

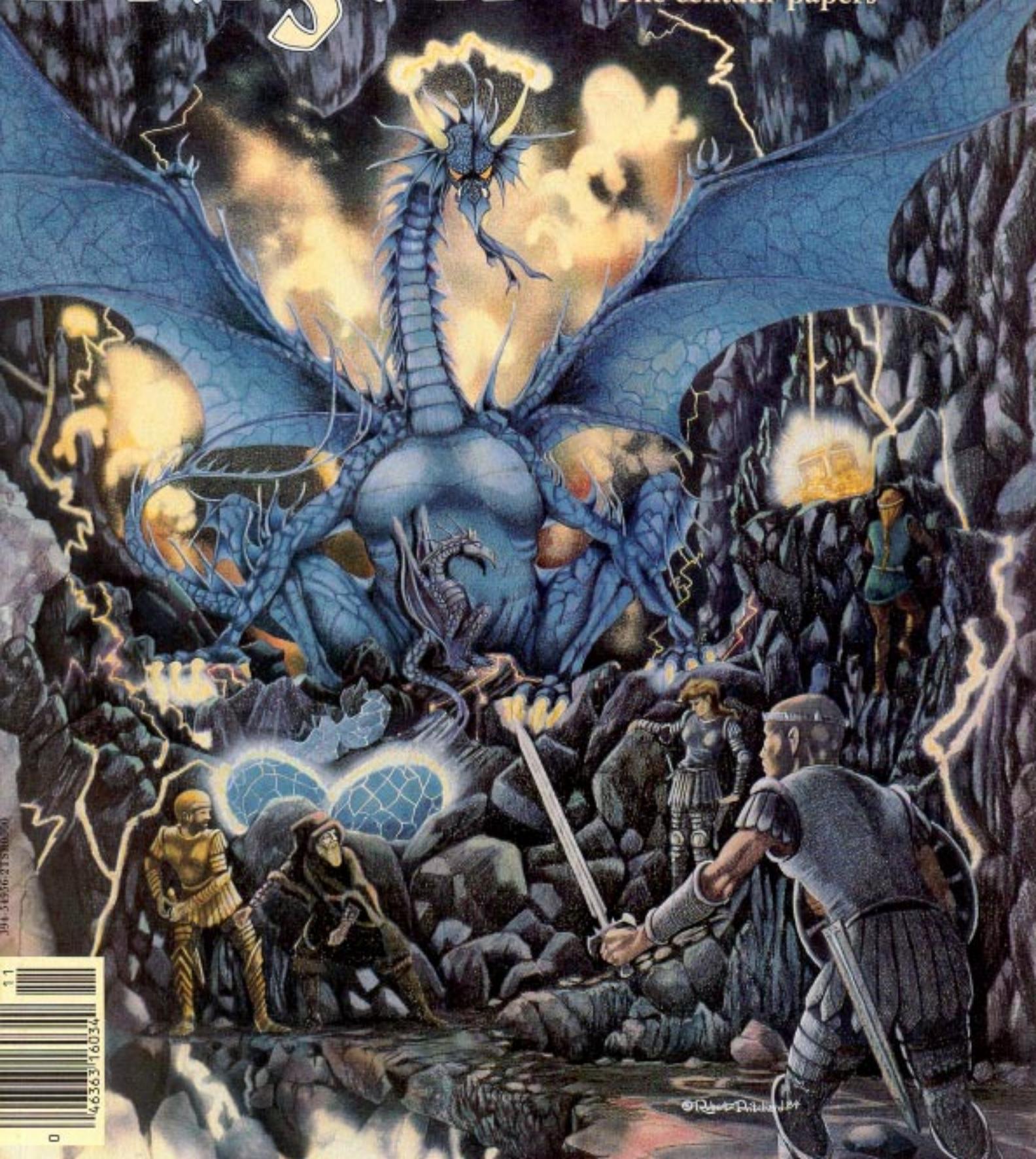
Monthly adventure role-playing aid

Dragon®

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#103

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Monthly adventure role-playing aid

Dragon®

Vol. X, No. 11 November 1985

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COVER

Robert Pritchard's first contribution to our cover is an interesting piece of artwork — and that's always the main factor in deciding whether or not to accept a painting to use. But Robert's choice of a title didn't hurt a bit. The name of the painting, of course, is "Birth of the Blues."

Letters

Copy service

Dear Editor,

I'm a bit confused. In answer to George Embley's question (issue #101) as to whether or not he could get a copy of the astral article in issue #67, you said no, unless it was published in a future Best of DRAGON.

However, in issue #83 you said it was possible to order copies of articles not reprinted in the Best of DRAGON series or not still available as back issues. I checked the list of issues available in #101, and issue #67 wasn't listed as available. Why couldn't Mr. Embley order the article from DRAGON Magazine, simply paying the price stated in issue #83? Or is this service no longer available?

Chad P. Culotta
Shreveport, La.

I did speak a little hastily in issue #101. I thought the photocopying service offered by TSR had been discontinued (it has been a long time since issue #83), but I was only partially right about that. Penny Petticord, the Coordinator of the RPGA™ Network, informs me that the service is still available — but only to members of the RPGA Network.

If you're a member, you can order photocopies of any article from an out-of-print issue of DRAGON Magazine, as long as the article does NOT fall into one of these categories: 1) It has been reprinted in a Best of DRAGON® Magazine anthology; 2) It was written by Gary Gygax; 3) It is a work of fiction; or 4) It is an article that does not specifically pertain to a TSR® game. The reason for restriction 1 should be obvious: Why would you want to pay for one article when you can buy it, plus lots of others, for the same or less money? The reason for restrictions 2 through 4 is that the authors of those articles have retained ownership of the copyright to their materials, and as such we are not authorized to distribute copies. For the same reason, we cannot and will not honor requests to photocopy art.

The cost of the service depends on what you want: \$4.00 for a module from the center of the magazine, \$2.50 for any single article, or \$1.00 for any single new monster or magic item — regardless of how many pages the module, article, or monster takes up. The postage and handling charge is \$2.00 for an order of \$15.00 or less, plus \$1.00 for each \$10.00 (or portion thereof beyond that: \$3.00 for an order of \$15.50 through \$25.00, \$4.00 for an order of \$25.50 through \$35, and so on. (Don't worry if you ordered some copies recently under the previous pricing structure; those prices will be honored until after this magazine is distributed.)

Requests should be sent to RPGA™ Network, P.O. Box 509, Lake Geneva WI 53147, along with a check or money order payable to the RPGA Network. You must be an RPGA member to qualify, and must include your membership number in your order. Any requests from non-members will be returned. Penny tries to fill requests within 6 weeks of the time they are received, but don't panic if it runs a little longer than that.

Why is the service only available to RPGA members? Because we don't have enough time or people to handle requests from the entire readership of the magazine. Because Penny is the only person who deals with the requests, and also happens to be the head of the RPGA Network organization. And because RPGA members deserve some special treatment in return for their membership fees. If you'd like to find out about more ways in which RPGA members get special treatment, write to the above address for membership information. — KM

Flail followup

Dear Dragon,

In the clerical spell *holy flail* (issue #100), it states that "any non-bladed weapon" is transformed by the spell into a magical flail. Does this include any weapon that is much larger than a flail that is non-bladed like a javelin, staff, spear, or even a lance? Does it work on magical non-bladed weapons or not?

If the answer to the preceding question is yes, can the spell be used to an advantage? For instance, if a cleric fights someone who is using a +5 lance, can't he cast the spell to transform the lance into the less powerful *holy flail*? Does the weapon transformed by the spell have to be listed as a weapon, or can anything that can be used as a weapon (rock, bottle, etc.) be transformed?

Joey Garcia
Bronx, N.Y.

Instead of using the term "non-bladed weapon," we should have specified that the spell only works on weapons usable by a cleric. That rules out everything except a club, flail, hammer, mace, staff, lasso, sap, or staff sling — no lances, spears, rocks or bottles allowed.

The spell will not fail to function when it's cast upon a magic weapon, but it won't offset or reduce any powers the magic weapon already had. However, the spell will bestow upon the weapon any special powers that are part of the magic. If it's used on a horseman's mace +4, for instance, the weapon is still +4 to hit and on damage, and for the duration of the spell the mace will do extra damage to undead and "any creature of a greatly different alignment than that of the cleric," as it says in the text. This extra damage is 1 point per level of the cleric who cast the spell, not per level of the character wielding the weapon — and note that the extra damage only applies when the magicked weapon is wielded by a cleric. Thus, it's pointless to cast the spell on an enemy's weapon — and it's downright dumb to even try doing it if the enemy is a cleric "of a greatly different alignment." — KM

Too expensive?

Dear Dragon,

I have a question about the automaton in Creature Catalog III (issue #101). Why is the cost

One monster we can't defeat

No matter how strong you are, you can't keep it from attacking you again and again. No magic item has any effect on it. No matter how good your armor class is, it scores a hit sooner or later — and when it hits, it hits everybody.

The monster goes by many names. We'll call it Increasing Costs — but don't expect to find it under "I" in any of the rule books. It does show up in a book, but it's the kind used by accountants, not gamers.

Okay, enough of the cute lead-in. What I'm edging toward telling you is this: Prices are going up. Effective on Feb. 1, 1986, all new TSR products will cost more than they would under our existing (soon to be former) price structure. Many existing products, including DRAGON® Magazine, will also carry higher price tags.

The magazine's single-copy price will be \$3.50 starting with the February issue (#106). The AD&D rule books and other products that now cost \$12.00 or \$13.50 will become \$15.00 items. Standard-sized modules will be \$8.00 instead of \$6.00, and special, larger modules will be \$12.00 or \$15.00, depending on the page count and number of components in the product. Practically every other item that's produced or published by TSR, Inc., will also go up in price.

I'm not going to waste any precious space with verbal contortions intended to convince you that higher prices are a Good Thing. You're all intelligent enough to realize why price increases are occasionally necessary — and "occasionally" is the right word here. The cover price of the magazine has been \$3.00 ever since issue #37, five and a half years ago. The price of the AD&D rule books has not gone up since those books were first published. But now the time has finally come when we cannot continue to absorb all of the Increasing Costs that continually attack companies in the publishing business. We have to ask you to absorb part of the blow for us — that's what friends are for, right?

We can't stop the monster from getting in its licks, but we can keep you from being hit while you're surprised. Armed with this bit of advance warning, you still have several weeks to pick up existing products at their current prices, and I hope lots of you do just that. Bad news is never easy to take, or to deliver, but we figured you'd rather know about it now than find out the hard way on the first of February.



for materials and labor so high? If you were making one out of a suit of plate mail or the like, and if you are using an armorer to assemble the automaton, why would it take him 1 day per hit point to assemble it?

Charles Bartz
Troy, Mich.

The cost and construction time of an automaton were set high to keep clerics and magic-users from continually rooting around in garbage piles and churning out these constructs every time they

replenish their spells. The figures — 1,000 gp per hit point and 1 day per hit point — are not outrageous when you compare them to the cost of making a golem, either from scratch or with the use of a manual of golems. It takes a lot less time and gold to make an automaton that's 5 or 6 feet tall, which would have an average of about 25 hit points, than it does to make most of the golems in the Monster Manual.

The only kind of golem a cleric can make from scratch is one of clay. It costs a minimum of 50,000 gp to construct and enchant the golem,

which will have 50 hit points when it's done. That comes out to 1,000 gp per hit point (at least), which is what any golem costs. It takes a minimum of 3 weeks to make a clay golem, which is less time than it takes to build our example automaton that has only 25 hit points. But a clay golem can only be made by a cleric of at least 17th level, whereas a cleric only needs to be 12th level to make an automaton. All things considered, we think the cost in gold and time for an automaton is a fair price to pay for the benefits received. — KM

The World Gamers Guide

If you live outside the continental United States and Canada, you can be included in the World Gamers Guide by sending your name and full address, plus your gaming preferences, to World Gamers Guide, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147 USA.

Abbreviations in parentheses after a name indicate games in which that person is especially interested:

AD = AD&D® game; DD = D&D® game; CC = CALL OF CTHULHU® game; DQ = DRAGONQUEST™ game;

GW = GAMMA WORLD® game;
MSH = MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game;
SF = STAR FRONTIERS® game;
TS = TOP SECRET® game;
T = TRAVELLER® game;
RQ = RUNEQUEST® game;
R = RINGWORLD™ game; ST = STAR TREK™: The Role-Playing Game. For space considerations, only the first three preferences given can be printed.

The World Gamers Guide is intended for the benefit of gamers who live outside the continental United States and Canada, in areas where nearby gamers are

small in number or non-existent, as a way for them to contact other game-players who would be interested in corresponding about the activities that they enjoy. Unfortunately, we cannot extend this service to persons who live in remote areas of the U.S. or Canada, or to U.S. military personnel with APO or FPO addresses. Each eligible name and address that we receive will be published in three consecutive issues of DRAGON® Magazine; to be listed for more than three issues, you must send in another postcard or letter.

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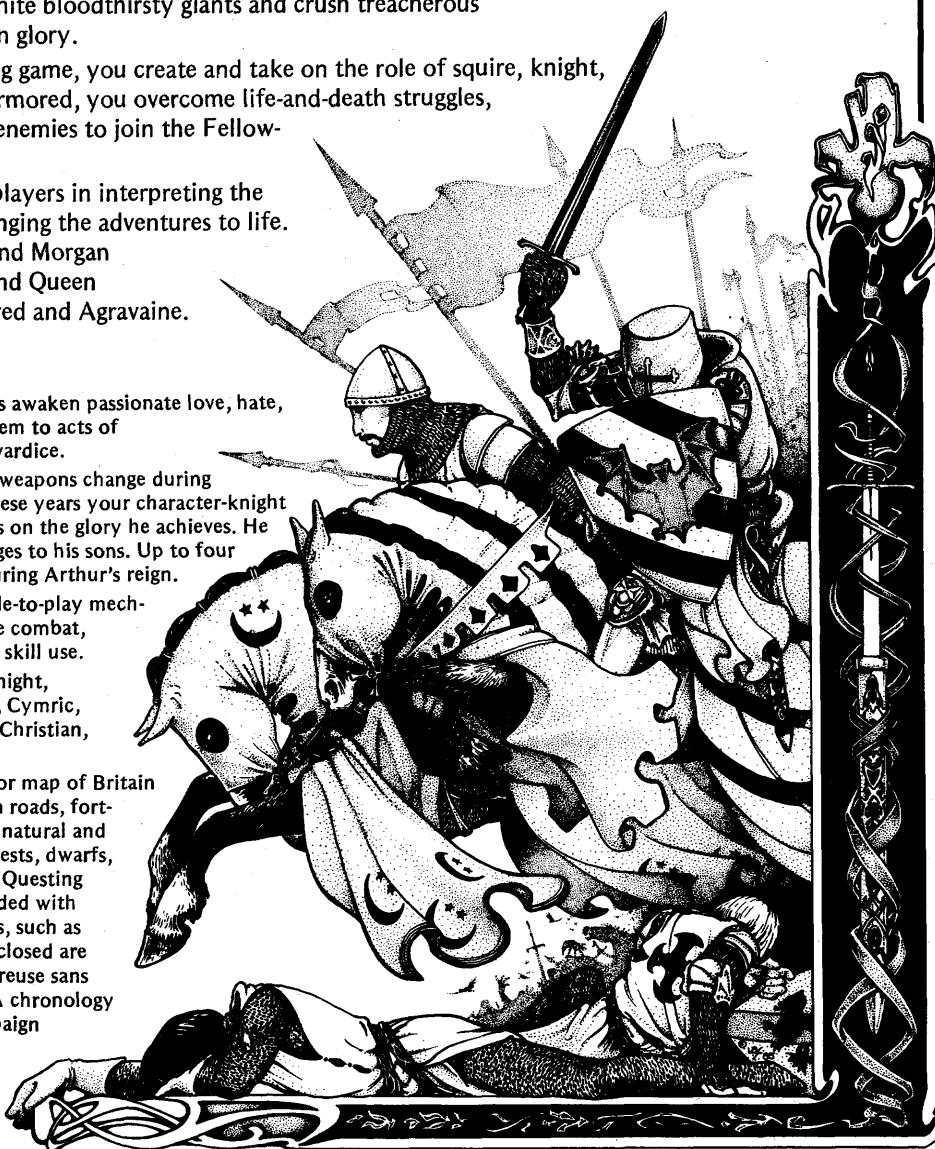
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The Game of Quest, Romance, & Adventure

The forum

I would like to comment on Sam Swanson's letter in issue #101. What I have to say deals not so much with what he says as why he seems to be saying it. Sam describes a game in which "players balk and complain" or "walk out." I have played the AD&D® game as both player and DM for years, and I have seen such lack of communications break down a campaign faster than you can say "wish spell." The unfortunate thing is that such antics can be avoided if everyone would just show everyone else a bit of consideration. I offer the following advice to anyone out there who is suffering from this problem.

The DM's primary responsibility is to run the game world. This does not necessarily involve paying homage to the all-powerful dice, nor does it involve killing off every player character in sight. Fairness should be the goal which all DMs strive for. Personal bias should not play a big role in the decision-making process, unless the DM wants the campaign to deteriorate.

As for the players, the best advice comes from the Players *Handbook*. It says, "Cooperate with the Dungeon Master and respect his decisions; if you disagree, present your viewpoint with deference to his position as game moderator." Remember that the DM is trying to keep things both interesting and exciting. If you walk out or cheat, you will spoil the fun for everyone. As for those few players out there who really are being obnoxious or irritating (and I know they do exist), a word of caution to them: *Beware!* Even if your DM is the most gracious, patient, benevolent individual you could ever imagine, there will come a time when he or she is pushed too far. This usually takes a toll on the characters. (You are attacked by three dozen nycadaemons — what do you do now?)

So the next time your gaming group reaches for the real swords, remember that this is a game. It's supposed to be *fun*. Don't deprive yourself of the satisfaction which a well-run campaign can provide.

As to the fudging issue, this is another matter of finding out what works best for your group. Just don't fight over it. Personally, I have fudged both for and against my players from time to time and, although they know this, they haven't complained yet. They have been left hanging by their teeth, having a blast all the while, because they know better than to get mad while looking for a good time.

David Gaw
College Station, Tex.

* * * *

I feel compelled to respond to an idea that has circulated in recent forum articles, and has now been championed by Frank Mentzer (DRAGON® issue #101). This idea is that somehow for a campaign to be fun, the DM must cheat on his die rolls. As Mr. Mentzer put it, "I make up results regularly, to keep the game fun." (DRAGON #101, p. 17.) I contend that DM cheating does not make a game more fun; quite the contrary, it makes the game less enjoyable for the players.

The type of cheating that Mr. Mentzer con-

dones is the type in which the DM is a nice guy. The DM is nice because he cheats to help out the characters. Instead of killing the PC, the DM lets the PC live by cheating on his (the DM's) die rolls.

But Mr. Mentzer erroneously states that this is more fun. First of all, this type of campaign all too easily degenerates into the type of campaign where players don't fear death. The players do incredibly stupid acts, knowing that the DM will save them. While this may be some fun initially, it quickly wears thin.

Furthermore, when a DM cheats to help players, it is not nearly as much fun for the better players. Typically the DM will end up helping the players whose characters deserve to die. Therefore, the better players don't get the benefit of their superior play. It also stifles creative solutions to problems that players find themselves in. Instead of relying on their wits, the players learn to rely on the DM's "kindness" to save their characters. Additionally, the poorer players won't ever learn that their poor play would hurt their characters. Without the sharp lesson of death, the DM can't show the players that foolishness has its own reward.

Perhaps the worst result of DM cheating is that the players' victories are tarnished. It's not difficult for players to comprehend when they slay the dragon and they only have one hit point left that perhaps the DM had something to do with it. This can only take away from the players' fun and their sense of accomplishment.

Besides being less fun for the players, cheating DMs are cheating themselves. If a DM knows that his players will survive every encounter, there's no sense of excitement for the DM. If the DM has a truly tough encounter for a special item, and the DM knows it's a fair battle, then it's just as exciting for the DM as it is for the players. And it's not all that difficult to make balanced encounters. Mr. Mentzer's excellent article ("Plan it by the numbers," issue #101) is a great aid for the DM. If the DM is worried that an encounter is too tough, he can always playtest it beforehand. DMs should put in the extra time. This will let the players and the DM have more fun, and more unpredictable and exciting times will be had by one and all.

Thomas E. Wolff
Edina, Minn.

* * * *

This letter is on the issue of role-playing. Throughout the issues of DRAGON Magazine (starting with #72), there have been several articles on how to successfully and realistically role-play certain characters. Role-playing alignments and clerics have made up the majority of such articles, but there was also a section on character background by Katherine Kerr that has most likely helped develop characters' personalities. So, role-playing is usually based upon an individual being that moves and works on its own.

Lately, TSR, Inc., has come out with the BATTLESYSTEM™ and War Machine rules for the AD&D and D&D® games respectively, but

this takes away from the essence of role-playing. Which takes more personality: playing a character going into a dungeon, fighting it out individually and making individual decisions such as "which door?" or how to avoid a monster; or, making mass-combat battlefield decisions? The latter takes away the flavor of role-playing, and changes the D&D and AD&D games into war games. Saying the BATTLESYSTEM supplement is part of a role-playing game is like saying games such as *Blitzkrieg* are actually role-playing games. (Aren't the players role-playing generals?)

Now, some may say that miniatures take away the flavor of role-playing characters. Miniatures, representing a 1:1 scale, are helpful in keeping arguments over enemy placement and player placement from occurring. True, one could then ask if *Squad Leader* isn't a role-playing game. That could be the basis for an interesting article or forum item.

Why not try something simple when battles are fought, in which players play minor roles (unless they happen to be high-level PCs commanding squads). Roll d6: 1-3, they lose; 4-6, the other side loses, with applicable modifiers. Meanwhile, the players have fun and inflict casualties in a wonderful hack-and-slash routine.

There has been only one circumstance in which I have used massive war game rules, and that was when a 12th-level fighter was the highest and most respected character in a village, though somewhat of a recluse. He was voted to lead the village into battle against the invading orcs (150 orcs against 70 0-level, able-bodied villagers). Otherwise, unless PCs are of highly noticeable levels or influence, PCs should have fun and role-play, not roll-play. Even then, they should role-play instead of move markers and roll dice. (Even in the Conan books by Howard, the Cimmerian fought beside his troops in almost all battles.)

Brian Hook
Pinellas Park, Fla.

* * * * *

In a letter which appeared in issue #101, Frank Mentzer tried to show that the revised dragons in the D&D Companion rules are a challenge to parties of high-level characters. To prove his point, Mr. Mentzer described a situation in which a group of 25th-level characters are systematically decimated by a huge red dragon from the Companion rulebook. Unfortunately, the combat he described is unrealistic when you consider the types of equipment and abilities available to characters of this level. When the players running these characters are reasonably intelligent and creative, the dragon becomes a relatively easy kill. Picture this:

As the 25th-level characters (which Mr. Mentzer describes as "wearing +5 everything and armed with the mightiest weapons known to man"), consisting of a magic-user, 2 clerics, a thief, and 3 fighters, make their way towards the mountain lair, a dark shadow suddenly blocks the sunlight. A huge red dragon (with maximum hit points) descends towards the adventurers. Gaining complete surprise, the great wyrm swoops down and flies off with 3 characters in its claws and mouth. The trapped characters are the magic-user, the thief, and a fighter. The mage, realizing that this situation could be slightly dangerous, decides to cast one of his three 9th-level spells. He casts his *shapechange* and assumes the form of a spectre. In this shape, he slips out of the dragon's grasp and energy-drains 2 hit dice from the beast in the process. The dragon is mad now! It drops the 2 characters from its claws and looks for other victims. The

(Turn to page 16)

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The future of the game

What the Second Edition books will be like

by Gary Gygax

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With the recent publication of *Unearthed Arcana* and now *Oriental Adventures*, many of the Astute Readership, as well as those others so benighted as not to subscribe to these Worthy Pages, have many questions to ask about what is coming in the future for the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Here are the plans I have projected as of this writing. While certain things might change over the course of time, the overall projection should be reasonably accurate.

A *Second Edition* is a major undertaking. There are corrections to be made, parts to be meshed, material to be deleted or shifted, and new rules and information to be included in such a work. The first question, then, is when does this undertaking begin? We anticipate starting the preliminary work in mid-1986. The scope of the project is such that it will certainly require two to three years to complete. When it is finished, we will have fewer, but thicker, tomes for your amusement and edification. It is important to add that this task does not preclude later supplements, changes, and yet new editions (a *Third*, perhaps a *Fourth* someday). The AD&D game system is vital. It grows, changes, and develops with continuing play and fresh ideas. One day it might attain the point where the rules can be graven in stone, but I don't see that likelihood for some time.

First subject for the Learned Editors will certainly be the *Monster Manuals* (I and II) and the FIEND FOLIO® Tome. The three books will be edited for errors and omissions, re-illustrated in part, color plates added (also useful as painting guides), and certain entries deleted. Thereafter, all worthwhile new monsters found in modules, DRAGON® Magazine, etc., will be inserted. An index will be compiled. Frank Mentzer is desirous of restructuring the order in which information is given. I am desirous of presenting creatures by region (or plane, subterranean, and similar categorical means) so as to make the work serve as a reasonable random encounter reference as well. It is hoped that we will have all of this accomplished in 1986, but do not hold me to that as a sworn statement or promise.

Next? The *Players Handbook* and portions of *Unearthed Arcana* and *Oriental Adventures*, in all probability. The information needed to be a player of the game should be contained between the covers of one book. We will do so! Monks as a PC type will certainly be moved to an oriental-themed campaign section. Assassins will be



reduced to *optional* status, or used only as NPCs, as your DM decides is best for his or her campaign. Bards will be rewritten to allow a player to start a bard character *as* a bard, and the current system will be removed *in toto*.

Any brand-new classes? Sure. I hope to get the *mystic* completed as a second sub-class of cleric, and likewise the *savant* to make a second sub-magic-user. Finally, the new bard class will have a sub-class, the *jester*.

There are bound to be a few other additions to the players' book. For instance, I have discovered that I neglected to include a fairly common medieval weapon in both the *Players Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana* — Zounds! What slipshod research on my part!

Rest assured that anything major will be previewed in these pages first, unless it is so late a development that we will be unable to do so. I hate to say it, Understanding Readers, but the new sub-classes do fall under that heading. I just don't have enough time to be able to do them as quickly as is desirable. It is most likely that they'll premier in the *Second Edition*.

Now we have a hefty pair of tomes taken care of, a *Second Edition Players Handbook* and a *Second Edition Monster Manual*. What's next in line?

Pulling apart *Unearthed Arcana* and *Oriental Adventures* to make up the new book for players will automatically put the Harried but Diligent Editors onto the track of the *Second Edition Dungeon Masters Guide*. Knowing what the new book for players will be likely to contain gives a good insight into what the new DM's book will cover. Of course the new-treatment of the Elemental Planes, printed right here in DRAGON Magazine some time ago, will be there. More planar details will certainly be included as well. Gone will be random encounter materials and monster XP lists.

Psionics . . . a subject I sidestepped in both commentaries on the expanded new editions. Quite frankly, I'd like to remove the concept from a medieval fantasy role-playing game system and put it into a game

where it belongs — something modern or futuristic. That is not fixed yet, and it could go either way. The new *Monster Manual* will be the key. If there is nothing about psionics therein, then you can count on the whole being removed from the AD&D game system. If you find references to monsters with such ability, then it will remain in the *Second Edition*.

Now. . . the DEITIES & DEMIGODS™ Cyclopedia, recently retitled *Legends & Lore* by others as a sop, or bowing to pressure from those who don't buy our products anyway. (For those Candid Enthusiasts who do not read between my lines, as they say, I do not particularly approve of the retitling of the work!) Anyway, whether it is under one title or the other, the work will be revised, expanded, and generally improved to conform to the new high standards of the other books in the system.

"So, Graybearded Windbag," you say, "What is the point of all this preamble?" Fair enough! I'll not take offense, merely give you the information. Statistics on deities are given only as a minimum guideline for the power of the individual in question when he, she, or it is encountered for whatever reason on the Prime Material Plane. Those individuals who have had the foresight to acquire the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Game Setting will understand what I am (eventually) getting to.

In the above-referenced work, the various sorts of deities are detailed in a manner that I believe the new edition of L&L, shall we say, should follow.

The players' section of that work (the *Guide*) gives information on what clerics and worshipers of each deity should know — color of robes, special interests or requirements, usual location of places of worship and type of ceremony, and so forth. The DM's section (the *Glossography*) has the "hard data." Standard and non-standard powers are given, and these are typically far greater than the material in L&L. Additionally, the statistics of these beings are given for DM knowledge only. Deity powers are great, special information is detailed regarding each, and the extra or



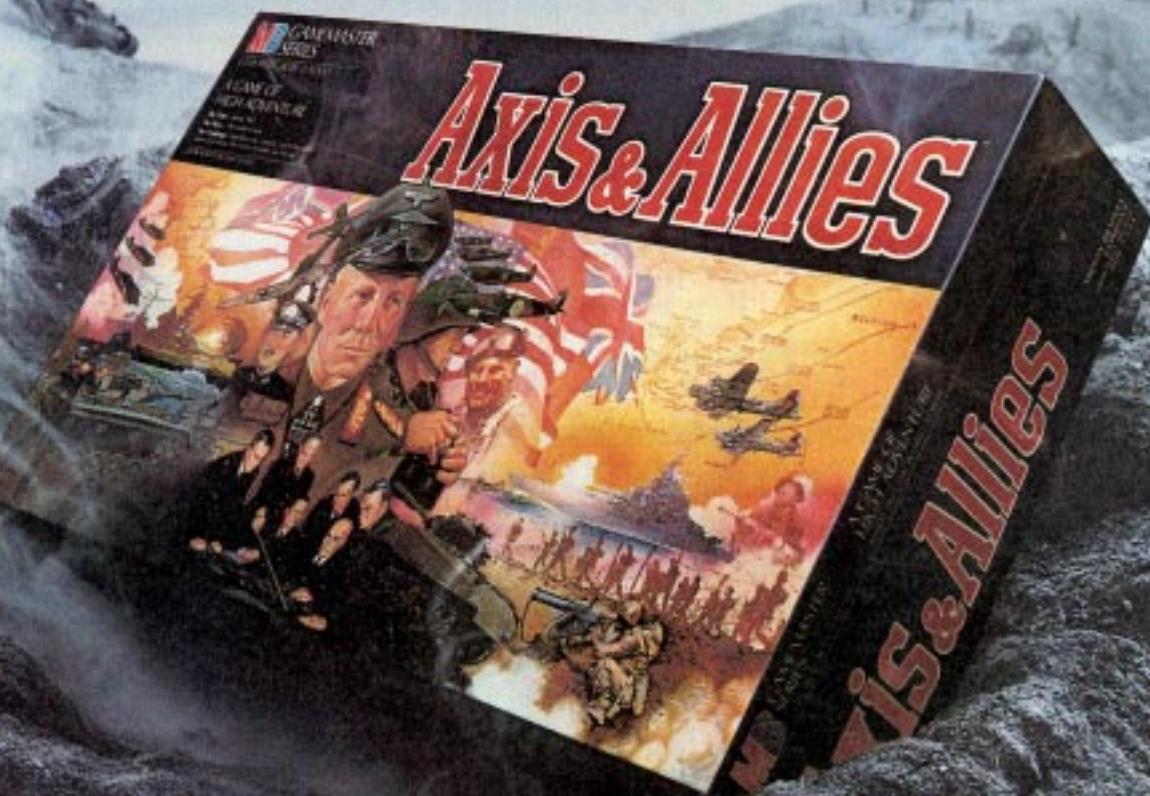
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special spells gained by their clerics are also stated.

If the DM considers the power of planewards and solars as stated in *Monster Manual II*, there can be no question as to the abilities of those who command them. Statistics must be considered in this light and as a yardstick for deity comparison only. The revised L&L tome must give more information regarding clerics and followers of each deity. A separate DM section should then deal with the minimum powers of each deity, along with a solid list of the standard powers typical for each deity. Spells usable only by such beings should be there too! Of course, the whole is to be expanded by inclusion of new material. An extensive section of non-human deities should be given, so demi-humans and humanoids are represented. That should do nicely.

What we have, then, when all of this is completed, is a set of four books once again: *Players Handbook*, *Dungeon Masters Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and *Legends & Lore*. Each is far larger than now, but the needed information is all under the cover of the appropriate tome. While this plan is seemingly fine, I foresee one special difficulty, so I'd better confess it to you now.

We are all what must be known as "hard core" gamers. The four books are quite acceptable, even a benefit, to us. But to an uninitiated person, especially one interested in beginning without benefit of experienced players, it will be a *big* drawback. The

books will be big, and their prices will be that too, comparatively speaking. Sure, the new edition of *Monster Manual* will cost less than all three books of creatures now being sold — but the beginner doesn't buy all three. See the point? Entry to the AD&D game system will be difficult and costly. None of us desire a shrinking, incestuous system. What can be done?

If *Players Handbook* is made to contain only general information on generating characters and how to play them, it becomes quite a small work indeed. Perhaps with careful study and preparation, it could be in the 128-page range. Character information of specific nature could then be handled in special works which detailed the four basic sorts, with sub-classes, weapons, armor, spells, and so on. No! Not more books again! Why not? A one-volume edition could be offered for the adepts, while those desiring to learn could enter by picking up but one or two small books. That is being considered, Loyal Enthusiasts, and you got it directly from me. This sort of system would also enable us to add more information from time to time without going through a major effort — no Ump-teenth Edition, no new big bucks to lay out to get the new data!

As usual, your good offices are appreciated. If you have helpful advice, go ahead and fire it off. I do not promise to reply, but the suggestions and comments will be read and considered as we begin this project. m

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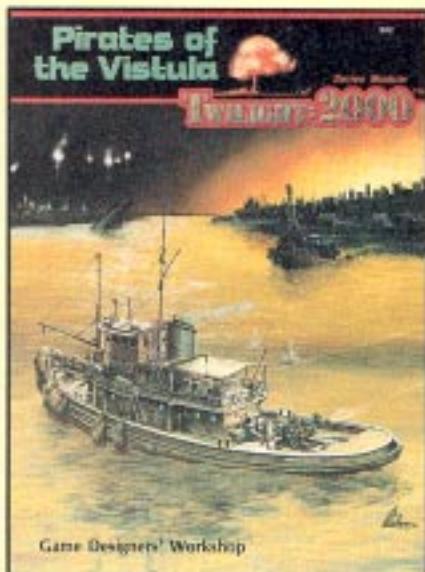
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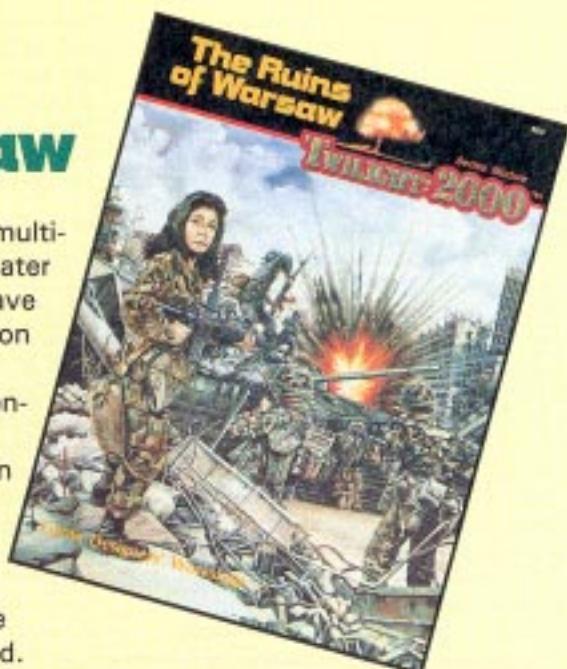
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Arcana update, part 1

Repairs, reasons, and even more new rules

by Kim Mohan

with ideas and aid from Gary, Frank, and Jeff

Now, don't get a bunch of swelled heads or anything, but you people are very good proofreaders.

We spent a few months working to produce *Unearthed Arcana*, and it took you a fraction of that time to find many of the errors that we carefully concealed inside those 128 pages. (I said *many*, not *all*. *No*-body's that good.)

Okay... we didn't hide the errors — they hid from us. What difference does it make? Anyhow, the way I figure it, leaving things in the book that needed fixing was actually a wise business move on our part. Now we get to use up page space in the magazine to acknowledge and correct those things, plus spend some money to make corrections to the book itself before we print any more copies. (What? We didn't need this to fill? We don't *like* spending money? Okay, I won't make any more business decisions.)

Yes, we will fix the book. We can insert corrections and supplementary material in lots of spots without having to redesign large chunks of type, and we're going to do as much of this kind of repair as possible. But all you proofreaders who already have the book — don't despair. On pages 48 and 49, you'll find a collection of all the pieces of type we'll be plugging into the text, plus some new information that we're going to try to squeeze in somehow. With a photocopier, scissors, tape or glue, and a dexterity of 6 or higher, you can fix your own book page by page. Or you can simply fasten these sheets of corrections and additions on the inside back cover for easy reference, if you don't want lumpy pages.

Other errors (and here I use the term very loosely) can't be tended to by simple

typesetting changes. "Errors" that require explanation or justification will be explained or justified in this article. Are we going to address every point you've spotted? Well, not right away. Since Gary and Frank and Jeff and yours truly sat down in late August to deal with the original batch of "I found a mistake" letters, a few new questions have come in. Be patient, and we'll try to do this again within an issue or two so we can get the book *really* fixed up. (What? More mail? More "you guys messed up" letters? Aaarrgh....)

Comeliness

The list of penalties and bonuses on page 6 now includes valley elves, wild elves, and dark elves. Note that dark elf males and dark elf females are listed separately, unlike any other race. Also, valley elves and wild elves are not "of the same race" for purposes of effective comeliness; this concept only applies to halflings *vis-a-vis* humans and gray elves *vis-a-vis* high elves.

Character races

A half-elf player character can operate in any class not specifically prohibited to all half-elves, so long as the PC comes from a strain of elven stock for which that class is legal. In concrete terms: Only a half-elf of dark, gray, or high elf descent can become a cavalier or a paladin. A half-elf of wild elf descent cannot become a cleric, a ranger, or a magic-user.

The last sentence in the text introducing Character Race Table II (p. 8) now refers to a "hill dwarf assassin" instead of a "dwarven assassin," since the book says it is possible for gray dwarves to be multi-classed assassin characters.

Racial Preferences Table

Now that there's so much more genetic variety in the half-elf, it's sometimes difficult to generalize about this race. In the matter of their reaction toward other racial types, we've reasoned that half-elves of dark descent would certainly feel differently (in most cases) than other half-elves do about the races in the AD&D game multiverse. So, we produced an extra line for the Racial Preferences Table (p. 12) for dark half-elves and we changed the current half-elf line in the columns for the six strains of full-blooded elves.

Frank's rationale for the new line goes like this: Half-elves of dark elf ancestry have attitudes toward other races similar to those of pure dark elves, but slightly mollified; most reactions are one increment more favorable. However, they share the full-blooded cousins' antipathy toward all halflings, and are tolerant of half-orcs.

Once dark half-elves were split off as a separate entry on this table, that necessitated a new look at how all other half-elves view full-blooded elves. The revised table now says that non-dark half-elves view dark elves and wild elves with antipathy, and they feel goodwill toward other elves.

Alignment requirements

A cavalier does not have to be good (as originally specified), but must be of a non-evil alignment when beginning in the profession. A thief must be of a non-good alignment to begin with, but may switch to good later on (just as some cavaliers turn to evil). Likewise, an assassin must be aligned toward evil as a beginning character, but may become neutral or even good later in his or her career. (For an example of a non-evil assassin, think of James Bond. As Gary put it, "Assassins kill people as the result of orders or directions from someone else. That makes James Bond an assassin, even if he's not evil.") The footnotes added to the entries for the druid and ranger are only to allow for the very rare occasions when a half-elf or elf wants to become a druid/ranger.

Thieves created using the rules from the *Players Handbook* were allowed to be neutral good at the start of their careers. Among other things, the above changes to the alignment rules explain how a medium- or high-level good-aligned thief PC could be present in an ongoing campaign. You didn't think we were going to make all those good thieves — and guilds — change alignment, did you?

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Character Classes tables

Table I now lists a druid's maximum number of hit dice as 15, making the entry conform with the text about the Grand Druid on pp. 16-17.

In Table II, the entry for an assassin's use of a shield now reads "yes," with a note explaining that a shield is prohibited when the character is in the act of committing an assassination. An assassin can carry and use a shield while battling with the guard outside the duke's bedroom, but does not benefit from a shield during the round(s) in which he actually attacks the duke.

The Cavalier

Change the heading on Cavaliers Table I (p. 15) to read "10-Sided Dice for Accum. Hit Points" — as stated on p. 12 and strongly implied on p. 14.

The age of a beginning player-character cavalier is determined as for a cleric of that race — $500 + 10d10$ years for an elf, $40 + 2d4$ for a half-elf, or $18 + 1d4$ for a human.

The retainers of a cavalier, although they are themselves cavaliers, are non-player characters and as such cannot have their own groups of retainers; only player-character cavaliers have the opportunity to gather such a retinue.

The Fighter

"Why take weapon specialization away from the cavalier and give it to the fighter?" asked someone. Well . . . when weapon specialization was first mentioned, in DRAGON® issue #66, it applied "only to fighters, excluding all sub-classes." Then along came the cavalier article in issue #72, which described how "weapon specialization" worked for that class (which was, at the time, a sub-class of fighter). The use of the term "weapon specialization" in issue #72 was inappropriate. The cavalier's ability to get real good with certain weapons isn't the same as the weapon specialization that an ordinary fighter can acquire. The distinction is made clear in *Unearthed Arcana*, where the cavalier's skill is described in terms of "weapons of choice," and the "weapon specialization" label only appears where it belongs — in the section on The Fighter. The cavalier didn't lose anything; all we did was polish up the nomenclature a bit.

Multi-classed fighters cannot use weapon specialization; this special skill is the province only of humans and demi-human, single-classed fighters.

The Barbarian

The age of a beginning player-character barbarian is $14 + 1d4$ years. (To keep things in their proper places, this rule and the one above for the age of a cavalier should be slipped into page 74 between the sections on "Creating the Player Character" and "Character Abilities.")

Some readers expressed concern that the barbarian class was made too powerful by the stipulation that a barbarian may use

certain magic items upon attaining a certain experience level (potions at 2nd, weapons at 3rd, armor at 5th, etc.; see p. 20), peaking at 10th level, when a barbarian can use "most magic items available to fighters."

Not so, says Gary, who points out that "high-level barbarians weren't all that viable before." This is a good example of what sometimes happens to rule text after the publication of *official* material in DRAGON Magazine and before it comes out in *final* form. The final rules for the barbarian class are different in many ways from what was published in DRAGON® issue #63 (July 1982). In fact, a followup piece indicates that the seed of change had germinated 'way back then. Gary had this to say at the end of an article on the barbarian in issue #67:

"In all truth, the sub-class is not too powerful. It is, in fact, under-powered unless some very good rolls are gained in the areas of strength, dexterity, and constitution. To have real prospects for long-range play, the character must have 18, 16, and 17 respectively. That is why they are given 9d6, 7d6, and 8d6 for those categories. A low-level barbarian has a better than average chance for survival without such high rolls, but at higher level he or she is not going to do well unless strength, dexterity, and constitution combine to give high hit points, low armor class, and superior punishment potential."



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The "9d6 system" for ability scores first described in the barbarian article evolved into Method V for character generation (see *UA* p. 74). The system requires that the player select the class of the character before rolling for ability scores — and you only get one roll for each specific ability. If the barbarian misses an 18 on the best-3-of-9 roll for strength (which is more than 80% likely to happen), he's out of luck. Because the chance of it happening is so small, it's unreasonable to expect a barbarian to have an 18 strength in order to remain viable at higher levels. One way to build some power into the class, then, is to *gradually* give the barbarian access to magic items as the character rises in levels. Experience, in this context, represents the barbarian's experience in learning to suppress his inborn detestation of magic, and learning how to use magic items to his benefit even if he may not understand or appreciate the force that powers them.

Contrast this with the barbarian's attitude toward magic-users, which never really softens. A magic item can (usually) be controlled by the possessor, but a *magic-user* is like a magic item with a mind of its own — and it's asking too much for a barbarian to put up with that sort of thing. (For the same reason, a barbarian probably wouldn't be too crazy about owning an intelligent sword, even if he was able to control it.)

The Attacks Per Melee Round Table (p.

22) should say that barbarians of level 6-10 get 3/2 attacks per round, not 2/3. Sometimes it's hard to notice when two characters get transposed like that.

The Thief-Acrobat

Some of you pointed out that the dexterity adjustments for pole vaulting (Table III, p. 25) were given in percentages, although the Thief-Acrobat Function Table lists pole vaulting distances in feet. This is a good example of something that should have been changed between the official and final versions, but wasn't. The original thief-acrobat article in issue #69 had the same figures in the same places, and to the best of our recollection no one called the problem to our attention at that time. Well, here's the fix. Change the entries in Table III to 1', 2', and 3' respectively.

The text on pole vaulting (p. 23) has been changed to reflect the newly discovered fact that the distance of a vault depends on the length of the pole, not the height of the vaulter. A 6th-level dwarven thief-acrobat with 18 dexterity can make a 9-foot vault, but only if he tries it with a 6-foot (or longer) pole. We changed the rule after hearing from a high-level halfling thief-acrobat who tried to make a 15-foot vault with a 7-foot pole and fell . . . short.

Nobody brought up the issue, but we decided to do something to help out thief-acrobats. First of all, every thief-acrobat can and does achieve 6th-level skill (not just 5th)

in *pick pockets*, *open locks*, and *find/remove traps*. Second, a thief-acrobat *does* gain the ability to "decipher magical writings and utilize scrolls" at 10th level, just as regular thieves do (see *Players Handbook*, p. 27). And for virtually every thief-acrobat, advancement in the abovementioned thieving skills does not stop when they split away from the main profession to become thief-acrobats. A thief-acrobat with 17 dexterity acquires 7th-level ability in *pick pockets*, *open locks*, and *find/remove traps* when he reaches 7th level as a thief-acrobat; one with 18 dexterity can gain 8th-level ability in these skills at 8th level, and a 19 dexterity allows 9th-level ability when the character reaches 9th level. (Since the minimum dexterity for a thief-acrobat is 16, these benefits apply to the majority of all characters who could qualify for the class.)

When does the split from thief to thief-acrobat actually occur, and when must a character decide which path to pursue? The decision must be made before the character accumulates more than 42,500 experience points — and it can be made as early as the start of the character's career. But a thief cannot "split off" until attaining the 6th level of experience, and may do so at any point between 20,001 and 42,501 experience points. After the switch, and the requisite six weeks of training, the character is effectively a thief-acrobat of 6th level, keeping all the experience points and hit points accrued in the thief class and needing to get

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to 45,000 experience points to qualify for 7th level. Note that an early decision can be changed; a 1st-level thief who decides to become a thief-acrobat is not committed to doing so, and could later elect to advance as a 7th-level thief instead of branching off. But once you switch, if you switch, there's no going back.

Other stuff

No character with exceptional strength (18/01 to 18/00) has the ability to use a two-handed sword in one hand or do anything of similar nature. The main factors here are the size and mass of the weapon and the wielder, not the wielder's strength. The two-handed sword is not necessarily too **heavy** for a powerful fighter to swing about with one hand, but its bulk and shape make it impossible for the fighter to use with normal effectiveness. (If Bruno the Slow insists on trying, let him swing it at a hefty penalty to both his hit chance and damage result. Either he'll get the idea, or he won't last long anyway.)

As noted on page 7 of the book, a player-character cleric can be of any alignment — including true neutral, which had previously been available only to members of the druid sub-class. What we **didn't** say is that any non-evil cleric should be treated the same as a good cleric for purposes of determining the success and outcome of attempts to turn undead.

Consider magical barding to be effectively weightless for the purpose of determining encumbrance, the same way that magic armor is treated.

The simplified rules for weaponless combat given in Appendix Q not only can, but **should** be used in place of the pummeling, grappling, and overbearing rules in the *DMG*. You can use the original rules if you've gotten used to them and you like them, but we think most people will appre-

ciate the simplicity and speed that the new system delivers. In fact, it's so simple that it can easily stand this little bit of complexity: Allow a saving throw versus death magic for a stunned pummeling victim to escape being knocked out. If the save is made, the victim is stunned for 1 - 10 more segments (counting from the time that the second stun occurred) but remains conscious. This "save versus knockout" applies whenever an already stunned victim is stunned again.

Think of the Quiver of *Ehlonna* (p. 102) as a specialized sort of *bag of holding*, not a *quiver of whatever you want*. The quiver will only give forth an arrow or other weapon upon command if that particular item was placed within it. The quiver is magical because of how many weapons it holds, not because of any ability to create or otherwise magically produce the weapons.

NEW RULES!

Multi-class possibilities

With all the new racial strains available for player characters, it's high time we had some once-and-for-all definition of which multi-class combinations are permissible for the various demi-human races. Jeff came up with Character Race Table III (see page 49) to define who can become what.

All combinations including the thief class also apply to the thief-acrobat split class, so that an elf (for instance) could begin as a cleric/fighter/thief and later become a cleric/fighter/thief-acrobat.

A note of caution regarding multi-classed assassin characters: Combinations with the assassin class are given as permissible for several racial types, even though we have reservations about some of them. (In particular, Frank isn't crazy about non-dark elf magic-user/assassins.) We'd recommend limiting multi-classed assassins to only those races with a disposition toward evil — gray

dwarves, dark elves, deep gnomes, half-orcs, and half-elves of dark descent. As Jeff points out, "An assassin in a good-aligned race tends to be a loner" — and who wants a loner for a player character?

The list of allowable multi-class combinations is pretty liberal, but it doesn't permit every matchup that's theoretically possible. For instance, a PC hill dwarf can be a cleric or a thief, but not a cleric/thief; a surface gnome can be a cleric or an assassin, but not a cleric/assassin. *Monster Manual II* mentions that wild elves can be druid/fighters, but that combination is not open to player characters of that race. Three-class combinations are only permitted for elves and half-elves, and only if all three classes are among the "basic four" (cleric, fighter, magic-user, thief). In no case can a player character be a member of a class and one of that class's sub-classes at the same time.

Armor for multi-classed thieves

With one major exception, multi-classed characters may use any armor and weapons available to any one of the classes in question without affecting the character's performance. The exception is a multi-classed thief's use of armor when attempting to perform thieving functions or acrobatic skills.

When attired in anything other than leather armor, a thief is required to apply a modifier to any attempt at using one of the class's special skills. As it is, Thieves Table II (p. 22) is sufficient for single-classed thieves, who have a limited selection of armor. However, fighter/thieves and cleric/thieves can use any of the armor types available to fighters and clerics, as long as they accept the consequences. Indeed, a fighter/thief can wear plate armor — but he shouldn't expect to get very far up the wall he's trying to climb.

We've expanded Thieves Table II to account for the armor types a multi-classed thief can wear, and we've drawn up Thief-Acrobats Table V to set forth the armor modifiers for thief-acrobat abilities. If a character's modified chance of success is 0% or lower, the indicated activity cannot be successfully performed. It may still be attempted, but the effort will certainly fail — with possibly perilous consequences: If a thief wearing plate armor fails to open a lock, he won't necessarily get hurt, but if the same character tries to walk a tightrope, he'd better have his insurance paid up.

Only cleric/thieves, fighter/thieves, and triple-classed thief characters can use metal armor (except for elfin chain, which can be worn by any thief fortunate enough to acquire a set). Illusionist/thieves, magic-user/thieves, and others are restricted to leather, studded leather, padded armor, or elfin chain, just as a single-classed thief is.

A thief attired in anything other than leather, studded leather, padded armor, or elfin chain does **not** receive the thief's customary bonus to hit and damage when attacking from behind. . . .

Richard Silva
West Roxbury, Mass.

. . . And that's all — for now.

The forum

(From page 6)

thief has a ring of *feather falling* and is saved from harm. The fighter falls 600' to his death. (He would have survived if the old falling damage system had been used.) Seconds after hitting the ground, a *raise dead* followed by a *heal* spell from the two clerics restore him to perfect health. The other 2 fighters both hit the dragon with + 5 arrows fired from + 5 bows (they can't miss). Round 1 is over. The dragon has lost 64 of its 160 hit points.

The dragon now begins attacking the characters on the ground. It lands on top of one of the clerics, doing 40 points of damage. The cleric doesn't even try to avoid this attack, choosing instead to strike back at + 4 to hit and do double damage (with her *gauntlets of ogre power* and a + 4 mace, she needs a 4 to hit). She isn't worried about the damage she took; she has 43 hit points left. Meanwhile, the magic-user hits the monster with his *magic missile* spell; twelve *magic* missiles strike the monster. At the same time, the other cleric scores a hit with his *staff of withering*, destroying the dragon's wing and rendering the

wurm incapable of flight. The thief throws his two + 5 daggers but misses with both of them. The fighters spend this round drinking their *potions of storm giant strength*. Round 2 is over. The dragon has 40 hit points left.

The dragon is getting desperate now. It uses its breath weapon on the three lighters. They all make their saving throws (with their + 5 rings of protection, they can't fail!) and take 80 points of damage each. They each have over 40 hit points left. Another hit by the breath weapon will kill them, but they're not worried. They know that the dragon won't survive this round. They charge into combat with their + 5 two-handed swords. By some miracle, two of them miss. The one that hits does 20 points of damage. The cleric with the + 4 mace and *gauntlets of ogre power* also hits, doing 14 points of damage. At this point, the mage decides to end the combat and casts another *magic missile* spell. The dragon dies, evil is conquered, and the heroes start looking for treasure.

The Companion-level dragons are powerful monsters and would be an excellent challenge for characters of levels 12-14. Against 25th-level characters, however, they are hopelessly outclassed.

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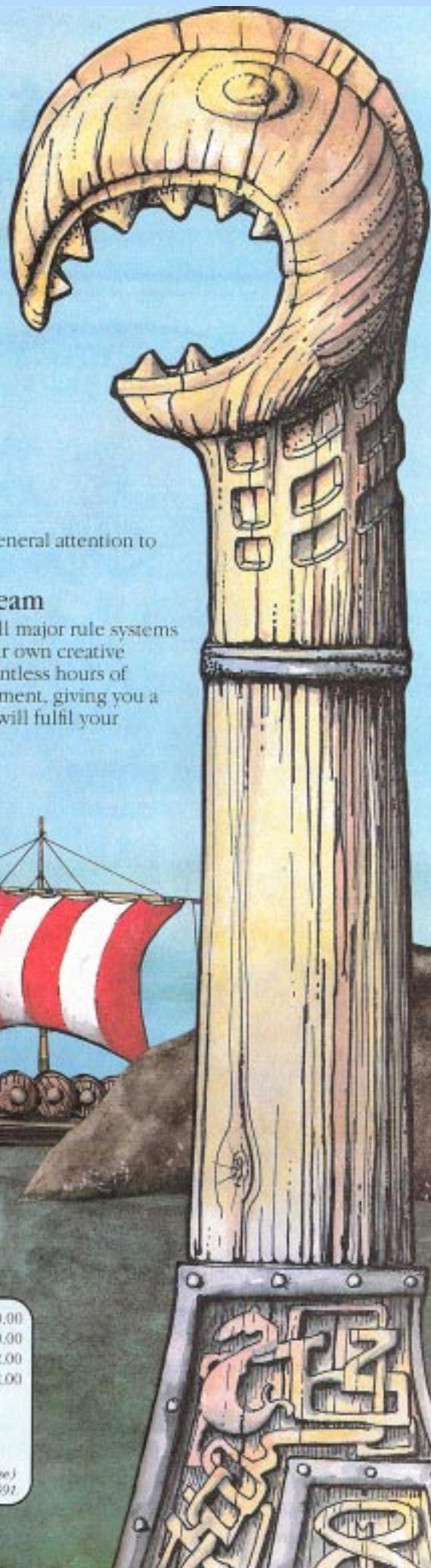
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All about Krynn's gnomes

The smallest and rarest demi-humans of all

by Roger E. Moore



Of the demi-humans of Ansalon, gnomes are the smallest and rarest. Though similar in many ways to gnomes elsewhere, the differences between them are striking and profound. As with other aspects of the DRAGONLANCE™ saga, the gnomes of Krynn have evolved into a special people with their own characteristics.

Throughout this article, all references to gnomes should be taken as applying only to

the gnomes native to Krynn, unless otherwise specified.

History

DL 5, *Dragons of Mystery*, details the origin of the gnomes. The god Reorx, having forged the world, took a number of men with him over the seas to learn his crafts and help him complete his work. Unfortunately, these people misused what Reorx

taught them and strayed from neutrality. They were filled with petty desires and uses for their skills. In his anger, Reorx cursed them, reshaping their bodies and minds. As their desires were petty, then so, too, would be their new stature. As their uses for craftsmanship were petty, then so would they use them for eternity, never achieving the greatness of purpose that other races would know, regardless of what they developed.

Reorx's workshops were located far across the sea to the east of Ansalon. When the Greygem escaped, the gnomes went west after it in a fleet of ships, landing on the eastern shores of Ansalon and hurrying after it on foot. The gnomes who finally caught up with the Greygem at Gargath's kingdom (as noted in DL 5) were changed into dwarves and kender. The rest of the gnomes hurried on after the newly escaped Greygem until it sailed over the seas to the west, over Sancrist Isle.

At Sancrist, most pursuing gnomes gave up the chase. They were content to settle down, rather than risk another ocean voyage like the first, which had proved to be highly dangerous. The rest of the gnomes built ships and sailed on out of sight, with the best wishes of their fellows. Eventually, many gnomes who had been scattered across Ansalon during the chase migrated west to Sancrist; only a few gnomes now remain on the main continent.

Throughout their history, the gnomes have concentrated on scientific and technological development to the limits that such are allowed within a magical universe. They have working steam engines and steam-powered ships, clockwork mechanisms to keep time, ore-refining plants that make high-grade steel, and such mundane items as screws, pulleys, drive shafts, toothed gears, coiled springs, music boxes, and mechanical toys.

Two notable events occurred following the escape of the Greygem. The first was the arrival of the knights of Solamnia on Sancrist, as detailed in *Dragons of Winter Night* (pp. 286-288). As a result of this contact, the gnomes now possess the formula for a poison gas that incapacitates its victims. More importantly, the gnomes have allied themselves with Solamnia's government and are now important trade partners with this kingdom. The knights, ever suspicious of magical forces, are pleased to deal with a race that carries the banner of technology, and Solamnia has profited greatly from this contact.

The second major event was the Cataclysm, which produced tremendous earthquakes that enlarged the size of Sancrist's mountainous northern half, where the gnomes lived. A number of gnomes were killed by landslides and tunnel collapses, but overall, the seismic activity was welcome. With vastly increased living space, the gnomes were little inclined to travel elsewhere. Many small groups of gnomes now make their homes in the northern Sancrist mountains, being occupied with mining and gem-hunting.

Mount Nevermind

The largest settlement of gnomes exists in the immense tunnel complexes beneath Mount Nevermind, an extinct volcano on Sancrist Isle that is also the tallest mountain there. A recent census of the community indicates that fifty-nine thousand gnomes live there, give or take a few hundred coming or going at any time. The Mount Nev-

ermind community is thousands of years old and is the most highly developed of all gnome cities on Krynn.

The city of Mount Nevermind is built around the central shaft of the volcano, leading up to a ceiling just below the floor of the main crater. The crater itself has a central lake that freezes over in the winter-time. Gnome engineers long ago excavated the ash and rock from the volcano's throat and smoothed out a main floor roughly 400 yards across. The main floor formed the base of the Inner Hall (as it came to be known), and a horizontal shaft was excavated leading to the outside world at the base of the mountain (the Outer Hall).

The central shaft itself is a narrow funnel over 1050 yards high and 800 yards across at the domed ceiling. Illumination from thousands of lanterns, fires, candles, mirrors, and old glass globes with continual *light* cast within them illuminate the Inner Hall. The overall effect of the Inner Hall is stunning, much like the effects of the largest cathedral or cave chamber upon tourists.

Mount Nevermind is a scene of frantic, nonstop activity and noise. Everywhere one looks are gnomes hurrying from place to place, whistles blowing, gears turning, steam blasting, horns sounding, lights flashing, mechanical carts rolling — an unearthly scene for a fantasy world. As noted in *Dragons of Winter Night*, gnomes have developed catapults ("gnomeflingers") to allow rapid access from the Inner Hall to the various levels of the city, of which there are thirty-five in all. Hundreds of staircases, ramps, pulley elevators, ladders, and the like also cross from level to level. Wheeled carts mounted on rails encircle the city on many levels, powered by steam engines and providing quick travel across a single level. In an emergency, gnomes could move through the huge ventilation shafts cut into the mountain, though the steam-driven fans would make the going difficult.

Beneath the main city is an enormous network of tunnels and mines that spread out in all directions. Called the "undercity" by visitors, this tunnel system is as ancient as the city itself but is more dangerous. Monster lairs and unfriendly subterranean races have been encountered, though gnomish technology has managed to isolate or barricade most of these hazards. Several engineering missions are investigating ways to harness the geothermal energy from live magma encountered deep in the earth, and have set up research stations here and there in the undercity. A number of tunnels also serve as dumping sites for regular and for hazardous wastes, and unpleasant things may be encountered there as well.

Each level is well separated from all others and from everything else by a thick layer of rock. The tunneling is superbly engineered and reinforced, in remembrance of the earthquakes that occurred during the Cataclysm and which still strike on rare occasions. Some areas of the city are built with shock-absorbing ceilings reinforced by enormous steel springs, and steel rods are

often drilled through the rock itself to lend additional reinforcement. In truth, Mount Nevermind could withstand a direct hit with a kiloton-level nuclear weapon and still survive largely intact. The possibility that it might escape a second Cataclysm has not been ignored by its builders.

The slopes of Mount Nevermind have been extensively terraced, and a strange irrigation system directs water from the main crater down the slopes and into the main city inside the mountain. The terraces are carefully farmed and tended by the Agricultural Guild, which also maintains fungi-growing farms and herds of cave-dwelling goats and sheep in the undercity. Additional food is provided by raising domestic animals in the surrounding countryside, and from game caught by the Hunters Guild. Research is being conducted into creating artificial food, but the results have universally been poisonous. A committee is still looking into the matter.

Mount Nevermind is governed by an elected oligarchy of clan leaders and guild masters, who serve their positions for life. Methods of election vary from guild to guild and from clan to clan; some use closed ballots, debates, seniority, and contests, while some positions are actually hereditary.

Several hundred clans dwell within the mountain, and there are perhaps fifty major guilds and a host of minor ones present. The government is so heavily laden with bureaucracy that few major decisions are actually rendered in the Grand Council. Most of the decisions are made by guilds and clans who go off on their own tangents, regardless of the wishes of the rest of the community. Everyone insists upon regulation and doing things by the book — but this process is so tedious and time-consuming as to try the patience of even a gnome.

Each major guild is organized around a particular area of interest. One will find a Mathematics Guild, Philosophers Guild, Mechanical Engineering Guild, Weapons Guild, Education Guild, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Coverage of the physical and technological sciences is very heavy, but only two guilds (the Agricultural and Medical Guilds) have anything to do with the life sciences. Scientific guilds without immediate application, such as astronomy, are usually small and lack a say in the affairs of the community. The Acquisitions, Military, and Foreign Relations Guilds regularly train and employ gnome thieves and assassins (and even gully dwarf thieves on occasion). Clerical gnomes (when some existed) belonged to the Priests Guild, which was the first and only guild to become completely extinct. Their functions were largely absorbed by the Medical and Philosophers Guilds.

Social practices

The largest gnomish community away from Mount Nevermind has only a thousand inhabitants. Most others average 200-400 citizens, and are found in mountainous

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or rough, hilly regions. Each of these small towns is organized similarly to Mount Nevermind, though fewer guilds are present and some guilds perform multiple functions (e.g., the Medical Guild might also take care of agricultural needs).

Sages (as per the *Dungeons Masters* Guide) are very common in any gnomish community Gnome sages have no magical spell capabilities, but are otherwise as described. Sages compile volumes and volumes of information, guesses, facts, figures, speculations, and philosophical doodles on their guild committee's selected topics. This pure research is sometimes (though rarely) helpful to future generations, but all of it is carefully labelled, archived, and cared for by gnomish librarians in their massive bookrooms. Sage gnomes almost never travel, preferring to devote themselves to lifelong study of a given subject.

A gnome has three sorts of names. One is the gnome's true name, which is actually a massive history of the gnome's entire family tree of ancestors extending back to their creation by Reorx. This history is compacted into a single, enormous word that can easily fill a large book. In fact, the complete names of every gnome born on Sancrist are kept by the Genealogy Guild in the main library at Mount Nevermind. Interestingly, this record forms the only continuous history of the world since the Age of Dreams, though it says little about any race other than the gnomes.

Though each gnome can easily remember his complete name, or at least the first few thousand letters of it, gnomes have developed a shortened form of address for each other which takes merely half a minute to recite; this shorter name is simply a listing of the highlights of the gnome's ancestors' lives. Humans and other races who deal with gnomes have developed even shorter names for them, consisting of the first one or two syllables of a particular gnome's name. Gnomes find this abbreviated name to be very undignified, but realize they have to put up with it.

It is worth saying a few words about gnomes' relations with other races. In areas where gnomes are known to exist, they are generally not well liked. Their technological bend makes them very alien to people accustomed to magic, and their poor grasp of social relations puts off most potential friends. War was narrowly averted in one area after a gnomish digging machine plowed through a sacred elven grove, and similar episodes seemed doomed to repeat themselves across Ansalon at regular intervals. The humans on Sancrist have managed to adjust to the gnomes by embracing their good points and avoiding contact with them whenever possible otherwise.

Personality

Being an immediate racial descendant of humanity, gnomes are much like humans in outlook. The influence of Reorx, however, has altered their personalities and perceptions in a number of areas. When compared

to humans, gnomes appear compulsive, nervously active and driven, and intensely curious. They are serious, unused to social pleasantries, and uncomfortable with emotional displays. Their happiest moments come from their work.

This is not to say that a gnome is a stick in the mud. Gnomes can be as adventurous as any other race, though many are content to stay home and tinker with their engineering and mechanical projects. Like Theoden, the gnome in DL 7, *Dragons of Light*, adventuring gnomes are generally unable to learn from previous experience, and tend to repeat the same mistakes. Yet they often succeed in developing a quirky solution to a problem that carries the day for their fellow adventurers. Adventurer gnomes tend more to become general handymen, jacks-of-all-trades (and masters of none). Anything and everything will draw their attention and cause them to reach for their notebooks or tool belts. It was a gnome adventurer who first invented roller skates (with 3'-diameter wheels), though he used them to descend a mountain slope and was not seen again. He'd forgotten about brakes.

One important belief that gnomes have concerns the Life Quest. At birth, each gnome is assigned a Life Quest by the Guild subcommittee to which his-or her family belongs. A Life Quest is exactly that. A gnome assigned to study screws will spend years and years experimenting with different thread sizes, metals, screwdriver types, etc., and is unlikely at any point to have his committee formally declare his Life Quest to be completed. Completion of a Life Quest means that the gnome has performed so well that all that could possibly be known about the subject he was exploring is now known. In this event, the gnome's soul and all the souls of his forefathers (who will likely have shared the same Life Quest) are guaranteed a place beside Reorx, wherever he may now reside.

The Life Quest is almost always highly specific and is usually related to a technological device or process. In some cases, highly unusual magical devices will be studied in order to develop technological items that can replace their functions.

Gnomes like to acquire interesting things and may steal them, though not for the same reasons as kender do. Gnomes will deliberately take things that might provide valuable information if taken apart, melted down, examined under a lens, and studied by a committee. A gnome at a royal coronation, for instance, might become fascinated by the unusual blue sheen of the queen's silver crown. He will be obsessed with the idea of taking the crown, bringing it into a smithy, chipping at it, melting it down, performing tests on the metal, questioning the people who forged it, and so forth. Think of the great advances in metalwork that could be made! He could write a paper, advance his Life Quest, and start his own committee on the refining of metals. Only he has to get the crown first. . . .

Technology

Many referees view the introduction of technology into their fantasy game campaigns with great misgivings. The technology of the gnomes, however, has little overall effect upon the cultures of Krynn. Dwarves care little for such innovation; elves are repelled by technology; kender cannot appreciate its use beyond their thrill of seeing it work; and, goblins and gully dwarves are too stupid to use it consistently. Gnomes **have** technology — but their innate incompetence is such that anything that their technology can do, magic can usually do more cheaply, quickly, and efficiently.

When a gnome sets out to invent something, it's a good bet that the invention will initially be at least thirty times larger than necessary, will make ten times the noise it should, will have many totally redundant features, and will fail miserably (if not disastrously). Some tinkering will gradually reduce the less favorable aspects of the device, though it may not always be safe when turned over for public use. Numerous fail-safe devices, warning signals (bells, horns, chimes, and whistles), and redundant safety features may be added to fix any equipment malfunctions, though these are usually added **after** numerous accidents with the device have occurred [as with the gnomeflingers described in *Dragons of Winter Night*].

Worse yet, gnomes are not well organized in their research. They regularly reinvent the wheel, as the adage goes, because they aren't aware of advances in other fields of science and technology in other guilds. Whole projects are redesigned from scratch at any given failure point. Worst of all, they have difficulty conceiving of simple things. Their minds whirl along through time and space, overlooking the clean design, the easy system, and the cost-effective program. Show takes first priority over substance; action is confused with accomplishment; the means outweighs the end result. A gnomish cigarette lighter would look like an Edsel with fins.

The humans of Ansalon would use technological devices more widely if they only knew that such things existed. Because gnomes are so rare and communicate so little with the outside world, their discoveries go largely unnoticed. Then, too, because gnomes make things far more complicated and dangerous than they could be, humans are inadvertently discouraged from learning too much.

It is worthwhile pointing out the sorts of technology that gnomes do **not** have. They know nothing about atomic energy, though they are aware of the existence of ores like carnotite. They don't use electricity, though the Weather Guild has several committees studying lightning. Gunpowder is as yet in a very impure form; the Chemistry Guild has become discouraged from experimenting with it to any great degree, following the destruction of one of its laboratories in the undercity of Mount Nevermind. (This problem is largely due to poor research

methodology.) The complete lack of oil deposits on Sancrist Isle has greatly hindered the development of hydrocarbon fuels like kerosene and gasoline, though the Chemistry Guild has managed to refine very small quantities of imported oil for its own curiosity.

Beyond these blind spots, technology has progressed (in fits and starts) at a fairly steady pace, and could be roughly compared to the state of technology in America and western Europe in A.D. 1850 (without gunpowder). This comparison is poor in some ways because gnomish technological development tends to be uneven and baroque. Solamnic visitors to Mount Nevermind often ponder a bit of folk wisdom first uttered by Heikmann Sester, one of the more cynical lords who governed the human colony on Sancrist. "If there's any possible way to ruin a perfectly good idea," he declared, "a gnome will find ten of them." (This is now known as Sester's Law.) Lord Sester is also credited with the quote: "If you want something broken, give it to a gnome."

The influence of Sester's Law upon gnomish inventiveness can never be underestimated. A Solamnic knight once wanted a suit of armor that could be removed quickly in case the wearer fell into deep water. The gnome he hired returned to Mount Nevermind, formed a subcommittee in the Armormen Guild, and spent six months researching the problem. What came out was a suit of field plate armor with a 12-inch-long, 6-inch-wide release bar mounted on the chest, painted bright, glossy yellow, with an unreadable label done in microscopic red print, detailing the effects of striking the bar. When the release bar was struck, it undid all of the catches on the armor's chest, shoulders, and waist.

Unfortunately, the release bar was very easy for opponents to strike at in combat, instantly leaving the armor's wearer with no chest protection. Furthermore, the release bar rusted quickly when exposed to the elements and wouldn't work after a few days. To make things worse, the pieces of the armor were strung together with wire (to make it easy to pick them up again). The wired pieces dangled from the waist and entangled themselves in the wearer's legs. The suit was quickly retired to a storeroom in Mount Nevermind, where it resides with several dozen other interesting but unused designs.

Finally, there is the story of the lighting system of Mount Nevermind. The gnomes ran long steel rods down the length of the Outer Hall and placed the ends in a magma pool. The rods soon began to glow bright yellow-orange, as was hoped, but the temperature made the Outer Hall into the world's largest toaster oven. A cooling system using water pumped from the top of Mount Nevermind was installed next to the heated rods, which made part of the corridor unbearably hot and part of it frigid. The cooling system also produced heavy fog, which was cured by installing a giant

fan at the inner end of the corridor. Unfortunately, the fan was steam-powered, and the boiler tended to force heated water back through its pipes into the lower terraces, killing the plant life there. The whole problem has been referred to a committee for further evaluation, and the lighting system has been disconnected. A similar system in the Inner Hall has never been activated.

Among other devices currently being developed at Sancrist Isle are: the silent, folding, automatically repeating crossbow; the net-throwing arrow (as per p. 316, *Dragons of Winter Night*); and, the spring-loaded, blade-throwing, two-handed sword (which comes apart under normal use and may harm the owner). The archives of Mount Nevermind are filled with hundreds of other ill-fated inventions, though there are always gnomes willing to continue trying to develop them further and make them workable.

Despite the hundreds of false starts, some research has enormous potential, if it could be properly handled. Projects which have a broader scope include the robot (composed of clockwork mechanisms of unusual size), the submarine (actually a sunken boat on wheels, with snorkle devices for the crew), the steam cannon and compressed-air gun (currently too large and dangerous to be of much use), the airplane (a pilot-propelled glider; this project is the second most dangerous one in operation), and blasting dust (gunpowder; this is *the* most dangerous project of all). And, of course, there is the little committee in the Flight Mechanics Guild, composed of three or four gnomes inspired by the tale of the gnome who first captured the Greymem (as noted in DL 5). Having established connections with the Astronomy Guild, they are quietly tinkering with space flight. After all, the first mortal creature to set foot on another heavenly body was a gnome. . . .

How much will a player character gnome know about high technology? What sorts of technological devices can a gnome adventurer carry around? These questions are best handled by the referee, but the following guidelines should help.

A gnome PC from Krynn should have a particular field of interest selected by the player, as per the information in this article. The player should then make up a list of five or ten items that the gnome is trying to develop within his field, and the items should be ordered from least complicated on up. A Weapons Guild gnome who is interested in weapons projecting burning oil might wish to develop a simple device like a cigarette lighter at first (useful for lighting pipes and campfires), but ultimately wishes to create a flame-throwing tank.

The referee then takes the list and makes his own notes on it. What possible aftereffects could come from a malfunctioning cigarette lighter? How much damage would the gnome take if it exploded? A referee with a streak of rudeness will look forward to PCs who wish to build large, potentially dangerous devices that could quickly and

painfully send a gnome inventor off into the Great Unknown. What sort of damage could a napalm-loaded tank do if it were to blow up? Especially if the inventor was sitting *inside the tank* . . .

The referee should assign a reasonably cautious chance for a particular device to work, and a reasonable time for assembling the necessary parts. The overall effect of a particular device should not exceed that of a low-level magical spell with the same overall effect. For instance, a small-sized flamethrower (of "cigarette-lighter" quality) might produce an effect like a *firefinger* cantrip. There's no reason why a persistent gnome should not have two or three working (if slightly dangerous) devices with him on an adventure.

Could a human make a better flamethrower? The referee should disallow most attempts to successfully use gnomish technology, since it does tend to be very baroque and over-built. Who knows what would happen if you pulled the trigger on a gnome's flame-thrower? You might have forgotten to adjust the fluid-intake valve or make sure the back tanks were properly pressurized. The gnome could take days and days trying to explain the device's operation to you. Referees might allow a base 50% chance of a malfunction occurring if anyone but a gnome uses one of his technological devices, increasing this chance dramatically to as high as 95% if the device is a weapon and potentially dangerous to the user in some fashion. Overall, one is better off using a *wand of fire* — but try convincing a gnome of that!

Religion

The only deity that the gnomes recognize is Reorx. Though they have no formal religious services or clerics among them, the gnomes still have a healthy respect for Reorx and have no doubt at all (unlike others in the post-Cataclysm world) that the god exists. Reorx is thought of as an usually large gnome who epitomizes their love of building, creating, inventing, and tinkering. A few philosophers go so far as to declare that the universe is guided by the machines of Reorx, and that the sun and moons of Krynn are constructs in the mechanism which powers the universe.

Before the Cataclysm, clerics of Reorx were fairly common among the gnomes; it is very possible that following the Third Dragonwar, such clerics will again appear among them. Gnomish records show that the old clerics vanished at the time of the Cataclysm, much to the irritation of the rest of their people. The loss of the clerics led directly to advances in medical science and the development of new alarm and protective systems, to compensate for the spells the clerics had once provided. Gnomes are rather disdainful of clerics at present, believing themselves to be above spellcasting, and feeling that clerics are an untrustworthy lot if they can disappear just anytime they feel like it. Nonetheless, clerics would soon be accepted into the ranks of the

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gnomes if they were to return.

Additional notes on gnomish religious feeling appear in the sections concerning the Life Quest (under "Personality") and the Priests Guild (under "Mount Nevermind").

Krynn gnomes as PCs

Though gnomes are common to most AD&D-game universes, the gnomes native to Krynn are not likely to be found elsewhere than on Sancrist Isle and in their few communities across Ansalon. However, because Krynn gnomes have tinkered with powerful magical and technological devices, there is a chance that groups of them have transported themselves to other universes, where they won't initially appear any different from the "usual" sort of gnomes present.

Gnome PCs may be of any alignment, though as a race they have a pronounced leaning toward lawful neutral and (to a lesser degree) lawful good. Their initial characteristics, classes allowed, and special abilities are as per surface gnomes (see the *Players Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*), given the changes below.

Krynn gnomes have minimum intelligence and dexterity scores of 8. Die rolls of $2d6 + 6$, giving a range of 8-18, may be used to generate these two statistics.

Krynn gnomes have no spellcasting ability other than allowed for cleric characters (*i.e.*, no illusionists). No gnomish clerics will exist prior to the Third Dragonwar, though a referee may allow a few to come into being should a good cleric encounter them and give one or more a *Medallion of Faith*. All gnomish clerics who worship Reorx will be lawful neutral in alignment. Gnomes may otherwise be fighters, thieves, thief-acrobats, and assassins, and may mix classes as per "usual" gnomes. Psionics are unknown among them.

Krynn gnomes have enhanced combat abilities against certain larger-than-manned individuals (as noted in the *Players Handbook*), but they have no combat bonuses against goblins, orcs, kobolds, and other humanoids, as they have no racial enemies. Infravision, magic resistance, aging, and underground-detection skills are as per gnomes everywhere. The languages that Krynn gnomes know vary, though the majority know their racial tongue, common speech, Solamnic, Ergothic, and Qualinesti Elven. Other languages may be learned as appropriate. All gnomes can read and write whatever tongues they have learned to speak. Krynn gnomes do not communicate with burrowing mammals.

Appearance

Gnomes average 3' in height and weigh about 45-50 lbs. Females are as large as males. All gnomes have rich brown skin, straight white hair, china-blue or violet eyes, and surprisingly even, cavity-free teeth. Males have soft, white beards and mustaches; females are beardless. Both sexes develop facial wrinkles after age 50. Gnomes are very short and stocky, though

their movements are quick, and their hands are slender, deft, and sure. They have rounded ears and often large noses.

Gnomes sound much like humans in vocal range and pitch, except for having a more nasal voice. They speak very intensely and rapidly, running their words together in unending sentences joined by connectors like *and, so, anyway, but, or, therefore, then*, and so forth. Gnomes are capable of speaking and listening carefully at the same time. If two gnomes meet, each will babble away at the other until they've both finished their say, often answering questions later in their dialog as part of the same continuous sentence. Gnomes have learned to speak slowly and distinctly when around other races; in a manner which some people find both condescending and irritating. If frightened, startled, or depressed, a gnome may speak in much shorter sentences.

Gnomish standards of personal health are exceptional; apply a -5% modifier to the disease and parasite infestation tables on p. 13, *DMG*, and a -1 modifier to the occurrence and severity rolls on p. 14 to all gnome PCs and NPCs. This benefit vanishes after a gnome has been outside his home community for longer than one week. The medical benefits are regained after staying home for one month or more.

Gnomes involved in certain major industrial operations may develop "industrial diseases" from smog and other working hazards. Mild respiratory and eye infections will be fairly common, but will clear up quickly if an affected gnome is put in fresh air for 1-4 days. Industrial accidents, noise and visual pollution, and other problems may temporarily or permanently disable a gnome, leading to early retirement from active pursuits.

Possessions

A gnome character starts with the local equivalent of the normal starting money given in the *Players Handbook*, p. 35, usually in Solamnic currency. They may purchase any items listed in the *Players Handbook* that are normally available to adventurers, as these can be easily made in the gnomish or human communities on Sancrist Isle. Gnome metalsmiths can make any of the armors listed in *Unearthed Arcana* (p. 26), though they are unfamiliar with elfin chain mail as yet. They can manufacture any known weapon in the AD&D system for at least standard prices. Gnomes can wear any sort of armor (as long as it is scaled down for their size), but can only use the smallest shields.

Any weapon that is 2' or less in length and weighs at most 50 gp may be used one-handed by a gnome (*e.g.*, dagger, hand axe, horseman's flail, knife, horseman's mace, horseman's military pick, sap, spiked buckler, and shortsword). Clubs and jo sticks are also one-handed gnomish weapons, though jo sticks are rarely seen. Weapons up to 5½' long and 90 gp weight, and having a space requirement of less than 5', may be used two-handed.

Gnomes who are new to adventuring often bring larger weapons with them in the mistaken belief that they can be easily used (as Theoden does in DL 7, *Dragons of Light*; he can only use his short trident as a weapon). Unless they are adventurers, gnomes rarely carry weapons of any sort except incidentally (such as daggerlike tools, hammers, a handful of stones, a clublike pipe, etc.). Strange weapons of questionable value are always being invented, like the yo-yo, though others show more promise. Slingshots and switchblades of varying sizes have been developed, and some gnomes are working on a dust-cannon, which is a compressed-air gun firing powder into opponents' faces. The possibility of making a compressed-air pellet gun has been discussed, but current designs are unworkable.

Hand-held and light crossbows, slings, short bows, javelins, darts, and melee weapons which may be hurled (like hammers and hand axes) may be used as missile weapons. Large siege engines and catapult-type devices are well-known and used for a variety of purposes (like gnomeflingers). The knights of Solamnia use gnomish artillery engines and engineers on a regular basis.

Gnomes are not the snappiest dressers on Krynn, and would easily qualify as the worst, were it not for goblins and gully dwarves. Gnomes will wear almost anything that is relatively clean, but seem to have a special taste for gaudy, baggy, mismatched clothes. Scarves and shawls are much used, and they enjoy hard leather footwear (not liking to go barefoot). In their research areas and laboratories, gnomes tend to be rather disordered in appearance and prefer wearing easily cleaned smocks and suits.

Gnomes on adventures usually carry a few regular clothes with them, and invariably have writing implements and paper for taking notes. Gnomes with senses of humor will bring items like water pistols to test out on their friends. Items acquired for their research value will often fill a gnome's pockets, especially those gnomes who have developed thieving talents.

Hobby items are commonly carried as well. A gnome's hobby often has a great deal to do with his work; to anyone else but the gnome, the hobby is the gnome's work. A gnome assigned to develop better catapults may make miniature catapults; a gnome who works with steel refining may putter around with making small items from samples of his refined steel.

Gnomes keep pets, though rarely for long. Town gnomes keep them for amusement or curiosity, and adventurers have them for company in the wilderness. Pets, however, are often poorly chosen as the gnomes know so little about the animal kingdom, and they assume that anything can be domesticated if you catch it when it's small. Thus, one sees gnomes with saber-toothed tiger cubs, immature stirges, and axebreak chicks. Once the "pet" reaches adulthood, the predictable thing happens, and the "pet" either leaves on its own or is captured or killed by other gnomes.

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A dozen domestic dogs

Twelve ways to classify man's best friend

by Stephen Inniss

Domestic dogs are not well represented in official AD&D® game material. The war dog and the halfling's guard dog, both described in the *Monster* Manual, are the sole representatives of this widespread and highly variable animal. This is unfortunate, since dogs definitely have a place in the campaign, particularly a campaign involving lower-level player characters. Dogs can be useful allies or formidable opponents, depending respectively on the inventiveness of the players and the intelligence and imagination of the DM; with their keen senses, even the smallest dogs are the bane of thieves — PCs and NPCs alike — and a war dog is more than equal to the average hired swordsman or first-level fighter. Many other uses will doubtless suggest themselves to the thoughtful referee or player. Dogs may be employed as scouts, guards, or hunters, and are almost as useful and much less demanding than hirelings or henchmen. It follows, then, that these most ancient, ubiquitous, and multiform of domestic animals should be treated in more detail.

DOG, Domestic

FREQUENCY: Common

NO. APPEARING: *Varies with masters*

ARMOR CLASS: 7 (*better if armored*)

MOVE: See *below*

HIT DICE: See *below*

% IN LAIR: *Varies with masters*

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: See *below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Hold*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Semi-*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: S to M; also see *below*

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: *very small or small* (any), I / 5 + 1/hp
medium (normal or runner), I / 10 + 1/hp
medium (fighter), I / 20 + 2/hp
large (normal or runner), I / 20 + 2/hp
large (fighter), II / 35 + 3/hp

The many different breeds of domestic dogs can be divided into twelve different categories for AD&D game purposes: three classes

according to shape or build (fighter, normal, and runner) and four according to size (very small, small, medium, and large). For the purpose of this article, these size categories supersede the normal statistical designations of S, M, and L; however, note that a "large" dog, in this classification system, is still size M (in AD&D game terms) for considerations such as the amount of damage it suffers from an attack. Movement rates, hit points, attack damage, and sizes for the dogs in these categories are given below.

	Very small (11-20 lbs.)	Small (21-40 lbs.)	Medium (41-80 lbs.)	Large (80 + lbs.)
Fighter				
Move:	9"	12"	15"	12"
Hit Dice:	1-3 hp	1-4 hp	1+1	2+2
Damage:	1/1-2	1-3	2-5	2-8
Size:	S	S	S	M
Normal				
Move:	12"	15"	18"	15"
Hit Dice:	1-2 hp	1-3 hp	1	2
Damage:	0-1/1	1-2	1-4	2-5
Size:	S	S	S	M
Runner				
Move:	15"	18"	21"	18"
Hit Dice:	1-2 hp	1-3 hp	1	2
Damage:	0-1/1	1-2	1-4	2-5
Size:	S	S	S	M

The size classes are broad, to keep down the number of different classifications. Similarly, the build classes cover broad ranges.

Fighter dogs are those with massive bodies and outsize jaws and heads, enhanced resistance to pain, and relatively short legs. **Runner** dogs are long-legged and long-bodied, with narrow deep chests, large eyes, and long muzzles. **Normal** dogs are the majority, those of wolflike or houndlike build.

Not all the different breeds can be placed in this system, although the majority fit in one category or another. The few exceptions can be easily handled by the DM. A breed like the basset hound is a medium normal dog, for instance, but is 3" slower because of its short legs. Toy or lap dogs are not accounted for at all in the above system. These move at 9", have one hit point each, have no effective attack against creatures weighing more than 30 pounds (against smaller creatures they can bite for 0-1 points of damage), and weigh 10 pounds or less.

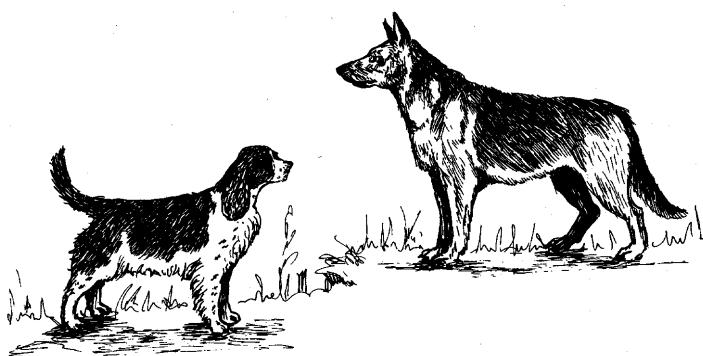
Like toy dogs, very small dogs are given two damage ranges. The larger figure is for damage against creatures weighing less than three times the weight of the dog (60 pounds or less), and the smaller one is for creatures larger than that. This reflects the fact that while these dogs can kill rats or weasels, or each other, they can't do much damage against larger creatures.

The different categories of dogs are further explained below.

Very small fighter: Dogs of this type are bred to attack vermin such as rats, or to drive weasels, foxes, or even badgers from their burrows. Some of the terrier breeds fit this category.

Small fighter: Dogs of this type are much like their smaller brethren. They may also be used in dog fights where there are weight categories.

Medium fighter: Dogs of this type may serve as guards, or fight other animals in such "sports" as dog fights, bull baiting, badger



baiting, or bear baiting. Examples would be the boxer, the bull terrier, or the Staffordshire terrier.

Large fighter: These are generally huge beasts of the mastiff type, bred to guard and attack, or for use in hunting large and dangerous animals such as boars or lions. Rottweilers and bull mastiffs are typical examples.

Very small normal: These may serve in any number of ways. Some, like Shetland sheepdogs, may be drovers' or herdsmen's dogs, while others may be employed as burglar alarms, or are kept simply as pets. Still others are used to harass and delay large game for hunters, or are raised for the cooking pot, or to attack small animals.

Small normal: Dogs in this category are as various as their smaller cousins. They include the smaller hounds, herding dogs such as the border collie, the small spaniels, and some of the larger terriers. Typical village scavengers are of this size.

Medium normal: This is by far the largest category, including dogs that serve almost every conceivable purpose. Among them are drovers' and herdsmen's dogs such as collies, old English sheepdogs, and German shepherds; most of the hounds, including foxhounds and coonhounds; sled dogs of various types; fast, light guard dogs such as Doberman pinschers; and most of the pointers, setters, retrievers, and spaniels, as well as many others.

Large normal: Dogs in this category are heavily built, but less so than the fighting breeds. They include the biggest hounds, such as the bloodhound, drovers' and herding dogs that also serve to protect the herd or flock, draft dogs, and rescue dogs such as the St. Bernard or Newfoundland breed.

Very small runner: These are miniature versions of the other running dogs, and are kept as pets. The Italian greyhound is typical.

Small runner: Small running dogs are usually set on rabbits and hares. An example is the whippet.

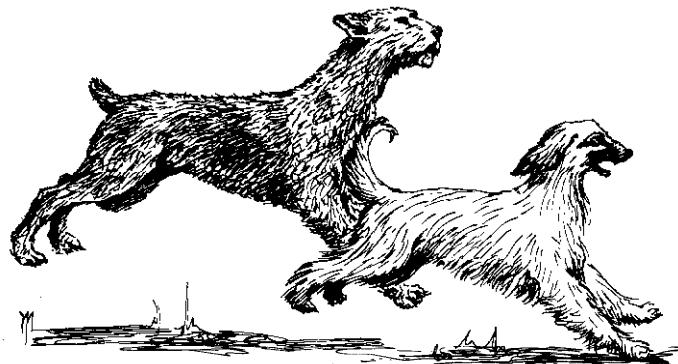
Medium runner: Most dogs built for speed are of this type, the optimum size for running; greyhounds, salukis, and Afghan hounds are examples. Over long distances other canids might be superior, but nothing canine can beat one of these in a sprint. These dogs usually pursue jackals, coyotes, gazelles, hares, and other speedy animals.

Large runner: These dogs are somewhat slower than their smaller cousins, but their greater size and strength allows them to attack larger game. Borzois, Irish wolfhounds, and Scottish deerhounds are examples of the type.

Special characteristics

Many of the qualities that dogs may be bred for, such as distrust of or acceptance of strangers, cold or heat tolerance, sociability, ability to live on vegetable food, presence or absence of a loud bark, and so on cannot be rendered into AD&D game statistics. Some of the breed differences that can be expressed in game terms are included in the discussion below.

In combat, some dogs grab and hold on. The hold is inflicted if the dog scores a hit with a roll of 16 or better, and it may then do damage equal to half the normal bite damage each round thereafter with no roll "to hit." Opponents so held are considered to be held by one leg, with appropriate combat penalties (*DMG*, page 67). Fighting breeds do this naturally, and others may be taught the move. A determined dog cannot be removed unless it is stunned or killed.



Dogs are generally slower swimmers than humans are. Small or very small breeds swim at 6", and medium or large dogs swim at 9" regardless of body form. Water dogs are 3" faster, but the major difference between them and other dogs is their inclination to enter water and their more water-repellent fur. Water dogs will last longer in cold water — four times as long as humans, and twice as long as ordinary dogs.

Dogs bred for digging ability (some of the small or very small breeds) can burrow as rapidly as badgers (3"). Other dogs of small or very small size dig at 1") and larger dogs can excavate burrows but have no burrowing movement *per se*.

Dogs have keen hearing, and any breed gains a 20% bonus to its chance of detecting hidden or invisible creatures by sound, as applicable. This bonus may be halved or doubled according to the conditions. Most dogs are allowed a similar bonus of 20% because they can detect otherwise hidden objects or creatures by scent. Most dogs can detect and identify people for a considerable distance downwind. The scenting bonus is increased to a basic 30% for tracking and pointing breeds and is reduced to 10% for running breeds (the latter hunt primarily by sight). An ordinary dog can track as an onyx *dog* can (*DMG*, page 144), while tracking breeds are allowed an additional 20% chance and running breeds track at a 10% penalty.

In strong light, dogs do not see as clearly as humans do (the running breeds are exceptions to this rule), and no dog perceives colors. However, a dog's night vision is superior to that of a human — about as good by moonlight as it is by daylight, and as good on a moonless night as a human's would be under a full moon.

The morale of an unaccompanied dog is as described for monsters on page 67 of the *DMG*, but all dogs are of the largest size for purposes of this calculation. Dogs with their handlers are treated as henchmen when morale is determined. In its lair a dog gains a 20% bonus to morale ("every dog is a lion in his own back yard"), and morale may be affected by training, as shown below. Fighting breeds gain a 10% bonus under all conditions.

Training

Dogs can be trained to attack on command, and ones so trained gain 10% to morale. Dogs may also be taught the hold described above.

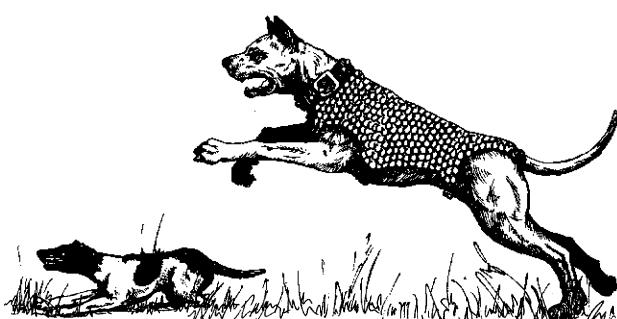
Dogs that have not been trained to track do so at a penalty of -20% even if they are instructed via **speak with animals**, and they may forget the object of the search and track something that smells more interesting.

Dogs can be trained to point out hidden creatures, just as pointing breeds spot game for hunters. A dog's ability to detect hidden creatures is not increased by training.

Equipment

Dogs may be outfitted with armor, with specifications similar to those for horse armor (barding) as described by Gary Gygax in DRAGON® Magazine #74 and in *Unearthed Arcana*.

Armor type	Maximum speed	AC bonus
Leather or padded armor	15"	1
Studded leather, ring or scale mail	12"	2
Chain mail, banded mail	12"	3
Plate mail	9"	4



Only large dogs can carry plate mail, and only medium or large dogs can carry metal or partly metal armor at all. Small dogs are restricted to leather or padded armor, and very small dogs cannot carry armor. A spiked collar provides AC 6 versus bites from other animals (which instinctively are aimed for the throat).

costs

A few of the costs related to domestic dogs are listed in the *Players Handbook*. The prices given below are to the same scale.

coursing hound50 gp
draft dog/sled dog	10 gp
dog-fighting/bear-baiting dog30 gp
food dog3 gp
herding dog20 gp
ratter.10 gp
collar, normal.3 sp
collar, spiked5 sp
dogsled.50 gp

The prices for dogs given here are for those that have already received any necessary training. The cost of dog armor is one-fifth that of equivalent human armor. Rations for dogs cost the full human amount for large dogs, half of that for medium dogs, one-quarter for small dogs, and one-eighth for very small dogs.

Travel

The following daily movement rates, in miles, are typical of dogs and dog-drawn conveyances. These figures are to be compared to those on page 58 of the *DMG*.

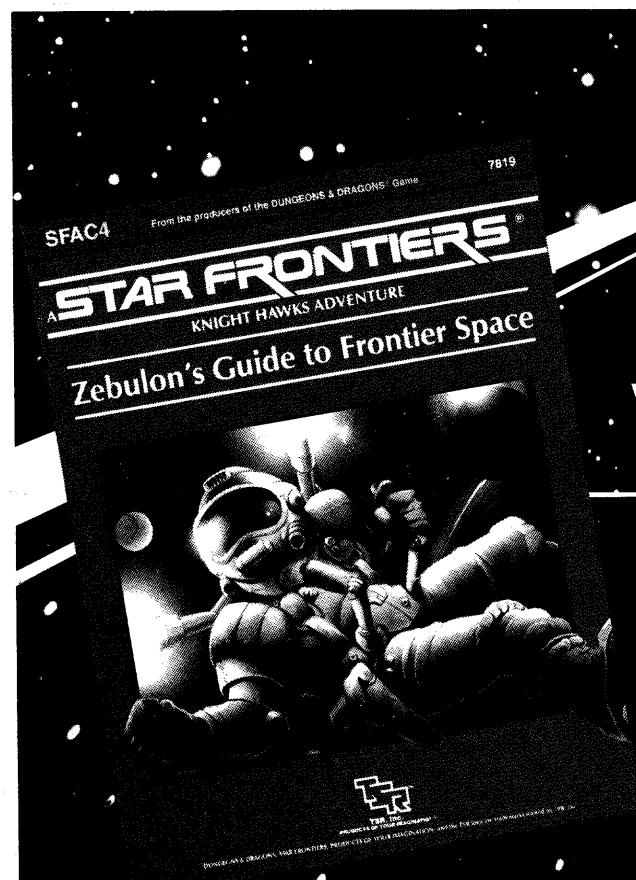
	Normal	Terrain type	Rugged	Very rugged
Dog, medium	60		40	20
Dog, small or large	45		30	15
Dog, very small	30		20	10
Dogsled	40		25	10
Skijorer	60		40	20

Fighting dogs are one size class slower than normal or running dogs, the very small fighting dogs moving at 20/10/5. Dogs carrying packs move at half the daily rate shown above. Skijoring is riding on skis that are pulled by relays of dogs. A dog's movement rate is little affected by forests, marsh, or snow; all of these conditions are interpreted as one terrain class better in assessing the difficulty of the terrain for dogs. Sleds can only travel where there is good, firm snow, which counts as normal terrain.

Dog breeds

Like those of medieval times, the breeds of dogs in an AD&D game world are likely to be less distinct from one another and less uniform within themselves than breeds of the real and modern world, since they are likely to be defined more by their functions than by their ancestry. Planned, long-term breeding programs will be relatively rare. Nevertheless, it is likely that each country-sized area will have its own set of dog breeds, adapted to local conditions, and that in less civilized areas each tribe will have one or more distinct breeds of dog. Spaniels, setters, and pointers will be relatively rare, since there is less of a demand for these in a world without guns. Nevertheless, they will find some employment with those who go hawking or (more commonly) with those who hunt birds using nets. Similarly, the retrievers will be fetching nets and fishing gear (and the occasional fisherman) rather than downed waterfowl.

Demi-human and humanoid species may also have suitable breeds of dogs if they haven't other animals on hand. Dwarves, for instance, are likely to have heavily built and loud-voiced fighting dogs to guard their mine sites and treasure troves. Elves, if they haven't got the cooshee dogs described in *Monster Manual II*, will probably have swift running breeds of medium size, silent and canny scouts and hunters. Orcs might keep vicious fighting dogs of the largest size — animals as ugly and bad-tempered as the orcs themselves. Only the humanoids of chaotic alignment and low intelligence are unlikely to have dogs; an ogre might well forget a dog's usefulness on a hungry day and eat it.



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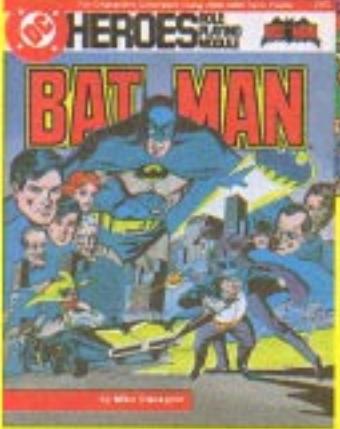
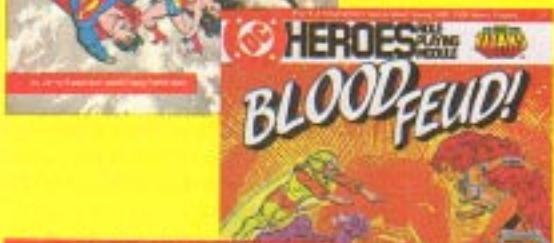
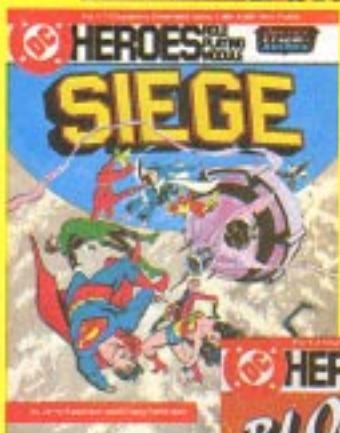
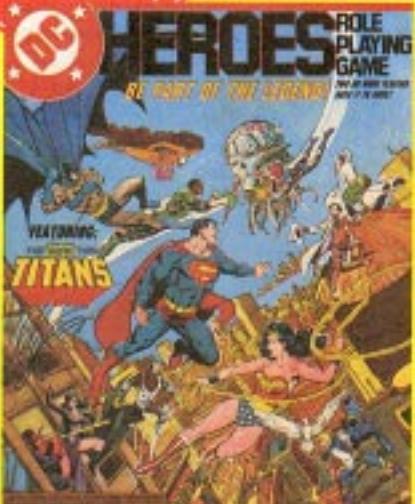
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The role of books

Fiction for gamers to get something out of

Reviews by John C. Bunnell

THE SILVER CROWN

Joel Rosenberg
Signet 0-451-13531-8 \$2.95

By now, most of the positive things have already been said about Joel Rosenberg's *Guardians of the Flame* series. So what is left to talk about now that the third volume is out? Answer: the fact that Rosenberg's novels represent the end result of taking the advice in all those DRAGON® Magazine articles about making one's campaign more realistic.

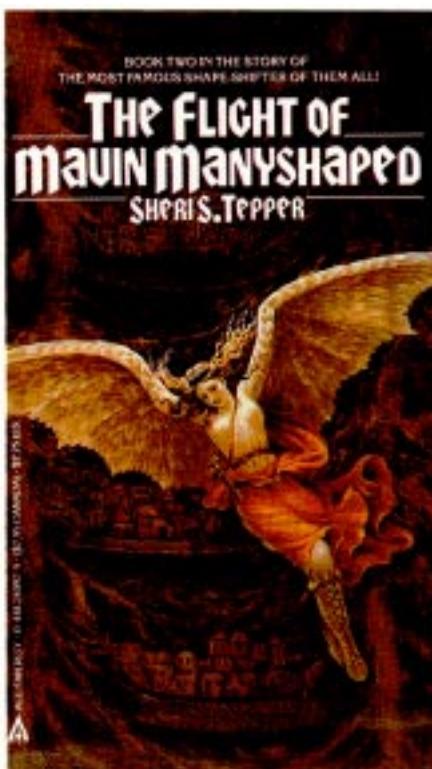
Readers of the previous books in the series already know that Rosenberg has created an extraordinarily effective game world. Karl Cullinane and his friends used to be fantasy gamers in our world, but now are willing residents and reformers in the game world where they were sent by Arthur Deighton, game master and mysteriously devious master wizard. Deighton's presence in this novel is brief and chiefly serves to foreshadow at least one more book, but his influence on the fantasy realm's events seems to be much more pervasive.

Karl's colony has a fairly simple-sounding mission: rid the world of slavery. However, Rosenberg has envisioned all kinds of detailed complications in the assignment, and his writing and plotting show it. For instance, his slavers are only part of a complex economy, and disrupting the slave trade has economic effects. Also making life difficult is a gradual technological escalation begun by Karl's group: They've introduced primitive guns and explosives, which are now starting to be copied by enemy wizards, and which make the colony something of a target.

There are also personal grudges to be settled. Ahrmin, master slaver and all-around sleazy personality, has been bested several times by Karl's forces. He's harder to kill than Darth Vader, though, and keeps reappearing at strategic moments to threaten Karl's life.

Then, there are the internal politics of the colony, which are by no means as uncomplicated as they would be in many RPG campaigns. The population is growing, largely through emigration, and since Karl and his associates have introduced a town-meeting form of democracy, affairs can easily become unpredictable.

All this really does sound rather as if Joel Rosenberg were reading DRAGON Magazine, following the advice of many of the articles on refining campaign environments, and plugging the results into his novels. Those speculations don't really matter,



though, since his series is such a good example of what a game world can be like. To that end, *The Silver Crown* could almost be considered a reference book — if it weren't such entertaining reading, too.

THE SONG OF MAVIN MANYSHAPED THE FLIGHT OF MAVIN MANYSHAPED

Sheri S. Tepper
Ace 0-441-77523-3 and
0-441-24092-5 \$2.75 each

It takes a certain degree of self-confidence to feature the name of a trilogy's central character in the titles of the books. For acknowledged immortals — Doctor Who, Conan the Barbarian, or Tarzan — it's expected, but in the hands of a relatively new writer, it sounds a trifle presumptuous. Just who is Mavin Manyshaped, anyway?

Not surprisingly, the answer to that one is "whoever she wants to be" in the most literal sense possible. Mavin is the most skillful shapeshifter in the history of the lands of the True Game, and she is capable of transforming herself into nearly anyone or anything she encounters. It is the former ability which sets her apart, since, according to long-established tradition, no shapeshifter can take the form of another human.

The True Game itself was introduced to readers in a trilogy to which this one is the prior sequel. One of Tepper's most winning literary traits, however, is that she has restrained herself from explaining the rules. Characters in these novels do not stand around talking about their culture (unless asked, and then only in believable snippets). They act, and often act decisively.

Mavin, however, is something of a cultural outcast. She is one of few females of childbearing age in her tribe, and she resists the idea of becoming the village broodmare. Her strong will is what pushes her the rest of the way into exile, and then into intrigues that form the basis of the novels.

Tepper does go to some length to define and to justify the nature of shapeshifting abilities, which are neither effortless nor entirely without risk. The explanations don't impede the story's progress, though, and they do provide enough material for ambitious game masters to adapt it to their individual campaigns (as an NPC class, perhaps, or possibly an extension of certain druidic powers).

Meanwhile, Mavin's adventures are soundly plotted, though rather brief, and the author has a way with dialogue that makes it both believable and faintly musical. These are stories that are not especially ambitious, but it's refreshing to find a series in which the universe isn't threatening to fall apart every third chapter. (One last note: the third *Mavin* book is scheduled to appear before this review is published, but after it's gone to press. Some people write unreasonably fast. . . .)

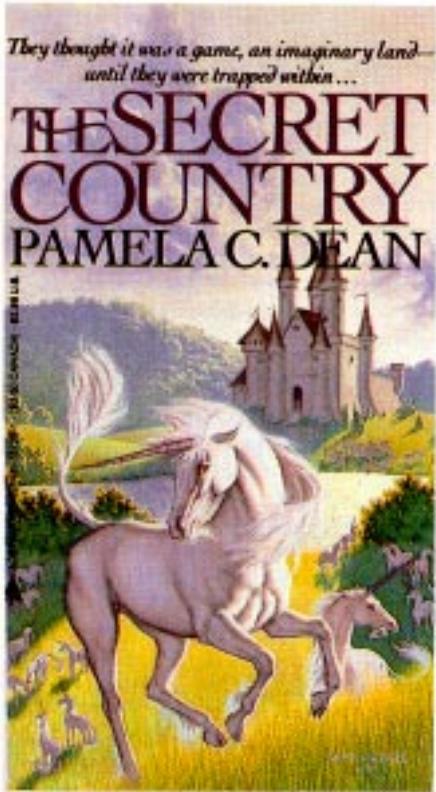
THE SECRET COUNTRY

Pamela C. Dean
Ace 0-441-75739-1 \$2.95

The Secret Country starts out with the premise of a juvenile novel: Five children playing games in the back yard accidentally find themselves drawn into a world where magic works. However, the maturity and deftness with which author Pamela Dean handles the idea quickly turn the book into a tale that will delight all ages.

Dean's characters have obviously read the kinds of books her novel initially resembles — stories by E. Nesbit and Edward Eager. But they've also been exposed to more contemporary fantasy as well. It shows in the pattern of their game, a sort of pre-SCA medieval drama set in, of course, the Secret Country

As the story opens, however, they have a



BRIDGE OF BIRDS

Barry Hughart

Del Rey 0-345-32138-3 \$2.95

"My surname is Li and my personal name is Kao, and there is a slight flaw in my character. You got a problem?"

Number Ten Ox (so called because he is the tenth child in his family and as strong as an ox) definitely has a problem. His seventh-century Chinese village has been struck by a plague which threatens to wipe out its entire population between the ages of eight and thirteen. Only the wisdom of the very old philosopher, Li Kao, offers any chance of discovering a cure, and the cure the old man proposes takes Number Ten Ox and Li Kao on a desperate race across China in search of a legendary ginseng root. But that's only the beginning, because there is also a small matter of a lost goddess connected to the mystery.

In *Bridge of Birds*, Barry Hughart has created a positively breathtaking novel that is part high adventure, part dazzling panoramic grand tour, part intricately woven web of riddles, and part constantly amusing social commentary. There is something indefinably right about the world Hughart presents, and readers are likely to finish the book swearing that the entire tale must have really happened.

The novel is crafted with the same intricate attention to detail that is associated with fine Oriental antiques, both with regard to plot and to its presentation of ancient Chinese culture. That's an even more impressive achievement when Hughart's narrative approach is taken into account: he tells the story in the voice of Number Ten Ox, and not once does Ox drop out of seventh-century character in any of his often complicated memoirs.

Other novelists have explored the world of the samurai and told tales of oriental-style dragons, but no one has — until now — given the ancient East the same grand scope and depth of reality often found in Western-based fantasy. Barry Hughart has ably met that challenge, and at a time when players of RPGs are becoming more and more interested in oriental campaigns, *Bridge of Birds* is all the more valuable as a thoroughly realized vision of those lands. Even if it weren't, though, it would still be an unforgettable reading experience.

DRAGONS OF SPRING DAWNING

Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman
TSR, Inc. 0-88038-175-2 \$3.50

The appearance of *Dragons of Spring Dawning* really deserves two reviews. By itself, the book is a strong climax to a distinctive and intriguing trilogy. But now that this first trilogy in the **DRAGONLANCE™ CHRONICLES** is complete, it's also possible to step back and examine the framework on which the saga was constructed — with results that are both familiar and startling.

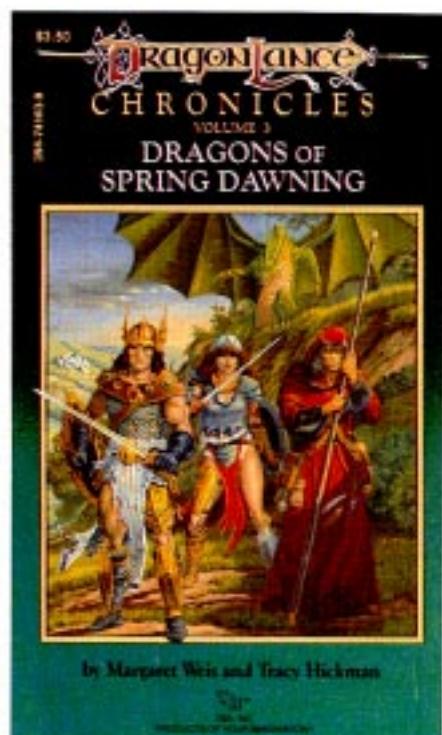
The story picks up almost exactly where *Dragons of Winter Night* left off, with the forces of good in a state of somewhat

divided confusion. Tanis Half-Elven is caught between Kitara, his human lover and one of his deadliest enemies, and Laurana, the elven princess whom he also loves. Laurana, meanwhile, is rapidly becoming entangled in the political and military webs of the allied forces opposing the evil draconian invaders. And the war itself is escalating, as good dragons appear to counter evil dragons and the shadowy Queen of Darkness sends out emissaries in search of the key to victory.

That key is Berem, the Green Gemstone Man, who is strangely immune to being killed, at least by normal means. But, in order to prevent what seems to be certain destruction, Laurana and her allies must get Berem deep within the sanctum of the Queen of Darkness without being detected. Meanwhile, the enigmatic Raistlin may or may not have found the power to defeat the Queen on his own.

Like the trilogy's second volume, the concluding book follows several plot threads at once, as members of the original band of adventurers take different routes toward their destinations. Unlike the second book, however, *Dragons of Spring Dawning* does not lapse into rambling asides like an absentminded Dungeon Master. Readers travel smoothly and economically between episodes, and the tale as a whole may well be the fastest-paced of the three books.

In some ways, it is also the darkest in tone. Unlike some novelists, Weis and Hickman do not guarantee that all of the major characters will be gathered around a fire to reminisce at book's end, and several of the adventurers endure a high degree of physical and emotional pain as events rush toward the climax. In this regard, no one character dominates the story, though narrative focus is loosely centered on Laurana. Only one serious objection can be made to



problem. Ruth, Ellen, and Patrick have moved to Australia, so Ted and Laura are staying with the wrong cousins for the summer, cousins who seem to lack the vivid imaginations needed for appreciating the Secret Country's wonders. To make matters worse, Laura has been breaking windows and dishes; she is going through an awkward phase.

Yet strange forces seem determined that the game of the Secret Country should go on. So, by some inexplicable magic, the two groups of cousins find themselves together in what turns out to be the Secret Country itself, where the inhabitants quickly mistake them for their imaginary counterparts.

Dean's prose captures a delicate balance between modern teenaged sophistication and wide-eyed, childlike wonder, and her characters are people one might easily meet next door. Her plotting is also laced with the unique blend of logic and persistent irrationality that goes with growing up. There are myriad political intrigues, magical persons and beings in great variety, and assorted prophecies and mysteries with obscure meanings.

To complicate matters still further, scientific-minded Patrick doesn't believe in magic ("I don't want to explain it, I want to know what to do about it"), and he isn't above trying to prove that the entire sequence of events is a product of the children's collective imaginations.

All this is great fun and just plausible enough to be thought-provoking. Dean keeps the game framework firmly in mind, but leaves many of the details of the design unexplained — more than enough to promise a sequel. And if the sequel is anywhere near as enjoyable as *The Secret Country* it will be well worth the wait.

the generally excellent characterization: there seems no real justification for the emotional hold Kitara possesses over Tanis, no side to her personality that would explain his attraction to her. (One possibility does come to mind, but it's not one that Weis and Hickman can adequately explore in a saga aimed at school-aged audiences.)

Aside from that flaw, the book does an admirable job of drawing together the strands of a complicated plot and of holding the attention of readers attracted by the earlier books. Only two other relatively minor matters are worth mentioning. Fans of the inept mage Fizban will be pleased to find him again in good form here, but should not bank on his return in the series set to follow this one. And, it should be noted that the final spell Raistlin casts appears to be the reverse of a spell not listed as reversible in the *Players Handbook* — a contrast to the authors' usually strict adherence to the AD&D® game's rules of magic.

All that has been stated should be more than enough to persuade readers of the previous books that *Dragons of Spring Dawning* is worth picking up. Those who have waited for all three volumes of the trilogy to appear before passing judgment, however, have an even better reason to try the *DRAGONLANCE Chronicles*. Put simply, Weis and Hickman have produced a novel that openly seeks to emulate the grand pattern established in J.R.R. Tolkien's works, and their trilogy generally succeeds in capturing the spirit and scope of that form.

That last *word* should be taken quite literally. The *DRAGONLANCE Chronicles* are parallel to Tolkien's trilogy in form, but not to any major degree in content. The worlds of Krynn and of Middle Earth are very different in origin, geography, political and magical makeup — but they are both worlds, and the scope of Weis and Hickman's creation is as broad as Tolkien's was.

The comparison extends fairly directly into the structures of the two trilogies as well. Like *The Lord of the Rings*, the three books of the *Chronicles* are really one long novel. Both trilogies, too, are too large in scope to truly focus on a single protagonist, but instead feature a group of heroes united in pursuit of a single goal. And both are also, in part, travelogues and guides to the worlds in which they are set.

More specific parallels and likenesses might be cited, but to do so would both stretch the premise and miss the point. What Weis and Hickman have done is to recapture some of the epic flavor of Tolkien's classic, something no other writers in the genre have quite attempted. That (don't worry about the resemblances) isn't stealing; it's homage, just as the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* movies are homage to the old Saturday afternoon movie serials.

It's much too soon to guess whether the *DRAGONLANCE* books will become literary classics — and it's probably wishful thinking to imagine that they will ever garner the academic respect that has bee-

granted to Tolkien's tales of Middle Earth. But, within the genre, it's now quite safe to say the Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman have produced a trilogy that should at last satisfy the old demands for "something to read after the *Ring* books." A better bridge between the old classics and today's more modern fantasists would be difficult to imagine.

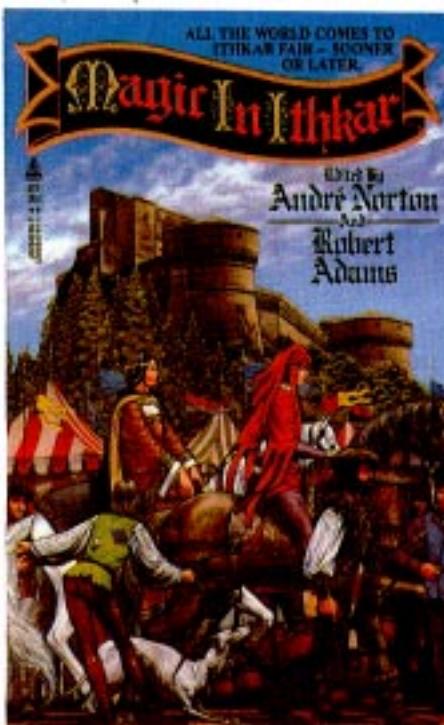
MAGIC IN ITHKAR

Andre Norton and Robert Adams, eds.
Tor 0-812-54740-3 \$6.95

Predictably enough, the success of the *Thieves' World* series has given rise to more anthologies based on the shared-world concept. The first of what promises to be a bookshelf full of imitators is *Magic in Ithkar*, which offers to do for wizards what its predecessor in the field did for thieves. Unfortunately (and despite the best efforts of some very good writers), the results aren't all that impressive.

That's not to say that the collection doesn't have some very good stories. Lin Carter's "The Goblinry of Ais" illustrates the importance of properly framing wishes, Elisabeth Waters's "Cold Spell" demonstrates an ingenious way to cope with curses, and Andre Norton's own tale is an effective twist on a very old story indeed. Other contributors include such well-known writers as C.J. Cherryh, Nancy Springer, and Ardath Mayhar, and none of the stories in the anthology can really be called less than well-crafted.

The problem is simply that the stories do not truly mesh into a single setting in the distinctive way necessary for Ithkar Fair to qualify as a shared world. Each merely takes the few common background details established — the fair geography, the rulership of the priests of the Three Lordly Ones, the mysterious evil of the followers of



Thotharn — and goes merrily off in its own direction. There is no glue to bind the different tales together, no thread running through them to give them a sense of belonging in the same book.

Again, the caliber of the writing in *Magic in Ithkar* is generally quite high. But though the portrait of a major trading center is enough, in its various incarnations, to make the collection worth reading, it isn't enough to justify its rather lackluster trade paperback presentation and the resulting higher price tag.

THE GADGET FACTOR

Sandy Landsman
Signet Vista 0-451-13536-9 \$2.50

Yes, this one is a young adult novel. Yes, the paperback cover is a bit silly. And yes, the librarian or bookstore clerk is liable to give you a strange look when you ask for it. But, the fact is that it's also a fascinating tale about computer games and scientific accidents, not to mention a story that talented and gifted (TAG) students and their families might do well to read.

Narrator Mike Goldman is thirteen years old, and as the story begins, he's skipped live years of school and enrolled as a college freshman. (This is easily the most unlikely idea in the entire book, and though this sort of thing is much rarer now than it used to be, it does happen.) His roommate, Worm, has not skipped as many years ahead as Mike has, though he is also younger than the average college freshman. Both are fascinated by computers, and they rapidly become deeply immersed in the prospect of programming their own computer game on the college's extensive hardware.

As might be imagined, the two become so interested in the game that it starts to dominate their lives. Then, just as the college administration begins to realize that it can't cope with its boy geniuses, Mike accidentally invents the mathematics of time travel and gets pulled into the world of advanced scientific research, where it becomes more than probable that his formulae will be abused.

Landsman handles all this with a breezy, likable style that makes the scenario seem perfectly plausible, and he plays very fair with his computer programming. This is *not* a novel about superhackers who do impossible feats of electronic magic. He does make it clear by implication that he doesn't entirely approve of the educational system in which Mike and Worm are functioning, but even so, the novel doesn't come across as overly moralistic. *The Gadget Factor* moves quickly, but it leaves room for readers to come up with their own answers to some of the questions Landsman raises. And many gamers, especially younger ones, may see bits of themselves in Landsman's characters.

That last possibility, all by itself, is worth the funny looks from the clerks and librarians. But, it's by no means the only reason for reading *The Gadget Factor*.



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The Centaur Papers

Two manuscripts become one very long article

by Stephen Inniss and Kelly Adams



Editor's introduction

Coincidence is a funny thing.

A while back, we received two manuscripts within days of each other, both from western Canadian writers and both about centaurs. Each article was well written and contained much valuable information that corresponded well with and complemented the information in the other article. As you

would expect, neither author had any idea of what the other one was doing.

We contacted the authors and asked for permission to combine the best features of each article into one large one, and they kindly agreed. Herewith, we present virtually everything you could ever want to know about centaurs, from two who seem to know the most about them. — RM

Centaurs are probably the least understood of the semi-human races, despite their close association with humans. Perhaps their rarity is to blame, but it is more likely that because the majority of scholars are human, their writings have been influenced by human prejudice against the horse-people. Centaurs, claim the sages, are a wild, rude, and barbarous people, living in

woodland far from human civilization. They are not very bright, and are prone to drunkenness and violence. They are slaves to impulse and instinct; even when they mean well, they are untrustworthy. There is some truth beneath these slanders, but they hardly give an accurate picture of centaur life and manners.

Anatomy

The unique structure of the horse-people lies behind many of their differences from other intelligent species. A centaur is most simply described as a creature with a human trunk, arms, and head, with a horse's body and legs. The human portion of a centaur's body merges with the equine at what would be the neck of a horse, the lower human back fading into horse shoulders and the human belly meeting the equine chest, so that the hominid navel is almost level with the withers. The lower, equine body stands about 15 hands high, with a range of 14-19 hands, the largest ones being quite rare.

The rest of a centaur is proportionately large so that an average one stands over a head taller than a human of the same sex. Those in lands distant from the horse-people may confuse them with giants or ogres, and in this they are not too far wrong. A large centaur may weigh as much as a small giant, and few centaurs weigh less than an ogre does. The hominid elements of centaur anatomy are within the human range, however, and not truly giant-sized. The joining of apparently disparate elements in a centaur is not superficial; it forms a harmonious and coordinated whole that looks entirely natural to the accustomed eye.

The upper torso and limbs of a centaur are larger and somewhat coarser than the human average. The same applies to the head and facial features. With their high-bridged noses, powerful jaws, and broad teeth, centaur faces have a definite equine cast. Centaurs have more hair than the average human. The females have long thick hair, and the males sport abundant body hair and unusually heavy beards as well. Male centaurs rarely go bald in old or middle age.

Centaurs voices are more powerful but have the same range as human ones. Centaurs lack the infravision and keen hearing of demi-humans, but overall, centaurs have senses superior to humans. They can detect the scent of another equine (any horse-like creature, including pegasi, unicorns, and normal horses) if that creature has passed within twenty yards of the centaur's current location within the past hour. This ability is negated by rain or strong winds, or by the presence of overpowering odors such as skunk musk. A male centaur can scent a female in heat up to one mile away on a clear day; the mare is equally sensitive. Centaurs are more sensitive than humans to other smells, but not so much so that it has any real effect. Centaur vision is better at picking out movement, and this generally

makes the creatures superior hunters. Centaurs possess only slightly better hearing than the human race, but use what they have with greater efficiency: they will attend to a small sound that a human would normally ignore.

Coloration follows the patterns found in domestic horses, with the most common color being a brown bay (brown body with dark head hair and tail), and the least common being true appaloosa and palamino (unless one counts the albino, which is extremely rare). As with horses, head-hair color and tail color are the same in most cases. It is not uncommon, though, to see a centaur with white and black head hair (in the case of a piebald or a skewbald), a phenomenon that never occurs among humans.

The upper and lower parts of a centaur generally correspond in color and build so that a stocky, red-haired centaur is stocky and reddish in both hominid and equine halves, and a thin, black-haired centaur is thin overall and has black fur on the lower torso and legs. Hair color does not have to match skin color. Pinto coloring, for instance, does not extend to a centaur's skin, and some tropical centaurs are solidly black or brown above, though their lower bodies are striped black and white. Most centaurs tend to show a certain resemblance to local human and equine populations.

Centaurs can touch the ground with their fingers without bending their knees. The region of the withers and lower hominid back is of marvelously sound and flexible construction, with powerful muscles, strong ligaments, and an odd but effective set of vertebrae. The rest of the centaur body is also surprisingly flexible, much more so than that of a horse. It is not difficult for a centaur to braid his or her tail.

Centaurs have two hearts, one in the upper body and one in the lower. Each is about three times the size of a human heart, and they beat together in a slow but powerful rhythm. There is also a pair of lungs in each chest cavity, though the lower pair is mostly a bellows for the peculiar but efficient upper respiratory system. The chests of a centaur expand and contract in unison.

The overall construction of the centaur body is such that it is less vulnerable to injury than that of a human. Most of the major organs, such as those of the digestive system, are carried underneath the lower torso, where they are less easily reached by an enemy and well protected by less vital tissues. Many, such as the liver and kidneys, are proportionally smaller than in humans (as is common in larger creatures), and are therefore less likely to be hit. The area that appears to correspond to the vulnerable human abdomen is mostly composed of fat and muscle, with equivalents of the human windpipe, jugular vein, and such buried deep within it. All this makes it difficult to score a telling blow on a centaur. It also explains why damage from a small weapon is so much less serious than that done by a weapon that reaches the vital areas of such a large creature.

There are some less favorable effects of a centaur's weight. The bones and tissues of large creatures are proportionally weaker than those of smaller ones (strength does not increase as quickly as weight) so that a centaur will take +1 on each die of falling damage it suffers.

Birth and aging

The equine body carries the reproductive organs. The fertility period of the females is monthly, but conception is most likely in spring or early summer. The gestation time is 11 months, but pregnancy is not so burdensome for a female centaur as it is for a human woman, and birth is easier and safer for both mother and child. There is usually only one foal, but twins are possible. The umbilicus is so attached that a centaur's navel is on the upper torso.

At birth, a foal's human portion is roughly equivalent in growth to a 4-year-old child. A newborn centaur is at first covered with a coat of fine hair, with a few longer strands on head and tail. Within two months, it will lose its downy covering and begin to grow fur on the lower torso and legs. Centaurs can stand within an hour of birth, and by the time they reach the age of two years can run as swiftly as a grown man. Most learn to talk by their first birthday. Mothers kneel down to nurse their young (their mammary glands are on the upper torso, just like humans), and must do so often; young centaurs have great appetites. In some societies, the diet of the infant is supplemented with milk from domestic animals. Centaurs are not fertile either with humans or with horses.

Centaurs have a slightly extended life-span compared to humans, as the following table shows (see p. 13, *DMG*).

Child	0-14 years
Young adult	15-19 years
Maturity.	20-40 years
Middle age	41-75 years
Old age	76-95 years
Venerable	96-135 years

Centaur children are called foals; specifically speaking, a male child is a colt and a female child is a filly. Mature adult males are stallions; mature females are mares.

Adult status in a herd is usually granted at the age of seventeen for females and nineteen for males. Centaurs age gracefully, remaining active and healthy until the last year or two of their lives.

Diet

Though they weigh six times what humans do, centaurs need only four times the nourishment. Larger creatures eat less, pound for pound, than smaller ones, as any human that has been host to halflings is well aware. Still, finding enough food can be a serious problem for the omnivorous centaur (see "Hunting and farming," below).

Though they have powerful jaws and high-crowned molars, centaurs are not suited to eating such coarse and abrasive

fare as grass, twigs, tree bark, or leaves. This does not prevent them from consuming large amounts of fresh or dried alfalfa, dandelions, raw turnips, peas (along with the pod and vine), various seedy and bitter fruits and berries, acorns, and a broad range of other foods unpalatable or undigestible to humans, as well as less difficult fare. Grains, particularly oats, are eaten as a staple food. Fresh milk, cheese, and milk products may be taken in great quantities, especially by young growing centaurs.

A healthy adult centaur eats roughly the following amounts (by body height in hands):

under 12 hh.....	.14-16 lbs.
12-13 hh16-19 lbs.
13-14 hh19-22 lbs.
14-15 hh22-24 lbs.
15-16 hh24-26 lbs.
16 + hh26-28 lbs.

In an ideal centaur diet, approximately 50% of the above must be concentrates, of which 30% should be meats and 70% oats, barley, maize, split beans, and other vegetables. The remaining 50% of the diet should be bulk: hay, alfalfa, chaff, bran, sugar beet pulp, oat straw, and the like. In an average day, a centaur must drink 5-12 gallons of water or other fluids, depending upon its size. Fair quantities of salt are also desired.

The digestive system of a centaur is suited to this varied diet, and has both

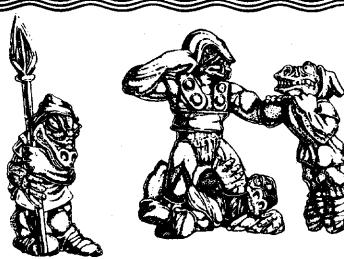
human and equine aspects. The stomach is relatively large, as in humans, so that meals can be taken more infrequently and in larger amounts than with horses. Centaurs can eat meat and other fatty foods because, unlike horses, they have a gall bladder, which aids in the breakdown of fats. On the other hand, centaurs have a fully developed horselike caecum (equivalent to the non-functional appendix of humans) which permits the digestion of rough, fibrous foods. With such a system, it is not surprising that centaurs actually enjoy tough foods, or those with exceptionally bitter or sour flavors, as well as foods humans enjoy.

Behavior and psychology

Though centaurs are quite similar to humans in outlook, the major physical differences between the two create significant differences in behavior. Humans tend to overstate these and confuse real differences between centaurs and humans with those associated with the usual centaur way of life. Most commentators are townsmen, and do not realize how similar the horse-folk are to human nomads and tribesmen. They are also prejudiced by the physical appearance of centaurs. Observing their half-bestial bodies, they attribute to them a beastly nature as well. A centaur's ready reply to this would be that centaurs do indeed partake of the nature of both man and horse, combining the best aspects of both.

The true nature of centaur psychology and its relation to human ways of thinking are best seen by less partisan races. If asked, an elf will point out that (like humans) centaurs are rough and boisterous, coarse of manner and feature, dimwitted, unappreciative of subtle jokes and song, that they eat and drink to excess, and that they are impatient and irascible. A dwarf might add that (like humans) centaurs are unruly, shortsighted, and short of memory, that they are unable to devote themselves to a task, and they quail before difficulties. Other nonhumans give similar reports, and so the similarity of centaur and human minds can be regarded as established. It is the ways in which centaurs and humans differ that are of interest.

Centaurs are self-willed to the point of stubbornness, and some are even more individualistic than uncivilized humans. They have little regard for custom and precedent, and have few laws. Often, they are seen as liars because they are apt to abide more by the general spirit of an agreement than by its particular terms, and will abandon it altogether if keeping it seems harmful to themselves or others. Few centaurs are good either at ruling or being ruled. They do not practice slavery and are themselves rebellious as slaves or serfs. Like elves, they are unlikely to treat others differently because of higher or lower station. Such behavior is often offensive to other races, and combined with a centaur's casual



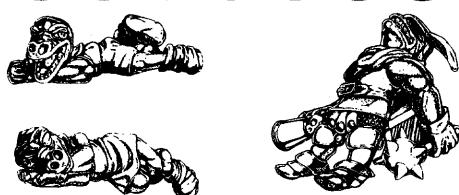
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contempt for law and tradition, and its natural stubbornness, this trait has proved unfortunate on more than one occasion.

Perhaps the same bulk and strength that make centaurs so independent also give them the security to deal openly with the world. Centaurs are poor liars, and poor at discovering a lie. Literally big-hearted, they frown on such traits as jealousy and dishonesty, and place great value on an open and generous character. This does not mean that thieving is unknown in centaurs, but it does mean that if they practice banditry, it will be entirely aboveboard, and the victims will probably not lose more than they can afford. Centaurs are generally too good-natured to plot serious harm except in warfare.

Misunderstandings sometimes arise, however, from centaur concepts of ownership, which differ from those of humans. Centaurs have a low regard for money, and give or take it freely. Also, while they understand ownership of individual items well enough, they do not recognize claims of land ownership unless the land is actually in use. They have little regard for national boundaries. Centaurs are known to break down fences and destroy or deface boundary markers, if they find such things on land they are accustomed to wandering over.

Intangible and abstract things have little hold on centaurs, not for lack of understanding but for lack of appreciation. They

prefer direct and earthly things, such as food and drink. They are lusty, their games involve running or wrestling rather than thinking, and their jokes are more often practical than verbal. Gold and jewels are considered for their looks rather than for what they can buy, and are easily traded for something more directly appreciable if their novelty wears off.

Modesty is an intangible for which centaurs have no use, and they enjoy amusing themselves by embarrassing non-centaurs. Because they are so large, centaurs have no room to be shy. They have no discomfort regarding nudity, and prefer to remain uncovered whenever the climate permits. Breeding is a natural part of life; although a mare and stallion will usually carry on such activities in private, they are not disturbed or shocked if they are watched.

The human view of centaurs and their drinking habits is a distorted one, due to the fact that the most commonly seen centaurs are young males who are in town on holiday, squandering their money at the wine merchant's, brawling, and staggering up and down the streets and in and out of houses and shops. The behavior of these fiery young stallions away from their band is hardly typical, but the fact remains that centaurs appreciate drink more than humans do, and are strongly affected in proportion to their weight. Once drunk, a centaur remains so for a long time — a result of its large size. If it were not so

expensive a habit, there might be a good number of four-legged alcoholics. Centaurs are attracted to a number of other drugs as well, most notably tobacco. Though smoking is not uncommon, most prefer to chew cured tobacco leaves, which are considered a great delicacy.

From their earliest years, centaurs are accustomed to standing on their own four feet, and they do not enjoy riding or being carried. They are particularly suspicious of boats, and would certainly only trust to an animal to pull them somewhere as a last resort. The need to keep their feet firmly on the ground and to be able to move swiftly means that centaurs dislike unstable ground, heights, and dark or enclosed spaces. They do not like any sort of uncertainty, preferring to control as much of their situation as possible.

Humans have a number of stories illustrating the violent nature of the horse-folk, but centaurs are in fact no more violent than other races. What makes them seem so rough is that they often overestimate the robusticity of non-centaurs. Horseplay is common with centaurs, and they are baffled when others are reluctant to join in their games.

A centaur's faults are likely to be those of excess — too much love for food, drink, or other pleasures, too emotional a response, too volatile a mood. In this, even sophisticated centaurs resemble some human primitives, acting without thinking and trusting to strength instead of wit.

As centaurs are fiercely independent and prideful creatures, affront can be taken in all the manners common to humans (e.g., suggestive comments regarding ancestry, insults regarding family relations, etc.), as well as a few common only to centaurs. Any insult regarding a stallion's virility is sufficient reason for an immediate duel, possibly even a fatal one. A stallion is also very protective of his hindquarters, and is apt to kick first and ask questions later. It is decidedly unwise to pat a male centaur on the rump unless he knows you very well. Rude remarks about one's tail, as noted elsewhere, can also prove hazardous.

Society and communities

Assertions that centaurs are completely lawless are false. Nonetheless, it is true that most centaurs know little permanent organization larger than bands of less than a hundred adults. This may be just as well, as any adult is allowed a say in tribal decisions, and usually has a long one. Few things are settled without shouting and confusion. Fortunately, the majority of a herd will usually follow the advice of one or two individuals best informed in the matter, most often either the warchief or the matriarch or both. The warchief is simply the most skilled and popular warrior, whose advice has been useful in the past. The rest of the centaurs will follow his lead in war, and he settles disputes over cattle or quarrels between males that might otherwise come to a duel.

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The matriarch is simply the most respected female, often the chief cleric of the tribe as well. The others turn to her for judgment in more serious matters, such as where to seek water in a drought, whether to wage war, or how to settle a dispute between households. It is in the nature of centaur life that males less often live to gain wisdom and lore, and so the opinion of the matriarch carries great weight. Centaur tribes of more than a hundred members tend to fragment due to a duplication of leaders, so there will seldom be more than one warchief and one matriarch in a herd.

As with human nomads, there are nearly twice as many females as males in many centaur communities, due to the hazards of the wilderlands. Still, because centaurs are polygamous, there may be some males with no wives and others (the most wealthy or otherwise popular) with many. Centaurs being as they are, this presents fewer problems than might be imagined. The custom of polygamy persists in more settled regions, where there may be large numbers of unattached males as a result.

Most centaur males attend to herding, warfare (necessary and otherwise), hunting, and destruction of dangerous predators. Females perform many basic crafts of the community, from weaving to smithwork, calling on the stallions of the herd to help with the heavier and simpler tasks. Young fillies may wander, but females with young children remain near the settlement or encampment, and the rest of the tribe is very protective of them. Some centaur bands are dangerously close to extinction, with fewer than eighty members to set against the hundreds of humans, demi-humans, and humanoids. Because they are polygamous and have flexible mating customs, the centaurs can afford to lose a few males, but childbearing females and their foals are precious. Strangers, even friendly ones, are likely to count fewer children than there are, the balance having been hidden. Centaur mares are considered equal despite their protected status. This is partly in the nature of centaurs, but the major reason is probably that female centaurs are more nearly equal to males in strength and speed than is so with humans. Female centaurs are as likely to have potter's wheels, smithies, looms, and the like from their mothers, just as males are likely to have received cattle or other livestock from a father. The females hold most of the dwellings in a community, but the lone males may construct places of their own if they do not live with a parent or sister.

Though small bands of centaurs are often nomadic, larger communities may build homes, rather than seek shelter in caves or under trees. The largest such communities may consist of about 100 individuals, with 20-30 homes. Centaur villages, whether temporary or permanent, are haphazard affairs. Houses and tents are placed at the whim of their owners, and new buildings erected without reference to any overall plan. Centaurs of the forest usually build

permanent structures, with heavy logs or planks set solidly on stone foundations. These buildings are long and rambling, with high ceilings, wide doorways and large rooms. They are well ventilated (drafty is the term most humans would use) and have hard clay or wooden floors, strewn with sand or straw. Storehouses, forges, smokehouses, and barns are separate structures, usually of similar design. Centaurs of the plains live in sod huts or in large tents, depending on the permanency of the settlement. If a blacksmith shop is not available, the centaurs will trade for such services from others with pelts, leather items, wood-work, food goods (such as grains), or their own considerable labor capacity.

There is little furniture even in permanent centaur homes; usually only a few high tables (centaurs eat standing up) and a few straw mats for comfortable resting are present. Any other possessions are kept clear of the floor, hanging on the wall or resting on high shelves or in cabinets. Centaurs will go to considerable trouble to decorate their abodes; tapestries are not uncommon, and any member of a household might decide to carve a post or paint a wall of the dwelling in leisure hours. Decorative floor coverings are unknown, since these would be soiled with mud and dust in short order.

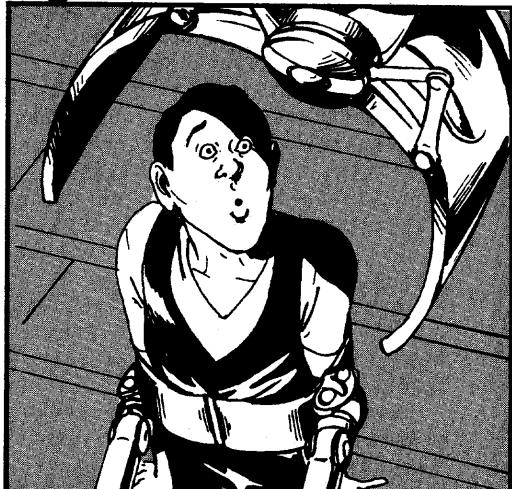
Centaurs of the plains and grassy hills are primarily pastoral, and, like all centaurs, are expert in determining when to move

their herds so that the pasture will be sweet and full when they return. They are contemptuous of humans, who seem unable to use an area without overgrazing it or moving more often than need be. Grassland centaurs also hunt, and gather whatever wild plants and fruits are available. They may tend plots of grain and vegetables, visiting them only a few times between planting and harvest, but much of their grain they get in trade or warfare.

Sylvan centaurs are fewer but more civilized, as their contacts are more with elves than men. They depend on hunting, but they also grow crops and keep livestock. Their fields are small but very well kept, usually pastures or hayfields for their herd animals or small plots of oats or vegetables. Their livestock they keep well hidden, for what little they have they can ill afford to lose. Visitors, seeing the lush and carefully managed fields close at hand, may be forgiven for mistakenly concluding that the rich grasses in them are intended for the centaurs themselves.

Centaurs keep few domestic animals other than cattle, sheep, or sometimes goats. They are often uneasy in the presence of horses, and regard them in much the same way humans regard monkeys, though with less interest. They find the sight of horses pulling burdens or carrying riders disturbing at first, and are angered at any mistreatment of them. The thought of eating horseflesh is abhorrent to them, just

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as many humans would not sample a stew if they saw a monkey's hand floating in it. Most centaurs like cats, and use them to keep storehouses clear of rodents. However, they dislike dogs, which they find annoying. The sound of barking is unpleasant to centaur ears, and they react strongly to having their heels nipped.

Finding food enough to support a herd is a time-consuming task. Some groups of centaurs have a large area of land which is carefully farmed, providing the bulk of a herd's nutritional needs. The older colts (led by the best hunters from among the stallions, or even by exceptional mares) also go on regular hunting forays during the greater part of each year.

While a centaur farmer is stronger than a human and needs no beast of burden, he is still not four times as good at farming, as is necessary. Though centaurs can eat rougher food, they must work longer hours and hold more land than smaller farmers would, to feed themselves adequately. Worse, the farmland that supports one centaur can support four or more of almost any other intelligent race. They are threatened not only by starvation, but by sheer numerical aggression by human, demi-human, and humanoid tribes.

Finally, settled centaurs lose an important advantage over potential enemies unless their fields and houses are well-hidden: that of mobility. Centaurs less tied to a locale can always flee before superior numbers if

all else fails. Unfortunately, farming supports the greatest number of inhabitants on any rich, tillable land, and so centaurs have retreated into the still uncleared forests or onto land that is more difficult to plow.

Centaurs are well suited to hunting, gathering, and herding, activities that permit them to take advantage of their speed and range. It does not matter so much that they need more ground if they can cover it more swiftly. If they tend fields, they are less dependent on them, since if they cannot grow or gather enough vegetable food, they can always trade for it with the surplus from their herds, or raid the granaries of hostile settlements. There is a price to be paid for this safer and more prosperous lifestyle, in terms of isolation, but with their mobility, centaurs can make contact with other races as they please.

In areas heavily populated by centaur tribes, annual or biannual festivals may be held, in which each herd sends a group of representatives made up of its finest athletes, artists, warriors, and leaders to the Gathering of the Great Herds. This is held in whatever area the Stallion of the Great Herds happens to call home, and consists both of a week-long political meeting as well as an athletic and artistic contest among the best the centaur race has to offer. At every third Gathering an election is held, with each herd having one vote, to elect a new Stallion (the capitalized form denotes the Stallion of the Great Herds). The candidates are chosen from amongst the very best of the herd warchiefs. The votes are then cast and the winner is the warchief with the greatest number of votes.

In the past, it has occasionally occurred that two stallions of equal merit have received an equal number of votes. The traditional procedure to determine the winner in such a situation is by a pull-off, in which the two centaurs are harnessed together and must attempt to pull the other across a line. Once the Stallion of the Great Herds is elected, it usually follows that his entourage of females increases in number and that his particular herd grows in status, receiving better prices from the other herds for its goods, etc. The Stallion is empowered to make certain (often minor) decisions regarding the affairs and policies of the entire centaur population, as well as being required to settle disputes between herds and to handle interpretations of the herd law that can not be taken care of by the lesser herd stallions.

Although all centaurs are of a generally independent nature, they will risk everything for the benefit of the herd. This apparent contradiction has confused researchers for many years, but it makes good sense for the survival of the race. A centaur who one day stands in direct opposition to his herd stallion will the next day give his life to save that same stallion.

Centaur law

Herd law is an unwritten code that varies from herd to herd. Justice is usually admin-

istered by the matriarch and is executed by the herd warchief. As the rules are unwritten, a discussion of them can only be general at best.

In a few herds, it is a crime to insult frequently any individual herd member. If a centaur is convicted of this, the maximum sentence is tail shearing. Cropped tails are often much in evidence after council meetings, unless this rule has been temporarily suspended.

The drawing of a weapon against a herd member by an outsider, except in self defense, is a crime punished by expulsion from the herd environs. Use of a weapon by one herd member against another carries a maximum sentence of permanent expulsion from the herd environs, unless the offense was premeditated (which they rarely are). Attempted murder of a herd member is punishable by a maximum sentence of sterilization. Murder of either a herd member or an invited guest of the herd is punishable by death.

The breeding of underage herd members with other underage herd members is usually punishable by tail shearing, but not by anything worse. However, the breeding of underage herd members by full herd members is a crime punishable by sterilization. A full stallion caught breeding with a filly (underage female) will be castrated forthwith, the only recourse being a decision by the herd stallion saying that the situation (drastic decline in population, etc.) necessitates early breeding.

Hoarding of food or supplies needed for herd survival is punishable by expulsion or restraint from breeding for as much as five years. Surprisingly (especially considering the drives of a normal stallion), if it is decided that a particular stallion has committed a crime and cannot breed any mares, he almost certainly will obey the decree. Perhaps the fact that castration awaits the breaker of such a decree has an effect, but that is difficult to say.

Although centaurs do not lie, they find nothing wrong in "not telling the whole truth." Such editing allows a centaur to avoid situations that could be dangerous to life or limb, and is quite acceptable as long as the guilty party is not caught. This, of course, applies only to normal situations; in a court of herd law, the telling of a partial truth is serious indeed, and is usually punished by the shearing of the offender's tail. A centaur would never, except in dire situations, avoid the full truth when talking to a friend unless that truth would cause needless emotional harm.

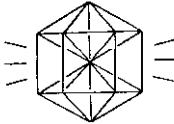
Appearance and grooming

Like many humans, centaurs take great pride in their personal appearance. Many decorate the upper torso with paint, and wear carved trinkets of ivory, of bone (such as from giant or ogre teeth), or of precious metals. Clothes, usually only worn to protect the upper torso in cold weather or as a handy place from which to hang tools, are elaborate and brightly colored, and look as

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if their primary purpose were decoration. A shiny coat of fur brings high status, and even the poorest centaurs take care to comb their hair. Males are, if anything, worse than females in this regard, having a beard to attend to as well.

The tail of a centaur, both among the stallions and the mares, is an object of pride often bordering on vanity. A long, flowing tail, with or without braiding or other decoration, is the envy of the rest of the herd. "Muddy-tailed" is a common centaur expression for anything ugly or poorly kept. Pulling a centaur's tail is a grave insult, and to make degrading comments regarding the length, color, fullness, etc., of a centaur's tail is a sure way to start a fight. On the herd level, many stallions who commit crimes are punished by having their tails docked (as noted elsewhere above). There are only three greater punishments: banishment from the herd, castration, and death.

Male centaurs have a unique custom which bears mention. If a compatriot at arms is also a good friend, a centaur will cut a small piece of his tail hair and bind it to a leather thong (or whatever material is available). When worn by a friend, this signifies that the individual will be protected to the utmost by the giver of the token, and that the giver will avenge his death if ever it should come to that. Usually, this act, called "sharing the tail," occurs with each centaur giving the other the token as described above. On very rare occasions, such tokens have been shared between centaurs and those of other races, in which case the non-centaur will use any available body hair of sufficient size to be seen. The sharing of the tail occurs only between two comrades at arms, and is perhaps the strongest commitment a centaur can make.

A centaur values its hooves almost as much as its tail. The race is very protective of legs and "feet," and individuals are apt to be upset if a stranger touches either. In the same manner, centaurs insure that their hooves are well looked after and usually find a partner in the herd who is willing to cooperate both with hoof care and grooming. Some centaurs, especially adventurers, hire their own squires to look after such details.

Hooves should be trimmed by a knowledgeable person once every two months. This is sufficient on soft ground, but galloping about on stony surfaces is an invitation to disaster. Continual movement over paved or rocky ground will wear down the hoof faster than it can grow. In addition to the minor discomfort from this, there is a 1% cumulative chance per day of hard-road travel of developing an injury that will keep the centaur off his or her hooves for 1-4 weeks. This time cannot be shortened, unless some sort of *regeneration* magic is used, since cure *wounds* spells will not repair the hoof's nonliving nail-like material. The solution is to wear horseshoes.

Good farriers are hard to find, though there are many poor and mediocre ones. Many lands will have poor shoeing customs, and some may be entirely ignorant of

metal shoes despite a substantial material culture. The latter should not be a problem unless the centaur strays beyond the vaguely medieval-Europe culture in which most AD&D campaigns are set, but the former will be hard to avoid. A centaur will be able to tell if a shoeing is improperly done, though what might be done about it is another matter.

If all shoes stay on, reshoeing will be required once every 4-6 weeks because of hoof growth and the wearing of the shoe itself. A centaur will know immediately if a shoe is thrown, but unless it is reattached or the other shoes removed, movement will be awkward. In cities and along hard roads, there is a 1 in 6 chance per week of throwing a shoe. On rough or rocky ground, the chance is 2 in 6, and elsewhere there is a 1 in 8 chance per week of losing a shoe.

Origin and history

Sages have debated for ages on the origin of centaurs. Were they the result of magical experimentation by an ancient mage? Not likely. Could they have come from the mating of a human and a horse? Jesters think so, but this, too, is not likely. Learned clerics and sages have conferred with their centaur equivalents to seek an answer to this question, and the following hypothesis seems most reasonable.

Sages believe that there existed a universe of pure thought, from which the earliest gods originated and from which the energy

to create the many planes and material universes was drawn. In this universe of thought existed pure forms representing all basic things, whether they be chairs, trees, humans, or horses. It is possible that some of these pure thought-forms mixed together when the first gods were created, and this produced a centaur deity (Skerrit), who then proceeded to create the race of centaurs in his own image. Centaur herds were then established on a multitude of worlds, as were humans and other creatures.

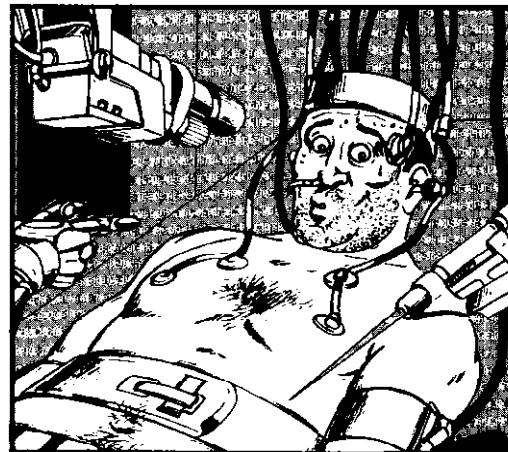
Whatever their genesis, centaurs have existed from the time of the earliest records. Once they were common, and sizable communities farmed the rich river lands, but with the multiplication of humans, humanoids, and other hazards, their numbers have been reduced, and they have been driven out onto the plains and into the hills and forests. Now they have begun to grow again in number, especially in peaceful alliance with humans or demi-humans.

If centaur fighters and rangers (see below) are present, they may be either individuals trained in dealing with non-centaurs, or those who have broken with centaur fighting methods to take up foreign ways. Other centaurs than the rare character-class types have begun to appear in the outside world. Those knowledgeable in herb lore are well known, and more accessible than their elven colleagues. Centaur farriers are much in demand, as they are often highly skilled in their craft.

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Religion

Skerrit is the major deity of the forest centaurs, as he is of many of the sylvan peoples. The horse-people often adopt non-centaur gods as well, particularly human or even ones. Of those listed in the Legends and Lore volume, members of the Greek, Celtic, and American Indian pantheons are most appropriate, particularly Pan, Dionysus, Poseidon, Hasteletsi, and Silvanus. Of those in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Setting, Obad-hai is an obvious choice, but Ehlonna, Harlanghn, and Olidammara are also suitable.

Centaurs also have various minor deities and demi-deities of their own. These include Naharra (goddess of fertility and love), Fanthros (god of the sky and weather), Brilros and his sister Linroth (twin demi-deities of strength and speed), and others concerned with health, singing, cattle, and other important aspects of centaur life. The few evil centaurs in existence tend to worship one or another of the demon or devil lords. Centaur clerics and druids are greatly respected in the community. Centaurs spend considerable time in worship, but do not fashion expensive temples or altars. Religious ceremonies feature singing, dances (often wonderfully complex), contests of skill, and a concluding feast.

Interspecies relations

In the world outside the herd, a centaur will more often than not be hampered not only by limited charisma (see the section on centaurs as characters), but also by the general reaction of humans and others toward his race.

Centaurs: preferred (P)

Dwarves: neutrality (N)

Elves: goodwill (G), or preferred (P)
for wood elves

Gnomes: neutrality (N)

Half-elves: tolerance (T)

Halflings: neutrality (N)

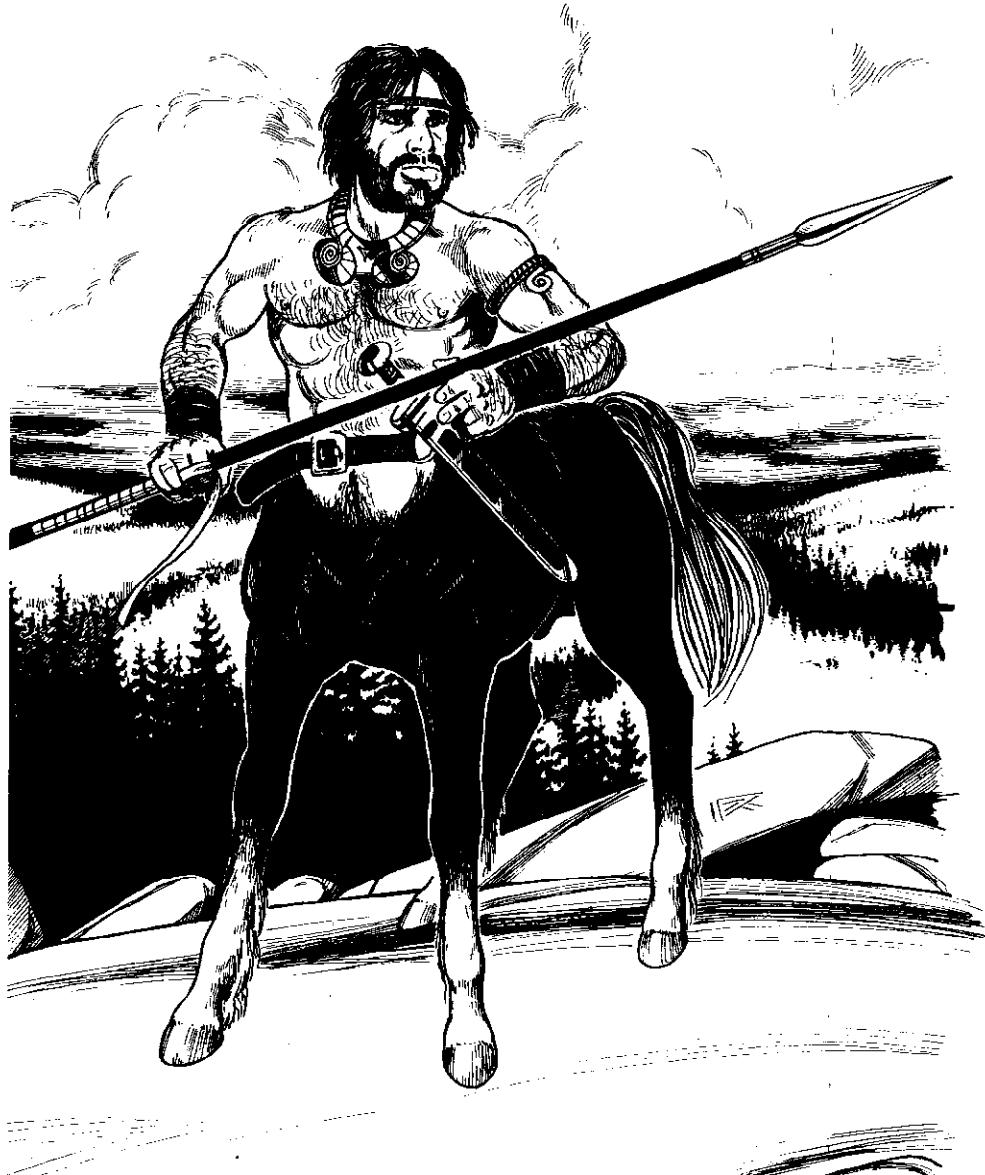
Half-orcs: antipathy (A)

Humans: neutrality (N)

The reaction of centaurs to other races is the same in most cases, except that centaurs tolerate (T) the smaller and less aggressive gnomes and halflings, and the centaurs hate (H) half-orcs and their kin.

Many intelligent creatures are intimidated by the size and careless strength of centaurs, and by their apparent wildness and lawlessness. As more than one human has remarked, centaurs don't just step on corns — they break toes. The more flexible and tolerant groups are able to see that they usually mean well, and harm others only by accident, but such understanding peoples are rare.

Despite their similarities, or perhaps because of them, humans and centaurs do not always get along well. Centaurs think of humans as greedy, touchy, and by nature tyrannical and servile. Humans are less than pleased to see centaurs on the horizon because of their reputation for violence, as seen in many stories. Even more common



and less believable than accounts of centaur violence and drunkenness are tales of the abduction and rape of human women by centaurs. These fables probably have more to do with human fears and preoccupations than centaur behavior, but they may have some basis in a centaur's idea of a joke. To carry off a woman (and later release her unharmed) would be just the sort of rough jest that is considered the height of wit and humor among centaurs. Despite occasional incidents, centaurs can and do exist peacefully with humans, though this is most likely where the two lead largely separate lives and where the humans involved are not farmers or townsmen.

Dwarves and centaurs regard one another with mixed feelings, but perhaps because they seldom meet there is no open hostility. Dwarves are scornful of the centaur disinclination to hard work, and centaurs dislike dwarves for their greed and lack of humor, but neither bears the other any lasting grudge. Centaurs have never succumbed to gold fever and tried to raid a dwarven settlement, as many other races have. This may have more to do with the relative sizes of dwarf and centaur populations than it does with the centaurs' merely passing

interest in precious metals, but in any case it has prevented a complete souring of relations.

The small demi-humans, gnomes and halflings, are not disliked or distrusted by centaurs, as they are less numerous and greedy than certain other races. However, the attitude of these people toward centaurs is somewhat cool. The small folk are even more distrustful of centaur size and strength than are the tall humans or the short but powerful dwarves. Too often, centaurs have trampled gardens, caved in burrows, or thrust smaller folk aside by main force. That such incidents are the result of carelessness rather than malice does not make them any less traumatic, and they are not forgotten. Halflings in particular are wary of centaurs and will usually hide and wait for them to go away.

It is elves, particularly wood elves, that get along best with the horse-people. They are similar in their individualism, their love of feasting and drinking, and their appreciation of nature. Centaurs are less fine-tempered than elves, quicker to take offense or to forget a quarrel, and more apt to be rowdy and bawdy. For this reason, they associate most closely with the more rustic

wood elves, though most elves have a liking for centaurs and are willing to overlook their faults. Perhaps because of their long lifespans, it is in the nature of elves to regard other races as children, and so while centaurs are regarded affectionately as stubborn and overactive but basically good-natured children, humans or certain others are seen as spoiled, sullen, and ill-mannered children. For their part, centaurs prefer the tolerant and unaggressive elves to the greedy and oversensitive sorts.

There is one race of elves that does not love centaurs, though the horse-people have long forgotten it. In ancient time, when the elves drove from their number those of evil disposition, the centaurs aided the elves of light, the better-natured elvenfolk that remain in the sunlit lands. The elves of darkness, the drow, have not forgiven or forgotten this. Only one of their generations passes for each five of centaurs, and the drow are unwearied in hate. Few drow have even seen a centaur, but it is said that the dark elves plot for them a revenge no less horrible than that they would visit on the elves and faeries of the upper world.

It is the humanoids and other evil humanlike races that present the most obvious threat to centaurs, particularly the more numerous and well-organized ones. Giants, trolls, and ogres are generally too rare or too poorly organized to be more than occasionally dangerous. Centaurs may outweigh them, can often outfight them, and can certainly outrun them. Gnolls and bugbears are a more serious problem, as they are more numerous, but the real danger is from humanoids of lawful alignment: orcs, kobolds, goblins, and hobgoblins. These races hate and fear the powerful and swift horse-people, all the more so for their association with elves, and they find centaur slaves intractable. They have therefore carried out a campaign of extermination, killing and eating any centaur they can catch. These creatures are more difficult to avoid than the occasional band of giants and ogres, and with their organization are more dangerous than a rabble of gnolls, which might not have the persistence to hunt down a centaur tribe.

While centaurs hate these humanoids with a passion and intensity matched only by that of the dwarves, they have never waged extended wars against them. They are not so well organized as humans, or so long-lived and foresighted as elves, nor do they have the iron determination of the dwarves. Worst of all, they are less numerous than any of these peoples. Nevertheless, the bitter strife between centaur and humanoid accounts for the reaction of centaurs to half-orcs or to even faintly orcish-looking humans. Most half-orcs dislike centaurs, if for no other reason than that a centaur is difficult to bully.

Satyrs are particularly well disposed toward centaurs, and often ally themselves with centaur tribes. For reasons not fully understood, titans are also especially friendly toward centaurs on those rare

occasions when they meet them. Pegasi are on good if somewhat distant terms with centaurs.

Like all intelligent quasi-equine beings, centaurs are at continual war with worgs, winter wolves, werewolves, and the like. Few natural predators will attack a full-grown centaur, though large packs of wolves or particularly hungry big cats are sometimes a danger. Griffons and bulettes are a greater threat, as they are harder to kill and more avid in their pursuit of equine flesh. Centaurs will always slay such animals if possible, and griffon feathers and bulette teeth are popular decorations with centaur warriors.

Centaurs and warfare

Centaurs are superior in many sorts of common labor because of their strength and ability to carry large loads. Most sought after by some human societies, though, are centaur troops.

A charge of centaur cavalry is much feared, and their archers are famed for the power of their bows. Where they are allied with 'the halfling folk, they can carry the smaller ones to battle in large panniers so that the halfling archers are not in danger of being overrun by heavier troops. Centaurs are often employed as scouts in conjunction with elven or halfling riders, a combination that permits stealth or speed as necessary. Though they are good mounts, centaurs will usually only carry a friend, and even then

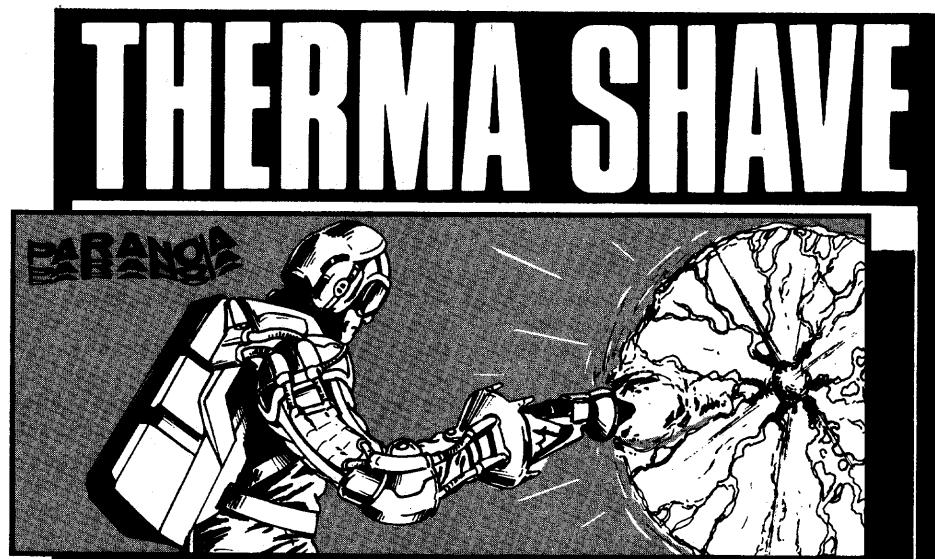
most will balk at the idea of a saddle. On rare occasions they will consent to carry human foot soldiers. Those centaurs trained in them are very good with siege weapons, since they need no draft animals to draw them onto the field.

Valuable as they are, the horse-folk are difficult to find in numbers unless there is a major humanoid threat. If recruiters know where to look, though, they may be able to find small groups of unattached young males, eager for action, pay, and the prestige that comes with it. Another problem with centaur troops, but one that is less easily solved, is that they are difficult to keep in order and likely to charge before the proper moment. They are also next to useless on either side of a long siege because they eat so much and tend to lose interest in a contest if inactive for more than a few days.

Centaurs as characters

Despite certain limitations, the centaur character is a workable and enjoyable alternative to the standard set of humans and demi-humans. If properly handled, the race does not unbalance a campaign. On the contrary, a centaur is a valuable addition to the group he or she joins. The benefits of a centaur's unique characteristics go as much to the party as a whole than the individual. For example, a centaur's size and speed

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may be used to good effect. One of the more unfortunate situations in AD&D gaming comes when a party must flee from a swift and dangerous foe. Too often devils take the hindmost, the shortest-legged or otherwise slowest members of a group. With a centaur present and cooperative, however, small demi-humans need no longer fear abandonment, and the wounded may live to fight another day. On a centaur's back these bold adventurers can make a strategic withdrawal at maximum speed.

When not carrying fellow adventurers, centaurs can use their great carrying capacity in transporting equipment or treasure. They are hardier than mules for this purpose, and more polite in their refusal to be overburdened. Lastly, centaurs are very good at opening doors and impressing large foes. Even those DMs who feel compelled to follow the official rules closely may at least wish to include centaurs as NPCs.

Classes and statistics

Warrior centaurs may be fighters or rangers. In either event, advancement is limited as follows. Centaurs of 16 strength or less are limited to the 6th level of fighter or ranger ability; those of 17 strength may reach 7th level, and those of 18 or better strength can advance to a maximum of 8th level.

Centaurs may become clerics or druids if they have exceptional ability scores. As clerics, they are limited to 3rd level, and those in the druid subclass may reach 2nd level. Centaurs can never be magic-users of any kind. They can be multi-classed fighter/clerics, fighter/druids, or ranger/clerics.

A centaur character starts off with one extra hit die of the appropriate sort. Thus, fighters will have 2d10, rangers 3d8, and clerics and druids 2d8 at 1st level. This extra hit die is retained, so that a 4th-level centaur fighter will have 5d10 hit points.

All centaurs have two virtually independent types of physical strength. First, there is the strength inherent in the human part of their body, which is consistent with normal human strength. This strength score is used for determining damage from hand-held weapons attacks, and for granting additional encumbrance carried. Feats performed by the hands, such as bending bars apart, would also be determined by this first strength score.

Second, there is the strength of their equine halves, which is the same as a horse of similar size and constitution. This second type of strength is often ignored by humans, who are then surprised at what centaurs can do. Few humans could even budge a thousand-pound block of stone, but with proper harness most centaurs could move it about with relative ease by dragging it along the ground. Weights of up to one ton (for a large, 17-hand-high stallion) can be so moved.

A traveling centaur is likely to need one or two hundred pounds of food in order to survive for any length of time in areas where no food can be found. Nature has

provided for this by giving centaurs broad, strong backs (see section on movement, below, for information on encumbrance values). There is also the possibility of hitching oneself to a wagon or cart, which may double the amount that can be moved.

Their great weight makes centaurs one strength class better at forcing stuck doors than are other beings of the same strength. Even a 13-strength centaur opens doors on a 1-3, and an 18/00 strength centaur can force a lock or stuck door as easily as a hill giant can.

Strength is determined with 9d6, the best three scores being retained and the rest discarded. A total of less than 13 should be rerolled. The remaining ability scores are determined in the same way as for other characters in the campaign, with the following adjustments: intelligence - 1, wisdom - 2, constitution + 1, charisma - 2. In addition, maximum and minimum ability scores must be observed, as shown below:

Ability	Males	Females
Strength	13/18(00)	13/18(90)
Intelligence	3/13	3/13
Wisdom	3/14	3/14
Dexterity	3/16	3/17
Constitution	13/19	13/19
Charisma	3/12	3/13

The unmodified charisma score should be recorded, since the penalties and limits to charisma apply only to dealings with non-centaurs. The large size and unusual appearance of centaurs accounts for their limited appeal to other intelligent creatures. Females are seen as less threatening, and so are not quite as limited in charisma.

Combat abilities

Unlike humans or demi-humans, a centaur can inflict lethal damage without the help of a weapon, striking an opponent with its two forehooves for 1-6 hp damage each. Using both a weapon and hooves in the same round, however, requires special practice and training. Normally, only centaur warriors have the time to train, though other adults do have some combat training. Just as they do not have the hit dice of other adult centaurs, fighter or ranger characters do not in the beginning have the ability to strike as ordinary centaur warriors do, with both weapons and hooves. They have opted for a more difficult but ultimately more rewarding path, and differ from ordinary centaurs in much the same way as a monk character differs from a man-at-arms: weaker at first, but with greater potential for development.

A centaur character may strike with the forehooves at any point at which a weapon attack would normally be allowed. This attack consists of a thrust with each hoof, and may not be divided between two opponents. It does not allow the character to use his or her strength bonuses to hit or damage, though these bonuses do apply to any hand-held weapon attacks. Thus, a 2nd-level centaur fighter battling against crea-

tures of less than one hit die can attack either twice with a weapon, twice with each hoof, or once with the weapon and once with each forehoof. Skill in hoof use does not count as a weapon proficiency.

Centaurs may also kick out with their rear hooves. This attack replaces all normal attacks during a round. Each hoof inflicts 1-8 hp damage, but is at -2 to hit targets. This attack requires no weapon proficiency to learn, and a double-hoofed kick may be made twice per round.

In most cases, a centaur uses weapons just as any other character would. A centaur does damage equivalent to a human mounted on a medium warhorse if using a lance, scoring 2-7/2-12 hp damage with bonuses for charging as applicable. They may use bows while running, just as a human can shoot from horseback, with a -2 penalty to hit. Finally, a centaur's weight can be used to good advantage if he or she uses a lasso (see *Unearthed Arcana*).

Note that the use of front hoof attacks requires that the centaur have at least 50% of his height in clearance space above his head; that is, a 9' tall (approximately 17-hands-high at the withers) centaur requires about 13'6" vertical space for his front hoof attacks.

Centaurs, like mounted riders, can charge an opponent with a thrusting weapon. At least 50' of relatively level space is required to build up speed for this form of attack. Such charging makes defense difficult, thus raising the centaur's armor class by one, but can result in double damage if a hit is successful. The victim of the charge can only do normal damage, unless he has set a weapon. Setting a weapon takes one round and is only possible with pointed weapons of greater than 2' in length. It simply means the weapon is positioned with its business end pointing in the direction the charge is coming from, doing double damage if it hits the charger.

Movement

The movement rate of a centaur is in most respects like that of a medium warhorse (18"), with all the advantages and disadvantages that implies, but a centaur has the advantage of intelligence and hands as well as a more flexible body. Normal movement is at 18", and a centaur gets the bonus for quadrupedal movement if he or she charges (p. 66, *DMG*). The rate of 18" can be maintained under loads of up to 4000 gp in encumbrance, plus bonuses for strength as applicable, and a centaur can still move at 9" while carrying up to 6500 gp plus bonuses. Armor may impose an upper limit on movement rate regardless of other considerations, as explained below.

Though they are able to enter typical dungeon areas, centaurs are not ideally adapted to moving around in buildings and diggings made by humanlike races. They cannot move faster than 6" up or down stairs, and are plagued by a host of other problems. Narrow passages, tight turns, steep slopes, low ceilings, and collapsing

stairs are just a few of these annoyances, not to mention crowded bars, polished floors, and small pottery shops, and to say nothing of such horrors as ladders and rope bridges. Centaurs may be prevented from entering or leaving an area by local law, physical fact, or nervous inhabitants. No inn will give a room to a centaur anywhere other than in a local stable or barn.

Outdoors, however, centaurs can handle themselves as well or better than donkeys or mules. If unencumbered by a rider, they can move as far as a light riding horse in a day, or as far as a human would, whichever is greater (p. 58, *DMG*). Movement over marshy or snow-covered ground can be tricky, though, particularly over the latter; while humans can resort to skis and snowshoes, there are no equine equivalents.

Climbing is next to impossible, indoors or out. With the help of a crane (or a sling around the rump and a rope to grasp), a short cliff might be ascended, but under no circumstances can a centaur actually pull his or her unsupported weight up using only the arms. Going hand over hand up a rope or chinning on a branch or ledge is impossible unless the feet can get a purchase so as to support some weight. The best a centaur can manage is to hang, and that only with difficulty and for a very short time. Centaurs can swim much better than they can climb, but are not swifter in the water than a human.

Though centaurs don't always like to be ridden, a few don't mind carrying close friends, and warriors may carry an armed rider with a second spear or lance. Centaurs are easier to ride than horses, since there is an upper torso for the rider to grasp. This is just as well, since most centaurs object to saddles. A centaur may alter a harness so as to be able to pull a cart or wagon if he or she so desires. Getting personal transportation, rather than providing it, will be troublesome and expensive for centaurs. Most land conveyances will not carry a centaur in comfort, if they can carry one at all, and small or unstable watercraft will be unsuitable. A rowboat or canoe with a centaur in it will have very little freeboard, if it does not sink outright.

Armor

Most centaurs go unarmed, since the hide, size, and structure of the centaur body is such that it has a base armor class of 5. Centaurs may wear armor, with results similar to those given for horse bardings by Gary Gygax (DRAGON® issue #72 and *Unearthed Arcana*), presented again here. Normal human armor is, of course, of no use.

Type of

protection	AC	Weight	Move
None	5	—	18"
Leather or padded	4	170#	18"
Scale, ring, studded leather	3	280#	15"
Splint, banded mail	2	390#	12"
Plate mail	1	550#	9"

Dexterity adjustments and shield use will modify the armor classes listed. Shields have their usual values, but they are less useful for centaurs than for humans, since there is more unprotected space along each flank. No magical armor found will even fit a centaur's upper torso. Magical rings and bracers offering protection will be of great help here.

Armor for a centaur is very expensive, costing almost thrice the normal cost of horse bardings. Plate bardings can run as high as 3000 gp, chain bardings up to 1000 gp, and leather up to 300 gp. The above prices assume a normal-sized centaur. The price is high to allow for special materials needed to make the armor light enough to wear. A centaur of 18 or better hands in height can wear lower quality plate bardings costing as little as 900 gp. One of 17 or better hands can wear lower quality chain, with a price of as little as 500 gp.

Other considerations

Centaurs are allowed a bonus on saving throws against poison similar to that allowed dwarves (*i.e.*, +1 for every 3½ points of constitution). They gain this bonus because of their size and hardiness. This resistance does not extend to any other saving throws other than against death or paralyzation magic.

Centaurs are larger-than-man-size for determination of weapon damage. Up to twelve attackers may engage a centaur foe at once, if stabbing and thrusting weapons are used or if overhand chopping weapons are employed on a first strike. A centaur surrounded by orcish halberdiers is in serious trouble!

Whatever their ability scores, no centaurs will have psionics. If under attack from a **mind** blast they are treated as humans (p. 78, *DMG*).

Disease is, as always, a problem. In monthly health checks, exposure to a human or equine carrier of disease is 50% likely to be significant.

Centaurs have, at best, rural backgrounds, and so will know only alignment and centaur languages in addition to the Common tongue — and they may not be particularly fluent in the latter. Those centaurs dwelling in remote sylvan areas might have learned elven instead of Common, and any centaurs with the capacity to learn another language will likely learn elven if it is spoken in their environment. Centaurs can learn other languages than those they start with, if their intelligence score permits (p. 10, *Players Handbook*).

Centaurs are regarded as lower class, if they have any class at all in human eyes. This is the result not only of their appearance, but of their rustic and unsophisticated upbringing. Because of this, they do not automatically attract followers of any sort. At the DM's option, other centaurs might be attracted, however.

Certain secondary skills are unlikely, given the background of the average centaur. If skills are randomly determined,

allow only a 5% chance that a centaur will have some minor skill associated with mining, the sea, or city life. Otherwise, reroll until something more probable is indicated. If a character does have an unusual skill, then it must be attributed to the often unusual history of adventurer types. Common sense and imagination are required in explaining such a past. Experience on the water, for instance, is probably with barges on a river. Treat any result of "armorer" as "farrier" (blacksmith), a much more likely profession in a centaur herd.

When traveling on hard surfaces, centaurs surprise opponents only on a 1 in 6 chance, because of the sound of their hooves. Straw slippers or cork glued to the bottom of horseshoes will be effective in achieving normal chances for surprise, but will require daily replacement. It is a measure of centaur woodcraft that they can surprise opponents normally in most natural terrain.

The cost of living is high for a centaur. Feeding, clothing, and otherwise caring for a being that weighs between one-quarter and one-half ton is not always a simple matter. The cost of food will be about four times that spent by other characters. Clothing is not always needed, but may be required because of inclement weather or local custom. Vests and shirts in cool weather, with the addition of a blanket in very cold weather, should prove sufficient, and items of such a nature are not too



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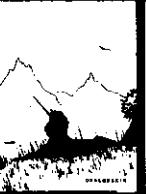
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difficult to come by. Any covering specifically designed for the centaur body, however, will be costly — two or three times the price of similar human garb.

Some typical prices for goods a centaur might want are listed below.

Leather armor/barding	.315 gp
Chain armor/barding	.975 gp
Plate armor/barding	.2700 gp
Vest (with pockets)	.5 sp
Food, merchant's meal	.4 sp
Food, rich meal	.4 gp
Rations, iron, 1 week	.20 gp
Rations, standard, 1 week	.12 gp
Horseshoe	.5 cp
Shoeing, per hoof	.5 sp

If centaur characters are included in a campaign, they are necessarily considered to be persons for purposes of such spells as *charm* person and *hold* person. (They are surely persons if troglodytes and lizard men, which are also affected by these spells, are classified as persons.)

A centaur can be resurrected only through the use of a *rod of resurrection* (treat one as an elf for number of charges used), and one may otherwise return to the campaign (although perhaps in different form) by use of a *reincarnation* spell or a *wish* spell if it is killed.

Many of the available magical items in a campaign will be useless or of dubious value to a centaur, for one reason or another. Such items include *potions of climbing* or *potions of levitation*, any substance that must be applied over a character's whole body surface (a centaur needs 3-5 times the amount that a human would).

Other less than desirable magic items for a centaur include a *ring of water walking* (nearly useless if the centaur wants to carry anything), magical boots, belts, robes, and cloaks (none will fit), most magical flying items, and any magical armor (all of which is assumed to be tailored for humanoid frames) except shields.

On the other hand, a centaur will certainly get more use out of such items as magical horseshoes than any humanoid character would — particularly *horseshoes of speed*, possession of which makes it much more practical for a centaur to wear heavy armor.

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The material in this article is based on the information available in the AD&D® game books, and on the Greek legends from which other fictional centaurs are derived. The numerous centaurs and centaurlike beings of modern science fiction and fantasy were also a source of inspiration, as was information on horses and humans of the factual world.

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UNEARTHED ARCANA additions and corrections

Page 6:

Half-orcs: -3
 Dwarves, gnomes, dark elf males: -1
 Halflings*, humans*, wild elves, valley elves: 0
 Half-elves*, sylvan elves*, dark elf females: + 1
 Gray elves*, high elves*: + 2

*— Treat the indicated pair on each of these lines as being of the same race for purposes of effective comeliness; e.g., halflings are just as attractive (or repulsive) to humans as humans are to each other, and vice versa.

Page 18:

The Fighter

The scope of the fighter class is expanded in two major respects. First, fighters are able to employ any and all of the new weapon types detailed in this book. Second is the benefit of weapon specialization, described below, which is available to all single-classed (but not multi-classed) fighters and rangers.

Page 22:

Fighter 7-12	3/2 rounds
Barbarian 6-10	3/2 rounds
Ranger 8-14	3/2 rounds
Cavalier 6-10	3/2 rounds
Paladin 7-12	3/2 rounds

Page 107:

A stunned opponent will be so affected for 1-10 segments, during which time no actions may be taken. Any spells in the process of being cast are lost. If an opponent that is already stunned is stunned by a later attack, the opponent must save versus death magic to avoid being knocked unconscious for 1-4 rounds. A stunned opponent defends without benefit of dexterity or shield, and is + 4 to be hit.

Page 8:

level in the ranger class, but a half-elf ranger with the same ability scores can rise as high as 11th level in the class. A hill dwarf assassin is restricted to the level limits shown on the table, since a hill dwarf cannot be both a multi-classed character and an assassin.

Page 12:

HALF-ELF* (%E)	T	N	N	G	A	A	N	A	A	A	N	N	**	P	A	A	A	T	T	N
Dark descent	T	N	N	A	G	G	G	A	G	A	N	T	P	N	N	T	A	A	T	N
Any other	N	N	N	A	G	G	G	A	N	N	T	T	P	P	P	P	N	N	N	T
HALFLING																				
Hairfoot (HH)	N	T	T	A	T	T	N	N	T	N	T	T	N	P	P	P	P	N	N	T
Stout (SH)	T	G	G	A	T	T	N	N	T	T	T	T	N	P	P	P	P	N	N	N
Tallfellow (TH)	N	T	T	N	G	G	T	T	G	N	T	G	P	P	P	P	P	N	N	N
HALF-ORC (%O)	N	H	H	N	A	A	A	A	A	A	H	A	N	N	A	P	T			
HUMAN (H)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	T	N	N	N	N	N	N	P	

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* With regard to the reactions of races other than elves, half-elves are considered as a specific racial type. However, elves will react to half-elves as if the half-elf were either a half-elf or a full-blooded elf of the same racial type as the half-elf's non-human ancestor, whichever is the more negative reaction.

** Preference for half-elves of dark descent, hatred of all other half-elves.

Page 13:

Assassin as thief yes⁵

5: An assassin cannot use a shield during a melee round in which the character is engaged in the act of assassination.

Page 7: Half-Elves	Page 7:	Alignment Requirements	Page 12:	Maximum No. of Hit Dice	Page 15:	10-Sided Dice for Accum. Hit Points
yes ¹		Any non-evil at start		10		
yes ¹		Lawful good only		9		
yes ²		Any		9		
yes		True neutral only ³		9		
yes		Any		15		
yes ²		Any non-lawful		9		
yes ²		Any good ⁴		8		
		Any		10(+1) ³		
		Any		11		
yes		Any non-good at start		10		
yes		Any non-good st start		10		
yes		Any evil at start		12		
yes		Any lawful				
1: If of dark, gray, or high elf descent		Any neutral		17(+1) ⁶		
2: Except for those of wild elf descent		3: Possibly with good tendencies		10		
		4: Possibly with neutral tendencies				

CHARACTER RACE TABLE III.: MULTI-CLASSED CHARACTER OPTIONS

Race	CF	CR	CM	CI	CT	CA	DF	DR	DM	DT	FM	FI	FT	FA	RM	MT	MA	IT	IA	CFM	CFT	CMT	FMT
DWARF, Gray	x				x	x							x	x									
Hill	x												x										
Mountain	x												x										
ELF, Dark	x	x	x		x	x						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Gray/High	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Valley/Wood	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Wild													x										
GNOME, Deep	x		x	x	x							x	x	x			x	x					
Surface	x		x	x								x	x				x						
HALFLING, All	x			x		x			x		x		x		x								
HALF-ORC	x			x	x							x	x										

Column headings are abbreviations for all possible multi-class combinations for player characters: CF = cleric/fighter, IT = illusionist/thief, etc. An "x" under a column heading indicates that this combination is possible for a character of the race in question.

A half-elf uses the entry for the strain of elf from which the character is descended.

Note that this table enumerates all the *possible* class combinations for player characters in the game, but does not imply that they must all be *permissible*. Some of these combinations may be disallowed by the Dungeon Master in his or her campaign.

THIEVES TABLE II

Effects of Armor on Thief Functions

Thief Function	No armor ¹	Elfin Chain	Studded or Padded	Ring or Chain	Scale or Banded	Plate Mail	Plate Armor
Pick Pockets	+ 5%	-20%	-30%	-40%	-50%	-75%	-100%
Open Locks	-	-5%	-10%	-15%	-20%	-40%	-80%
Find/Remove Traps	-	-5%	-10%	-15%	-20%	-40%	-80%
Move Silently	+ 10%	-10%	-20%	-40%	-60%	-80%	-100%
Hide in Shadows ²	+ 5%	-10%	-20%	-30%	-50%	-75%	-110%
Hear Noise	-	-5%	-10%	-20%	-30%	-50%	-70%
Climb Walls	+ 10%	-20%	-30%	-40%	-90%	-99%	-99.9%

General note: No dexterity bonuses apply to thief functions (though penalties do) when wearing armor other than simple leather.

1: This category applies when wearing *bracers of defense* and/or a cloak, but no large protective devices.

2: Assumes that armor worn is covered by another garment. Elfin chain mail is light and thin, and can be worn under normal clothing. All other types of armor except simple leather are stiff and/or bulky, and can only be covered by a full body cloak.

THIEF-ACROBATS TABLE V

Effects of Armor on Thief-Acrobat Functions

Thief-Acrobat Function	No armor ¹	Elfin Chain	Studded or Padded	Ring or Chain	Scale or Banded	Plate Mail	Plate Armor
Tightrope Walking	+ 5%	-	-10%	-40%	-70%	-90%	-100%
Pole Vaulting	+ 1'	-½'	-1'	-4'	-8'	-12'	-18'
High Jumping	+ 1'	-½'	-1'	-4'	-8'	-12'	-18'
Broad Jump, Standing	+ ½'	-	-½'	-3'	-5'	-7'	-10'
Broad Jump, Running	+ 1'	-	-½'	-5'	-10'	-15'	-20'
Tumbling, Attack	+ 2%	-5%	-10%	-20%	-20%	-30%	-50%
Tumbling, Evasion	+ 4%	-5%	-10%	-30%	-60%	-70%	-70%
Tumbling, Falling	+ 5'	-	-5'	-10'	-30'	-50'	-70'

General note: No dexterity bonuses apply to functions (although penalties do) when wearing armor other than simple leather.

1: This category applies when wearing *bracers of defense* and/or a cloak, but no large protective devices.

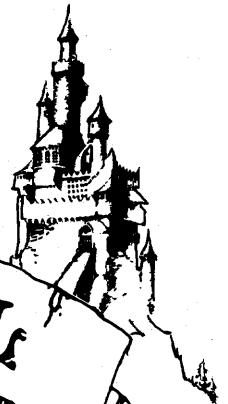
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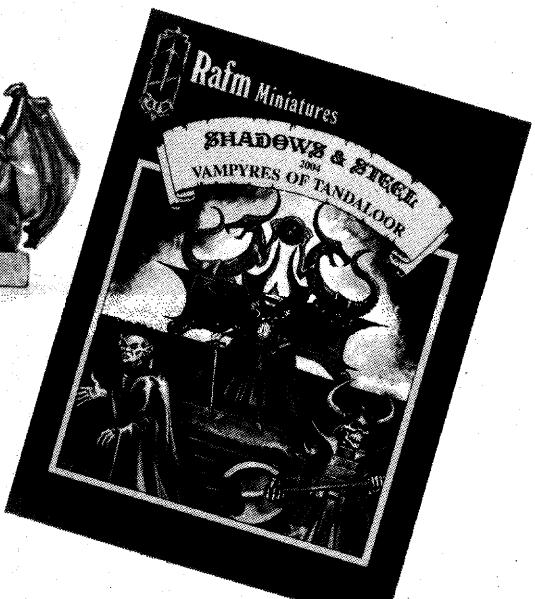
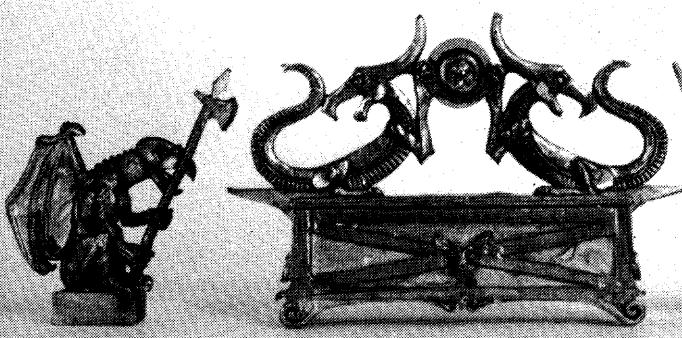


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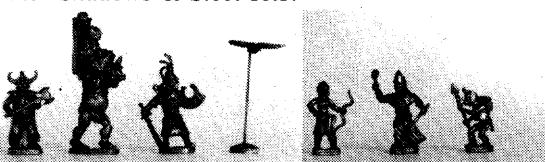
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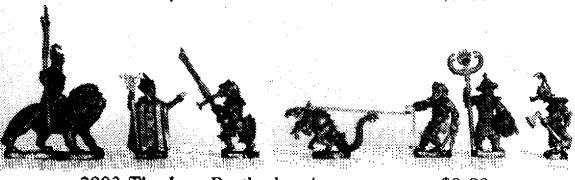
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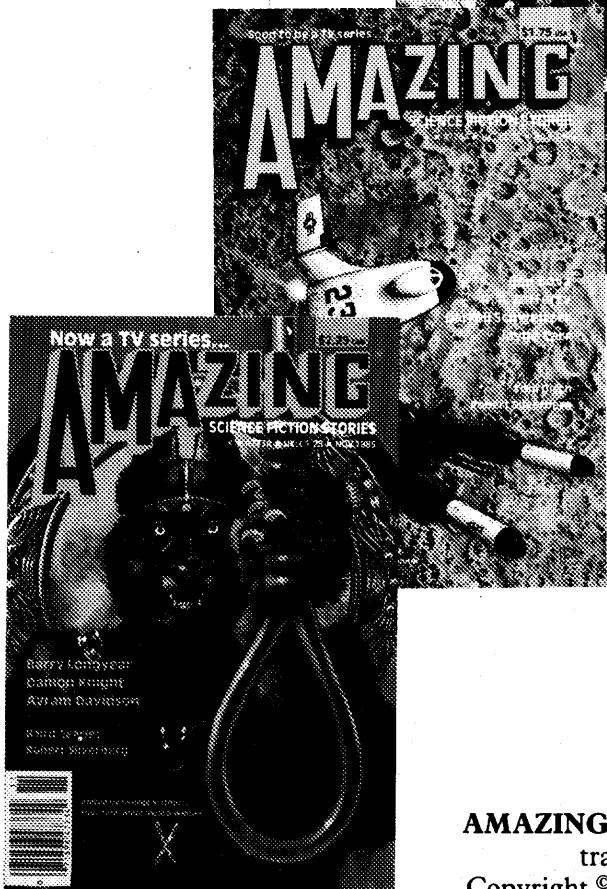
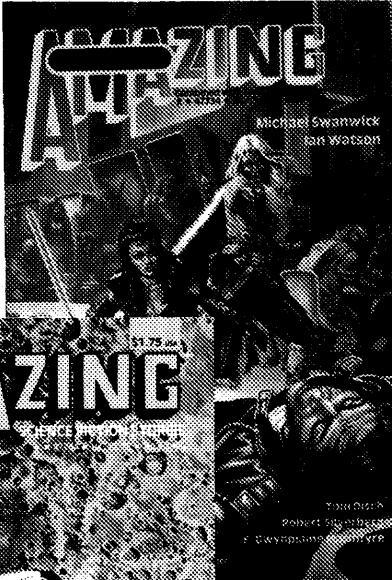
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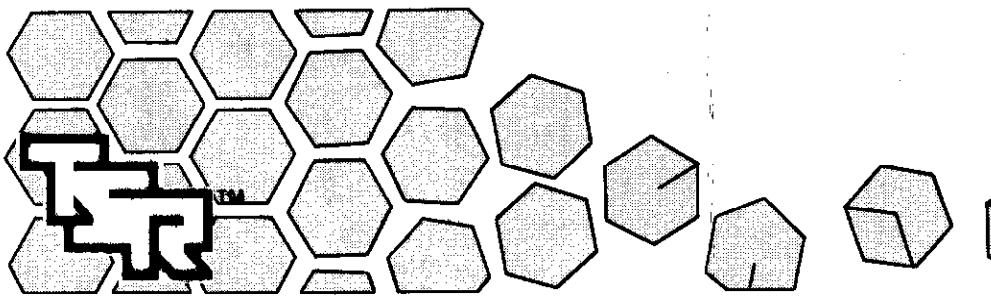
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PREVIEWS

Welcome to TSR PREVIEWS, where you can find the latest information on what's new from TSR, Inc. Each installment of TSR PREVIEWS lists all products that TSR will be shipping in the same month as the issue of DRAGON® Magazine in which it appears. Since this is the November 1985 issue, the following items will be shipping in November. It takes a few weeks from our shipping date for items to arrive in your local store, so these products will probably not reach your store until sometime in mid-December. . . . Just in time for Christmas!

This time, we're also going to describe a few products that we shipped in October. They should be arriving in your local store just about now, so watch for them!

On the page following this premier installment of TSR PREVIEWS is another new feature. TSR PROFILES will feature all your favorite TSR creators in the months to come — game designers, artists, editors, magazine staff, and others. We've chosen to start off with our #1 game designer (also our President, our Chairman, and soon to be our top novelist) . . . Gary Gygax!

TITLES SHIPPING IN NOVEMBER

X10 RED ARROW, BLACK SHIELD D&D® Expert Campaign Adventure by Michael Dobson

Out of the sands of the mysterious Sind Desert rides The Master of the Desert Nomads and his army of dervishes, threatening to conquer all the civilized lands of the world! You are diplomats and generals who must recruit allies, organize armies, and direct the course of the war. Travel to all the countries of the Expert Set game world, meet with national leaders, and go on quests and missions to win support. A unique strategic wargame (an expansion of the D&D® Companion Set War Machine rules) and counters allows you to run the entire war!

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Product No. 9160
Suggested Retail Price: \$10.00

17 Baltron's BEACON AD&D® Game Adventure by Philip Meyers

Battle your way into the ruined tower that holds the secret of the Black Flame, defeat its deadly guardians, and return with its dark secret...before the wizard returns!

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Suggested Retail Price: \$6.00

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If you like powerful barbarians, evil wizards, and hack-and-slash adventure, the CONAN® game system is for you.

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OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS REVISITED

AD&D® ORIENTAL ADVENTURES Handbook by Gary Gygax

After this month, your AD&D® game will never be the same again . . . ORIENTAL ADVENTURES is here! With official Samurai, Ninja, and Wu-Jen character classes, Oriental magic, martial arts, and an expansion of the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ setting covering the Oriental lands of Oerth, you know it's going to be the hottest item around!

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SAGA OF OLD CITY GREYHAWK™ Adventures Book 1 by Gary Gygax

You got a taste of GREYHAWK Adventures in Dragon® Magazine #100 — now the first part of the incredible adventures of Gord is in your store! Don't be left out of the hottest adventures around!

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Plus the latest DRAGONLANCE® adventure, the first D&D® Master Rules Set adventure, a new STAR FRONTIERS® rules accessory, and the incredible AMAZING® Stories Books!

SCHEDULE CHANGES

The BARBAROSSA™ game and the TERRIBLE SWIFT-SWORD™ game, announced last month as new SPI™ game releases, have been delayed. They will now ship in January 1986.

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GARY GYGAX

There is a persistent rumor at TSR, Inc., that Gary Gygax never sleeps.

President of TSR, Inc., is a full-time job all by itself. Chairman of the Board is a full-time job, too. Then there's President of the Dungeons & Dragons Entertainment Corporation in Beverly Hills. And Co-Executive Producer of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Cartoon Show. That's enough to keep three ordinary mortals busy. On top of that, there's the new *Oriental Adventures* hardcover rulebook for the AD&D® game system and the first novel in the GREYHAWK™ Adventures epic series and regular articles for DRAGON® Magazine and . . .

"I'm always working on new products," Gary told us.



"Currently, I'm working on three boardgames, the rest of the GREYHAWK Adventures novels, a new role-playing game, several short stories, a children's book series, and various entertainment projects for film and TV."

Gary frequently gets up at five o'clock in the morning to hit the typewriter before coming into the office to handle the myriad details of the far-flung TSR, Inc., operation. "The writing is the fun part, the reward for doing everything else," he said.

Gary has been a writer and a game designer for most of his life. He learned how to play chess when he was six years old. By the time he was 12, he was designing miniatures rules for toy soldiers with his best friend Don Kaye (now deceased), who later helped Gary found TSR, Inc. Gary had built a huge collection of 54mm and 70mm figures. The collection decreased because of his unique method of resolving battles. "We used to use ladyfingers (small firecrackers) to simulate explosions. . . Light the fuse, and BOOM!"

By the early 1960s, Gary had grown much more sophisticated as a game designer. He became active in fandom and got involved in play-by-mail DIPLOMACY™ games. He designed DIPLOMACY variants, and also wrote house rules and variants to the early games from The Avalon Hill Game Company. Gary also continued to design miniatures games — but stopped using ladyfingers for playtesting.

In 1965, Gary founded the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association, a wargaming and miniatures club. He designed games as a hobby while making a living as an insurance adjustor in Chicago. And then, in

1970, he left his job to try to make a living at his hobby.

"There were too many boundaries in insurance," he said. "All I really wanted to do was write and design fantasy games."

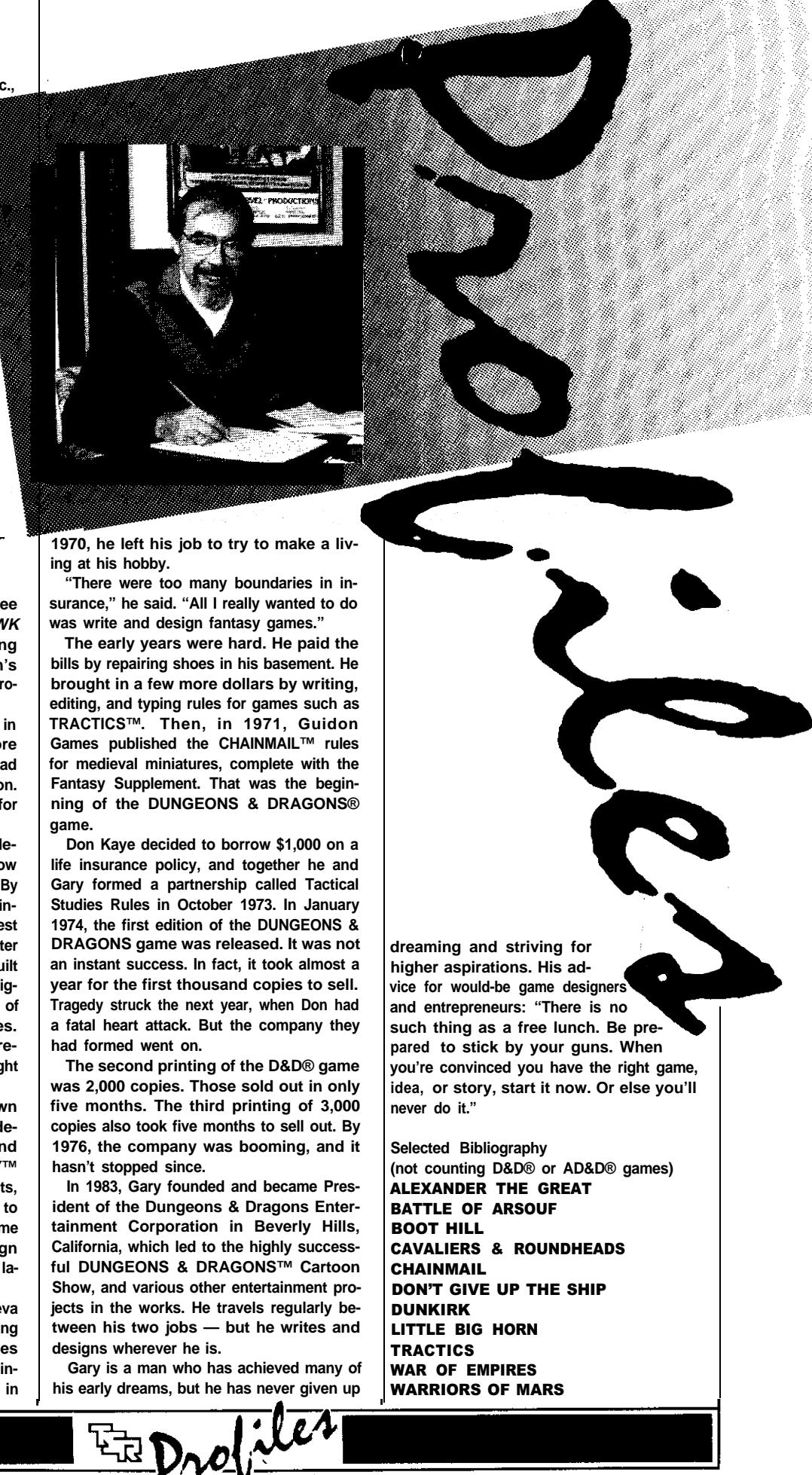
The early years were hard. He paid the bills by repairing shoes in his basement. He brought in a few more dollars by writing, editing, and typing rules for games such as TRACTICS™. Then, in 1971, Guidon Games published the CHAINMAIL™ rules for medieval miniatures, complete with the Fantasy Supplement. That was the beginning of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game.

Don Kaye decided to borrow \$1,000 on a life insurance policy, and together he and Gary formed a partnership called Tactical Studies Rules in October 1973. In January 1974, the first edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game was released. It was not an instant success. In fact, it took almost a year for the first thousand copies to sell. Tragedy struck the next year, when Don had a fatal heart attack. But the company they had formed went on.

The second printing of the D&D® game was 2,000 copies. Those sold out in only five months. The third printing of 3,000 copies also took five months to sell out. By 1976, the company was booming, and it hasn't stopped since.

In 1983, Gary founded and became President of the Dungeons & Dragons Entertainment Corporation in Beverly Hills, California, which led to the highly successful DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Cartoon Show, and various other entertainment projects in the works. He travels regularly between his two jobs — but he writes and designs wherever he is.

Gary is a man who has achieved many of his early dreams, but he has never given up



dreaming and striving for higher aspirations. His advice for would-be game designers and entrepreneurs: "There is no such thing as a free lunch. Be prepared to stick by your guns. When you're convinced you have the right game, idea, or story, start it now. Or else you'll never do it."

Selected Bibliography (not counting D&D® or AD&D® games)

- ALEXANDER THE GREAT
- BATTLE OF ARSOUF
- BOOT HILL
- CAVALIERS & ROUNDHEADS
- CHAINMAIL
- DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP
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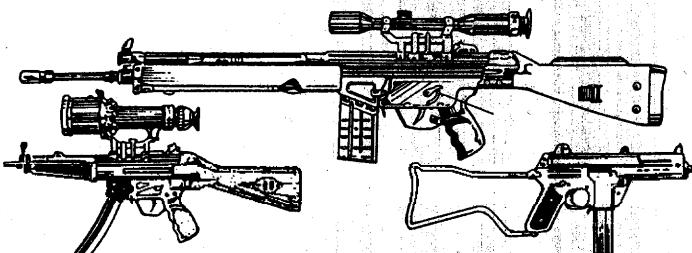
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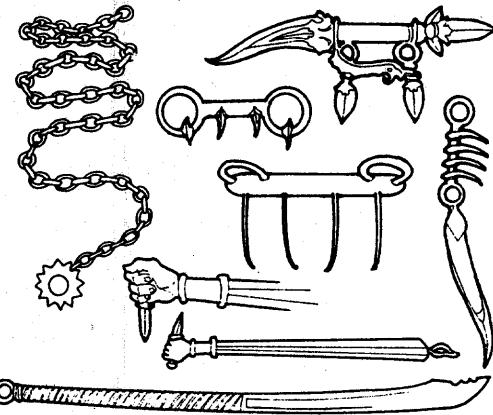
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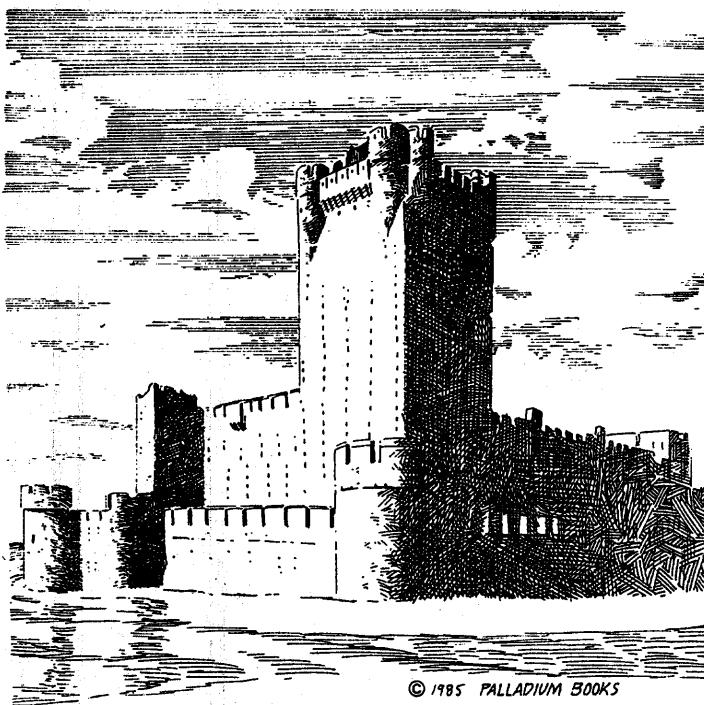
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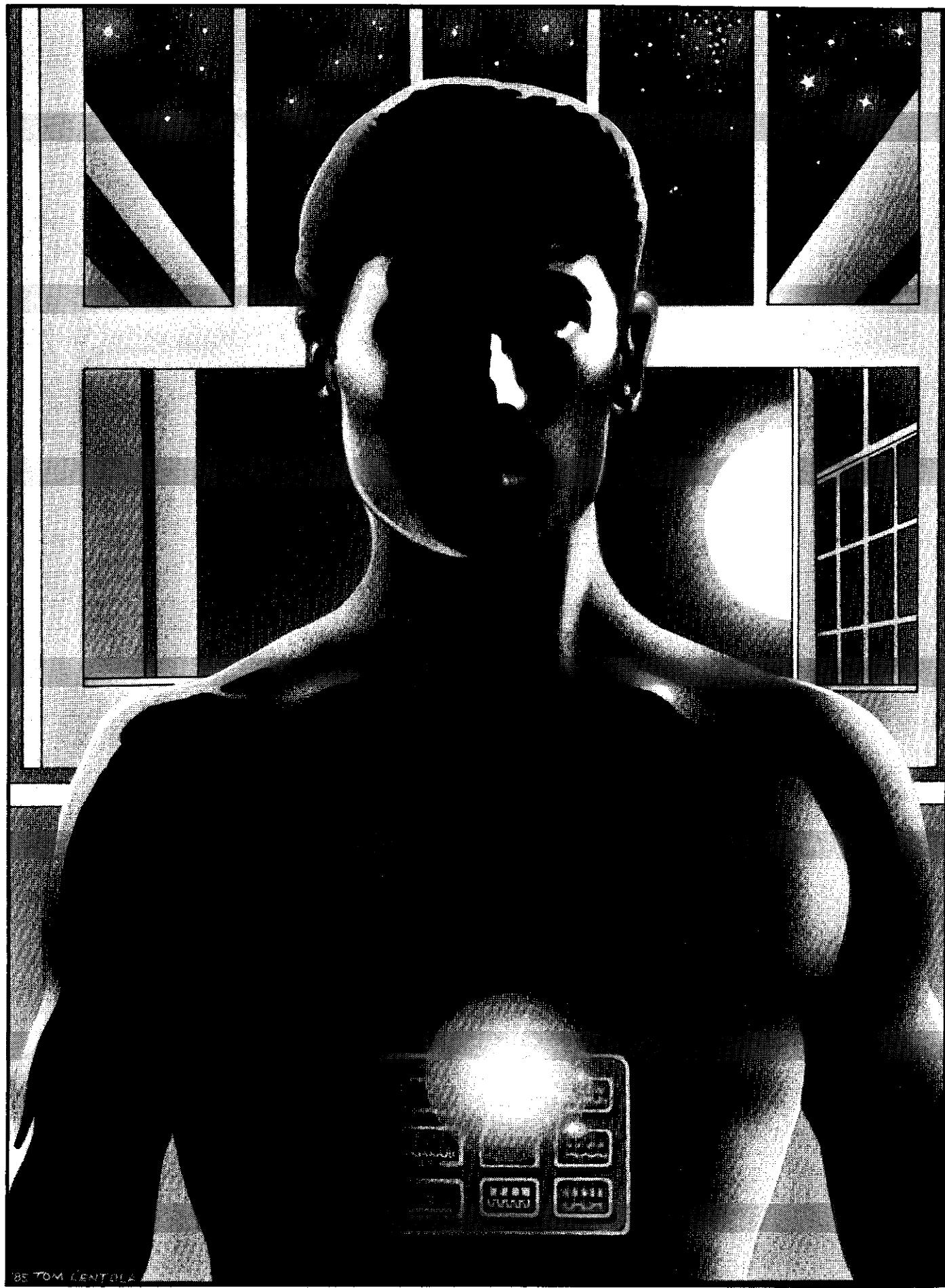
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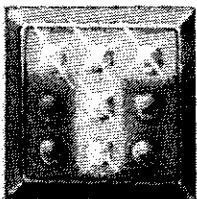


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BE TOM LENTZELA



HIS DEVICE IS NOT ILLEGAL,

Hale reassured himself for the tenth time. He taped the flat vibrator assembly over his rib cage and rebuttoned his shirt to check for a bulge. Nothing showed.

He doubted that police moved very fast in matters of Social Health anyway. Shaking his head to dispel the lingering guilt, Hale switched on the signal generator to produce what he'd finally discovered was the "Obnox" tag: 1500 Hz for 1.5 seconds. This marker designated, Hale hoped, those who were to be his special prey.

Holding his breath, Hale flicked the detector's switch; immediately the vibrator buzzed like a trapped insect against his ribs. Perfect, he thought, and permitted himself a brief laugh of self-delight common to inventors. Greed wasn't in him: he only needed enough cash to pay off his mother's indenture debt and buy them both tickets back home to New Zealand. It would be a matter of weeks now.

The Obnox tag was embedded in the organic flurry of body signals continuously broadcast from all citizens. Neighborhood receivers boosted all data to Social Health's headquarters, where the computers monitored each person's physiological stress and accordingly shifted funds from account to account, minute by minute, day by day. All routine in 2007.

But Hale Romathon had found a loophole.

Hale was short, scaled down, well-muscled but slightly stooped from years of hunching over electronic work-benches. Standing now, with his hand under his shirt on the gain control, he walked about the apartment engrossed in studying the detector's range and sensitivity, forgetting that it was 3 A.M. He was light on his feet, but his shoes squeaked.

Zenia emerged, rumped and blinking, from her bedroom. Pulling her robe together, she stared at her 36-year-old son. Zenia had recently turned "old," and her expression in the last month had become sad and heavy, but this scene made her smile.

"Dancing the night away, dear?" she asked. Hale stopped abruptly, embarrassed, and removed his hand from under his shirt.

"Oh. Sorry. I guess I woke you? Believe it or not, Mother, this is rational behavior."

"It's OK. Everything wakes me these days. Does this have something to do with that disk you made me smuggle out of work?"

"Don't think about it. You don't want to know. Let's have breakfast."

Hale prepared hot cereal with cinnamon and butter, pampering his mother while she related the family problems back home: her sister was very sick, and there was fierce rivalry among the rest of her relatives for control of the family ranch, which was close to bankruptcy. Hale was fairly indifferent to it all but saw that Zenia's Display, a two-inch square panel pinned to her robe, was flickering into yellow-orange, very unlike her.

"I have to go home!" she said plaintively. "But I'm trapped here until I pay off that infernal debt. Oh, Haley, I made such a mistake moving here!"

The Wages of Stress

by Christopher Gilbert

Illustrations by Tom Centola

Hale could see it was getting bad for her. "You had to try it. I'll get you back home soon, I told you, remember? I'm resourceful."

Zenia gave him a long, melancholy look and said, "How? All those wonderful technical jobs you used to have, and now you're working at that complaint window for such terrible wages . . . I just don't understand what's happened to you."

He winced at her criticism but said only, "I'm working on something."

They ate in silence for a few minutes, until Zenia said, "I'm sorry. I'm being awful. Why don't you come home early tonight? I invited Vedo. We could all have a nice dinner, just the three of us."

Hale tensed. Vedo, for reasons he could not tell her, had become a sore subject. The Display on his shirt edged toward yellow. Zenia saw it, said a standard "excuse me," and the matter was dropped.

The next morning Hale did extra preparation for the strain he knew lay before him. Nestled in the cocoon-like relaxation pod loaned to him by Social Health, he began with ten minutes of *pranayama* yoga breathing. Then he activated the feedback devices; visual displays and gentle auditory signals guided him as he dropped into a deep, hibernation-like relaxation state. He fine-tuned his EEG into the restorative high theta range. Using muscle and cardiac feedback, he made himself limp as a sleeping baby, lowered his blood pressure, and stabilized his heartbeat. Finally, it was time to go to work.

If one is looking for aggravation, Hale had found, one doesn't have to look very far. Since leaving his bio-engineering job, Hale had tried working as an attendant in the huge government food automats, coping with impatient and demanding customers; for a few weeks he'd sold women's shoes in a very busy shop. Each position had provided the frustration and aggravation he sought, but at generally low density. He'd finally settled on part-time work at the Dispute Resolution window at Fleer's Multi-Store.

Hale's fourth customer today was a grossly fat man wearing a soiled beret and an expression of childish fury. He approached carrying a bent Hungarian Sipp chair before him. Hale's vibrator went off. *Obnox. Here we go.*

"This chair is no good. Look how it bent!" the man said, eyebrows raised and quivering. "Besides, it gives only five positions! It should have eight like the Rupert chairs."

Hale examined everything and began, very politely, to explain store policy to the 250-pounder. The man broke in, breathing hard: "Look, the fabric got all stained too! It looks awful. I want a different chair!"

Hale was skilled at drawing out a person's repellent qualities, but this one needed no drawing out. "Sir," he said, "stains aren't covered under warranty, which in any case expired last month. And the bending is rather extensive —"

"So my kid spilled juice on it. And the metal's cheap. Not my fault."

Hale was getting annoyed. Casually holding the chair up to obscure his own Display, which was in the yellow, he said, "Unfortunately, the rules limit what I can do for you, sir. You've had the chair seven months. Would you like me to arrange for repair?"

The man snorted now. "You're no help, Shorty. 'New chair,' I said! Don't you know your job? Where's your supervisor?" Hale's heart thumped at the word "Shorty," and his internal rage grew.

But he answered, "Mr. Fantuzzi will be in at two, sir. I do feel I know my job, but I've only been here three months; I may have missed some fine points."

The man saw Hale's bright orange Display then, grimaced, and shut up. Even an Obnox had some sense. Satisfied, Hale began preparing the repair forms. Stress suffered from an Obnox earned bonus credits, and fault was automatically assigned. The entire exchange had earned him at least sixty dollars; just that much closer to New Zealand.

After work Hale headed for a certain Doyle Street tavern where emotions ran high. He circulated among the noisy crowd nodding to a few acquaintances and observing the glowing panels worn on everyone's chest. The lights were kept fairly high in here, which was one reason Hale liked it: his Display wasn't so obvious.

He waited for the telltale buzz against his skin and soon located the first Obnox, a thin baggy man who sold shares in real estate. Chattering like a hyperactive weasel, the man spread his literature on a table and jabbed at paragraphs: "It's all here, see? Seventeen per cent you'll get! You look like a smart guy, don't you know a bargain? Trust me!" He moved even closer to Hale, talking louder and faster. Hale kept nodding, feigning interest while his temples pounded from the onslaught.

Finally, the man noticed Hale's shimmering orange Display. "Touchy, huh? You're not gonna buy? Cripes, this is costing me. Who needs you?" With a sneer he swept up his papers and went off to find another prospect.

Hale did likewise. His detector led him to a good-looking woman who liked to talk politics. Hale would never have taken her for an Obnox — at first. But as she kept correcting him and dismissing his opinions, his anger grew; as she left (she was tall), she patted his head and said, "You'll see the light someday, little fellow." He closed his eyes and contained his rage. That was where his profit lay.

He took on three more of them, but it was like absorbing poison, and Hale knew he'd better stop for now. No wonder there was a movement to identify the Obnoxes. He began walking home, slowing his heart rate, smoothing out his breathing to minimize the stress afterload.

It wasn't perfect, however, because something else was on his mind now. Vedo. He had to challenge him tonight.

When Hale entered his apartment, Vedo and Zenia were huddled at the table over picture books of New Zealand, with Zenia giving the tour. His mother had met this amiable 20-year-old several weeks ago at a travel agency. Vedo was full of questions about New Zealand,

and Zenia was delighted to describe her homeland. He was polite, sleek and unruffled, with Mediterranean coloring. She'd brought him home several times.

In the kitchen Hale gobbled down some leftover turkey patties and considered how to confront Vedo. He somewhat liked the youth, especially his air of inner control. He seemed to think before he spoke. What he thought about, however, was a matter of concern. Hale wanted to trust him. But there was something . . .

Two nights ago, when they were all watching a very tense drama on the screen, Vedo had said something disturbing: "It seems to me a person could make a bit of extra cash by becoming aggravated a lot on purpose. The other guy would get blamed for it. Credits could build up fast. Stress couldn't be all that dangerous."

Hearing that, Hale had simply stopped breathing. Zenia had said with maternal sincerity, "Oh, it is, Vedo. It's very dangerous in the long run, otherwise I wouldn't have my job. Please don't even think of such a thing. It's not worth it." Standard Social Health line. Hale hadn't even trusted himself to say anything.

Besides that, Vedo had referred to the Social Health stress monitoring at least twice in the last two weeks, too much for coincidence. Hale didn't like being made nervous by a 20-year-old kid, but suddenly he felt like an animal with his foot poised over a trap. Vedo said he worked as an accountant, but he'd never shown ID; he could be police, a Social Health investigator, anything.

So this night Hale invited Vedo for a walk.

Hale's apartment was on the fringe of the great metropolitan center; the glow of city lights perpetually blotted out the stars. They strolled through the cool night making small talk while Hale worked his nerve up. He wasn't good at confrontation. As they approached a well-lit intersection, Vedo drew out a folded piece of paper from his jacket pocket. Handing it to him, Vedo said in a rather formal voice, "I've got something to tell you, Hale."

Hale's thoughts flashed: a summons? Subpoena? Warrant? Aware of the glowing of his Display, Hale unfolded the paper. It appeared to be Vedo's monthly Social Health statement and showed \$208 worth of stress credits deposited to Vedo's account. In bold print below was the phrase Hale knew so well:

STRONG RECOMMENDATION FOR STRESS CONTROL COUNSELING.

Hale was puzzled; these documents were very personal items which people seldom revealed to each other, even to their spouses. In essence it stated where one stood in relation to society: whether one was among those who suffered or among those who caused the suffering.

"Two hundred and eight dollars!" Vedo said proudly. "How about that? The thing is, I intended it! Listen, I've got to tell someone. I hope you'll keep it quiet. I'm working on a way to beat this whole system. I've figured out what sorts of reactions register strongest with their computers — anxiety, anger, that sort of thing — and I'm learning to maximize them, just the opposite of what we're taught."

Hale hadn't even remotely expected this. "Clever idea," he said guardedly. "Suffer for pay, is that it? Pretty hard on your longevity." He was buying time, to think.

Vedo described his method, which consisted mainly of baiting half-drunk men in taverns. "I'll say something like 'I'm just a kid. Tell me about women.' and then let them run on. I hate getting advice from old sots, so I begin to get annoyed, very annoyed. They usually notice my Display eventually and back off, or a friend might warn them. Until then, my credits pile up."

Hale smiled faintly. "Is that so? Now I see why you've been asking questions about Social Health. You knew Zenia works there."

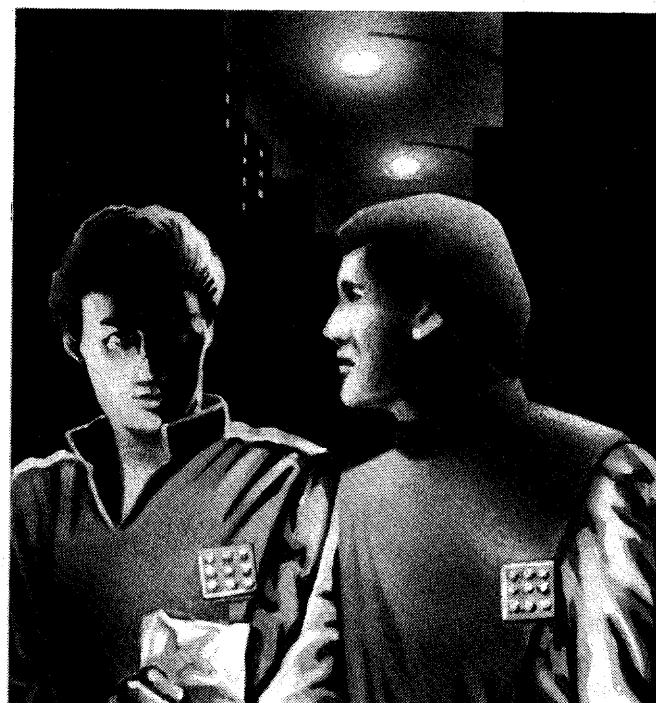
Vedo looked away and shrugged, apparently embarrassed. "Your mom's great, but . . . I admit it. When I found out she's a stress counselor, I got curious, yeah. I'd never tell her, though. She's a true believer. But you seem to have your own mind. What do you think of my idea?"

Hale handed Vedo's paper back. He had never told anyone about his stress-baiting activities; his own satisfaction had always sufficed in this as well as other accomplishments. But now something tugged at Hale. He'd never had a son and would have scoffed at the suggestion that he had paternal instincts. However, he reflected later, that probably explained it.

On impulse Hale said calmly, "Your methods are primitive, Vedo. If you're going to do this, you might as well learn to do it right. At least don't make the mistakes I did."

The youth stopped walking and stared at Hale, mouth agape. "What do you mean . . . you don't do this too?"

Hale nodded, annoyed that he enjoyed the moment. "I made \$1750 this way last month. This month will be higher. There are lots of little things you learn — standing in the sunlight so they're less likely to see your Display, knowing exactly what your sore points are, and seeking out people who rub you wrong that particular way. The key, though, is to maximize the imbalance. If you're annoying somebody while they're provoking you, it



balances out and nobody gains."

Vedo listened intently, then said, "That's right! Hey, I can't believe my luck! You're way ahead of me. Zenia doesn't know, does she?"

"Not a bit, nor does anyone else. Let's keep it that way."

Vedo extended his hand. His eyes were wide, sparkling; he'd lost his reserve. "Don't worry. I'm honored. How about making me your apprentice?"

Hale grimaced. "Slow down, Vedo. I'm not a school. I'll pass along a few tricks to you, sure, but I'm going to be very busy piling up funds and hope to be gone with Zenia within a month."

Vedo paused for a moment, then said quietly, "I can reciprocate. My company is very large and gives me certain privileges. For instance, I know Zenia needs to make a lot of calls to New Zealand. That gets expensive. I could . . . facilitate those calls. There are other ways I could help."

Hale shrugged. "Maybe. We can talk about it tomorrow. But why would you want to learn to do something like this? You have a good job. Stress tears your guts up if you're not careful."

"I guess I like to find flaws and loopholes in things. Excitement. Beating the system, maybe. What about you?"

"Something similar. I was designing prosthetic systems for Benton; I turned 35. My head was swimming with electronics and physiology, and suddenly all I wanted to do was listen to music. So I did; I quit. This stress-baiting got started as a hobby, probably because Zenia worked for Social Health."

"And now you're an underground expert on simulated suffering."

"That's what the system rewards! It's all backwards, you know. It started as a way to compensate workers in high-stress occupations, and grew too fast. But we're stuck with it now. You fish where the fish are. Let's get back."

Hale's next few days were both exhilarating and debilitating. No longer worried about Vedo, he put his attention toward accumulating stress credits as never before. What had once been a diversion was now serious. He sought out Obnoxes, got what he could from each, and went on to the next. He endured being degraded, proselytized, harangued, and frustrated, persisting until the person noticed Hale's glaring Display and apologized and retreated.

Each night he came home a little more exhausted. He spent hours in the relaxation pod using all its feedback devices and every body control skill he had, but even so he had difficulty relaxing. His blood pressure hadn't been below 140/90 in days. Adrenaline was flooding his body, and his nervous system seemed to be in permanent buzz.

Finally, Zenia said to him, "You're looking very strained. What's wrong? You haven't smiled or laughed in

days."

"Just working hard. Doing what I have to."

"Are you angry at something? I know that face, Haley."

"Angry? I don't get angry. That's a —"

"You don't get angry, you get even. I know."

She knew him too well. He was glad she didn't have access to his Social Health records. "Mother dear, I said I'll get us out of here soon, and I will. Maybe two weeks. You can start packing." Hale could see that Zenia was looking strained herself; the frown marks between her brows had deepened. She worried him.

That night Hale met briefly with Vedo, accepting the help Vedo was able to arrange. In gratitude Hale revealed his Obnox detector. Examining the vibrator device, Vedo seemed quite fascinated. "Obnoxes don't even officially exist yet, and here you are just about harvesting them!"

Hale chuckled. "That's right. Imagine the pandemonium if Social Health admitted it. Lists published in the papers, maybe big O's on people's chests . . . I don't know what would happen. But don't worry. You're not one."

Two days later Hale came home to find Zenia crying, sitting in the dark at the kitchen table. Hale rubbed her shoulders while she talked.

"It's getting so bad, Haley . . . I want to go home! At work today they gave me an unscheduled review. They said I'm slipping! It's so unfair. . . ."

"Are you slipping?"

Zenia sobbed; Hale fetched the tissues and sat next to her. "I didn't think I was! Sure, I'm worried about home, but all week now they've been penalizing me for little things like late reports, tiny errors. I don't know why! I lost a bonus, I have to take remedial training — I'll never pay off my debt now!"

Her face had a puffiness which obscured her character and frightened Hale. His determination hardened. Obnox detector or not, he'd have to step it up. They needed more money, fast.

Retreating to his workshop, he studied manuals far into the night. He had a new device to build.

As a high-stress-risk person, Hale was entitled to special individual counseling sessions on request. At 2 P.M. the next day, he entered Social Health's massive headquarters, welcomed by relaxing music which drifted like bland perfume through the air. Zenia worked at a branch office, which Hale naturally avoided. He considered most stress counselors earnest and harmless, helpful but also easily fooled. Approaching the door to the public counseling section, he put on his tense manner.

"Stress is going to catch up with you, no doubt about it," the counselor told him with patient kindness. "You've been lucky so far, but you know there are ulcers and heart disease in your family. I just looked at your current record . . . what have you been doing? Aren't you worried at all about your health?"

Hale acted contrite and a little dim, as usual, giving helpless little gestures. "I just can't help myself. I try to relax, I really do, but people get me so annoyed."

She sighed; she'd been over it so many times with him. They spent half an hour discussing his "current life stressors," all fictional, followed by fifteen well-monitored minutes of deep relaxation while his serum cortisol and catecholamines were assayed through a capillary skin patch. Hale faked trying to relax, concentrating on memories of his old landlord, an infuriating and devious old devil. Luckily the EEG could not specify the content of his imagery.

The counselor's face showed he wasn't doing well. He kept squirming and acting self-conscious until she finally said, "Would you feel more comfortable if I left you alone?"

He nodded weakly. "Thanks. Performance anxiety, I think." Ten seconds after she left he stepped quickly to her terminal. He knew it was low security, no voice ID, just nice anonymous keys. Coughing intermittently, he entered several codes which he'd gained from Zenia's disk, and then requested the schematic for the Model III Stress Display.

It was unclassified! He smiled. Typical trusting, non-larcenous Social Health. Coughing some more, he activated the printer and set it buzzing. Meanwhile, he searched the desk and the corkboard on the wall, and then with a sharp sigh located what he'd hoped he'd find: the computer maintenance schedule. That told him the rest of what he needed. He hid the printer output in his shirt and returned to his recliner, suppressing his grin.

The counselor returned and gently removed the telemetry sensors from Hale's skin. Scanning his record on the wall screen, she shook her head in dismay. "Hale, this is terrible! And commotion there?"

"Didn't you hear me coughing? Getting over a cold. I'm sorry. I'll go home and practice more."

"Really, you have to! Your indicators are higher than ever. The cortisol levels, the CA's, your heart signs . . . isn't there something you need to talk over?"

"I'm just a tense guy, I guess."

"You know, all those compensation funds you're accumulating won't help you when your body starts breaking down. Won't you consider our Group Interaction training? Or at least go through the Mind/Body Harmony program again?"

"Groups make me nervous. I'll think about it. Thanks." His duty done, Hale shook hands politely and left.

Three days later Hale had the alternate circuitry prepared, barely in time for the scheduled computer maintenance shutdown at 4 A.M. He arranged his tools and test instruments very neatly on his workbench, memorizing their positions because he had only two minutes to make the switch. He watched the clock; at the proper moment he placed the Display under the microscope and opened the case.

Everything inside was as he expected. Working with



rapid but deliberate movements, he slipped the adjustable damping circuit into the case, made the necessary connections, used his oscilloscope for the final adjustment, then replaced and resealed the cover. *I am now a criminal*, he thought.

There was a twinge in his gut then. He knew it was the ulcer coming back; he'd known it for days. Also his heart was having premature contractions now and then. Little warning messages. His relaxation skills weren't remedy enough for what he'd been doing, and he knew his reserve was getting very thin.

He returned to his bed and flopped down, taking long, slow breaths. As sleep arrived he was strolling into the peaceful foothills of New Zealand, seeing them misty and glowing green after a spring rain.

Hale had been dodging Vedo, but the next morning the youth showed up with some documents which Zenia needed on New Zealand property law. Vedo had also arranged for free shipping of some heavy belongings and had paid in advance for the purchase of Hale's magnificent sound system. He'd kept his end of the bargain.

Feeling guilty, Hale dug into his files and with a wry smile handed Vedo a handwritten sheet. "Here, this is something you might like: the weighted stress index. This is the basis for compensatory payments. The more you learn to duplicate that pattern, the more dangerous for you; therefore, the more money you'll make. Come on, let's go for a walk."

Vedo studied the sheet as they went out, and Hale described it: "Cardiac stroke volume counts for about 30%) so it pays to practice making your heart thump. But watch out for aneurysms. Muscle vasodilation and peripheral vasoconstriction are both around 10%. Respiration, thoracic gasping, 15% — easy to fake, too. Blood pressure rise, 18%. Remember our implants pick up both systolic and diastolic. Neck muscle tension counts for about 8%. Et cetera . . . get the idea?"

Vedo nodded and nodded. "I'm amazed. It's just what I needed. I've been working in the dark up to now. How did you ever get this?"

"By being devious. It doesn't matter. Remember, fear doesn't pay as well as anger. Unexpressed rage is best, if you can work that up. Figure out what aggravates you most and go find it. Also, the program is oriented to peaks rather than duration of stress, so rapid recovery isn't much noticed."

"You've got it all figured out," Vedo said with wonder. "Can you really produce all these reactions?"

"I can enhance them; it's much easier with the proper stimulus — wait, I'll show you. Here comes an Obnox."

They were nearing a woman wearing a garish orange sack dress and too much makeup. She was standing by a transit bench. Hale stopped. "Excuse me," he said, "we're trying to find the car for Woolsey Circle. Is this —"

He got no further. Putting her shopping bag down to free her gesturing hand, she began to talk: "It'll come along in about twenty minutes I don't know why they're so far apart and usually late anyway don't you know —

this whole system is a real insult although I have been over in Richmond and people never mind waiting because the shelters are so top notch you know those brown and gold ones with the seats . . ." She continued her seamless monologue without perceptible breaths. Hale saw her problem: she neither sensed nor needed feedback.

Several times he tried to interrupt, to inject a few words, and each time he failed, his frustration mounted. Babblers like this made Hale furious. After nearly five minutes, he could take no more.

"Have to go now," he said abruptly, as if hanging up on someone, and then he just walked away fast. Vedo hurried behind. After they rounded a corner, Hale slumped onto a step, leaned back, and closed his eyes. "She was awful," he moaned. "On and on and on . . . did I ask for her fifty-five favorite opinions? I can't handle those people! Excuse me while I calm down." He slowed his breathing and slackened his muscles all over. His heart slowed, neck and shoulders unclenched; he could nearly feel his adrenal glands shutting down. Finally, he opened his eyes.

"That's better. Now, that encounter was a lesson," he said. "What did you notice?"

"Well, I saw your jaw tensing, things like that," Vedo said. "But you seemed to stay calm enough. Your Display stayed pretty low."

Hale smiled broadly and tapped his Display. "I was in a rage! My heart rate probably hit 120! But what did this Display show? Greenish-yellow, maybe? Around a three? How do you figure that?" Vedo looked puzzled. "It's **rigged**, Vedo! Last night while the computers were shut off, I added a little damper circuit to my Display. Social Health still gets the true data, but my Display is now muffled."

Vedo looked stunned; his thick eyebrows rose. "You did that? Altered your Display? That's serious business."

"Yes. Serious. I know. But I've got to get out of here soon. Zenia's frantic to get back to her family. She's crumbling, her work's suffering. And I'm feeling my limits, too. How's your stress recovery skill, by the way? Been practicing?"

Vedo shrugged. "I could do better."

"Don't neglect it. I mean it; don't get cocky. That's the only safe way to play this weird game. Apply for a relaxation pod; learn all you can from the stress counselors. Just don't let them find out how good you are."

Vedo seemed uneasy, and said, "You're really leaving soon then? Too bad. Off to an unmonitored society. I'll miss you."

"Same here. You've been a big help. But you're coming over tonight, aren't you? I'll give you some more tips on relaxation, plus a lesson on the Obnox detector you're inheriting."

Vedo lit up. "Hey thanks! I'll be there, around seven."

They parted. Hale wearily went to work at the complaint desk. As each Obnox appeared, he drew out their worst qualities and kept his reactions to himself. With his Display damped, they had no way of knowing his feelings; there was no limiting factor now except his tolerance. He was feeling a flushing in his face and neck, the signs of high blood pressure overcoming his medication. And the twinges in his stomach were growing sharper.

Hale went home earlier than usual that evening and was surprised that Vedo hadn't arrived. "Oh, he said he had to do some errands tonight," Zenia said. "You know, I saw him at work today! Isn't it a small world?"

Hale set down his coffee cup very carefully. He said, in a tight voice, "What do you mean you saw him at work?" Vedo worked six miles across town and had never mentioned any connection with Social Health.

"Well, I was talking to someone in Systems Development, and Vedo was on the screen, in the background, just walking by."

"Did you ask him what he was doing there?"

"That's why I phoned him tonight! He said something about his company doing an audit."

"Audit? He doesn't do audits — he said he's in Procurement! How did he act?"

Zenia frowned. "Act? Actually, a bit uneasy. In a hurry maybe."

"When did he mention he couldn't come by tonight?"

"Well, at the end. Why? Why all these questions, Haley?"

"Let me think," he said. He retreated to another room and started thinking. The more he thought, the worse he felt, until finally he came out and said to his mother, in a chilly voice, "Let's get our travel permits now. Tonight."

"Now? But I'm not even —"

"Right now. We may have to pack fast. Something's come up."

They rushed through the quiet evening to the all-night Federal Document booth; inside, Hale entered his identification numbers and his proposed destination. He expected that Zenia's application would be blocked because of her indenture debt, but he knew a good document man who could change names in a pinch. He pressed his thumb into the print pad and inserted his passport.

The screen flashed a red he'd never seen before:

APPLICATION DENIED. TRAVEL RESTRICTION 281 –
FEDERAL AUTHORITY, JURISTICKTION 04. NOTIFICATION
REQUIRED. YOU ARE BEING DETAINED.

Hale grabbed his mother to shove her out. Too late. The heavy glass doors hissed shut. Hale slumped against the wall as Zenia kept crying, "What's happening? What's happening? Tell me, Haley!" In the few minutes before the police arrived, he began to tell her about it.

They were fairly gentle, considering Hale's surly manner, and obviously well-briefed; one of the officers immediately removed Hale's Display and pinned on a replacement. He then reached under Hale's shirt on the left side, located the Obnox detector, and untaped it.

"Why is this thing vibrating?" the officer asked, brusque, suspicious. "What is it, anyway?" Hale decided not to tell him; he was not unkind.

"It's something like a radar detector," he said, and quickly turned it off.

As the police drove them away, Hale spotted Vedo behind a large oleander bush. Their eyes met without expression.

The next morning Hale sat staring at the interrogator's scuffed shoes and responding sullenly to the questioning. From time to time he shivered, thinking of the imprisonment awaiting him. He did not cope well with confinement.

They permitted him a brief phone link with Zenia, also in custody. Hurt and angry, she turned aside Hale's attempts at apology: "For shame! Haley, this is so typical of you! Don't you see? You and getting even — you're making a career of revenge! And don't you dare say you did it for me. You've prostituted yourself!"

"Mother, let me work on this. I'll get you home yet," Hale said, then broke the connection. He had to think; there had to be a way out.

To the interrogator he said, "I want to talk to Vedo, if that's his real name. Bring Vedo in."

"There's no need. This isn't his function."

Hale repeated his request in response to all further questions, until finally an hour later Vedo appeared, holding himself straight in his grey and gold State Corps uniform. As he received Hale's glare, one of his eyelids quivered, betraying his nervousness.

"My apprentice, huh?" Hale said in a voice that stung. "The one thing I cannot forgive you for is putting that job pressure on Zenia. That was your doing, wasn't it?"

"Partly, yes. I'm sorry for that," Vedo said stiffly. Besides a guard at the door, two new men were in the room, very alert. Hale guessed that they were Vedo's superiors. The less imposing of the two, a short, cheery-looking man, spoke then.

"Mr. Romathon, it is fascinating to at last meet you in person. I have been following your progressive defeat of what seems to be our quite vulnerable system. I am Donald Aronson, deputy administrator of Social Health." The man carried his authority quite well; Hale felt deference in spite of himself.

"I, too, apologize regarding our treatment of your mother, but the truth is we wanted to know what loopholes you would find under pressure. There are few people who think like you do."

The other officer folded his arms then and said sternly, judge-like, "Modifying your Display for personal gain is a very serious offense. By misrepresenting your emotions, you have been cheating your fellow citizens and subverting the system. We consider you a threat to the health of society."

Hale stood then, so abruptly that he startled the guard. "All right, if that's so, then consider this: there are lots of ambitious fellows in prison, very curious and ambitious fellows." He paused, watching them all. "Even though I made a poor choice of apprentice, I have realized that I like to teach. And I will teach. Do you follow?"

Mr. Aronson nodded. "Go on."

"You're right that your system is quite vulnerable. Now if a corporation, say, becomes concerned about security, what would be the best type of consultant for them to hire?"

Vedo flashed a smile and whispered briefly to Mr.

Aronson, who did not smile. He said, "Such a corporation would, I believe, want to hire a *reformed* criminal of some sort, and that does not seem to be the case here."

Social Health is an idealistic organization, and you, Mr. Romathon, are a cynical man. As to your threat, we certainly would not enjoy seeing you hold prison seminars on what you do so well. But there is always solitary confinement."

Hale sat down to think. He felt tremendous anger coming, and for once he wasn't sure he could control it.

In the ensuing silence Vedo bent and whispered again to his boss, who after a moment shook his head. "He does have a strong background in physiological electronics, but I disagree that he has a lot to offer us, as you put it, Vedo. Skill is nothing without motivation, and the fact remains that this is a cynical man. I see no reason not to recommend the proper prison term."

Hale could hold back no longer. Something exploded in him. He slammed his palm on the table and said fiercely, "This hypocrisy stinks! Why shouldn't I be cynical about such a cynical system? It rewards only suffering! *Don't aggravate your fellow man*, we're taught. *Don't annoy. Don't cause stress*. Is that the highest moral commandment in our society? To protect our arteries? What about the good people? My mother, even, before all this — she used to radiate such human goodness and benevolence you could warm yourself in her presence! Yet people like

her get no reward at all. If someone's headed for a heart attack, you reward him with money. What kind of a system is that?"

Mr. Aronson leaned forward. Now he said gently, "I assume you know its history. It was never intended for general use, but please continue. Given what you've just said, what would you suggest?"

Still ready for a fight, Hale was caught off guard. He said, "Well . . . you mean, what would I do? I'd change it! The person who can walk into a room and make everyone feel better, the person who spreads calmness instead of stress — that's who I'd reward! The computers could handle it. Don't you see? I've become the grotesque logical extension of a system with backward priorities. It's no good!"

Mr. Aronson clasped his thick hands together with deliberation and then said blandly, "With another sort of reward system, you would have proceeded quite differently in your quest for fast money, correct?" Hale nodded slowly. He was confused. Then Mr. Aronson stood and offered a handshake. "Very interesting. Some of us have been thinking along similar lines. We may yet get somewhere. In any case, Mr. Romathon, it appears that you're a cynic with a reason, which is a different situation altogether. Perhaps you can help us after all."

Hale looked at Vedo, saw his beaming face, and realized he'd won.

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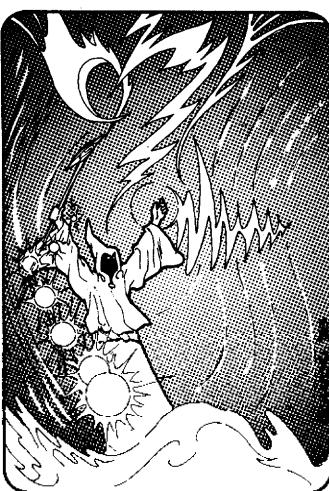
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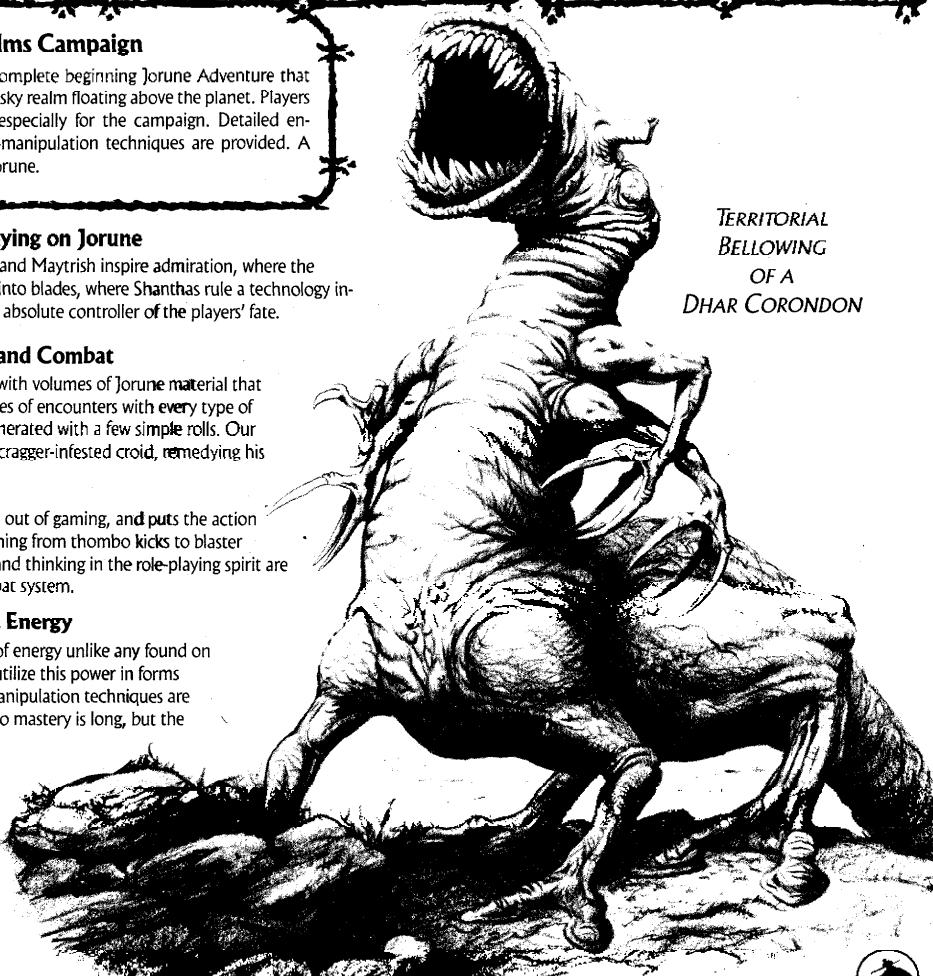
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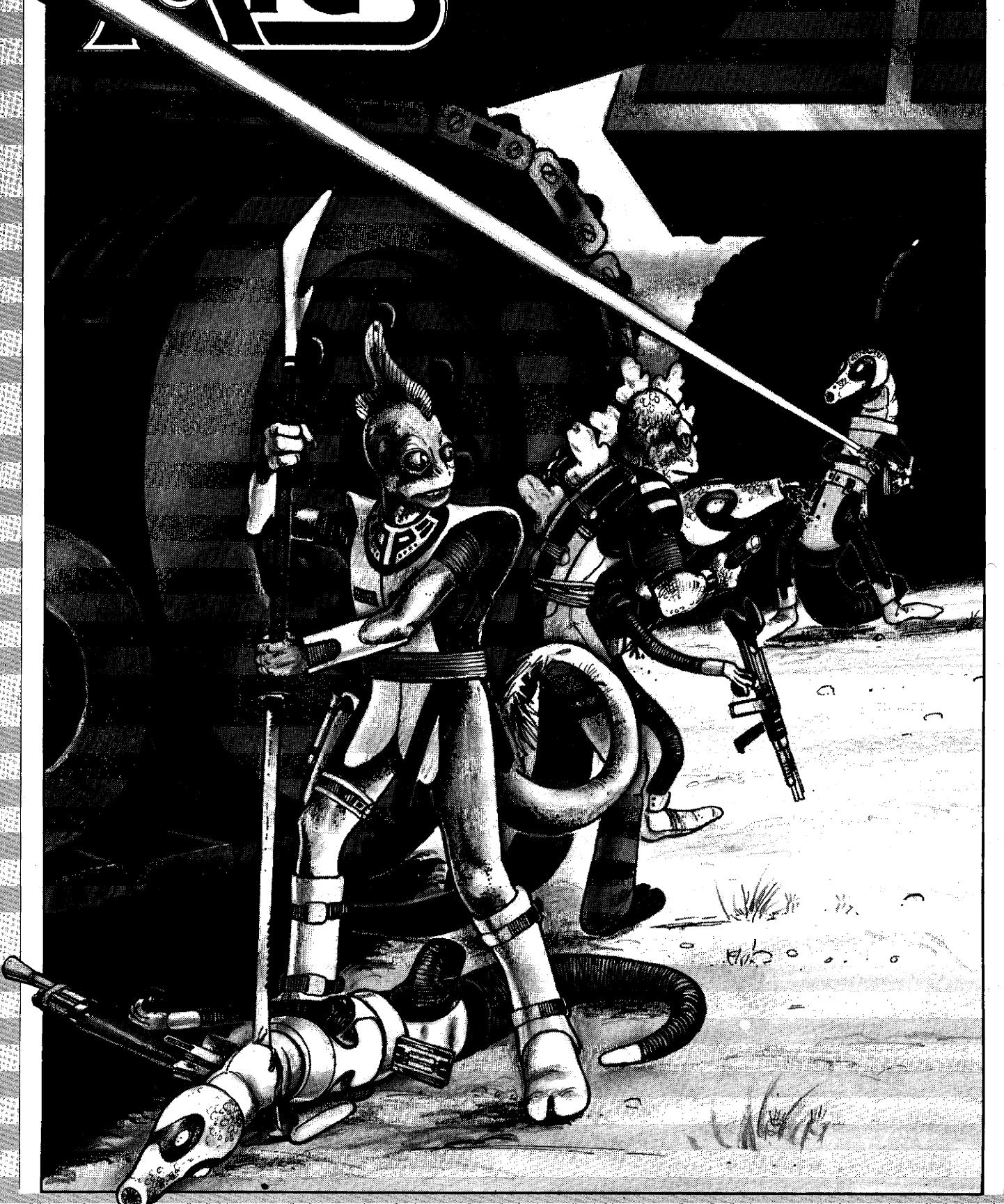
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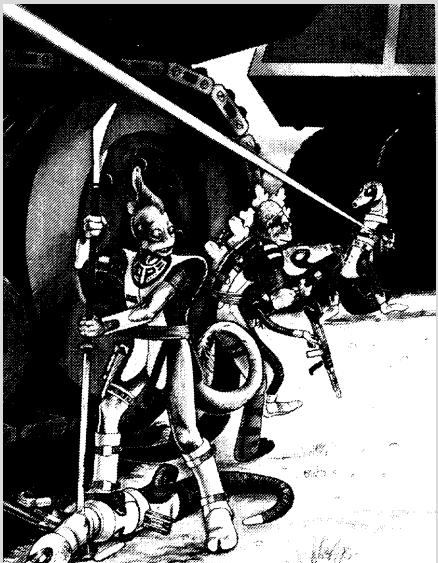
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**ON THE COVER**

Two Saurian mercenaries raid a Sathar convoy in this issue's cover art by Roger Raupp. Turn to p. 75 for more details.



This editorial was sparked by a few recent letters which were critical of DRAGON® Magazine because the writers believed we did not use material from foreign contributors. One reader offered to handle correspondence from Canada to better our awareness of writers from Up There. Another wanted to know if we ever used articles written by British gamers, and implied that the magazine was only written by Americans for Americans.

In point of fact, we are quite aware of our foreign readers and contributors, particularly the Canadian ones (because of our high circulation there). Much of the material that you have been reading in this magazine (and in the ARESTM Section) was created by Canadian gamers. If they will forgive me for naming them, some of our excellent contributors from the Great White North include Bruce Barber, Scott Bennie, Gregg Chamberlain, Alex Curylo, Ed Greenwood, Scott Hutzell, Stephen Inniss, Dan Proulx, Edward Simbalist, and Paul Suttie. ARESTM Magazine counted Jon Mattson, Ken Ramstead, and Dave Stover among its own authors. The brilliant chess-piece cover paintings that so many of you liked on your DRAGON Magazines were done by yet another Canadian, Denis Beauvais. The above list was culled from only a few issues of the magazine; many other Canadian contributors were left out from lack of space.

Less material has been received from overseas writers because of the low circulation of the magazine beyond North America. Nonetheless, we have an article in this ARES Section from a veteran British gamer, Paul Vernon, whose material has appeared in a number of gaming magazines. We receive letters and articles from Australia, Sweden, New Zealand, Norway, West Germany, France, Ireland, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Japan, and a dozen other countries. If we like it, we'll publish it.

Please feel free to contribute! This has always been your magazine.

Roger E. Moore

ARESTM Section 103
THE SCIENCE-FICTION GAMING SECTION

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Graphics, design, and production: Kim Lindau, Roger Raupp

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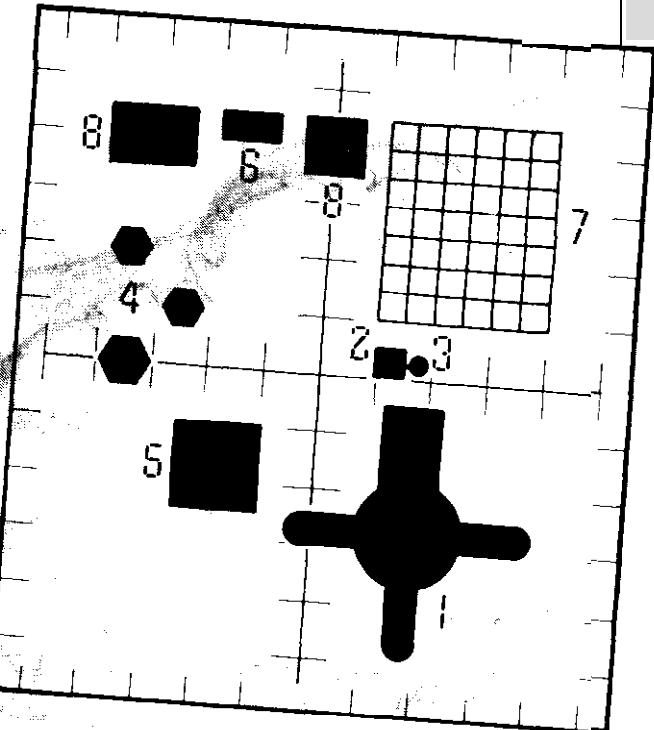
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Of Nobbles and Men

Adventuring on Tarsus in TRAVELLER® gaming

by Paul Vernon



[The following article may be used as a supplement to the Tarsus module for GDW's TRAVELLER® game, though it is not official material. — Editor]

Tarsus (UPP B-584620-A) is an agricultural, non-industrial world in the District 268 subsector of the Spinward Marches. Harvesting nobbles (large migratory grazers) is the primary occupation of 10% of the planet's 2.332 million inhabitants, and an important sector of the Tarsan economy. There are over 4000 noble ranches circling a vast expanse of stepland named Nob Plain, the average distance between them being 50 km.

Nobble ranching is regulated by the Ag Market, which awards a finite number of contracts per year, each for 100 animals. The nobbles are culled while the vast herds are on the move, and as they average 20 km/hour, this is done as quickly as possible so that the carcasses may be efficiently processed. Once

killed, the animals are skinned, their carcasses dressed, and the meat and hides taken to a pre-designated rendezvous point to be picked up by shuttle.

The ranches themselves consist of two sections: a mobile component of grav vehicles used to harvest the nobbles, and a ranch compound where the ranchers, their families, and workers live. A typical ranch compound, as shown here, consists of the ranch house proper (1), a powerhouse (2) and fuel tank (3), 2-3 dwellings for the resident workers and their families (4), a large vehicle port (5), a shed housing agricultural machinery (6), a greenhouse area growing the ranch's vegetables (7), and 2-3 barns (8), all set on a 1-square-kilometer landholding.

In addition to living accommodation for the rancher's family (ranching families tend to be large, often with 4 or more generations living at a ranch), ranch houses have a number of other features. These include a mess hall and recreation area for non-resident work-

ers (also used for the Harvest End celebrations), guest rooms, a play/school room for the ranch children (who are usually too isolated to attend a normal school), and a sick bay fitted with an autodoc.

Ranch buildings vary in style from ultra-modern modular constructions to a wide range of classic reproductions. Hermann Kohl's ranch house, for example, is built in the style of a small Rhine-land castle of Terra/Sol, and is a popular tourist attraction.

Many ranchers also use their landholdings to grow crops and tend the more usual types of domestic animals, making their ranches almost totally self-sufficient in foodstuffs.

The mobile component of a typical ranch would consist of two large refrigerated grav trucks, two smaller grav trucks, four standard air/rafts, four grav belts, and one bunkhouse vehicle. Although Tarsus imports most of its manufactured goods, a company called Firbright Aircars TLC, based at the plan-

et's capital, includes all the above in the small range of vehicles it manufactures from imported components.

Refrigerated grav trucks are used to carry the dressed nobble carcasses to the rendezvous point and ensure that they arrive in good condition, while the smaller grav trucks are used to carry the nobble hides after transporting the slower air/rafts to the harvest area. The latter vehicle is commonly found in other areas of Tarsus, carrying a wide variety of goods.

The nobbles are shot from the air/rafts, which are enclosed rather than open-topped due to the often inclement weather on Tarsus. They have fittings enabling them to tow agricultural machinery when not involved in harvesting. Air/rafts are fairly common throughout Tarsus, especially in those areas having no roads for ground vehicles.

Finally, the bunkhouse vehicle is basically a ten-man version of TRAVELLER Book 3's pre-fabricated cabin built onto a grav-sled. It is used to house the harvesting party, and doubles as accommodation for temporary ranch workers at other times.

The **Striker** specifications for these vehicles are as follows:

Refrigerated Grav Truck (TL 10)

This vehicle has provisions for the driver and one passenger, including somewhat cramped sleeping/living accommodations. It mounts no weapons.

Height: 2 m (plus 1-m turret cabin)

Width: 5 m

Length: 12.5 m

Volume: 125 cubic meters

Weight: 135.665 tons

Price: Cr 1,595,230.

Movement:

Maximum 259 kph/216 cm

Cruise 195 kph/162 cm

NOE 65 kph/54 cm

Movement effects on fire: No fire possible.

Armor: Chassis (all faces) 1; turret (all faces) 0.

Target size DMs: + 4 Low, + 1 High

Equipment: TL 10 avionics, 50-power radio, Drive-Aid computer/autopilot, 5-ton (1 cubic meter) refrigeration plant using 1.5 megawatts, Tarsus standard model communicator with keyboard/viewscreen (used to track nobble herds via satellite), cargo capacity of 100 cubic meters.

Power plant: 18-megawatt fusion power plant, consuming 27 liters of fuel per hour; fuel capacity of 4500 liters,

sufficient for 166 hours. Grav generators produce 1.216 Gs.

Weapons: None

General-Purpose Grav Truck (TL 10)

This vehicle has provisions for the driver and one passenger, including cramped sleeping/living accommodations. It mounts no weapons.

Height: 2 m

Width: 4 m

Length: 9.35 m

Volume: 67.32 cubic meters

Weight: 75.09 tons

Price: Cr 1,094,013

Movement:

Maximum 238 kph/198 cm

Cruise 178 kph/148 cm

NOE 59 kph/49 cm

Movement effects on fire: No fire possible

Armor: All faces 1

Target size DMs: + 3 Low

Equipment: TL 10 avionics, 50-power radio, Drive-Aid computer/autopilot, cargo capacity of 50 cubic meters

Power plant: g-megawatt fusion power plant, consuming 13.5 liters per hour; fuel capacity of 2300 liters, sufficient for 170 hours. Grav generators produce 1.198 Gs.

Weapons: none

Standard Air/Raft (TL 10)

This vehicle has provision for 4 passengers (including the driver) and mounts no weapons.

Height: .75 m (turret .75m)

Width: 1.75 m

Length: 4.2 m

Volume: 9.184 cubic meters

Weight: 7.076 tons

Price: Cr 109,688

Movement:

Maximum 157 kph/131 cm

Cruise 117 kph/98 cm

NOE 39 kph/33 cm

Movement effects on fire: No fire possible

Armor: Chassis (all faces) 1; turret (all faces) 0

Target size DMs: + 1 Low, + 1 High

Equipment: 50-power radio, Drive-Aid computer/autopilot, cargo capacity of 4 cubic meters

Power plant: 0.8-megawatt fusion power plant, consuming 1.2 liters of fuel per hour; fuel capacity is 200 liters, sufficient for 166 hours. Grav generators produce 1.13 Gs

Weapons: None

Another vehicle sometimes encountered on Nob Plain is the G-Carrier used by the Tarsus Defence Force, whose **Striker** specifications are as follows:

G-Carrier, TDF Model (TL 10)

This vehicle has a crew of 2 (driver and gunner) and provisions for 10 passengers (with cramped living accommodations for 8). It mounts a heavy laser rifle (as per a laser rifle, but does 6D damage) on a pintel mount on the chassis deck. No fire control is fitted, but the weapon is stabilized.

Height: 2 m

Width: 5.6 m

Length: 10 m

Volume: 112 cubic meters

Weight: 51.77 tons

Price: Cr 873,992

Movement:

Maximum 190 kph/158 cm

Cruise 143 kph/119 cm

NOE 48 kph/40 cm.

Movement effects on fire: None

Armor: Chassis (front and rear) 28; chassis (sides) 20; belly and deck (all) 15

Target size DMs: + 4 Low, 0 High

Equipment: Laser sensor (6 +), 5000-power radio, Tarsus standard model communicator with keyboard/viewscreen, 5-power target-acquisition radar (all-weather), thermal image, image intensification, map box, Drive-

Aid computer/autopilot, 6 prismatic aerosols, sealed pressurized environment with life support for 12, 5 tons of cargo capacity.

Power plant: 6-megawatt fusion power plant, consuming 9 liters of fuel per hour; fuel capacity is 4000 liters, sufficient for 444 hours. Grav generators produce 1.159 Gs.

Weapon: Use TL-13 laser's direct-fire characteristics given on page 31 of Striker Book 3

The Drive-Aid computer/autopilot fitted to the above vehicles is a hand computer (with diagnostic capability to warn of potential malfunctions) which can be programmed to maneuver the vehicle to a preset destination.

The price of a complete set of ranching vehicles is 6.5 million credits, which, coupled to the value of ranch buildings, landholding, and power plant, gives nobble ranches an average value of 10 MCr. Upkeep and maintenance costs Cr 300,000 per standard year, and wages average Cr 40,000 per harvest. The average number of harvests each ranch makes per standard year is 5.76 at Cr 186,000 per contract, giving a profit of Cr 540,960 per standard year — a 5.41% return on the initial investment. The best-run ranches can make up to Cr 630,000 per standard year, while others make as little as Cr 250,000.

Tarsus adventures

In addition to the adventure given in the Nobble Ranch section of GDW's *Tarsus* boxed module, ranches can serve as a background for a wide variety of other actions. Some ideas for game scenarios on this interesting world appear below.

1) A miserly ranch owner spends much of the ranch's profits on personal anagogathics. Despairing of inheriting the ranch through natural causes, the owner's heir (this middle-aged grandson) hires the characters to help the old man on his way — or the PCs might defend the old man from hired assassins.

2) The former right-hand man of the leader of an Imperium-based criminal organization has retired to a Tarsus nobble ranch. His true identity has just been discovered by the Imperial authorities, who would like to question him concerning his previous activities. Unfortunately, no extradition treaty exists between Tarsus and the Imperium. Not wanting to prejudice attempts to encourage Tarsus to seek Imperial

membership, the PCs are unofficially hired to kidnap the man and transport him off-planet. Given the delicate nature of the operation, it is unlikely that the PCs will be told the true identity of their employer until after the mission.

3) Imperial intelligence has recently discovered that a nobble ranch is being used as a cover for a Sword Worlds spying operation, being a staging post for operatives between the Imperium and their home planets. For the same reasons as in the second scenario above, the Imperium does not want to become officially involved, and the PCs have been hired to ensure that the base ceases operations, while at the same time obtaining as much information as possible concerning Sword Worlds intelligence.

4) The PCs are contacted by one or more patrons whose relatives have disappeared without trace in the Startown area of Tarsus. A number of clues lead them to a seemingly ordinary nobble ranch which turns out to be a cover for an illegal transplant clinic using organs from kidnapped donors. To liven things up, one or more PCs could be kidnapped as they are nearing their goal.

5) Computer analysis of the data from an orbital geophysical survey has desig-

nated an area bordering Nob Plain as having a 78% probability of containing lanthanum deposits. Not wanting to draw attention to the fact by performing a ground survey, thus causing the value of the ranch which occupies the site to soar, the mining company which carried out the survey has decided to buy the ranch beforehand. The PCs are hired to encourage the rancher to put the property up for sale. The base chance for this to occur is 13 + on 2D, DM + 1 per Cr 500,000 damage which the ranch vehicles or buildings sustain. Alternatively, the PCs could be hired by the rancher to protect her property from a group of company employees who want the land for some unknown reason.

6) Due to a drought which recently reduced the sizes of the nobble herds, the number of contracts has been cut for a period of four years. As the contracts are allocated on an area basis, this has resulted in two neighboring ranches having to compete for 5 contracts per year between themselves. Increasing tension and Tarsus' low law level has led to a "Lincoln County" range war between the two ranches. PCs could be hired by one or the other as gun hands, or they can attempt to play off both ends against the middle.

KALI: An American super-villainess with a background in crime and mysticism. She is wanted and has a long criminal record.

Identity: Sheena Grey Age: 20
Side: Evil Level: 1

Powers:

1. Heightened Expertise: Martial arts, +4 to hit
 2. Special Weapon: Power-chucks, HTH +3 to hit, +1d6 damage, carries a Power Blast
 3. Heightened Defense: -4 to be hit
- Other Weaponry:
Katana, HTH +2 to hit, +1d6 damage
6 Shuriken, HTH +3 to hit, +1 damage, with a 13 inch throwing range.

Weight: 130 lbs.

Strength: 16

Endurance: 13

Agility: 13

Intelligence: 12

Charisma: 15

Dam. Mod.: +1

Accuracy: +1

Hit Points: 9

Heal: .9

Car. Cap.: 351

Basic HTH: 1d6

Power: 54

Movement: 42"

Det. Hidden: 10%

Det. Danger: 14%

Invent. Pts.: 1.2

Inventing: 36%

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StarQuestions

Questions, answers, and advice on the GAMMA WORLD® game

by Penny Petticord

This column takes another look at the GAMMA WORLD® science-fantasy game. If you need some answers to help your gaming campaign, write down your questions and mail them to StarQuestions, Dragon Publishing, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

Q: How quickly can a vibro blade or vibro dagger cut through duralloy?

A: Since there is no force field involved, a vibro weapon can punch through duralloy in the time it takes to complete an attack (one Action Turn). However, carving a hole in a large duralloy-armored vehicle or vault, or creating an opening of specified dimensions which will require careful cutting, could take between 2 and 12 Action Turns, at the GM's discretion.

Q: What suggestions would you have for designing "high level" adventures for well-equipped and experienced adventuring groups?

A: If you've run out of lost ruins to explore, you could get the characters involved in some large-scale world events, such as the consolidation of villages into nations, redevelopment of civilization, and clearing of new homelands.

If you already have some settlements large enough to be political entities in your campaign, they might have (or only threaten to have) a war, with the player characters on one side or the other, and adventures directed toward sabotaging enemy equipment, spying out weaponry and military capability, or confronting teams of elite military forces as well-equipped as the characters.

To restore the suspense that is sometimes lost with a too-powerful party, try designing the adventure with built-in time limits, so that characters will not have time to return home and cure injuries or re-equip themselves. For example, perhaps the characters can be called upon to avert an impending worldwide disas-

ter, such as collision with an asteroid, close passage of a comet, pollution of the world's water supply, epidemic disease, or even an alien invasion.

If you have the time to do extra design work, you could expand the frontiers of your campaign to include exploration of colonies on the Moon (Tycho Center, DRAGON* issues #86-87) or on Mars (POLYHEDRON™ issue #26). Characters might find an abandoned spaceport on Earth with a functioning shuttlecraft, discover how to operate it, and visit one of these other worlds.

Q: The legend on the "Outdoor Adventure Map of Pitz Burke" shows that the symbols for "Craters" and "Radiation" are exactly alike. Was this an accident?

A: No. Most of the craters were created by nuclear blasts during the Social Wars, and are thus comparatively strong radiation sources. Note, however, that the craters on the map are named; the pinkish areas that are not named are simply other sources of radiation.

Q: I cannot figure out what the Range Ruler that came with modules GW3 and GW4 is used for.

A: It is meant to be used with figures for comparing movement rates with weapon and attack ranges. This can help to determine if, for example, a character's movement rate might take him out of range of a mutant attack before such could take effect. However, since it is not in scale with any of the maps that come with the GAMMA WORLD game or modules, the Range Ruler's use is limited to tabletop gaming.

Q: Why do fungicide and herbicide attacks always hit their targets when thrown, but frag grenades require a roll to hit the target?

A: All creatures within the blast radius are attacked individually by a frag grenade, so it is important to know its exact location. The deadly effects of fungicide and herbicide,

however, are specific for certain creature types, and the substances are harmless to all others. Since the net effect of tossing a fungicide at a fungus is that the target has taken 12d6 points of damage, and no other creature in that area is affected (regardless of exactly where the substance has landed), the game mechanics specify an automatic hit for ease of play.

Q: With the mutation *wings/gas bags*, one can fly at 100 meters per action turn, but the fastest speed that flying NPCs can reach is 36 meters per action turn. Was this an error?

A: No. The flying species listed (such as the Lil) cannot fly as fast as mutated full-sized characters with wings. NPC humanoids or mutated humans of normal size who have the wings mutation can fly at 100 meters per Action Turn.

Q: Where do the GAMMA WORLD modules take place in North America?

A: Module GW1, *Legion of Gold*, is set somewhere in the southeastern Wisconsin/northern Illinois area.

Module GW2, *Famine in Far-Go*, does not have a specific location, and can be placed anywhere the GM desires relative to the individual campaign world. Module GW3, *The Cleansing War of Garik Blackhand*, takes place in the western United States, near Yellowstone Park and the Grand Tetons. Module GW4, *The Mind Masters*, starts somewhere along the Mississippi River north of Memphis. Iac South is on the Illinois side, just across the river and a bit north from Cape Girardeau, MO (called "Kap Gurdo" on the module map). If you compare the module map with a road atlas, you can also identify the Ohio River ("Hio River"), Jackson, MO ("Jakson"), and Carbondale, IL ("Lake Carndale").

Q: What city is "Sanjo" on the North America map? It appears to be in California.

A: "Sanjo" is the GAMMA WORLD game version of San Jose, California.

The Saurians

A new race for STAR FRONTIERS® campaigns

by Jeffrey Bouley

[The Saurians are presented here as an NPC race, though players may use them as player characters if the campaign referee so allows it. It is assumed that the Saurians are very rarely seen, so they have little overall impact on events in the Frontier. The Saurians' history may be altered to fit the circumstances of a particular campaign. — Editor]

The Saurians hail from the planet Kischen, an oceanic world many light-years from the Frontier. For a time they lived in peace, enjoying profitable trade with nearby races. Soon, however, the Sathar became aware of the Saurians and regarded them as both a threat and a challenge to be overcome.

The Sathar descended in waves on the unsuspecting planets, destroying whole populations in the process. The Saurians, unused to full-scale war, fought bravely against the worms, but to no avail. With their defenses decimated and racial destruction imminent, the Saurian governments prepared dozens of starships to transport hundreds of thousands of citizens on a large-scale exodus to new worlds. To save as many beings as possible, all of the starships were filled to capacity with passengers placed in stasis.

The majority of the computer-guided vessels were launched in the direction of the Frontier, although ships were sent out in many other directions. The Saurians had earlier intercepted radio signals from the Frontier that were part of a plan by the Pan-Galactic Corporation to contact other sentient races, in hopes of developing more interstellar trade. The Saurians did not send all of their ships in that direction, though, lest the signals prove to be a Sathar trick.

The main body of Saurian starships eventually entered the Theseus system and were boarded by alerted UPF vessels. Only a few thousand Saurians were brought out of stasis at first, until space could be found on other worlds on which they could settle. At present, two

hundred thousand Saurians now live and work throughout the Frontier, but nineteen Saurian starships (with over five hundred thousand colonists aboard, in stasis) remain in solar orbit at Theseus. Finding space for these beings is still a problem, though plans are underway to ship them to Lossend (Timeon).

Appearance and structure

Saurians are bipedal reptilian humanoids that stand **2.1** meters high. Each of them has two hands, each with three fingers and an opposable thumb. Each foot has four toes; feet, as well as hands, are webbed. Saurians have small scales, as per their reptilian ancestry, but they are warm-blooded as mammals are. Saurians are omnivorous and have rather flat teeth.

Being semi-aquatic creatures, Saurians feel at home both above and below water. As part of their aquatic adaptations, Saurians have a gill slit on each side of their throats which filter oxygen out of fresh and salt water. Saurians also possess underwater vision of exceptional quality.

Saurians still have certain physical defenses inherited from their prehistoric ancestors. One of these is the set of claws on fingers and toes. Although these claws have degenerated, they can still be used to some effect. When a Saurian uses its claws, consider the attack to have punching damage but add **1 hp** extra damage. The tail can also be used as a weapon; it has a -10 to hit any target, but it does **2d10 damage** on a strike.

The internal structure of a Saurian is similar to that of a Human, with the functions and positioning of a Saurian's organs approximating those of a Human's. The respiratory system is adapted for air and water breathing, and no Saurian organ corresponds to a Human appendix.

Saurian races

The Saurians evolved from a highly adaptive creature that Humans have called a land dragon. This creature was found in a variety of habitats on Kischen and developed into the four known races of Saurians: the Kavak, the Kamier, the Talsoi, and the Vanar.

The Kavak: These Saurians have green scales, a long tail, and a short, curved horn protruding from the top of their skulls. The horn varies in color from one Saurian to another, from white to green; it is light-colored at birth and darkens gradually as the Saurian grows older. This horn can be used as a weapon, causing **1d10** damage. However, for every .1 meter by which the opponent is shorter than the Saurian, reduce the chance to hit by 5 (to a minimum of a 10% chance).

The Kavak evolved from a grasslands-dwelling dragon that used the horn for defense and the green coloration for camouflage (allowing them to approach prey more easily).

The Kamier: While the other races of Saurians have small but visible scales, the Kamier have the appearance of smooth skin, their scales being visible only under magnification. Coloration is green to green-brown, and this variety of Saurian also sports a large crest of red or orange skin that runs from the **base** of the neck to the tip of the skull. The claws of the Kamier are more developed than those of the other Saurians, doing **+ 2 hp** damage to punching damage, as opposed to the **1 hp** damage cited above. In addition, the tail of a Kamier is covered with horny spikes which add **2 hp** damage to tail attacks (4-22 hp). Another unique feature of the Kamier is its snout, which is much shorter than those of the other races, being almost flat.

The Kamier evolved from a swamp-dwelling land dragon that had to contend with particularly dangerous swamp predators. The head crest, which resem-

bles a native marsh plant, was used to help the Kamier with concealment.

The Talsoi: A Talsoi has beige to dark brown scales, a heavy tail (+ 1 hp to tail damage), and a horny ridge running from its extended snout to the tip of the tail. They developed from the forest- and plains-dwelling land dragons, that used the coloration for camouflage to improve their hunting skills. Tolsoi enjoy freshwater rivers, seas, and lakes.

The Vanar: Vanar are bright to dark green and have a very narrow, whiplike tail (1d10 + 1 hp damage). They are descendants of the land dragons that were native to the jungles and rain forests of Kischen. Vanar have thin limbs and are lighter than other sorts of Saurians.

Senses

Saurian senses are roughly equivalent to those possessed by Humans. They have a slightly more acute sense of vision and, as noted before, can see well underwater. Saurians do have a more acute sense of smell than humans, about equal to a Vrusk's.

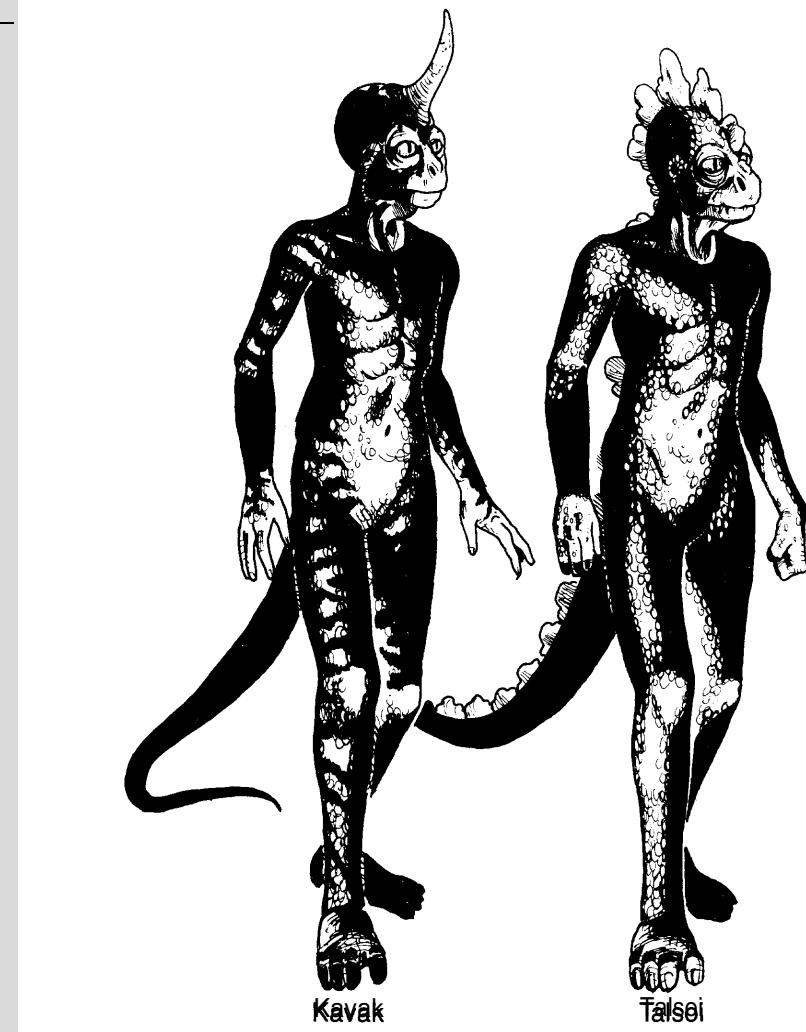
Speech

Saurians are able to speak in the same manner as Humans, and many can communicate in Pan-Galactic, Human, and Yazirian languages with ease. Saurians tend to lisp, though their hissing voices are distinctly unlike those of the Sathar. When angered, Saurians hiss loudly and bare their teeth.

Society and customs

Saurians stress two beliefs above all others in their society: individuality and the freedom of choice. Saurians detest dictatorships and prefer very loosely structured governments, having an uncaring attitude for authority, though they will obey it if convinced it is for the common good. Their belief in self-reliance made it hard for the Saurians to accept the aid of the UPF at first, though they really had little other choice. Saurians in the Psycho-Social field will not hypnotize unwilling beings; only the most evil and vile of Saurians would do so.

Saurian have large) extended families. Because their young develop so rapidly (reaching adult size in five years), "nuclear families" would be short-lived. Education and socialization of the young are handled within each clan, or *svik*, which may consist of hundreds of individuals living within the same general area. Saurians are interfertile despite



their racial types, and a *svik* may have members of all four races within it.

Svika may compete with each other over business or personal matters, but violent crime among them is almost unknown; they are too aware of their own near-extinction as a race from the Sathar's attacks.

Saurians are extremely touchy about comments regarding them as a species. Any insult against a single Saurian is easily taken as a slur against the race as a whole, even if the Saurian in question belongs to another *svik*. Saurians tend to be overprotective of their fellow clan members, even as they recognize the importance of standing on one's own two feet. This causes such stress for them that they will not willingly discuss it with someone of another species, such as a Human or Yazirian.

Saurians are something of a paradox to other races, as they are both gentle and kind as well as vengeful and brutal. Among friends and their *svik*, a Saurian is pleasant, cheerful, and absolutely loyal. But in the presence of a hated enemy such as the Sathar, a Saurian's rage and fury can be frightening (although Saurians do not receive any

bonuses for rage in combat). A wrong done to a Saurian will not be forgotten by any of them, and making amends can be difficult (or impossible, depending on the offense). Should the offending party make an appropriate apology, the Saurians will grudgingly accept it and continue with the business at hand — though forgetting about the incident will take months or years.

The horrifying losses that they took in their war with the Sathar have made Saurians a militant race. They tend to purchase large quantities of arms, and groups of them have expressed interests in creating their own military force, with which to raid Sathar bases and ships. Saurians hope to someday locate the Sathar homeworld and destroy it; they also wish to return to their old homeworld of Kischen and retake it from the Sathar. For cultural reasons, Saurians have a marked fondness for weapons that others see as archaic (swords, pole arms, crossbows, etc.).

Saurians have from three to four names. The first two are the common and *svik* names, comparable to a first and last name. If the Saurian performs an important deed, he or she may



Vanar

Kamier

receive an honorific to signify this accomplishment. The most important of all names, however, is the *tarish satimu* ("sacred name"). According to Saurian religious beliefs, the *tarish satimu* is a part of the owner's very soul. Only the individual Saurian and his *svik* will ever know the Saurian's sacred name. Should someone somehow discover a Saurian's *tarish satimu*, it is considered an insult of the most terrible kind, and the Saurian will try to regain his honor through a duel of some sort, often to the death. This practice has eroded under contact with the races of the Federation, though sacred names are still considered very important.

Attitudes

Saurians are respectful of the other races, but they particularly enjoy and are fascinated by Dralasites. They respect Vrusk for their drive, but find it hard to make friends with them; the Vrusk are too practical and structured. Saurians find Humans fairly easy to get along with.

Yazirians are another matter. Though Yazirians and Saurians are alike in cer-

tain social, political, and family matters, the Saurians find the former to be rude, insulting, and pushy. Fights between individuals of the two races have tended to turn into widespread brawls as clan members from either side are drawn into the conflict, and even in the short time that Saurians have been in the Frontier, several remarkable feuds have developed. When it happens that a Yazirian and a Saurian become friends, however, they become friends for life.

Saurians dislike S'sessu greatly (see DRAGON® issue #96), because of the latter's similarity to Sathar and amoral business practices. S'sessu dislike Saurians in turn. Other races are generally friendly toward the Saurians, despite their touchiness, but some Humans are slightly nervous around Saurians, particularly if they have an aversion to reptiles. This reaction is fortunately rare.

Special abilities

Because of their nervous structure, Saurians have a pronounced resistance to hypnotism or mind control of any

kind. A Saurian will receive a + 15 bonus in his favor to resist the control, depending on the exact nature of the mind-affecting power. In addition, a Saurian has a + 15 bonus to any roll enabling him to notice the control attempt (or to a normal Intuition roll if the noticing roll is not normally allowed). Note that if experience is used to increase this resistance, the bonus to notice the attempt will not automatically be increased (and vice-versa). Each ability must be given experience separately.

Miscellaneous information

Average size:	2.1 m tall
Average mass:	100 kg (male), 90 kg (female)*
Average lifespan:	240 years
Reproduction:	Heterosexual; oviparous
Body temperature:	26°C

* — Vanar are 15 kg lighter.

Saurians have the following ability modifiers, regardless of sex and racial type.

STR/STA:	+ 10
DEX/RS:	-10
INT/LOG:	+ 0
PER/LDR:	+ 0

Saurians walk at 10 m/turn, run at 30 m/turn, and move at about 5 km/hour.

Racial reaction modifiers follow.

race	<i>Saurians'</i> <i>reaction to</i> <i>Saurians</i>	<i>Saurians'</i> <i>reaction to</i> <i>race</i>
Human	-5	0
Dralasite	0	+20
Vrusk	0	0
Yazirian	-10*	-15*
S'sessu**	-5	-20
Zethra***	0	-5

* — If favorable reaction is gained, discard the use of this modifier on future rolls regarding the individuals in question.

** — See DRAGON issue #96.

*** — See DRAGON issue #84.

Concluding notes

All Saurians encountered in the Frontier will be able to speak Pan-Galactic, since they were hypno-trained in its use after they were released from stasis. They were also taught some of the common cultural idiosyncrasies and customs in order to integrate them into society.

Some Saurians have remained aboard their old starships, which are hull size 16-20, and are using them as transports in their own commercial dealings.

Tanks again!

More material on STAR FRONTIERS® vehicle weapons

by Alex Curylo

[“Tanks a lot!” DRAGON® issue #99) proved to be one of the most popular STAR FRONTIERS® articles we’ve run in a long time. Alex Curylo, the author of the piece, sent us a few corrections, clarifications, and bits of new material to add to the original article. These are given below. — Editor.]

Corrections

The power econopack holds 250 SEU, as stated in the article, not 500 SEU (as stated on the charts under “Ammunition”).

Mines from a minedropper weigh 5 kg apiece, not 25 kg as given on the charts under “Ammunition.”

The heavy version of the guided missile weighs 45 kg, not 60 as given on the same chart.

Bombs cost 500 Cr (light) and 1000 Cr (heavy), not 50 and 100, respectively, as given on the ammo chart.

Clarifications

The vehicle MG only fires bursts of 20 bullets apiece. This could have been deduced from the charts (the vehicle MG has 400 rounds of ammo, but only 20 shots), but should have been stated explicitly.

Reading the descriptions of the sprayer, one gets the impression that one multipurpose sprayer fires smoke, oil, and paint. This is not so. Each type of sprayer is a separate weapon, but all are the same size and cost. Also note that sprayers on jetcopters and certain air vehicles will have their jets broken up by the rotor wash, making them ineffective at best.

The ranges given on the charts for cannons and howitzers are both for indirect fire. Both weapons can also be used in the direct-fire role; a cannon has the range of a vehicle rocket launcher, and a howitzer has the range of a vehicle recoilless rifle.

The programmed guided missile cannot be used to hit a moving target. It can

be aimed at where you think your target will be, but this subtracts two levels from the firer’s GM skill.

Cyberlinked weapons all fire at the same time. Weapons not able to aim at the gunner’s target will miss automatically, but still fire and use ammo.

Extensions

The dimensions given for oil and paint jets assume that the vehicle is traveling at its turn speed. If the referee wishes the extra work, he can assume that traveling slower widens and shortens the slick, and traveling faster extends and narrows it. No more than 50% alteration of either length or width should be allowed.

The question of applicable weapons skills was basically left untouched in the article. Obvious extensions of Expanded Rules weapons use the same skills as used for their smaller cousins. Cannons and howitzers use Projectile Weapons skill; if either is used as an indirect fire weapon, use the new Military skill of Indirect Fire. (This skill could also be used to fire mortars, rifle grenades, and other indirect-firing weapons.) Flame-throwers use Flame Weapons skill. Bombs use Dropped Weapons skill, which is applicable to anything dropped from a moving air vehicle. Sprayed weapons and minedropers don’t require a weapon skill; add 5% per Technician level of the driver to half of his DEX for an attack roll if these weapons are being aimed at a pursuer.

For greater consistency with these rules and official game rules, guided missiles should use skill-oriented rolls also. The wire-guided missile should then have a base chance to hit equal to the gunner’s DEX, + 5% per level of Guided Missile skill. The programmed missile should have a base chance to hit of 35%, + 10% per level of Guided Missile skill. Note that absolutely no one without at least one level of Guided Missile skill has any chance at all to hit with these weapons.



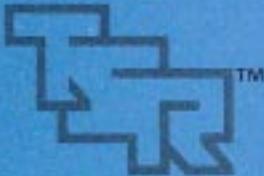
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The GEN CON® 18 super-designers' top

A Super-Powered Seminar!

by Roger E. Moore

Ever wish you could meet the top super-powered game designers all at once? If you were at the GEN CON® 18 convention this August and went to event #100054 on Saturday night (August 24), then you got your wish.

The seminar was held on the upper level of the MECCA Convention Hall in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Present were dozens of eager gamers, a handful of heroic game designers, and yours truly as moderator. The topic was super-powered hero games: their past, present, and future.

The designers' panel included Jeff Dee and Jack Herman, creators of the VILLAINS & VIGILANTES™ game from FGU; Ray Greer from Hero Games (makers of the CHAMPIONS™ game); Greg Gorden, designer of the DC HEROES game from Mayfair, Inc.; and, our very own Jeff Grubb, creator of the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game from TSR, Inc. The panel was asked questions from the moderator, and the answers appear below.

The past

How did the super-games get started?

Jeff Dee and Jack Herman were sophomores in high school when they developed the earliest version of the VILLAINS & VIGILANTES game. They attempted to rate the various comic-book heroes using rules from the *Empire of the Petal Throne* game, but hit upon their own rules system which was further developed after exposure to various GEN CON conventions in 1978-79. The V&V game has gone through a number of revisions since then, and is the oldest major super-powered hero game in print.

One super-game predated even the V&V game: *Superhero: 2044*, by Zocchi Games. George MacDonald, a college student in the late 1970s, was interested in the game and in the V&V system which came after it. He developed his own system of hero gaming, which received its first big push at the 1981 Origins convention on the west coast. There, 2000 copies of the CHAMPIONS game system (hand-stapled, at that) were sold to excited gamers. Produced by Hero Games, the CHAMPIONS system has been expanded-to link it with role-playing systems for modern spies, Roaring Twenties adventurers, and other universes.

Jeff Grubb was in college, too, when he and his friends got tired of their usual AD&D® game and came up with their own Marvel Universe™ hero game. The group's characters were developed as a minor branch of the Avengers™, naming themselves the "Junior Achievers." When Jeff came to TSR, Inc., the TSR-Marvel link strengthened and work began on the infamous "BOOT HILL® revision," the code name for the Marvel project. The MARVEL SUPER HEROES game was developed to get new people into the gaming market. Its easy-to-learn mechanics and fast set-up time were seen as the perfect counterpoint to the V&V game's medium-level complexity and the high-complexity CHAMPIONS system. DC HEROES is viewed as about as complex as the V&V or CHAMPIONS games.

The DC HEROES game began in 1980 as a Marvel Universe game, but was developed for DC Comics after TSR, Inc., picked up the Marvel license. After going through a variety of game design-

ers, the project was given to Greg Gorden. With an enormous pile of hand-written notes, a complete set of DC comics from 1955 to 1983, and Mayfair's best wishes, Greg was turned loose. "I worked fast," he said. He began work in May, 1984, and the game was released exactly one year later.

Headaches and heartburn

What sorts of problems did the designers encounter when they were developing their games?

Greg Gorden's worst problem was "this guy right here" (pointing to a poster of Superman™). The problems inherent in trying to balance the powers of Krypton's™ finest son within a game system that included Robin™ were enormous. Stupendously powerful heroes would have to fight moderately powerful villains to a draw; relatively powerful and weak characters would have to be able to adventure together on a regular and comfortable basis. Greg hit upon using a logarithmic scale for measuring powers (and, indeed, everything else), and used a hero-point system similar to the JAMES BOND 007 game (from Victory Games) to help out the weaker characters.

Attempts to keep the Marvel Universe heroes and villains true to the comics were one of Jeff Grubb's biggest headaches. He finally settled on general rankings for super-powers, avoiding a lot of number-crunching and arguments over whether Thor™ or the Hulk™ was the stronger. The magic system has also been a problem, as it is difficult to define an accurate system that fits the Marvel Universe's magic. Jeff developed

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the Karma system to let heroes make the rolls they needed to make in order to succeed; this system was also similar to the JAMES BOND 007 game's system.

The high complexity of Hero Games' CHAMPIONS game led to many problems in play balance. New powers had to be tested and retested, and rules had to be rewritten. (The current, third edition of the rules, says Ray Greer, is the final one.) Ray noted that the high complexity of the CHAMPIONS game was still desirable: "You can never have enough source material." Another problem was that everyone on the Hero Games staff had another job; game design had to be done in their spare time, and spare time was hard to find.

Jack Herman and Jeff Dee had had no previous experience with game design when they put the V&V game together. Play balance and power abuse were critical problems; how does a game master keep a very powerful character and a very weak character happy on the same mission? This problem was put into the game master's realm, and advice was given on how to keep all of the players busy with useful tasks on game adventures.

The future

What's coming for these games in the future?

True Believers in the Marvel Way will see an assortment of new modules covering urban bad guys (Concrete Jungle), New York City (*Faultline*), technology and battle suits (*Weapons Locker*), and the Beyonder™ (*Secret Wars II*™). An expansion of the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game is also under close consideration, and may appear in 1986.

In the months to come, V&V gamers will see some licensed modules for the DNAgent™, the Elementals™, and the THUNDER Agents™. Jeff and Jack noted that one module should be coming out for the V&V game every month (if everything works out right), and that a comic book based on the V&V game would be produced by Comico (with art by Jeff Dee). The comic would feature original heroes and villains.

CHAMPIONS gamers can look forward to modules giving information on super-agents, neutral characters with super-powers, a fantasy bestiary that can be applied to hero gaming, and an organization that recovers the fruits of villainous technology. A CHAMPIONS comic book will appear through Eclipse Comics next June, featuring the heroes and heroines from the rules books and supplements (as on the CHAMPIONS II cover).

The DC HEROES game is expecting to have modules on the Teen Titans™², the Brotherhood of Evil™², Ambush Bug™², and Blue Devil™². Sourcebooks on Batman™² and the Crisis on Infinite Earths™² should also be appearing.

The audience strikes back

The audience got a chance to ask their own questions before the seminar was over. The hottest topic turned out to be game conversions.

Many people expressed an interest in buying modules which could be adapted for a variety of game systems. The major stumbling block here lay in the realm of licensing; some contracts might not permit conversion of one super-powered game system to another. A game module with conversion statistics for several games at once might also cost several dollars more than a regular module. The great differences between the Marvel and DC universes were cited as a problem in converting between those two game systems as well.

For the most part, players are on their own in converting licensed characters to other game systems. The question will still be explored, however, by the com-

panies involved. Both Hero Games and Fantasy Games Unlimited have included statistics in their products allowing conversions from the V&V game to the CHAMPIONS game and back, and Chaosium Inc.'s SUPERWORLD game has also joined the list of conversion-linked games.

Conflicts between how characters perform in comic books and how they are defined in game terms were discussed by Jeff Grubb and Greg Gorden. The licensed games that they created were designed to allow for a variety of actions and combat results on the part of their respective heroes and villains. Thus, Spider-Man™¹ can beat up all the X-Men™¹ on some days, and Wonder Woman™² can beat Superman in arm-wrestling on others. Both designers still felt that keeping up with the "state of the (comic) art" was exhausting.

At the end of the seminar, the panel agreed to try another get-together like this again next year. All in all, it proved to be a very enlightening experience for everyone involved. I'll take Greg Gordon's advice and allow more time for the game designers to poll the audience next time, and I'll take Jeff Grubbs advice and not ramble so much. Nuff said.

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The MARVEL®-Phile

Vox populi

by Jeff Grubb

I'd like to thank Peter Sanderson for making this month's column both possible and enjoyable.

Okay, you ask yourself, who is Peter Sanderson and how is he involved with the possibilities of and enjoyment found in the MARVEL®-Phile?

Well, Peter writes the Marvel Saga™, the history of the Marvel Universe™,

starting with the historic flight of the Fantastic Four™ 25 years ago. He is also the co-writer (with Mark Gruenwald) of the Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe™, both in its original incarnation and the deluxe edition that is currently available. (They're up to Clea as I write this.)

Peter took time off from both of these

monstrously complex jobs to help with the GEN CON® 18 convention, by giving a few talks, meeting with fans, and generally proving to be indispensable during the four days he was there. One of these talks involved creating characters for the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ role-playing game. Peter and I took suggestions from the floor and, by careful examination, cobbled together a grab-bag of characters we haven't covered before. The audience was most interested in new and powerful characters, particularly Armadillo™, Count Nefaria™, and Hyperion™ of the Squadron Supreme™.

So, for those who were there (and for those who didn't make it there), here are the official Marvel-approved versions of the 1985 GEN CON Grab-Bag!

ARMADILLO™

Antonio Rodriguez™

Ex-criminal, now professional wrestler

Fighting: EXCELLENT (20)

Agility: GOOD (10)

Strength: INCREDIBLE (40)

Endurance: REMARKABLE (30)

Reason: TYPICAL (6)

Intuition: TYPICAL (6)

Psyche: TYPICAL (6)

Health: 100

Karma: 18

Resources: TYPICAL

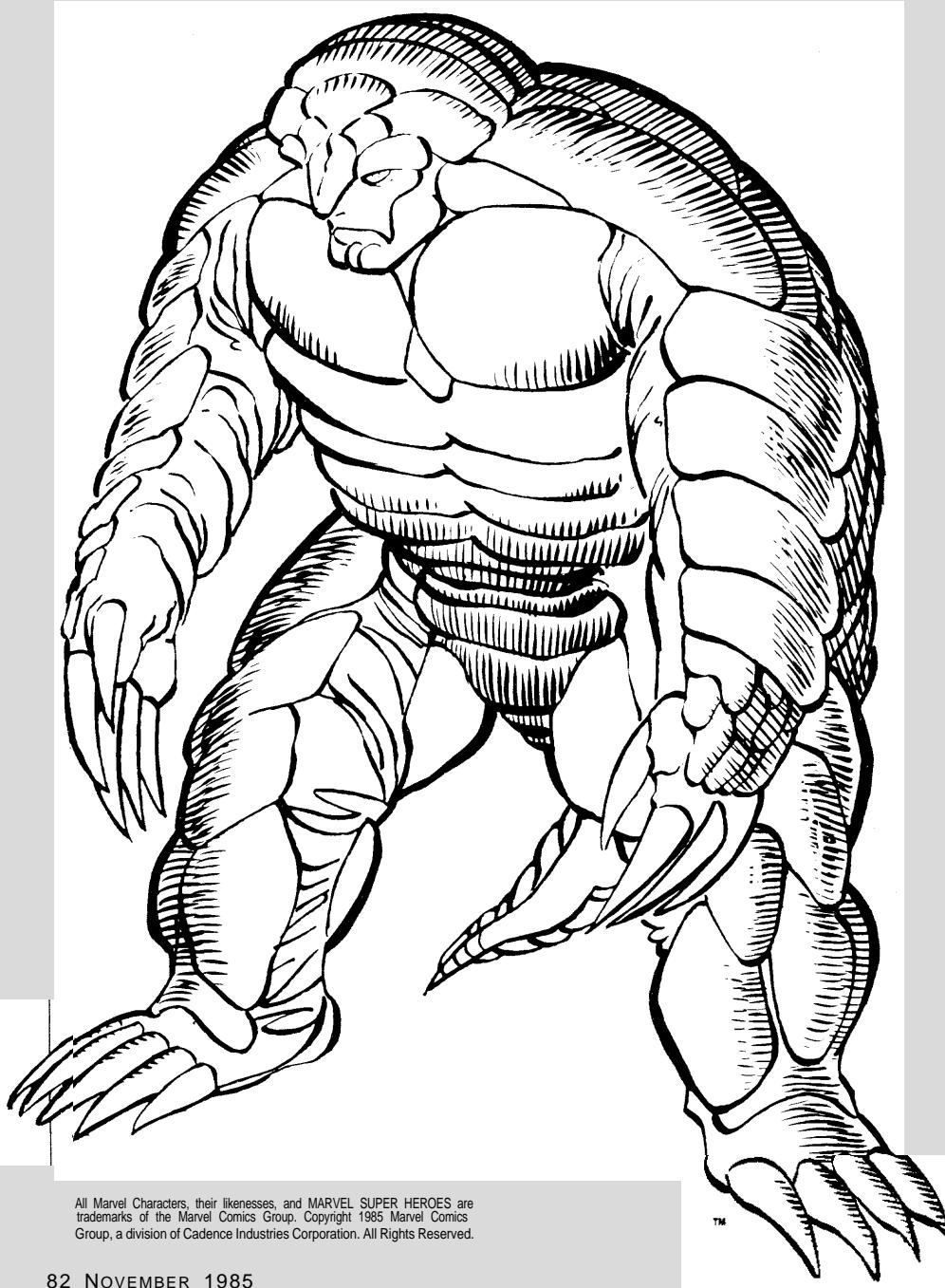
Popularity: 0

Known powers:

BODY ARMOR: Armadillo's body is covered with a thick hide and armor plates, providing Amazing protection from physical and energy attacks, and Excellent protection from heat-, fire-, acid-, and cold-based attacks.

CLAWS: Armadillo's hands and feet end in long claws of Incredible material strength, capable of rending concrete. They inflict Incredible damage on the Hack & Slash chart.

TUNNELING: Using his powerful claws, Armadillo can burrow through soil and



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rock at a rate of 1 area/round. He may do this through material of up to Remarkable strength without difficulty.

Armadillo's story: Antonio Rodriguez is an American citizen with a criminal record, whose wife Maria fell ill with a mysterious disease. After failing to find a cure through legitimate doctors, Rodriguez turned to Dr. Karl Malus, a criminal scientist whose research had produced the Fly™ and the new Goliath™. Malus offered to help Maria if Armadillo would become the recipient of super powers and serve as Malus's henchman for an undetermined time afterwards. Rodriguez agreed, and Malus combined Rodriguez's genes with those of an armadillo, transforming the small-time criminal into his present form.

Armadillo's first mission was to recover the comatose body of the new Goliath, Malus's last servant, from the compound of the West Coast Avengers™. While Rodriguez's armored form easily dealt with the defenses of the compound, the Armadillo was stopped and captured by Captain America™. Antonio explained that he was engaged in crime only to help his wife. The Sentinel of Liberty took pity on Armadillo's fate and, accompanying Rodriguez back to Malus, forced the scientist to cure Maria and promise to turn himself in. Armadillo has since joined the Unlimited Weight Class Wrestling Federation.

COUNT NEFARIA™

Count Luchino Nefaria, now deceased
Ex-leader of Maggia family and terrorist

Fighting: EXCELLENT (20)

Agility: EXCELLENT (20)

Strength: UNEARTHLY (100)

Endurance: UNEARTHLY (100)

Reason: INCREDIBLE (40)

Intuition: INCREDIBLE (40)

Psyche: REMARKABLE (30)

Health: 240

Karma: 110

Resources: FEEBLE

Popularity: 40

Known powers:

SPEED: Count Nefaria had the powers of the Whirlwind™ (see MH AC 2, *Avengers™ Assembled!*), magnified a hundredfold. He could move up to 30 areas/round in the atmosphere and could generate a whirlwind that acted as a force field of Unearthly strength. He could also make up to 5 multiple attacks

per round against any targets, and these targets did not need to be in the same area as Nefaria.

LASER BEAM: Count Nefaria could fire a laserlike beam of light from his eyes or hands, inflicting up to Unearthly damage at line of sight range.

BODY ARMOR: Nefaria had Unearthly protection from most physical and energy attacks, and Monstrous protection from fire-, cold-, and acid-based attacks.

Count Nefaria's story: Count Nefaria was at the above level of power for about one hour, during which time he stood off the combined might of the entire Avengers™ force, including Thor™ and the Vision™. Before this time, Nefaria's abilities looked like this:

F	A	S	E
EXCE	EXCE	GOOD	GOOD
R	I	P	
INCR	REMA	REMA	

Following this super-powered period, up to the time of his death, Count Nefaria's abilities were:

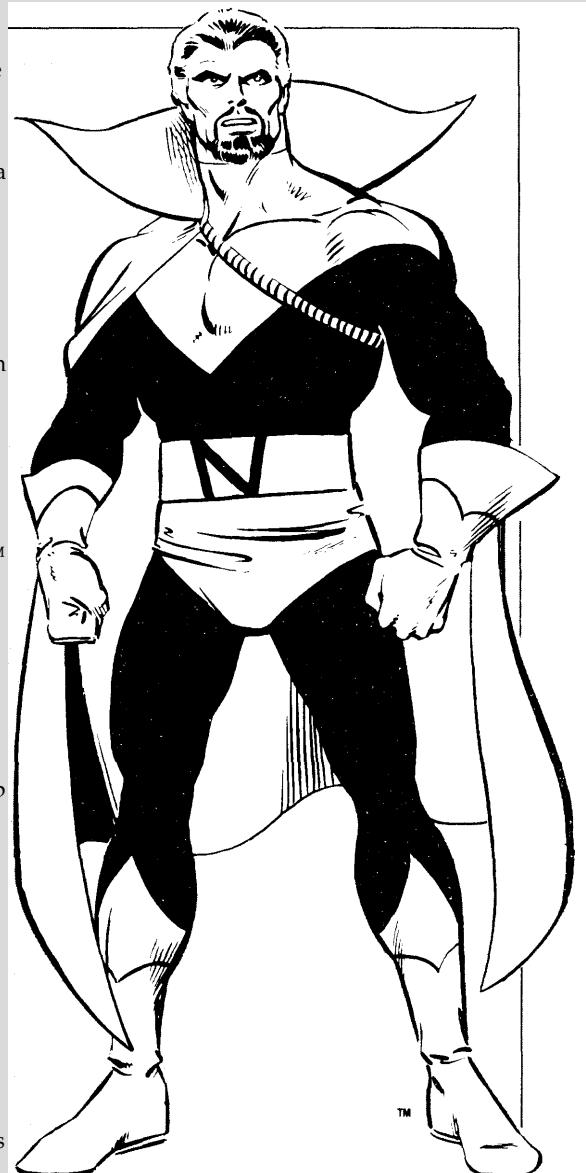
F	A	S	E
FEEB	FEEB	FEEB	POOR
R	I	P	
REMA	TYPI	REMA	

This is how it happened:

Count Luchino Nefaria was an Italian nobleman whose ambition brought him into the criminal organization known as the Maggia™. Nefaria quickly formed his own "family" within that group and, his role in the Maggia concealed, master-minded criminal operations for several years. This lasted until he attempted to frame the Avengers, who were spoiling his American operations. The Avengers foiled Nefaria's plan and revealed the Count's criminal activities. Nefaria was deported and lost much of his standing within the Maggia.

Nefaria's wife had previously died in childbirth, leaving him with a daughter, Giulietta. Nefaria sent his only child away for her own protection, and she grew up believing herself to be Whitney Frost, daughter of a Wall Street financier. After his initial defeat by the Avengers, Nefaria revealed to his daughter her true background and coerced her into joining him in crime. She became his second-in-command and, later, his successor in the Maggia, as Madame Masque™.

Nefaria returned to America with a blackmail scheme that involved sealing off Washington, DC, with an impenetrable dome. This plot was foiled by the



original X-Men™, and Nefaria went to prison, losing all remaining status with the Maggia and being replaced by his daughter as his family's leader. Following Nefaria's escape from prison, he took over the North American Air Defense Command in Cheyenne Mountain, intent on holding the world hostage with the nuclear weapons under his command. This plot was foiled by the new X-Men, though at the cost of the life of John Proudstar, Thunderbird™.

With the failure of this scheme and his complete rejection by the Maggia, Nefaria came up with a plot to enhance his own powers. Working with Klaus Sturdy, a scientist who assisted the first Baron Zemo™, Nefaria recruited Whirlwind, Living Laser™, and the criminal Power Man™ (who became known as Smuggler™ and later the new Goliath), and used Sturdy's equipment to enhance their powers. This group, the new Lethal Legion™, took on the Avengers. However, the power increase was only temporary; as the villains' individual

powers failed, their powers were gained by Count Nefaria, raising his abilities and granting him the super-human powers listed above. The super-powered Nefaria mortally wounded Sturdy, so his process could not grant powers to others.

What Sturdy did not initially tell Nefaria was that *his* power gain was temporary as well, and that the Count would rapidly age as a result of the treatment, dying in three days. When told this by a dying Sturdy, Nefaria went mad and attempted to destroy New York City, but was stopped by the Avengers. Nefaria quickly aged to a wizened old man, kept alive by life support systems in Avengers Mansion, while the Avengers sought a cure for his condition. Madame Masque rescued her father from Avengers Mansion; with the help of the Ani-Men™, she captured Tony Stark™ to find a cure for her father's wasting disease. Stark (as Iron Man™) and Madame Masque battled, but Nefaria was accidentally crushed to death in the fight by a Jupiter Landing Vehicle that Masque used against Iron Man. With Nefaria's death, Masque again took control of the Nefaria family of the Maggia.

HYPERION™

**Leader of the
Squadron Supreme
Former alias — Mark Milton,
cartoonist**

Fighting: UNEARTHLY (100)

Agility: UNEARTHLY (100)

Strength: UNEARTHLY (100)

Endurance: UNEARTHLY (100)

Reason: EXCELLENT (20)

Intuition: AMAZING (50)

Psyche: INCREDIBLE (40)

Health: 400

Karma: 110

Resources: MONSTROUS

Popularity: 80

Known powers:

BODY ARMOR: Hyperion has Unearthly protection from all forms of physical and energy attacks, including the effect of heat, cold, acid, and the vacuum of space.

FLYING: Hyperion may fly up to 30 areas per round, though he normally flies only 10 areas per round in the Earth's atmosphere.

NUCLEAR VISION: Hyperion's eyes can project beams of X-ray and heat radiation, inflicting up to Monstrous damage on targets up to 10 areas away.



WEAKNESS (ARGONITE): Argonite is an orange, radioactive isotope of lead which seriously effects Hyperion's abilities. Argonite will negate Hyperion's flying and nuclear vision powers, and weapons made of argonite will negate all body armor for that attack. Other attacks would still have to deal with his Unearthly protection. The mere presence of 5 grams of argonite will inflict Excellent damage on Hyperion every round.

Hyperion's story: Hyperion has no memory of his origins or anything that occurred to him before he was five. He assumed he was an extra-terrestrial since no one on Earth came anywhere near his power level. (He has a dimensional counterpart who was created by the cosmic gamesman, the Grandmaster™, to resemble him.) Realizing his great powers,

Hyperion grew to manhood, eventually taking the identity of Mark Milton, a cartoonist, and used his powers to help mankind. With the help of other super-powered individuals, Hyperion formed the Squadron Supreme to combat injustice and evil. Some of the Avengers traveled to the Squadron's Earth, first by accident, but later to free the world of the domination of the Serpent Crown™.

Later visitors included the mighty Thor and the Defenders™, who joined Hyperion in a battle against the rest of the Squadron, which had been possessed by the Overmind™. Following this battle (and the return of the Defenders to their own Earth), the Squadron, led by Hyperion, has decided to take a hand in turning its world into a utopia. (Check out the Squadron Supreme Limited Series for more information.)

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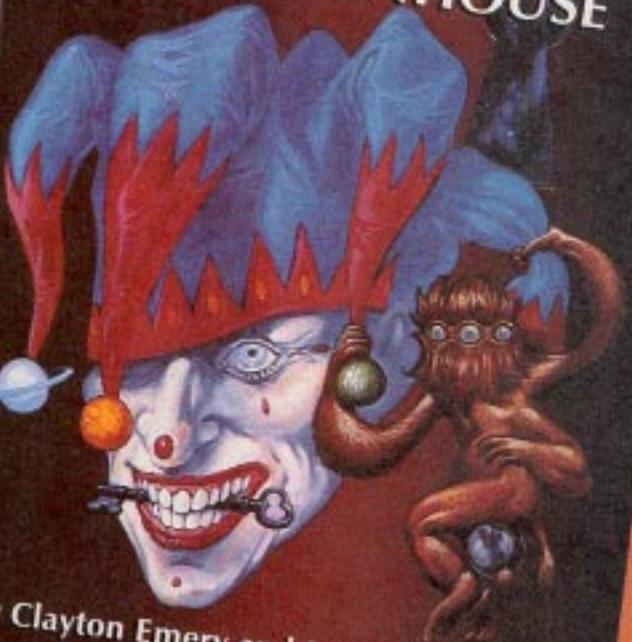
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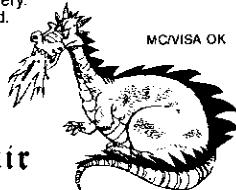
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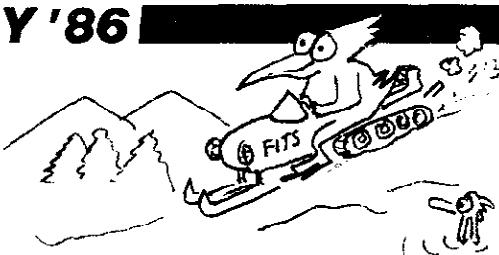
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Convention Calendar

DRAGON CON, Nov. 1-3

This convention will be held at the International Inn in Orlando, Fla. Prizes will be given for the winners in the six-member teams of the AD&D®, Starfleet Battles, Civilization, and Diplomacy tournaments. Films, open gaming, a dealers' room, and a costume contest will also be available. Registration fees are \$12. For more details, telephone (305)352-6778.

DEF CON '85, Nov. 2-3.

This gaming convention will take place in Middleton, New York. Activities will include role-playing tournaments, wargaming events, an RPGA™ Network meeting, auctions, door prizes, and much more. Dealers and game masters should feel free to inquire. For more information, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Chris Arndt, RD #2 Box 318, Pine Bush NY 12566

DOCTORCON, Nov. 2-3

This mini-convention will be staged at the Ramada Inn (SW Freeway) in Houston, Texas. Activities include tournaments, panels, contests, and costume parties. Registration fees are \$6 for a one-day membership and \$10 for a two-day membership. For more details, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Doctorcon, P.O. Box 540906, Houston TX 77254-0906.

ROCK CON XII, Nov. 2-3

This convention will take place at the Wagon Wheel Resort on Route 75 in Rockton, Ill. Featured events include a selection of historical miniatures activities, an official RPGA™ AD&D® tournament, board games, an auction, an expanded dealer area, and a flea market. For more information, contact: Cliff Wilson, c/o Black Hawk Hobby Distributors, 14225 Hansberry Road, Rockton IL 61072.

WINTERCON GAMEFEST '85, Nov. 2-3

This gaming convention will be staged at the Dearborn Civic Center, just southwest of Detroit, Mich. A large variety of gaming events and an exhibitors' area are planned for this year's convention. For more information, contact: Wintercon Gamefest '85, c/o Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 656, Wyandotte MI 48192.

UNICON II, Nov. 8-10

This convention will take place at the L. A. Pittenger Student Center on the Ball State University campus in Muncie, Ind. Guests of honor will be David Gerrold, Nancy Springer, and Buck and Juanita Coulson.

Movies, seminars, workshops, and miniatures competitions will be featured. Contact: The Quetors' Society, Unicon II Preregistration, L.A. Pittenger Student Center Box 279, Muncie IN 47306.

CONTACT, Nov. 15-17

This convention will be staged at the Airport Sheraton Inn in Evansville, Ind. Guests of honor include author Jack L. Chalker and RPGA™ Network coordinator Penny Petticord. Panels, an art show and auction, and comet gazing will be among the featured events. Registration fees are \$12. Contact: RCSFA, P.O. Box 3894, Evansville IN 47737, or telephone (812)858-5419.

NOVOCON, Nov. 23

This one-day gaming event will be held at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. Miniatures battles and role-playing and board games are among the planned activities. For more details, contact: Convention Lords, P.O. Box 7411, Akron OH 44306.

FANTASY FAIR, Nov. 30

This one-day convention will be staged at the Manatee Civic Center in Manatee, Fla. All sorts of science-fiction games will be scheduled. Registration fees are \$3 at the door. For more information, contact The Time Machine, 3320 Manatee Ave. W., Bradenton FL 33505, or telephone (813)748-4879.

TROPICON IV, Dec. 6-8

This science-fiction convention will take place at the Holiday Inn in Ft. Lauderdale West, Fla. Guests of honor include Robert Bloch, Lee Hoffman, and Gary Alan Ruse. Activities will include panels, films, an art show, and a banquet. Registration fees are \$15. For details, contact: Joe Siclari, c/o South Florida Science Fiction Society, 4599 N.W. 5th Ave., Boca Raton FL 33431.

EVECON 3, Dec. 27-29

EveCon will be staged at the Holiday Inn in Gaithersburg, Md. Featured events include science-fiction and fantasy gaming activities, videos, movies, music, singing, dancing, and an art show. Also planned are a Friday Night pool party (with waterfall) and a Saturday masquerade. Registration fees are \$10 until December 1, and \$15 thereafter. For more details, contact EveCon 3, P.O. Box 128, Aberdeen MD 21001.

RUSTYCON III, Jan. 17-19

To be staged at the Executive Inn in Seattle, Wash., this science-fiction convention

will feature a number of activities. Guests of honor include author Vonda N. McIntyre and artist Ilene Meyer. Registration fees are \$16 until December 31, and \$20 thereafter. For more information, contact: Rustycon III, P.O. Box 47132, Seattle WA 98146.

BRIDE OF PANDEMOMIUM, Jan. 18

This event will be staged at the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto, Ontario. This third annual convention will include 17 games, a figure and diorama contest, an auction, and open gaming. Gifts certificates will be awarded. For more details, contact: Dungeon Parties, Inc., P.O. Box 67, Stn. F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 1N1, or telephone (416)924-1989.

CHIMERA CON III, Jan. 25-26

This convention will be held at the Carolina Union at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, NC. Guests of honor include Orson Scott Card, Manly Wade Wellman, Allen Wold, M. A. Foster, and C. Bruce Hunter. Special events include an "Outer Limits" cantina, a writing workshop, a trivia bowl, an art show, panels, and readings. Registration fees are \$6 until November 15, or \$3 per day thereafter. For more information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: ChimeraCon III, 12-A University Gardens, Chapel Hill NC 27514, or telephone (919)967-5347.

DUN DRA CON, Feb. 14-17

This gaming convention will take place at the Airport Hyatt in Oakland, Cal. Seminars, a painting contest, and a flea market are among the scheduled events. For more information, contact: Dun Dra Con, c/o T. O. Green, 386 Alcatraz Ave., Oakland CA 94618

ORCCON, Feb. 15-17

This gaming convention will take place at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. Activities will include role-playing tournaments, war games, seminars, and an auction. For more information, contact: Orccon, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach CA 90808, or telephone (213)420-3675.

WISCON 10, Feb. 21-23

This science-fiction convention will be staged at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wis. Guests of honor include Chelsea Quinn Yarbro and Suzette Haden Elgin. Activities include films, a masquerade, and an art show and auction. For more details, contact: WisCon 10, P.O. Box 1624, Madison WI 53701, or telephone (608)251-6226 (days) or (608)233-0326 (evenings).

WAMCON '86, Feb 28 - Mar. 2

This event will be held at the Sheraton Inn Coliseum in Hampton, Va. Guests of honor will include Judson Scott, A. C. Crispin, and Tracy Hickman. Two- and three-day registrations are available. For more details, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: WamCon, P.O. Box 2223, Poquoson VA 23662.

8

WORMY

CAPTAIN...

I THINK
WE'RE LOST.

NO WE
AIN'T!

JUST KEEP
GOIN'.



'EY!
WHICH WAY TO
SKEETAH'S GROVE?

DID YOU
SEE THAT?

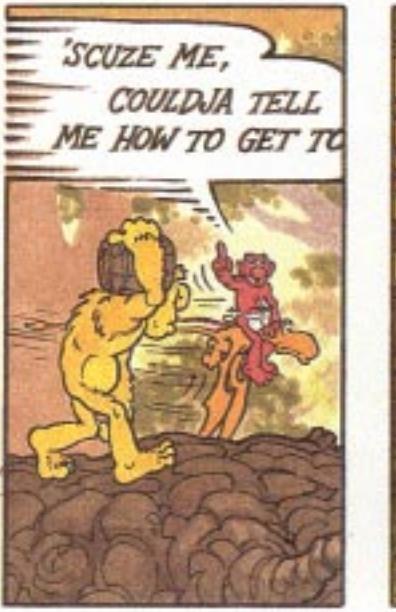
YOU MEAN THAT
2-TONED CHIMERA?

MHMM.. IT'S NOT EVERYDAY
YOU SEE ONE OF THOSE.

THAT'S
TRUE.



FAH!
STOOPID
TREETROLLS.

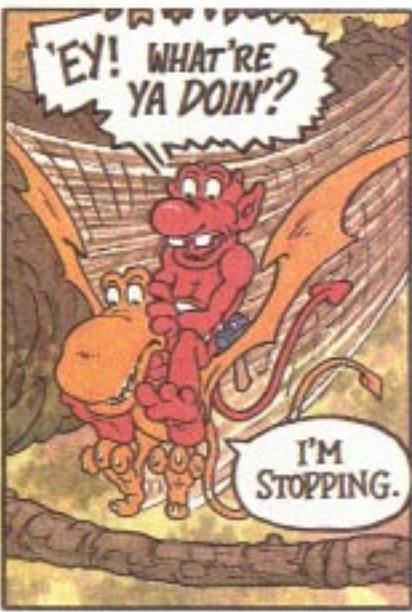


'SCUZE ME,
COULDJA TELL
ME HOW TO GET TO

-C'MON, FRED!
WILL YA
SLOW DOWN!

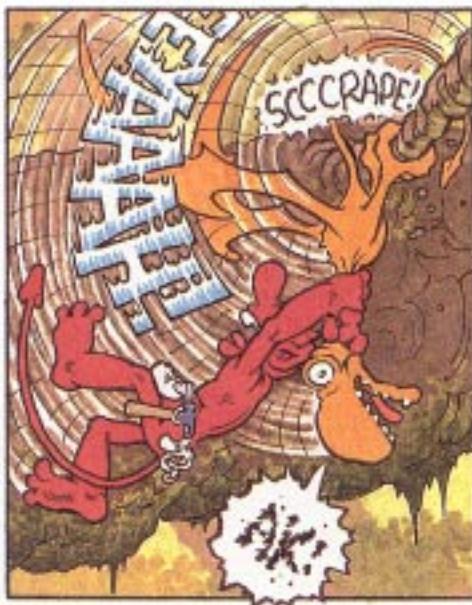


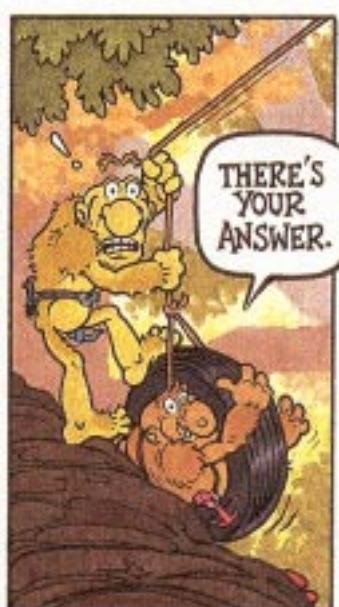
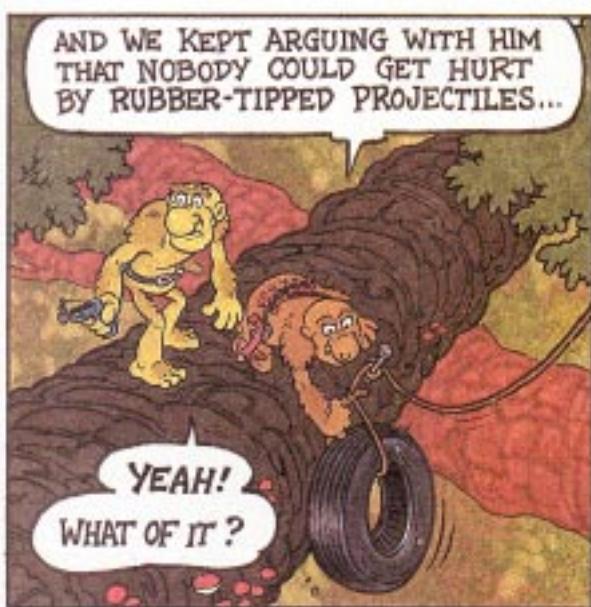
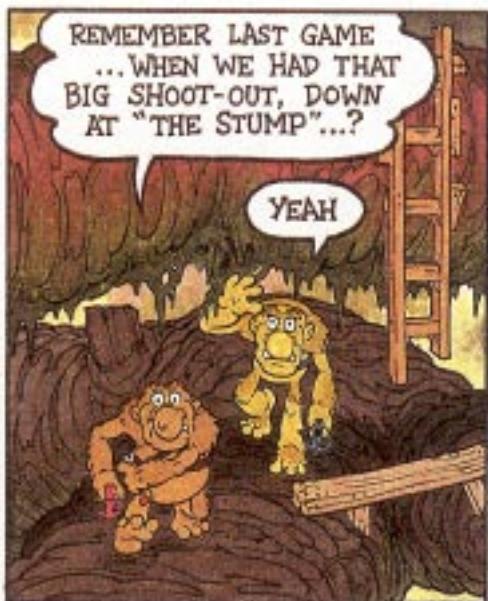
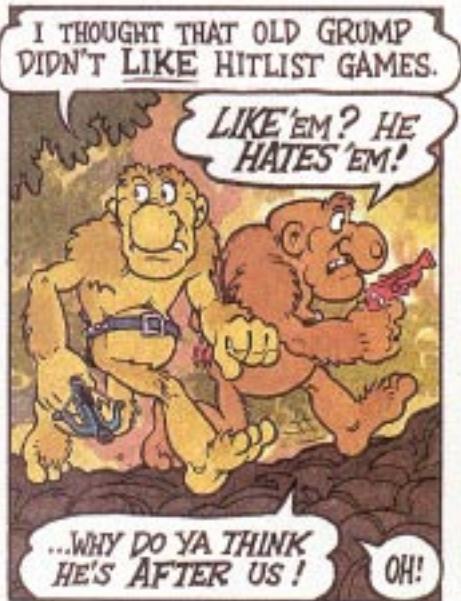
YA AIN'T GIVIN' ME
ENOUGH TIME TO ASK
FER DIRECTIONS.

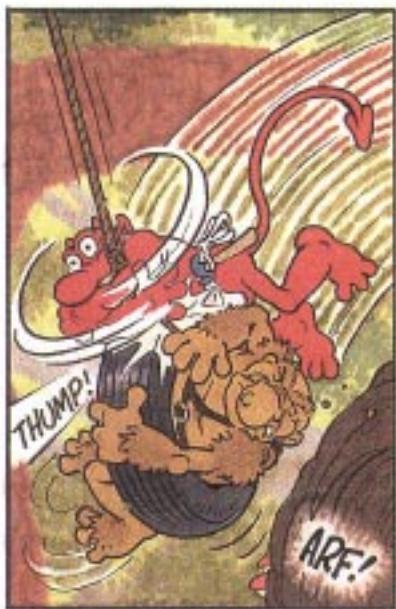
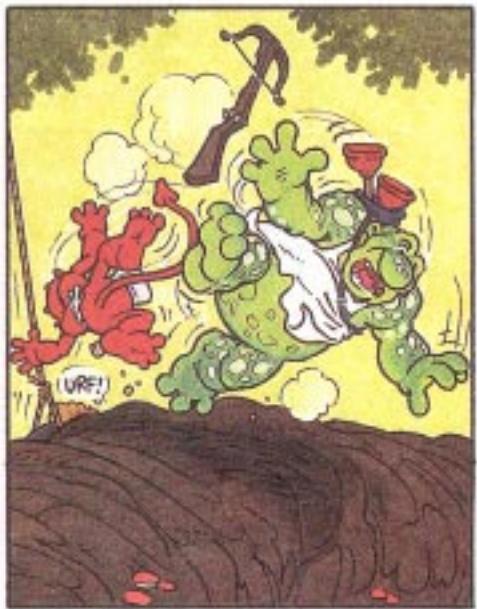
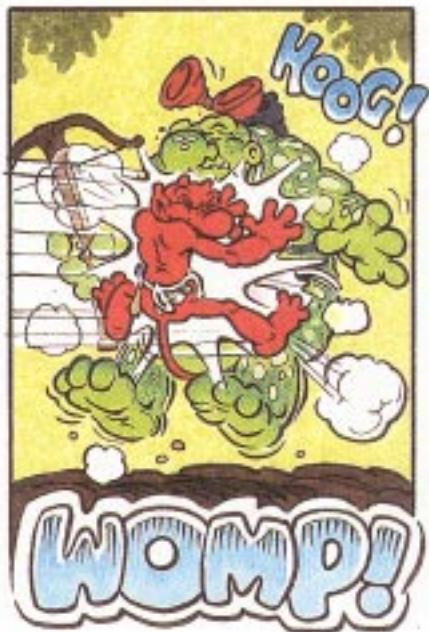
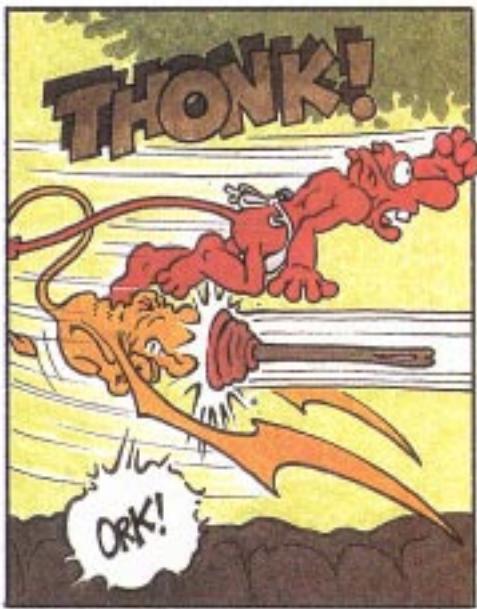
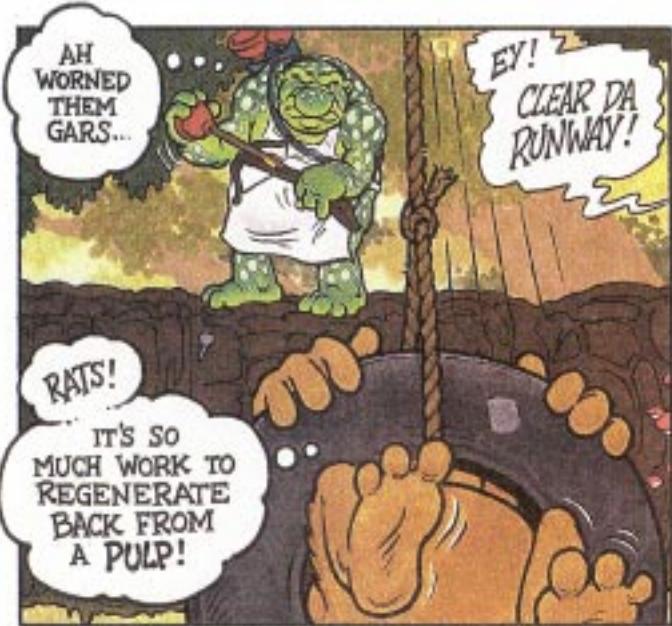


'EY! WHAT'RE
YA DOIN'?

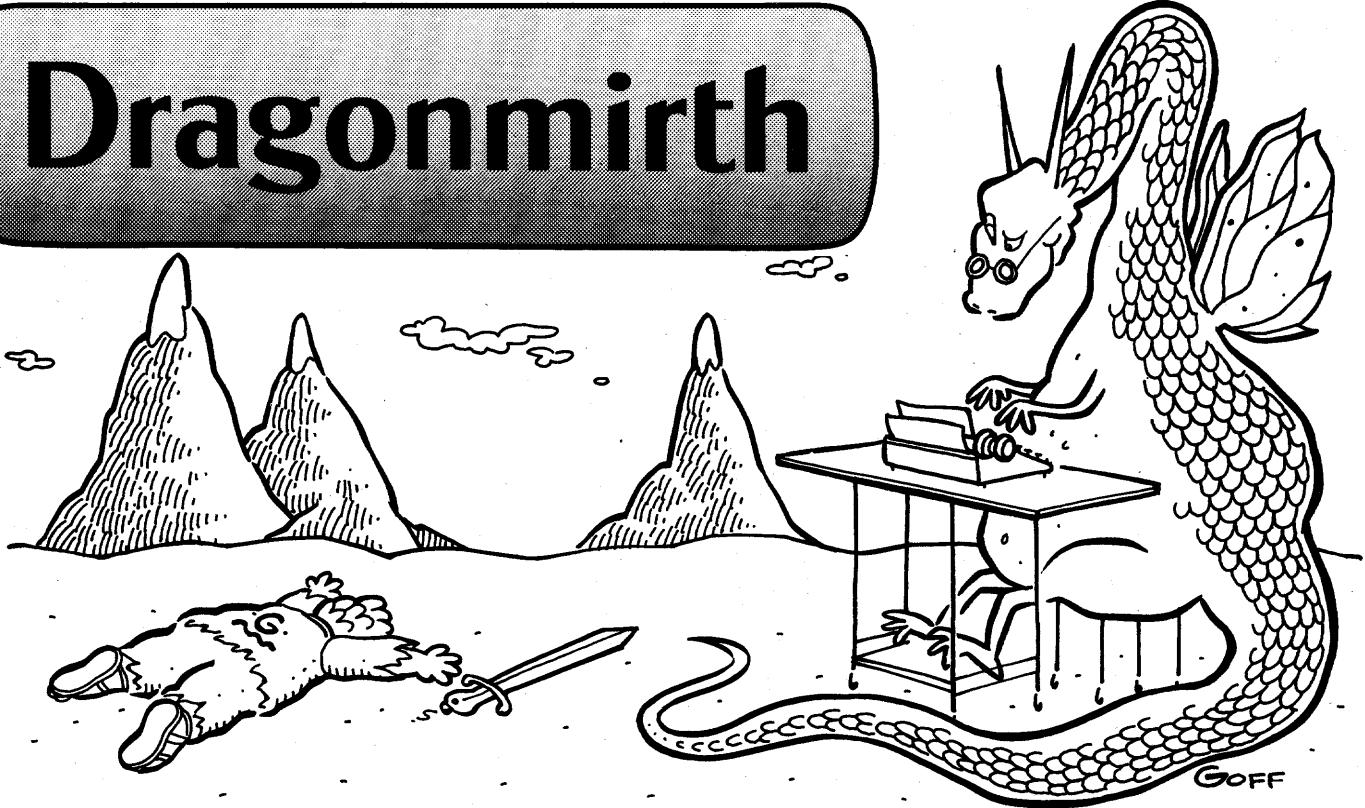
I'M
STOPPING.



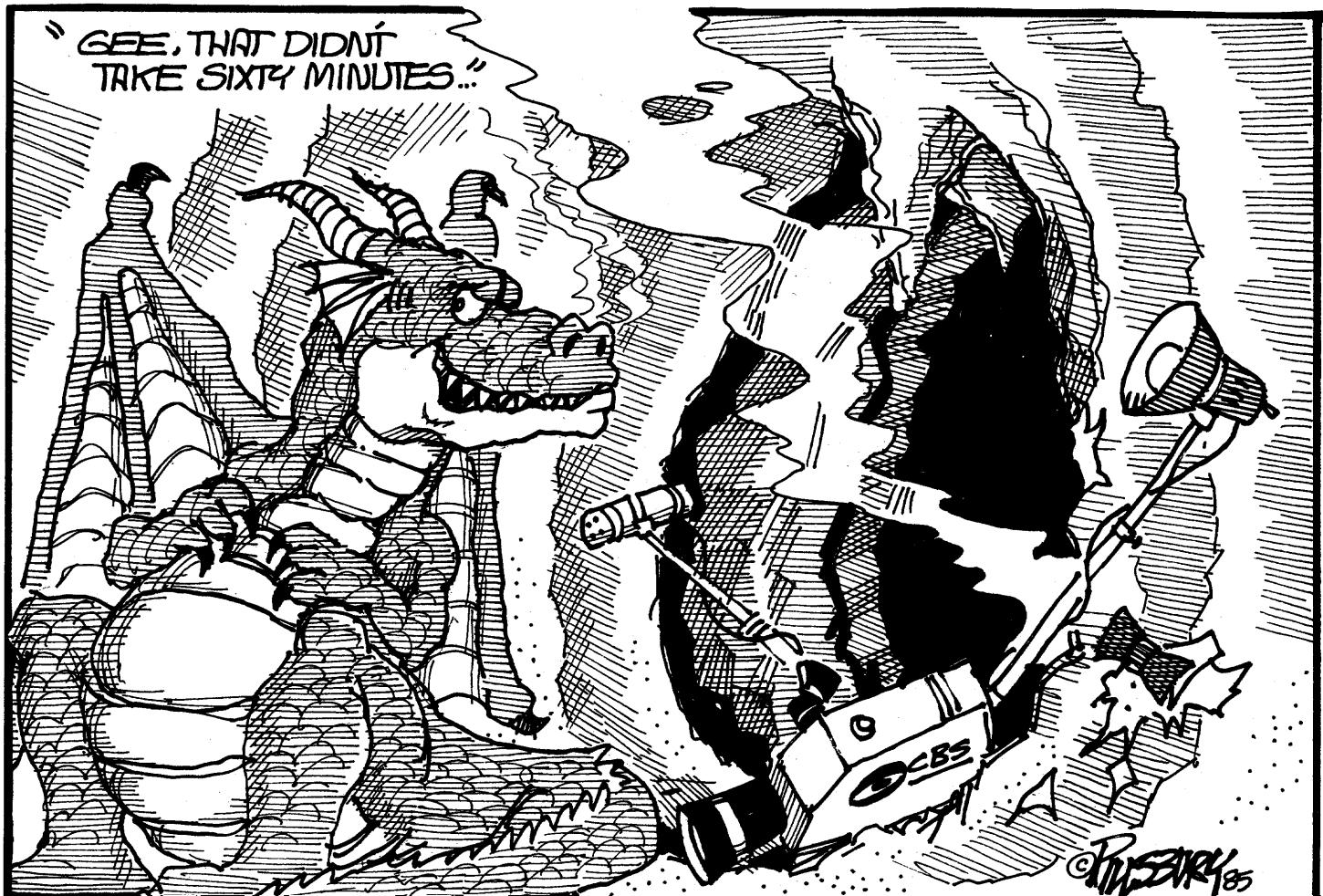




Dragonmirth



"SCRIPT CORRECTIONS: GOTHART THE DRAGON SLAYER.
FIGHTING: POOR. AGILITY: POOR. STRENGTH: WEAK..."

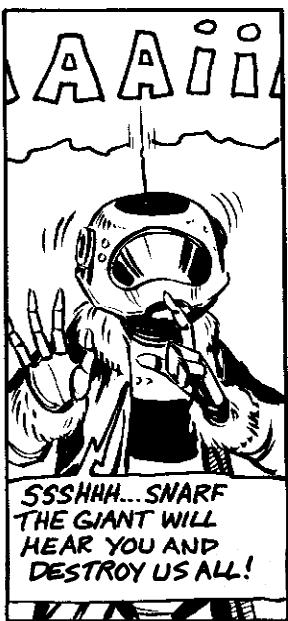
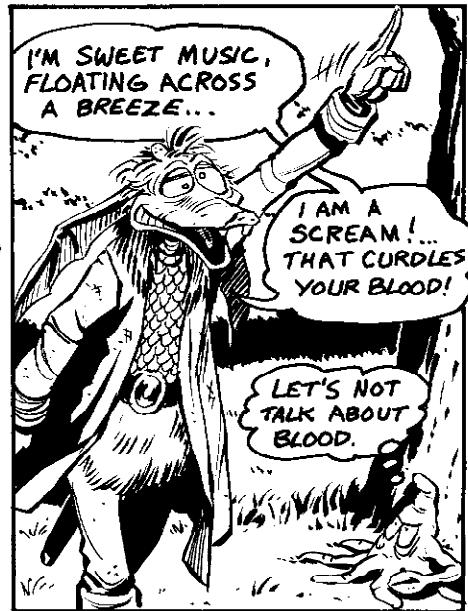
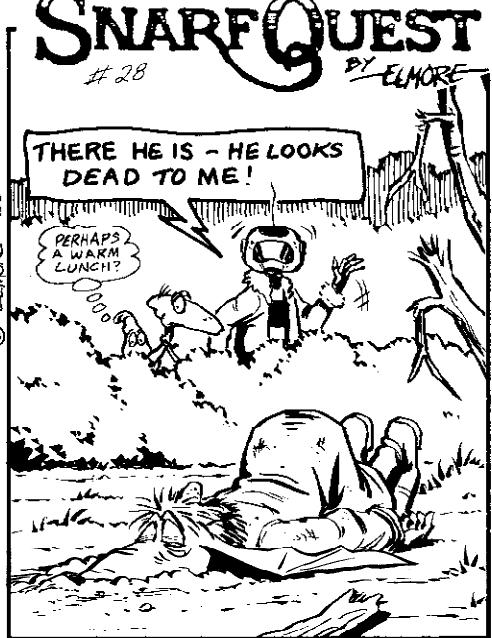


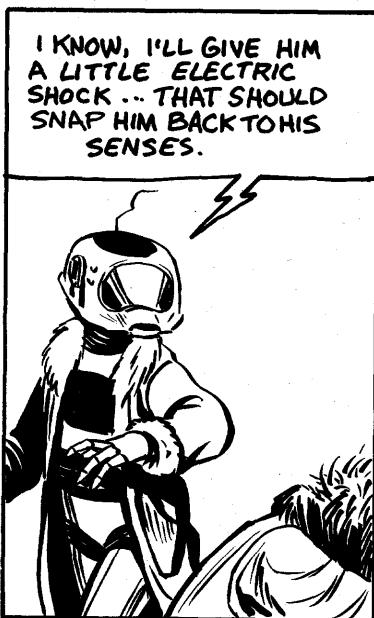
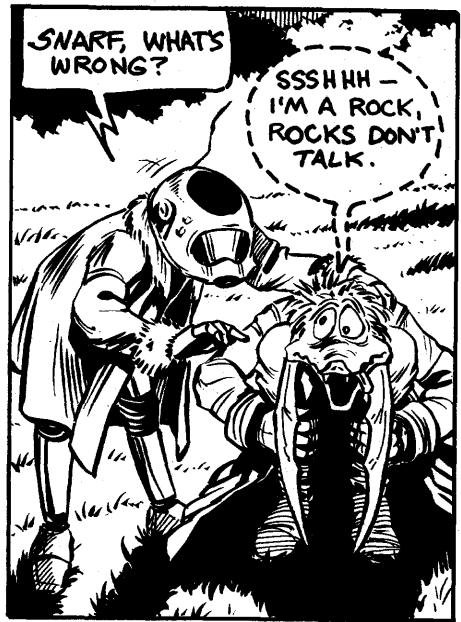
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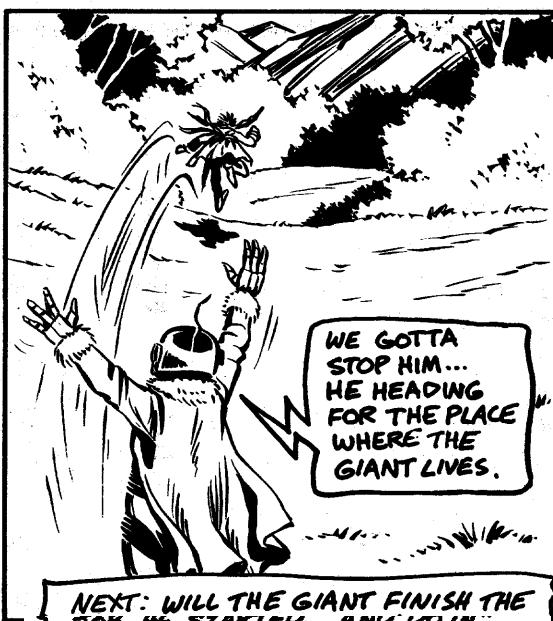
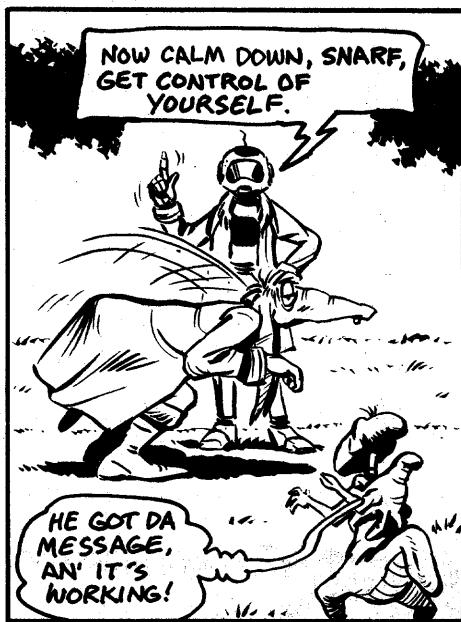
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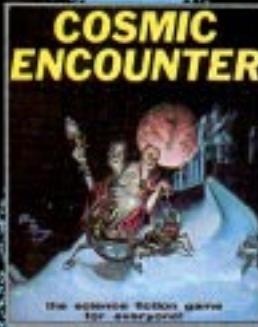




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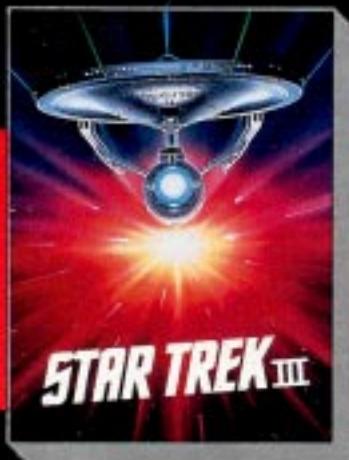
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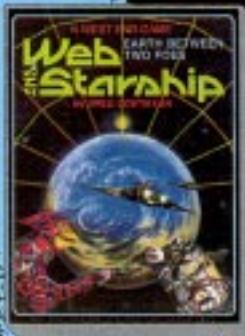
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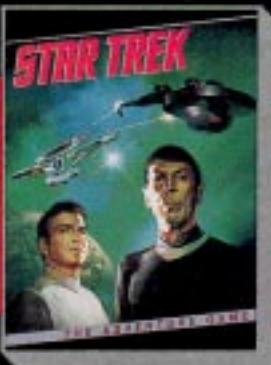
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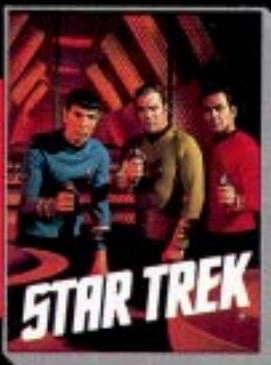


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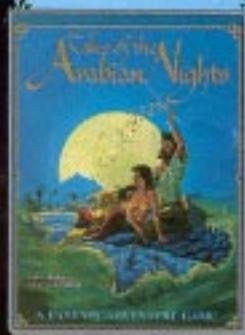


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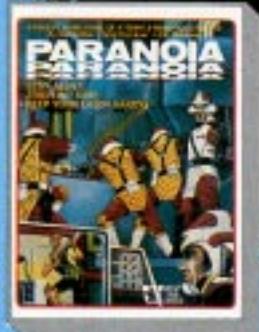


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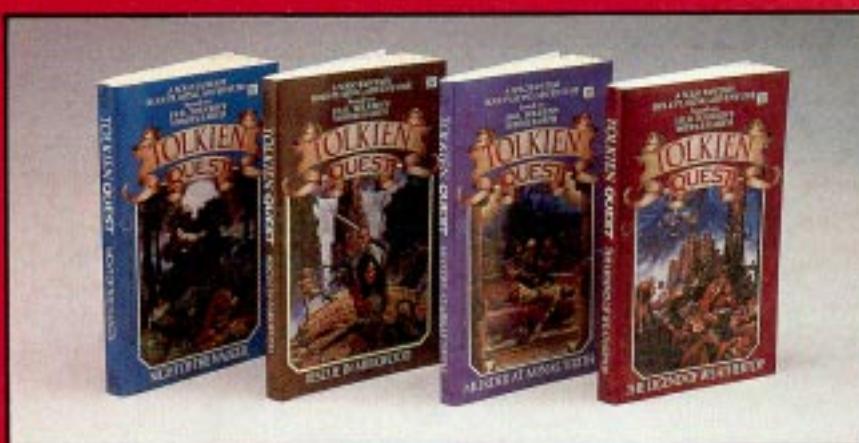
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