until next time you better start planning a major gaming con (or better yet volunteer your services to one that's already being done) and that is guaranteed to keep you busier than you ever thought of being.



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