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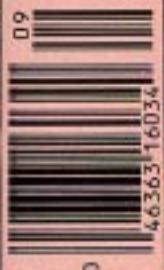
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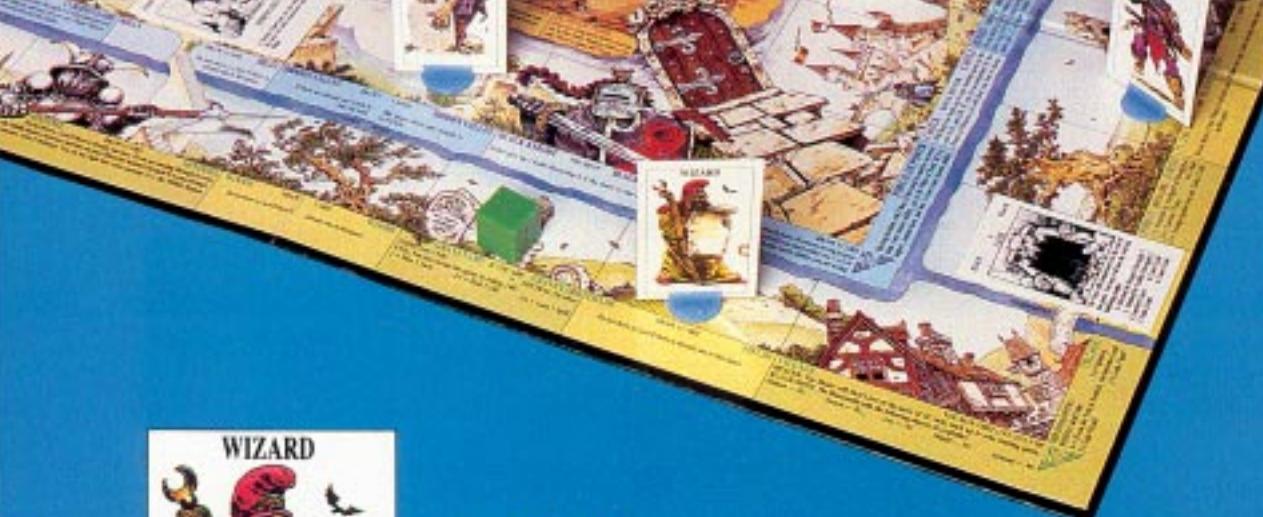
#101

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Charging magic items

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"I'm the TROLL  
and the strongest  
of them all."



TROLL



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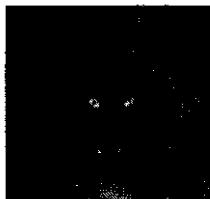
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**COVER**

David Martin, whose work has graced the covers of a plethora of products in the gaming industry, makes his first appearance on the front of DRAGON Magazine with this action scene entitled "Deadly Encounter."

# Letters

## For PCs only

Dear Dragon,

I am bringing to your attention something that I myself just realized. In "Demi-humans get a lift" by Gary Gygax (issue #95), the aquatic elves are not represented in the "Elves, Other" section. Is this an oversight, or are the aquatic elves to remain the same as usual?

Alen Parker  
Portland, Ore.

*The increased level limits for demi-human characters, first outlined in the magazine and further refined in Unearthed Arcana, do not apply to aquatic elves because that sub-race is not open to player characters. New level limits are only given for the races and sub-races to which PCs may belong — although, to be fair the new benefits should also apply to NPCs of the same races within the campaign. Aquatic elves should be treated as described in the Monster Manual. The vast majority of them will be of 1st level (1 + 1 HD), with certain higher-level "leader types" present according to the number of elves in an encountered group — but since aquatic elves do not use magic, there will be no magic-users or spell-casting clerics in the group, no matter how large it is. — KM*

*other PC races. And to help offset some of the advantages that they do retain, these races are forced to operate with a handicap when they venture out into the sunlight. This is a logical reason from the standpoint of game design, even though it's difficult to rationalize as a "fact of life" in the AD&D game universe. It's times like these when we have to remember that we're playing a GAME here, and once in a while realism has to take a back seat to playability*

*By the way, I pronounce it "svirfneblin," with the accent on the "nebb." — KM*

## Sorry, no glow

Dear Dragon,

Mr. Findley's article on the ecology of the will-o-wisp (issue #99) was great. I have a question, though. When a will-o-wisp is killed, does the light keep emanating from its body? In other words, can you use a dead will-o-wisp as a light source?

Al Pace  
Stratham, N.J.

*I'd say no, judging by the fact that the will-o-wisp is able to regulate the brightness of its illumination; if it loses control over the light, then it loses the light, too. The answer would be different if the light were some form of natural phosphorescence, but nothing in the creature's nature indicates that this might be the case. — KM*

## Racial inequality?

Dear Dragon:

"Tables and tables of troops" (issue #99) was written excellently, but I cannot understand why all the remaining character races were excluded. In issue #95, demi-humans were allowed to attain higher levels. With this official change, a PC lighter of any race may reach 9th level (with the exception of halfling halflings). This means that other demi-humans could attract men-at-arms. Would these PCs use the human tables and simply substitute their own race for that of the followers? Or would they get only human men-at-arms? Would the normals be 1st-level fighters and the sergeants 2nd level? What tables would gnomes and halflings use since their height is not favorable to cavalry — the dwarf table?

Robert March  
Marlboro, Mass.

*This is a perfect example of the "unplanned obsolescence" that has befallen a lot of our recent articles, and which will be evident in some articles yet to come. The large-scale rule changes that we've published in the last few issues, and which are incorporated into Unearthed Arcana, didn't exist when much of our current crop of article manuscripts were being accepted. In this particular case, James Yates's manuscript was accepted many months prior to its publication — at a time when we didn't know that Gary was going to*

## Aren't we all in this together?

Making money might be the main reason why anyone goes into business; the point of this essay is not to judge intentions. But I've got something to say about methods.

As the deadline for submitting advertising for this issue approached, we received some copy in the mail for an ad that you won't find inside. As all advertising does, it had some glowing things to say about a product put out by the company that was paying for the space.

Yes, that's okay. Anybody has the right to call their own product the best of its kind, and we usually won't hesitate to publish such an ad. We've even used ads in this magazine that referred to some other magazine as the best in the business. Whether we agree with someone's claim or not is immaterial, and it's not our place to judge anyway — that sort of comparative decision rests with you, the consumer.

Feathering your own nest at the expense of someone else's, though, is out of bounds. The ad we refused to run was a combination of praise for one product and a blatant put-down of a product put out by another company in the gaming industry.

Advertising that builds up one product while tearing down another is not a new concept. Hamburger franchises, to name one example we're all familiar with, have been doing it for years. But I'd like to think that the gaming industry is above that sort of tactic, and I don't think that's being naive or puritanical.

It would be a sad state of affairs if the whole industry threw ethics and fair play out the window and decided that the best, or the only, way to get your money was to try to persuade you not to spend it on someone else's stuff. Of course, things are nowhere near that bad — but if we have anything to say about it, things aren't going to get any worse, either.

Removing this ad from our schedule is our way of striking a small blow in favor of friendly competition. Am I just being naive again, or aren't we all in this together?



expand the level limits for demi-human fighters.

We were afraid that the article would be seen by some people as incomplete, but we decided to use it anyway. (See the editor's column in issue #99 for more on this question of "incompleteness.") It's good stuff, as far as it goes, and we don't think it would be too difficult for people to develop their own additions to the tables to accommodate high-level demi-humans. If you need a gnome table or a halfling table, create one. If you think the additions and alterations to the tables are substantial enough to warrant a followup article, send in a manuscript and we'll let you know if we agree with you.

Even if we wanted to and we were sure the effort would be well received, we wouldn't be able to print updates or errata for every one of our recent articles that is affected by the publication of the new rules. We're going to count on you to do that sort of thing for yourself, if you

have a desire or a need for the information, so that we can continue to produce all-new material instead of using a lot of space and time on rehashes of old subjects. Like it says above, we will consider using followup articles on certain topics, but those will all be case-by-case decisions and in many instances (like this one) we won't be able to say yes or no to a "rehash" until we see the manuscript that a writer has composed. — KM

as if it was "sparked"? Is there a saving throw involved when a creature is wearing clothing under his armor?

Benjamin Weiss  
Delmar, N.Y.

Instead of "See below," the damage statistic for the giant lightning bug should have read "2-5." Anyone who touches a bug would not be harmed, assuming that the bug wasn't "sparking" at precisely that instant. Anyone struck by a spark gets a saving throw for half damage, but will take at least half damage unless his body is insulated from the electricity. Whether wearing clothing under one's armor constitutes sufficient insulation is a matter for DMs to decide; a thin shirt wouldn't do anything, but thick leather probably would absorb the charge. — KM

(Turn to page 89)

## Fixing the bug

Dear Dragon:

I have a couple of questions concerning the giant lightning bug from Creature Catalog II (issue #94). First, what is the damage from its "sparking" attack? If a character or creature touched one of these bugs, would it take damage

# 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.

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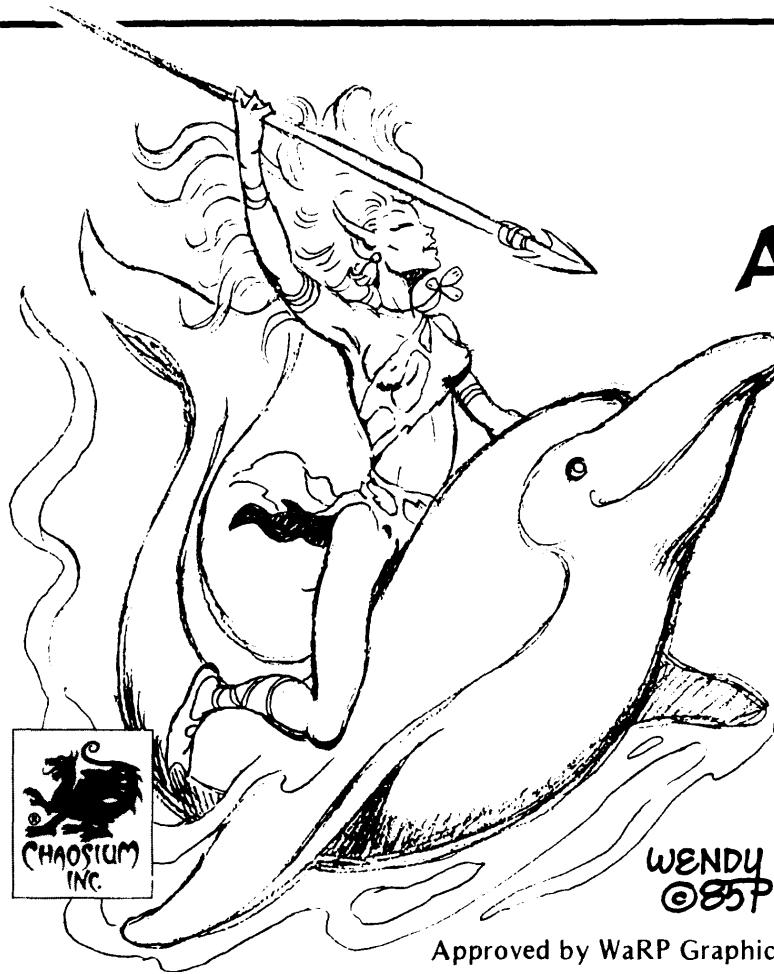


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I am writing in response to Bruce Carlson's letter in issue #99 of DRAGON Magazine. Like Bruce, I disagree with Gary Gygax's system for limiting the advancement of non-human races and believe in slowing their advancement at all levels. I disagree with the reasoning behind Bruce's ideas, however.

The imbalance that would result if non-humans advanced at the same rate as humans is not due to the advantages they possess, as Bruce proposes, but due to their great life spans. Speaking generally, a human character at any level is no weaker than a non-human of the same class and level.

The imbalance is created when, say, 90 years of game time have passed. The human fighter who has achieved 7th level suddenly drops dead of natural causes, but his buddy, an elven fighter who has also achieved 7th level, is just nearing the prime of his life and is looking forward to many more years of adventuring and level-gaining. If this were how the game was set up, then the non-humans would be in control of the world.

Gary Gygax's answer to the problem is simple: stop the advancement of non-humans at a certain level. As far as I can see, there is no justification for this whatsoever. Bruce's system offers a more plausible solution: slow advancement at all levels. I disagree with his justification for this, however. He proposes that because non-humans have certain "inborn advantages," they should get less experience, possibly because they were not as "challenged" as a human might have been. This is not the case, however, as non-humans also have a number of inborn disadvantages.

The reasoning we are looking for can be found in Roger Moore's "Point of View" articles. If one generalization stood out, it was that the longer-lived races have the philosophy of "we have plenty of time to get it done," and the shorter-lived races have the outlook of "let's hurry up and get it done so we can move on." Because humans are always striving for more, they will get more experience, in general terms than the longer-lived races who are not trying to do so much in so little time.

The experience received, therefore, should correspond to the average lifespan of a member of a race. Assuming that the current experience point system is based on humans, then an elf would lose about 90% of his experience if no modifications were made. This is obviously unfair. I would lower this figure substantially for several reasons: (1) The experience points necessary for advancement do increase geometrically, so it is harder to gain the upper levels; (2) the average lifespan of an adventurer is lower than that of an "ordinary" member of a race; and (3)

one campaign is not likely to cover a great number of game years.

So, keeping the ratio of XP penalty to each race the same, but lowering the overall amount for the above reasons, I propose the following reductions: elves -30%, gnomes -28, dwarves 25%, half-elves -22, and halflings -13%. These figures can be rounded off to the nearest multiple of five if the reader wishes. The half-orc is a different case. The average lifespan is shorter than that of a human, so it would seem logical to add to their experience. However, because this race is "rude, crude, and generally obnoxious," they do not tend to advance any faster than humans. For this reason and for simplicity's sake, I would say that they get the same experience as humans. The DM can make his own decision here.

Mike Dombrowski  
Fairport, N.Y.

\* \* \* \*

Two brief comments on DRAGON Magazine #98.

First, Kim's reply to Tommy Hendricks' letter regarding ranger tracking was on target. A secret door can be searched for when tracks are lost, and if the party being tracked passed through it, normal chances are again used. The key here is DM involvement. There are a number of ways which can be employed for tracking situations so as to cause the ranger to lose the trail. Such devices must be used, or else the trackers will be brought to a secret door locale every time! The problems of adding "realism" to the game are manifold and include all the facts of reality. Simplicity is sometimes more desirable in an action oriented game. . . .

Second, I quite agree with the article "Dragon damage revised" by Leonard Carpenter. It is a logical step, considering the increasing damage done by breath weapons of dragons, as well as their hit points. The damage he proposes seems well thought out, and I recommend that DMs give the new addition a trial in their campaigns. My guess is that it will certainly put punch back into the species, with allowance, as Leonard

points out, for introduction of young, small dragons into lower-level games.

E. Gary Gygax  
Lake Geneva, Wis.

\* \* \* \*

Urging the DM to fudge the die roll result, as David F. Godwin suggests in his article "History of a game that failed" (issue #99), is a good way to cause the game to fail. Why use the dice at all if the DM "decides" what's going to happen in critical situations? Players balk and complain when their character is killed fairly (by the traditional way of reading what is rolled) — What is the DM going to tell the player who asks about his character's death? "Well, I thought it was time your character was really challenged, and . . ." (Of course, the simple answer is to tell the player that's what the dice said and leave the fudge factor as an unknown variable. After all, if the DM doesn't lie about fudging, the players will either walk out or start fudging on their characteristics, "to hits," saving throws, etc.)

Of course, David's point is clearly centered upon preserving the character in an "unavoidable" situation. I'm sure the DM would find it quite easy to fudge a die roll in favor of a character that was one he or she liked (or if it was run by a person of similar status), while an obnoxious or irritating character or player might not receive the same beneficial fudge roll. The DM usually only has a few seconds in deciding "to fudge or not to fudge," and I'm sure personal bias plays a big role in answering the fudge question. It appears that all fudging accomplishes is to add an element of unfairness into the game.

Sam Swanson  
Morgantown, W. Va.

\* \* \* \*

The article, "Tables and tables of troops," in issue #99, was excellent, but I believe that Mr. Yates may have inadvertently misled some readers with the statement, "Climate . . . cannot substantially alter the prevalent terrain, only the creatures which reside in it." In fact, climate, along with bedrock structure, is the primary factor in terrain development. Compare the steep canyons of the arid Midwest with the rolling hills of the more humid Northeast, and it can be seen that changes in climate will cause changes in the topography of a region.

Dan Swingley  
Webster, N.Y.

\* \* \* \*

I am writing in reference to a letter I saw in issue #96. I wish to commend Mr. Dornbierer for some excellent and thought-provoking material.

First of all, yes, there are some judges who use weapon speed factors and "to hit" adjustments. Encumbrance, too.

This is my fifth or sixth campaign. I can say that, with more experience, as you go along, they

(Turn to page 59)

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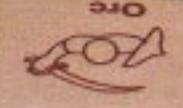
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# Update from the chief

## About the past, the present, and a bit of the future

### by Gary Gygax

Many thanks, Gentle Readers, for your overwhelming response to the survey form (printed in issue #93) pertaining to a feature film based on the AD&D® and D&D® game systems. We are still tabulating the results, but it is safe to say that only 1 in 100 was against such a project and that about 60% would see the movie multiple times if the production warranted it. Now . . . what are we going to do? Dungeons & Dragons Entertainment Corp. (DDEC) will do its utmost to get a major motion picture project going, of course. All that means, however, is that we'll get a script finished and try to line up an actor and director interested in same. The process is long and complicated. As usual, we'll keep you informed through the medium of this Excellent Journal.

The immediate sales of *Unearthed Arcana* exceeded even our expectations, and we have had trouble supplying sufficient quantities. Hang in there, for the presses are running again, and more shipments will go out as soon as a new load of books arrives. *Unearthed* has hit the best seller list for hardbound books. Our sincere thanks for your support!

This leads to mention of two other upcoming titles. *Oriental Adventures* is the next in the AD&D game series, and you will find it as interesting and enjoyable as *Unearthed*. Not only does it have all sorts of character classes for adventuring in an Oriental campaign setting, but there are new monsters and magic as well. Now all we need is a series of modules to back that up! Guess what the new offerings for 1986 will include. . . .

Worthy of a Special Paragraph is the news about the long-awaited T2. It is now labeled T1-4, the whole entitled *The Temple of Elemental Evil*, and includes a revised and expanded version of T1, *The Village of Hommlet*. This "supermodule" offers DMs a great setting for a starting campaign, for characters can progress from 1st through about 8th level when the mission is finally concluded. This Neglectful Designer hereby gives sincere thanks to Frank Mentzer, for he took some 300 pages of manuscript, notes, and maps and turned all of that into a most exciting finished product.

*My Work Is Cut Out For Me Dept.:* Loyal Readers are aware that this Busy Designer (read Lazy Creative-Type) was recalled to perform the duties of Chief

Executive Officer of TSR, Inc., some months ago. That did not relieve me of the responsibilities attendant to DDEC, although John Beebe (Senior Vice President of Productions) and Ernie Gygax (V.P. Creative) manage to take care of most of the work. The third season of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Cartoon Show airs later this year — a demonstration not only of CBS's confidence in the show, but also its realization of the audience who enjoys watching. We are discussing a *fourth season* already; if that is a go, you'll see some new and different settings for certain! Of course there are also other projects, but those are . . . secret.

Meanwhile, before getting back into the Lofty Office, I began the GREYHAWK™ ADVENTURES books, number two being just completed and at least two more to go. As announced in the previous issue of this journal, the first volume in the series, *Saga of Old City* is scheduled to show up in stores by November. With the trilogy of DRAGONLANCE™ novels setting the pace it has, the GREYHAWK ADVENTURES novels are going to be hard pressed to equal or surpass their popularity — a challenging, but not unpleasant, position to be in.

At the same time that these efforts are taking place, Ernie and I are at work on something different in RPG creations. Jim Ward, Paul Yih, and I are undertaking a game and a companion book series based on modern-day action adventures, too. There are quite a few innovative RPGs out there, and "different" is a tough word to measure up to. The action-adventure series of six books is an untried market for TSR, and the game is family-oriented. Wish me luck, please. Anyway, now you know why I haven't been contributing very much of late to these August Pages.

TSR will be doing more fiction — such as the new AMAZING™ Stories Anthology, titled *60 Years of the Best Science Fiction* and edited by the renowned duo of Isaac Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg. More paperbacks, as mentioned above, are also on the way. These, along with the new family-type games in the manner of ALL MY CHILDREN, CROSSCHECK, PARTY ZONE, and the SIROCCO™ Strategy Game, will probably be marketed under a series of brand-new logotypes. Why? Well, TSR is identified with the best in RPGs, but we need to establish distinct entities and identities for fiction books, general-audience games, and even chil-

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dren's products. You'll hear about it here when we begin using the new logos. (In the meantime, you might want to look into those games mentioned above — they are fun!)

Contrary to rumors you may have heard, I am not trying to compete with Isaac Asimov in getting my name onto products. There is, however, a grain of truth in that as far as anthologies are concerned. As a reader of *Amazing Stories* since 1950 (and I collected issues from most of the '40s as well), I have put in a bid to edit one of these collections in the future . . . perhaps including some goodies from FANTASTIC™ STORIES as well!

*Greyhawk Update:* There is an error on page 3 of the *Glossography* in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ Fantasy Game Setting. It slipped in because information was being picked up from the old booklet, and some of it should have been updated first. Although the inaccuracy is not major, those Interested Parties desirous of the true population range of settlements will be advised well if they make the following changes:

Settlement Population	Dice
town	1,500 - 9,500 (3d6 + 1) x 500
city	12,000 - 96,000 (12d8) x 1,000

*Urban Area:* A town or city will have suburbs which are a part of the greater community. To determine the number of people in these lesser settlements, simply roll a six-sided die. The result is the total number of additional, suburban residents expressed as a percentage, i.e. 10% to 60% of the population of the urban center.

For example, a town of 6,500 residents is found to have a suburban population equal to 40% of the town proper, and 40% of 6,500 is 2,600. Obviously, this is not another town unto itself, so there are at least two other communities on the outskirts of the town. Since the town is average in size, it would be safe to assume that there is a nearby village of 900 residents, another of 700, and a pair of hamlets of about 300 population each. This totals 2,200. The remainder of the area residents (400) are assumed to be spread in individual dwellings and smaller-than-thorp clusters throughout the radius of the area.

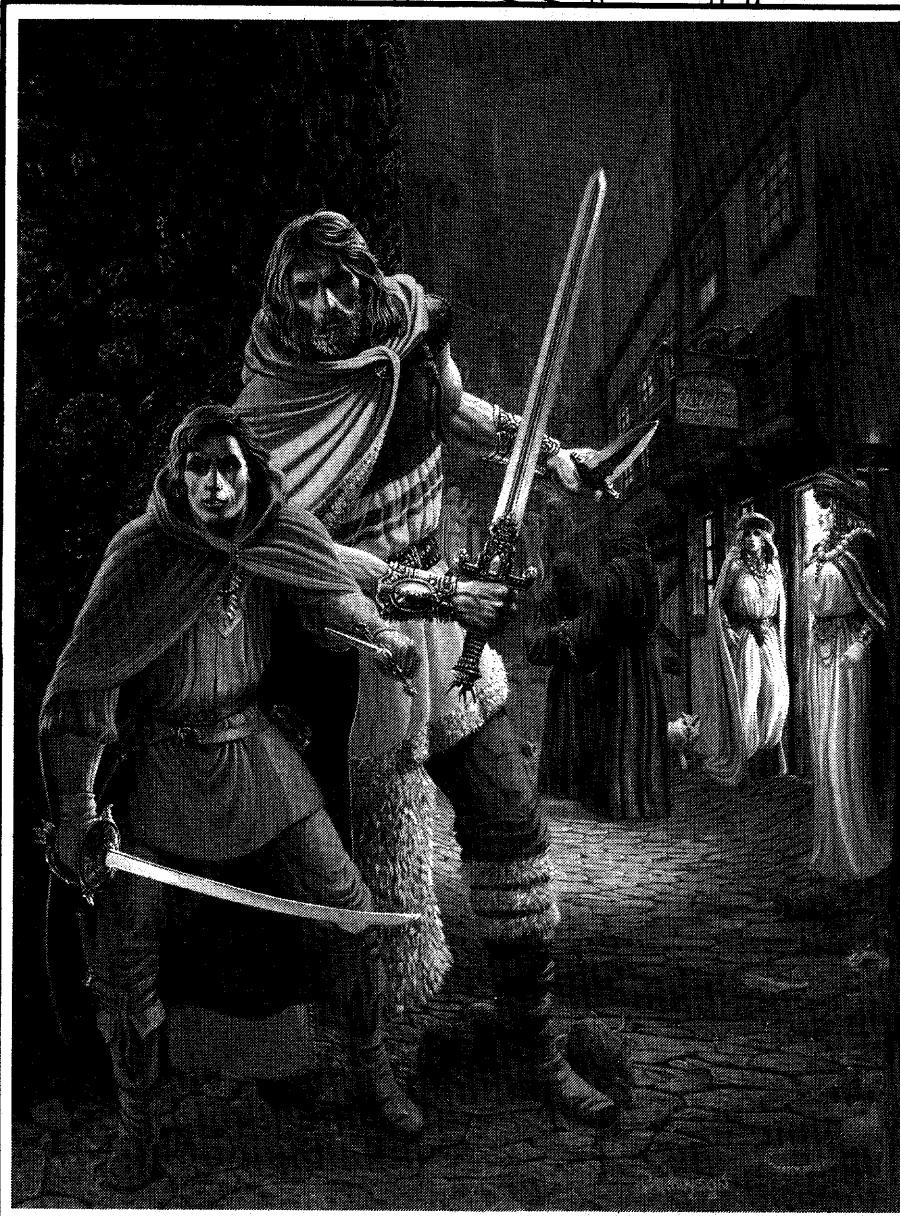
*Nasty Stuff:* The unscrupulous attacks and baseless accusations pertaining to role-playing games in general and the D&D game in particular persist. Despite the fact that there is no shred of proof to the claims,

(Turn to page 59)

# JUST ONE LITTLE NEIGHBORHOOD

IN

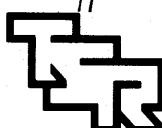
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# All about the kender

## A long look at the little people of Krynn

by Roger E. Moore



As the DRAGONLANCE™ saga has grown and changed since its conception, so have its various elements, including the racial portrait of the kender. Originally thought of as much like halflings, kender have evolved into a distinctive race unto themselves. The following article brings to light new information about this interesting race. Some thoughts are also given on how to effectively role-play kender characters in AD&D® DRAGONLANCE campaigns.

### History

DL-5, *Dragons of Mystery*, describes the origin of the kender folk. All kender are descended from gnomes who were magically and permanently changed by the artifact known as the Greymem, or the Greystone of Gargath. Gnomes were themselves descended from men who were magically altered by the deity Reorx. Kender thus came to possess most of the personality traits common to humans, though certain

ones became much magnified and others disappeared.

Kender spread throughout Ansalon during the Age of Dreams, though little is said of them in official histories. The earliest known kender hero was Balif, a close friend of the elven lord Silvanos, who established the kingdom of Silvanesti. Balif fought in the First Dragonwar and established his own kingdom of kender, called Balifor. Balif died in the year 250 of the Age of Dreams.

A second kender kingdom was established in northwestern Ansalon in the year 400 of the Age of Dreams. Known as Hilo (because of the mountains and low plains), this second kingdom was brought into the empire of Ergoth in the year 800. Following the Rose Rebellion of Vinas Solamnus (also known as the War of Ice Tears; see DRAGON® issue #94, "My honor is my life"), Hilo again gained its independence and has kept it to this date.

Tragically, Balifor was destroyed during the Cataclysm. The few kender survivors wandered north and eventually established a city at Kendermore, renaming the area around it Goodlund. Kendermore is only a short distance from the remains of an old human city-state called The Ruins by the kender who explore it in droves. It is said that finding artifacts in The Ruins is easy, but leaving with them is impossible because of the local kender.

Many of the kender in Goodlund never returned to civilization, however, remaining in a state of semi-barbarism for centuries. One of these tribal kender, an unusually powerful and charismatic leader named Kronin, has begun organizing all local kender to combat the draconian and dragon armies sweeping the area. Kronin is unusually antagonistic for a kender, and those few who have met him have come away shaken. Whether Kronin and his army of kender will have any effect on the current war remains to be seen.

## Society

The basic unit of kender society is the immediate family (parents and children). Because kender wander so much, extended families do not truly exist. A detailed discussion of kender politics, government, and society is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice to say that kender society is unique and everchanging.

Kender society can also be hard to take. Non-kender visitors rarely stay longer than a week in any major kender town, unless they have a sense of humor. "If an asylum had turned loose its inmates and a jail its thieves to run this city," wrote one traveler of Kendermore, "the end result could not have been more atrocious. I have been robbed a dozen times today, twice by constables and once by a child who could barely reach my kneecaps. I have been tormented by a hundred thousand questions, been told a million lies, and been run to exhaustion by my guide. Half the population wants to make a gynosphinx their mayor on the grounds that they have never had one before, and the other half has left in search of one. Gods take me if I ever set foot in this land again!"

## Personality

Four things make a kender's personality drastically different from that of a typical human. Kender are utterly fearless, insatiably curious, unstoppably mobile and independent, and will pick up anything that is not nailed down (though kender with claw

hammers will get those things as well).

The fearlessness that all kender possess gives them a strong sense of confidence. They are quite carefree or matter-of-fact about a situation, even if things look hopeless and grim. ("No sense in running away now. There's five hundred goblins surrounding us!") Kender react effectively to dangerous situations, fighting hard and fearlessly. They sometimes come up with some bizarre tactics which may carry the day in battle, and they don't let their fearlessness get in the way of self-preservation — most of the time.

Kender appreciate the need for caution, but their uncontrollable curiosity gets them into trouble on adventures. They forever have to check out unexplored places and peek into dark corners. They have no desire to be the second or third persons who ever entered and left the Caverns of Unspeakable Doom; they want to be the very first. Pointing out that no one returns from the Caverns of Unspeakable Doom has no effect. In fact, describing what makes the caverns so unspeakable might even excite the kender further and make him or her determined to go to the caverns at once. ("An evil archmage and an army of ogres? Wow! Let's go see 'em!") Some kender might allow their curiosity to overcome their common sense when facing unusual opponents, such as a dragon, though they eventually learn to run when running is best.

A kender's fellows are often in the position of having to teach him that certain things have big, nasty teeth, and that avoiding these things is often in the kender's best interests, regardless of what the kender's opinions are in the matter. Whenever a kender displays an inordinately sensible attitude about danger, it is probably because the kender realizes that performing this action will ruin any further chances of doing exciting things — ever.

A few legends suggest that kender can actually be frightened, though only by creatures on the level of demon princes and archdevils. No one is willing to test out this theory, however, and most people believe that after the initial scare, the kender would be back to normal, pestering the monstrous prince with personal questions.

Kender are intensely curious about everything. Magic awes and fascinates them, as do any large, unusual, and dramatic creatures like chimeras, centaurs, unicorns, and, of course, dragons. Kender are drawn to beautiful things, but they may find certain things that others find disgusting to be intriguing or humorous in some way (even some gully dwarves).

Though strong-willed, kender are not prone to consider all the possible results of their behavior. A kender may quickly and impulsively paint herself into a corner, then wait for someone else to come along and get her out of the jam. Sometimes this means that the kender's fellow adventurers are painted into the same corner. ("I guess I shouldn't have opened that locked door

with the warning signs on it, huh?") Experienced adventurers quickly come to dread that most awful of kender sayings: "Oops!"

Another important point is that kender need action — and they need it now. They thrive on excitement and yearn for new adventures. "I'm just along for the fun" is a common saying among wandering kender. It has been suggested that the worst torture that could be inflicted on a kender would be to lock him up and simply give him nothing new to do or look at. (Conversely, it is said that the worst torture one can visit on any non-kender would be to lock him up in a bare cell with a bored kender.) Some kender believe that evil creatures are condemned to an afterlife where they will be eternally bored.

Most kender are encountered during wanderlust, a peculiar phase that comes on a kender in his early 20s. Apparently the kender's natural curiosity and desire for action suddenly go into overdrive at this time, and kender are driven to wander the land as far as they can go. Wanderlust may last for many years, and some kender have a habit of making maps of their travels during this time. Sadly, most kender are poor mapmakers, lacking the patience and skills to chart their travels accurately. Kender may collect other maps during this time to satisfy their curiosity about other places. This wanderlust is responsible for spreading kender communities across the continent of Ansalon.

Risky deeds draw kender like dragons are drawn to gold, but risk must be combined with action or else they'll lose interest. Gambling with cards won't hold a kender's attention for long, but seeing if one can outrun a mad owlbear is another thing. Bravery is easily confused with recklessness where kender are concerned.

Kender are natural extroverts and enjoy making new friends and seeing new places. The majority of them are very personable and friendly — perhaps too friendly for some people, who dislike their nosiness, their extreme talkativeness (which grows worse when they get excited), and their habit of pocketing everything that interests them. Kender also resent being given orders; they want to do what *they* want to do, especially if they have their minds set on doing it. Telling them to do otherwise is worse than useless, as they will complain loudly and disrespectfully, using their taunting skills if they're mad enough. The best way to handle kender, say old adventurers, is not to give them orders, but to get them to volunteer.

Kender are sensitive and can be easily hurt by indifference or intentionally cutting remarks (triggering their taunting talents almost immediately). They treasure their friends; if one's friends are injured or slain, the kender may become very depressed and upset. Death only seems to affect a kender when it comes to one that the kender knows and loves, or when it is meted out by disaster or warfare to innocent beings (including any kender). In such cases, the distress that

the usually cheerful kender feels seems extremely terrible. A story is told of a human ranger in the Age of Dreams who wounded a deer that was the pet of a kender community. The sight of an entire village of small kender crying their hearts out was so upsetting to the ranger that he quested until he found a druid who could heal the animal, then retired and took up fishing.

Kender are also masters of taunting, sarcasm, and outright rudeness when it suits them to use it. (See the section on kender as player characters for details on taunting effects.) Their intense curiosity gives them shocking insights into the character and nature of other people, though such an awareness is generally shallow. It is acute enough, however, for a kender to forge an idea of another person's character flaws, giving the kender the ability to create the most stinging insults that can be imagined. Full-scale riots have been reportedly started by irritated kender who opened up on someone with their verbal guns.

Taunting is one of the few defenses that kender have. Physically small, kender represent anyone who takes advantage of them. A kender could not imagine taunting a fellow kender; after all, they're in this together. Taunting is especially effective if a kender has others to back him up or some trap that a maddened attacker can be lured into with little cost to the kender himself. Though not very effective against the largest creatures (who will not have their combat effectiveness reduced greatly), taunting might still give a hard-pressed kender an edge in a fight. It is best used only against those who are either attacking or are about to attack; there's no sense in angering a potential friend.

### Handling

The kender concept of personal property and theft deserves special attention. Because many kender develop thieving talents, most people assume they are merely innocent-looking but sneaky burglars. This isn't so. The intense curiosity that kender feel feeds their desire to know how locks can be opened, how to approach people unseen and listen in on their conversations, and to reach into pockets or pouches to find interesting things to look at. Thieving comes naturally to them — so naturally that they cannot see it as thieving.

Kender do not steal for the sake of profit. First of all, they have little concept of value. Faced with a choice between a 2000 gp diamond and a huge, glittering chunk of purple glass, 90 kender out of 100 will take the glass. (The rest will take both but will get rid of the diamond first.) They pick things up out of curiosity and wander off with them. Sometimes the owner of an item leaves before the kender can give the item back, or else the kender becomes enchanted with the item and forgets to return it. If adventuring, a kender will regard anything found in an enemy stronghold as fair game for picking up, as such items are marvelous curios and might prove useful later on.

Even if caught taking an item red-handed, the range of excuses a kender will offer if found to have something that doesn't belong to him is amazing:

"Guess I found it somewhere."

"I forgot that I had it."

"You walked off before I could give it back."

"I was afraid someone else would take it."

"You must have dropped it."

"You put it down and I didn't think you wanted it anymore."

"Maybe it fell into my pocket."

All of these lines are delivered with an innocent sincerity that is all the more maddening because the kender is sincere! A kender might *not* necessarily remember where she found something, even if she picked it up half a minute before, and such responses are often delivered as part of an unthinking defense mechanism. Intense curiosity is a trait ingrained in their souls and minds from their racial creation by the Greystone of Gargath. They cannot be other than what they are — natural thieves.

No regular thieves' guilds operate in kender communities, and kender would not belong to such guilds even if they did exist. (Tasslehoff Burrfoot learned Thieves' Cant during his travels by overhearing conversations between human thieves; he has never belonged to a guild.) Informal organizations for adventurous kender do exist, however, and thieving skills are taught as a matter of course to anyone who is interested in learning them. In addition, families of kender often pass along the knowledge of how to perform certain skills from generation to generation.

Kender, like everyone else, do not like the idea of someone deliberately taking an item from someone else without the latter's permission. To be called a thief is still considered a base insult. This assertion sounds remarkable in view of the fact that kender constantly "borrow" things from each other and from visitors (without asking) in their home communities. Kender don't regard their idea of borrowing as stealing, however. If they need something, they'll take it. If they see something interesting, they'll pick it up and pocket it. A popular proverb defines a kender heirloom as anything that remains longer than three weeks inside a kender's home.

### Religion

After their creation in the Age of Dreams, certain kender were gifted with clerical and druidic powers. These spellcasting kender roamed the entire length and breadth of the continent of Ansalon, spreading their various faiths. Clerical and druidic kender were either incapable of or had no desire for establishing fixed places of worship. No evil kender clerics were ever seen or heard of.

The clerical kender proved to be troublesome for the clerics of the more rigid established religions to govern. Aside from their wanderlust, which made it impossible to

keep track of them and get them to settle down, kender clerics also displayed all of the less engaging traits shown by their people: petty theft, name-calling, and questionable wisdom in dealing with danger. Worse yet, kender clerics were quite good at seeing through false piety and sham, and their criticism of other clerics — whether of their own religions or of others — was stinging. Religious kender themselves were dedicated and sensitive, even if they were incapable of maintaining close relationships with their flocks for very long. Sooner or later, they would have to move on.

Clerical and druidic kender vanished from the world after the Cataclysm, as did all other clerics. Nothing is known of where they went. During the centuries after the Cataclysm, kender spent their time searching for their religious leaders and investigating the various false religions that sprang up across the changed world. Few kender joined such cults for long, and gradually they forgot about the old gods and created a number of their own philosophies on life and the world — philosophies in some ways as error-prone as the false religions of the land, but certainly more sincere and friendly.

The most highly favored of all gods among the kender were Branchala, Chislev, Mishakal, and Gilean. A certain degree of homage was paid by all kender to Reorx, who indirectly caused the creation of kenderkind, and to Habbakuk, the Fisher King and ruler of animals and the sea. Branchala, the Bard King, appealed to the kender with his mastery of song, his love of stories and legends, and his wayward nature. All true bards among the kender held Branchala to be their lord, and they served him well on their endless travels. Clerics of Branchala often learned to play musical instruments or sing as a part of their religious training.

Chislev, the male/female deity who governs all the natural forces of Krynn, was served by many druidic kender. Chislev's worship involved immersing oneself in the harmony and peacefulness of nature, establishing a oneness with the earth and its seasons and cycles, and in the avoidance of judging things to be good or evil. If a thing was troublesome, it was dealt with, whether it was good or bad in nature. Peace and community were emphasized highly. Druidic kender were often accompanied in their wanderings by retinues of wild animals (some under a charm and some merely friendly).

A small cult dedicated to Mishakal could always be found in a large community of kender. Clerical kender of this deity were known to be especially pleasant company, though they had not lost their talent for ridiculing evil-natured beings to their faces. Kender who worshiped this deity were less prone to wander than other clerics and druids, and often followed a circular trail around several small communities that they would periodically visit.

A minor cult among the kender devoted

to the worship of Gilean was known from several parts of Ansalon. Kender who sought knowledge of the world's secrets sometimes took up the gray robes of Gilean's clerics and set out with pen and book, recording all they saw, heard, suspected, and imagined. Only a few diaries of these kender have survived; they make wonderful reading.

During the Third Dragonlance War, it was reported that a kender had encountered a true, good cleric, and, to the cleric's surprise, had gained a duplicate *medallion of faith*. Nothing more is known of this event, but it appears to foretell the return of holy spellcasters among the kender of Ansalon.

### Kender as PCs

For the most part, kender characters will only appear in DRAGONLANCE campaigns set in the world of Krynn. However, it is entirely possible that kender have found their way into other campaign universes by toying with plane-shifting devices or by other means. Krynn is the only world of origin for the kender race, and kender on other worlds will probably have legends concerning their old homes and how they arrived at their new location.

Kender PCs may be of any non-evil alignment. A magical effect that forces a kender to become evil will instead cause it to go insane with catatonia, as per the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

The initial characteristics for a kender are generated using 3d6 rolls, with a -1 modifier for strength and a +2 modifier for dexterity. The following table gives the maximum and minimum values for their six principal, characteristics.

Strength:	6 - 1 6 *
Intelligence:	6 - 1 8
Wisdom:	3 - 1 6
Dexterity:	8 - 1 9
Constitution:	10 - 1 8
Charisma:	6 - 1 8

\* — Female kender may only have strength scores as high as 14.

Kender gain a racial bonus of +1 to comeliness, and virtually no kender are known to have a comeliness of less than 7.

Kender may become fighters, rangers, thieves, thief-acrobats, and bards. Note that kender thieves, thief-acrobats, and bards may be of any non-evil alignment, including lawful good and chaotic good. Kender bards will only gain 1 hp per bard level, instead of a 6-sided hit dice, after the 1st level of bardic experience. Kender clerics and druids may also be used as characters, if the referee is able to work them into an ongoing DRAGONLANCE campaign. Neutral clerics may exist, but druids must always be completely neutral.

Kender cannot learn to cast magic-user or illusionist spells because of their innate magic resistance, a legacy of their creation by the Greystone of Gargath. They cannot become assassins because of their natural empathy with living things, and they cannot

become monks because, regardless of alignment, they lack self-discipline. No evil kender are known to exist. The maximum possible levels that kender may attain in such professions are listed below in table form.

Class	Maximum level
Fighter	5 *
Ranger	5 *
Cleric	6
Druid	5
Thief	unlimited
Thief-acrobat	unlimited
Bard	9

\* — Kender who somehow gain 17 strength can reach 6th level; those who manage to get strength of 18 (as great as can be permanently allowed; no percentile roll allowed) may become 7th-level fighters.

Kender may mix classes so long as alignment and common sense prevail. They may become fighter/thieves (of any non-evil alignment) or ranger/thieves (of any good alignment). If the referee allows cleric and druid characters into his Krynn campaign, then fighter/cleric, ranger/cleric, fighter/druid, thief/cleric, and thief/druid kender may be used as PCs, though such should be extremely rare.

Kender bards (like other bards) cannot be multi-classed, and a class cannot be mixed with a subclass of itself (such as a cleric/druid or fighter/ranger). Kender druid/rangers do not exist. The thief-acrobat split class may be mixed as per the thief class.

Kender who are not thieves are allowed a base 5% chance to perform any thieving skill except reading languages (nil) and climbing (base 40% chance); these chances never improve except for dexterity and racial modifiers (treat kender as halflings with regards to the latter). This also applies to NPC kender who have no levels (who are treated as O-level characters with 1-6 hp).

Unarmored kender, if moving in front of a party by 90' or more and traveling only with other beings like elves who can move as quietly as they do, can surprise opponents on a roll of 1-4 on a d6. They can tell directions above or below ground with 50% accuracy, due to their innate sensitivity to the environment. No kender has ever been known to have psionic talents. As a race, kender tend to be strongly neutral with good and chaotic leanings.

Kender have the same lifespans and age categories as halflings, though they begin their adventures at age 20 + 3d4, regardless of class. Starting money is as per the *Players Handbook*, substituting steel pieces for gold pieces.

Kender have a base movement rate of 12" due to their agility. They lack infravision and gain a special saving-throw bonus vs. spells, rods, wands, staves, and poison of +4, regardless of their constitution scores.

Most kender will learn the languages of any major human, demi-human, and humanoid peoples living near their villages. In

Ansalon, kender will become familiar with goblin, ogre, elven, dwarven, and gnomish languages, as well, as local human tongues and their own racial language, Kender-speak. Druidic kender will learn the secret language of that class. Interestingly, kender have a chance to learn Thieves' Cant regardless of their own class, supposing that they have opportunity to learn it. The idea of using a secret language is quite appealing to them.

The two special talents of kender, taunting and fearlessness, are elaborated upon here. Taunting any intelligent creature who can understand the kender will cause it to save vs. spells (with wisdom bonuses applicable), or else the victim will attack the kender wildly for 1-10 rounds, with a -2 penalty to hit and a +2 penalty to armor class due to the affected being's irrationality. If a particular victim is assumed to be more or less vulnerable to such abuse, the DM may apply penalties or bonuses to saving throws as desired. Long-time friends of a particular kender will develop high saving-throw bonuses against this power as they will have grown used to it.

Fearlessness applies specifically to any form of magical *fear* generated by magical items such as wands and monsters such as dragons, androsphinxes, demons, and the like, as well as to spells like *cause fear*, *scare*, *emotion (fear)*, *symbol (of fear)*, and *fear*.

In general, kender prefer the company of other kender, though they aren't likely to see very many other kender for long periods of time while wandering. They are very well disposed toward elves, humans, half-elves, and hill dwarves, and will have neutral feelings toward other, non-evil dwarves at worst (particularly toward gully dwarves). Gnomes are tolerated for the most part. Kender do not truly hate any other race on Krynn, feeling antipathy at worst toward goblins, derro, and draconians. Kender antipathy usually means that the kender will ready a weapon and open fire on the opponent at a moment's notice — as a matter of principle, not out of hatred.

At the DM's option, a particularly bright or well-traveled kender could be given a 5% legend lore chance to know the answer to a particular problem, based upon the kender's past experience. Kender tend to collect trivia in the same way they collect other people's belongings, and they enjoy songs, stories, tall tales, and legends. All kender bards gain a +5% bonus to their legend lore skill rolls.

### Appearance

Kender are small and resemble human children, though they are more heavily muscled. Males are typically 3' 9" tall and weigh 80 lbs.; females are 2" and 6 lbs., smaller. Adult kender are rarely more than 4' tall, and their weight can be up to 100 lbs. Kender lack the hairy feet and chubby appearance typical of halflings.

Kender typically have sandy blond, light and dark brown, copper-red, or even red-

orange hair colors. Hair styles are usually long, with many varieties of braids and pony tails being popular. Cheek braids indicate a kender is of royal or noble blood. Often bits of colorful material such as bird feathers, ribbons, or flowers are carefully woven into their hair as well. Kender are fair-skinned but tan quickly, becoming nut-brown by midsummer. Their eyes are variously pale blue, sea green, olive, light brown, and hazel.

Facially, kender are distinctive for their pointed ears, giving them a faintly elfin look. They are bright-eyed, and their facial expressions are quite intense. No one seems to look as happy as a joyful kender or as miserable as a crying one. Angry kender using taunts and insults against someone they particularly dislike can be shockingly vulgar, as noted above, and can look quite devilish for a few moments. This intensity of emotion can be infectious.

Kender have been called "wizened" because of the fine network of lines that appear on their faces about age 40. These minute wrinkles give kender a curious appearance when seen close up, though such lines are considered attractive by kender of all clans.

Kender have a wide vocal range, from deep and husky to high-pitched and squeaky. Older kender tend to have deeper voices, but they still maintain wide pitch ranges and can often perform remarkable sound imitations. When excited, kender tend to speak very quickly and ramble at the same time, making it hard to follow what they're trying to say.

#### Possessions

Because of their small size and low strength, kender prefer to travel light. Only small shields will be used (if class allows), and leather or padded armor or furs make up the heaviest armor that most kender will tolerate. A few warriors may use ringmail or studded leather armor, but will generally take it off when traveling long distances by foot or when scouting an enemy position. Elfin chainmail (if somehow obtained) would be much enjoyed.

The following one-handed melee weapons may be used by kender: aklys, hand axe, dagger, hammer, horseman's flail, horseman's pick, horseman's mace, sap, and short sword. Kender may throw the aklys, hand axe, club, dagger, dart, hammer, harpoon, javelin, and the short spear and trident using only one hand, and they may use the short spear and trident as one-handed thrusting weapons. Javelins may be hurled with a throwing stick (atlatl). Light, small shields and spiked bucklers may be used with any of the above.

In addition, kender may carry and use the following weapons (though two-handed): club, falchion, footman's flail, footman's mace, morning star, footman's pick, scimitar, spear, short quarterstaff and bo staff, khopesh sword, long sword, broad sword, and trident. A few of the taller ones can use the bardiche and battle axe. Ken-

der, despite their height, may learn to use a lasso. They dislike the use of the garrot and whip, and no kender are known to have any expertise with them.

Kender prefer using slings and staff slings as missile weapons, though they have also been known to use short bows of various sorts. Blowguns and hand-held crossbows may be used by them. Kender have never been known to build or employ large siege weapons on a regular basis, though they might be fascinated with them for a short time.

The hoopak is a special weapon developed and used exclusively by the kender, who are the right height to make the best use of it. Its origins are unknown, lying far into the earliest years of the Age of Dreams. A hoopak is a combination bo staff and staff sling (treated as a regular bullet sling, regardless of the type of missiles fired) that all kender are able to use, regardless of class restrictions on weapons. Kender PCs should choose a hoopak as one of the weapons learned at 1st level; those who do gain a +2 bonus to hit and damage on all attacks involving the hoopak, due to the years of practice with it earlier in life. Any kender PC who does not choose the hoopak at 1st level will never be able to gain the +2 proficiency bonus.

A hoopak can be easily made in 1-4 days by any adult kender. They cost nothing, since kender never sell them, and a kender PC may begin the game with a ready-made hoopak. A hoopak is made from a springy, resilient wood; one end of the staff is forked like a slingshot, and a leather pocket is mounted there as the sling. The other end of the staff is pointed and shod with metal or hardened by fire.

Being fairly inventive, some kender have developed combination weapons similar to the hoopak. A snapper is a hand axe, balanced for throwing, with an elastic-band slingshot mounted on the back of the axe head. The kender using it simply points the shaft of the axe in the direction of an enemy and fires away. Other such devices, such as spears with removable spearheads (turning them into staves), have also been noted, but these are fairly rare. Kender also like adding extra things to their weapons such as whistles, notches for tying bundles to the weapon's shaft, or hollow shafts that allow the weapon to double as a snorkel or a blowgun.

All kender, whether thieves or not, invariably have one or more makeshift lockpicking tools, often no more than a length of wire, hidden on their persons. Professional-quality thieves' tools are made and sold (or picked up) at the same adventuring clubs that teach thieving skills.

Kender clothing is widely varied and tends to be colorful and bright. Even rustic clothing will have bits of brightly colored material woven into it. Soft, thin materials are much preferred, and soft leather is highly valued (especially if dyed and tooled with designs). Kender thieves generally avoid wearing clothing that is too loudly

colored, since this inhibits their thieving abilities at hiding.

Beyond the above, a kender will almost certainly have an assortment of other small items in his pockets or belt pouches that were acquired in one manner or another. Bird feathers, odd stones, rings (possibly magical), string, animal teeth, toys, whistles, scraps of paper, necklaces, tinderboxes, small tools, chalk, purses, figurines, charcoal sticks, handkerchiefs, gems, pet mice, glass marbles, unusual daggers, bits of dried meat or biscuits, foreign coins, and the like will fill a kender's pockets. Anything that could conceivably hold a kender's attention for longer than two seconds and that can be quickly hidden on a kender's person will almost certainly be taken.

Players using kender characters may have their DMs generate random-roll tables in case the kender quickly reaches into a pocket to grab an item at random. If a kender wants to find a specific item, it will take one round to locate it among the kender's possessions. A kender grabbing an item on his person at random may hurl or use the item immediately. Random-roll tables should be adjusted to keep track of new items acquired. If a kender exceeds the maximum possible number of items that he or she could possibly carry (as determined by the DM and player before play starts), then items are randomly lost from the list. Some degree of rational judgement should be used in figuring out these tables, but they add enormously to playing enjoyment.

Players with kender PCs should also make a habit of passing notes to the DM whenever an item is seen that the kender wishes to "handle." The DM may roll for successful use of the kender's pickpocketing skill only if an item is being taken from a living person or within plain view of another character. Otherwise, the item is automatically and secretly transferred to the kender's list of possessions.

Kender often "handle" items taken from fellow adventurers. Threats are generally useless in preventing this occurrence. In fact, a kender PC who does not pickpocket her friends probably has something seriously wrong with her, and she should be seen by a physician or cleric at once. A lowered "curiosity drive" is often a symptom of fever or insanity.

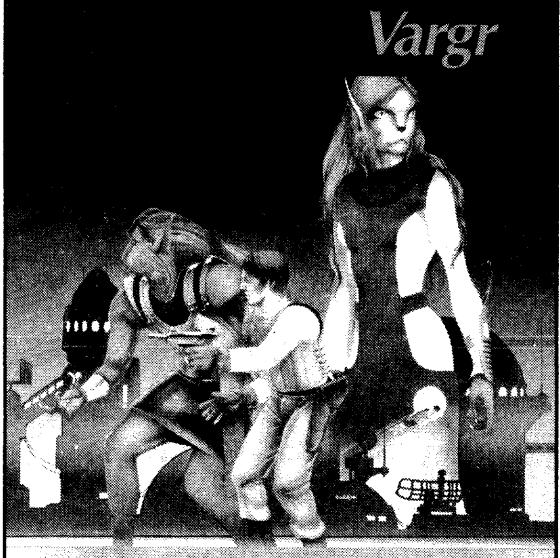
Kender have sometimes been known to make pets out of stray animals, particularly cats, dogs, and small, friendly rodents like mice. A few stories are told of kender who managed to get even bigger and more unusual pets; one peculiar tale is told of Tasslehoff Burrfoot and a mammoth he freed from captivity, but this cannot be proven. Kender only rarely use mounts, preferring to walk even over long distances.

*This article was prepared with the help of Harold Johnson, who is to blame for creating kender in the first place, and Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman, who brought them to life in the DRAGONLANCE trilogy. Thank you all!*

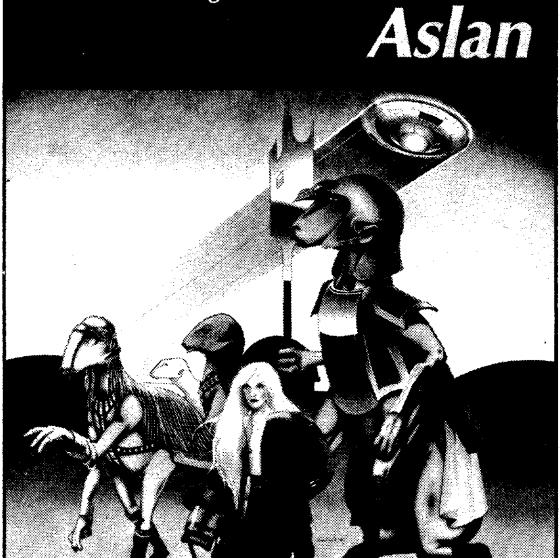
# Which Alien Is Dangerous?



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Encounters with the Enigmatic Centaurs

**K'kree**

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The K'kree—a gregarious plant-eater?

The Vargr—a genetically engineered Terran wolf?

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**K'kree** are very big and powerful, and they always travel in groups. They don't like you: they can tell you're a meat-eater; they can smell it on your breath. They're also very arrogant and don't consider other races civilized. And K'kree in groups are very aggressive. An Aslan fight ends in a gesture of submission; a K'kree fight ends when the loser runs away. Running away is a good idea, if you can; better hope they don't chase you very far.

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# Plan it by the numbers

## A system for tailoring challenges to characters by Frank Mentzer

(Author's note: The following was included in the original manuscript for the D&D® Master Set. It was, however, thought by the editors to be too heavily mathematic for easy use, and was replaced by an alternate system. But I still like this one, and use it in my own campaign — though modified for AD&D® game use.)

It is possible to generate encounters by applying a bit of math, using the experience of the PCs as the major variable factor. Try the following system; but be aware that it may not apply to some campaigns. It can be easily modified, applying the same general principles to data found more accurate to your own style of play.

By applying this or a similar system, you can predict the game impact of a wandering or placed encounter before it occurs. This system is thus recommended when you cannot accurately estimate the monster power needed to challenge the characters. Give yourself enough time to use it; try to find out what PCs will be played at least an hour, if not longer, before the game starts.

This system is also useful when, for entertainment reasons, you want to finish the game session with a rousing encounter, designed (quickly and just before it is used) specially for a given group of characters. If you can work the math quickly enough, try it during a break, or while the players are busy role-playing without needing you as a judge. But don't delay the game while calculating!

### Preliminary calculations

Before you start, find the Total Party Levels (TPL) by adding all the levels of all the characters being played. Divide this total by the number of characters to find the Average Party Level (APL).

Multi-classed AD&D game characters use their highest single level plus one-half of the level attained in any other class(es); thus, a fighter/magic-user/thief of levels 2/2/2 has a figure of 4 for purposes of this calculation. Dual-classed characters use the total of all levels they have attained. Drop any fractions that remain after the TPL arithmetic is completed.

The difficulty of an individual monster, in comparison to a given level of PC, can be expressed in terms of the APL, as shown on Table 1.

When the TPL is compared to the total hit dice of monsters appearing, the overall impact of the encounter can be estimated, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Monster HD compared to APL

HD of 1 monster	Comparison to PC abilities
Over 200% APL	Extremely dangerous opponent
150-200% APL	Tough opponent
110-150% APL	Major opponent
90-110% APL	Average opponent
50-90% APL	Minor opponent
30-50% APL	Easy opponent
20-30% APL	Very easy opponent
Up to 20% APL	Nuisance opponent; omit or modify unless related to greater party goal.

Table 2: Total HD of monsters compared to TPL

Total HD	Game impact
Over 200% TPL	Extreme danger. If the PCs do not retreat or flee, they will probably die; you may need to drop hints to this effect.
150-200% TPL	Tough encounter; may require many party resources to ensure success, and may cause deaths.
110-150% TPL	Major encounter; can become one of the game session's major activities.
90-110% TPL	Average placed encounter, Tough wandering encounter.
50-90% TPL	Minor placed encounter, Major wandering encounter.
30-50% TPL	Easy placed encounter, Average wandering encounter.
20-30% TPL	Very easy placed encounter, Minor wandering encounter.
Up to 20% TPL	Too easy for placed encounter, Easy wandering encounter.

### Procedure

Keep track of decimals in all of these steps, without rounding. An electronic calculator is very helpful.

1. *Select categories:* Decide what impact you want the encounter to have, in terms of monster strength (Table 1) and overall encounter impact (Table 2). Be sure you have the APL and TPL handy, as well.

2. *Select the monsters:* Multiply the APL by each of the percentages given in the Table 1 category you have chosen. Select a monster whose hit dice are within that range, preferably near the average. (This will often be based on those available in the adventure setting.) Make a note of its name and hit dice, including the number of asterisks (special abilities).

3. *Find the Power Factor (PF):* Find the number of asterisks by the monster's hit dice, and use the following chart to find the PF (to be used in step 5).

Asterisks	Power Factor
0-1	1
2-3	2
4-5	3
6-7	4
8 or more	5

4. *Find total hit dice appearing:* Multiply the TPL by each of the percentages given in the Table 2 category you have chosen. Keep both the smaller and larger figures. You may wish to note two or more ranges and their effects, to provide alternatives.

5. *Calculate number appearing:* Divide the total hit dice (from step 4) by the hit dice of a single monster, then divide that result by the Power Factor. (Thus, if the PF is 1, it has no real effect.) The number(s) to the left of the decimal point indicates the number of monsters appearing.

6. (Optional) *Convert decimals to hit points:* Find the average hit points of one monster by multiplying its hit dice (without plusses) by 4.5 (average for 1d8), then add any plusses to the total. Multiply the entire result of step 5 by this number of hit points. Round the result to the nearest whole number; it is the total number of hit points to be divided among all the monsters appearing. Divide it however you wish, as long as each monster has no fewer than the minimum and no more than the maximum hit points.

*Example:* A giant rockfish has 5 + 5 HD (5d8 + 5 hp); its average hit point total is 4.5 times 5 (= 22.5) + 5, or 27.5 hp. If your calculations show 3.45 rockfish appearing, they have a total of 94.8 (rounded to 95) hp; you divide this as you like among the 3 rockfish appearing (as shown by the whole-number part of the 3.45), so that each has 10-45 hp.

(Designer's note: This is the system I use, but a few hit points here and there don't

mean much, and this last step is a bit time-consuming. Estimate, round off, or substitute if you wish.)

## Examples

A. Low Level Party; size = 5, TPL 26, APL 5.2

### Situation #1: Wandering encounter

1. Impact desired: Average opponent, average encounter.
2. HD of one monster: 90-10% APL, or 90% of 5.2 to 110% of 5.2, or 4.7 to 5.7. Average = 5.2; monster chosen: cockatrice (HD 5\*\*).
3. Power Factor: 2 (asterisks).
4. Total monster HD: 30-50% TPL, or 30% of 26 to 50% of 26, or 7.8 to 13.
5. Number appearing: 7.8/5 to 13/5, or 1.56 to 2.6, each divided by 2 (PF) = 0.78 to 1.3. One cockatrice wanders by.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = 22.5, multiplied by 0.78 and 1.3. The cockatrice has 18-29 hp.

### Situation #2: Placed encounter

1. Impact desired: Tough opponent, Tough encounter; also consider Major impact as an option.
2. HD of one monster: 150-200% APL, or 7.8 to 11. Average = 9.4; monster chosen: stone giant (HD 9).
3. Power Factor: 1 (may be ignored).
4. Total monster HD: For Tough, 150-200% TPL, or 39 to 52; for Major, HD 110-150% TPL, or 28.6 to 39.
5. Number appearing: For Tough, 39/9 to 52/9, or 4.33 to 5.77; for Major, 28.6/9 to 39/9, or 3.18 to 4.33. For Tough, 4-5 giants are placed; for Major, 3-4 giants are placed.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = 40.5; for Tough, the 4-5 stone giants have 175-234 total hp; for Major, the 3-4 stone giants have 129-175 total hp (each with 9-72, or 9d8, hp).

B. Mid-level party; size = 6, TPL 122, APL 20.3

### Situation #1: Wandering encounter

1. Impact desired: Average opponent, Easy encounter.
2. HD of one monster: 90-110% APL, or 18.27 to 22.33. Average = 20.3; monster chosen: tyrannosaurus rex (HD 20).
3. Power Factor: 1 (may be ignored).
4. Total monster HD: Up to 20% TPL, or up to 24.4.
5. Number appearing: Up to 24.4/20, or up to 1.22. One dinosaur wanders by.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = 90; the tyrannosaurus rex has up to 110 hp (minimum 20).

### Situation #2: Placed encounter

1. Impact desired: Major opponent, extremely dangerous encounter.
2. HD of one monster: 110-150% APL, or 22.33 to 30.45. Average = 26.39; monster chosen: NPC party (APL 26).
3. Power Factor: Assume 3.
4. Total monster HD: Over 200% TPL, or over 244.
5. Number appearing: Over 244/26, or over 9.38; divided by 3 (PF) = over 3.13. Three NPCs are placed.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = special. Each member of the NPC party has about 104% of average hp. Recommended makeup: 1 fighter, 1 magic-user, 1 cleric; all level 25-27, equipped similar to PC party but with about 28% more power (NPC APL divided by PC APL = 1.28).

### C. High-level party; size = 4, TPL 132, APL 34

### Situation #1: Wandering encounter

1. Impact desired: Easy opponent, Minor encounter.
2. HD of one monster: 30-50% APL, or 10.2 to 17, average = 13.6. Monster chosen: cloud giant (HD 13\*).
3. Power Factor: 1 (may be ignored).
4. Total monster HD: 20-30% TPL, or 26.4 to 39.6.
5. Number appearing: 26.4/13 to 39.6/13, or 2.03 to 3.04; 2-3 giants wander by.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = 58.5; the 2-3 cloud giants have a total of 119-178 hp (each with 13-104 hp).

### Situation #2: Placed encounter

1. Impact desired: Minor opponent, Average encounter.
2. HD of one monster: 50-90% APL, or 17 to 30.6. Average = 23.8; monster chosen: Huge red dragon (HD 20 \*\*\*).
3. Power Factor: 4.
4. Total monster HD: 90-110% TPL, or 118.8 to 145.2.
5. Number appearing: 5.94 to 7.26, divided by 4 (PF) = 1.48 to 1.81; one dragon appears.
6. Convert decimals: Average hp = 90; the one huge red dragon has from 133 to 160 (maximum) hit points.

### Reversing the process

By finding the total hit dice of a group of monsters who are about to be encountered by a party (according to your encounter key), you can estimate the impact in advance. If you feel that the result would be something other than desirable, feel free to modify the number appearing or their hit points — and the treasure, as well.

There are many good reasons for modify-

ing existing details (often called "winging it"). If the hour is late, you might wish to avoid a long, involved encounter. If the party is exceptionally damaged, you might want to avoid killing characters. If the party has been remarkably unlucky in treasure-finding during the adventure, you might want to add more, with a corresponding increase in danger. Or you might simply have underestimated or overestimated the PCs' abilities. By using an effective impact-prediction system, you can avoid guesswork in making the changes. You may have trouble with the system at first, but stick with it. The more you use it, the faster it'll become, until you can estimate impacts quickly and accurately without even a calculator. Don't believe it? Try it!

One final note. The concept of variable game details may shock some DMs — especially those who wipe out whole parties while saying "That's what it says right here.

... Gee, isn't that a shame?" But most DMs fake rolls occasionally, announcing the results they prefer — which could be to the party's advantage, or the reverse. The deadliest games I've ever seen are ones in which everyone (including the DM, in melees) rolls the dice out in the open, for better or worse. I make up results regularly, to keep the game fun — and isn't that why we're all playing?

You can do lots more with APL and TPL. Think about it, and write to me with your ideas!



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# For king and country

## An alignment system based on cause and effect

by Paul Suttie

Alignment has always been important in the making and playing of an AD&D® game character. Supposedly, by electing to be lawful good, chaotic neutral, or whatever, a character chooses a broad set of morals which will guide his behavior in the game. Unfortunately, it is not nearly so simple. It has become obvious in the recent storm of letters to the Forum that alignment is no longer serving its primary purposes, those being to rationalize each individual's behavior and to prevent players from breaking character in order to unfairly exploit game situations. Instead of answering moral dilemmas, alignment is creating them. Instead of preventing characters from taking liberties with the game, it encourages abuse or puts the player's own better judgment in chains. What has gone wrong?

Good and evil were introduced into the game at a time when the whole concept of role-playing was much simpler than it is now. A typical campaign used to involve a dungeon full of horrible monsters and traps, and a nearby castle or town where supplies and rumors were readily available for those with the gold to buy them. Even players with cleric characters did not usually know the name or nature of the god they worshiped; they knew only that through prayer their PCs could obtain various spells to aid the party. The motivations of kings and churches were unimportant, unless they were offering bounties for the heads of particular monsters. War and politics were unknown; adventuring in dungeons was the major activity of the strong and bold, and all else revolved around adventuring. Needless to say, a character in such a campaign needed a reason to be making his living at killing things and taking their riches, or else adventuring would have begun to seem rather immoral.

Alignment provided what was needed. A character could kill something with a clean conscience if he knew that it was evil and thus ready to wreak whatever havoc it possibly could on society until it was destroyed. A character whose job it was to destroy evil was quite obviously good, for he was the guardian of society. Alignment had another benefit too; in the absence of actual laws and religious beliefs, it was nevertheless possible to tell a character when he was getting out of line. For instance, even though a certain merchant might have been a defenseless old man, and killing him might have been the cheapest way to get supplies from his shop, the players could not exploit the campaign in that way be-

cause their characters had morals to uphold. Killing the old man would have been a breach of good alignment.

So far, so good. At the most basic level of play, alignment is an indispensable part of the game. But this is not the only level of play. As they become comfortable with the idea of running characters, players begin to look deeper than the sort of clear-cut situations I described above; they want to know how PCs feel about other things, like poisoning their enemies or killing the monsters' young, and they want to know what the morals are that make the characters feel that way.

The first signs of the problem began to appear as soon as it became necessary to define the various alignments. Perhaps knowing that a comprehensive list of "do's and don'ts" would destroy the spontaneity of play and inevitably miss situations that might arise, the game creators opted instead to give players a definition of the general outlooks which would guide their characters' thoughts and actions. But how to define good and evil?

In the real world, good and evil are invented concepts. Societies label their own values as good, and those of the enemy (or the threatening or the unknown) as evil. In the simple campaign described above, this would not do; a character who makes his living by killing things wants to know that the enemy is truly evil, not just a perceived evil. So realism had to be abandoned. Alignment was approached in the same way that magic was handled; that is to say, as a thing common in literature and unknown in the real world. Each and every intelligent being would be motivated by some absolute cause which would be perceived by all as the same thing. Thus, a paladin not only would believe himself to be good, but would be seen as good even by his enemies.

Once it is decided that there is a definite thing called "good," it is reasonable to try to define it in absolute terms. This is the stumbling block. How does one define concepts that in the real world have no absolute meaning? There is no way to do it except to choose a particular value system and declare that it applies universally to the gaming universe.

The system that was chosen comes straight from the perceptions of the creators, and thus straight from twentieth-century America. While "life, relative freedom, and the prospect of happiness" might satisfy the typical modern gamer as being part of the framework of good, they

would not satisfy most of the societies in a game universe. In fact, there is no system that could conceivably satisfy all the creatures in a gaming universe, because it is the differences in their views that put them at odds in the first place. No one has ever decided that certain values are good, and then chosen to oppose them and be consciously evil, and there is no possible reason why any sane person ever would, even if he is just a character in a game.

Absolute alignment is inevitably defined from one society's perspective, and thus makes no sense for any of the others that co-exist with it. In actual fact, the alignment system which is spelled out in the AD&D game rules applies to a society which is not even a part of the game, and so upon examination, every character naturally finds himself incompatible with his professed ethos. Alignment makes sense in a simple game. But AD&D games today often operate on a level so sophisticated that the worlds we create give rise to inhabitants no less realistic, events no less consistent, than those in our own world. Yet these characters whom we seem to know as well as we know ourselves must still choose an absolute alignment, a label which upon examination is rife with contradictions.

No wonder characters who take on evil personae find themselves appalled by their own behavior. So would anyone who set out to be the opposite of what they knew was right and good. Even the most "evil" villains of history did not have the sort of attitude that an assassin character is expected to have — that is to say, that woe and suffering are desirable ends in and of themselves.

No wonder the typical paladin hypocritically preaches respect for all life, while a value system he would more realistically possess, that of religious intolerance, determines his actions. Subconsciously, if not consciously, we know that a paladin is not good in the sense of the definition we have been given. But when a dilemma arises, we make the fair mistake of turning to the rules for an answer, and find in retrospect that most of what our character does is wrong according to this supposedly absolute definition of good. So where should we turn? To a new set of guidelines, invented with the paladins of the Middle Ages in mind? Unfortunately, this would not solve the problem, because it would still be based on a system of universal perceptions, where each character "knows" what good is, but some choose to turn their backs on it. A system

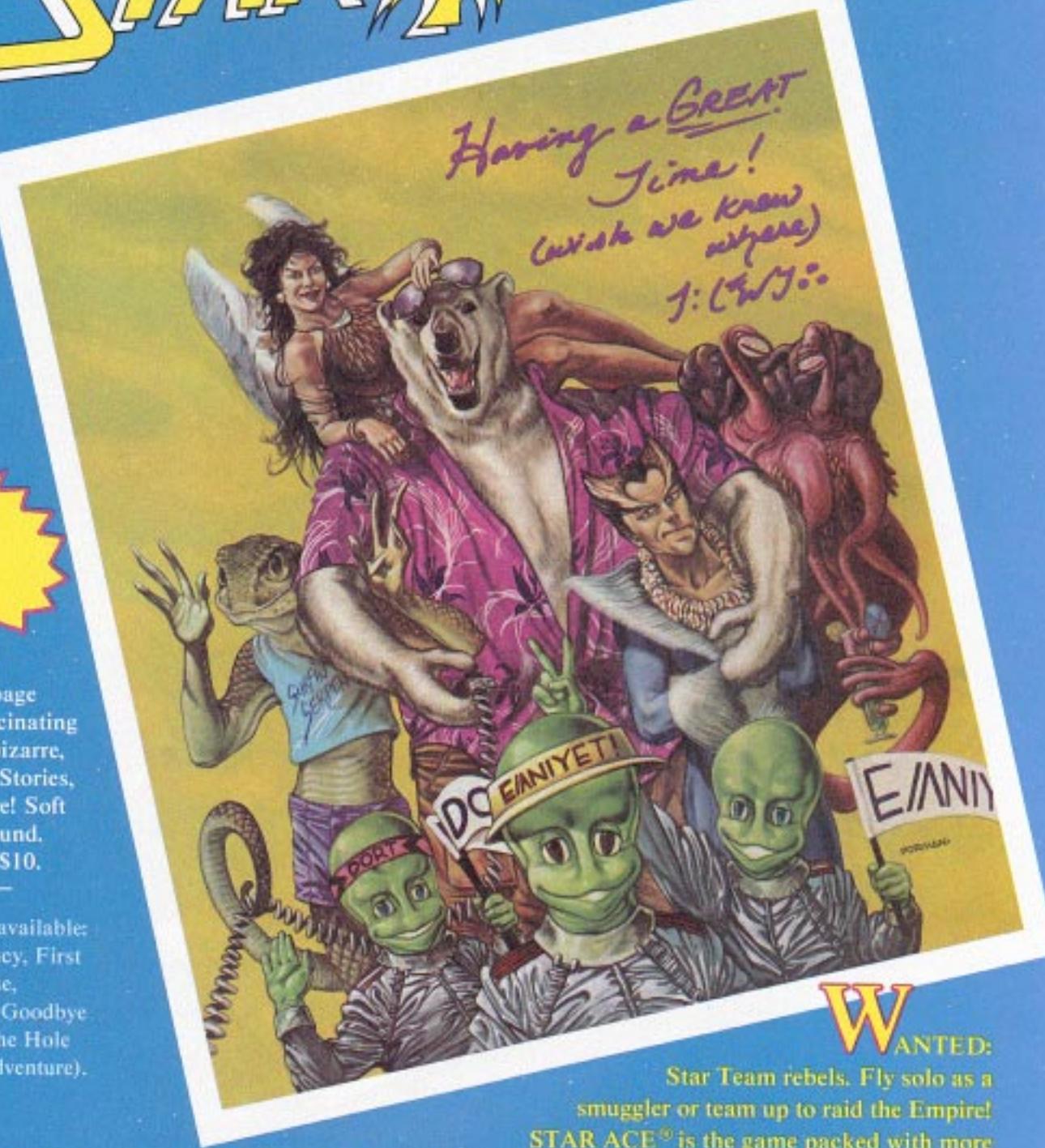
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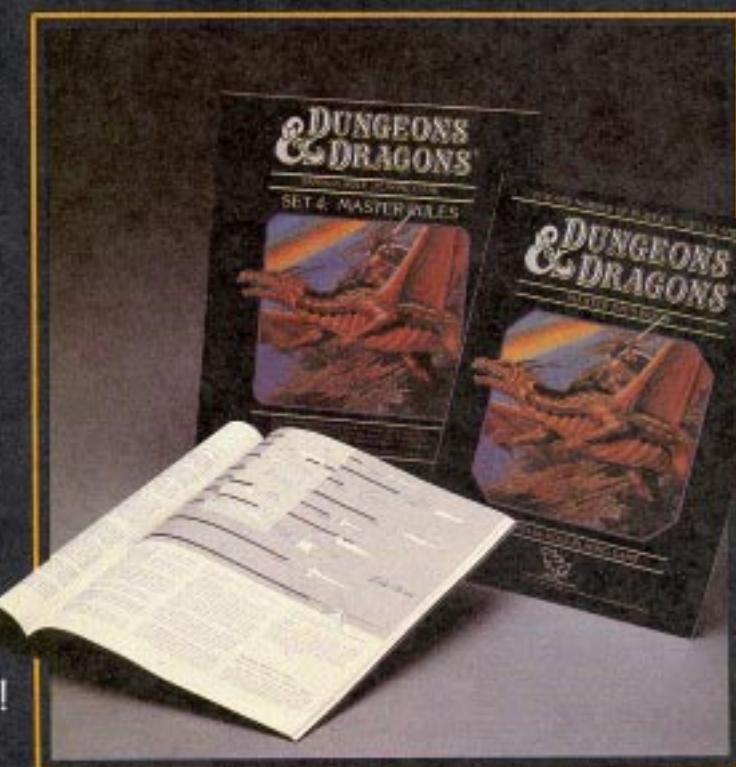
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invented for the paladin would fall apart when applied to his enemies.

For an alternative, consider this: In many gaming groups, the campaigns have outgrown one facet of their origins. The characters they play do what they do because they are loyal to a king or a god whose nature and beliefs are known to them, or because their land is in danger, or because the PCs are ambitious, kind, or greedy. To have to place their beliefs into narrow and absolute slots only restricts their role-playing. By removing the current concepts of good and evil from the campaigns, these groups would enhance, rather than cripple, their gaming. But it is a change not to be taken lightly. The alternative to a rigid system of alignments involves a lot of work for the Dungeon Master.

If good and evil are not to be taken for granted, there must be another way for characters to choose and adhere to a system of beliefs. If there were not one readily available, the task at hand would be too enormous to even contemplate. But there is. Characters no longer worship intangible forces whose only purpose is to grant spells, and they no longer serve kings whose only purpose is to provide bounties and ransoms. The *Legends & Lore* book, various articles in DRAGON® Magazine, and the imagination of the DM can all provide gods who expect their followers to behave in a certain way. Kings and other people in positions of power also will expect certain behavior from their subjects — sometimes because of their own religious beliefs, and sometimes to promote their own selfish ends. The list of logical motivations that a character can have goes beyond that. He need not be pious or loyal to find a slot in this less absolute system, for he may well have selfish ends of his own.

In creating a campaign in which alignment will be subjective, a referee must plan certain aspects of play much more carefully before characters may enter his world. He must consider religion — which gods exist in his campaign, and which races and societies worship which gods? He must consider the rulers of the various states, decide which gods, if any, they worship, and what other considerations will affect the way they rule. Does the character's king have fears of being invaded, or does he have conquests of his own in mind? Does he worry about revolution, or does he find no greater pleasure in life than to see contented, well-fed peasants? All these considerations will affect what he expects from his subjects, and what their level of loyalty to him will be.

Now the player may create his character. Instead of simply writing down a two-word definition of his PC's beliefs, he must first find out from the DM which gods the PC may choose to worship, and should select one which is compatible with the character he desires to play. For instance, a paladin should choose the official religion of the state, whereas a thief might choose a subversive cult whose patron is a god of stealth or trickery. Or, upon consideration, he may

decide to be completely impious; while the edicts of a god will certainly decide much of a character's morality, they are not by any means the only considerations.

Next, he should query the DM about the nature of the local ruler, and whether the campaign demands a certain degree of loyalty or disloyalty to this ruler. Again, there is no need for a character to follow any king's principles; he may opt to be completely independent of both church and state. But this does not allow him to be directionless. Once he has adopted as many morals as he wishes to glean from the PC's religion and society, he must fill out his character with whatever values and principles he will consider important in gaming.

In all of this, the PC need never decide to be good or evil, lawful or chaotic. He will decide whether he is pacifistic or pugilistic, whether he craves or shuns material goods, whether he has a hot temper or a slow fuse, whether he is merciful or vengeful, or whatever else he thinks is important in understanding his character. (Sometimes these will be determined in part by the character's class, especially in the case of assassins and cavaliers, whose moral code is partially spelled out in the class descriptions.) Unlike a traditional alignment, these guidelines need not be all saintly or all deplorable; a mix is entirely possible, and will result in far more interesting and viable characters. A character need no longer be denied honesty and trustworthiness simply because he wishes to be materialistic and consider the slightest provocation an invitation to fight. Also, unlike the standard alignmental code, additions and changes can be made to the list whenever the player discovers the list to be incomplete in some way, or if some value turns out to be incompatible with the other ones.

This is not to say that this list may be altered at the player's whim to suit the situation, for then other considerations will crop up. Has a character abandoned a value held dear by his god? If so, then all the regular penalties of alignmental shift will stem from the god's wrath. Will the character's new tendencies put him at odds with the law? If so, he risks imprisonment or worse. Maybe he is neither pious nor important to the king, but if he acts radically different from how he did before, or changes faces too regularly, he will certainly alienate himself from those he knows. In any case, he will probably discover that maintaining the PC's values is a smart thing to do, and will certainly discover that there is more enjoyment in playing a consistent persona.

Once alignment becomes a personal and tangible set of values instead of a rigid slot, characters are free to act as they truly should, in their capacity as servants to a king or a god, or in their desire to build an empire, gain a fortune, or free an enslaved people. Cause and effect are a character's motivation. If a being acts in the interests of a character or his superiors, it is a good being. If it opposes those interests, it is a

bad being. Consider these following examples of characters in a cause-and-effect world.

A paladin, a member of one class considered inseparable from alignment, could be played just as effectively as a stalwart believer in the official religion of the state as in the empirical concept of lawful good. He will still be expected to limit his material wealth, to fight tirelessly in the name of his god and his king, and to heal the faithful selflessly. If he does not, he will suffer the consequences of alignmental deviation, for his god will not tolerate such behavior. And faith still has its rewards; although there is no such thing as evil in an absolute sense, the state will certainly have religious enemies which it will consider evil. Against these beings, the paladin will have full use of his special abilities; he will be able to detect their presence, ward himself magically against them during battle with *protection from evil*, and should he have a holy sword, wreak havoc upon them as he can do to no others.

This paladin could be a knight on a crusade to rid the holy land of the infidel. On the other hand, he could be an Arabian knight, defending the holy land from the infidel. It is possible, in other words, for paladins to fight one another, inflict damage on one another with their holy swords, and gain bonuses in their saving throws against one another's spells. The long-debated question of whether there should be an anti-paladin class is quickly resolved; there is no need for such a class when paladins can logically oppose one another in any case. To each paladin, the other would seem to be an anti-paladin, a fanatical pagan intent on the desecration of all that is right and pure.

Let's consider another class which is often considered the epitome of a particular alignment: the assassin. It may be hard to accept at first, but a ruthless killer who makes his living through deadly subterfuge can survive without a belief in woe for all. Merely consider his job description in comparison to that of a typical fighter, and the need for an assassin to be evil begins to slip away. Who has not played a purportedly good fighter whose sole occupation is to kill things that oppose his ethos? True, an assassin does his work in the midst of society, not in a dungeon, but this does not require him to be contemptuous of life. His motives may be similar to those that lure many people into crime — a chance to make it big, a desire for vengeance, a discontentment with the establishment, desperation to feed a hungry family, or loyalty to a foreign king. The fact that he often does not align himself with a god or king does not make him immune to retribution or punishment, for he is still a criminal and a murderer, subject to grievous punishment if captured by the authorities or by his intended victim. Not only is the assassin playable without the evil label, he is virtually unplayable as a campaign character until alignment is restructured. A human being with motives, desires, and purposes can remain interest-

ing through many adventures. A blood-thirsty killer quickly becomes intolerable.

I have referred repeatedly to the morals which state rulers and gods impress upon the character. It is reasonably easy to see that a king would wish to instill certain beliefs upon the populace. If war was a constant threat, then a strictly pacifistic social value system would lead to the quick downfall of the state. If the official religion of the state relied on human sacrifice, then a general belief in the sanctity of life would be a real problem. But what about the gods? In the absence of rigid alignments, what possible reason could they have for demanding their followers to maintain certain sets of values, convert pagans to the "true" beliefs, and oppose other religious sects violently? Has the whole question of alignment not simply been shunted back one step to the level of the deities?

It need not be so. Consider the recent works on clerics in DRAGON® issue #92, specifically with regard to the reasons why clerics must spread the faith. The power of any deity is proportional to the number of devout followers it has. This is a concept which should be reinforced under the new system of alignment. The power of gods should actually be made to vary with the power of their followers to the extent that they would die if all their followers were slain or converted to other faiths. As an example, suppose the members of a Greek society were to overrun a Babylonian nation and convert the survivors to their own faith. Many of the Greek lesser gods might actually be elevated to greater god status, and the Babylonian pantheon would be relegated to demigods if not slain. In this way, pantheons may grow, prosper, and fade away, just as has actually happened throughout history. It may even be that gods are created originally by the existence of worshipers. If a large number of thieves, discontent with the state religion, begin to secretly worship a god of stealth and trickery, such a god is created. Thus, there are gods to fit every intelligent being's needs.

This answers many questions. First, a particular god has particular values because its worshipers created it with those values in mind. Following the example of the thieves above, asking why a god should treasure stealth is meaningless. Second, a god requires its worshipers to be devout and gain more followers, because if its homage fades away, so in turn does the god itself. Not all gods need to encourage war and conquest to increase their power, but they all must have some method of maintaining old followers and gaining new ones if they are to survive. One of the biggest bonuses for a cleric of a particular religion is that if he converts enough pagans to the true faith, he may actually help to make his demigod or lesser god become a greater deity. As *Legends & Lore* makes clear, this will give him otherwise forbidden access to sixth-level and seventh-level cleric spells. Conversely, if he allows the devoted followers of a greater god to slip away from the faith, he may cripple

his god and so lose access to the same spells.

Another aspect of religion which must be dealt with is the traditional arrangement of the outer planes. Here again, the task of restructuring the game without the pigeonholes of alignment may seem formidable, but here again the work has already been done for you. In fact, you may agree on examination of the current system that the arrangement of the outer planes has hampered the campaign of today as much as the concepts of absolute good and absolute evil have.

The structure of the outer planes, as presented in the *Players Handbook* and in *Legends & Lore*, was created before there was material available describing the various pantheons of gods from our own mythologies. In a sense, the planes took the place of a well-developed theology for the game. If one knows that the lawful good gods, whomever they might be, live in the Seven Heavens, and that devout followers of the "lawful good faith" can expect to go there after death, then one is not required the massive expenditure of time and effort that it would take to develop a real mythology. But the game has expanded enormously in that direction in the last few years. It is now possible to know the exact nature of one's religion and one's gods. There are guidelines for worship, for divine intervention, even for adventuring in the homelands of the gods. This detail brings with it a new problem. In much the same way that the characters of the contemporary campaign have outgrown pigeonhole alignment, so have their gods.

*Legends & Lore* describes the various pantheons of gods as they existed in mythology — that is to say, as separate hierarchies which do not interact with one another. Each religion had its own homeland for the gods, and many of these homelands have been described in *Legends & Lore* or in recent issues of DRAGON Magazine. Those which have not already been described in AD&D game terms can easily be converted for game play from the wealth of material available on the topic at any library. With all this material at hand, it seems criminal that we retain the traditional structure of the outer planes, in which the most fantastic creations of legend, the homes of the gods, must be abandoned or at least restructured.

There is an alternative, and the development of Gladsheim as a home for the Norse gods and the Norse gods alone (as presented in both *Legends & Lore* and DRAGON issue #90) steers us in the right direction. (To be fair to the author of the article on Gladsheim, I must note that a place was reserved there for gods of other mythos, but this place was considered separate from that of the Norse gods, and so the statement that there was a home described for the Norse gods and the Norse gods alone remains true.) For the first time, we have a viable home for gods, a place which we can envision graphically — a place where PCs can adventure. Why not give every pantheon a

plane of its own, with its own places of glory, its own battlefields, its own blights of evil? True, if this were done, virtually none of the gods would end up living in the plane of their professed alignment, and characters who died would go to the plane of their mythos rather than their alignment, but I say wholeheartedly that this is how it *should* be. The gods should not live in ill-defined places, boarded with gods they have no right to know, just because alignment dictates it. They should be with their kin, in places that mythology describes to us, where they can reenact the myths which are central to their being.

Once this is done, there is no purpose to arranging the outer planes in a now-meaningless rectangle. Each plane would be, an island in astral space, with its own shape, connected to the Prime Material Plane in whatever ways mythology dictates. A fine example is the great tree Yggdrasil, which was described as such an independent structure for the home of the Norse pantheon in issue #90. This vision was made compatible with the old outer plane arrangement, but it stands far better on its own, without the fetters of alignment.

It is important not to neglect the fact that some DMs prefer to create their own mythos, or mix and match from existing ones. But, it is better to pick and choose with the goal of having a god to represent each group or attribute known to humans, rather than one to represent each alignment, and so to fill the spaces available in the outer planes.

One distinct difficulty with fragmenting the outer planes into their individual mythologies is that some planes would seem to have no place to go. For instance, to what religion do the Nine Hells belong? It has been stated that devils have no worshipers among humans, so how and where can they survive?

Many campaigns are basically Anglo-Saxon, and the Anglo-Saxon religion of the Middle Ages did have a hell something like the one described in the *Monster Manual*. There is no reason why such a religion cannot exist in the AD&D game. What I am *not* suggesting is the introduction of modern Christianity into the game; that would be as confusing as the introduction of twentieth-century morality. What I am suggesting is that the religion of the Middle Ages was as different from ours in outlook as any of the religions presented in *Legends & Lore*, and that a religion resembling medieval Christianity is the single most logical religion for characters in an Anglo-Saxon campaign to follow. In fact, we have been subconsciously using such a religion for years. Our intolerant clerics with holy water sprinklers, and our paladins with holy missions against the infidel, are drawn straight from Anglo-Saxon mythology. Why not make the religion a real part of the game, and give the devils a reason to be out there?

The devils fit nicely into the Anglo-Saxon mythos. For the faithful of this religion,

there is an eternal afterlife in paradise. For the sinners, there is eternal torment in the lands of the archdevils. The existence of the devils without worship can be easily explained; they draw their power from the sins of those supposedly faithful to the religion. That is why they go to great length to win souls over to them. It is by luring the upright into sin that devils gain and maintain their power.

When all is said and done, the Nine Hells are more consistent without rigid alignment in the outer planes than with it, because the devils no longer need to find places for the evil gods who were previously expected to co-exist with them. Set and the rest of the bad gods can join their pantheons on other planes.

As for the demons of the Abyss, they do seem to have their worshipers, but not among humankind. Demogorgon has the ixitzachitl, Lolth the drow elves, and Yeenoghu the gnolls. Presumably Orcus receives homage from the intelligent undead, and Juiblex from the slimes, jellies, puddings, and other faceless beings. The common trait of these races is that they are all dire and irrational enemies of all mankind, so it is natural that they have created gods through their worship which oppose man with relentless fury. Of course, the minions these gods have chosen to create are similarly irrational and dangerous among men. It is because many men try to control these beings for their own ends, and many fail, that many souls end up in the Abyss as manes, having been cheated of their promised afterlife. This is arguably the worst fate possible — to be cast among the gods of mankind's most heartfelt foes for eternity.

As for the rest of the lower planes, they will disappear nicely once each religion in a campaign steals its own little piece of hell for its own sinners. These planes never had much life in the first place, and their inhabitants will be happy to be relocated. (Nydaemons, it is known, will work for just about anybody, as long as they get to be nasty to the lodgers.)

This, then, is my thesis. In a well-developed campaign setting, there is no need for absolute alignment. At all levels of play, thought and action will be more logical and the setting more viable if alignment is a statement of specific morals and beliefs, formed by the influence of king and country, and by the character's own experience in life. Having said this, it remains to demonstrate that this system will work, and work better than the old one. For that reason, I will now describe a campaign which I designed, and show how my original nightmares faded once alignment was diversified, to be replaced by an exciting and vibrant campaign milieu.

Originally, I envisioned an Arthurian setting in a mythical counterpart to England. The inhabitants of the land were to include the following. There would be Anglo-Saxons, ruled by the king and a feudal system of dukes, barons, and

knights. Many members of the court would be paladins and cavaliers. The Anglo-Saxons were to co-exist with the high elves. A second group was to be the Celts, ruled by the druids. The elite fighters of this society would be trained by the druids to become attuned to the natural world, and so would become rangers. The wood elves, who have shared the forest with the Celts for centuries, are their staunch allies. In the north would be the Scots, divided into various clans, and sharing their land with various dwarven and orcish bands. Along the coasts would be the ever-present threat of Norse Vikings, who make their living by plundering seaside towns. Across the channel, of course, would reside the dangerous French.

In the traditional scheme of things, the knights of Camelot would be branded lawful good from the outset, because of their heavy complement of paladins, one of whom is the king himself (as described in the *Legends & Lore* Arthurian Heroes section). But the French have a similar court, also laden with cavaliers and paladins. It may be possible for aggression to take place between the two courts, but it could not be the focal point of the campaign it was designed to be. When lawful good fights lawful good (a tenuous proposition from the start), they must certainly unite to drive off evil if it should enter the picture. Evil was going to enter the picture, but I didn't want that to lessen the antipathy between England and France one

iota. But there was nothing to do; an obvious political hotspot was practically dead before it had been born.

How about the wood elves, the rangers, and the druids? Their society, which once owned all of England, has been overrun by the Anglo-Saxons. But can they retake the land through violence? The fact that their fighters and rangers share an alignment with the potential foe makes the whole thing a risky proposition. The rangers and elves, both good in outlook, would more likely side with the knights than with the druids of their own society if it came to blows. But it shouldn't happen that way! Celts should be a strong resistance movement with no strings attached, but it was not to be.

The dwarves in the north are lawful good, just like the knights of the court. If Arthur pushes north into Scotland, they will almost certainly ally themselves with him to bring law and unity to the land . . . even though this will destroy their traditional way of life. Then there are the Vikings, a real headache for Arthur because in the absence of an Anglo-Saxon religion, the most logical mythology for the court to adopt was that of a harsh land, with many gods who are lawful and good. You guessed it . . . the official religion of England was to be Norse. If attacking the French was iffy, then attacking the Vikings, worshipers of the same gods, was quite simply asking for it. Come to think of it, that works both ways — maybe the Vikings will have to look

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elsewhere for plunder. There goes another source of action.

Finally, of course, there are the orcs. Orcs are evil, and evil is evil no matter how you look at it. There is no need to even justify killing them. Good thing, too, because at this point it was beginning to look like fighting them was going to be the only activity for the characters in this static and morally confounding campaign.

What happened? For a moment, this looked like a plausible campaign. But with everyone so neatly pigeonholed into absolute alignments, there was no place to take it. I could have rearranged things, to be sure. I could have postulated a French court without a single paladin, where everyone was a neutral fighter or a lawful neutral cavalier. I could have envisioned a Celtic society where the druids ruled over ordinary fighters instead of rangers. I could have advanced the extremely unlikely proposition that the Vikings all worshiped the evil god Loki and so were at odds with the court after all. But before making those changes I asked myself why I should have to. Why couldn't I make it run the way I wanted it to run, without altering the whole structure of my world?

Instead, I changed the alignment system, removing the concepts of absolute good and evil, to reconcile the whole campaign with common sense. This is what I achieved.

The court of King Arthur is benevolent to its people, but the knights are lethally intolerant of pagan religions. Spurred on by their king and their Anglo-Saxon god, they will fight for the unification of Britain with the righteous fury that paladins have been shying away from all these years.

The major threat to the court is the subversive society of druids, who still practice the outlawed Celtic religion, along with its allies, the wood elves and the rangers. The possibility is not only open for paladins to fight rangers to the death, but to receive their protection from evil bonuses when doing so, because evil is now defined in terms of religious enemies. No other criterion need be met.

Interestingly, Arthur's friend and advisor, Merlin, is tied closely to the old religion, but Arthur can ignore this fault because he is not lawful good anymore. He is, as I detailed him, courageous, trustworthy, chivalrous, and charismatic, but like many of the medieval Anglo-Saxon faith, he is also somewhat hypocritical in matters of religion. In the same way that the Norse gods allow their worshipers to take their gods' names in vain, deface their gods' images, and break their sacred oaths (provided they show bravery in battle), my Anglo-Saxon god allows his followers to be somewhat less than the ideals they make themselves out to be, provided that they campaign with relentless vigor to expand the empire and convert pagans to the true faith. It's an example of the different strategies that different gods will employ to maintain power. While some gods rely on a small body of absolutely devout followers,

Arthur's god relies on having an enormous and ever-expanding number of followers, many of whom may be imperfect in their faith. That's why the devils of the Anglo-Saxon religion take such a prominent role compared to those in other religions. In Arthur's empire, the sinners outnumber the saints.

But back to the frontiers. The French are strong and hostile; maybe a war now on French territory would save a war later on English soil. Of course, the French are political, rather than religious, enemies, so in confrontations between them neither side would be able to use spells which are effective only against evil. There is now an important distinction between a political war, such as English versus French, and a religious one, such Anglo-Saxons versus Celts.

The Norsemen are still causing trouble on the coast, but now the Vikings are about as evil in the eyes of the English as anyone could get, having no Anglo-Saxon morals at all. Driving them away would be a holy quest for any knight.

In the north, Arthur is looking for allies in a potential conquest of Scotland. One of the Scottish clans, envisioning dominion over the others, is with him. Since he is an honorable man, Arthur is indeed planning to give them a favored position in the new order of things if the war is won, provided they will embrace his religion. But he needs more allies among the natives, and he cannot afford to promise anyone else a share of the spoils lest the victory accomplish no real unification at all. His choices are the dwarves and the orcs, but which should he approach? Well, dwarves are still dwarves. They are tough fighters, but full of pride, and will want to defend their way of life. He decides to make non-aggression pacts with several of the more powerful dwarven leaders, knowing that both sides will benefit from the deal. The dwarves will keep their mines, and he will keep the lives of the armies he would have lost if the dwarves felt threatened. But he still needs a body of mercenaries to fight in Scotland. The otherwise unthinkable possibility of approaching the orcs becomes very real now that alignment is not a concern. Orcs are still boorish, warlike creatures with crude lifestyles and morals that would offend even the Vikings. But they are also stupid and greedy, and Arthur knows he need offer them nothing but money and they will fight whomever he pits them against. After all, they fight all the time anyway, with not even money at stake.

Once the conquest of Scotland is complete, Arthur has no further duty to the beasts. The orcish religion is now a pagan faith in the lands of the king, and as such is outlawed. The orcs can convert to the religion of the court, flee from Britain, or face their just end. If they had been smarter, they could have seen that they would have no place in a unified Britain, but they weren't smarter, and so they willingly captured their own homeland for pay.

All in all, then, the abolition of alignment made the campaign setting come to life.

Player characters can now fit into the scheme of things in just about any role they please. Think of these possibilities:

A paladin on a quest from Arthur to destroy a druidic shrine.

A ranger who defends druidic shrines against attacks by the knights of Camelot, using her stealth and woodsman skills to survive in the dangerous forests.

A French assassin on a mission to kill Arthur's senior military advisor before he can present his plans to the king to take over France. (As an added bonus, he could bring back a copy of the plan.)

A wood elf who uses his thieving skills to become a highwayman, disrupting traffic in and out of the capital.

A dwarven fighter whose ambition leads him to the court of England, where he must overcome prejudice and undertake grueling quests to join the ranks of the knights.

A half-elf, the illegitimate daughter of a duke, outcast and maligned from youth, now ready to seek vengeance against the court in whatever way she can.

A cavalier who questions the morality of destroying the Celts, the original owners of this land, and so joins with the enemy and becomes England's most wanted knave.

A magic-user, a member of the rarest class, seeking a mentor who can teach him the powerful secrets of sorcery. What can he do to convince Merlin that he is a worthy student? What will be the price of his studies? What will he do with the knowledge he gains?

A cleric of the Roman gods, part of a secret cult that has survived since the days that Julius Caesar ruled this land. What does she stand for? How does she fit into this cause and effect campaign world?

Once the shackles of alignment are broken, the gaming possibilities are endless. All of these figures are important player and non-player characters in my own campaign. They interact with one another in some of the most unexpected ways, befriending those that alignment would dictate should be violently opposed to them, and bitterly fighting their traditional allies. As it currently stands, there are three main groups adventuring in the campaign. One of these is a force of knights loyal to Arthur. A second group, once motivated by ambition and the prospect of wealth, but now supposedly committed (actually to widely varying degrees) to justice for the Celts, includes a Viking ship captain and a turncoat knight of the court. A third group, composed of cerebral members of various arcane cults and studies, has fallen under the influence of Merlin and now works toward a grander purpose than even the besieged Arthur can imagine. How others will fall in with these groups, or how the groups will fall out among themselves, one can only imagine. But two things are certain. It will not be a traditional campaign, and the players will not go away after it is over to wonder what motives carried it to its climactic end. 

# The role of books

## Fantasy and SF stories for gamers to savor

Reviewed by John C. Bunnell

### THE DESTINY DICE

David Bischoff

Signet 0-451-13489-3 \$2.95

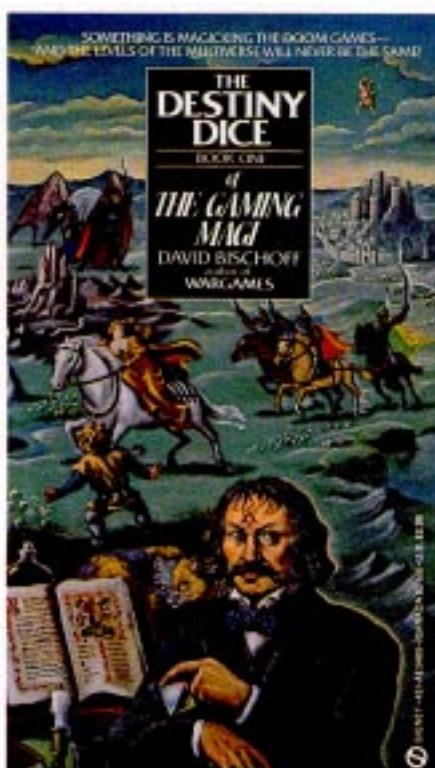
To say that David Bischoff's newest fantasy tends to inspire mixed emotions may well be the understatement of the year. On one hand, *The Destiny Dice* shows signs of being fantastically inventive and wickedly funny. On the other hand, it comes dangerously close to being one of the most unfairly marketed books in recent history.

The difficulty is that Bischoff has created a cosmos which encompasses at least three levels of reality (and quite possibly several more), yet he has shown readers only bits and pieces of that cosmos in what is advertised as the first book in a series of at least three volumes. While that might not be a major criticism under normal circumstances, there's a catch: The missing pieces seem to have been held back more as a tactic for inducing readers to buy the next book than for any reason integral to the plot or structure of the tale itself. (Note that *The Destiny Dice* hasn't been referred to as a novel. It isn't one, and its relatively slim thickness and rather large print suggest strongly that the *Gaming Magi* series may be one rather long novel masquerading as several short — and therefore more profitable — books.)

It would be tempting, after all that rhetoric, to simply dismiss the entire series as unworthy of any interest whatsoever. Unfortunately, Bischoff's multiverse is too intriguing to be tossed aside without a second thought, and there are some genuinely hilarious sequences involving puns too awful and too significant to give away.

Beginning on the lowest level of the tale's reality, there is the "game board." Though its residents generally don't know it, they are merely toy soldiers of a sort, manipulated by game players on higher planes. Two "pieces" are of major interest: Princess Alandra, a virgin in name only and a significant political prize, is the key to something, though it's hard to tell what that might be; and Ian Farthing, a very peculiar character indeed, a sort of cross between jester and jigsaw puzzle, whose arrival on the board is highly mysterious. (The book's action is confined to a medieval-style milieu, but there are suggestions that other "game boards" possess vastly different technologies and characteristics.)

Crowley Nilrem owns the game board and is one of the Gaming Magi for whom Bischoff has named his sequence. To him, Ian and Alandra are metal figures con-



trolled by the dice and the rule books. But something is wrong on his level; the novel opens as his feline familiar accidentally disrupts a crucial dice roll with consequences that force Crowley to invoke various councils in an effort to repair the damage. At one of these sessions, a strange bodiless being appears and hints that the crisis has its origins at still higher levels. Whether this creature can be equated with the living universe described in the book's preface or whether it comes from a level between Crowley's and the Creator's — neither is revealed.

There are other loose ends: Alandra's bag of talking runes seems able to plug into other dimensions, but for no discernible purpose; Ian Farthing possesses a "conscience" whose powers don't match any of the known levels of Bischoff's world; and, someone on Crowley's level is running around murdering Magi. And yet, despite the holes in the plot, *The Destiny Dice* somehow doesn't seem incoherent. Perhaps its deliberately light, unpretentious tone keeps things from disintegrating completely.

It's possible that the full *Gaming Magi* series will turn out to be an interesting, logically constructed novel. Certainly it's encouraging to think so; not many writers can match Bischoff's irreverent humor. But

Bischoff and his publishers should be severely scolded for presenting the tale in a form that so clearly puts financial considerations above the literary obligation to give readers a complete story. (Anyone who does buy the book is strongly urged to send in the response form printed on the last page.)

### THE ISLE OF CLASS

Judith Tarr

Bluejay 0-312-94237-0 \$14.95

At first glance, *The Isle of Glass* (which is identified with an almost heraldic flourish as the first volume of a trilogy) is simply another one of the "alternate England" novels which are rapidly multiplying on bookstore shelves these days. But, a more attentive look reveals that author Judith Tarr has written a strikingly thoughtful novel that should be required reading for any gamer who plays a demi-human character.

The novel focuses its attention on one Brother Alfred, a quiet, scholarly individual whose origins are shrouded in a mystery he prefers to ignore. Unfortunately, the rest of the world isn't content to leave Alfred alone, and his peculiar background propels him into a series of explosive conflicts.

To begin, Alfred is an orphan. Some sixty years past, he was left on the steps of St. Ruan's abbey as a babe, to be raised by the monks there and introduced to the religious life. Yet though time passes normally, Alfred does not seem to grow old; instead, he seems to possess elven blood — though he does not, as elves are said to do, recoil from cold iron and holy water. He possesses some talent for healing, even beyond the clerical norm. He may have the powers of a wizard within him, despite his profound unwillingness to acknowledge them. And, he seems equally at home with (and equally reluctant to employ) the sword and shield of a born warrior.

In gaming terms, that makes Brother Alfred a typical multi-classed character, with aspects of the fighter, cleric, and magic-user about him. But where an AD&D® game campaign would treat this combination as a walking arsenal, Tarr gives Alfred a meticulously conceived, three-dimensional background and reveals that he is less concerned with using his diverse powers than with reconciling himself to their very existence.

The world in which Alfred lives is equally plausible and far from comfortable. Human nobles are involved in a difficult series of power struggles involving both the kingship

of Anglia and the status of various lesser holdings, and in uncertain dealings with the elven realm of Rhiyana, which has thrust itself somewhat unexpectedly into the situation. Events propel Alfred into the center of the various political and personal conflicts, where he finds himself the target of religious persecution by a fanatical Christian sect known as the Hounds of God.

In some ways, Tarr's choice of setting and plot makes comparisons with Katherine Kurtz's Deryni novels inevitable, and the two sagas are not without parallels. But, Tarr's writing has a less polished, more immediate flavor that may be a more accurate style for conveying the rough reality of early medieval existence. And although *The Isle of Glass* almost certainly does owe its origins to an RPG campaign, it's one of the few good fantasy novels whose premise could be easily and directly translated into a game setting.

That last fact may well be the most striking aspect of Tarr's novel. It's a rare book that can blend a challenging tale of character study with a taut, suspenseful saga of fast-paced intrigue and adventure, but *The Isle of Glass* balances the two elements with singular effectiveness. For once, readers should greet the news that the novel is the first of a trilogy with pleased smiles, rather than bored yawns and sighs of, "Oh, no, not another one."

### CATS HAVE NO LORD

Will Shetterly

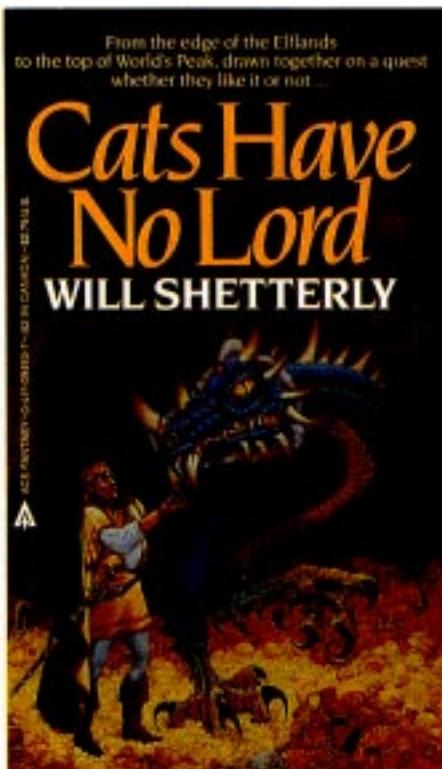
Ace 0-441-09493-7 \$2.75

Riddles have been intertwined with fantasy for almost as long as people have been writing fantasy novels, but *Cats Have No Lord* may well be the first fantasy novel to give itself over to a long, dangerous, and complicated variant of the old riddle game. Riddles are layered throughout Will Shetterly's tale, and that story has a considerable number of layers for readers to explore.

The obvious riddle, of course, is "Why do cats have no lord?" Of all human and animal races in the world, only cats seem not to have a godlike leader, and no one seems to know why. So Merry, a priest of the half-magical, half-religious Order, is sent to ask half-elven Catseye Yellow and wandering performer Lizelle to go on a quest to find the Wisest One and ask him for the riddle's answer.

There seems to be more at stake, however, than idle curiosity. Who is it that is trying desperately to prevent Lizelle and Catseye from accomplishing the quest? What is the connection between the missing cat lord and Catseye? What does Lizelle's former lover have to do with the matter? And what is the significance of the stolen miststone necklace that Lizelle wears?

The answers to all of these riddles are all connected in some way to the quest for the Wisest One, whose very identity is a matter of some uncertainty. And, it slowly becomes clear that the fate of the universe is also bound up in the pattern, though whose



actions are intended to preserve order and whose are meant to bring chaos aren't certain until the last few pages.

Shetterly somehow manages to cloak this tale of cosmic crisis, which sometimes operates on a spectacularly grand scale, in the unassuming guise of a low-keyed adventure told primarily from Lizelle's perspective, and laces it with a cheerful wit that seems perfectly natural in its tone. He also has a good ear for dialogue and the skill to record it accurately — both Darkwind, Lizelle's intelligent steed, and the hill barbarian Thraas have distinctive speech patterns that reflect their unusual personalities.

*Cats Have No Lord*, for that matter, is an unusual novel, and one that's hard to pigeonhole precisely. Even after repeated readings, it's likely to prompt different speculations and to raise more questions than it necessarily answers — unlike a typical RPG adventure in which the loose ends are all accounted for, if not tied up, at the end of the evening.

One thing, however, is certain. The author's biographical note (also a bit of a riddle) reveals that Shetterly is part of a writers' group that includes some of fantasy's most promising new authors. That may make the praise from other group members which graces the novel's back cover sound a trifle less altruistic, but the overall quality of the books emerging from the Scribbles' typewriters can't be ignored. Will Shetterly and his colleagues are definitely talents to keep an eye on.

### LADYHAWKE

Joan D. Vinge

Signet 0-451-13321-8 \$3.50

Until very recently, novelizations of science-fiction and fantasy films weren't

worthy of serious critical attention — largely because the films on which they were based were somewhat thinly conceived. But matters have steadily improved lately, and Joan Vinge's translation of *Ladyhawke* into book form proves once and for all that the task is worth doing.

For those who haven't seen the movie (which is itself a very well told tale), the story chronicles the adventures of Phillippe Gaston, also called the Mouse, a young but very skillful thief who is both absolutely untrustworthy and impossible to dislike. It is also the saga of Etienne Navarre and his beloved Isabeau, the victims of a diabolical curse placed upon them by the evil Bishop of Aquila. Navarre becomes a wolf from sundown to sunrise, while Isabeau spends her daylight hours as a hawk; thus, the pair can never be together in human form. Only an accident that sends Phillippe across the path of the cursed lovers offers them any hope of undoing the spell.

Vinge accomplishes a difficult feat in telling the story, managing both to retain the dramatic visual character of the film and to give the narrative a distinctive freshness. This latter quality is largely due to Vinge's narrative approach, which focuses consistently and perceptively on the innermost thoughts of the adventurers. What results is a lively tale that expertly plays Phillippe's usually cheerful roguishness against the grimmer, sometimes vindictive moods of Navarre. More unusual still, the novel is remarkably true to the screen story, and its occasional departures from the script generally improve an already excellent story. (In particular, Vinge's ending seems more effective than its cinematic counterpart.)

All this is of special interest to game-playing readers for the simple reason that Phillippe and Navarre are first-class role models for members of the thief and fighter classes, respectively. Phillippe exhibits versatility and deft expertise at his craft and an entirely convincing dislike of crowded melees, while Navarre is a fierce and frighteningly competent combatant. The two make an uncertain but generally effective team, linked by their mutual feelings for Isabeau — or, as Phillippe christens her, ladyhawke.

Regardless of its relevance to gaming, though, it's good to discover that someone has at last made a quality live-action fantasy adventure movie — and even better to learn that the story is also entertaining in print.

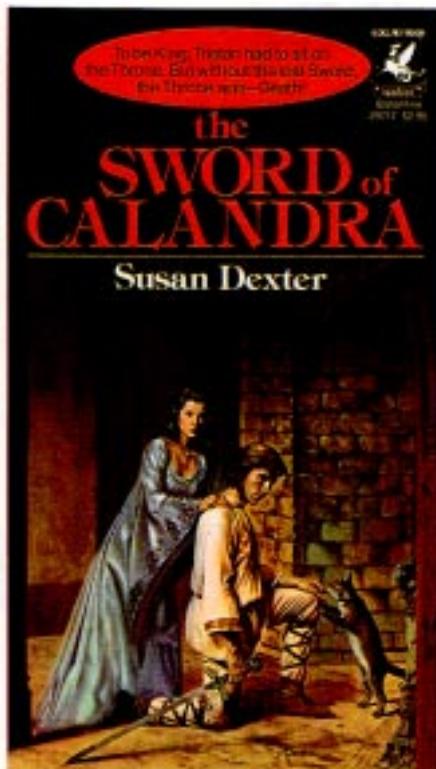
### THE SWORD OF CALANDRA

Susan Dexter

Del Rey 0-345-29717-2 \$2.95

Three and a half years ago, a novel called *The Ring of Allaire* made a relatively quiet debut, chronicling the adventures of an apprentice mage on a search for a lost ring, a kidnapped princess, and a king thought not to exist. It ended with the words "and they lived happily ever after," which appeared to mean that the story was over.

Now, Susan Dexter has continued Tristan's story in *The Sword of Calandra*, with



the promise of at least one more novel to come. But Dexter's second novel, like her first, doesn't feel like part of a series. Instead, it has the same kind of completeness as a single quest in a solidly constructed RPG campaign — while its characters accomplish the goal of their search and overcome powerful opposition, the potential for future adventures and conflicts lurks patiently in the background.

This time, Tristan's problem revolves around the recently discovered fact that he is the long-missing heir to Calandra's throne. While his right to rule is indisputable, he must be crowned according to ancient ritual in order to achieve political power over a number of independent-minded lords. The ritual, however, involves powerful magic that is certain to kill Tristan unless he can locate the legendary Sword of the Last King, an artifact needed to control and channel power.

Dexter weaves her narrative in a matter-of-fact style that lends plausibility to Tristan's rather rambling search and that allows Dexter to explore the sometimes uncertain motivations of her characters. Those characters are both numerous and well-drawn, ranging from Thomas, Tristan's devoted but constantly cynical cat, to Dickon of Falkerry, a young farm boy who is something more than he appears to be, and Jehan of Kinark, a refugee smith who is plagued by nightmares.

The novel's plot has been crafted with equal care: Dexter engineers more than one ingenious twist on her way to a thoroughly satisfying conclusion, and does so without quite seeming to give her cast too much auctorial assistance.

*The Sword of Calandra*, in short, is a novel that follows the most traditional patterns of fantasy without making those pat-

terns look tired and obvious. Readers will be entertained and made comfortable in Dexter's world. Luckily, the next tale should be available in much less than three and a half years.

#### DAYWORLD

Philip Jose Farmer

Putnam 0-399-12967-7 \$16.95

Jefferson Cervantes Caird plays role-playing games as if his life depended on it — and, in the first novel in what's billed as a new series by the author of the Riverworld books, it does indeed.

Actually, that's only partly true. Caird is a role-player, but not in the sense that he spends one night a week sitting around a table and rolling polyhedral dice. Instead, he spends six days a week masquerading as six different imaginary personalities, one to each day. In the future society of which Caird is a member, that makes him both a rarity and a wanted criminal. Most citizens live for only one day a week, spending the remaining days in a form of advanced suspended animation known as "stoning." This regimen has been instituted to conserve Earth's resources, and it allows the planet to support seven times the population for which it could otherwise provide.

Caird isn't the only such outlaw in this culture; there are whole networks of day-breakers, or immers, as Farmer describes those who exist on more than one day of the "horizontal" week. But, Caird is unique in having created an entire week's worth of different identities in three-dimensional detail. No one else seems capable of living a total of seven lives without drawing the attention of government authorities. Jeff Caird's accomplishment involves more than consummate acting, yet just barely less than schizophrenic insanity, and Farmer does a first-class job of portraying the complicated layers of character development at work in the situation.

That's only one aspect of *Dayworld*, though. At the same time, the novel is also a fast-paced thriller involving the government's struggle to smash the daybreaker organization and the search for the secret of a life-lengthening chemical that enables the

criminals to survive undetected for all their multiple lives. There are political conflicts and tense chase sequences that transcend the normally impassable barriers between the seven parallel "dayworlds" of the New Era, and the novel's pace never slows, even when answers to Caird's and the government's questions are found.

All in all, Farmer has taken a fascinating set of ideas and translated them into a highly readable adventure, though only Caird seems to have any real depth in all his surroundings. Perhaps the sequels may fill in some of the holes in the currently thin texture. Meanwhile, role-players will definitely have something to think about.

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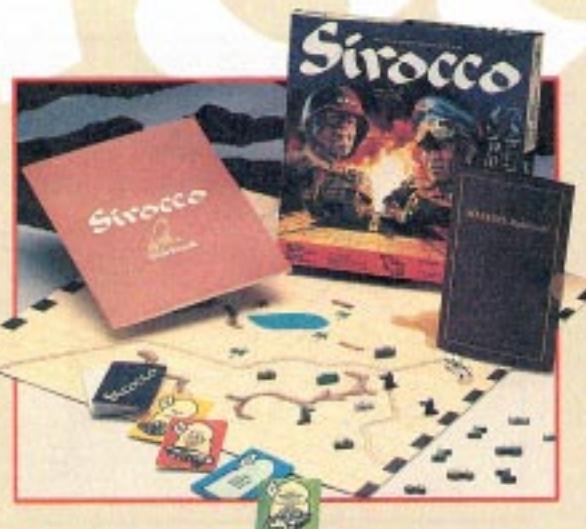
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# Charging isn't cheap

## How to make and fix rods, staves, and wands

by Peter Johnson

How does a character go about making and recharging magic items in an AD&D® game campaign? The Dungeon Masters Guide lays down some general guidelines for characters to follow, but fails to go into specifics on the topic — a potential source of problems for players and DMs alike.

A review of what the *DMG* offers is important. A cleric meditates for fourteen days, fasts for seven, then spends a day praying over and purifying the item to be enchanted. The cleric then places the item on an altar and invokes divine favor to instill it with the requisite magic. The invocation has a cumulative 1% chance per day of succeeding. If the item needs charges, the necessary spells are cast on the item. Finally, the cleric sanctifies the item, and it is ready for use.

A magic user casts *enchant an item* on the properly prepared raw materials for the item. This enchantment takes sixteen hours (2 eight-hour days), at the end of which time the magic-user pronounces a final magical syllable. The item must make a saving throw equal to that of the magic-user, including all of the magic-user's bonuses up to +3. If the item saves, the magic has worked, and the item is ready to have the necessary charges entered. During this time, the item may never be placed more than 1' away from the magic-user, and it must be touched during all periods of active enchantment.

For either clerical or magic-user items, the raw materials must be of the highest quality. No more than twenty-four hours may elapse between any actions when enchanting the item.

Obviously, this is a lot of work. A player character cleric or magic-user cannot always afford to spend days and weeks away from adventuring just to make one staff. A magic-user or clerical assistant or hireling could make such items if a suitable arrangement can be worked out. Creating a magical item should not be made too easy, to keep PCs from shovelling them out of their laboratories by the dozens.

The above procedures leave many questions unanswered. What basic materials are needed to make each rod, staff, or wand? How do you recharge the item — do you merely blast a *wand of lightning* with a *lightning bolt* of your own? How does a DM handle the recharging of an item like a *wand of metal and mineral detection*, which has no corresponding spell for recharging it? Can the same magical spell be used to create different magic items? Finally, how

can a DM ensure variety and individuality among magic items in the campaign?

To answer these questions, it's best to start at the point when a character decides to make a magic item of his own. If the character is making an item that already exists in your campaign, your job as DM is simplified. All you need to do is feed bits and pieces of information to the character as his research on how to make the item proceeds. A magical formula here, half an ingredient list there — some or all of the information may be taken from this article. After the character has learned the correct ingredients and procedure, gathered all the necessities, and gone into seclusion, the procedure outlined above is followed. The enchantment is laid, the charges are entered, and *presto!* A new magic item is born.

Nice, but it doesn't always happen that way. DMs learn never to make anything too easy and never to give out a lot of correct information all at once. So, many characters will begin the enchantments without knowing the correct rituals or ingredients to make the item. Some will experiment without any preliminary research, trusting to chance and the gods for success.

Most of these characters will fail in their quests. Some will attain limited success, a few will succeed, and a few may even end up with magic items that do unexpected things, like a *wand of magic missiles* that doubles as a duck call. Not all variations on procedures or ingredients should be disallowed out of hand, although thoughtless experimentation should usually lead to failure or disastrous backfiring.

The use of imperfect rituals and variant ingredients gives DMs the chance to introduce unique magical items into the game. Of course, no magic item should unbalance the campaign. The power of a magic item may be curbed by letting adversaries have saving throws against its power, by limiting the amount of damage per charge expended, or by building a percentage chance of failure into the magic item. Characters who create unique magical items may risk a greater chance of having the item turn out imperfectly, adding considerable uncertainty and excitement to the campaign. (Is my wand going to blow up or just turn me into a frog?)

If a player wishes to introduce a new magical item into the game, the DM should lay down some guidelines on how that character does his initial research. One interesting possibility is for the player of

that character to do some actual research by going to the library and learning which type of wood is said to attract lightning, which gems cure disease, which metals provide good luck, etc. A warning: Such research, even today, is not easy. Aside from a few histories of medieval England and several books on herbal lore, information on such folklore is scarce. Such research should be entirely optional and, if it is performed, well rewarded (do not let the player argue down the cost of making the item as a result, however). The benefits include a greater sense of participation by the player, more realism, and less work for the DM.

The information garnered by such research can be used to complement or replace the following material. More conventional and less taxing methods of research, such as consulting sages, oracles, deities, or divine servants, will allow the DM to use the following listings more or less as written.

The base chance of finding the proper procedure for creating a unique item depends on the money spent. The minimum cost of such research is 2,000 gp a week, which produces a base 10% chance of success. The chance of success increases by 10% every time the amount spent is hiked by 2,000 gp, up to a maximum chance of 50%; when the cost is 10,000 gp per week. This money is used to buy tomes, hire sages, etc. The minimum time spent on such research equals in weeks the minimum level a character must be in order to successfully make the item. A *wand of magic missiles* has a preparatory time of twelve weeks, a *staff of the magi* has a time of eighteen weeks, and so forth.

To find the actual chance of success per week of research, take the base chance, add 1% per level of the character, plus 1% per intelligence point of the character (if a magic-user; use wisdom for clerics), minus twice the minimum required level to make the rod, staff, or wand. Example: Mae, an 18th-level magic-user, decides to make a *staff of the magi*. Her intelligence is 18, and she spends 2,000 gp per week. Her chance of success is  $10\% + 18\% + 18\% - 36\% = 10\%$  per week, non-cumulative, for discovering the proper materials and procedures for making the magic item. The usual procedure would be to have Mae do her initial research for eighteen weeks, and then roll the percentile dice. Each time Mae fails to roll 10% or lower, she must lay out another 2,000 gp and spend another week on research. If she is successful, she receives the

procedural list, puts the raw materials together in the prescribed fashion, then proceeds with the enchantment.

The drawback to the above method is that it does not allow for variety. An alternate method would be to have the DM roll for success each week throughout the initial preparatory period. Each time the DM rolls the given percentage or lower, he hands out some correct information to the player. Every time the roll of the dice is unsuccessful by 40% or more, the DM hands out some inaccurate information. This not only allows for variety (because the player has no way of knowing if the information is correct), it also more accurately parallels a true research situation, where truth and falsehood can be easily confused and intermixed. A kind DM may hand out true information that contradicts falsehoods learned earlier. The DM should be sure that no success is possible before all necessary facts have been gathered, although the player should decide when his or her character has sufficient and correct information.

If the character uses false information to create a magic item, leading to the use of the wrong enchantments or materials, then the DM rolls on the following table to determine the result of the enchantments.

#### Dice Result

01-65	Outright failure
66-85	Limited success (the item will hold only five charges, there are harmful side effects with the item's use, or a unique and unwanted kind of magic item was created)
86-98	Success
99-00	Success, and the item has a unique and helpful feature

An indication of failure is just that; the item will never work as was planned, and the character must start over. A unique feature might be an innate ego within the item, the ability to *detect evil* 50% of the time, and so forth. No such unique features should unduly change the balance of power in the campaign, and negative features should be strongly considered. (See the Malevolent Effects Tables for artifacts and relics, *DMG*, pp. 162- 163.) A new kind of magic item could be a different rod, staff, or wand from the *DMG*, an item derived from a previous DRAGON® Magazine article, or something the DM has prepared for the occasion. This procedure should *never* result in the creation of an artifact or equally powerful item; the newly created magic should be limited in its capabilities.

A 10% bonus should be added to rolls on the above table if the player performed library research on creating a particular item. A 5% penalty should be subtracted for every variation made in item creation from the standards given below (or those adopted in a particular campaign).

#### Methods of magical creation

The following are suggested procedures for creating the various rods, staves, and

wands listed in the *DMG*. The DM may easily craft similar procedures for creating items introduced in the *Unearthed Arcana* book, DRAGON Magazine articles, and other such sources. The minimum levels required for a character of a class that can manufacture these items are given as well.

Dungeon Masters should feel free to alter, amend, omit, or otherwise use this information as desired, particularly in the sections describing command words. In certain places, the text refers to information that will have been obtained during the initial investigation on how to create the item. Such information includes certain command words, special spells or scrolls, and the like. It is assumed that the magic-item maker will have gained such materials prior to successfully making an item.

Note that the creation of certain items may call for spells that are beyond the capabilities of a spell caster to use at his current level. The successful use of scrolls, *rings of spell storing*, hired spell casters, and so forth will overcome this handicap, though the DM may add an increased chance for the creation procedure to fail or produce a variant item.

Also note that recharging of a particular item *cannot* occur during combat, such that, for example, an enemy magic-user casting a *magic missile* at a wizard with a partially depleted *wand of magic missiles* could unintentionally recharge the wand. The owner of the item must recharge such items in a relatively stress-free situation, unless specifically noted below (such as per the *wand of lightning*'s recharging procedure, which could prove hazardous).

*Rod of absorption* (12th-level cleric, 16th-level magic-user): Take a green shoot from an apple at harvest time. Apple is a lucky wood, able to store and release magic easily. Bury it in a cedar crate with a topaz — the best stone for absorbing magic — and the strongest magic item the maker of the rod had used in the last year. Clerics must also include their holy symbol. A *limited wish* must be cast now, to create a magical connection between the items in the crate. After one month, the topaz turns to dust and the magic item is ruined, but the rod is ready to be enchanted. If the rod takes the enchantment (see above for the process), then a second spell included in the instructions is read. The vellum on which the second spell was contained will burst into flames. The rod is run through the flames, and the command word appears on the rod. It is now ready for use.

*Rod of beguiling* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): The instructions for this rod are divided between two different scrolls, which the character will locate if all instructions for making this item are found. If the spell on the second scroll is cast too soon, the maker is *beguiled* so that every humanoid seen for one month will be considered a "best friend" to be given money, aid, and much advice. The first scroll instructs the maker to find an isolated ash

tree; ash is known for its *charm* potential. Cut one branch from the morning side of the tree and another branch from the evening side. Thus, opposing energies are symbolically joined so that the rod will join opposing wills to the wielder's own. Bind the two branches together, then give them to a nereid to hold underwater for one year. Next, bake the rod in a mud oven built for this sole purpose. Enchant the rod. Read the second scroll, on which a *beguile* spell and the command word are written. As long as the *beguile* spell is used solely for the purpose of charging the rod, the spell will vanish from the scroll in the typical fashion as it is cast, but will reappear whenever a certain rare incense is burned underneath it. The incense can be purchased for 1,000 gp. If the *beguile* spell is used in any other fashion, it will rebound upon the caster in the manner previously described. Note: *Beguile*, if cast in combat, will function as a *mass charm* spell with a one-turn duration.

*Rod of cancellation* (12th-level cleric, 16th-level magic-user): Take a thigh bone from an enchanter who died of old age. Shatter the bone so that one end reveals a hollow marrow. Place a black sapphire, known for its power to drink magic, into the hollow, and bind it in place using wire that once grounded a lightning rod. Take the rod to a high place, and stand it upright with the sapphire to the sky. Read aloud the spell (included in the instructions) during a thunderstorm; a lightning bolt will strike the rod. The bone must save vs. lightning at -2 or shatter. If the bone saves, the rod is empowered, and the command phrase glows inside the sapphire.

*Rod of lordly might*: Legend claims these items are made only by servants of a god of weaponry in their spare time. If such a rod is tracked down, however, it might have the following variations: is missing one or more aspects of a normal *rod of lordly might*; has only the flaming sword as a weapon, but with a fountain of cool water which can be made to jet out the other end (as per the *decanter of endless water*); has no weaponry, but casts a *hypnotic pattern* when twirled, acts as a *shield +3* when raised, and *detects magic and enemies*.

*Rod of resurrection* (16th-level cleric): Take a 3' branch from a tree of goodness, the rowan, under the care of a treant. Carve the thicker end into the form of a humanoid, adding jet eyes and ruby lips. Bind an amethyst, the only true stone of resurrection, over the slender end of the rod. Place a mandrake root over the amethyst for magical power, bind it with a cloth soaked in the maker's own blood, and wrap the cloth with silver wire. The ceremony to enchant the rod must use special robes and incense, as well as a building erected for the ceremony. The outlay must reach 100,000 gp. At the end of the ceremony, the command word will issue forth once from the mandrake, which shows the rod is activated and fully charged.

*Rod of rulership* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Take the crown of a king,

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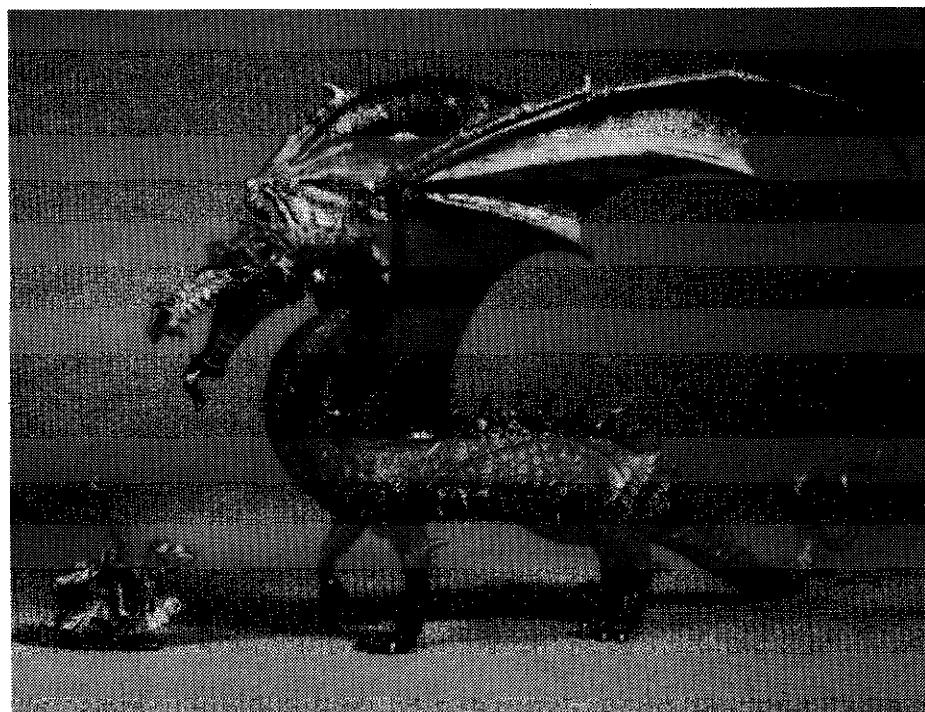
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and have it reworked into a cylindrical shape. Give it to a succubus for one month, then take it back, being careful not to hurt the demon. This gives the rod the necessary association with magics of fealty and charming. Enchant the rod, then read the spell that will be found in the instructions. The rod is fully charged, and its command word is the name of the kingdom the king ruled. Optionally, the rod will affect 1/10 the number of hit dice of creatures that the king ruled over.

*Rod of smiting* (12th-level cleric): Trace one's clerical symbol on a tome for the making of a golem, and place the rod thereon. During the next month, petition the deity twice a day that the rod be enchanted. The rest of each day must be spent fasting and meditating. (Nourishment may be taken after the sun has set). Proceed with the usual enchantment process, but at the end, when the item is on the altar (still atop the tome) and divine favor is visited upon the rod, the tome must save as a book vs. fireball. If it saves, the rod vanishes, then pops out of the tome when it is opened. The tome is undamaged. Otherwise, the tome burns and the cleric must retrieve the rod from the flames, bringing 3-30 points of damage upon himself (no save). The command word is the name of the first fighter that the cleric ever met.

*Staff of command* (10th-level cleric): Engrave the entire contents of the most popular speech of a successful politician around the trunk of an ash tree no more than 6' in height, and no less than 5'. When the tree dies, lop it down with one blow (*giant strength* use permitted), then boil it in an ointment made of chicory, hound's-tongue (the plant, not the animal), and the hide of a spirit naga. All three ingredients add to the ability of the staff to command obedience. Enchant the staff. Add charges by *praying* over the staff, one charge per prayer. The command phrase is the first three words of the speech.

*Staff of curing* (16th-level cleric): Take a branch from a rowan that stands in a holy place (like the temple grounds). Carve a holy symbol into a ginseng root that has naturally grown in the shape of a man (this is the greatest root of healing). Begin the enchantment process. When it comes time to place the staff on the altar, lay the ginseng root at the tip of the staff. When divine favor has been successfully invoked, the root and staff will be seen to have joined magically, assuming the shape of the original rowan branch (about 5' long) with the texture of the ginseng root. The command word is the name of the cleric's deity. One charge is added to the staff for each-week of non-adventuring meditation the cleric performs. This meditation must be done in a secluded area, with precious incense burning constantly.

*Staff of the magi* (1 &h-level magic-user): Take a 6' shaft of the wood of all great magics, oak. At the thick end, place a butt of applewood, the wood of gentleness. At the other end, a splinter of blackthorn, the

wood of aggression. Join the pieces with a *limited wish*. Rub the staff with a page from the spell book of a living wizard, but not one's own book. Soak the staff in an ointment of ground quartz and bloodstone, for the abjurative and elemental energies of the staff, and drip in the juices of mandrake and henbane. These last two dangerous herbs boost magical ability. Leave the staff in the ointment for six months. In the meantime, obtain small amounts of yeti fur never touched by another humanoid and metal heated by a hell hound's flame. Place the metal and fur next to the staff, wrap it up with poplar bark (for the alteration energies), and bind together with the web of a giant spider. *Wish* into one unit. Enchant the staff. Absorption is the only way this staff can be charged or recharged; at least one charge must be added in the first twenty-four hours. The command word is the name of the wizard from whom the spell book page was taken.

*Staff of power* (18th-level magic-user): Oak is used for the staves that shoot lightning bolts; baywood, for the others. Oak is associated with lightning and is a more powerful wood, but bay is more adaptable. *Stone shape* two pieces of obsidian, the stone of the gods, into rings that fit around the 5' length of wood at each end. Etch a mace into the obsidian at one end, a shield into the obsidian at the other. Place a protective star sapphire into a jeweled band around the center of the staff. Sprinkle basil, an herb of light and darkness, over the staff, then cover with the skin of a powerful magic-using creature (such as a ki-rin or red dragon) and enchant the staff. *Wish* the staff and a scroll bearing the appropriate spells (check the DMG) into one unit. One side effect of the *wish* is that the staff will take on a smooth, silvery appearance, as if the staff were shod in metal. Add charges by casting a *friends* spell on the staff, while a helpmate slaps it against a subdued dragon (one charge per spell). The command word is the name of the creature whose skin covers the staff.

*Staff of the serpent* (10th-level cleric): Enter a swamp wherein lives a mist dragon. Into a hummock of the swamp, away from sight of solid ground, bury a swatch of snakeweed with a sprig of clove as a catalyzing agent. Call out a *prayer*. Within an hour, snakes will leap from the spot. Some will be red (adders) and some green (constrictors). Catch one. (Note: The snake will fight back.) Turn it into a staff with a *snakes to sticks* spell. Enchant the staff in the normal fashion. The command phrase will come in a dream on the night after the staff is sanctified.

*Staff of striking* (10th-level cleric): Take a 6' length of ironwood, the wood of fighters. Bless the staff in a week-long ceremony. During this time, there is a 5% chance that a malign spirit will enter the staff, which will then cause the item to act as do *bracers of defenselessness* when it is used, although its normal functions will not be impaired. After the blessing, bathe the staff in the

juice of the plant of courage, the marigold. Enchant the staff. Charges are entered with each day of fasting and meditation thereafter, one charge per day; the command word must be chanted continuously by acolytes during this time. The command word is the last half of the deity's name.

*Staff of withering* (16th-level cleric): Cut a 5' shaft of elder-wood, the wood of evil, from a place near the lair of an abhorrent creature at midnight. Carve one's holy symbol into the handle, an act which has a 5% chance of calling a servant from the ranks of one's deity's enemies to attack the cleric. Bind a garland of betony, which enhances withering, to the staff. Then enchant the staff while it rests in a gold coffer filled with (un)holy water. Add charges by casting one *wither* spell per day onto the betony garland for fifty successive days. Each spell adds a charge. The command phrase is the verbal component of the *wither* spell.

*Wand of conjuration* (14th-level magic-user): Smear brimstone over a 2' length of the magical medlar wood. Light the brimstone, then plunge it flaming into a vat containing the blood of all the creatures the wand will summon. Enchant the wand. Call an *unseen servant* and *magic jar* it into the wand. Using *limited wish*, enter two scrolls into the wand — one bearing all the monster-summoning spells (I-VII), the other *continual darkness* and *prismatic sphere*. The command word will be found in the instructions. Add charges by *magic jarring* more *unseen servants* into the wand, one charge per servant.

*Wand of enemy detection* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Bind sard, alexandrite, ruby, and sapphire stones around a hazelwood shaft no more than 2' in length. This gives a good variety of perceptive abilities to the wand. Plunge the wand into a vat of rakshasa blood. Pull it out and dry over a cedarwood fire. Enchant the wand. Add charges by reading *friends* or *know alignment* spells from a scroll, one charge per spell. The command word is the name of the first person who ever beat up or teased the maker of the wand as a child.

*Wand of fear* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Using the same methods as to enchant a rod, staff, or wand, the cleric or magic-user enchains a fresh mandrake root. Then, the root is planted near a manticore's lair. After five seasons, harvest the mandrake patch that results. Take a branch from an aspen in the exact middle of a large forest — aspens reveal their connection to fear in their trembling voices. Slice the tip of the wand, then enchant it as well. Over the slice, set a mandrake. Cast a *fear* spell "at the mandrake, which will save as a 5th-level fighter. Any mandrake that fails to save oozes into the slit and gives the wand one charge. The command words are the verbal component of the *fear* spell.

*Wand of fire* (14th-level magic-user): Take a branch from a hundred-year-old oak. Pour the still-hot blood of a fire-breathing creature over the wand. Set a fire

opal in a red dragon's claw (blood and claw cannot come from the same creature) and affix the claw to the slender end of the 1' wand. Carve the command word — the personal name of the dragon whose claw adorns the wand — into the wood. Enscroll the spells to be entered, enchant the wand, and join scroll and wand with a *limited wish*. Charge the wand by casting fire-related spells of at least 3rd level on the opal, one charge per spell. 1% of such spells will backfire, possibly destroying the wand and harming the spell caster.

*Wand of frost* (14th-level magic-user): Gather the thigh bone of a yeti, and cover with the esophagus of a white dragon. Bind these together with rings of clear quartz. Pour holy water over the wand, and freeze with these successive spells: *cone of cold*, *wall of ice* and *ice storm*. Enchant the wand, and add charges by pronouncing the personal name of the slain dragon while an assistant casts *cone of cold* spells on the wand. The command word must be found with a *limited wish*.

*Wand of illumination* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Cut a 2' bough from a living holly, and tip it with a cap of sterling silver — the wood and metal beloved of creatures of light. Carve the symbol of a god of light into the wand's thick end. Place a *continual light* spell on a scroll (as a spell, not so it illuminates the scroll), enchant the wand, then burn the scroll under the wand. Add charges by casting *continual light* spells, one per charge, onto the god's symbol (which will absorb them). The command word is the god's name.

*Wand of illusion* (12th-level magic-user): Take the lowest branch of a poplar that grows in the garden of an illusionist. Mash jimson weed, plant of the illusory, and cake it over the wand. Bind two of the stones of dual aspect, alexandrite, to the wand (one on each end). Cover with the hide of a lesser devil. Enchant the wand. Add charges by casting *phantasmal force* spells in such a way that both alexandrites are affected by the spell at once. The command word is the maker's own name spoken backwards.

*Wand of lightning* (12th-level magic-user): During a thunderstorm, gather a piece of wood splintered from an oak by lightning. Before the rain stops, attach an amber tip to one end of the splinter (amber is associated with lightning in many old texts). Fashion a handle for the other end, using neutral laurel wood, attaching it with copper wire. Enchant the wand. Go to a swamp, corner a will-o-wisp, and throw the wand through it (any hit passes through the creature). The wand is then fully charged and may be completely recharged in the same manner. The command word is in the instructions the maker originally found, but is unintelligible until the wand is activated.

*Wand of magic detection* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Hollow out one end of a 2' length of myrtle, a wood sympathetic to magic. Cover with a slip of cedarwood that extends 3" beyond the hollow end. This will dampen out all magi-

cal energies coming from directions other than the direction pointed. Place a pearl in the hollow, and seal it in place using pine sap. Enchant the wand. Cast *detect magic* spells upon the pearl, one charge per spell. The command word is the first word of the most holy text in the land that the maker inhabits.

*Wand of magic missiles* (10th-level magic-user): Take amber from a place with a dismal, rainy climate, then a sprig of stinging nettle from a place with a wonderful, sunny climate. Carry them together in a cedar casket on a journey of not less than 500 days. Carve a niche in a 2' length of blackthorn, and place it in the nettle and amber. Using magical means, warp the blackthorn so that the nettle and amber are trapped inside the wood, thus joining three very aggressive ingredients. Enchant the wand. Join a scroll bearing a *magic missile* spell to the wand, using a *limited wish*. Carve the command word listed in the instructions into the handle of the wand. Cast *magic missile* spells to charge, one charge per spell. Each missile should spiral around the wand and strike it on the engraved command word.

*Wand of metal and mineral detection* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Cut the highest branch of a hazel tree on the first night of harvest time. (Hazel is good for any divinatory magic.) Let the branch fall from the tree and be caught by a fat thief before it hits the ground. Let the

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thief take one end, the maker the other, and the two bend the wood double. The maker pinches the branch at the bend until it snaps off, leaving at least a 2' section left. He or she then takes that section underground, near a pile of metals and minerals worth 50,000 gp. Enchant the wand. Cast the spell of empowerment found in the instructions. (This spell cannot be used for any other purpose; it takes one turn to cast and has verbal components only.) The pile of metal will vanish, and the wand will be fully charged. It can be recharged by casting the same spell, at the rate of one charge gained for every 1,000 gp of metal piled up. The command word is the name of the thief's grandmother.

*Wand of negation* (12th-level cleric, 14th-level magic-user): Break off the last living branch of a dying peach tree. (Anti-magical agents are found in peach.) Preserve the branch in a mixture of snake oil and a *potion of longevity*. Drink the mixture over one week. (No anti-aging effects will be felt). Cover the wand with a cloth woven from the fur of any magic-resistant creature and bind the cloth with gold bands that have smoky quartz gems inset. Smoky quartz is famed for its ability to capture energies. Enchant the wand. Add charges by casting *dispel magic* spells on the cloth, which still retains some of its magic resistance from the creature; charging may go a bit slowly. The command word is found in the instructions.

*Wand of paralyzation* (14th-level magic-user): Find a magical mirror of any sort which no longer has its magical properties. Shatter it at a time of ill omen. Choose a shard, and hammer it into one end of a rotting branch of elderwood no longer than 2'. Disintegrate all other pieces of the mirror. Pour essence of ghoul over the wand. Enchant the wand. Charges are entered by bathing the wand in an ointment made of extract of Portuguese man-o-war. The wand must soak in the ointment one week for every charge entered. Due to evaporation, a 1 HD Portuguese man-o-war will be sufficient for only one bath (one charge).

*Wand of polymorphing* (12th-level magic-user): Take a root from a beech tree, the tree of multiple aspect. Bind a bit of amber with an insect occluded inside it to the slender end of the 2' wand. Carve the name of the insect into the amber. Enchant the wand, and charge with *polymorph* spells cast on the beech tree from which the wand came, one charge/spell. No illusory spell will function within 10' of that beech until the wand is ruined. The command word must be a rhyme including the name of the insect occluded in the amber and of the creature to which the user intends the transformation. For instance, "Grasshopper to Atlantis, make him a mantis!"

*Wand of secret door and trap location* (10th-level cleric, 12th-level magic-user): Take a 1' length of ivory. Scribe into it the verbal component of a *true seeing* spell or a

limited wish specially worded so that secret doors and traps will appear upon use of the command word. The command word is in the instructions. Enchant the wand.

Charges are added by holding aloft a lantern which has a six-sided star etched into its glass. Inside the lantern is placed a gemstone worth 100 gp. The wand is held in the other hand, and the spell read off the wand. At the end of the spell, light blazes from the lantern, the diamond vanishes, and a charge is entered.

*Wand of wonder*: This wand is always made unintentionally. There is a 10% chance of a *wand of wonder* resulting if either of the following fail to save against *enchant an item*: a *wand of conjuration* or a *wand of illusion*. 20% of such wands are active only for their maker, being worthless to anyone else. The reverse applies to the other 80% of wands of this sort.

#### Final notes

Clerics cannot read instructions aimed for magic-users, nor magic-users those aimed for clerics. Tools used in making magic items must be of the highest quality and made solely for this task. Substitutions should create the possibility of the rod, staff, or wand malfunctioning, perhaps a 5% per substitute. Generally, gold or silver wire may be used to attach the separate parts of these magic items — unless, of course, in your campaign only demon ichor is a proper binding agent.

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# The latest super-hero RPG: Done Cleverly, but Definitely Complex

Reviewed by Jeff Grubb

[A note to the reader: Check the name of the reviewer Right. That guy. The one who wrote that "other" super-hero game. I provide this caveat only because game reviews done by people in the business are more common than some of us might realize, and the responsible reviewer should let the responsible consumer know about this up front. Consider yourselves informed.]

DC Comics is represented in the superhero role-playing game field with a powerful new entry, the *DC HEROES ROLE PLAYING GAME*. The release of this game has been delayed several times, and has resulted in a hefty boxed game packing a hefty \$17 price tag.

The wait has been worth it. This is a not a bad game. In fact, it's the best that Mayfair Games has done yet.

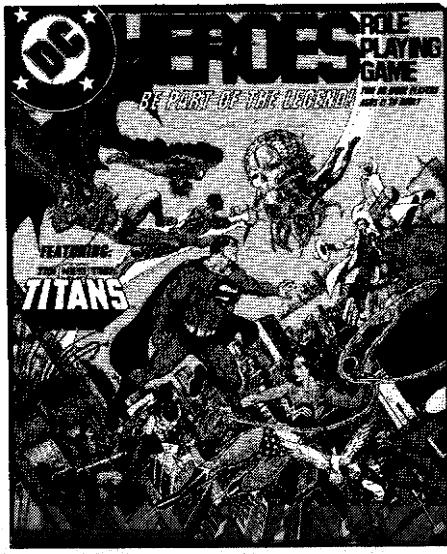
It is not, however, the epitome of simplicity and easy-to-play mechanics as claimed in the promotional copy. It is a massive work encompassing five books ranging from 16 to 96 pages each, plus a judge's screen, character cards, stand-up counters (with bases), and two heavyweight dice. It is not easy to get all the components back into the box after unpacking them.

Designer Greg Gorden & Co. use the large amount of pages to explain the system in a clear, reasonable fashion. They succeed in a very user-friendly set of rules that are enjoyable to read without making the reader lose track of what they are teaching. The rules have a bad case of Significant Capitals (where every Word of Importance is Capitalized, dodging between Upper Case and Lower Case), but in general the designer has gone for clarity in defining the DC heroes.

Each DC hero has nine major attributes (along with a whole host of background, initiative, powers, and skills, but they explain those later). The Physical Skills are Dexterity, Strength, and Body. The Mental Attributes are Intelligence, Will, and Mind. The Mystical Attributes are Influence, Aura, and Spirit. The last three are for use in Magical Combat and with Powers.

Gorden then redvides these attributes in a different fashion. Dexterity, Intelligence, and Influence are used to determine if a character successfully makes a Physical, Mental, or Mystical attack. Strength, Will, and Aura determine how much damage one can inflict in such an attack, while Body, Mind, and Spirit are effectively Physical, Mental, and Metaphysical hit points. It's a very clean approach, aided by clear graphics on the description cards.

Each attribute has a number of attribute



points (sorry . . . Attribute Points), or AP. These AP range from about 2 for a normal person's characteristic to around 50 for Superman™. The points increase on a logarithmic scale, so that each additional point of AP reflects a *doubling* of ability. A character with a Strength AP of 30 is twice as strong as someone with a Strength of 29. This makes characters like Superman feasible (and in fact, the system leans toward handling the powerhouses better than the darknight detectives). Superman merely has  $2^{48}$  times more strength than Jimmy Olsen™.

Now, *everything* in this game is measured in AP. Time is in AP (1 round = 1-4 seconds = 0 AP of time, while 10 AP is an hour and 20 AP a month). Distance is in AP. Weight and volume are given in AP. Even information is measured in AP (this article is 2 AP or so). This means that in order to figure out what is going on, the Gamemaster has to be able to convert our "real" system, with all its oddball units, to AP, and then back again. Fortunately, the text provides some good guidelines for handling this, though this makes the judge's screen a necessity. Once values are converted to AP, the mechanics for handling huge numbers is simplified. In one example, they explain why Wonder Woman™ can throw Mount Everest 40 feet, an example that illustrates the basic silliness of comics in general.

All actions are resolved on two tables, an Action Table and a Result Table. Every action involves a character's attribute and an opponent's attribute, which are cross-referenced on the Action Table to produce a number from 3 on up, called the Success Number. The player must roll that number

or greater on two ten-siders to succeed in the action, whether this be deciphering a riddle or pasting one on the Penguin™. Rolling double ones is always failure, but any other roll of doubles gives you an extra roll, and the two results are added together. If the result of the roll(s) is over 11, column shifts are gained on the Result Table. If the character succeeds, other attributes are compared on the Result Table (with column shifts gained again for rolling over 11) to determine the degree of success, such as the number of points of Body damage meted out in an attack.

This system sounds complicated, and it is. But, as I said before, the designers/writers/editors broke this very complicated process down and spread its description out between three books. Not the best situation for finding information, but excellent for learning a detailed resolution system.

In addition to all of the above, the column or row referenced on a table may be modified by spending Hero Points, similar to James Bond's Hero points or Karma from the MARVEL SUPER HEROESTM game. In this case, however, spending Hero Points provides column shifts, and hero and villain may engage in bidding wars to shove the final number needed up or down.

While such social interactions as interrogation, persuasion, and investigation are also resolved using the same two tables, the tables' primary function is the resolution of combat. The Player's Manual delineates a whole bunch of tricky maneuvers, including blindsiding, pulling your punch, and multiple attacks. Combat is the basis of comic-book conflict, and it is well represented here.

Hero points are awarded for defeating suitably powered bad guys and for completing subplots. Subplots are small personal adventures of the heroes in their alter-egos and with their friends and family, and are set up in conjunction between the GM and the player. The player will receive a number of Hero Points for successfully completing a subplot (example: prevent a nosy reporter from discovering secret identity). It is up to the GM to set up the subplots, but the player has the right to "pull the plug" if the GM starts torturing the hero's friends and family indiscriminately.

The game provides a lot of heroes to run with, keying on DC's most popular group, the Teen Titans™. Twenty-five heroes are given full stats in the books, with most of them represented on individual 3½-by-4¼ inch cards listing their abilities and powers. Some of the attributes and abilities given in the book are different from those given on

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the cards (the cards are correct).

The plethora of ready-made characters is good, because the character generation system is so complex that it can take, in the designers' words, "up to an hour" to create a character. Character generation is similar to the system in the *Champions* game, in that the player has a certain number of points to spend on building his hero, with the option to increase his point supply by building in limitations and vulnerabilities. The super-powers are listed in a separate book under their physical, mental, and mystical headings, as well as skills available. In a nice touch, the rules include a "Batman™ Option" where the character

is low on attributes and powers but high on skills and gadgetry.

The first three books (Introductory, Player's, and Powers Books) concentrate primarily on the game mechanics, and the DC heroes do not appear except in examples. The Game Master Manual goes a long way toward bringing out the color of the DC Universe. Not only are there quick tours of Metropolis™, Gotham City™, and Central City™ (with maps!), there is also a 16-page, impossible-to-read-without-ripping-it-out-of-the-book map of the Titans Tower™. This is a nice touch, and in many ways is the icing on the cake.

A word on production quality and methods, which often affect the playability of a game but are seldom mentioned: The interior layout of this ruleset is a gem, with reasonable use of two-color (red and black type) that does not overwhelm but does highlight the rules. Art is minimal but good where it appears, though more illos of the heroes, villains, and aliens would be appreciated (what the heck does a Grafallooon™ look like, anyway?). The cover is badly muddled, however, and the three-part logo is a mistake. (It's easy to misread the name of the game as "Heroes.")

The legal copy in this game, by the way, would choke a moose, and this RPG may set the record for largest amount of legal text in micro-type anywhere. They list every trademarked character in the book, and then some, and even the thin playing pieces carry legal copy that totally fills one side. This is not meant as a criticism of Mayfair, but rather a recognition of the task involved in licensing.

In summary, this is the best product I have yet seen from Mayfair Games. As a designer of the distinguished competition, Gorden's approach had me nodding my head in agreement over his handling of the DC mythos. But lest the point be lost, let's say it again: *This is not an easy or an introductory game*. It's more in the league of the *Champions* game, with better presentation, rather than an introductory game. Come into it with some background in role-playing.

And me? I'm going back to the lab. I love good competition.

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# CREATURE CATALOG III



# **CREATURE CATALOG III**

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## *C r e d i t s*

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Michael Persinger: Alcor; Gargorian.  
Alex Gray: Automaton.  
Scott Bennie: Avari.  
Gregg Chamberlain: Bogeyman; Sea Giant.  
Ed Greenwood: Burbur; Hamadryad; Orpsu.  
Dan Proulx: Creeping Pit.  
K.L. Campbell: Dracones.  
Peter Zelinski: Forchoreai.

Bruce Barber: Gu'Armori.  
Richard Stump: Hawkdragon; Pilfer Vine.  
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Gregory Detwiler: Mantimera; Metal Mimic; Yale.  
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Dave LaForce: Automaton; Burbur; Forchoreai; Hawkdragon; Orpsu; Sea Giant; Wind Thrower,  
Roger Raupp: Cover illustration; Avari; Creeping Pit; Gargorian; Lhiannan Shee; Mantimera; Pilfer Vine; Tener;  
Thendar; Yale.

## ALCOR

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*  
NO. APPEARING: 2-8  
ARMOR CLASS: 5  
MOVE: 9" walking, 24" skiing  
HIT DICE: 3

% IN LAIR: 10%  
TREASURE TYPE: *K, M*  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 tail strike;  
or, 2 claws and 1 bite

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-12 or 1-3/1-3/l-4  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Tail strike, possible  
missile fire

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard  
INTELLIGENCE: *Animal* to low  
ALIGNMENT Neutral  
SIZE: *M*  
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: *II/65 +3/hp*

The alcor is a distant relative of the lizard man that has adapted itself to life in a frigid climate. It has earned the nickname "the skier" because of the mode of travel it frequently uses. By balancing itself on its large, flat tail, the alcor can glide across snow and ice (downhill only; no self-propulsion is involved) at a 24" movement rate. It can also move fairly quickly on its legs, but generally only uses this form of locomotion for short distances or if traversing flat or rising terrain.

The alcor is carnivorous and primarily concerned with obtaining food. However, a few groups (10% chance for each small



band encountered) are composed of relatively intelligent specimens that have learned to fashion crude weapons. These alcors carry small darts and javelins fashioned from sharp stones and wood (doing 1-3 and 1-6 hp damage respectively) for use as missile weapons. The more intelligent sorts will also carry spears for use in close com-

bat. When charging to attack using its skiing movement, the alcor has a +2 bonus to hit and does double damage with the spear. When the charge is complete, the creature will usually drop its weapon and engage its opponent with its claws.

The alcor's razor-sharp claws do 1-3 hp damage per hit, and it can bite for 1-4 hp damage. These attacks may be used against a single foe or divided between two targets in a round. The creature can also attack with its tail (when not skiing) at the rate of one tail-slap every two rounds. A strike by the tail does 3-12 hp damage, and a target hit by the tail must save versus petrification or be knocked down. Opponents of size S have a -4 penalty to this saving throw, and those of size L receive a bonus of +5. A target that is knocked down forfeits any attack(s) it would otherwise have been entitled to in the remainder of the current round, and also cannot attack during the following round while it regains its feet. All attacks against a target that has been knocked down are made at +4 to the attacker's chance "to hit."

If an alcor chooses to attack with its tail, it cannot use claw or bite attacks in the same round. If it knocks down an opponent, it will attack that foe in preference to any others during the following round.

The two types of alcors will never be found in the same group or in the same lair, but if weapon-users and the less intelligent variety are somehow brought together they will work in concert against a common enemy, thereafter going their separate ways again.

## AVARI

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*  
NO. APPEARING: 1-4  
ARMOR CLASS: -4  
MOVE: 9"/15"(MC:C)  
HIT DICE: 9 + 3  
% IN LAIR: 15 %  
TREASURE TYPE: *C*  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 claws and 1 bite  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 7-12/7-12/7-18  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: poisonous bite,  
screech, surprise on 1-5  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Various immunities  
and resistances, rarely surprised  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 35%  
INTELLIGENCE: *Very* to high  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil  
SIZE: *M* (6' tall)  
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: *IX/5700 + 14/hp*

Avari are batlike humanoids native to the Middle Lower Planes, where they are the unfortunate rivals of daemonkind for territory. There they dwell in dank caverns filled with bats, and are usually encountered in similar surroundings on the Prime Material Plane.

Avari love the taste of human flesh, and



their saliva contains a powerful poison that affects the victim's nervous system; anyone bitten by an Avari must save vs. paralyzation or writhe in agony for 4-16 rounds,

with the same effect as a symbol of pain. An avari may also screech like a mobat (6" radius), but may not bite in the same round.

Avari telepathically command all bats and can summon 1-4 mobats up to three times per day. They are unaffected by non-magical weapons, paralysis, poisons, and acid attack forms, take half damage from cold, electricity, and magic missiles, but take full damage from fire.

Avari long ago dwelt in a central community, but their wars against daemonic kind shattered their unity and forced them to exist as isolated clans in the most desolate reaches of their planes. They do not deserve pity, for the avari are among the cruellest

races of the Lower Planes, and love torture for its own sake.

In the few places where avari flourish, they have set up a feudal system using slaves to satisfy their whims; as they often feed upon these serfs, the efficiency of this system is questionable. They have been known to negotiate with humans, particularly for gold (which avari crave), and will manipulate adventurers into attacking their enemies. They will usually try to eat anyone who appears incapable of resistance. Avari occasionally come to the Prime Material

Plane via gates cast by other individuals, and certain forms of magic have proven successful in summoning them, through the use of the personal names which all avari possess.

Due to their acute sonar senses, avari surprise opponents on a 1-5 on a d6, and are surprised only on a 1. They see into the ultraviolet and infrared spectrums, and telepathically communicate with all creatures of low intelligence or better. They have huge leathery wings and are brown-green in color.

## AUTOMATON

FREQUENCY: Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1-2

ARMOR CLASS: See below

MOVE: 9"

HIT DICE: 1 HD per foot of height

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 per pair of forelimbs

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-8 or by

weapon type

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: See below

INTELLIGENCE: Non-

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

SIZE: 5% S, 75% M, 20% L

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

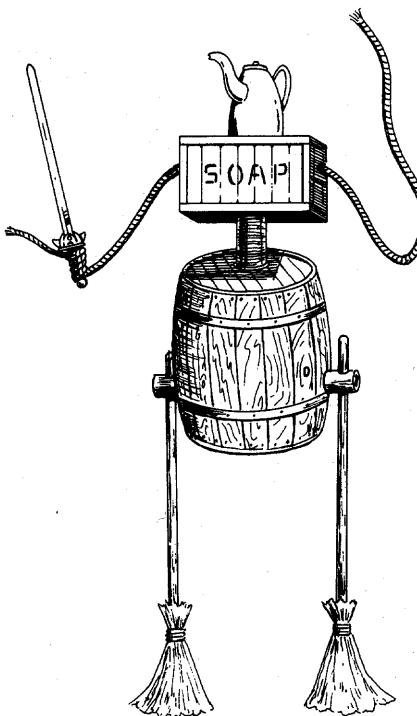
Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: Variable

Automatons are robotlike constructs similar to golems. They are usually humanoid in appearance, although other forms are possible. Unlike golems, they must be constructed in such a way as to permit movement; i.e., if an automaton is to be able to walk, it must have legs with joints in the appropriate places. Automatons may be constructed of many things: normal objects such as chains and thick ropes, suits of armor, full skeletons, mechanical arms, and so forth. Parts may be mixed and matched; for instance, an automaton may have a torso taken from a suit of plate mail, and chains for arms. The only restriction is that an automaton's body (torso) and arms (forelimbs) must both be composed of the same substance, and that substance must be generally classifiable as either bone, leather, metal, or wood. An automaton made primarily of bone has an armor class of 9; one of leather or rope has AC 8, and one of metal has AC 3.

An automaton made entirely or partly of magical components will not retain any of the magical characteristics of those components; if a helm of brilliance is used as a head, for instance, the helm will lose its magical powers when the automaton is enchanted.

Any cleric or magic-user of sufficiently high level can create an automaton. First, the creator must acquire the necessary materials and have them assembled into the



desired form by a tinker, engineer, armorer, or other such specialist. The cost for materials and labor is 1,000 gp per hit point, and it takes 1 day per hit point to acquire and assemble the materials. When the construction is complete, the creator must cast a sequence of spells upon it, in the order given:

A cleric must use *animate object*, *raise dead* (if organic components are involved), *prayer*, *bless*, and *quest*.

A magic-user must cast *geas*, *limited wish*, *animate dead* (if organic components are involved), and *enchant an item*. In either case, all spells must be cast personally by the creator and not read from scrolls.

When the magicking process is complete, the automaton can receive and act upon commands issued by its creator, in the same manner that a golem is controlled.

An automaton can be repaired by its creator (assuming the availability of suitable materials), regaining 5 hp per day spent in repairs, up to the automaton's original hit-point total. However, if an automaton loses more than one-third of its original hit points, it cannot be repaired. Automatons

take damage from different attack forms according to the primary substance from which they were constructed:

	Bone	Leather	Metal	Rope
<b>Acid</b>	half	full	half	full
<b>Blunt</b>				
<b>weapons</b>	half	none	none	none
<b>Cold</b>	none	half	none	none
<b>Edged</b>				
<b>weapons</b>	half	full	none	double
<b>Electricity</b>	none	none	half	none
<b>Fire</b>	half	half	none	double

All automatons are unaffected by poison, mind-affecting magic, gases, normal missiles, and magic missiles.

Certain spells will instantly kill an automaton, depending upon its primary substance. If it is a mixture of substances, those parts made of the material in question will be affected. For example, an automaton with a metal upper body and legs made of bones will have its legs destroyed by a *raise dead* spell. It would theoretically retain its movement rate, but would have no means of getting around, although it could still attack with its arms if a target came within reach. The spells that will destroy an automaton are as follows:

**Bone** — *animate dead*, *raise dead*, *reincarnate*, *resurrection*

**Leather** — *blade barrier*, *Mordenkainen's sword*

**Metal** — *disintegrate*, *transmute metal to wood*

**Rope** — *blade barrier*, *fire storm*, *rope trick*

Any automaton can be destroyed by the application of three *dispel magic* spells or three *hold monster* spells, or any combination of the two types equalling three, if each subsequent casting is made within 1 turn of the previous casting. Each spell will lower the movement rate of the automaton by 3" for 1 turn thereafter, and if its movement rate is brought to 0" the automaton becomes an inanimate heap of junk.

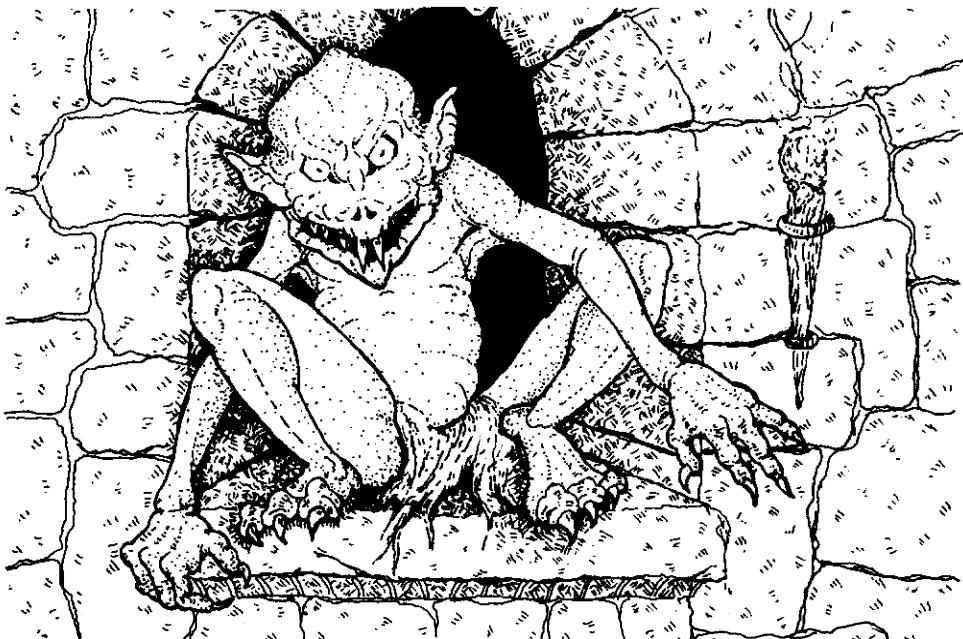
Any automaton has a strength of at least 16, with 1 extra point for each 2' of height over 6' up to a maximum strength of 25. Automatons of 10' or more in height will do 1-10 hp damage per hit, or perhaps even more for exceptionally large creations. Damage figures do not include strength bonuses.

## BOGEYMAN

FREQUENCY: *Uncommon*  
NO. APPEARING: 1 or 1-4  
ARMOR CLASS: 10  
MOVE: 12"  
HIT DICE: 2  
% IN LAIR: *Nil*  
TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 claws  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-3  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Illusion, scare*  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Darkness*  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*  
INTELLIGENCE: *Semi-*  
ALIGNMENT *Chaotic evil*  
SIZE: S  
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: I/44 + 2/hp

A truly despicable creature, the bogeyman is a type of psychic leech that feeds on the fear and terror it creates in its victims, who are usually young children. The bogeyman attacks at night when its victim is alone in a darkened room. It surrounds itself with a form of *continual darkness* with a radius of 5 feet and uses *phantasmal force* and *audible glamer* to create night terrors out of familiar objects in the room. If the intended victim proves resistant to the illusion, the bogeyman will use its ability to *scare*, causing the target to fall into a trembling fit and allowing the creature to feed on the fear that the victim exudes.

The bogeyman does not confine its choice of victims to children. Lone travelers journeying through deserted woodlands or



desolate moors, or a solitary person walking along a dark city street, may also find themselves victimized by this creature. A bogeyman usually appears alone, but in the city there is a 5% chance that 1-4 of these creatures will gang up on some unfortunate target.

Anyone attempting to attack a bogeyman will do so at -4 "to hit" because of the sphere of darkness surrounding the creature. Infravision and ultravision are useless against this magical darkness, but the bogeyman can see through it to the area beyond. When forced to fight, the bogeyman can attack twice per round with its claws. It

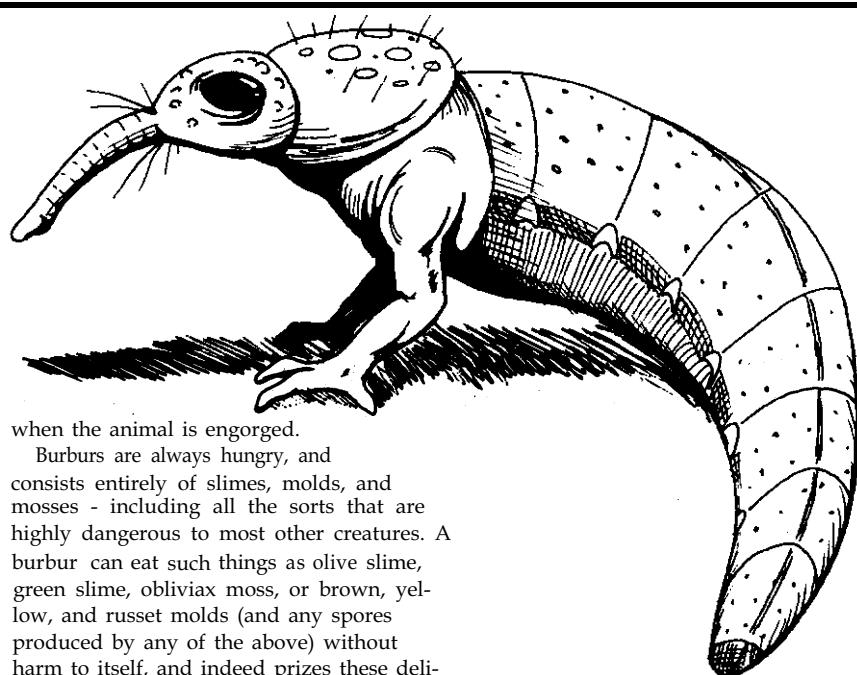
uses each of its innate spell-like abilities (*phantasmal force, audible glamer, scare*, and *continual darkness*) at the 5th level of ability, and can employ each type of magic twice per day.

If its *darkness* aura is dispelled, the bogeyman is revealed as a puny-looking, 3'-tall creature with a bulging head, staring eyes, and dead-white skin. Because of its cowardly nature, the bogeyman will flee immediately from any strong opposition or upon losing its protective *darkness*. It will head for the nearest large patch of darkness and attempt to conceal itself until it can reuse its *continual darkness* ability.

## BURBUR

FREQUENCY: *Rare*  
NO. APPEARING: 1-4  
ARMOR CLASS: 9  
MOVE: 13"  
HIT DICE: 1-1  
% IN LAIR: *Nil*  
TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 bite (vs. mosses,  
slimes, and molds only)  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8 (targets  
as above)  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Nil*  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immunities; also*  
*see below*  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*  
INTELLIGENCE: *Animal to low*  
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*  
SIZE: S (6 inches to 1' long)  
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: I/14 + 1/hp

Burburs are small, curious-looking worm-like creatures with large, glistening black eyes, sucking tube-mouths of considerable dexterity, tiny forelegs like a sprite's that can climb, grip, and manipulate objects, and a body that swells up like a balloon



when the animal is engorged.

Burburs are always hungry, and consists entirely of slimes, molds, and mosses - including all the sorts that are highly dangerous to most other creatures. A burbur can eat such things as olive slime, green slime, obliviax moss, or brown, yellow, and russet molds (and any spores produced by any of the above) without harm to itself, and indeed prizes these delicacies, attacking them in preference to more common varieties of the species.

A burbur is immune to the attacks of yellow musk creepers, zygoms, and violet fungi, but does not find these things edible.

It is affected normally by oozes, jellies, poisonous vapors, and other creatures or spell attacks.

Burburs wander constantly in search of

food, and are sometimes encountered feeding in groups of 1-4. They are valued by adventurers, who may pay up to 1,000 gp for a healthy specimen. They are docile companions, and will not attack their keep-

ers, or stray, so long as they are fed regularly (a full meal at least once a day). Once every dozen years or so, a burbur will swell up to double size, develop a second mouth and set of legs, and split into two smaller

burburs. The creatures are ivory to yellow in color, and are able to absorb or give off moisture through their skins. They have a spicy body odor, somewhat similar to the smell of cinnamon.

## CREEPING PIT

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: *Not applicable*

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: *See below*

% IN LAIR: *Nil*

TREASURE TYPE: *See below*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 *engulfment*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See below*

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Engulfment, cast victims into Astral Plane*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immunity to physical and magical attacks*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *See below*

INTELLIGENCE: *Unratable*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: L (6' diameter, 10' deep)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

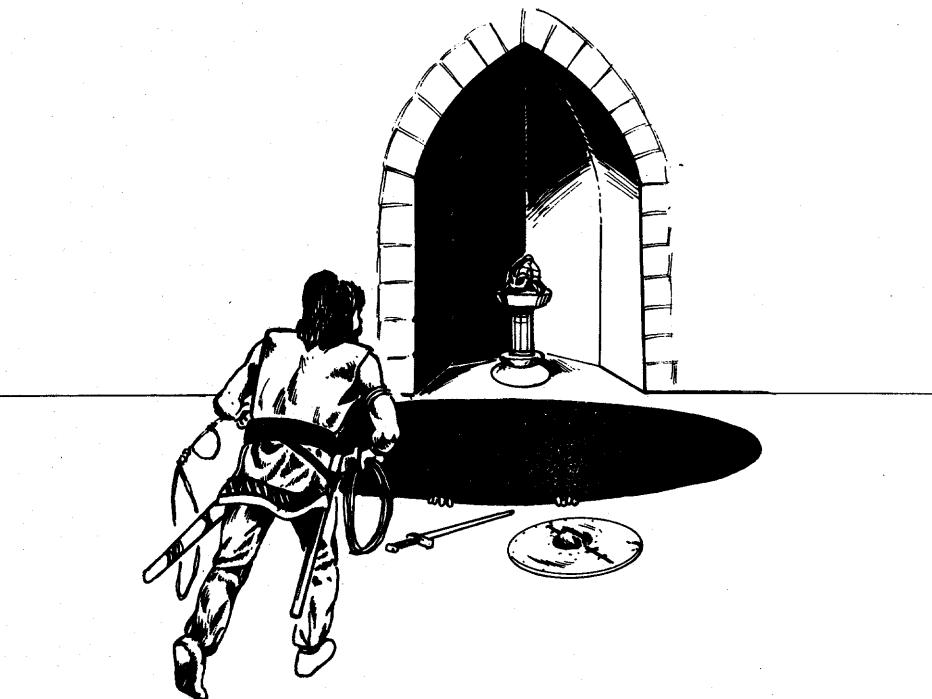
Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VI/1000

An extremely curious and rare phenomenon, a creeping pit is created when a *bag of devouring* (see DRAGON® issue #89, "Ihnagnim" in Creature Catalog I) is placed within a *portable hole*. The combination of these two magical items opens a rift to the Astral Plane, which closes in one hour. The closed rift then changes, for reasons unknown, into a creeping pit.

The creeping pit has a quasi-sentience, and it seems to stay in the general area in which it was created. The pit looks exactly like a mobile *portable hole*, and it is always 6' in diameter and 10' deep. It can move freely over any fairly level surface, and can travel up and down ramps (but not stairs).

Any live creature coming within 30' of the creeping pit will be "attacked" by it; the pit attempts to slide under the creature's feet, causing it to fall in. The only way to avoid falling in the pit is to jump to any available area not occupied by the pit. To see if the creature has avoided the pit, roll a 20-sided die; if the result is below or equal to that creature's dexterity, then the creature has avoided falling in. If the result is



higher, the creature has fallen into the pit. There must be available floor space to which a potential victim can jump in order to even try to avoid the pit.

A creature falling into a pit will usually take 1-6 hp damage when hitting bottom, but sometimes (10%) there will be sufficient garbage at the bottom to break the fall without harm. Any victim may easily get out of the pit if the means are at hand, but that creature will then be subsequently attacked by the pit, and the victim may find himself in a new area. (The pit is always on the move and can easily slide under doors).

Creeping pits are not affected by any type of magical spell or weapon attack. The only way to affect a pit is to create another extra-dimensional hole inside it. This can be done by casting a *gate* within it, or by throwing a *bag of holding* or *portable hole* into the pit. This will reopen the pit's interdimensional

rift, and creatures and objects within a 10' radius of the pit must make a save vs. spell or be swept into the Astral Plane. This rift will then close in one hour, the creeping pit destroyed. Creatures in the Astral Plane will not be able to use the rift to get back into the Prime Material Plane, as it is a one-way opening only.

Even if a creature cannot escape from a creeping pit, it will probably end up in the Astral Plane. For every hour that material (living or non-living) is in the pit, there is a 25% chance that it will "fade" into the Astral Plane.

Even though a creeping pit cannot be killed in the conventional sense, experience points should be awarded by the DM if characters overcome it by creating a hole within the pit as outlined above, or by filling it with some substance, making it easy to walk upon.

## D R A C O N E S

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVE: 15"

HIT DICE: 9 (+3 hp per level of fighter lord over 9th)

% IN LAIR: 95%

TREASURE TYPE: C

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 bite and 1 constrict

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-9 and 3-10

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Fear, blinding, constriction, possible magic and psionics use*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 10% (+5% per level of fighter lord over 9th)

INTELLIGENCE: *Average to genius*

ALIGNMENT: *Any neutral alignment*

SIZE: L (30' long)

PSIONIC ABILITY: *See below*

Attack/Defense Modes: *See below*

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VII to IX/2500 + 12/hp to 5400 + 14/hp

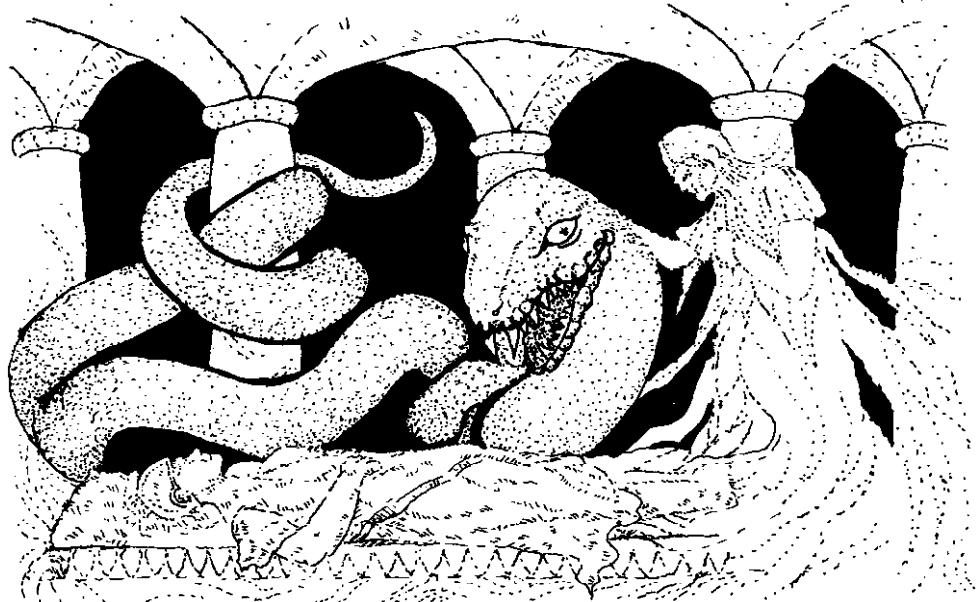
A dracones is a large constrictor snake that inhabits the tomb of a dead fighter lord (excluding all subclasses of fighters, but including dual-classed and multi-classed fighters). Through long association with the tomb, the snake becomes possessed by the warrior's spirit and is altered to become a magical creature.

Once per day, the dead warrior's spirit

may separate from the serpent for up to one hour and manifest itself in a ghostly form (AC 0; MV 6"; HD and hp as per above; attacks as described below). The spirit will cause its viewers to save vs. spell or flee in panic for 4-16 rounds. During this time, the serpent will return to its normal state as a nonmagical snake. While the spirit and the serpent are united, the snake has the warrior's knowledge of battle (hence the hit dice and hit points) and all previous magical powers (if any) and psionic abilities.

In battle, the dracones can bite and constrict in the same round; if it hits with its coils, it need not hit again in order to inflict damage by constriction. The dracones glows with a blinding light which causes its opponents to fight at -2 on "to hit" and damage rolls. If the dracones begins to lose a battle, it may play dead or try to escape. If it truly dies, the warrior's spirit will take up residence in a new serpent, if any become available in the future.

A dracones drops the weaker half of the warrior's alignment and takes up partial neutrality when in snake form. For instance, a chaotic evil warrior will become chaotic neutral or neutral evil in snake form, depending upon whether he was more evil or more chaotic in life. A dracones will only fight to defend itself and its tomb, but



it is often lonely and will try to speak with travelers; there are legends of dracones befriending adventurers who pass the time with them. Occasionally, a dracones can convince a party to have the warrior lord *resurrected* or otherwise *raised*. The snake and rejuvenated hero will refuse to be separated afterward, and still retain a kind of mental communion effective at any range.

A dracones appears to be a 30' -long serpent with metallic scales that glow faintly with magical energy. Its eyes are jet black. It may speak the languages known to the dead warrior in either snake or spirit form. Treasure found with a dracones consists of what was buried with the warrior and what the snake may have accumulated by fighting to protect the tomb.

## FORCHOREAI

FREQUENCY: Common on Happy Hunting Grounds; very rare elsewhere

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 2

MOVE: 33"

HIT DICE: 4 + 10

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 6-24

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Surprise 95% of the time

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Rarely surprised, regeneration, spell use, save as a 10th-level cleric, +1 on reactions

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Very

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good

SIZE: L (7' tall at shoulder)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: V/330 + 5/hp



hp/round and move silently, hear noise, and hide in terrain (like *hide in shadows*) as a 17th-level thief, surprising opponents 95% of the time. In addition, they have the following spell-like powers which they cast, one at a time, once per round, at the 10th level of ability: *detect snares and pits*, non-

detection, pass without trace, protection from evil, and speak with plants and animals. Once per day, they may use *invisibility mirror image*, *misdirection*, and *plant door*. A forchoreai may cast *heal* on any being but itself, once per week. The powers above will work on the wildlife and residents of both the Happy Hunting Grounds and the Prime Material Plane.

Forchoreai that are killed as part of a hunt on the Happy Hunting Grounds will be resurrected after a period of three days. This is a common trait of many of the animal-like creatures of this plane, which are hunted for sport and in ritual by the plane's inhabitants. Forchoreai will only fight if cornered, and then only with their powerful antlers.

These beasts are very rarely encountered on the Prime Material Plane, usually in the service of a powerful, good (but non-lawful) ranger or elf. The circumstances under which such a character may gain a forchoreai vary, but such help can be had but once in a person's lifetime.

## GARGORIAN

FREQUENCY: Very rare

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 0

MOVE: 10"/18"(MC:C)

HIT DICE: 12

% IN LAIR: 80%

TREASURE TYPE: C

NO. OF ATTACKS: 4 claws, 1 bite, and

1 tail slash; or, 4 weapons

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8/2-8/2-8/2-8/

3-12/1-6 or 4 weapons, by type

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Continuous damage

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +1 or better

weapon to hit, regeneration

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil

SIZE: M (6' tall)

Forchoreai (for-KOR-ee-aye) are creatures found on the Happy Hunting Grounds, residing there naturally along with unicorns, pegasi, and scores of odd varieties of wildlife. Forchoreai appear to be large, white or gray stags, with pearly antlers valued as high as 750 gp per set on the Prime Material Plane.

Forchoreai are very quick; this is the reason for their low armor class and superior saving throws. They gain a +1 on all reaction throws, and are surprised only on a 1 in 8 chance. They regenerate at a rate of 2

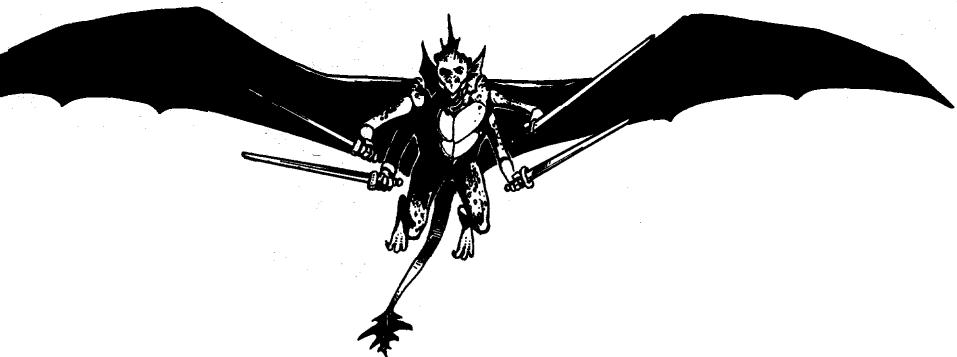
#### PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VIII/4950 + 16/hp

A variant offshoot of the gargoyle race, the gargarion is far less common than its weaker cousin. This 6'-tall, four-armed monstrosity is on friendly terms with regular gargoyles, though the latter do not worship them. They will almost always work in cooperation with each other, though they have been known to clash at times. Like its smaller relative, the gargarion can only be hit by +1 or better weapons.

The gargarion can attack in two different ways, naturally (with clawed hands, a bite, and a tail slash) or by the use of weapons. If the natural attack mode is used and two or more arms hit the same opponent, the opponent is seized and takes an additional 7 hp of rending damage. Anyone with a strength of 15 or better can break free immediately (though still taking damage that round). Anyone with a strength of 10-14 will be trapped for 1-3 rounds, afterward breaking free. During this time, the grasping arms do not need to roll to hit; they do normal damage, as well as the 7 points of rending damage. Arms that aren't grasping, as well as the tail and the bite, must



roll to hit. Anyone with a strength of 9 or below will be trapped until the gargarion chooses to release him. Grasped characters may still attack with no "to hit" penalties, so long as they are using weapons 3' or less in length. Other weapons may not be used.

The gargarion is sometimes armed with four longswords (or other weapons 4' or less in length). If this attack mode is used, it does not get to utilize its bite or tail attacks and it cannot grasp-opponents. When using weapons, the creature gets "to hit" and damage appropriate for a being with 19 strength (+3/+7).

On the round after it is wounded, the

gargarion begins to regenerate at a rate of 1 hp per round. It can regenerate fire and acid damage, but when it is reduced to zero hit points, regeneration stops and the monster is dead. The gargarion can direct its attacks against multiple opponents.

The gargarion generally dislikes humans and will usually attack them. Despite this, gargarions are sometimes forced into service to exceptionally powerful humans and monsters to guard their treasures. If someone hits a gargarion with an arrow of slaying gargoyles, it will not automatically die, though it will take away 75% of its current hit points as damage.

#### GU' A R M O R I

FREQUENCY: Very rare

NO. APPEARING: 1-4

ARMOR CLASS: -4

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 1 hp (but attacks as 12 HD monster)

% IN LAIR: 100%

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 fists or 2 sword blows

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-1 6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below

SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 5%

INTELLIGENCE: Non-

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

SIZE: M (6' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VIII/5100

Gu'armori (singular: gu'armor) are animated suits of armor constructed through the combined efforts of a magic-user of at least 16th level and a cleric of at least 11th level. The creation of a single gu'armor requires the fabrication of a suit of adamantine-alloyed armor, the life energy of a fallen fighter of at least 12th level, and the casting of the following spells: *animate dead*, *animate object*, *enchant an item*, *geas*, *magic jar*, and *raise dead*. The exact procedure is performed according to a jealously guarded arcane ritual — only three written copies of the instructions are known to exist. The process takes at least four months to complete, at a cost of 35,000



gp for each gu'armor.

Gu'armori may be encountered stationed at entrances, in treasure rooms, or in the company of their creators as personal guards. They will attack anyone who approaches within 30' of the area or thin& they have been instructed to guard, unless a special command word known only to the creators is spoken. They will never venture more than 90' from that which they have

been instructed to protect. The original purpose of the gu'armor cannot be altered by any means, magical or otherwise, except by one or both of the creators.

The "life force" which powers a gu'armor qualifies the creature to be classified as a special type of undead entity, and any cleric has a 2% -per-level chance of recognizing one as such. If recognition occurs, a cleric of 11th level or higher may (if he chooses to make the attempt) affect a gu'armor by rolling a 20 on d20, thereby "turning" the energy-spark which animates the gu'armor and resulting in the explosion of the armor, with effects as described below.

Gu'armori are formidable offensively, able to inflict 2-16 hp damage on a hit with either of their armored fists (some are outfitted with two-handed swords, but number of attacks and damage per attack are the same in either case), and are extremely difficult to hit in return. A successful physical attack requires a weapon of +3 power or better. Gu'armori are immune to mental attack forms, and are well shielded against other magical attacks. In addition to their 5% magic resistance, they are also allowed saving throws against all spells capable of causing physical damage or any sort of physical effect (such as a *levitate* spell), including those against which a save is not normally allowed (such as *magic missile*) and those for which a saving throw normally only halves damage (such as dragon breath). In any case, a successful saving throw indicates that the gu'armor suffered no damage or other adverse effect.

However, if a gu'armor takes even 1 hit point of damage or is physically affected

(i.e., moved) against its "will," the result is spectacular and potentially deadly. This seemingly insignificant amount of "damage" disrupts the delicate balance of dweomers which maintain the gu'armoru, and it will instantly blow apart, sending

shards of armor in all directions. Any characters or creatures within 5' of the explosion automatically take 12 hp damage apiece, and anyone from 5' to 30' away must save versus wands to avoid taking 2-12 hp damage.

## HAMADRYAD

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*  
 NO. APPEARING: 1-2  
 ARMOR CLASS: 7  
 MOVE: 16"  
 HIT DICE: 4  
 % IN LAIR: 5%  
 TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*  
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 weapon  
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*  
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spells  
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: Magic resistance, spell-like abilities  
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 75%  
 INTELLIGENCE: High  
 ALIGNMENT: Neutral  
 SIZE: M  
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
 LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: IV/ 175 + 4/hp

This extremely rare creature is a guardian of the woodlands, found only in old, vast forests far from civilization. Like a dryad, a hamadryad is linked to an individual oak tree and will quickly die if the tree is destroyed. But unlike a dryad, a hamadryad can leave the vicinity of the oak tree and travel any distance from the tree. A hamadryad often carries daggers or daggerlike weapons.

Hamadryads dislike non-forest environments intensely and almost never leave wooded areas. They prefer well water or mineral water, and derive energy from sunlight through the chlorophyll in their bright green hair. Shorn or dungeon-imprisoned hamadryads will die in 10-20 days if they cannot get sunlight and are not allowed to regrow their hair.

Hamadryads appear to be beautiful elven or human females, but have deep, sparkling green eyes and long green hair. They are shy but noble of manner, and they rarely



speak. They will often cooperate with rangers and druids, acting first to protect their own woods. Hamadryads can use the following powers at will, one per round: *animal friendship*, *entangle*, *pass without trace*, *speak with animals*, and *quench fire* (16' square area of effect). They will always successfully *detect snares and pits*, and cannot be *entangled*. They can *dimension door* from any tree to any other tree (maximum range of this ability is 66'), and can enter inside any living tree. Hamadryads will always see non-real trees (such as those caused by a *massmorph* or *tree* spell) for what they truly are. They also recognize treants and treant-controlled trees on sight.

## HAWKDRAGON

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*  
 NO. APPEARING: 1 (1-3 in wild)  
 ARMOR CLASS: 4  
 MOVE: 12"/33" (MC: B)  
 HITDICE: 1 +1 to 3 +3  
 % IN LAIR: *Nil* (50% in wild)  
 TREASURE TYPE: See below  
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 4  
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-2/1-2/1-4/1-2  
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Diving attack*, *breath weapon*  
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immunity to missiles*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard  
 INTELLIGENCE: Low to average  
 ALIGNMENT: Neutral  
 SIZE: S (11/2' to 3 1/2' long)  
 PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*  
 Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*  
 LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: III to IV/126 + 2/hp to 240 + 4/hp

The hawkdragon is a rare creature that dwells in forests and wooded hills. Named because of its similarity in size and appearance to a hawk, it is quick on the ground and capable of highly complicated maneuvers in the air.

Gu'armori may be found guarding any type of treasure, and on occasion may be "on guard" protecting nothing at all, their creators having died or been forced to abandon them without having a chance to alter their instructions.

Once a day, a hamadryad can cast a *hold plant* spell, and thrice per day can cast a powerful *charm person* spell (save vs. magic at -3). If a person is taken away by a hamadryad, he will be compelled to perform one service (usually aid in protecting the woodlands from woodcutters or the like), and will then be released in the depths of the forest in a dryad grove, whereupon he may be *charmed* in turn by a dryad. If not, no forest creature of good or neutral alignment will attack the person if he does not bother them and is attempting to leave the forest. If a hamadryad enters a tree which contains a druid (cf. *pass plant* and *plant door* spells), she can charm that druid if she so wishes with great efficacy (save at -6). She can converse with the druid normally, and there is room for both within the tree.

Hamadryads speak the tongue of dryads, elves, pixies, sprites, and can *speak with plants*. Sometimes (33%) they can speak the Common tongue as well (having learned it from *charmed* individuals). Hamadryads are 90% likely to speak each of the following languages as well: centaur, faun, treantish, and the druidic secret language. Hamadryads are immune to the effects of a *call woodland beings* spell, but will feel its summons and will usually (90% of the time) go to the caster's location to observe; they give aid of their own free will.

Hamadryads give any treasure they gain to dryads. They have exact knowledge of the forest in which they dwell.

A hamadryad's tree is always old and large, but does not radiate magic. The hamadryad will rarely fight other woodland creatures and is most friendly with dryads and treants. She will often aid the latter with her *quench fire* abilities.

The touch of a hamadryad is also said to cure nilbogism (see the FIEND FOLIO® Tome, Nilbog), but truth of this rumor is as much a mystery as the condition itself.

Most hawkdragons are found in the wild, but occasionally one domesticated from birth may be found as the pet of a powerful or wealthy lord. As hawkdragons are small, fast, and vicious, domesticated ones have been used much in the same manner as falcons for sport.

A hawkdragon attacks with a claw/claw/bite/tail slash routine, getting all four attacks even while airborne, as the tiny hawkdragon can land upon larger prey to attack. Since they can fly so well, 70% of all hawkdragons are able to dive on a target in the same manner that eagles do. During a dive, a hawkdragon can only attack with its

claws and tail, but all hits are at +4 on the die, damage is doubled, and a "to hit" roll of 20 indicates a 50% chance of blinding the victim in one eye. A *heal* alone will cure this blindness.

Hawkdragons, due to an innate form of magic resistance coupled with their high maneuverability, are not affected by normal missile weapons of any kind, and magical arrows or bolts do -1 damage on each die (see 3rd-level magic-user spell, *protection from normal missiles*). The -1 modifier also applies to missiles from ballistas, catapults, and the like, but this resistance offers no protection to the *magic missile* spell.

If a hawkdragon attacks a creature that is too powerful for it or if the creature is badly wounded, it will use its breath weapon of a 10' -diameter *stinking cloud*, centered on the dragon's nose. A missed saving throw vs. spell constitutes nausea (and the inability to attack) for 2-5 rounds, just long enough for the hawkdragon to flee. It is thought that some hawkdragons eat various wild herbs and onions to intensify this effect. A hawkdragon is immune to its own breath weapon and can use it twice a day.

Wild hawkdragons have a natural affinity



for brightly colored objects, so their nests may contain treasure types K, L, M, and 1-4 small gems (base 10 gp value). Domesticated hawkdragons often wear either a

silver, gold, or gem-studded collar bestowed upon them by their masters.

When encountered in the wild, a hawkdragon will be either a lone male, a mated pair, or a mated pair and young. There is a 40% chance that a mated pair of hawkdragons also has a clutch of 1-3 eggs. If sold, hawkdragon eggs can bring over 1,000 gp on the market, and young 3,000 gp. Adult hawkdragons will defend their eggs or young to the death, and cannot be subdued.

Hawkdragons range in color from dark green for young ones to brown for adult ones. They are sized and gain hit points as do normal dragons; i.e., an 8-sided die is rolled: 1-2 = small (1 + 1 HD), 3-7 = average (2 + 2 HD), 8 = large (3 + 3 HD). Ancient hawkdragons live to be 140 years old, and each growth stage is as follows:

Very young	0-3 years
Young	4-7 years
Sub-adult	8-18 years
Young adult	19-30 years
Adult	31-60 years
Old	61-90 years
Very old	91-120 years
Ancient	121+ years

## L H I A N N A N S H E E

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 2

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 5

% IN LAIR: 5%

TREASURE TYPE: Q (x5), T (x5), X

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 claws

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-2/1-2

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Draining kiss*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Selective invisibility, spell immunities*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 90%

INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral evil*

SIZE: M

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/XI. VALUE: V/365 + 5/hp

Rare in the extreme, the lhiannan shee (LAN-an SHE) is a vampiric spirit with an affinity for persons of high charisma and strong poetic ability — in other words, bards. The lhiannan shee is feminine in appearance and looks like an extraordinarily beautiful human, elven, or half-elven woman.

However, she is visible only to her intended victim; she possesses the power of *selective invisibility* and can become visible or invisible to the victim at will without being detected by any other persons nearby. Anyone using a *detect invisibility* spell or power to locate such a being has a 5% chance per level of the person searching of detecting the lhiannan shee, per turn of searching (e.g., a 7th-level magic-user has a 35% chance of detecting the presence of a



lhiannan shee in one turn). Note that the usual chances to detect invisible creatures that beings with high intelligence or hit dice have do not apply against these creatures.

As previously stated, this creature prefers

bards and almost never attacks anyone else. A bard above 10th level has a 1% chance per month of encountering a lhiannan shee. She will seek out the bard (invariably male; female bards are not bothered by lhiannan shee) when he is alone and no one else is around to confirm or deny her presence. She will use every wile at her command, from 'subtle flattery to blatant propositioning, assuming every role from dignified musical student to charmed trollop. A lhiannan shee usually observes her victims invisibly for a month before making her presence known. Her knowledge of the victim, combined with her intelligence and cunning, make her methods very powerful indeed.

The bard must make a saving throw vs. magic at -2 upon seeing a lhiannan shee or he will not be able to resist the lhiannan shee's desires, as if he were *charmed*. It is 95% likely that each time this creature meets the bard she will want him to kiss her. This act automatically drains 1 hp permanently from the bard and transfers it to the lhiannan shee's hit point total (up to her maximum total of 40). Hit points so lost cannot be recovered except by wishes (1 hp per wish). The bard may not initially notice this life drain, there being only a 1% chance per day per hit point drained of the bard noticing it. Until then, the victim will resist all suggestions that his "lover" is anyone other than what she really is. The *charm* placed upon the bard is broken only by a *wish*, a *dispel magic* from a 10th-level or greater magic-user, or *remove curse* from a cleric of 10th-level or greater, unless the bard discovers the life drain (breaking the *charm* immediately).

While the bard is sharing the company of

the Ihiannan shee, she will manifest her power to teach the bard to improve his musical talents. While the Ihiannan shee is evil, she also appreciates fine arts, music and poetry in particular. If the bard succumbs to her charms, she will give him the following powers for as long as he continues to visit her:

1) The bard adds 10% to his charm percentage when he plays a stringed instrument;

2) The bard will increase the morale of associated creatures when he plays by an

additional 10%;

3) The bard can cause all listening creatures to save at an additional penalty of -2 vs all relevant magical effects when playing a musically based magical item (e.g., drums of panic, pipes of the sewers, etc.).

The Ihiannan shee is immune to all magical attacks from magical musical instruments (drums of panic, horn of blasting, etc.). It is affected by magical items giving protection from undead (such as scrolls) and can be turned away by a cleric as a vampire. Holy water does not affect it. Only

weapons of +1 enchantment or greater may damage it, though silver weapons and cold iron weapons cannot.

A Ihiannan shee is thought to be the undead spirit of a woman who killed herself for unrequited love (generally for some particular bard). It will share the company of a bard until driven off by a cleric or slain. Note that unless the bard realizes what is happening, he will resist any attacks made upon his "beloved." This being is, like most undead, immune to all *charm*, *hold*, and *paralysis* spells.

## MANTIMERA

FREQUENCY: Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1-2

ARMOR CLASS: 5

MOVE: 11"/18"(MC:E)

HIT DICE: 8

% IN LAIR: 30%

TREASURE TYPE: E, F

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 bites, 2 horns, and 2 claws

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-3/1 -3/1-4/1-4/1-8/2-8

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Tail spikes

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Low

ALIGNMENT Neutral evil

SIZE: L

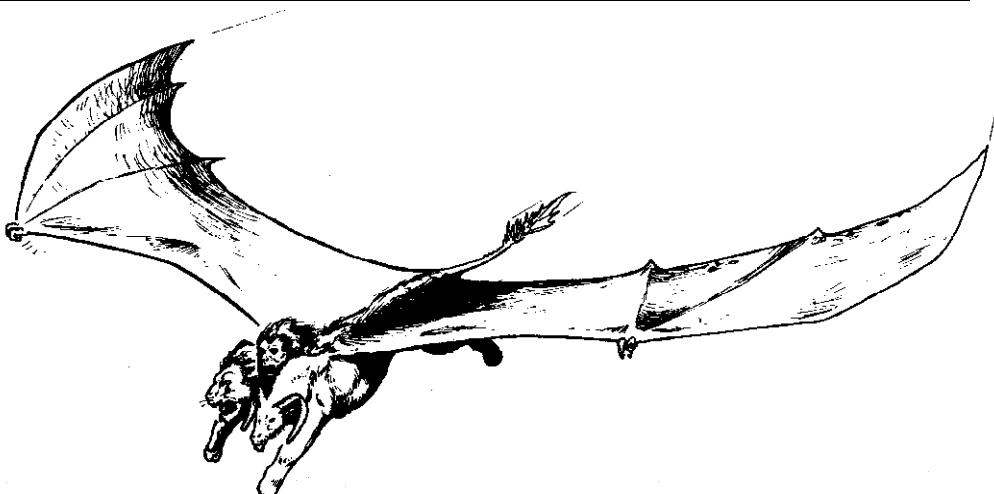
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VII/725 + 10/hp

The mantimera is a sterile crossbreed resulting from the mating of a manticore with a chimera. This creature has the manlike head of a manticore as well as the goat and lion heads of the chimera, and retains the spiked tail of the manticore.

Similar to its manticore parent, the mantimera prefers to lie in wait for prey along game trails or caravan routes, firing at least one volley of tail spikes before closing for melee. Even without its tail spikes, the



mantimera is a formidable opponent, able to strike six times per round. The humanlike head can bite for 1-8 hp damage, the lion head for 2-8, the goat horns can butt for 1-4 points each, and each of its forepaws can lash out for 1-3 hp damage. It can divide these attacks against as many as three different targets in the same round, although the two goat-horn attacks must always be against the same foe.

The mantimera will not lie in wait indefinitely, and if no prey presents itself the creature will take to the air and range far and wide looking for men (its favorite prey) or other food sources. However, it is a

clumsy flier, and will not choose to engage in aerial combat.

The mantimera is vicious and always on the lookout for prey. It will not take on a greatly superior opponent by choice, but will usually not hesitate to swoop down upon (for instance) a large group of armed men; if the group proves to be too strong, the mantimera will simply lift into the air and fly away.

The coloration of the creature is similar to that of the body parts of its parents. It has the batlike wings of the manticore, rather than the dragonlike wings of the chimera.

## METAL MIMIC

FREQUENCY: Very rare

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 7

MOVE: 3"

HIT DICE: 8-11

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 punch

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 4-16

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Glue, spell use

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Camouflage

MAGIC'RESISTANCE: Standard

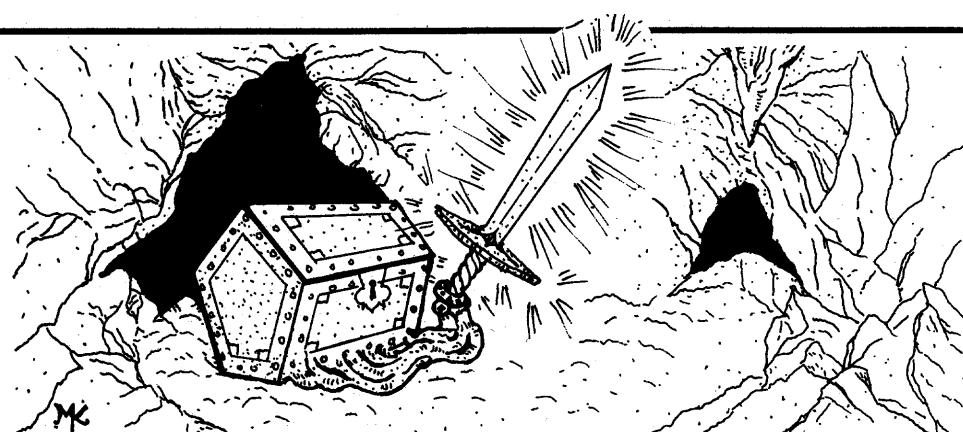
INTELLIGENCE: Semi- to average

ALIGNMENT Neutral

SIZE: L

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil



LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VI to VIII/900 + 10hp to 3400 + 16/hp

The metal mimic is a more powerful

relative of the "ordinary" mimic, having all of the basic abilities and characteristics of its weaker counterpart. In addition to being able to imitate objects of wood or stone, the

metal mimic can take on the shape and appearance of items of raw or finished metal. It can take on the color, luster, and texture of any pure metal (iron, gold, silver, platinum, etc.) except for adamantine, but cannot form into an alloy. Standard tactics of the creature include forming itself into a metal coffer to attract treasure-seeking prey or taking on the shape of an iron column in a passageway through which prey is expected to pass.

The metal mimic can duplicate the effect of a *light* spell up to four times per day, causing the illumination to come from itself or from any other object within 20' of its location. This magical *light* persists for 6 turns or until dispelled by some outside force. The mimic can cancel the *light* only if it was cast upon the mimic's body.

The metal mimic can exude a pseudopod, connected to the main body by a slender tendril, and shape that extremity into the form of a sword or dagger. With magical *light* placed on it, this extremity will appear to be an enchanted blade. If the creature wants to imitate a non-glowing magical weapon such as a mace, or possibly a magic shield, it can project a form of *Nystul's magic aura* once per day (duration 2 turns, or until dispelled by the mimic), causing the imitated object to register positively if *detect magic* is cast upon it.

The metal mimic has no use for treasure as such, but will often use the coins and weapons of previous victims to lure other prey, leaving such items where they have fallen and forming itself into a stone or iron column next to the pile.

The metal mimic attacks in the same fashion as the weaker mimic, sending out a pseudopod which hits as a weapon and also secretes a powerful glue. Each hit does 4-16 hp damage, and a victim held fast by the mimic's glue will incur subsequent attacks from more pseudopods as if the target were AC 10 (bonuses for dexterity and magical armor apply). The hold of a pseudopod's glue is broken by any single hit upon the mimic which causes at least 6 hp damage.

Metal mimics are of two basic types: the larger (10-11 HD), relatively intelligent sort, and the smaller "killer mimic" which is semi-intelligent and instinctively aggressive. The larger, non-belligerent types may learn local languages and be willing to negotiate for food instead of making an outright attack.

## ORPSU

FREQUENCY: Rare

NO. APPEARING: 4-12 (usually 6 or 7)

ARMOR CLASS: 7

MOVE: /12" (MC: D)

HIT DICE: 1 + 6

% IN LAIR: 15%

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 horn and 1 fang slash

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 4-7/1-3

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spell use, bleeding wounds, blood drain

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Spell and psionic immunities

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Low

ALIGNMENT Neutral evil

SIZE: S (up to 2' "hornspan," 3' overall length)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

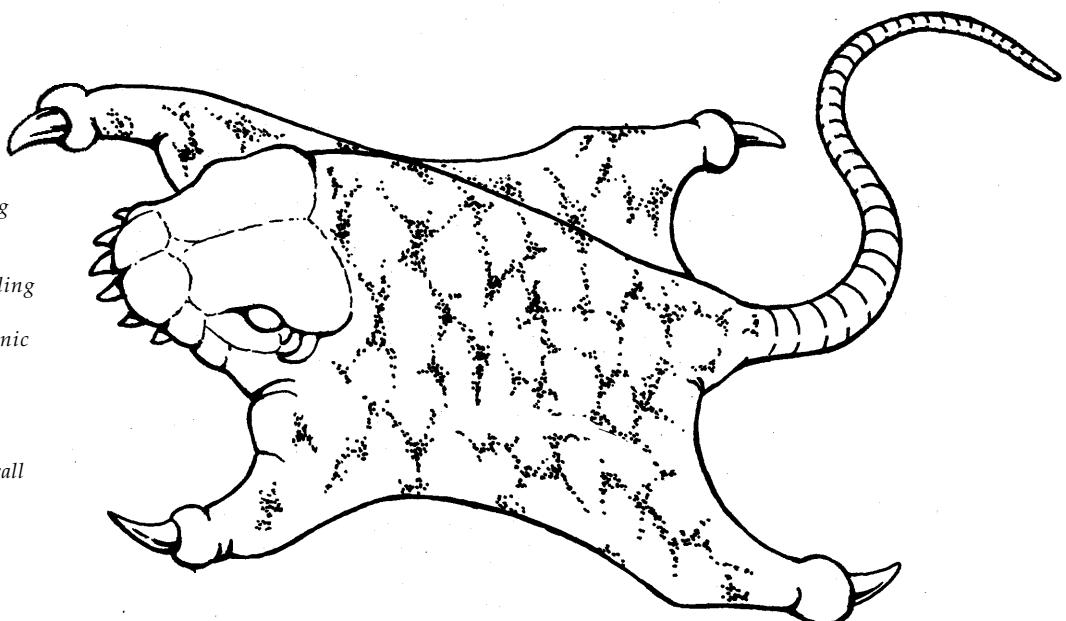
Attack/Defense Modes: See below

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: III / 52 +2/hp

Orpsu (singular and plural forms are the same) are predators found in temperate wastelands. They are nocturnal creatures which inhabit rocky places (such as caverns or ruins) and tall trees, and hunt in open, rolling country (scrubland or plains). They prey upon sheep, cattle, woodland creatures of all types (having a particular fondness for badgers, foxes, and otters), large birds, and men.

They have ultravision out to a 20" range and infravision to 15", both of which are useful in their nighttime hunting. Their greatest threat to prey is the ability of each orpsu to use, once per day, a weak form of *hold monster* (as the 5th-level magic-user spell, against any single living target within 6"; target saves at +2, success indicating the target is affected as if by a *slow* spell). This *hold* effect (or *slow*, if save is made) lasts for 2-5 rounds, and is the means by which orpsu catch and overcome most of their prey.

The coloration of orpsu ranges from crimson through mauve. They are hairless



and have mottled, veined, leathery skin, a prehensile tail (too weak to hold struggling prey or wield any sort of weapon, but able to drag small objects or coil around a tree limb when the creature is at rest), and four unusual "horns." These razor-sharp, blade-like bony appendages project out of an orpsu's body like two back-to-back pairs of crescents, one pair curling forward on either side of its raking fangs and the other pointing backward like wings on either side of its tail. (The orpsu has a row of 4 or more fangs, pointing downward, but no lower jaw, and thus it cannot attack by biting in the normal fashion.)

Orpsu can fly by some form of natural levitation combined with propulsion provided by the flailing of their tails. However, they are relatively slow and clumsy in the air, and generally only try to swoop down on prey after it has been *held* or *slowed*. A slash or stab from an orpsu horn does 4-7

hp damage, and its fangs can inflict an additional 1-3 hp damage. (Separate "to hit" rolls are required for horns and fangs; a swooping orpsu may not strike a victim with more than one of its horns on a single attack.) Any wound inflicted by an orpsu horn will continue to bleed (the victim losing 1 hp per round thereafter) until the wound is bound or some form of curative magic is applied.

Orpsu feed upon the blood of mammals, drawing it through a cluster of white, flexible, tubelike tentacles located on the underside of the creature. Unlike the more common sturge, the orpsu (which is sometimes mistakenly called a "night sturge" because of its diet; the two creatures are not related) has no barbs or claws with which to grip a victim securely. Orpsu will not attempt to drain blood unless a victim is *held* or until it collapses from wounds and blood loss. Its tentacles can penetrate a victim's

skin and provide some holding power, and the orpsu can also affix itself to a victim by coiling its tail around the body or an extremity of the prey. (The creatures have no legs or feet, and cannot move across solid surfaces.)

The blood drain of an orpsu will sap 1-2

hp per round from a victim until the victim dies or the orpsu is knocked or rubbed off — not difficult to do but requiring conscious effort (and the ability to move) on the part of the victim.

Orpsu can communicate only with others of their kind, employing a sort of limited

telepathy (2" range) which is incomprehensible and confusing to others who may try to "overhear." The creatures are immune to charm, suggestion, domination, and hold magic, and psionic powers of similar nature, but otherwise have standard magic resistance.

## PILFER VINE

FREQUENCY: Rare

NO. APPEARING: 1 patch

ARMOR CLASS: 6

MOVE: 1" (main plant), 9" (vines)

HIT DICE: 1-10

% IN LAIR: 100%

TREASURE TYPE: See below

NO. OF ATTACKS: Variable

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4 per vine

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Strangulation

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Resistances to blunt weapons and cold

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Semi-

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

SIZE: S to M

PSIONIC ABILITY Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: II to VII / 22

+ 1/hp to 2250 + 14/hp

Pilfer vines are sentient plants that have an unusual affinity for bright, shiny items. They are usually encountered in jungles or forests when wild, but the plant may also be found near a settlement or monster lair, for it otherwise would have little chance to acquire the items it has such an intense desire to filch. Why a pilfer vine "steals" is a question no one has been able to answer, as it will take things for which it has no possible use.

A pilfer vine is able to find shiny objects with visual organs located upon its broad leaves. The images that the organs receive are transmitted to its vegetable brain, which is surrounded by a tough mass of twisted vines. The plant is color-blind. Two mobile tendrils are possessed for each hit die that it has. These tendrils can reach out up to 5' away and can lift up to 5 gp in weight per vine.

A pilfer vine's base chance to steal any item from a being is 70%. Some of the modifiers to this chance are: victim standing still, 0%; walking, -20%; running, -60%; sleeping, +15%. More modifiers can be devised if needed. A victim will notice the attempt if the die roll is 25% or more over the number needed to pilfer an item. Characters of 5th level and above have an increased chance to foil the attempt; subtract 1% from both the base chance to steal and notice the theft for each level over the 4th. Thus, if an 8th-level fighter was the victim, the base chance of a successful theft is now 70% - (8-4)% = 66% and the person will notice the attempt on a roll 21% over what is needed. Tendrils can dig into pouches, backpacks, and the like to find



items, and more than one tendril can help steal an item. Lifting an item from a victim takes 1 round per attempt. If the plant is successful in stealing a random item from someone, it will hide the item amongst the gnarled vines of the main plant.

A pilfer vine will attack only if attacked first. It can lash out with its whiplike vines, doing 1-4 hp of damage per strike and gaining one attack for each mobile tendril it possesses. Up to six vines may attack a man-sized creature at a time. A vine can take 5 hp damage from edged weapons before it is severed and becomes useless. These hit points are in addition to those of the plant's central body. The plant's structure makes it resistant to blunt weapons, which do 1 hp of damage plus magical bonuses per strike.

When a tendril's "to hit" roll in combat is a natural 20, the vine has wrapped itself

around the victim's neck. The creature so hit takes 1-6 hp damage, and will continue to take this damage each round until the vine is broken (only possible by those with 18+ strength; use one-half of exceptional strength rounded up as the base number) or severed. A being with a 19 strength has a 75% chance to snap the vine, and 20 strength or greater means automatic success at breaking the vine.

Fire (magical or non-magical) does double damage to pilfer vines. Because of this, a pilfer vine will never send its tendrils towards anyone carrying a torch or other heat source. A pilfer vine takes normal damage from electricity, but cold only does half damage and slows the plant's movements by 50% for 2-5 rounds.

A pilfer vine's treasure is hidden in or around the plant. It consists of treasure types Qx2 (gems of less than 500 gp base value), and 20-200 coins of various types. There is a 40% chance for the plant to have 1-4 pieces of jewelry, and a 10% chance for a small magic item (dagger, scroll in metallic case, glass potion bottle, etc.) to be present. There will also be various shiny items such as bits of broken glass, metallic darts, small mirrors, holy symbols, etc., from 5-20 in number.

Sometimes a druid or magic-user will grow and feed a pilfer vine, as well as supply it with shiny items, in return for the protection of his or her abode. Being semi-intelligent, the pilfer vine will recognize its benefactors and not steal from them or their friends, if so instructed (though it takes time for the pilfer vines to understand that, even using speak with plants spells).

A pilfer vine is a large mass of tangled and twisted vines, not unlike those of a creeper. The vines of the plant are dull green or greenish-gray in color, while the leaves are broad and of green-brown coloration. Tiny, dark splotches appear on the leaves; these are the sensory organs used to see bright objects. The plant is almost always found coiled about a tree, column, post, or pillar.

## RIGHTEOUS CLAY

FREQUENCY: Very rare

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 6

MOVE: 6"

HIT DICE: 1-12 (see below)

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: See below

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Soul gouge, surprise on 1-5

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Rarely surprised, resistances to blunt weapons and various magical attacks, camouflage

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil

SIZE: S (2' diameter)

#### PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes: Immune to psionic attack

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: III to VIII/65  
+ 1/hp to 5400 + 16/hp

The righteous clay is a rather curious sort of horror which wanders about underground caverns looking for souls upon which to feed. It is basically a large, gray lump of intelligent clay; due to its amorphous nature and remarkable camouflage ability, it can blend in with its surroundings so as to surprise opponents on a roll of 1-4. A righteous clay is only surprised on a 1.

Righteous clays wait patiently on walls, ceilings, floors, etc., for would-be victims, having superb climbing ability. When a victim approaches within 10' of the clay, the blobby horror will attack the unfortunate creature with a *soul gouge* in an attempt to steal the victim's soul. Note that even elves and half-orcs, creatures that do not possess a soul *per se*, can be attacked by the clay's *soul gouge* and lose their spirits. For every soul that the clay steals it gains 1 HD, permanently. A clay is assumed to have stolen 0-3 (1d4-1) souls already, so it may have 1-4 HD. The victim gets a saving throw vs. death magic in order to repel the *soul gouge* and, if successful, will fall unconscious for 1-6 turns. A save vs. the *soul gouge* will instill a permanent immunity to this particular attack, so that following attacks by *any* righteous clay will be useless against that victim. Failure to save indicates



the soul or spirit of the creature has been stolen, in which case the victim's body is reduced to a mindless state (0 intelligence, wisdom, and charisma). The victim will swallow food placed in his mouth, breathe normally, and have involuntary reflexes, but that is all. The victim will not understand language but can be physically moved from place to place with a gentle tug in the desired direction.

A *soul gouge* can be blocked by a *mind blank*, *mind bar*, *helm of telpathy*, *tower of iron will*, or *intellect fortress*. Although possessing no psionic ability itself, the righteous clay's attack will drain twice as many defense points from a psionic defender as a *psionic blast* used by a psionic of maximum ability. If a psionic makes his saving throw,

he will not fall unconscious due to his own mental discipline.

Once a clay is slain, its stolen souls can be regained by casting one of the following spells on the mindless victims: *reincarnation*, *remove curse* (cast by a cleric of at least 10th level), *restoration*, *resurrection*, or *wish*. If the soul isn't returned to its owner's body before the clay rots away (about two weeks), no hope of soul restoration is possible. Elves and half-orcs can have their spirits restored by these methods as well.

Righteous clays are immune to blunt weapons due to their shock-absorbing bodies. Edged weapons do only half damage to them, and they are immune to poison, paralysis, *hold* magic, and death magic. Cold slows them to half speed, and fire and electricity do reduced damage on a 1 hp/HD basis. A righteous clay always saves as a 1 HD monster. Righteous clays can stick quite well to most surfaces, and can be peeled away from them at a chance equal to 6% per point of strength used against them.

Righteous clays are so named because of their extreme arrogance and self-centeredness. They can understand common and can converse by vibrating their bodies rapidly, thus operating in the manner of a stereo speaker. They can reproduce a variety of sounds, and some can mimic with perfection. A clay will split to form two separate organisms once it reaches 12 HD; each new clay will have 1 HD, and all souls previously stolen will be beyond recovery.

## SEA GIANT

FREQUENCY: Uncommon [Very rare]

NO. APPEARING: 1-2

ARMOR CLASS: 6 or better

MOVE: 12"/30" [/30"]

HIT DICE: 12 [16-19]

% IN LAIR: 25% [10%]

TREASURE TYPE: E [E, Qx100]

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 fist or weapon

[or tail smash]

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 5-30 [8-48] or by weapon type (see below) [or see below]

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Rending, hurling rocks for 2-20 hp damage [or spell use; psionics possible]

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Resistance to cold, pressure, and poison

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

INTELLIGENCE: Very [Exceptional]

ALIGNMENT Neutral good [Neutral]

SIZE: L (15' tall) [L (25' long or more)]

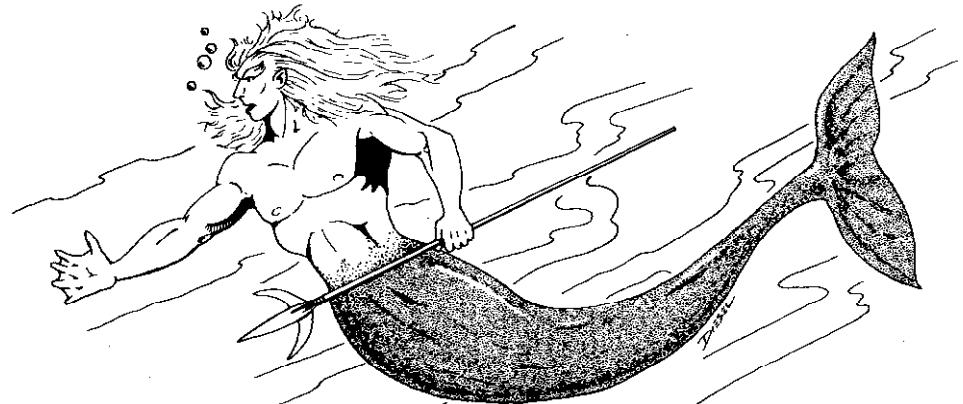
PSIONIC ABILITY Nil [See below]

Attack/Defense Modes: Nil [See below]

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VIII/4800 + 16/hp  
[X/10,250 + 20/hp to 19,100 + 30/hp]

Note: Figures in [brackets] are for Type II sea giant.

The sea giant is an evolutionary offshoot of giantkind which returned to the sea and readapted to a marine environment. The lesser form (Type I) is amphibious and



spends part of its time on land, while the other form (Type II) spends its entire life in or upon the ocean.

The Type I sea giant can be found living in large coastal grottoes, on small islands or in small (for a giant) towers near deserted strands. (Such a tower will have a water-filled tunnel or bore leading directly to the sea.) Of all the species of giantkind, this one is the most friendly toward humans and demi-humans. Amphibious sea giants are known to have rescued small fishing skiffs caught in storms and people in danger of drowning. Fishermen sometimes report seeing one of these giants swimming on or just below the surface of the sea.

Type I sea giants have skin color ranging from light green for those in tropical waters to light blue for those inhabiting polar regions. This giant has webbing between its fingers and toes, is as strong as a fire giant (22 strength) but taller and slimmer, and has little apparent body hair except for the top of its head. An amphibious sea giant is capable of deep dives (as far as 500') and long submersions (up to an hour) before needing to resurface for air.

The Type II sea giant has wholly adapted to life in the sea. A solitary being, the marine sea giant lives most of his life (possibly with a mate) in the depths of the ocean and rarely ventures near the surface. This giant

possesses gills, but has also retained a pair of vestigial lungs which enable him to function on the ocean surface for up to an hour at a time.

The skin color of a marine sea giant varies from sea green to icy blue, with a mane of white hair crowning the head. The hands are webbed much like a duck's feet, but are able to grasp and hold objects. The lower half of the body is shaped like the tail of a whale, ending in a set of horizontal flukes. The giant can use this tail to strike at foes, doing damage of 2-12, 4-16, 4-24, or 5-30 hp depending on the giant's hit dice.

The marine sea giant has strength equivalent to a storm giant (24 strength) and is usually encountered when carrying a huge trident. For this reason, some individuals have mistaken the giant for Poseidon (or another similarly powerful sea-dwelling deity) and offered it treasure. Depending on his precise alignment (50% are inclined toward evil, 50% toward good), this giant will either accept such offerings and take advantage of the situation, or decline the treasure and inform the individuals of their mistake.

Sages speculate that the marine sea giant lives a nomadic existence, usually roaming the depths but sometimes dwelling temporarily in a great undersea cavern or in a castle constructed of stone, large sea shells, and the bones of sea monsters. If adventur-

ers come upon such a castle, the jewel-treasure they find within it will be mostly composed of large pearls.

Sailors believe that the sighting of a marine sea giant foretells a coming storm; if the giant is looking toward the ship when seen, then the storm will take a life, but if he is facing away from the ship then the storm will be weathered without loss. This belief may have its foundation in the fact that the Type II sea giant has some innate spell-like abilities. The giant can perform the following feats, each twice per day and one per round: *control weather, predict weather, control winds, weather summoning, animal summoning III* (sea creatures only), and *polymorph others* (into some form of sea creature).

There is a 5% chance that any Type II sea giant will be psionic, with 140-190 ability points and randomly determined attack and defense modes. A psionic sea giant will have the following disciplines, all performed at the 12th level of mastery: *animal telepathy, body weaponry, clairaudience, clairvoyance, and telepathy*.

All sea giants have a natural armor class of 6 which they can augment. Amphibious sea giants may wear specially made armor of leather (improving AC by one or two places) and carry a shield; marine sea giants are often attired in armor made of giant shells or the hides of sea beasts (improving

AC by two to five places) and often bear shields made from the shell of a dragon turtle or an archelon. Although they can do great damage with their fists, sea giants often carry weapons; either type may be found carrying trident and net, spear, or a form of heavy crossbow which is usable underwater — all sized appropriately for use by giants, of course, and doing twice (for Type I) or three times (for Type II) the damage of a normal-sized weapon of the same sort.

If a sea giant attacks barehanded against a size L opponent and the "to hit" roll is a natural 18 or higher, the giant has succeeded in grabbing his foe with both hands, and can do additional rending damage of 3-18 hp damage (for Type I) or 4-24 hp damage (for Type II) in the same round.

As a byproduct of their ability to withstand the cold and pressure of the ocean depths, sea giants take only one-half normal damage from cold-based attacks and the various *Bigby's hand* spells (save, when applicable, for one-quarter damage). They are unaffected by injected poisons of any sort, since the toxin is simply absorbed by the layer of insulating fat which protects their bodies. Both types of sea giant possess infravision (12" range) and a form of underwater sonar which they use for navigation and identification in the lightless depths, to a range of 600'.

## T E N E R

FREQUENCY: *Rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 0

MOVE: 12"

HIT DICE: 9

% IN LAIR: 5%

TREASURE TYPE: A *in lair; M, N, Q T*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 4 claws

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Multiple attacks; poisonous bite; spells; gripping*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Spells; various resistances and immunities; hit only by magical weapons*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 50%

INTELLIGENCE: *Low*

ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic neutral or chaotic evil*

SIZE: L (8' tall)

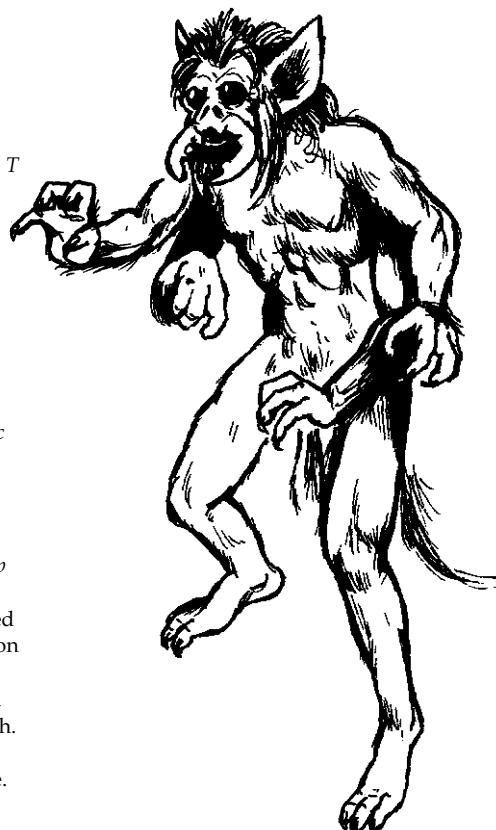
PSIONIC ABILITY: 140

Attack/Defense Modes: ED/G

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VIII/3200 + 12/hp

The tener is a grey, hairy, spindly-limbed creature. It is bipedal and has long claws on the hands of its four arms. It has large amber eyes set in a small round head, and spiderlike chelicerae flank its fanged mouth. The tener is greed incarnate and will jealously guard anything of the slightest value. It regards all strangers as thieves, but it itself has all of the abilities of a 9th-level thief except for backstabbing capabilities.

Teners may use the following powers, one



per round, at the 9th level of ability (where applicable): *bestow curse* (reverse form of *remove curse*), *darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility, haste* (self only), *teleport without error* (once per day), and *slow* (once per day). Teners have both infravision and ultravision. They are immune to poisons, noxious gases, and paralysis, and take half damage from fire and cold. Teners are harmed only by +1 or better weapons, and cannot be petrified or polymorphed.

The tener has a powerful grip. If it scores a hit with two of its hands, it holds its victim, striking at +3 "to hit" with its other two sets of claws and biting (at +3 "to hit") for 1-2 points of damage. The bite of a tener is venomous and causes paralysis for 6-36 turns (save at -2). Individuals held by a tener attack at -3 "to hit." A character's chance of breaking a tener's grasp is equal to his chance of bending bars, checked on any round that the attempt is made. No other action is possible for the character during such a round.

Teners are better known for their greed than for their malice, and they may be bribed not to harm a party. Such bribery is expensive, however, and not particularly reliable. Teners are native to the plane of Pandemonium and are also found, on occasion, in Limbo or the Abyss. They roam the Astral, Ethereal, and Prime Material Planes in search of treasure.

## THENDAR

FREQUENCY: Rare on Astral Plane; very rare elsewhere  
NO. APPEARING: 1 (5% chance of 2-8)  
ARMOR CLASS: See below  
MOVE: 17" to 20" on Astral Plane;  
12" elsewhere  
HIT DICE: 5 + 5  
% IN LAIR: Nil  
TREASURE TYPE: See below  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 weapon  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Spell use  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Spell use, spell immunities  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 25%  
INTELLIGENCE: Genius to supra-genius  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good  
SIZE: M (6' to 6½' tall)  
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil  
Attack/Defense Modes: Immune to psionic attack  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VI/550 + 6/hp

Thendar are native to the Astral Plane, though they may be found on any of the known planes. They are a wandering race, seldom remaining in one place for very long. Thendar are generally peaceful and have a great thirst for knowledge of all sorts. They have life spans ranging in the thousands of years, and seek out new experiences to relieve the monotony of their existence.

Thendar appear to be tall, slender humans with golden skin, silvery hair, and glowing white eyes. They prefer to wear



hooded robes of durable gray or blue material. Thendar do not usually collect treasure but may carry a memento or two picked up during their travels. Ornate jewelry, magical staffs, walking sticks, and other such items are typical examples. Such items will not usually have any great magical power but may have some value as antiques on the worlds where they were acquired, as they are liable to be several centuries old. Weapons are rarely carried or used.

Thendar possess natural true seeing and

communicate by an innate ability to understand all spoken languages, as per tongues. They have normal ultravision. They may use the following spell-like powers, one at a time, one per round, at the 12th level of ability: change self, dimension door, light, magic missile (5 times/day), plane shift (2/day), project image (1/day), sunburst (as per wand of light, S/day), wall of force (1/day). Thendar have excellent memories, never forgetting anything that they have experienced. They are immune to the effects of feebled mind or forget spells as well as all psionic attacks or powers.

Because of their long lives and far travels, thendar are great sources of information. They may answer questions as sages, with special categories in the inner and outer planes and major fields in humankind, demi-humankind, humanoids, and giantkind. The prices asked to provide such knowledge to other races are often unusual. Minor questions have been answered for no more than a demonstration of a simple knot or the telling of an old folktale. More exacting information has been gained simply by allowing the thendar to accompany the party and observe their actions for a time (if the thendar found the journey interesting) or in exchange for an equally arcane bit of knowledge. Thendar are only interested in lore that they do not already possess.

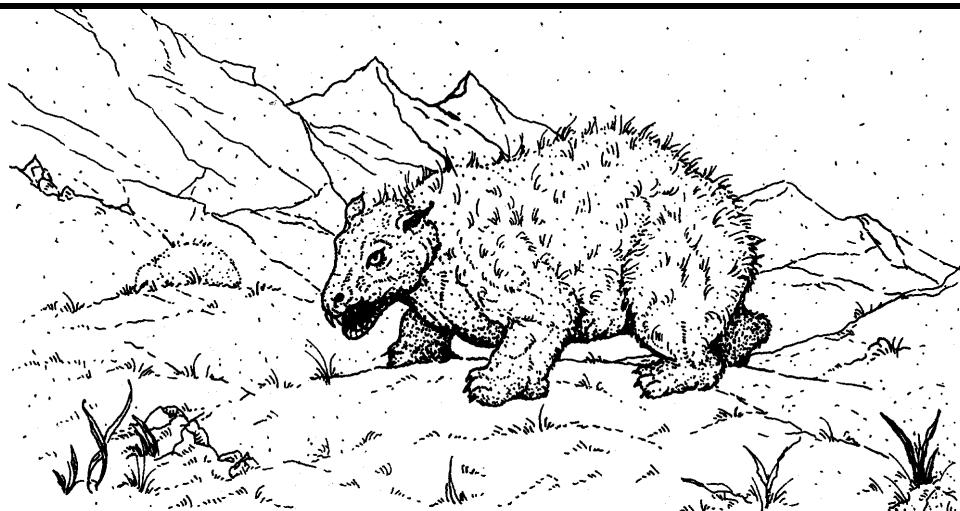
The githyanki hold a particular hatred for the thendar, who respond with only an indifferent annoyance. The thendar are on good terms with astral devas and star leviathans (see DRAGON issue #89, Creature Catalog I).

## TUNDRA BEAST

FREQUENCY: Rare  
NO. APPEARING: 1-2  
ARMOR CLASS: 5 (back and head), 7 (underside)  
MOVE: 3"  
HIT DICE: 4 + 4  
% IN LAIR: 90%  
TREASURE TYPE: Nil  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1  
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 5-30  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: 4 En tangle, surprise on 1-5  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Camouflage  
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard  
INTELLIGENCE: Semi  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral  
SIZE: L (9' long, 4' tall at shoulder)  
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil  
Attack/Defense Modes: Nil  
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: V / 285 + 5/hp

As their name implies, tundra beasts are native to subarctic and northern temperate plains. They are carnivorous, hunting either alone or in mated pairs. Tundra beasts usually stay in one area, moving on only when prey becomes scarce.

Tundra beasts are large creatures with four short legs and big, padlike feet. Their



upper bodies are covered with long, grass-like fur which can quickly change color to match that of the surrounding vegetation. Their undersides and vaguely triangular heads are hairless and brown. The eyes of a tundra beast are dull red, and the many teeth in its huge jaws are a dirty yellow.

Tundra beasts are able to pull both their head and legs beneath their bodies; when doing so, they resemble nothing more than low, grassy mounds, and they are able to surprise their prey on a 1-5 on a six-sided

die. Tundra beasts can sense ground movement within 15' of themselves, allowing them to detect approaching victims while camouflaged. They have normal ultravision.

Once per day, tundra beasts are able to cast an entangle spell. They will use this to stop or slow their quarry once it has approached within 10' of them. Tundra beasts are immune to the effects of their own or another tundra beast's entangle spell, but not those cast by druids or other creatures able to use that spell.

## WIND THROWER

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*

NO. APPEARING: 3-24

ARMOR CLASS: 7/3

MOVE: 9"

HIT DICE: 5 + 3

% IN LAIR: 33%

TREASURE TYPE: M, Q (x3), Y

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*

(strength bon uses possible)

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Wind blast, psionics*

use, possible missile fire

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Save as 8 HD*

*monster, immune to poison*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Very*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral evil*

SIZE: S (4' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: 180

Attack/Defense Modes: A, D / H

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: V/ 450 + 6/hp

These evil demi-humans are quite dwarflike in appearance, being short, stocky, strong, and very hairy. Their skin is light blue in color, and their hair tends to be red or white. They appear to be a distant and rare relative of normal dwarves.

All wind throwers wear studded leather armor under their clothes, but over their strong right arms they wear plate mail. This armor extends from the shoulder to the wrist, and over their hands are worn metal gauntlets. Anyone trying to hit this arm must do so against AC 3. This arm is so protected because with it a wind thrower is actually capable of hurling blasts of wind. This swirling wind affects everything in a 6" line (1" wide) in front of the thrower. It lasts for five rounds once it is thrown and it is so strong that it will slow all avian creatures therein by 50%. It will also cause all light missile weapons such as arrows, bolts,



darts, and sling stones and bullets to completely miss their target. Against such heavier missile weapons as spears, javelins, hammers, daggers, etc., a -4 "to hit" is suffered. Fire attacks within this area, such as *fireballs, flame strikes, dragon breath,*

and the like, will suffer -1 hp of damage per die. The wind blast will extinguish small fires such as torches and lanterns. A *gust of wind* spell cast against the wind blast will shorten its duration by one round for each spell cast.

These dwarves save as if they had 8 HD, and they are immune to all poison. They are capable of attacking and defending with their psionics, and each has two minor disciplines, determined randomly for each individual.

Wind throwers hate goblins, kobolds, dwarves, and gnomes, and will always opt to attack them over any others in combat. A typical force of these dwarves will be armed as follows: hand axe 10%, hammer 5%, short sword 10%, mace 10% mace and light crossbow 15%, short sword and short bow 15%, short halberd and dagger 20%, throwing hammer and two daggers 15%.

Wind throwers have 19 strength in their right arms and 14 strength in their left arms, and so will usually attack with one-handed weapons in their right arms. The use of two-handed weapons like the short halberd will gain no strength bonuses "to hit" and on damage.

Wind throwers are found in hills, mountains, and deserts, but in all cases their lair will be underground. There will be young in the lair equal to 50% of the number of adults. Those young who are capable of combat attack as 2 HD monsters, but with no wind-throwing or psionic abilities. The females and males both fight equally well. The leader of a clan is always a male with the maximum amount of hit points (43) and with the highest charisma of the clan.

These dwarves have 60' infravision and can determine underground phenomena as do dwarves. They can speak dwarven, gnomish, goblin, and as many other languages as their intelligence allows. They live as long as mountain dwarves do.

## YALE

FREQUENCY: *Uncommon*

NO. APPEARING: 1-8

ARMOR CLASS: 7

MOVE: 24"

HIT DICE: 3 + 3

% IN LAIR: Nil

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 horns or 2 hooves

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-8 or 1-4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Nil*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Animal*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

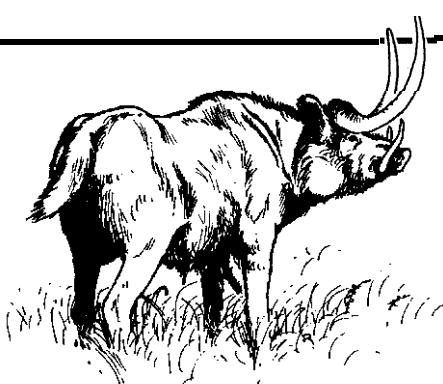
SIZE: L

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Attack/Defense Modes: *Nil*

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: III/60 + 4/hp

The yale is a horse-sized herbivore of rather bizarre form. Built like a stag, it has

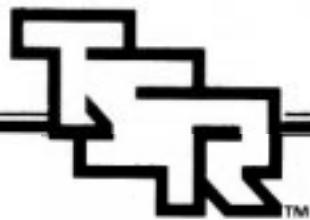


the head of a boar, with tusks (not used in combat) and a pair of 4'-long horns growing out of it. The head is colored like that of a normal boar; the horns are as white as ivory (though they are not this substance), and the body, neck, limbs, and tail are a solid, dull black.

Yale graze in small herds and will aggressively defend themselves if threatened. The animal can manipulate its horns, pivoting

the base upon which each is fastened to the head so as to be able to attack two opponents at the same time (1-8 hp damage per strike). The yale can also concentrate both horn attacks against a single foe, and can change the configuration of its horns from round to round if so desired. Against a small-sized opponent or one which is downed, the yale will prefer to attack with strikes from its front hooves, doing 1-4 hp damage on each hit. The animal cannot use both modes of attack in the same round.

Despite their ferocity, yale are sought after in the areas they frequent, since the flesh is considered a delicacy (particularly by elves). In some elven societies, a young warrior's skill is tested by having him go up against a solitary yale with long sword in hand, instead of using a bow, which is seen as a fair test of the warrior's ability since the Yale's prowess with its horns is roughly equivalent to that of the warrior's handling of the sword.



# COMING AT

## T1-4 THE TEMPLE OF ELEMENTAL EVIL AD&D® Game Adventure

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## DRAGONLANCE™ Chronicles Vol. 3

*Dragons of Spring Dawning*

by Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman

It all started with the discovery of a blue crystal staff and the return of the true gods to the tortured world of Krynn. And now the Wars of the Lance reach their astounding climax with Volume 3 of the classic *Dragonlance Chronicles* fantasy trilogy!

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The *Dragonlance Chronicles* will also be available as a beautiful boxed gift set — the perfect Christmas present for your adventure-loving friends!

### BULLETIN \*\* BULLETIN \*\* BULLETIN

Because you demanded it, the adventure will continue in early 1986, with the beginning of DRAGONLANCE™ LEGENDS, a brand-new trilogy following the adventures of the heroes of the Lance after the end of the wars . . . and through the dark history of Krynn!

## DL9 DRAGONS OF DECEIT AD&D® DRAGONLANCE® Game Adventure

by Doug Niles

Meanwhile, the DRAGONLANCE® module series continues with world-shattering excitement!

The secret of the draconians is held in the pits of Sanctuary, a dragon-controlled city at the feet of the Lords of Doom. The Heroes of the Lance must infiltrate the city and find the sinister secret . . . or face unspeakable consequences if they should fail!

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## THE SOULFORGE

SUPER ENDLESS QUEST™ DRAGONLANCE™ Adventure Book by Terry Phillips

The secret history of Raistlin, the powerful, enigmatic mage of the *Dragonlance* saga, comes alive in this fascinating gamebook. As Raistlin, you must take and survive the dreaded, mysterious Test that all practitioners of the mystic arts must survive in order to gain true power.

Terry Phillips played Raistlin in the original *Dragonlance* campaign, and helped to create much of Raistlin's personality and background.

## THE TOP SECRET® COMPANION

TOP SECRET® Game Expansion

by Merle Rasmussen

The Administrator returns with this brand-new collection of new rules, new weapons, new bureaus, special campaign rules, and an abbreviated unarmed combat system for the TOP SECRET game. The TOP SECRET COMPANION contains the special new rules that have been printed in DRAGON® Magazine, plus many pages of never-before-printed material ready to be used in your campaign!

This 96-page book contains a brand-new TOP SECRET game adventure, *Operation: Meltdown*, a thrilling race against time to defeat a terrorist plot!

## XS2 THUNDERDELVE MOUNTAIN

D&D® Expert Game Adventure

by Bradley Stock

You play a dwarf with a mission in this unique solo adventure for the D&D® Expert Rules Set. Princess Drona Marble-fist, beloved ruler of the dwarves, has vanished on a dangerous mission to Thunderdelve, there to defeat an evil menacing all who live under the mountain.

## AC7 MASTER PLAYERS SCREEN

D&D® Game Accessory

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## THE ART OF THE DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® FANTASY GAME

Edited by Margaret Weis and featuring  
the TSR Staff Artists

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# TRACTIONS

## AMAZING™ STORIES Books

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In Book #1, *The 4-D Funhouse*, by Clayton Emery and Earl Wajenberg, a young man is lost in the strange and terrifying world of the 4th Dimension!

In Book #2, *Jaguar!*, by Morris Simon, an archaeologist in Mexico discovers a tribe that appears to have the power to turn themselves into jaguars!

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## MHAC7 CONCRETE JUNGLE MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game Accessory

by Jazzy Jeff Grubb

This is the city . . . New York. There are seven million stories in the concrete jungle, and here are a few more of them. More than fifty new good guys and bad guys who prowl the dark canyons of Manhattan are described in this 32-page MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game accessory.

Includes the full and fabulous facts on your friendly neighborhood SPIDER-MAN™ and his most famous foes!

## MH8 FAULTLINE MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game Adventure

by Kinetic Kim Eastland

The fast word of a dying man: "Faultline . . ." Can SPIDER-MAN™ and the mighty AVENGERS™ unravel this cryptic clue before the East Coast is doomed?

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## REVENGE OF THE RED DRAGON ONE-ON-ONE™ Gamebook #3

by James M. Ward

Everyone's talking about the new ONE-ON-ONE™ Gamebook series! The unique diceless combat system and special tricks, traps and stories that allow the story to be played over and over again are winning new fans daily!

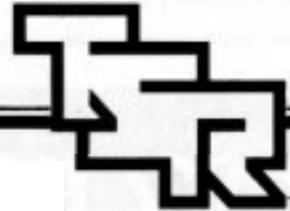
In *Revenge of the Red Dragon*, the third in the series, you are the Red Dragon, on a quest to retrieve treasure basely stolen from your horde by the Black Knight — or you are the Black Knight, trying to reach safety after recovering the magic shield from the evil dragon's lair!

## CN2 CONAN® THE MERCENARY CONAN® Game Adventure

by Kim Eastland

The Orb of Yama has been stolen! If it falls into the wrong hands, great evil of the most unspeakable kind will spread over the land like a dark shroud. The mighty-thewed barbarian from Cimmeria, now in the pay of the Priests of Jhebbel Sag, must brave a terror-filled catacomb to prevent the destruction of the Hyborian world!

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## LJ6 FROM THE FILES OF INDIANA JONES™\*: THE 4TH NAIL ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES™\* Adventure Pack

by Tracy Hickman

*Indiana Jones*™\* is at it again! Ranging from the Australian desert to treacherous Barcelona in search of the fourth nail of the cross, Indy™\* must elude the nefarious Ben Ali Aloob™\*. Plenty of action and adventure, and lots of additional 3-D ADVENTURE FOLD-UP™ figures!

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## THE GAME BUYER'S PRICE GUIDE By Frank Mentzer, James M. Ward, and Jean B. Black

So how much is that original edition of SNIT'S REVENGE™ worth, anyway? If you've ever wondered how much your game collection is worth, *The Game Buyer's Price Guide* is for you! Based on the actual safes prices of games and accessories at the famed annual GEN CON® Convention auction, this book is the best source of information on going prices for many games and collectables — both of the present and the golden age past, from major companies and hobby independents as well!

## TOWER OF DARKNESS ENDLESS QUEST® Book #29

by Regina Fultz

Garan must face deadly dangers to save his father from the clutches of the evil Count Cristoph in this adventure based on the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game!

## STOP THAT WITCH! CRIMSON CRYSTAL™ Book #4

by Mary Clark

Look at the special illustrations in this CRIMSON CRYSTAL™ book through the transparent red Coin of Linking to uncover the hidden secrets of the powerful witch! Then use your special ranger abilities to save the kingdom from her malevolent powers!

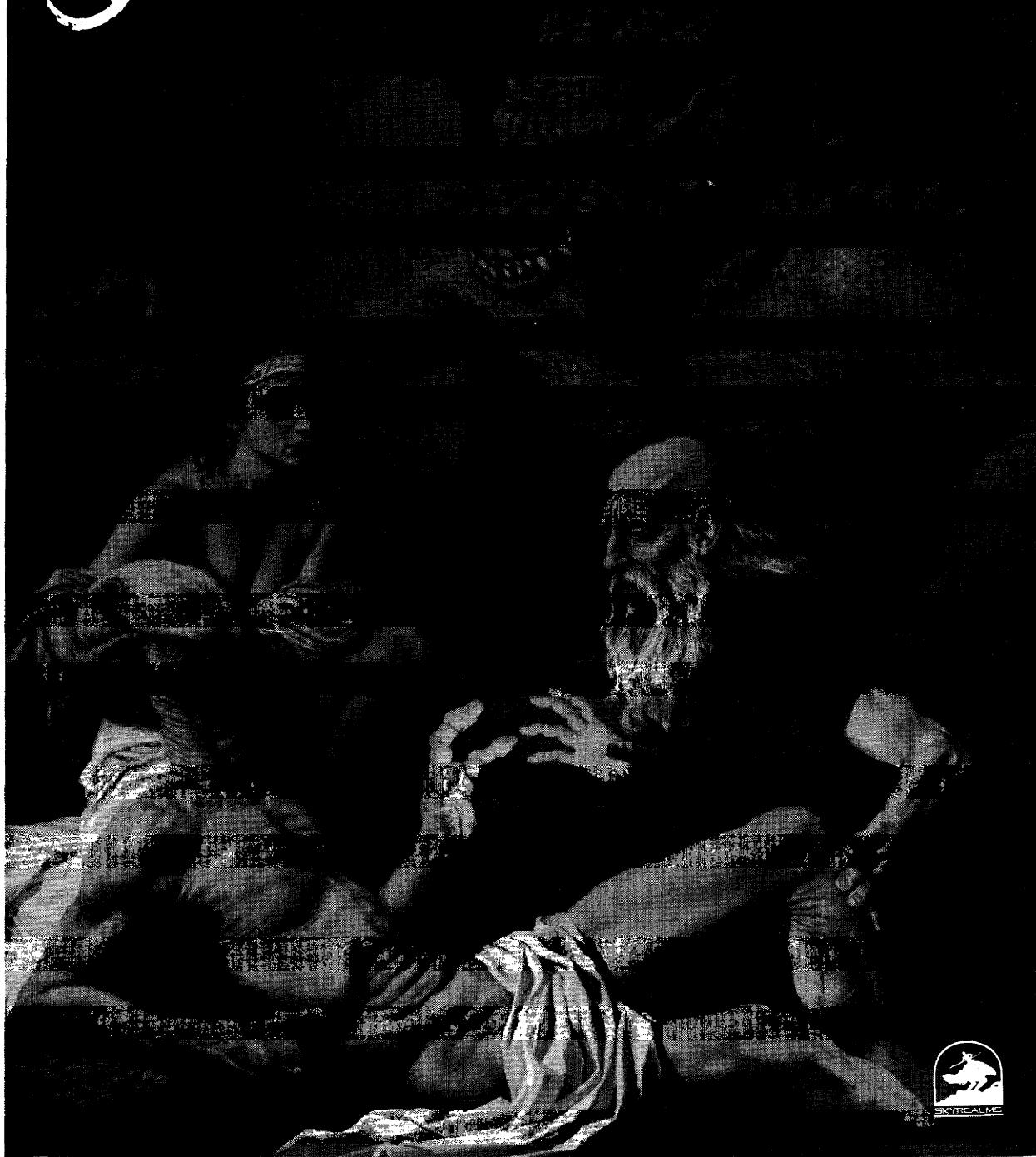
## COMING RETRACTIONS. . .

In DRAGON® Magazine #99, we proudly announced the impending release of the PROTON FIRE™ Robot Role-Playing Game, both in this column and with an article in the AREST™ Section.

Well, it didn't happen, folks. The truth is that after the original information was prepared and printed, we decided there wasn't a big market for a stand-alone robot game—so instead, we're re-packaging it as a STAR FRONTIERS® game accessory. That way, your STAR FRONTIERS game will be enhanced with new options, and the fascinating works of PROTON FIRE will expand the Frontier Universe!

Watch this space for news as it develops!

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**LEAVE YOUR WORLD BEHIND**

## *Update from the chief*

(From page 8)

which are based on coincidence and speculation — mixed, I believe, with ignorance, prejudice, and the cynical desire of certain individuals for publicity — the news media pick up such stories and publish them with lurid headlines to catch the eye, with refutation of the whole mess buried within the piece or carried on page 47 of the umpteenth section a week later.

This is brought up again, for it puts pressure on you, the ones who understand and enjoy the pursuit of gaming, to defend your choices and justify what you like to do. If you are in a situation which would benefit from TSR assistance, get in touch with Dieter Sturm, Director of Public Relations, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. Dieter has pro-gaming material useful for preparing presentations to groups questioning the hobby.

Having said my piece, it is time for me to get back to work on the stack of projects before me. No . . . Kindly Editor . . . don't use the whip again, please! I promise to make my deadlines — honest!



**THE CHIEF**

(From page 6)

all get easier to do. And, for the most part, more realistic and more enjoyable, too.

No, I don't believe in going by the book and I think Mr. Gygax may have sent out that article he wrote too hastily. Instead, maybe he should have let it sit overnight and re-read it the next morning. It's more than likely he wrote it when something was irritating him, and thus, he should be forgiven. The Dungeon Masters Guide clearly tells us that it is to be used as *guidelines to aid the referee*.

There are plenty of dungeon masters who can carry out a legitimate campaign. What's legitimate? Anything is legitimate. Some people like going up four levels in a one-hour session. That's fine for them. Don't spoil their fun by telling them that they aren't adhering to the "true spirit" or the "right way" of gaming. Not that I endorse this type of gaming. My guys have been playing in my current campaign for six months and they're only about third level and they love it. Believe it or not, Monty Haul campaigns are legitimate as long as the players *like* it. It is not fair to use the word "degenerate" in reference to someone's Monty Haul campaign when the players are loving every minute of it.

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When players don't like it, that is another story. I really feel sorry for those players afflicted with the sadistic dungeon master syndrome. If you've got one of those dungeon masters around, tell them to go fly a lurker above. Then go find a decent one. It's people like that who give the game a bad name. I once almost clobbered a clerk when I went to buy a module. I placed the module, along with my \$5.50, on the counter. He proceeded to tell me what a great dungeon it was and how he'd already killed three parties in only two weeks. Needless to say, I told him what kind of dungeon master he must be, watched his incredulous expression, and left.

All you dungeon masters guilty of this sort of thing: *Stop*. You don't have to kill your players' characters to prove how good you are. Any Tom, Dick, or Harry can kill a character. You have to show your players a good time and help them enjoy playing with you. Don't have them throwing dice, screaming, yelling, arguing, and stomping out your back door in fits of rage. If you show them a good time you won't have to get them to play. Instead you'll be fending them off for lack of adventures.

Jim Ayotte  
Southwick, Mass.

\* \* \* \*

After reading #98 and seeing the following quotes, I feel moved to comment.

"Adventurers should give dragons a healthy degree of respect." — Roger Moore

"The largest and oldest dragons are tougher, and they provide an even greater

challenge to high-level characters . . ." — Leonard Carpenter

I agree, but even mid-level (7-11) AD&D® game characters go dragon hunting. Where are the wyrms of fairy tales, the great dragons who once commanded fear and respect?

Glad you asked. Answer — in the D&D® game system, specifically the Companion Set. Parties of 20th, 25th, and even 30th level hear tales of big dragons with incredible hoards — and go elsewhere, to save their skins! Doubt me? Picture this:

The seven 25th-level characters are all invisible, flying, wearing +5 everything, and carrying the mightiest weapons known to man. They cautiously proceed up a mountainside, toward the dragon's reputed lair. Suddenly and soundlessly, gliding over the sprawling arms of the mountain on the gusty air currents, a great red dragon appears. In mere seconds, it swoops down, picks up three victims — one in each claw, and one hapless soul in its jaws — and flies on, disappearing over the next ridge.

The survivors know that a single breath from the beast may inflict over 150 points of damage. Thus, though still well-equipped, they quickly retreat towards town for as many reinforcements as they can gather. But the dragon returns after its short snack, much sooner than expected. The characters spot it coming, this time, and prepare . . . but there is not enough time. A vast winged fury, the beast breathes as it swoops in. As it hovers briefly, it kicks over two characters with its rear feet, knocks another head over heels with its great tail (disarming him in the process), and adds the usual attacks from bite and claws. End of round one.

In round two, the beast lands squarely on the cleric, crushing her. Though the two victims of the kicks are fleeing, now 60 feet away, the dragon lashes out at them with its wings, buffeting the victims soundly and stunning them. It then looks around, deciding which to eat first, and gets ready to breathe again, to have a nice hot meal... but that's enough of this sad tale.

They're not indestructible, but they are powerful. Woe to the unwary traveler, who heeds not the tales of the great wyrms of the far mountains. And it is lucky that the dragons avoid the cities of man, knowing full well the inherent danger of that species, hazardous even for them. Let us hope that they continue to live far away, out of the reach of all but the bravest and most powerful of adventurers.

The new, revised D&D game — it's not just for kids.

Frank Mentzer  
Lake Geneva, Wis.

## Write on!

Got a question about an article? A subject you'd like us to cover — or not cover? What do you think of the magazine you're reading? Drop us a line at "Letters," P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147. We'll read every letter we get, and we'll select certain letters of general interest for publication — maybe even yours!

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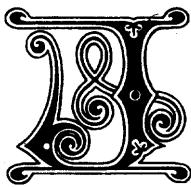
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JARL STRUCK AT THE GREAT WOLF attacking Kye, but his attack was hurried and ill-aimed, doing little damage. The wolf jumped at him, its mouth open and red-dripping from Kye's blood. Jarl was off-balance from his fumbled strike and could not defend himself, but Diann's bow hummed in his ear, and one of her grey arrows met the wolf in mid-spring. A muffled thump told him that Leas's staff had struck one of the other wolves. Given the moment he needed to regain a firm grip on his weapon, Jarl impaled the next wolf on his broadsword. Diann reached for another arrow. There was no time to count the grey shadowy forms that merged with the blacker shadows of the great trees.

Leas was knocked to the ground, but amazingly she drove the end of her staff into the open, slobbering mouth of a wolf as large as she was herself. Diann sent an arrow into its grey side, giving Leas a chance to get to her feet. Jarl neatly divided the skull of the wolf nearest him, but not before its teeth had torn open a long gash in his leg.

Kye, having gathered his concentration, reached out his hands toward the fire, one arm flowing with blood, horribly rent. In answer to his spell, the flames rose higher, a fire formed of magic. Soon the clearing was brightly lit. The four remaining wolves revealed by the light of that suddenly leaping fire hesitated, but they did so for only a' moment before attacking again. Fire or no, they had tasted blood. Leas knocked out the eye of a wolf leaping for Kye, beside her, but he did not notice — he saw only the dancing flames formed by his will. Diann shot too fast and her arrow missed, flying out into the heavy trees, but Jarl's blade shown in a bright half-circle and another wolf fell, a great gash open just below its ribcage. He reversed the momentum of his blow to shear off the foreleg of the third wolf. As he turned to deal with the last one, Leas's staff came down on its back, accompanied by the crunching sound of broken bones.

Then, there was nothing but quiet and the small sounds of the flames. Jarl hurriedly added logs to the fire, building a true blaze to replace the summoned one that Kye could not maintain. Leas ignored her own scratches to grasp Kye's arm at the proper place to slow the flowing blood. She fumbled one-handedly for the medicines in her pouch. Jarl moved to help, but fell to the ground when he tried to put weight on his wounded leg.

Diann watched the darkness, with an arrow ready in her bow, as Leas bound Kye's arm. None of them spoke.

"Are you hurt? Do you need help?" a voice called out of the darkness under a large tree.

Jarl regained his feet, forcing his wounded leg to support him by will alone. He saw Leas reach for her staff after first tieing the last knot in Kye's bandage. Jarl and Leas watched the stranger moving toward them, but Diann watched the woods with a roving glance to all places except where he drew their attention.

"I heard wolves and thought you might need help," he slowly walked toward them, "for not many know the woods as well as I." He stopped, almost in mid-step, some emotion showing on his face. "But I do not come where I am not welcome. If you would not bid me to your fire, I

# And Adventuring To . . .

by Brenda Gates Spielman

*Illustrations by Jerry Eaton*

will leave."

Jarl hesitated, knowing his fear-dried throat could not produce words, but he heard Leas answer. She spoke clearly the word of Denial in a language that she usually only whispered. Jarl looked at her with a question on his face.

"The protective circle that I traced around our camp this evening lies directly beneath the half-step that he did not take," she answered.

The stranger's face writhed in anger, making him appear wolflike. He moved as if to come forward, but he was unable to cross the circle. With a snarl for Leas that was more than wolflike, he turned, perhaps walking on four legs rather than two before he completely disappeared.

Kye, Diann, and Jarl looked at each other with shocked eyes as they waited for sunrise. Adventure was turning out to be much different from what they had thought it would be.

**B**ecause they were young and confident that only other people died, and because they had knowledge but practically no wisdom, they had strode together in an early dawn with their backs firmly to their home village and their faces eager for adventure. Two were fighters; one, with half truth, claimed to be a magician. (The whole truth would have required the word *apprentice*.) The fourth made no claims.

Jarl was leaving because he was tired of being the baby brother; Diann, because she was a fighter in a village where most women were wives. Kye had declared that a farming village in a rural land was too poor a setting for a sophisticate like himself, but Leas would not say why she went, except that the first three would need someone to put their pieces back together again if ever they found the adventure they craved.

Diann's father watched their leaving with approval. Though he was content enough to retire in the village, he had never adopted village ways. Diann was his child and of his training. It seemed proper to him for her to seek adventure. Kye's father watched unhappily. He had told Kye that he would find the rest of the world a bad place and that he really should stay home. Kye did not listen. Leas was given a sedate good-bye from two of the novices of the healing order that had taught and raised her, a foundling child with no name. The layleader herself also came to bid farewell to her most promising pupil. But Jarl's family did not yet know of his going — he left a letter to be found long after no older brother or weeping mother could catch him.

Jarl watched Diann striding along. He envied her woods skills. He had traveled the woods with her before, hunting wolves that the harsh winter had driven into village fields that they normally avoided. At first, he had felt distaste for a woman wielding weaponry, but he had gone because he wished to hunt beside her father and to learn from him. A winter of hunting had changed his mind, and he now accepted her uncanny ability with a bow. Perhaps he accepted it easier because he knew that his strength made him better with a sword. And in turn, she did not

stand aloof from him, as she did the other warriors, after he started taking it for granted that she would do her share of the killing.

They had met Leas during the winter on visits to the house of healing to have various wolf bites treated. Jarl had liked her from the first, even though her secretive nature made it difficult to truly get to know her. Diann had brought Kye into their group, although Jarl still did not know why she liked him. He was too boastful for Jarl's taste, always bragging of the magic dagger left him by his godfather, the Wizard. Jarl doubted both the magic and the Wizard.

Then spring had come, and the village had seemed to grow smaller, offering nothing new to attempt, no experience not dulled by repetition. So, one morning they left, firm of step and light of heart, striding down ways bordered by tame woods and timid creatures. But Man was still only in enclaves, and soon they left the bounds of the land that had been ordered. The woods were no longer mild, and the animals were far from timid.

**S**unrise chased away many of the shadows and dispelled much of the fear that had fed on night. As it became light, Kye slipped into a doze while Leas applied herbs to his wound. Under her calm gaze, the rents in his flesh lessened, grew together, but slowly. He was worse hurt than Jarl had been, and Leas's spells worked less well.

At first, Jarl and Diann believed the man in the darkness to be a product of their overwrought imaginations, but his footprints had been clear enough even to Jarl, who had been trained only in the formal duel fighting of the royal court into which his mother had hoped to gain him entry rather than in the practical survival lore of Diann's schooling. He and Diann traced the prints to the edge of the clearing where they had camped, but neither one of them wanted to venture into the shadows beneath the trees.

The two of them skinned five of the wolves as Leas got Kye ready to travel. They left the rest unskinned rather than wait any longer than was needed for Kye. They wished to be far from that place when another night arrived.

Jarl walked beside Leas. "Why didn't you tell us that you knew how to use your walking staff as a quarter-staff?"

"You didn't ask." She shrugged.

"You should have told us without being asked. It is important for the ordering of the group."

"Well, you know now." She smiled at him. Jarl shook his head and sighed.

The trail that they had been following became clearer, more well defined. At dusk they decided not to camp, but to push on to the village that they felt should be near. The path was too well worn to have been made by chance travelers. Men passed this way often. And even if they were wrong, none of them had any desire to sleep beneath those trees again.

Full dark had fallen before they reached the log palisade around the village, and at first the guards were loath to open the gates to admit them, but they changed their

minds when they saw the five wolf skins tied to the packs. The village had suffered much from wolves of late.

The four found themselves the center of approval that extended to a meal in the local tavern, and the terrors of the night before faded in the friendly glow of the fire. In fact, by the third (or perhaps fourth) drink they were feeling quite the hardened adventurers.

**T**he small man indicating the pile of wolf skins, said, "A worthy deed, I must say. But not as great as you are capable of, I am sure."

"Well, perhaps," Jarl pointed to an empty seat in invitation and waited for the man to continue, for he clearly had a purpose.

"My brothers and I" — he pointed to three other men sitting around another table — "have traveled from our farm three days' journey away seeking a solution to a problem, and we believe you could help. It would be well worth your time, for it is a matter of gold."

The man continued, well aware that he now had their full attention. "My father was a strong man, and he ruled us all. When we were young and mother was still alive, things were well. He built a fine house, and we had all our wants filled. But slowly in the years following her death, he grew to find it harder and harder to part with gold. We endured it though, for he wed late and was an old man. When he finally died, we buried him decently and counted his hoard. There was ample for all the improvements we wished to make and still leave a reserve. But the first time we spent his gold, his body came out of his tomb in the night and howled about the yard, trying to get into the house. It has been the same for two years now. Every time we spend any gold, his body walks. During the day we cannot enter his tomb, and during the night we dare not leave the house.

"In desperation we sent for a cleric. No matter how distasteful it was to so treat one who was once our father, we knew that he had to be sent away. But the cleric failed, and he was so badly mauled by the Undead that he refused to try again. Finally we decided to come to the town, and at great cost consulted a dreamer-of-dreams.

"She told us that our dead father's unlikely powers came from an amulet—that he took to wearing in his latter years. (He made us swear to bury him in it, saying it was once our mother's, curse him.) She said that it was a strange and ancient thing out of the distant east, but that its power would end if we removed it from around the corpse's neck.

"He is, after all, our father, and it is not in us to fight him, even though he be dead. But we would willingly give you reward if you were to remove the amulet for us."

"I think it is more fear than filial regard that stays their hand." Diann whispered to Kye. But Jarl had heard it all the same.

"Likely, but we could use silver, and he offers gold."

Kye's reply was true enough Jarl thought as he answered the man. "Gold and adventure are each hard to resist, and both together even harder; but, when speaking of reward, it is best of talk of hard figures so that disagreements do not later arise between friends."

"This is an evil that must be ended, gold or not," Leas chided him gently. But Jarl did not listen to her. He was too busy dickering.

**T**he farm house was of sturdy stone with stout wooden door and shutters, for it was on the very borders of this enclave of Man and needed such protection. The tomb was well back from the house and was built into a cave on the hill above. As the brothers claimed, the tomb could not be opened.

Kye, at Jarl's suggestion, attempted to open the tomb. With many theatrics, some of which were only for show to impress the brothers, he tried to raise the door of the crypt.

"I have tried all the spells of opening I know," Kye finally announced to the watching brothers, "and I am unable to force an entry. Your father indeed has strong protections. We shall have to fight him to remove the curse."

Jarl stared intently at the door, as if studying it, but the muscles of his face twitched slightly as he fought a smile.

"Kye knows but one opening spell, and that is good only against locks not the least bit magic." Diann whispered tartly in Jarl's ear.

"Yes, but the more difficult they believe our task, the more willingly they will pay us afterwards. And the full amount owed."

Diann looked at Jarl with sudden understanding in her eyes. "Well, court training might be of some use after all."

"If we can't get into the tomb, we shall have to lure the weird out." Jarl leaned against a tree at the edge of the clearing as the four of them discussed tactics.

"That will be easy enough," Diann added as she sat on top of a small boulder, "just have the brothers spend some gold."

"And what will we do after we get the Undead out?" Kye asked in a small voice.

"Attack it from a distance, of course," Diann answered. "And when it's down, remove the amulet."

"Which leaves you out of it, Leas. Diann and I have bows and Kye has spells, but you have no distance weapon. Your part will come later, healing any hurts we take."

Leas did not look pleased at Jarl's words, but she said nothing.

**J**arl and Diann both stood silently to each side of the house, their still silhouettes blending with the tall shadows of the trees. Not so calmly, Kye waited farther back, near the edge of the clearing, trying to convince himself that his spells were more potent than they were. Diann, who had ordered their plan, would let him no closer because he had not yet learned to dull other's senses to his presence, and she said that his nervousness would cry, "ambush" if he were closer.

All three, even Kye, saw the figure of the Undead as it approached the house, for it glowed with unhealthy pale light much as some of the strange things that lived deep in caves. Diann shot first, as they had planned, because she

was best with the bow. Her arrow went deep into the Undead's side, but there was no reaction, no welling of blood.

Suddenly, Jarl realized what a mistake they had made. The being was already dead, what more could arrows do to it? The creature began to wail, even as their second and third arrows entered its body. Jarl dropped his useless bow to pick up his shield and draw his sword. He closed with the Undead to try to sever the chain that supported the amulet. He could see Kye standing tense, concentrating. But whatever spell he was trying had no effect on the Undead. Diann, too, drew her sword, but Jarl was ahead of her and reached the creature first. It turned to face him, and the shriek coming from its open mouth struck him like a physical force. It was so painful that his blow was weak, only shearing unwholesome skin from a decaying side. Diann's blow was better aimed and carved into the decaying flesh of the weird's neck. But, although the blow was strong and fell fully on the chain, it was unmarked.

"Well," thought Jarl, "If we can't cut the chain, we'll have to cut off the head."

The body, shrieks rising even higher in tone, drew its burial sword. Diann was in the full force of the shriek. She fell as if stunned, but Jarl intercepted the blow meant for her. Kye ran to pull her aside from under the Undead's upraised sword. Jarl cursed that the sons had buried their father so proudly, for the sword was of true steel and well forged unlike most burial swords that were merely for show. The Undead was slower than Jarl, but stronger and with better steel in his blade. Slowly, Jarl was being forced to merely defend.

Kye attacked with his long magician's knife from the side. The knife went in deeply, piercing the heart. But that heart had stopped functioning long before, so it did no harm to the weird. Kye was thrown aside, smears of undead flesh clinging to him as he fell hard to the ground, stunned. Jarl fought panic as well as the Undead, for he knew that he was overmatched by the demonic strength of the weird.

The Undead's wail rose again, and Jarl cowered behind his shield, as if the sound were a physical thing that the shield could stop. Then the creature faltered, held immobile and silent for a mere second that seemed endless. Suddenly, it turned and went toward its tomb in a lumbering run.

Jarl saw Diann rise unsteadily and go after it. Kye followed her up the hill, bent to one side from the pain of broken ribs. Jarl ran too, but dazed and slowly.

"Try to cut the chain," he called to Kye, wishing that he

really did believe the magician's knife to be magical and thus able to cut enchanted metal.

When Jarl reached the tomb, Diann was on the ground, unmoving and deeply unconscious or dead. Kye was kneeling beside her. Leas stood in the open door of the crypt. She wore the long formal robes of her order, and amid lit candles she had just completed the chant *Unevil*. She stood now denying entry. Tension bent the air between her and the weird. There was a feeling of something about to break. Leas was pale, trembling. Clearly her strength was overmatched, and she had reached the edge of defeat. Kye ran forward. He brought his long knife down on the weird's neck. The blow sundered not already dead flesh, but the chain holding the amulet. As the charm fell, so did the mouldering body that was no longer forced to unlif.

Jarl sat down on the ground, gasping for breath. He heard Kye muttering, "Well, what do you know, it really is magical."

In the late morning the brothers began to re-tomb the decayed corpse of their father as Kye, Jarl, and Diann looked on. Kye moved stiffly, his ribs tightly bandaged. Diann was foul of temper, and Jarl assumed that her head hurt as badly as his did.

"It seems to me that, for all the gold we promised for such a small job, you should have re-buried him too." The elder brother was not joyed at the task lying before him.

"Small job?" Jarl questioned in a silky voice.

"Yes, small," the younger brother entered the debate. "You would have eight months wages for one night's work. It seems an unreasonable thing."

"If you doubt the worth of our work, we could always replace this, and let you try yourselves how difficult it was." Jarl lightly swung the amulet by its broken chain.

The elder brother started counting out gold pieces.

At the foot of the hill, Leas was waiting with their belongings neatly packed and ready to travel.

"Now that you have our payment, we had best leave," she suggested as she deftly snagged the amulet Jarl was still swinging. "I have a longing to travel into the sun for a time today."

Jarl picked up his pack and moved to walk beside Leas. As soon as his head stopped hurting, he had more than a few things to say to her about letting the group know what she was planning. But not until the pounding in his head stopped.

The sun in their faces made their shadows long behind them as they walked.

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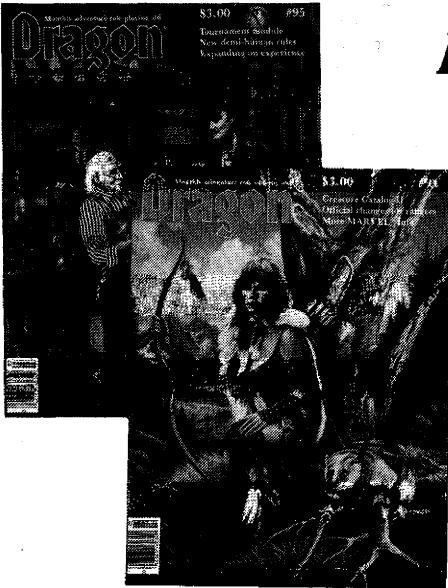
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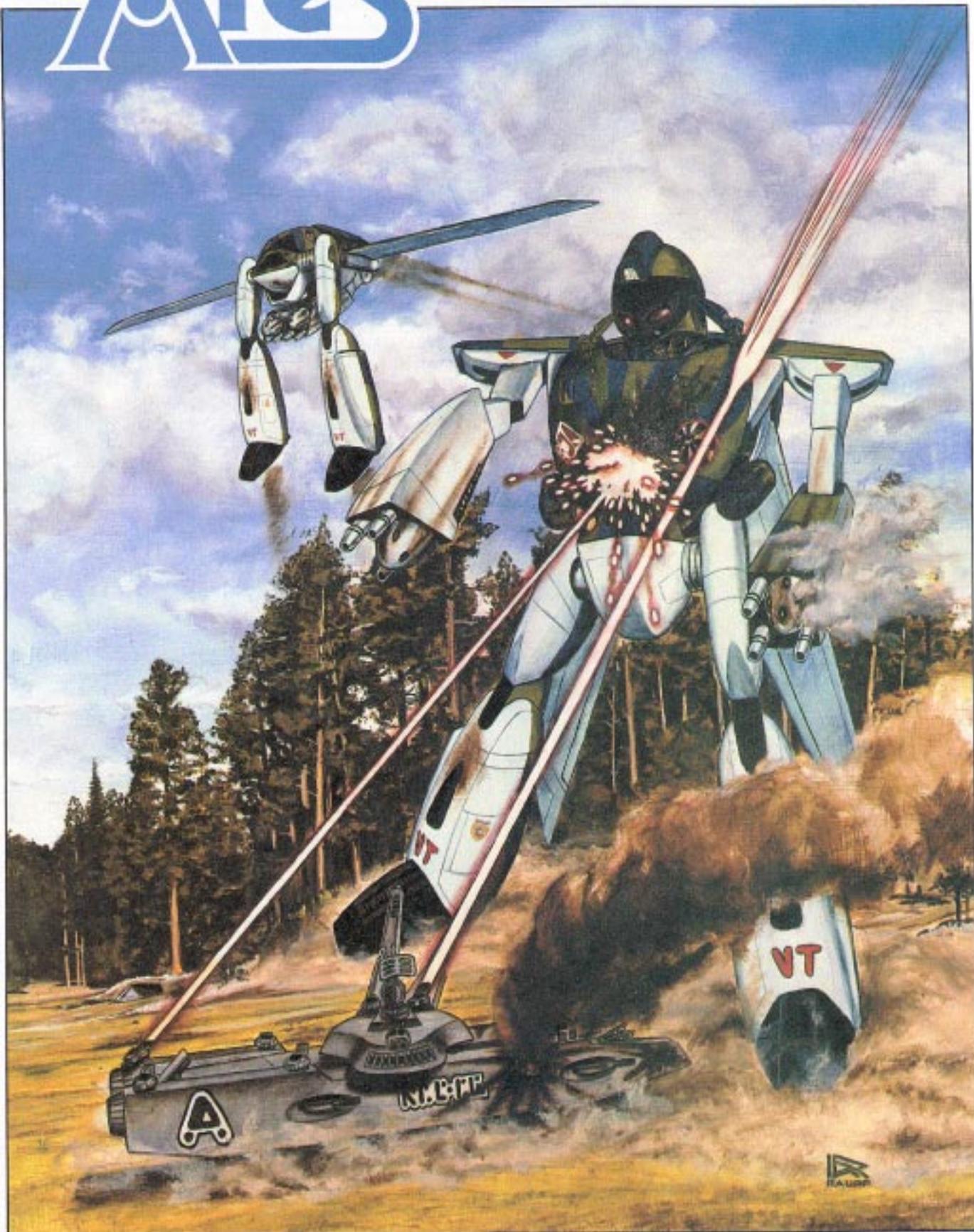
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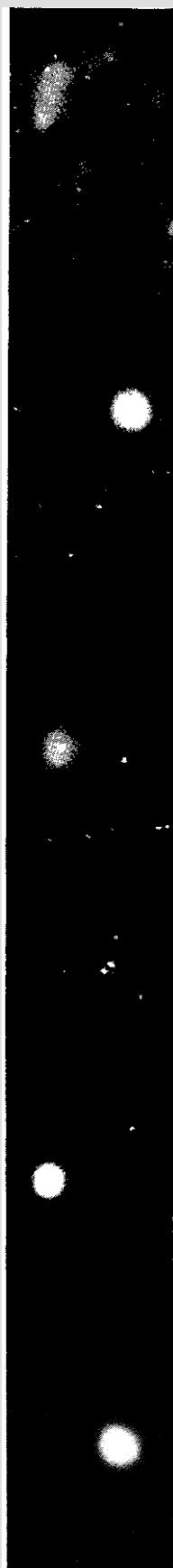
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The clergy in TRAVELLER® gaming


**ON THE COVER**

Ever want to play kickball with a Death Machine? Then turn to the article on the Man-Machines and see what Gamma Buddies Jim Ward and Roger Raupp have cooked up for you! Art by Roger Raupp.



For some reason, I feel wonderful today. We've got a hot selection of material this issue, including my favorite Marvel Universe" couple, but there's something moore going on. . . .

Anyway, the response to "Tanks a lot!" (DRAGON® issue #99) was very strong. We may cover mounting vehicle weapons on robots or in buildings in a future article. Several readers discovered that the table headings at the bottom of p. 72 should have read "screen cost (Cr)" and "spaces" in the fourth and fifth columns, respectively. "Spaces" refers to the number of weapon spaces that may be mounted on the vehicle, with or without turrets.

One of the projects we are considering for publication in this section are mass-combat rules for the STAR FRONTIERS® game. Squads of Star Law Rangers could then go toe-to-toe with the Sathar, pirate raiders, and corporate mercenaries in table-top combat, linked with the regular rules system. If this sounds good to you, read the article on the following page and send us your mail.

This editorial will be a short one. If you have any suggestions for future articles for the ARESTM Section, write in and let us know: ARES Section, DRAGON Magazine, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

Cheers!

 ARESTM Section 101  
 THE SCIENCE-FICTION GAMING SECTION

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# STARSHIPS AND STAR SOLDIERS

## MINIATURES IN SCIENCE-FICTION GAMING

by Roger E. Moore



How popular is science-fiction miniatures gaming? What rule systems do gamers prefer for such battles? What special problems do miniatures gamers encounter when running science-fiction events, and how can they be cured? Now that TSR's BATTLESYSTEM™ and Citadel's Warhammer rules for fantasy warfare have been released, it's time that science-fiction miniatures gaming received its fair share of attention, too.

Probably the most popular science-fiction miniatures games are the starship vs. starship games like the STAR FRONTIERS® Knight Hawks or Star Fleet Battles systems. At last year's GEN CON® 17 convention, several massive fleet actions were run using computers to keep track of the fighting. Aside from ship battles, land actions with laser-toting infantry and occasional tank-vs.-tank events (sometimes using vehicles and rules from the OGRE® game) also made their appearance. (Though Steve Jackson Games has no official OGRE miniatures rules, they are rumored to be working on them.)

### Land warfare

The majority of gamers use infantry miniatures for land battles of small size, minor skirmishes, barroom shoot-ups, and shipboard hijacking attempts. The terrain may be casually marked with a few poker chips and scraps of paper, or it may be laid out on a detailed map grid showing building or starship interiors.

Miniatures games of this scale are easy to run because of the low number of combatants. Rules to handle such battles are usually included with any science-fiction role-playing system, such as the STAR FRONTIERS, GAMMA WORLD®, TRAVELLER®, SPACE OPERA™, STAR TREK®, and STAR ACETM games, but such rules don't always lend themselves to battles involving battalion-sized units. Some of the miniatures games that were designed for larger unit actions are given below.

*Combat 3000*, by Richard Halliwell and Richard Priestly; Tabletop Games (U.K.), 1979. One supplement, *Combat 3001*, is available.

*Final Frontier*; Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc., 1980.

*Galactic Grenadier*; Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc., 1980.

*Laserburn*, by Bryan Ansell; Tabletop Games (U.K.), 1980. Supplements include *Advanced Laserburn*, *Robot*, *Imperial Commander*, and *Forces of the Imperium*. This system is a combination of miniatures rules and role-playing.

MAATAC; Superior Models, Inc. These are tank-battle rules.

*Snapshot*, by Marc W. Miller; Game Designers' Workshop, 1983. This system connects with the TRAVELLER game system, and it specifically concerns shipboard combat.

*Spacefarers*, by Andy Murkin and Nick Henfrey; Games Workshop, Ltd. (U.K.), 1981.

*Space Marines*, by A. Mark Ratner; Fantasy Games Unlimited, 1980 (previously by FanTac Games, 1977). This system connects with the SPACE OPERA role-playing game.

*Star Force 300*, by Bob Connor; Tabletop Games (U.K.), 1980. These are rules for tank battle scenarios.

*Starguard*, by Michael Scott Kurtick and John McEwan; McEwan Miniatures, 1974. *Orilla* is the only supplement to these rules.

*Striker*, by Frank Chadwick; Game Designers' Workshop, 1981. This game is associated with the TRAVELLER role-playing game. TRAVELLER Adventure 7, *Broadsword*, contains *Striker* gaming information.

*Strike Team Alpha*, by Michael Scott Kurtick; Gamescience, 1978. This game is connected to the *Star Patrol* role-playing game.

As noted earlier, the OGRE game is often seen converted to a tabletop miniatures system, though (to my knowledge) no miniatures conversion system has been published for it. Other boardgames that would probably work well in a miniatures games format include Avalon Hill's *Starship Troopers*, Steve Jackson's G.E.V.® and *Battlesuit*, Close Simulation's *Hovertank*, Dwarfstar's *Grav Armor*, and SPI's STARSOLDIER™ games.

### Space wars

Starship-vs.-starship rules are generally more popular than infantry-combat games. A number of starship combat systems are designed to be played either on hex-gridded maps with paper counters or on ungridded surfaces with starship miniatures on stands. A few of the space combat games are given below.

*Encounter One*, by P. Brough and M. Booth; Tabletop Games and Starfleet Studies (U.K.), 1983.

*Star Fleet Battle Manual*, by Lou Zocchi and Michael Scott Kurtick; Gamescience, 1982.

*Star Fleet Battles*; Task Force Games, 1979.

*Starfleet Wars*; Superior Models, Inc.

STAR FRONTIERS Knight Hawks game, by Douglas Niles; TSR, Inc., 1983. Rules for miniatures battles (by Carl Smith) are included in the boxes of starship miniatures for the game.

*Starhound*, by M. Booth and P. Brough; Tabletop Games and Starfleet Studies (U.K.), 1981.

A number of starship-combat board games may be converted to miniatures systems without great effort. Task Force Games' Starfire and GDW's Mayday systems would do well, and a few of the old SPI games (i.e., the DELTAVEET™ game) might also work in miniatures formats.

### Feedback

How many ARES™ Section readers are interested in science-fiction miniatures gaming? We'd appreciate hearing from those who are. In particular, we'd like to know the following:

What science-fiction miniatures rule systems do you use? Which rule systems do you feel are the best (or worst), and why?

What miniatures scale do you prefer using: 15mm or 25mm? Do you prefer using cardboard counters or lead figures?

What particular problems have you encountered with miniatures gaming? How have you solved them?

Would you like to see a infantry-combat system designed for use with the STAR FRONTIERS game? Would you like to see more information on running Knight Hawks space battles?

Would you like to see more articles on science-fiction miniatures games in the ARES Section? If so, which games would you like to see covered?

Send your letters to the ARES Section, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.



# Sorry, Wrong Dimension!

*Dimensional travel for super-powered gaming*

© 1985 by Mike Manolakes

Cross-dimensional escapades are a recurring adventuring theme in comic books, and they open up infinite possibilities for the game master in a super-powered hero role-playing campaign. In the comics, the supposition is that our entire universe is but one of a limitless number of alternate universes or dimensions in the Multiverse. Many of these dimensions are startlingly different from ours, and many are so similar that they contain parallel Earths — worlds nearly identical to our own.

Each campaign also has one dimension that we will call the base-line dimension, the home of the player characters. In Marvel Comics, the base-line is often called the Marvel Universe™, but there are also universes such as the Negative Zone™, an antimatter dimension where the laws of science vary significantly, and alternate universes in which groups like the Guardians of the Galaxy™ and the Squadron Supreme™ exist. The base-line dimension in DC Comics is called Earth-1™, but its heroes have discovered a host of parallel dimensions with such designations as Earth-2™, Earth-X™, Earth-S™, and Earth-Prime™, in which you and I live.

Most heroic game systems allow for dimensional travel in various ways. In the VILLAINS AND VIGILANTESTM system, for example, a character can have dimensional *travel* as a power, or he might possess a dimensional-travel device. Also, a game master could create a dimensional warp as either a natural occurrence or an accidental side-effect of some malfunctioning machine. However it happens, a group of player characters might begin an adventure by leaving their base-line dimension. (Let's call that base-line universe Earth-Major.)

A group of dimensional travelers may or may not have a certain destination in mind when they begin such a trip; even if they do, they might arrive somewhere else instead. A character with the power

to travel through dimensions will have a certain chance to succeed, subject to various modifiers. A dimensional-travel device would probably have a better chance of getting characters to the correct dimension, depending on how reliable it's been in the past. (A newly invented device would have a greatly reduced chance for success.) If the party does wind up in the wrong dimension, the characters might realize their mistake at once — or they might not.

One method for designating different dimensions and determining their characteristics follows. In this system, every dimension is identified by a set of seven coordinates. Thus, our base-line dimension of Earth-Major could be given the coordinates of 7,7,7,7,7,1. Seven is a very useful number for the base-line dimension, as will become apparent. All of the tables below assume that the base-line universe has the particular dimensions given above.

Each coordinate in the dimensional designation refers to a different characteristic of the dimension. The closer any dimension's coordinate is to 7, the greater the similarity to Earth-Major in that characteristic. Here is what each of the coordinates refer to, calling each by one of the first seven letters of the alphabet.

Coordinate A: The first coordinate gives the rate of time passage in the dimension (Table 1). As this coordinate increases, the time flow of the new universe will be seven times slower compared to that of the home universe than at the previous lower level. If an adventurer from Earth-Major spends a week in a dimension with a coordinate A of 2 and then returns home, he may find only seconds have passed for his compatriots who stayed behind. Adventurers who tarry where coordinate A is 12 need to hurry home, lest they return to Earth-Major centuries after they left.

Coordinate B: This refers to the balance of science vs. magic (Table 2). In most comic-book universes, both the laws of science and the laws of magic coexist. Here in the real world, we are convinced of the infallibility of laws of science, but scoff at the possibility that magic exists as well. In some dimensions, wizards might routinely cast spells on a world where Newton's Laws often fail. The lower coordinate B is, the better the laws of magic work. The higher coordinate B is, the more reliable is science. For Earth-Major, coordinate B is 7 and both magic and science coexist, though one or the other might be more prominently used.

Coordinate C: This gives the technological (either science- or magic-based) level of the counterpart world to our current world (Table 3). If coordinate C is below 7, the world is more primitive than Earth; a value greater than 7 means it is more advanced. Of course, alien planets in an alternate dimension might have their own technological levels, just as they would in the base-line dimension.

Coordinate D: This describes the biology of the dominant life form on the counterpart world (Table 4). In a dimension with coordinate D at 7, the inhabitants on Earth-Major's counterpart would be human; at 6 or 8, they would look human but have minor biological differences. The further the coordinate gets from 7 in either direction, the greater the differences between the dominant life-form and humans (Table 4).

Coordinate E: This coordinate gives the balance between good and evil (Table 5). In the base-line universe, both heroes and villains exist in equal numbers, and coordinate E is 7. The higher this coordinate, the more virtuous its inhabitants, and the less familiarity they would have with the concept of evil. With a very low coordinate E, the inhabitants would be thoroughly nasty, and visiting heroes from Earth-Major would

have a hard time finding a friendly face.

Coordinate F: This coordinate refers to the likelihood of finding individuals who are analogous to each other on parallel worlds (Table 6). If Joe Smith from Earth-Major travels to another dimension that also has a coordinate F of 7, the odds are certain that somewhere on that world is another Joe Smith, even if he is a sword-swinging reptileman. If coordinate F is 9, the odds of finding another Joe Smith would be 75%. The further the coordinate is from 7, the more the random differences between universes mount up, until a visitor to a dimension with F at 12 can find almost no similarities at all to the world he left behind.

Coordinate G: Unlike the above coordinates, this one is merely a counting function. It is possible to have two dissimilar universes with the same first six coordinates, differing in numerous other ways. Coordinate G simply labels a universe with another number to keep the universes straight. All newly discovered universes with unique combinations of their first six coordinates should have a coordinate G of 1.

Using this system, it becomes easy to randomly create new dimensions. A game master will need to do this if dimensional travelers have mistakenly wandered into the wrong dimension, or perhaps he can use it to create the home dimension for some interdimensional villainous invader.

The game master rolls two six-sided dice for each of the first six coordinates, the sum of the two being the coordinate number. This generates a number from 2 to 12, with 7 being the most likely number rolled. This assumes that in cases where a dimension needs to be randomly chosen, it is likely that it would turn out to be similar to the baseline dimension in most of its characteris-

tics. If the game master wants the random dimension to be in the neighborhood of some other dimension, he can add or subtract an appropriate modifier to any of the coordinates.

Let's say that Earth-Major's mightiest hero, Cosmic Charlie, is going on an interdimensional vacation. Unfortunately, his dimensional travel device blows a fuse and sends him into a random dimension. The game master determines that Charlie has arrived in dimension 8,10,4,10,6,6,1. (Note that the last coordinate was not rolled.) Our hero will probably first realize he's in the wrong place when he sees that the local population is decidedly non-human (coordinate D) and somewhat backward, perhaps at a medieval technological level (coordinate C).

Since coordinate E is 6, the inhabitants of this dimension are slightly more evil than those Charlie's used to, but there's still a good chance he will find some heroic allies. But, if he needs to use his Mystic Flame Ring, Charlie will find that the magical item fails — coordinate B is 10, and magic has little power here. Luckily, Charlie's dimensional travel device is completely scientific in nature, and he is able to repair it and return home. On his return, he finds seven weeks have gone by at home, since his adventure took place in a dimension where time passes at a slower rate (coordinate A).

Instead of rolling up the first six coordinates for a new dimension, a game master might instead decide that an adventuring party was only slightly off course. He can randomly alter one of the coordinates (which itself can be randomly chosen on 1d6). If a party,

**Table 1: Rate of time passage**

A coord.	time spent in new dimension	time passed in home dimension
2	1 week	36 sec.
3	1 week	4 minutes
4	1 week	30 minutes
5	1 week	3 hours
6	1 week	1 day
7	1 week	1 week
8	1 week	7 weeks
9	1 week	11 months
10	1 week	6.5 years
11	1 week	46 years
12	1 week	323 years

**Table 2: Science and magic levels**

#### B coord. result

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 2-3   | Magic items always work, scientific devices always fail          |
| 4-5   | Magic items always work, scientific devices fail 60% of the time |
| 6-8   | Science and magic coexist and are equally reliable               |
| 9-10  | Scientific devices always work, magic items fail 60% of the time |
| 11-12 | Scientific devices always work, magical items always fail        |

The chance of failure is in addition to any chance for failure for the device or item written into the game rules.

heading home to Earth-Major, ends up instead in dimension 7,7,7,7,5,7,1, the characters might not notice right away that their friends and allies have suddenly turned ruthless and villainous.

Player characters who, by reason of their powers or abilities, are naturally familiar with the myriad dimensions of the Multiverse might be able to use this numerical system themselves. They could tell the GM, "Today I'll transport myself to dimension 3,2,7,4,5,12,2." Perhaps the numbers might even appear on the digital display on the dashboard of some interdimensional flivver. Of course, player characters without such familiarity with dimensional travel would not be able to identify other universes numerically. Whatever interdimensional travel they are involved in would then be done blindly.

One last point. The range of numbers from 2 to 12 for the coordinates is strictly for convenience, and in fact the range is not limited to these numbers. If a game master wishes, he can use a number greater than 12 or lower than 2, even negative numbers. But even if he sticks to the range of 2 to 12 for the first six coordinates, he still has 1,771,561 possible dimensions to explore! That should keep the player characters busy.

**Table 3: Technological level of Earth's counterparts**

#### C coord. status

2	No written languages, early agricultural systems
3	Iron weapons, complex number systems
4	Sailing ships, swords and armor
5	Gunpowder weapons, printing press
6	Steam engines, electricity
7	Air travel, telecommunications
8	Interplanetary travel, fusion power
9	Interstellar travel, most labor automated
10	Minor stellar empire, greatly extended lifespans
11	Instantaneous teleportation, telepathic communication common
12	Energy output of entire galaxy harnessed, planets and star systems reconstructed

In a magic-dominated dimension, these achievements would be magical in nature; for example, air travel may mean flying carpets are commonplace.

**Table 4: Biology of dominant life form**

D coord. result
7 Identical to humanity
6, 8 Impossible to tell from humans without a scientific examination (example: may have different blood chemistry)
5, 9 Minor differences in appearance from humans (examples: unusual skin color, pointed ears)
4, 10 Major differences in appearance from humans (examples: different number of eyes or limbs)
3, 11 Resembles some other Terran life-form (examples: intelligent apes, felines, reptiles, or ducks)
2, 12 Resembles no Terran life-form (examples: creatures of pure energy or silicon-based life)

**Table 5: Good and evil levels***E coord. result*

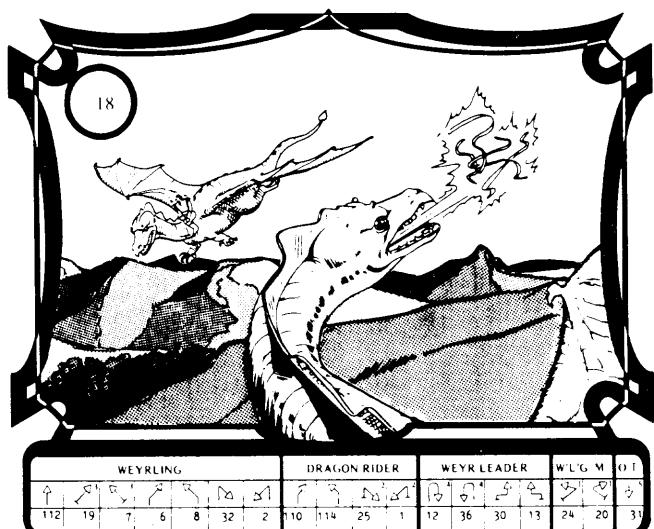
2 Culture entirely villainous; no chance of finding good characters
3 Culture is criminal; 5% chance of finding good characters
4 Culture is lawless; 10% chance of finding good characters
5 Culture is corrupt; 15% chance of finding good characters
6 Culture is somewhat cruel; 20% chance of finding good characters
7 Culture is mixed or neutral; 25% chance of finding either good or evil characters
8 Culture is somewhat virtuous; 20% chance of finding evil characters
9 Culture is moral; 15% chance of finding evil characters
10 Culture is peace-loving; 10% chance of finding evil characters
11 Culture is saintly; 5% chance of finding evil characters
12 Culture is innocent; no chance of finding evil characters

**Table 6: Similarity between dimensions***F coord. result*

7 Every individual has an analog in parallel dimension
6, 8 90% chance of finding an analog to any individual
5, 9 75% chance of finding an analog to any individual
4, 10 50% chance of finding an analog to any individual
3, 11 25% chance of finding an analog to any individual
2, 12 10% chance of finding an analog to any individual

If two dimensions contain parallel worlds, each individual in one dimension would have a twin, or analog, on the parallel world. Subject to the differences caused by the other five coordinates, the analogs would have similar names, appearances, occupations, dispositions, and histories. The higher the difference in F coordinates, the greater the dissimilarity between analogs and the less their chance of existing.

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# The MARVEL®-Phile

by Jeff Grubb

## Return to Asgard

A quick personal note: The editor of the ARESTM Section of the magazine probably won't mention it in his editorial, so I'll mention it here. Roger and his lovely wife Georgia are the proud parents of their first child, John Michael Moore, born July 19, 1985. (I liked the name Pinball Godzilla Ozone Moore myself, but only if it was a girl). Congratulations to the new parents! (Do I get paid, now, Roger?) [No.]

Well, on to business. Dylan Nor- mington, of Portland, Ore., and a vast host of others have put in votes to see Sif™ and Beta Ray Bill™. As Odin™ would say: **SO BE IT!**

### BETA RAY BILL™ Adventurer, hero to his people

Fighting: UNEARTHLY (100)

Agility: REMARKABLE (30)

Strength: UNEARTHLY (100)

Endurance: UNEARTHLY (100)

Reason: REMARKABLE (30)

Intuition: EXCELLENT (20)

Psyche: AMAZING (50)

Health: 330

Karma: 100

Resources: GOOD

Popularity: 30

#### Known powers:

**DENSE FLESH:** Bill's bio-engineered body provides him with Excellent body armor.

**STORM BREAKER:** Bill's hammer, crafted by Odin and the dwarves of Nidavellir, grants Bill several additional abilities. Like Mjolnir, the hammer of Thor™, Storm Breaker is a unique weapon made of Uru metal. The hammer has the following enchantments.

1. **Returning.** It may be thrown up to 10 areas and will return to Bill's hand the round after it is thrown.

2. **Weather Control.** The wielder of Storm Breaker has Unearthly control over weather, and is able to summon storms and strike opponents

with lightning bolts of Monstrous strength.

3. **Dimensional Travel.** By spinning the hammer in a certain fashion, Beta Ray Bill can span the dimensions, including the dimensions of Asgard and Olympus, and can use this power to span great distances of space as well. Bill does this with Unearthly ability.

4. **Flight.** By throwing his hammer and grabbing the thong, Bill can fly with Amazing speed while carrying as much as he can normally lift.

5. **Shield.** By spinning the hammer swiftly, Bill can deflect missiles, magical bolts, and energy beams of Remarkable strength or less.

6. **Alter Ego.** Bill's inhuman visage is the result of biogenetic changes made upon him by his race's scientists. Odin has passed on an enchantment from Thor's hammer that allows Bill to regain his original humanoid form. In this orange, noseless form, he has the following abilities:

F	A	S	E
Exce	Exce	Exce	Exce
R	I		P
Rema	Exce		Amaz
Health: 80		Karma: 100	

**SCUTTLEBUTT™:** Scuttlebutt is Bill's sentient starship and long-time companion. This huge warship may move at Class 1000 speed through space and is armed with numerous Unearthly-class blasters. Scuttlebutt has Incredible Reason, Incredible armor, and is self-repairing. The ship crashed on Earth while being pursued by his race's demonic enemies, but repaired itself within two days. It has since fought alongside Lady Sif and Beta Ray Bill in later battles.

**Beta Ray Bill's story:** Beta Ray Bill is a member of an ancient alien race that lived in a distant galaxy. Their civilization was destroyed by an explosion in the galactic core, and the survivors were forced to flee to a new home in ten thousand starships,

stored in cryogenic sleep. Bill was selected from among his people to serve as a guardian and protector of his people from a large field of contestants by means of grueling mental and physical tests. His leaders had him mutated and bio-engineered, giving him the genetic structure and traits of the fiercest carnivore in their former stellar empire. The result was a creature grotesque by the scientists' standards but powerful enough to serve aboard the stellar warship Scuttlebutt.

Bill's race set out for the stars, but were set upon by demons, agents of the lord of the Fire Giants, Surtur™, soon after leaving their homeworld. Bill and Scuttlebutt delayed the demonic hoards, allowing his people to escape. In catching up with his fleet, Bill and Scuttlebutt entered our solar system, where the ship was boarded by the mighty Thor on an investigative mission. Bill mistook Thor for one of his demonic foes and defeated the Thunder God when Thor had been without his hammer for one minute and unintentionally changed into Dr. Donald Blake. Damaged, Scuttlebutt crash-landed on Earth, and Bill discovered the power of Dr. Blake's cane (Mjolnir), transforming himself into a alien version of Thor. Being a worthy and noble champion, Bill was able to wield the hammer against attacking S.H.I.E.L.D.™ forces. However, Odin had need of Thor at that time, and he summoned the false Thor instead, thinking him to be his son.

Odin quickly realized his mistake and brought his true son to Asgard, where Thor regained his godlike form. Thor and Bill fought for the hammer Mjolnir in a battle to the death, and Bill won. But, though he defeated the Thunder God, Bill could not bring himself to slay his honorable opponent. In gratitude, Odin restored Mjolnir to Thor and, with the aid of the dwarves, crafted a second magical hammer, Storm



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Breaker. Odin enchanted it with powers similar to those of Mjolnir, and, in addition, moved the enchantment from Mjolnir to Storm Breaker that allowed Thor to become Dr. Blake. Storm Breaker's enchantment allowed Bill to regain his old humanoid form.

Bill has since left Asgard to guide his people to a new home, accompanied by the Lady Sif, and returned to aid in the defense of Earth against Surtur's demons in New York City. He has proven himself to be a noble and dedicated fighter on the level of the Thunder God himself.

#### SIF™ Warrior goddess of Asgard

Fighting: MONSTROUS (75)  
Agility: REMARKABLE (30)  
Strength: INCREDIBLE (40)  
Endurance: UNEARTHLY (100)  
Reason: GOOD (10)  
Intuition: INCREDIBLE (40)  
Psyche: AMAZING (50)

# 1986 Marvel Super Heroes™ Calendar



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Health: 245  
Karma: 100  
Resources: GOOD  
Popularity: 15

### Known powers:

**DENSE FLESH:** Like all Asgardians, Sif has Good body armor resulting from the density of her flesh. (She weighs 425 lbs.) In addition, she is immune to all terrestrial diseases.

**SWORDSMANSHIP:** Sif is among the greatest sword-wielders in Asgard, and receives an up-one shift when wielding a bladed weapon.

**ENCHANTED WEAPON:** Sif's normal weapon is a sword enchanted by Odin. She may inflict Incredible Hack & Slash damage with the weapon or Monstrous Sluggfest damage with the flat of the blade. In addition, by spinning the enchanted sword in a certain pattern, she may bridge the dimensions, allowing her to travel between Earth and Asgard with Unearthly ability, and to other dimensions with Good ability. (Fail-

ure to make the FEAT roll results in jumping to an undesired dimension or to another realm within the intended target dimension). The sword is made of Amazing-strength material.

Sif's story Sif is the sister of Heimdall™, the guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, and is the betrothed of the Thunder God, Thor. She was trained from an early age to be a Shield Maiden, and is now one of the most accomplished swordswomen in the realm, exceeded in skill only by Brunnhilda (Valkyri™, from DRAGON® issue #100).

Sif's dark hair is the result of the trickery of Loki™. Sif was a playmate of both Loki and Thor, but preferred Thor to his half-brother. In retribution, Loki cut Sif's golden hair off while she slept. To make amends, Loki went to the trolls to have them forge artificial hair of gold to replace the lost locks. The future god of mischief cheated the trolls of their payment, but the troll smiths had the last laugh; after Sif donned the hair and it began to grow normally, the tresses turned jet black. Sif was distressed by this turn of events, but has since learned to live with her ebony locks — though she now bears no love for Loki.

Though a playmate of Thor, Sif was separated from the Thunder God for some time as Thor adventured on Earth and in Asgard. The two met again following the end of Thor's relationship with Jane Foster and were soon pledged to marry. Thor's adventuring on and love of Earth (Midgard) postponed the marriage, and recent enchantments placed on the Thunder God by Lorelei™, the younger sister of the Enchantress™, has strained their relationship even further.

Sif, meanwhile, has found a close friend and companion in Beta Ray Bill, and fought beside the alien warrior in his battles against the demons threatening his people. She is very strongly attracted to Bill, and to some degree now understands Thor's previous affection for mortals. How the relationship between Sif, Beta Ray Bill, and Thor will develop remains to be seen.

**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

Basis HTH: 1d6

Power: 54

Movement: 42"

Det. Hidden: 10%

Det. Danger: 14%

Invent. Pts.: 1.2

Inventing: 36%

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Kali is  
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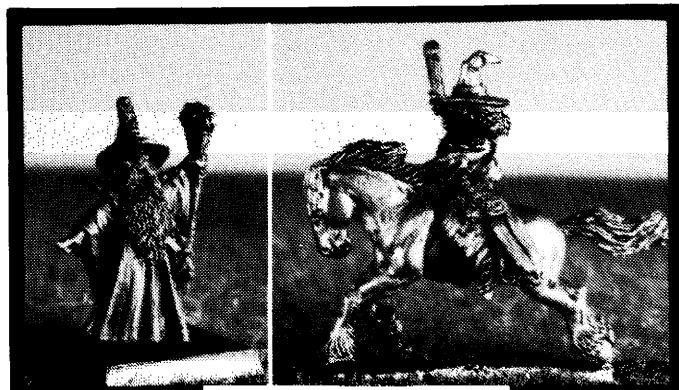


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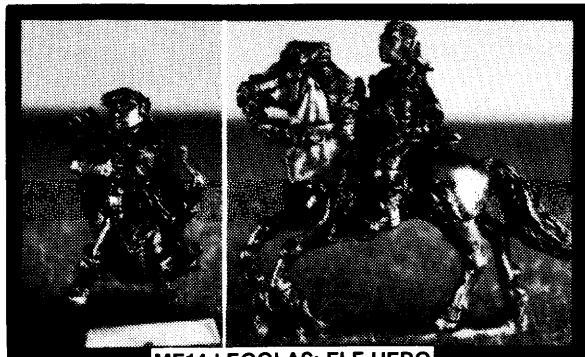
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# OUT OF THE SUN . . .

*The Man-Machines of GAMMA WORLD® gaming*

by James M. Ward and Roger Raupp

For over two hundred years, the Death Machine had faithfully guarded the entrance to the Redwood Underground Supply Depot. The machine took considerable cybernetic pride in having needed only its eight cryogenically cooled laser batteries to stop all opposition from getting within one kilometer of the base. Humans, smaller robots, and strange, unlikely animals had all fought the guardian, and all had died seconds after entering range of the lasers.

In all those years, the only damage the Death Machine had taken was from the purple flowers on the perimeter of the

depot's fence. Many years ago, the robot had trained its weapons on the flower patch to clear out its free-fire zone. With the first shot, the flowers had somehow fired back enough energy to strip the machine's energy screens a way and punch a hole a meter across through the machine's hull. The flowers ceased attacking the second the laser batteries were cut off — and the purple flowers were left alone from then on. The Death Machine needed a week in the repair shops to recover.

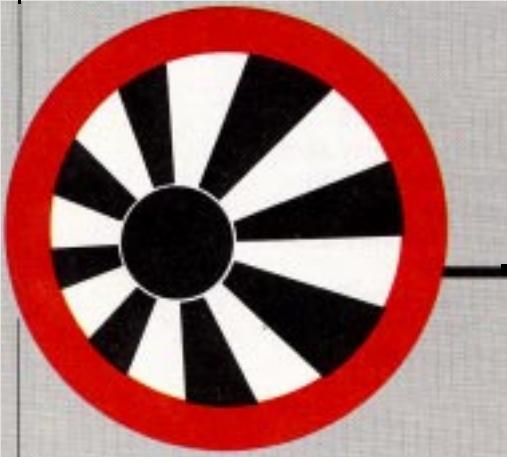
It was a bright, sunny day, and the Death Machine was tracking small birds with its trek guns for practice when its sensors detected two air units approaching, each equipped with a nuclear plant. Not willing to take any chances, the guardian brought all of its weapons to full power and readied itself for battle. The units reached the boundary of the 1500-meter free-fire zone — and the

Death Machine let them have it, its blaster cannons and laser batteries setting fire to the very air with their monstrous energies.

The enemy machines took direct hits and kept coming. The Death Machine rechecked its sensor readings and salvoed missile after howling missile in to the attackers . . . but they still kept coming.

The Death Machine backed away, firing every weapon it had. For the first time in its long, mechanized existence, the Death Machine experienced a new feeling deep within its inhuman consciousness. The Death Machine knew the meaning of fear.

The Man-Machines were among the last great battle weapons built in the time before the Shadow Years. They were created in three different models: the Aquabot (see POLYHEDRON™ issue



## The Empire of the Sun

by Roger E. Moore

**TECH:** III

**TYPES:** PSH, H (see below)

**NUMBER:** 1 per vehicle

**BASE:** B (2d4 + 20); H (2d6 + 3)

**SECRET SIGN:** None (see below)

**LOCATION:** Scattered bases across Pacific Ocean, east coast of Asia, and west coast of North America; controls island of Honshu, Japan

**DESCRIPTION:** The Empire of the Sun is not so much a Cryptic Alliance as it is a true nation, one of the few in existence in the Dark Years. Its military is spread very thinly across the Pacific basin and it has a low population base,

but its people, composed entirely of Pure Strain Humans and human-appearing mutants, are highly organized and motivated. They control little land in North America, but have set up a few bases from which their military is studying the local Cryptic Alliances.

As noted in the accompanying article on the AATAAV, the Empire got its start from a group of pilots and ground crewmen working on the island of Honshu prior to the Social Wars. Honshu was at that time a part of the Asian Coalition, which was at war with nearly every other nation on Earth. During the Apoc-

alypse Week of 2322, these crewmen were hustled into suspended animation chambers in a major undersea base off the coast of Honshu, and thus survived the cataclysm.

The crewmen were revived in 2431, and since then have slowly spread across the Pacific Ocean, scouting out the remains of the world. They will accept any human or human-appearing being into their ranks, after a lengthy indoctrination program which includes a telepathic scan by mutant humans. The program is so thorough that there is only a percentage chance equal to the prospective character's mental strength score of successfully hiding any traitorous thoughts.

Only military members of the Empire are encountered away from Honshu. The only sign exchanged by Imperial soldiers is a salute given to officers, in which the right hand is placed over the heart (as if reciting the American Pledge of Allegiance). About 70% of the

#20), the HATAAV (Heavy All-Terrain Armored Attack Vehicle), and the AATAAV (Airborne All-Terrain Armored Attack Vehicle). Manned war machines of incredible destructive power, they had only been in the testing stage when the Social Wars and the Apocalypse brought an end to all civilization.

Hundreds of years later, suspended animation capsules on the island of Honshu, Japan, released a force of AATAAV pilots and ground crew who had survived the Social Wars by entering the capsules at the last possible moment. Horrified at the devastation wrought upon their world, the force began to re-establish civilization — on their own terms, and under the banner of the Empire of the Sun.

This article details the AATAAV fighting machine, which is likely to be encountered along the western coast of North America. Player characters may either fight against or join the forces of the Empire of the Sun, or they may simply try to stay out of the way....

**TYPE:** AAATAV

**STATUS:** Two ranks

**NUMBER:** 1d4

**HIT DICE:** 300d8

**SENSORS:** A/B/C/ +

**MS:** Nil

**DX:** 1d4 + 14

**ARMOR:** 1

**CONTROL:** E

**POWER:** B

**IN:** Nil

**PS:** 250

**LAND SPEED:** 100/4500/80

**AIR SPEED:** 200/9000/160 (see below)

Empire's citizens and troops are Oriental or Polynesian, though the Empire's people harbor no ill will toward any race. Mutant animals and plants are not permitted to be soldiers or citizens of the Empire, as their status is still in question. Androids are regarded as enemies, and there are rumors of an Empire-android war going on in the northern islands of Japan.

After the failure of attempts to make peaceful contact with the Iron Society (see POLYHEDRON™ issue #18) and a Radioactivist city on the west coast (see POLYHEDRON issue #20), the Empire began attacks against both of these Alliances with mixed success. The outcome of this conflict has yet to be resolved.

The Empire's basic policy is to bring order out of the chaos of the world, using the most efficient means possible. If peaceful negotiation works, that will be used. If fighting is inevitable — then the Man-Machines are brought in.

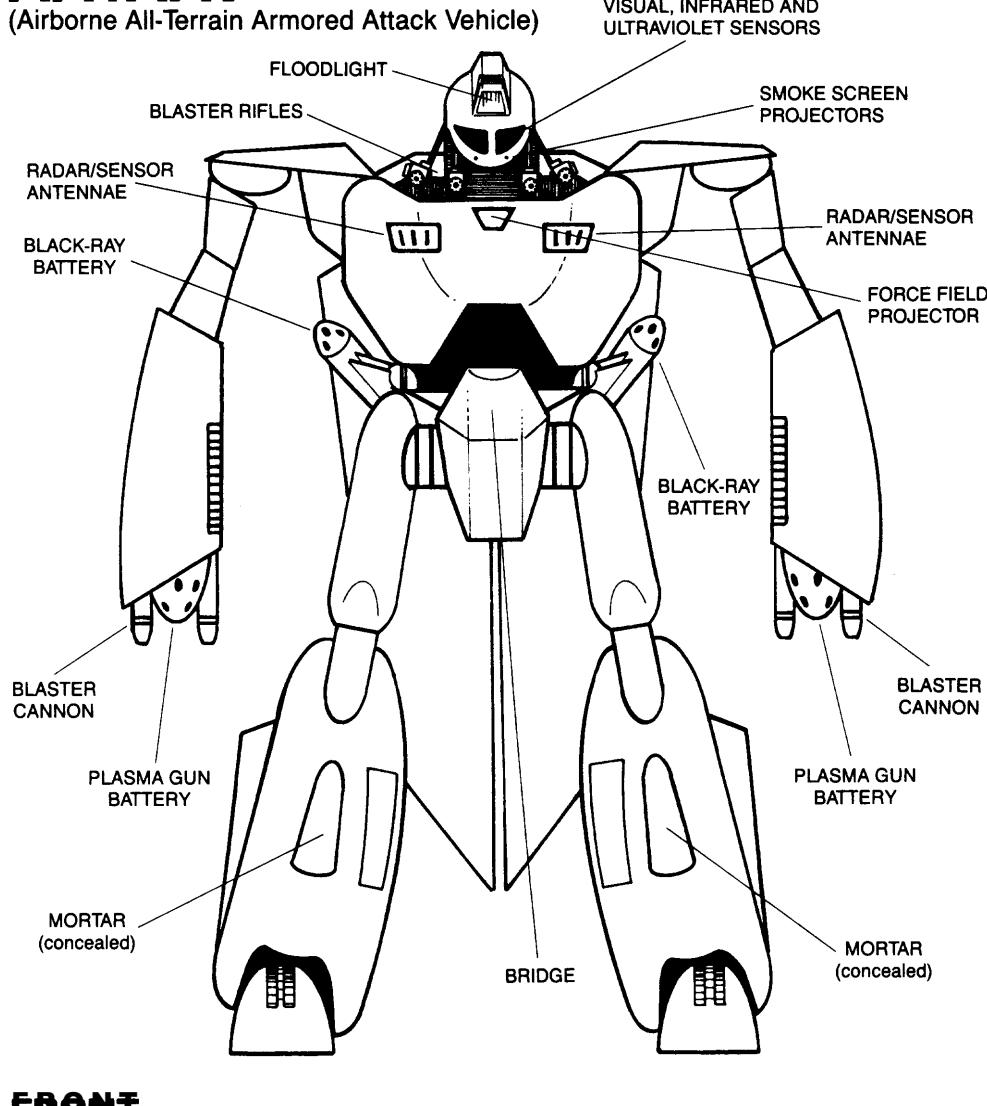
**WATER SPEED:** 65/2900/50

**DESCRIPTION:** The AATAAV is a gigantic, manlike war machine, standing 90 m tall and 36 m wide. The body is composed of energy-resistant collaplastic with a duralloy underbase. It must be piloted by a trained driver/gunner with a Stage V I.D.; the pilot controls all functions of the vehicle, including flight, hover, and walking capabilities, and all

limited by power and cooling considerations). For long-range travel, the AATAAV can reconfigure itself into a more aerodynamic form and fly normally, using antigravity pods and jet engines. The reconfiguration process takes only one minute, but during that time the machine's weapons cannot be operated. In full flight configuration, the vehicle can reach speeds of up to 830 kph. Streamlining is provided by shap-

## AATAAV

(Airborne All-Terrain Armored Attack Vehicle)



**FRONT**

gunnery. Intensive training is necessary to operate the device at full efficiency, and such training is only available from certain military bases controlled by the Empire of the Sun.

The AATAAV has standard, infrared, and ultraviolet sensors effective out to 10 km, and has radar good out to 200 km. It can walk over light terrain at 25 kph, or use its hover thrusters to move over all terrain at twice that speed, for 120 minutes every 24-hour period (being

ing the force field around the vehicle. Because of the force field, no weapons can be used while the vehicle is in flight.

The AATAAV has a force-field energy screen capable of absorbing 300 points of damage. A high-intensity floodlight mounted on the vehicle's head has a 1 km range and projects a 30° cone-shaped beam. The floodlight will cause temporary blindness in most light-sensitive or nocturnal creatures within 300 m of the beam's source.

Two smoke-screen projectors, mounted just below the visual sensors, are together capable of creating a cylindrical cloud of smoke or gas 30 m wide and 250 m long within 10 seconds. The smoke negates all laser attacks, ruins line-of-sight optical and infrared sensing, and can be mixed with a poison gas (intensity 3-18, as desired) useful against ground troops.

one launches matter bombs (type beta). Each mortar has a 2-km range and may fire two bombs per action turn, with a supply of 40 bombs for the matter-bomb mortar and 80 for the negation-bomb mortar.

The AATAAV's arms are each able to present a universal firing arc, quickly directing attacks in any direction. Each arm mounts three blaster cannon, doing 20d6 damage each at a 2km range.

Finally, four standard Mark VII blasters rifles are mounted under the vehicle's chin. These weapons have standard ranges and powers, and have a 90° firing arc to the AATAAV's front.

The AATAAV is powered by a fusion power plant with a ten-year life span. The machine is rigged to automatically self-destruct (regardless of the pilot's wishes) from a remote location, usually an Empire of the Sun base. (This is an excellent way of keeping these devices out of the hands of the Empire's enemies.) However, the self-destruct mechanism and circuitry are considered secret knowledge, and no pilots are aware that these devices have been implanted in their vehicles.

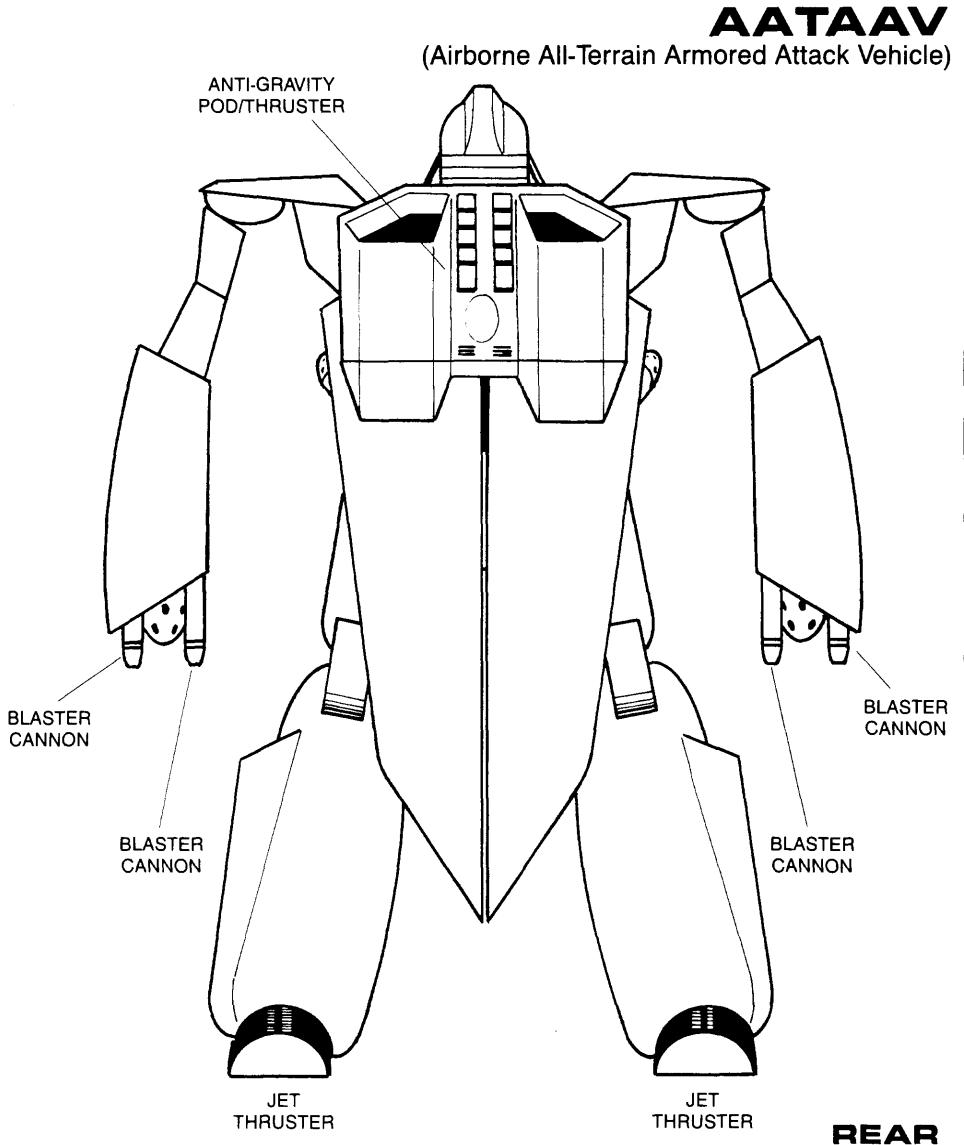
Because of the onboard guidance and fire-control systems, it is impossible for the pilot of a AATAAV to accidentally shoot his own vehicle in combat. An AATAAV will always remain upright unless it is depowered or purposefully made to sit down. Very few AATAAVs are in service, perhaps less than ten; only three to six of them would be in operation in North America. AATAAVs usually travel in small groups to provide fire support to one another.

*Only a minute had passed since the battle had been joined. The Death Machine's energy shields were gone, and it had taken massive damage from the multiple attacks mounted by the two intruders. Within the cold consciousness of the machine's combat computer, facts were analyzed and a decision was reached. It rocketed away from the attackers at full power, heading for the perimeter fence. If its plan failed, it would be a smoldering hulk within the next few seconds.*

*The gleaming titans raised their plasma gun batteries and took aim as the Death Machine suddenly dropped behind the fence, beyond a patch of purple flowers. Earth and sky were suddenly illuminated by the flash of star-hot plasma bolts that linked the two attackers and the flower patch in a bridge of blinding white energy.*

*It was over with in seconds. The flowers remained untouched, their mutant energy-reflection power undimmed. Slowly, the guardian arose and coasted back toward the flaming ruins of the two invaders. Training its remaining guns and weapons on the wrecks, the robot began to pound the remains until they were molten.*

*It was not called a Death Machine for nothing.*



The AATAAV is heavily equipped and was intended for use as a shock force against massed troop concentrations. Two black-ray batteries, each holding six black-ray guns with a 600-m range, are mounted on the left and right hips of the vehicle. Each battery has a firing arc of 180° to its respective side.

Each shin of the vehicle has a mortar, concealed internally but hanging out for firing. The left mortar is usually rigged for firing negation bombs, and the right

These guns are mounted around a massive central plasma-gun battery, with eight plasma guns per arm. Plasma guns have the following statistics: WC 13, code FIII, range 500 m, damage 15d6 each. The plasma weapons cannot be removed from the vehicle's arms without destroying them. Because the plasma weapons use so much power, the AATAAV cannot do anything else while these weapons fire and must stand perfectly still.

# The Stellar Diocese

*The clergy in the TRAVELLER® universe*

by Michael Brown

The TRAVELLER® game covers a diverse range of social aspects of the future, from the good to the bad, from the unusual to the mundane. Primitive cultures can coexist with high-tech societies, and many different ideologies can come into play during a game.

One thing appears to be missing from this diverse universe, however — religion. The only mention made of religion in the TRAVELLER rules are the religious dictatorships that can occur in world government generation. It would seem, even in the future presented in TRAVELLER, that religious beliefs would still play a great role in the day-to-day lives of individuals. What of religious personages not of religious dictatorships? Aren't there beings in the Imperium and elsewhere who spread the word of their beliefs, as priests, missionaries, or religious wayfarers?

These tables detail the generation of just such individuals, along with descriptions of some of the many religions possible within GDW's TRAVELLER Imperium.

## Cleric character generation

The following prior service table is modeled after the standard character generation tables in TRAVELLER Book 1, *Characters and Combat*. Character race and sex are irrelevant in character generation.

Enlistment	8+
DM of +1 if	Intel 9+
DM of +2 if	Educ 8+
Survival	3+
DM of +2 if	Intel 9+
Position	9+
DM of +1 if	Social 8+
Promotion	9+
DM of +1 if	Social 8+
Reenlist	5+



Clergy members receive an automatic skill of Religion-1 upon joining this service. All clerical members age normally as per their race. No retirement pay or pension is normally available, though mustering-out benefits may be received as usual. Though ranks 1-6 exist, the referee should come up with rank titles for different religions as appropriate to his or her campaign. Possible titles could include Father/Mother, Priest, Deacon, Elder, Patriarch, Bishop, Cardinal, Rabbi, Caliph, Abbot, Pilgrim, or more exotic forms of address.

Mustering out is accomplished as per the rules in TRAVELLER Book 1, using the table below.

Die Roll	Material Benefits	Cash Allowances
1	—	1,000
2	Low Psg	1,000
3	Mid Psg	5,000
4	+1 Intel	5,000
5	+1 Educ	10,000
6	+1 Social	10,000
7	Travellers'	—

DM +1 to material benefits table if cleric is of rank 5 or 6.

## Skill explanations

All skills given in the skills tables, except for those detailed below, are as described in TRAVELLER Book 1.

Carousing: See TRAVELLER Supplement 4.

Instruction: See TRAVELLER Book 5.

Liason: See TRAVELLER Book 5.

Recruiting: See TRAVELLER Book 4.

Religion: This is a general term relating to a character's knowledge of the particular religious doctrines of a certain sect of worshipers. The first skill level in this area is assumed to be an intensive study in the beliefs and doctrines of the religion professed by the character. Any skill levels beyond that may be the continued and advanced study of those particular doctrines. Second and succeeding skill levels do not have to be of the same religion, however; they can represent the study of religion in general, touching upon the fundamentals common to all religions, or they can be of another religion entirely.

Religion skill allows for reaction-throw modifiers when dealing with religious sects and attempts to persuade groups

to convert or take part in religious doings. Religion-3 allows an individual to have a regular following of worshipers, but all three levels must be of the character's professed religion.

### Futuristic religions

The following are a few examples of religions that could be created for science-fiction campaigns set in the TRAVELLER Imperium and its environs. None of them are "official" GDW game additions.

*Brotherhood of the Sphere* — The Brotherhood is a semi-popular religion in the Imperium that has proliferated since Imperial year 900. Its precepts hold that the universe is an infinite, self-aware sphere, and that other universes revolve around it. The sect's holy symbol is a spherical crystal (usually lapis lazuli) worn about the neck. The Brotherhood has an inner circle of twenty spiritual leaders (all TRAVELLER Rank 6) who, unbeknownst to the lesser members or to the Imperium, possess various psionic powers.

*Church of Divine Truth* — The Church of Divine Truth has a huge following, with a membership well into the billions. Its lineage can be traced back as far as the First Imperium. Its precepts are simple, proclaiming a Supreme Being that has at least one semidivine minion on each planet. Church members can be identified by the small, four-pointed star tattooed on the back of the right hand.

*Terran religions* — Terra (Earth) boasts a wide variety of religions, most of them ancient, very sound, and enjoying great numbers of followers. One of the more prevalent "new" religions which has sprung up on Earth in the latter century or so is the Disciples of Terran Purity. Its precepts involve the mistrust and non-use of technology in general, blaming it for corrupting Terra and rendering her peoples' spirits impure. The teaching of the Disciples combine religious and combat discipline, all corresponding to a tech level 0 or 1 lifestyle. Another fairly recent Terran

religion is the Order of the Unicorn, a following of doctors and other healers who strive to preserve life and health in all sentient beings. The Order takes its name from a mythical Terra animal supposedly able to cure disease and poisonings.

*Children Transcendant* — The Children Transcendant is a largely outlawed religion in the Imperium, for it advocates the use of psionics, basing that endorsement on the belief that the achievement of such powers is another step on the road to a higher plane of being. To that end, each and every member is required to try to achieve maximum psionic potential sometime during his or her active career. (The term in which the training is undertaken should be selected by the player and administered by the referee. The actual training will be free.) Members identify each other by *telepathy*, or, alternately, by a special hand signal.

*Followers of the Suns* — The Followers' philosophy is that each star is a powerful sentient being. As such, stars are deities to be worshiped in their own respective systems. As would be expected, members of this sect are always quite willing to help colonize new worlds — it means more worshipers in more systems, and not many stars would lack for worshipers.

*The Three* — A religion surmised by Imperial scholars to have begun in Zhodani space long ago. It holds that there are three deities, each of equal power but with different outlooks. One deity is good, one is evil, and the third acts as a mediator between the two and between the gods and the Zhodani. A popular holy symbol is a group of three small, identical objects, preferably gems or crystals, which are worn about the head, neck, wrist, or waist (depending on the degree of devotion). Worship of The Three has flourished in the Imperium due to the sensibilities of its philosophies, but it is nevertheless closely watched by Imperial authorities.

*The Vekkur* — This religion is similar to the Order of the Unicorn on Terra

(see above), but is much broader in scope. It is a noble philosophy indeed. The members of the Vekkur are true pacifists; they never seek to harm sentient life and will not take a life under any circumstances. The Vekkur believe that all beings have an equal right to live, and, to that end, learn the healing arts (gaining a Medical-1 skill upon joining). Members use no holy symbol, but always wear some sort of white garment. This religion is popular with doctors. The sect believes in a Supreme Being, and takes its name from the Vekkur, a mythical Vlandian creature whose spittle supposedly cured disease.

*The Mediators* — This group is dedicated to the precepts of law and order; as such, members act as lawyers and minor law-enforcement personnel. Members gain an automatic skill of Law-1; subsequent levels of this skill can be taken in place of Admin, if it is rolled. The doctrines of this religion hold that there is a Supreme Being who set down a Universal Law and gave it to intelligent beings to use as they saw fit. A member's fate in the afterlife is based on how well the law is understood and utilized during life.

The referee should feel free to create other religions, staying within the guidelines of playability and semi-realism. Certainly, there will be some hostile and aggressive religions for travelers to deal with across the galaxy. Religions built around an unusual central concept concerning love, sex, light, space, intelligence, etc., would also be present. Of course, fictional religions depicted in science-fiction literature, in the movies, and on TV are usable.

The player and the referee should discuss what religion the character would profess based on past experiences, likes and dislikes, etc. The referee should then note the details of the religion, including such things as origin world(s), precepts, history, and other information.

The character variant described here assumes that clergy will not normally take up weapons skills. The referee may tailor this rule as he or she sees fit, perhaps replacing a lesser skill on the tables with a weapon skill. Blade combat is recommended for such changes, as blades seem more traditional for such groups, but militant cults may easily use any weapons available. The addition or deletion of particular skills from the Acquired Skills Table may be made as desired or needed.

Cleric Acquired Skills Table

	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education	Advanced
1	+ 1 Dext	Religion	Recruiting	Ed. (Educ 8 + )
2	+ 1 Endur	Admin	Religion	Streetwise
3	+ 1 Intel	Religion	Leader	Mechanical
4	+ 1 Educ	Religion	Vehicle	Religion
5	Carousing	Liaison	Religion	Electronic
6	+ 1 Social	+ 1 Educ	Instruction	Medical
				J a c k - o - T

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# Convention Calendar

## AUTUMN CAMPAIGNS, Sep. 7

This convention will take place at the Holiday Inn North Bluegrass Pavilion in Lexington, Ky. Featured activities will include role-playing and board games, tournaments, and miniatures events. Registration fees are \$5. For more information about this convention, contact: Tim Wisner, c/o The Rusty Scabbard, 513 E. Maxwell St., Lexington KY 40502.

## CANTON FANTASY AND WARGAMING TOURNAMENT, Sep. 14-15

This convention will be held at the National Guard Armory in Canton, Ohio. An assortment of miniatures, role-playing, and board games will be featured. Registration fees are \$6 for the weekend, or \$4 for Saturday only and \$3 for Sunday only. For more information, contact: Graig Lechner, 212 33rd St. SW, Canton OH 44706.

## COGACON '85, Sep. 20-22

This gaming convention is sponsored by the Central Ohio Gamers Association, and it will be staged at the Airport Quality Inn in Columbus, Ohio. A variety of role-playing, board, and miniatures games will be offered. Registration fees are \$5. For more details, contact: Paul T. Riegel, c/o WarGame Designs, P.O. Box 124, Hilliard OH 43026.

## EARTHCON V, Sep. 20-22

This science-fiction convention will be held at the Cleveland Hilton South. Guests of honor will include David Smith, Ted Rypel, and Tony Isabella. Featured activities include a dealer's room, an art show and auction, a masquerade, and videos. For more information, contact: Earthcon V, P.O. Box 5641, Cleveland OH 44101.

## 1985 COICOD FALL MANEUVERS, Sep. 21-22

For more details about this wargaming convention, contact: Bill Thomson, 7081 NW 16th St., Apt. 114, Plantation FL 33313, or telephone (305)587-3315.

## VALLEY CON 10, Sep. 21-22

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, N.D. Guest of honor will be fantasy author Patricia Wrede. Featured activities will include videos, an art show and auction, panels, a Tarot reader, and a wide variety of gaming events. Registration fees are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children under the age of 13. For additional information about this convention, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Valley Con 10, P.O. Box 7202, Fargo ND 58111.

## NOWSCON '85, Sep. 28-29

Sponsored by the Northern Ohio Wargaming Society, this convention will take place at the National Guard Armory in Brookpark, Ohio. The convention will feature an official RPGA™ Network-sanctioned AD&D™ tournament, and the winner will be awarded the coveted Golden Pegasus trophy. For more information, contact: NOWS, P.O. Box 29116, Parma OH 44129.

## TOL-CON III, Sep. 28-29

This gaming convention will be staged at the Ramada Inn Southwyck in Toledo, Ohio. For more details, contact: Tol-Con III, c/o Mind Games, 3001 N. Reynolds Rd., Toledo OH 43615, or telephone (419)531-5540.

## CRUSADER CON V, Oct. 4-6

This gaming convention will take place at the Metropolitan State College in Denver, Col. Tournament events will include Diplomacy™, Kingmaker™, Champions™, Squad Leader™, and AD&D® games, and much, much more. Registration fees are \$8 until September 15, and \$10 thereafter. For more details about this event, contact: The Auraria Gamer's Club, P.O. Box 13395, Denver CO 80201-3395.

## KING CON 1, Oct. 5

Sponsored by the Knights of the Griffon, this convention will be held in the community building at the Mt. Vernon city park. Featured events will include role-playing game tournaments, seminars, a painting competition, a fantasy and science-fiction art show, and much more. Registration fees are \$5 in advance, or \$1 entrance fee for each scheduled gaming event. For more details, contact: King Con 1, c/o The Dragon's

## WARGAMERS' WEEKEND, Oct. 5-6

This wargaming convention will be staged at the Disabled American Veterans' Hall on Route 1, Newburyport, Mass. All events will take place in the main upstairs function room of the DAV Hall. Events will include two tournaments — WRG Ancients and WRG Renaissance — and many other games. Registration fees are \$5 for Saturday and \$3 for Sunday; most events will have a \$2 charge. For more information, contact: Chris Parker, c/o The Toy Soldier, Ltd., P.O. Box 148, Newburyport MA 01950.

## MAINECON, Oct. 10-12

This convention will be held at the Waynflete school in Portland, Maine. Events include fantasy rule-playing games, miniatures, board games, and seminars.

On-site dormitory space available at reasonable cost; however, bring your own bedding. For more details, contact: The Maine Wargamers Association, 116 Front St. Bath ME 04530.

## COUNCIL OF FIVE NATIONS XI, Oct. 11-13

This gaming event will take place at the Union College in Schenectady, New York. Featured activities will include costume and miniatures contests, an auction, and around-the-clock gaming. Contact: Pamela Boynton, Council, P.O. Box 4086, Queensbury NY 12801.

## NEBRASKA LIN-CON VII, Oct. 11-13

Guests of honor for this convention will be Duke Seifried, his associate Dale Bruner, Ken Bunger, and John Boehm. Mr. Seifried is the past president of Heritage Game and Figure Manufacturing, and also a past vice president of TSR, Inc. Mr. Bunger is the associate editor of *Courier Magazine* and a rules designer with 25 years of gaming experience. Mr. Boehm is the Nebraska Assistant Attorney General; he has been active in the gaming field for over 20 years. For more details, contact: Merlin Hayes, c/o Hobby Town, 130 North 13th St., Lincoln NE 68508, or telephone (402)476-3829.

## WINGAMES VI, Oct. 11-13

Held at the University of Manitoba, this event offers one of the largest AD&D® tournaments in Canada. Free admission; an entry fee may be required for some events. Contact: Wingames VI, Box 80 University Center, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3T 2N2.

## FALLCON, Oct. 19-20

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the newly built University Centre Hotel in Gainesville, Fla. Guest of honor will be Piers Anthony. Events will include videos, an art show, a cocktail party, and a costume contest. Registration fees are \$10. For more information, contact: Bill Hatfield, c/o Novel Ideas, 1122 W. University Ave., Gainesville FL 32601.

## ADVACON '85, Oct. 20

This gaming convention will be held at the Polish Falcon Hall in Depew, N.Y. Fantasy and science-fiction role-playing games, board games, and miniatures tournaments will be among the featured events. For details, contact: The Advacon Fellowship, 101 Floss Ave., Buffalo NY 14211.

## MILE HI CON 17, Oct. 25-27

Denver's oldest science-fiction convention will be staged at the Sheraton Inn in Lakewood, Colo. Guests of honor include Somtow Sucharitkul and Leslie Fish; Edward Bryant will be toastmaster. Featured events will include a computer game room, a trivia bowl, and a filk concert. For more information about this convention, contact: Mile Hi Con, P.O. Box 27074, Denver CO 80227.

### **NECRONOMICON '85, Oct. 25-27**

This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Riverview, Fla. Guests of honor will include Andre Norton, Robert Adams, Robert Bloch, and Roger Zelazny. Autograph sessions, a cabaret, a costume contest, alien cooking, and a banquet are among the featured activities. Registration fees are \$10 until October 1, and \$15 thereafter. For more details, contact: Necronomicon '85, P.O. Box 2076, Riverview FL 33569.

### **RO VA CON 10, Oct. 25-27**

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be staged at the Roanoke Valley Civic Center in Roanoke, Va. Guests of honor include Richard Pini, Hal Clement, and Angelique Pettyjohn. Activities will include filk singing, a variety of gaming tournaments, and a costume contest. For more information, contact: Ro Va Con, P.O. Box 117, Salem VA 24153.

### **THE WORLD MYSTERY CONVENTION, Oct. 25-27**

800 readers, book dealers, and professionals will congregate at this convention to share crime fiction's joys in San Francisco's Sir Francis Drake Hotel. For more details about this convention, contact: Bouchercon XVI, P.O. Box 6202, Hayward CA 94540.

### **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 miniaitures 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.

### **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. Registration fees are \$10 until October 15. 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 \$10 until November 1, and \$12 thereafter. Contact: RCSFA, P.O. Box 3894, Evansville IN 47737, or telephone (812)858-5419.

### **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 \$10 until November 1, and \$15 thereafter. 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**

This year 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 about this event, 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.

### **ORCCON, Feb. 15-17**

For more information, contact: Orccon, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach CA 90808.



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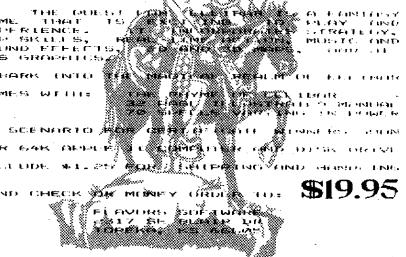
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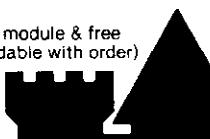
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## Letters

(From page 4)

### Not that one

Dear Dragon,

In "History of a game that failed" (#99), it said that Murlynd has no ability score over 18. But in *Beyond the Magic Mirror* it states Murlynd has intelligence of 19. How do you explain that?

Jeremy Oltmann  
Coon Rapids, Minn.

The article referred to Murlynd the quasi-deity, as described in issue #71 of the magazine — not the character of the same last name (but a considerably different nature) in module EX2. — KM

### Dragon teeth

Dear everybody:

It looks like we may have bitten off more than we could chew with our innocent publication of Gregg Chamberlain's "The magic of dragon teeth" in issue #98. That article has elicited more specific questions than any other article in recent memory. Here's a roundup of responses, some of them nothing more than blatant speculation on

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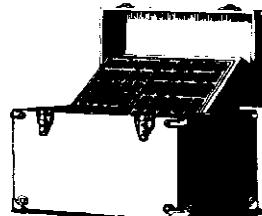
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our part. To save a little space, we aren't printing the questions, since they're obvious from the way the answers are phrased.

Other types of dragons weren't mentioned either because (a) they aren't official, (b) they are unique, deity-level dragons such as Tiamat and Bahamut, or (c) the article was specifically limited to, as Gregg put it, "the ten major dragon types from the *Monster Manual*." Our position on this is pretty well summed up in the response earlier in this letters column concerning "Tables and tables of troops": If you want a dragon-man to spring from the tooth of an orange dragon, or a Chinese dragon, or a faerie dragon, then sit down and make one up. Now that Gregg has laid the groundwork, it shouldn't be that tough to do.

I don't know if dragons have baby teeth, but I'm pretty sure there's no such thing as a baby dragon-man. What is he going to use as a weapon — a +2 rattle?

If you put a dragon-man's tooth in the ground, what you'll end up with is a dirty tooth.

Dragon-men come in one size only, no matter how big or small the tooth is.

The chance of growing twin dragon-men from one tooth is slightly smaller than the chance of growing twin oak trees from the same acorn.

Dragon-men cannot become player characters, and vice versa.

Judging from Gregg's recounting of the legend of Cadmus, I'd say that a dragon-man will spring forth from a properly enchanted tooth as soon as the tooth is planted; for the sake of playability, let's say that the dragon-man appears at the start of the round following the completion of planting. (Don't ask me how long it takes to plant a tooth,

please.) If you plant more than one tooth, like Cadmus did, then all the dragon-men will spring forth at the same time, after the last tooth has taken root.

Dragons probably can't pull their own teeth — and even if they could, they wouldn't be able to perform the enchantment process by themselves.

Dragon-men aren't normal mortals, and as such they don't need to sleep, eat, breathe, or drink.

As written, the article does not allow for the possibility of dragon-men being anything other than lighter-types. But the whole thing is optional, and quite unofficial, in the first place; if you want a magic-user dragon-man to appear, change the requirements and specifications to whatever you consider appropriate and go to it.

*Melf's acid arrow* is a new 2nd-level magic-user spell, originally described in DRAGON® Magazine about three years ago and included in *Unearthed Arcana*. As one of my favorite baseball managers always used to say, You can look it up.

A chaotic evil black dragon-man is sure to do only one thing, and that is whatever he wants to do. If the character who controls him is obviously the more powerful of the two, then the dragon-man will probably want to do what he's told — at least until he can get away with doing something else. Never turn your back on a black dragon-man, or a red one, or a white one, or . . .

For the answer to end all answers, to cover every other question that could be asked, choose between this pair of three-word phrases: "I don't know" and "Whatever you want." The next time we get a manuscript about teeth, we're going to make sure all the holes are filled before we plant it in the magazine. — KM

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### One out of three

Dear Dragon:

What happens to old issues of DRAGON that are no longer available?

What would happen if I sent in an order form from issue #71, ordering issues not available in my latest issue?

Is there any way that I can get a copy of the astral article in #67?

George Embley  
Cape May, N.J.

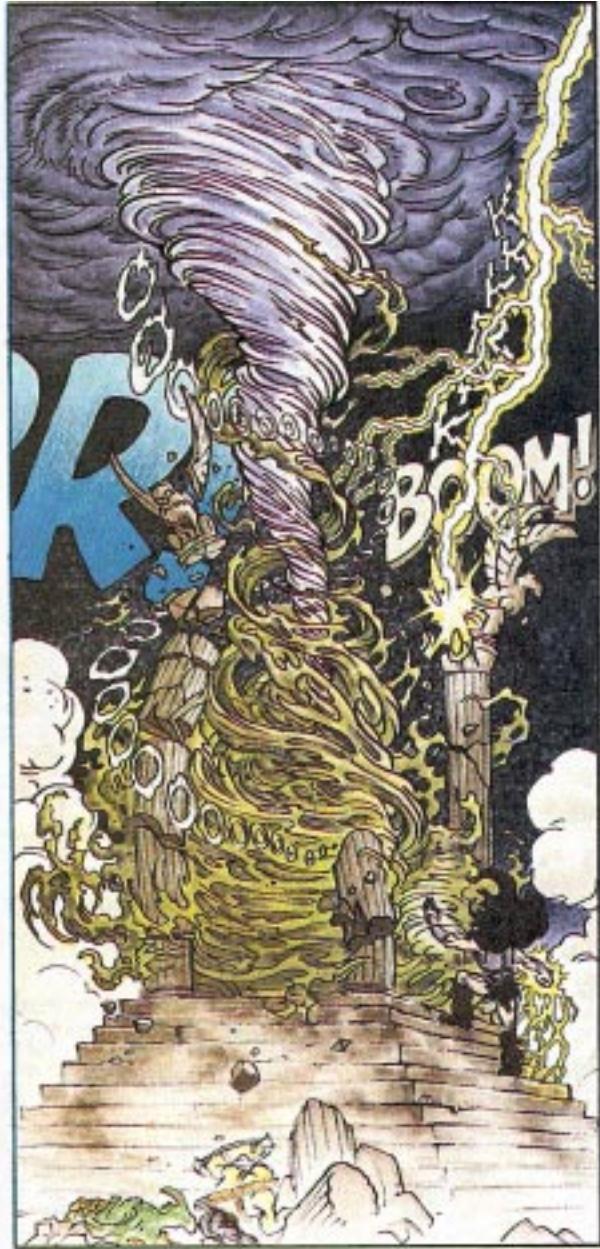
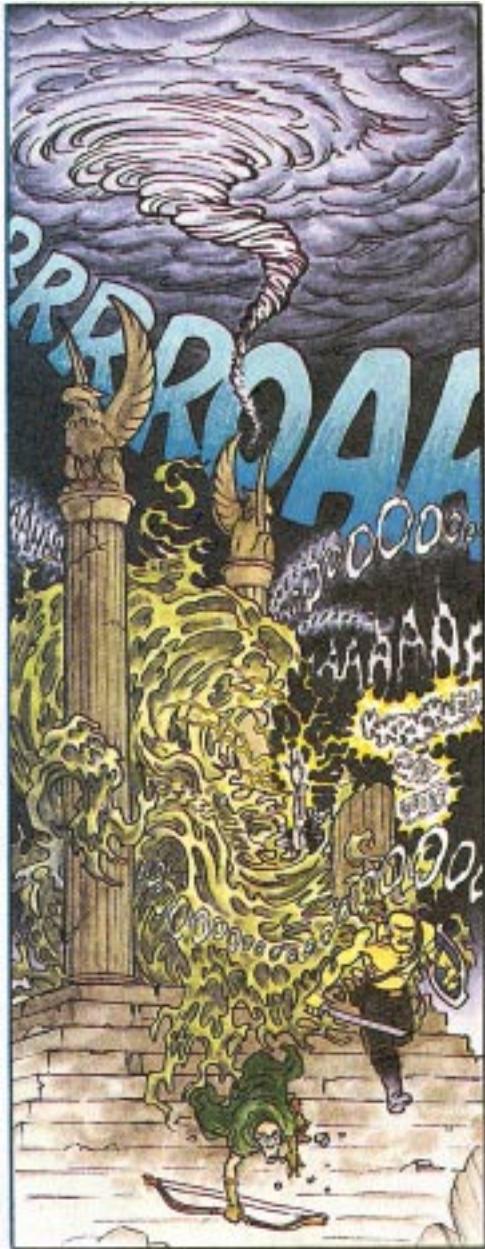
Dear George:

Nothing. They don't exist.

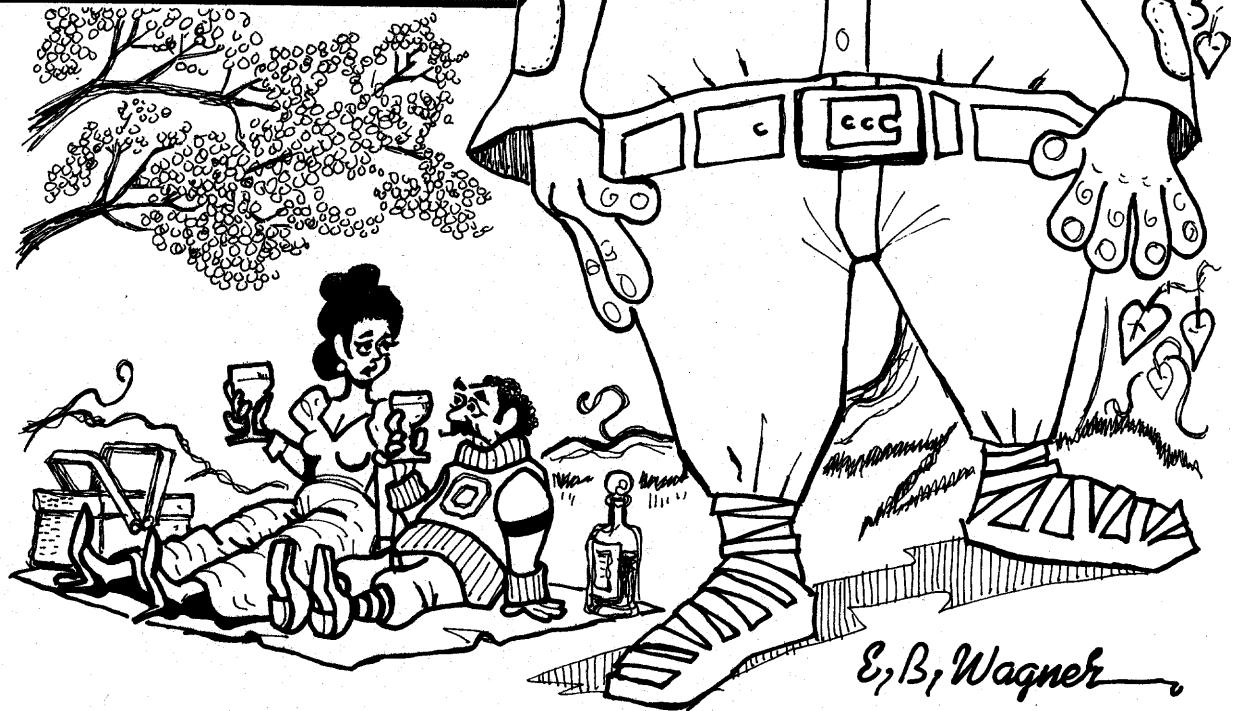
Nothing. They don't exist.

Not unless we reprint it in a future anthology — and the chances of that are good, since you're far from the first person who has asked for a way to get that article. — KM

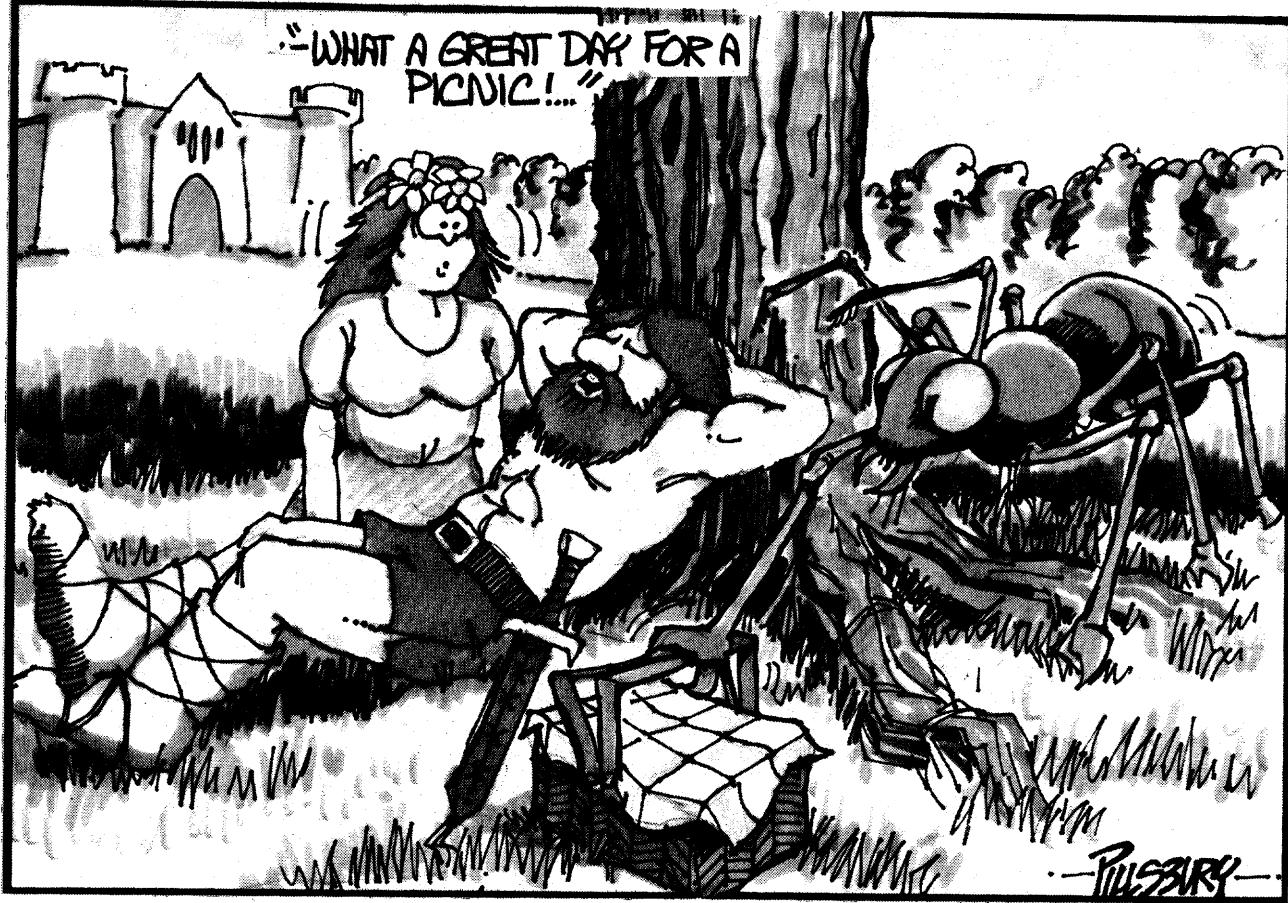




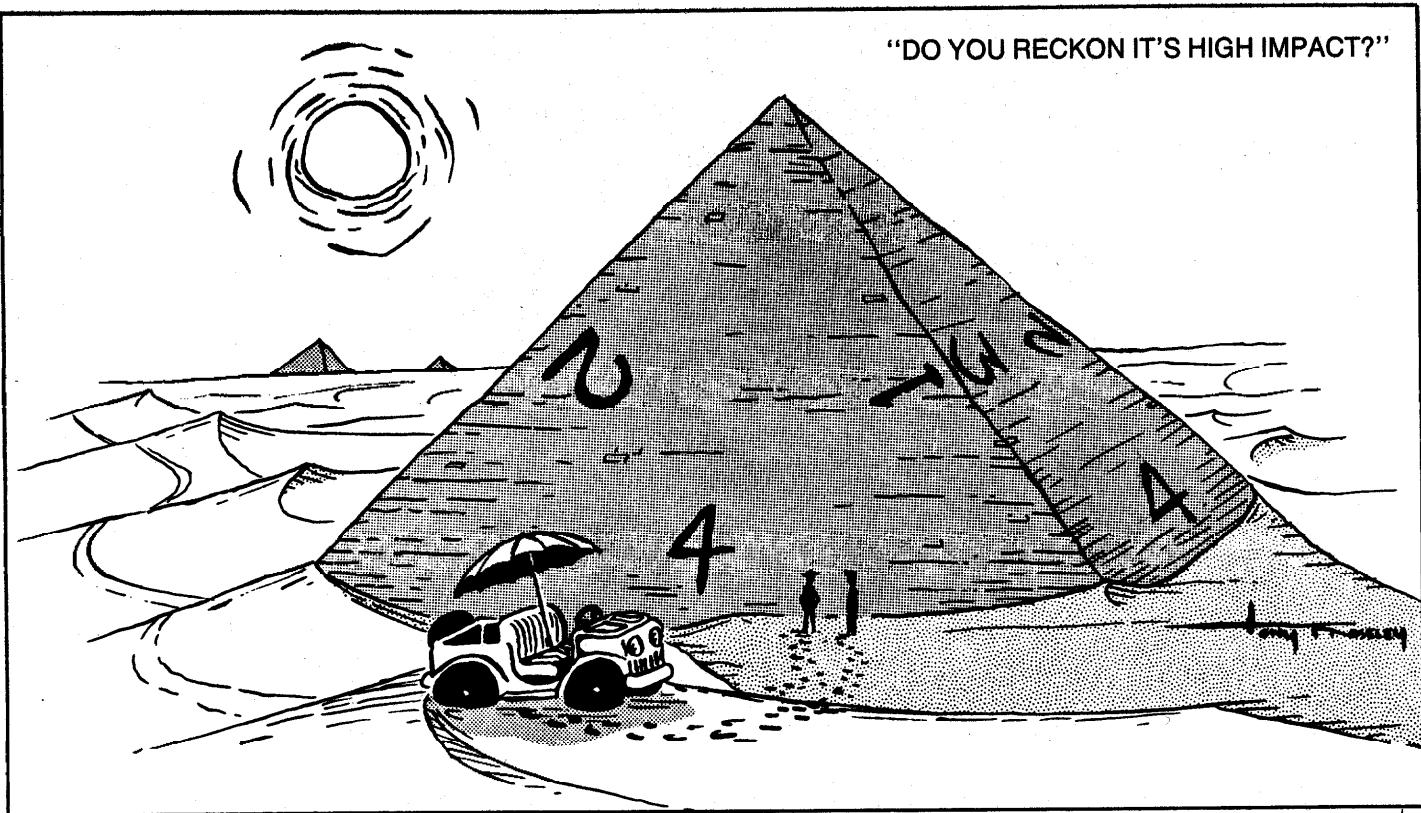
# Dragonmirth



"BUT, IF NEITHER OF US SAID, 'FE-FI-FO-FUM,' LADY PAMELA,  
WHO'S THE BLOODY IDIOT THAT DID?"



"DO YOU RECKON IT'S HIGH IMPACT?"

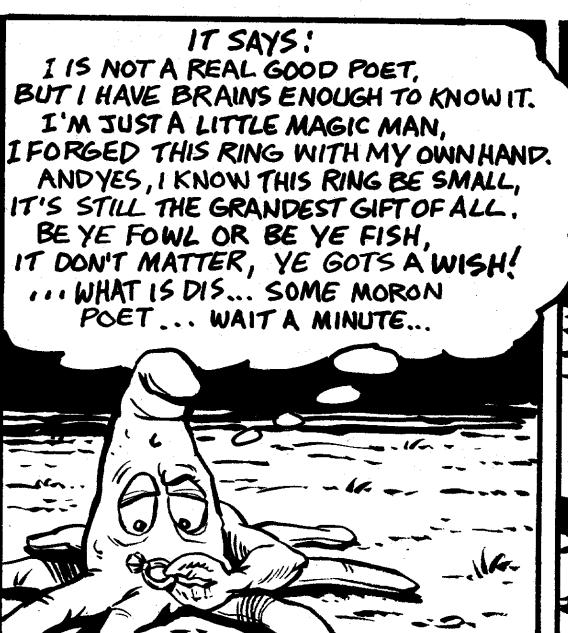
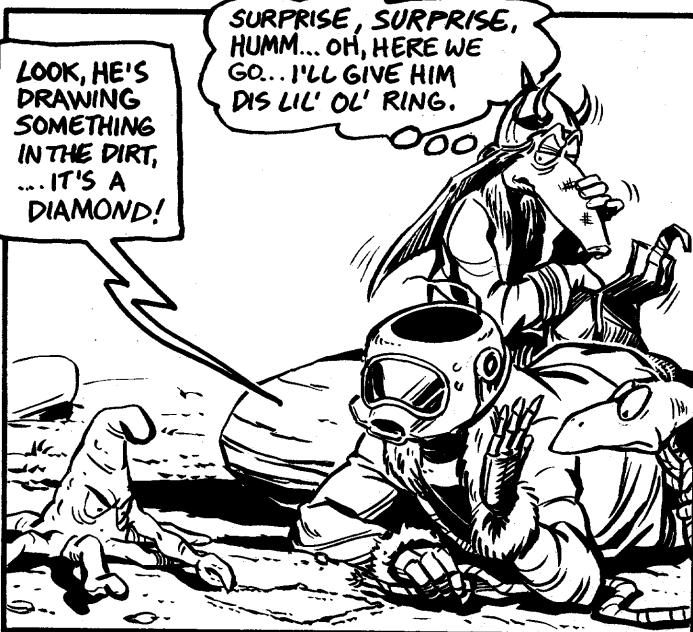


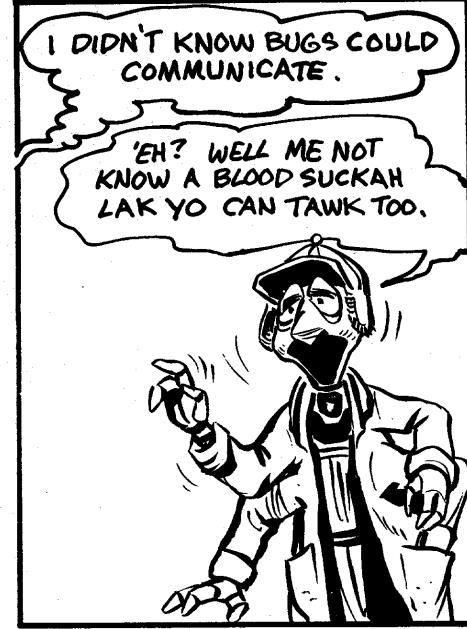
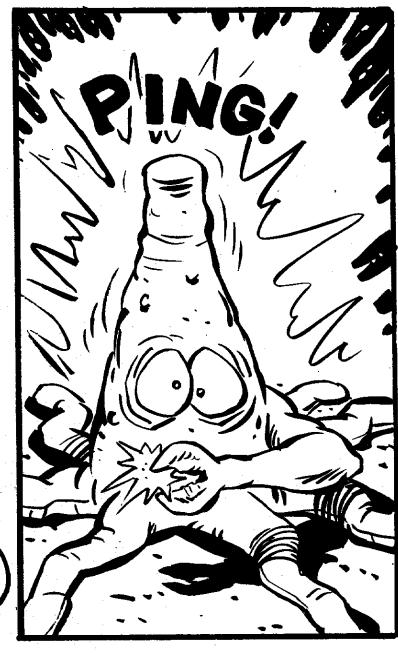
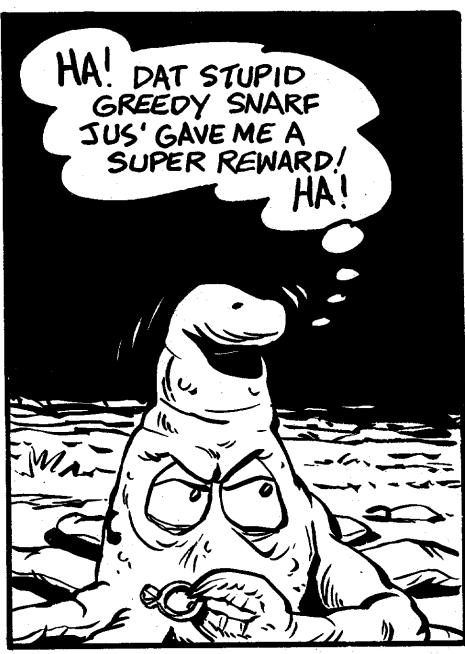
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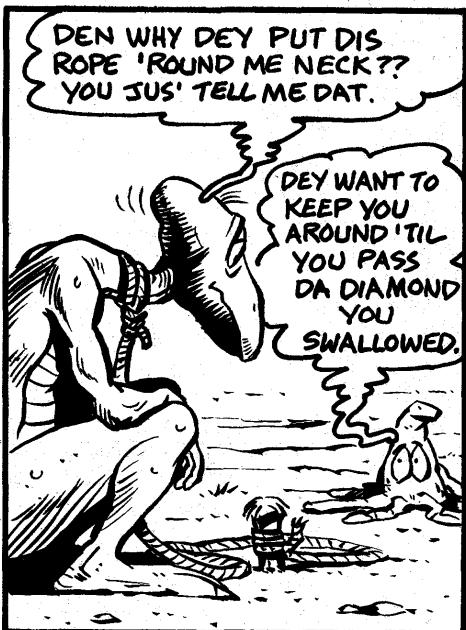
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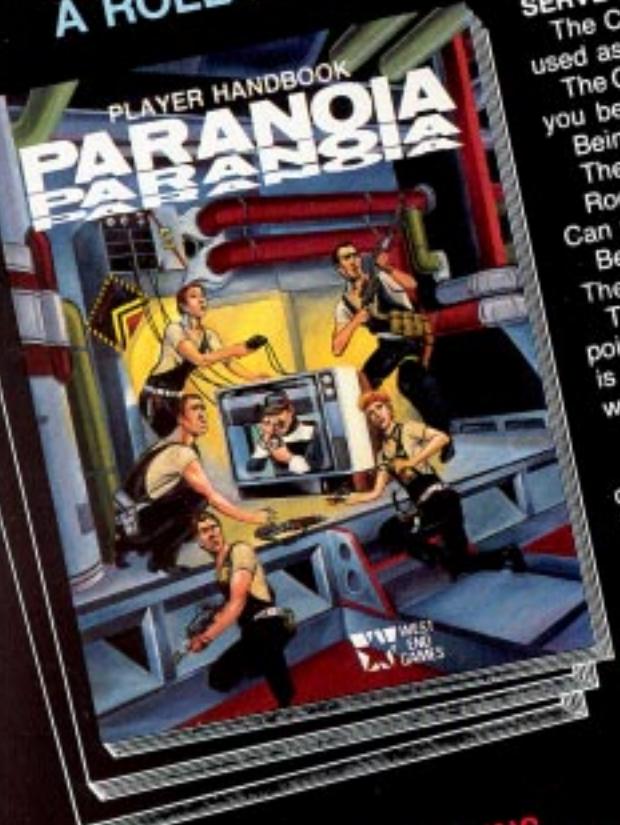




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