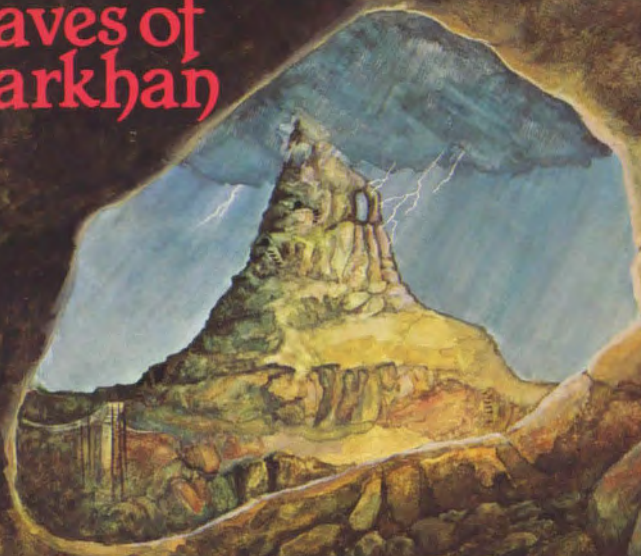


# Kaves of Karkhan™



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# KAVES OF KARKHAN

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# INTRODUCTION

**KAVES OF KARKHAN**, the sequel game to **DRAGON FIRE**, takes you into the mysterious underground realm of Karkhan, that lost religious capital of an ancient race. There are many tales told concerning these lost people and their works, including the story of Maldamere, at one time a minor demon in their pantheon of dark gods who ascended to a place above all others - by what means no one knows. From that position he directed the dark activities of these folk for centuries, inspiring deeds of such horror the underground chambers of Karkhan are said to be still tainted by the blood of the howling dead.

It will be your mission, with a select crew of adventurers, to enter these underground corridors, maneuver through traps both natural and supernatural, and return a piece of Maldamere's gem to the bier at the top of the mountain. Maldamere will do his best to stop you along the way; his influence is still felt here and there are many dormant spells which will become active once you enter Karkhan. Fail in your mission and the countryside will be consumed in the shadows of death and the powers of darkness.

Like **DRAGON FIRE**, **KAVES OF KARKHAN** is a role-playing adventure game, allowing you to choose a character and be that character for the duration of the game. In **KAVES OF KARKHAN**, however, a new dimension has been added. Besides choosing a character you wish to be, you may also select 10 adventurers as crew members to aid you in this dangerous mission. There will be 15 of these adventurers to choose from, complete with character descriptions so that you may imagine your crew in detail.

When you reach the traps within the crags of Karkhan you will be required to put in some thought as to their solutions. What are you and your crew members carrying which might solve this dilemma? What crew member possesses the special knowledge or skills required to maneuver through this trap?

Besides the traps there will be the maze of corridors themselves to contend with. At times you will be going up and down staircases in bewildering progression; it will seem to you that Karkhan was laid out by a madman. For Maldamere held the minds of his folk in an iron grip, and as a result his architects built a city more appropriate to supernatural beings than to anyone vaguely humanoid.



# MALDAMERE'S GEM

*By*

*Steve Rasnic Tem*

Three-finger John's tavern was having its briskest business in years since the five adventurers had returned from their quest into the mazes above the great dragon Salmadon's lair. All manner of folk — maidens, merchants, craftspeople, idlers, even thieves — sought tales of the treasures and perils there. The aisles were crowded with overdressed spectators, those standing and those unconscious. To the average drunken customer the tavern appeared as a mass of bright red, green, blue and gray cloth, the people's faces discernible only infrequently in the confusion. Some sought directions to these burled dungeons, wanting to try their own hand for some excitement and quick wealth. To these particular requests the dwarf would laugh heartily, then give them all the information they desired.

"If they be foolish enough to take such a risk, then let them have at it," he cried, downing another flagon of beer. "Why should we have all the wealth?" Then he laughed himself into tears.

Three-finger John leaned across the table eagerly. "Then you did well, my short friend? You came back a wealthy man?"

The dwarf suddenly put on a serious face and motioned for the tavern owner to come closer. Three-finger John cocked his head and moved his ear next to the dwarf's lips.

"I bathe in perfume, sir," the dwarf whispered in a hoarse and exaggerated fashion. "And my chamber pot is solid gold, and see ...." The dwarf kicked one filthy, sandaled foot up onto the table. Beneath the grime precious rings with emerald and diamond stones could be seen on each of his large toes. "Have you ever seen such finery!" the dwarf shouted, slapping John's back until he had to spit up a mouthful of brew. The dwarf fell backwards out of his chair in laughter; Three-finger John soon joined him in like manner.

There was a fight on the balcony above them. A chair tumbled past the dwarf's head. As the warrior stood up from his seat, an entire detached table top sailed past his leg with a small man desperately clutching its rim. The warrior looked at the huntress

and shouted. She dashed out of the way just as two grappling fighters tumbled over the railing above her and collapsed the table where she'd been sitting. The elf and the wizard sat quietly by themselves at a table in the middle of the room, drinking their tall flagons at leisure, a shield of silent protection shimmering blue above their heads.

The adventurers regained their chairs as Three-finger John and his barmald dragged the unconscious fighters out of the tavern, Three-finger John swearing continuously as he surveyed the damage to his establishment.

"And this jewel . . ." the dwarf began, then realized he no longer had an audience, ". . . Is a strange one indeed! I found it outside one of the rooms on the third level," he continued to himself, still gesturing dramatically.

The dwarf fell silent, staring morosely at the large, dull-black gem on the table. Although normally he enjoyed his solitude, there were times he wished he fit in with the human company around him. But he seemed to have little in common with the tall folk.

Looking around him, once again the dwarf felt vaguely puzzled by the variety of types in the human community. No other race to his knowledge possessed such a range. Packed elbow-to-elbow in the tavern's central room he could see a skinny youth carrying a rope looped over his shoulders, a short man carrying three companions twice his size, a tall man with his face covered by gray gauze — all shapes and sizes of humanity. The dwarf wondered how humans must keep track of them all; it seemed very confusing to him.

Again he looked down at the dark jewel in his hands. It was a curious thing: so dull and black, more like a piece of coal than any jewel he could remember seeing before.

A hairline fracture suddenly appeared in the jewel's surface.

The dwarf leaned forward anxiously. The crack seemed to be branching off, dividing, but silently. He was amazed. His jewel was crumbling right before his very eyes, but completely without sound.

A shadow suddenly obscured the crack. The dwarf looked up, but there was no one standing over him. He looked down and the shadow was still there, in fact had spread; the shadow crept across the surface of the jewel as if it were liquid. Upon closer examination the dwarf could see that the shadow had issued from the crack.

The dwarf looked about at his companions. He didn't know whether he should sound out his alarm or not; he did not wish to appear foolish. But the jewel's transformation frightened him.

He looked down at his table and his eyes widened. The shadow had spread over the table and was rapidly spilling onto the floor.

The dwarf was not one to flee in panic in even the deadliest of circumstances. Although practical, he possessed a well-developed curiosity, and was prone to thrust himself into supernatural-seeming events rather than flee them.

And so it was that the dwarf chose to stick his hand into the shadow issuing from the jewel, just to see what it felt like.

At first it appeared that the shadow was rapidly turning to mist about the edges of his hand, but as the dwarf looked more closely he began to see that his flesh was turning pale, as if all the blood had escaped it.

Then the dwarf could see the bones through the flesh and the translucent edges of his hand becoming ragged with corruption.

The dwarf shrieked and knocked his chair and table over in his haste to get away from that horrible liquid shadow. He backed up quickly into the room and could then see the shadow's progress through the rest of the tavern.

The tavern walls were now dark with shadows, layered with centuries of dust and cobwebs. The tables were broken or smashed completely, the wood rotting away. Pieces of glass and pewter crunched underfoot. Decaying scraps of cloth and flesh were scattered about the floor, and the remains of dozens of people lay about in various stages of dismemberment. Empty eye sockets stared at him; fleshless fingers gestured. The mouths were open, as if howling with anger or pain.

A corpse stood up before the dwarf and began swinging an ancient, rusty sword. The dwarf cried out in alarm and reached for his battle axe. He raised it, and with a loud cry ran full speed for the animated corpse.

The warrior did not know why the dwarf had suddenly gone mad. He had merely stood up from his table to join the dwarf for some good talk and merriment when the dwarf suddenly shouted and attacked the warrior with his battle axe raised, the dwarf's eyes glazed and oddly transformed.

The warrior did not wish to harm the dwarf, but he had to defend himself. He reached under the table for his shield and brought the top edge up hard against the dwarf's forearm. The



dwarf shrieked and dropped the battle axe even as the warrior was swinging his leg around to trip the dwarf.

The huntress watched the warrior and dwarf in growing alarm as they fought each other. What could they be thinking of? Then she saw the black, liquid-like shadow creeping across the floor from the dwarf's overturned table. Before she could react it crept beneath her foot.

Immediately she was surrounded by death, the images of death, the stench of death. Corpses were piled high around her; bodies with the flesh rotting off the bones were rising up off the dust-covered floor and striding towards her, raising ancient weapons and bony fists to attack.

The huntress lashed out immediately, lifting her short sword from the table and lunging . . . .

The elf and wizard had jumped up from their table and were rushing to separate the warrior and the dwarf when the huntress suddenly turned on them and attacked with her sword.

The wizard placed a spell of immobility on the huntress. But as he turned once again to stop whatever madness had overcome the dwarf and warrior, he did not see the black liquid shadow flow across the elf's foot and begin to climb his leg . . . .

The elf was sickened to see the hideous form before him: a tall figure wrapped in a cloak of decaying flesh, its eyes pink hollows. The elf pulled his dagger and readied to throw . . . .

The wizard suddenly sensed danger behind him, whirled, and was shocked to see his companion, the elf, lift his dagger and hurl it at the wizard's face. He immediately raised his arms and uttered a low curse. The dagger stopped in midflight.

All sound had frozen within the tavern. The wizard sighed and began to examine the room. The dwarf and warrior lay entwined on the floor like wrestling statues. The huntress stood still, her arms and weapon outstretched, her stony eyes gleaming dully. The elf was upright, the dagger floating a short distance in front of the elf's extended hand.

As a precaution, the wizard removed his spell from the other patrons in the tavern and bade them leave. There were no arguments as all exited as quickly as possible, including Three-finger John and his staff.

But there was something else about the tavern which seemed wrong and out of place. The wizard realized the floor was much darker than normal, and the shadow there . . . seemed most

unusual. It spread across the floor even as he watched, as if it were liquid, pushing itself forward with long, looping projections like amorphous, reaching arms. The wizard could sense death there, but knew he must investigate. Without hesitation he walked into the center of the dark shadow . . .

. . . and stepped into a mausoleum, the place stinking of butchered meat and rotting flesh, the walls stained darkly with ancient filth, the floor littered with crumbling furniture and bodies. He could barely recognize it, but knew this still to be Three-finger John's tavern. Curtains of cobweb obscured his vision, and he had to cast these aside to see into the far corners of the chamber.

A hulking shape rose up out of the darkness, twin yellow glows where its eyes might have been. It had roughly the shape of a giant bull standing on its hind legs. But its features were completely obscured by a dull blackness which wrapped it like a second skin.

As it strode toward the wizard he saw that its body was glowing with a strange black heat. He then knew what it was.

The wizard raised his arms quickly, his purple cloak billowing out around him. He concentrated on one image in his mind: the dark realm being drawn into his own body, his flesh opening to swallow it, and that advancing demon being sucked in after . . .

The other four adventurers began to stir out of their statue-like postures. The warrior looked at the dwarf in surprise; the dwarf's hands clutched the warrior's neck. The dwarf returned his surprised expression and immediately removed his hands.

There was no trace of the black shadow which had contaminated them.

The huntress was suddenly at the warrior's side, gesturing toward the center of the room.

Floating on his back several feet off the floor, the wizard appeared to be bloated, his face swollen and dark, his arms white and puffy. The adventurers gazed in amazement as the wizard's body seemed to fold in on itself, twisted, with great bumps and ridges travelling up and down his torso as if some battle were being waged within him. They approached his form cautiously.

"Back . . ." the wizard whispered through cracked and swollen lips. "Keep away!"

Immediately the wizard's body bucked, rising several feet into the air, his head twisting impossibly far on his neck, his arms flailing like branches in a high wind. "Fools!" a voice totally unlike the

wizard's came from the body, a voice like wind through marsh-land.

Heedlessly the dwarf stepped closer to the wizard, thinking perhaps to aid him. Immediately one of the wizard's arms transformed into an enormous bat wing which swept the dwarf off his feet into a far wall.

A series of bizarre transformations rippled through the wizard's body in succession. First scales spread over his chest, then feathers, then a mustard-yellow slime. The wizard coughed and a forked scarlet tongue several feet long snaked out. His legs became fins, then tentacles. He cried out and his voice became a mix of growls, squeaks and howls.

"What is it?" the huntress asked in awe.

The wizard's transformations slowed, and he opened his mouth. "Maldamere . . . the demon!" he shouted painfully. "He'd been trapped . . . in that gem . . . leaving Salmadon's realm . . . awakened him . . . must hold him . . . inside . . . fight him . . . else he spreads . . . his dark realm . . . death . . . over the countryside...."

The elf had crept closer to hear the wizard's whispered words when the wizard's head twisted around. "Back! Back!" he cried. "I cannot . . . hold him long . . . must . . . concentratel"

The elf retreated and after a few moments the wizard's aspect had calmed.

"Take the jewel . . . the pieces . . . return them . . . to Maldamere's home . . . the bier . . . the top of the mountain . . . even one piece . . . will draw him . . . back there . . . trap him . . . in the Kaves of Karkhan! Hurry! Hurry! Cannot . . . hold him . . . long . . . but beware . . . beware . . . his influence . . . is still . . . felt . . . in those underground . . . realms . . ."

And then the wizard was silent, except for the involuntary gasps forced out of him by his continuing transformations. The adventurers retreated quickly outside the tavern to discuss the situation.

"We must do as the wizard says!" the huntress declared, looking sternly at each of her companions in turn. "If we do not get at least one piece of Maldamere's gem back to its resting place his evil will spread over all the land!"

The dwarf shuddered, remembering the corpse-ridden tavern with its shadow and disease, imagining that realm swallowing up the entire town, the surrounding countryside, everything he had ever known. "What if we fail?" he asked. "I've seen those caves;



they're near my homeland. I've heard tell that they were once all natural, before a strange race of folk — neither elves nor dwarves nor humans — moved in with their dark religion, and built walls and rooms and many staircases there. They worshipped powerful demons . . . .”

“Maldamere!” the elf interjected.

“Yes, I've heard that name in this connection!” the dwarf continued. “But that race is long dead; their works are in sad repair. My people do not go there because of the dangerous ruins . . . and the few creatures still dwelling there! It is said Maldamere's power still holds sway, in spite of his absence! There are many spells and perils dormant until an adventurer stumbles over them, then they may be quite overwhelming!”

“There is but one way to improve our chances of success,” the warrior declared. “We must each hire a band of adventurers from the town, and each group will enter the caves separately, bearing a piece of Maldamere's gem.”

“That way perhaps at least one band will get through to the top with a piece of the jewel!” the huntress exclaimed.

“But we must be quick; there isn't much time!” the elf declared with rising excitement. “Our friend the wizard surely cannot restrain Maldamere for long!”

The other adventurers agreed, and they all quickly made their way down Potmenders' Lane, toward the shops, the other taverns and dwellings, where other folk eager for adventure or conscious of duty might reside.

## **CHARACTERS**

The characters you have to choose from in the KAVES OF KARKHAN are as follows:

### **THE WARRIOR**

The warrior is of the wandering barbarian type. Like his father before him he once served a great lord in the northern districts, whose death has left him landless and unemployed. Rival northern warlords have since divided and plundered his homeland of its wealth, so the warrior knows that most likely he will never be able to return.

Brought up in the various disciplines of weaponry, the warrior has known little else, and job opportunities for the fighting man are few and far between when there's no war to fight. He has worked as a private bodyguard many times, an advance scout for caravans of merchants, and occasionally as a police officer for those walled towns fearful of foreign assassins and arsonists. Fire is an ever-present danger in these places of closely-packed wood and straw huts.

The warrior need not engage in such mundane occupations at present, however, because he has accumulated much wealth from his adventures within the realms of the great dragon Salmadon (see the previous LEVEL-10 game, DRAGON FIRE). He was seriously wounded there, but has now almost completely recovered. He is anxious for adventure; these long months of inactivity have made him listless and irritable.

Rumors abound concerning this tall figure with the curly black hair, as they do with any stranger wandering into these closely-knit communities. There is little traveling in this time before the harvest, and a new face arouses much suspicion. Some say the barbarian seeks revenge upon a man with a quarter-moon scar on his left cheek. Others say he's a professional bandit specializing in the exotic: the left hoof of the centaur, the lost crown of the Faerie King, the eye of the stingbat, and the like. And still others say he seeks to give up his present occupation as fighting man and find something more peaceful, perhaps as an artisan's or baker's apprentice. A few insist he flees memories of a lost love.





Since his foray into the red clay hills above Salmadon's lair there have been further tales: how he lopped off the head of the Hippogrif with one mighty swing of his sword, how he outwitted the Basilisk, and how he aged a year in moments when faced by the terrible Doppelganger.

If you were to ask him about these rumors, the warrior might confirm any of them. He's done all these things and more in his lifetime. An artisan would be a good thing to be, he sometimes thinks, as he has always appreciated the beautiful and enjoyed making things with his hands, even if it were just a crude bridle or makeshift canoe.

The warrior is close to six feet in height, black-haired, with eyes gray as an evening cloud. He most often dresses in grays and dull silver.

## THE HUNTRESS

Female warriors are not unheard of in these regions, but their homelands, their purposes, sometimes even their names have remained secret. Three-finger John, the tavern owner, is convinced they hail from wandering "daughter bands," amazons who kill their husbands and any male children born to them. "They eat raw meat and drink the blood from dying animals," he tells his barmaid with a wink.

His barmaid counters that they're probably just local women who'd left the area to learn the warrior trade elsewhere. "You local men being too bull-headed to allow 'em into the guilds," she tells him.

Three-finger John knows better than to argue with her; she handles that broom and tray like a sword and shield.

The huntress is taller than any of the other female warriors these people have seen, and with her finely-chiseled nose, brilliant green eyes, and fine sandy hair tied into a bun on her back, she makes a striking figure. She dresses in a coat made from the skins of an animal these people have never seen before, the skin tanned and treated using methods apparently far beyond their own. Under this she wears a breastplate of tight red leather, with a short skirt beneath this armor. Her boots are unusual, long and soft with a point at the toes, and the leather ornamented with stars. Her cap seems to match these with its forward-curving point. Running through the countryside in this soft red and brown outfit, she is said to resemble very much a large deer or elk.

The huntress did quite well in her adventures within the lairs of the great dragon Salmadon. Some about the town say she now has the great skin of a Mountain Giant hanging on the walls of her quarters, the giant's empty eye sockets making an attractive frame around her windows. Others laugh and claim that is a drunken exaggeration. In any case her apartments are now richly furnished, with rugs fashioned from exotic fibers, cabinets full of rare herbs and medicinal powders, and one of the finest collections of weaponry around. She does not boast of her good fortunes, but has no embarrassment about enjoying them to the fullest.

She is independent; she serves no one. She can be a formidable opponent; therefore, one is careful not to insult her. The huntress is a fine rider, can handle any weapon, and has been seen carrying both a double-headed axe and a small shield shaped like a five-day-old moon.

## THE DWARF

Dwarves aren't as short as most people expect; four feet would be an average height. They are somewhat broader in the shoulders than the average man, making them capable of withstanding a great deal of punishment. Dwarves tend to specialize in hard, quick, precisely cutting blows with their bladed weapons, and no one is better in a club fight or tavern brawl.

Up until recently the dwarf worked as helper to the local blacksmith, but since his own trip into Salmadon's lair he no longer needs the money. He still returns now and then to lend a helping hand, however, since he enjoys this kind of work immensely. Dwarves in general are known for their abilities at the forge and furnace, and the dwarf couldn't have a more enjoyable job for his brief time among people. His position off the town square also has provided him with a good vantage point for viewing the habits and foibles of human beings, one of his favorite pastimes. Dwarves pride themselves on knowing more about the human race than the human race could ever know about dwarves.

Belief in "the one great wrong" no doubt influences dwarf behavior more than any other thing. For dwarves believe they own all treasure underground, and all treasure which originated underground. They feel that humankind has repeatedly stolen this treasure. So, although dwarves have been accused of all kinds of thievery and are much distrusted by human folk, they believe they are only reclaiming the treasure which is actually theirs by birth-right.

The dwarf has become confused about these beliefs since his DRAGON FIRE adventure. When he entered Salmadon's realm he was angry about the dragon's presence there, in what he thought to be the rightful dominion of the dwarves. He was also resentful of the elf and the humans who had decided to try their own luck there. He believed they had no right to this treasure. Since that time, however, he has seen the benefits of working as a member of a team, humans who might be called, however loosely, "friends."

There has been a change these past months which disturbs him. He is actually beginning to enjoy life among the humans. He wonders now if he will ever have the determination to return home.

Dwarves form well-disciplined armies under a monarch. They give their obedience to others grudgingly. Most remain stubborn and independent even in their own groups, but this allows them to become quite capable individual fighters.

The dwarf is frightened, yet at the same time quite curious about these "Kaves Of Karkhan." He knows an ancient race of the dwarves may have once dwelled there, and he wonders if perhaps he might find in these underground realms some important part of his past and heritage.

## THE ELF

You can't find an elf, no matter how hard you try. They will always find you. Elves are highly secretive creatures, vanishing here and reappearing there; they enjoy travel more than most anything. They make good friends when not pressed. But remember they can't be sought out, and they leave few tracks behind when they depart. When they're ready, they'll appear. Not before.

In the past the elf has wanted to have little to do with the people in town; he has always distrusted humans instinctively. Since his trip into Salmadon's lair, however, his attitude has softened a bit. He has made friends with the dwarf, and the three humans in this band of adventurers. They even contributed part of their own wealth to pay the ransom which would free part of the elf clan. That ransom has now been paid, the unscrupulous eastern king has been pulled from his throne, and the elf's people are free.

The elf is restless now, however, and because of this has remained in the lands of the humans. This restlessness is a new feeling for him and he doesn't quite know what to do with it. He has no real urge to be a great adventurer, and like all elves, has little use for money. But the elf has realized there is much he does not know



about the world, and only by living with humans will he ever acquire this knowledge. This seems to be the source of his restlessness. He does not yet feel comfortable with humans, for elves possess a great sense of kinship and do not like being separated from their own kind. But acquiring more knowledge is very important to him.

Dressed in shades of light green, blue and brown, the elf blends easily into most natural backgrounds. He is thin, yet muscular, and few are quicker in battle. Elves possess foresight, but make little use of it. Most of them prefer play over serious work, especially tumbling in the leaves as they fall from the trees.

**Important Advice:** never eat the food the elves provide, or drink their drink. You might not be seen again among human beings.

The elf is both a warrior and a magic user, and can use any type of weapon or armor.

You won't be able to choose the wizard in this game; he's much too busy with the important work of containing Maldamere. Suffice it to say he has learned much since his last adventure (also into Salmadon's lair in the LEVEL-10 game, DRAGON FIRE). He is now a much more powerful wizard than before, and the books and rare documents he discovered in the dungeons surrounding Salmadon's lair have kept him up late many nights delving into their dark and arcane lore.



## HOW TO PLAY

KAVES OF KARKHAN is a simple game to learn to play; as in DRAGON FIRE, your computer will provide you with most of the information you need. Remember that the game is *timed*, however. The wizard cannot contain Maldamere forever. If time expires before you have delivered your piece of the gem safely to the bier at the top of Karkhan's awful crags, you will be notified that Maldamere has escaped from the wizard's body and spread his dark influence over the entire world. This disaster, incidentally, ends your game.

Careful study of this manual will enable you not only to imagine this fantasy world in specific detail, but allow you to make the best decisions during the heat of play. You should be able to better your time with each attempt.

### COMMANDS

While inside Mt. Karkhan you will use the following keys to move yourself and your crew through the various hallways and up and down stairs:

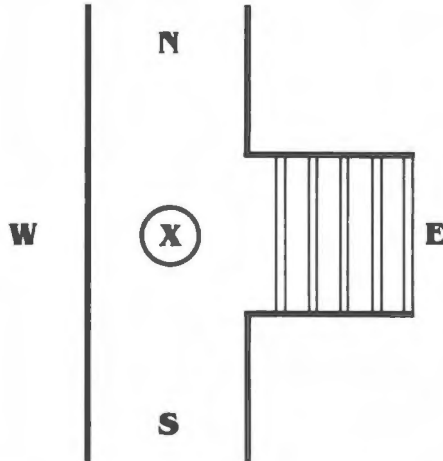


The Left arrow will turn you **left** and the Right arrow will turn you **right**.


**RETURN**

The RETURN key moves you **forward** one square, which is equivalent to about 30 feet. This is as far as you will be able to see at any one time because it is very dark in Maldamere's realm, forcing you and your crew to carry torches in order to maneuver. Therefore you won't be able to see what is at the end of a hallway, or what is at the top or bottom of a staircase, until you walk that way.



An example of how you would maneuver through Karkhan is provided in the bird's eye view below (note that this diagram is for explanation purposes only. The Kaves of Karkhan are actually three-dimensional, providing the illusion that you are walking inside actual hallways):



If you were the (X) looking north you would see a hallway.

If you type  you would turn left (west), and see a wall.

If you then type   (turning left twice), or

  (turning right twice), you would have made the equivalent of an about face, and you would see the staircase to the east.

The game also has a pause feature in case you are interrupted for some reason (such as a phone call, etc.). You can only go into this pause mode when asked for your move. When asked to enter your move, simply type the @ key (a shifted "P") to pause. Pressing this key again will allow you to continue.

## STARTING THE GAME

Pressing ESCAPE while the title page is on the screen starts the game of KAVES OF KARKHAN. At this point you will be given the names of the four main characters previously described in this manual: the warrior, huntress, dwarf and elf. You may choose the character you wish to be by number.



A list of 15 supporting characters will then be displayed with the item they are carrying and the weapon they are armed with. You may choose 10 of these characters as your crew. To choose these, simply type the letter for each character, and that character's name will go to inverse (dark letters on a light background). This indicates that that particular character has been chosen.

If you change your mind about a character you have chosen as a crew member, simply type the letter for that character again and this choice will be reversed (indicated by the inverse name returning to normal).

## THE CREW

The following townspeople have agreed to assist you in your mission. Remember that you may choose 10 of them:

1. **LANDAR** — He is carrying a **large shield**. This small man in tattered clothing possesses great physical strength. You first meet him when he is helping his friend, the blacksmith, by carrying a sick horse into the stables.

2. **BALLEAN** — She is carrying a **rope**. Ballean is a skinny young girl you met on the street outside Fliver's & Sons, Armorers. She has a keen look about her, and she made the rope herself. A fine rope it is, thick, and made from tough fibers.

3. **GRAY FACE** — He is carrying a **plank**. This mysterious figure was once a fine carpenter until he was horribly deformed in a fire. Since then he has refused to speak except through sign language, and wears gray gauze plastered over his face with oils.

4. **VOLTA** — He is carrying a massive **hammer**. This is Landar's blacksmith friend. He is perhaps the finest blacksmith in the entire region.

5. **WALDO** — He is carrying a heavy iron **chain**. This unusually tall man, a bit over eight feet you estimate, has the mind of an idiot. You found him in the middle of the lane outside Three-finger John's, his head held back, mouth wide open. When you asked him what he was doing he said he was thirsty, and waiting for a rain shower to quench his thirst.

6. **FILLONDA** — She is carrying a **net**. This is an extremely small woman you found drinking under your table at Three-finger John's. She is quick-witted and very agile.

7. **CRAXIS** — He is carrying an **axe**. This man is tall, dressed in greens, browns and the furs of small animals. A skilled

woodsman, he provided the wood for the tables and benches in Three-finger John's. In return, he receives all his drinks free.

8. **JOHN** — He is carrying a large piece of **canvas**. John is a cleric, and possesses a great deal of knowledge concerning "bookish" matters, including demonic and occult concerns. He is quite good-natured, however.

9. **IGNATIUS** — He is carrying a long **pole**. Ignatius is a traveling entertainer, skilled at singing, juggling and all manner of acrobatics. This is his off-season, so he is more than eager for a bit of adventure.

10. **MILES** — He is carrying two **buckets**. This peasant farmer has just sold his crops and has remained in town to drink and gamble away a little of his earnings (not much, mind you, he still has supplies to buy). He is an expert with all kinds of plants and animals.

11. **RED HOOD** — He is carrying some **heavy boots**. Red Hood is a highly-paid, highly-trained professional assassin. He is skilled in small weapons, plotting and subterfuge.

12. **ERIC** — He is carrying a large **jug**. Eric is the best thief you ever met (at the end of your interview he handed you your purse, shoes and birthmark). He walks softly, possesses unusually sharp hearing and is quick on his feet.

13. **DALRIK** — He is carrying his **falcon**. Dalrik is a professional falconer, owning several prize-winning birds. This particular falcon, Cinnibar, was his first. Dalrik himself has developed unusually keen eyesight from working with his falcons.

14. **PONTI** — He is carrying a lot of **extra food**. Ponti was the rich merchant who hired the warrior as a bodyguard back before the adventure in the lair of Salmadon (in DRAGON FIRE). Now he is down on his luck, however; he can't afford the perfumes he once used. Yet somehow he manages to obtain enough food to maintain his fat, and this trip he has brought his own extra supply of rations. He possesses some strength, but *much* weight.

15. **ALANA** — She is carrying a bottle of **poison**. Alana is an apprentice sorceress. Her teacher is the White Lady, one of the strangest apparitions to be seen in these lands. But don't bother asking Alana about the White Lady, for she's taken a vow of secrecy. Alana's own powers are unknown to you, but you've heard rumors that she's more than a fair student of the magic arts.

When you have finished selecting your crew type **Q** to **Quit**. This automatically will take you to the starting point of your adventure.



## ENTERING THE KAVES OF KARKHAN

At the base of awesome Mt. Karkhan you will encounter a large door wedged into the hard, gray stone. There will be several letters chiseled there by the last high priest of Maldamere's cult of horror, inscribed so long ago one would think the weather should have rubbed them out by this time, but they remain as readable as the day they were first carved, the author long since gone to dust and wind.

There are two four-letter words here, but the words are scrambled. You must type the unscrambled form of the words before you may enter this underground realm. Maldamere's remaining influence here will make your task difficult, for the words change from time to time, each time a new adventurer seeks entrance.

A final clue: the two words will have something to do with mountains and caves, but don't expect them to make sense together. The priest did not think in the manner of most normal folk.

## FACING THE TRAPS

Once you have learned to move through the maze using the RETURN and left and right arrow keys, all that remains for you to worry about are the many traps you will encounter along the way. Some of these are to be expected, part of the natural character of underground hallways of such considerable age. Others are the result of dormant spells Maldamere has left behind to protect these environs, which are activated once you are within a certain distance from them.

When you come upon a trap it will be displayed on the screen with several lines of text describing it. At the end of this description there will be a question mark ? awaiting your solution to this trap.

At this point, if you would like an inventory of your crew—their names and the weapons they are carrying—simply press the CONTROL key and "I," and then press RETURN. If you would like this inventory while maneuvering through the halls themselves, press CONTROL-I, but omit the RETURN.

You may then enter a **two word** command. The **first** word must be one of the verbs listed below.

**If you wish to continue forward, ignoring the trap, simply press the RETURN key.**



use	pull	get	swing	climb
throw	hold	hammer	rope	go
jump	wave	cut	kill	attack
walk	drop	yell	open	send

The **second** word must be a noun. This can be an item one of your crew members is carrying, the name of the trap itself, or the name of one of your crew members. If you give a command which is misspelled or a command which your computer determines to be incorrect you will see the ? displayed on your screen once again, waiting for a new command. Some typical commands might include "THROW HAMMER" or "SWING AXE."

Remember that you are the most important member of your expedition. If you die, the mission is a failure. **So you must decide in some cases to have a supporting crew member perform a particular task rather than yourself. For example, at a particular trap your command might be "USE JOHN," "JUMP MILES," or "WALK VOLTA."** If you have picked the wrong solution and that solution ends in death, it will be one of your supporting crew members dying and not yourself. However, you need these crew members to win the game, so be careful about risking their lives.

It is up to you to determine what the solutions are, and it may require several attempts or even several games before you will be able to come up with the right solution. And every time you play the game the traps will be rearranged, making each game completely different.

## BEATING MALDAMERE

You win the game and beat Maldamere when you are able to find your way through the maze of hallways within the crags of Karkhan, solve the traps, and then deliver your piece of the gem into the bier at the top of the mountain. Remember that you will be timed, however, and when time runs out Maldamere will escape from the wizard's body and spread his aura of death over the entire world.

If you are able to succeed once, then try again, attempting to beat your previous time, trying different solutions for some of the traps, or finding and solving traps you did not encounter your first time through the maze.



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# Dragon Fire™



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